



1. What do we know about the city of Corinth when Paul visited in the first century (from sermon and leader notes)? What cities does this make you think about in today's world?
2. Paul, traveling alone, arrived in Corinth and met a couple named Aquila and Priscilla there. What do we learn about this couple in verses 2-3? What do we learn about Paul here? What does this new friendship lead to later in verses 18-19, when Paul left Corinth?
3. How was Paul's approach to evangelism in Corinth similar to what he did in other cities (compare 13:5, 14-16; 14:1; 16:13; 17:2-4, 10-12)? What was his main emphasis with Jewish audiences? How was the reaction from the Jews in Corinth similar to the reactions Paul received in other cities? How did Paul respond to these Corinthian Jews? (4-7)
4. What may have helped Paul go from part-time tentmaker to full-time evangelist when his companions arrived from Macedonia (v. 5; see 2 Corinthians 11:7-9; Philippians 4:15-16)? What does that tell us about our role in helping those who go out for the gospel?
5. After Paul received much opposition from the Jews in other cities, even risking his life for the gospel, how would the Lord's words to him in verses 9-10 have encouraged him?
6. Up until now Paul had not stayed very long in the cities he had visited on his two missionary journeys. Why do you think he stayed as long as he did in Corinth (8-11)?
7. What about verses 12-13 would have seemed familiar to Paul by now? What was different about the result this time (14-16)? How does this result relate to verses 9-10?
8. What else do we learn about Paul's first visit to Corinth from the letter he wrote to that church a few years later? See 1 Corinthians 1:1, 14; 2:1-5; 4:15.
9. How was Paul's initial visit to Ephesus similar to his visits to other cities? What was strikingly different this time (19-21)? How do you think Paul made that decision?
10. Apply it: How can we pray for our own government leaders from what we learn about the proconsul Gallio in verses 12-16? Keep in mind 1 Timothy 2:1-4.



The Holy Spirit Goes to Work in Corinth Leader Notes for Acts 18:1-22

Note: We are studying 18:1-22 before we study 17:16-34, due to preacher scheduling. We will return to finish chapter 17 next week.

Corinth was an important port city of commerce in the first century when Paul visited it. That brought wealth, taxation, and the kind of immorality that accompanied sailors away from home. They had a beautiful temple there dedicated to the goddess of love, Aphrodite. Their focus was on physical beauty and outward attraction, not good moral behavior. Both travelers and residents could hire prostitutes at the temple, and pay the resident priests. That led to unwanted, fatherless children and sexually transmitted diseases, in a downward spiral.

It was into this environment that Paul arrived by himself to preach the gospel. He met a Jewish couple, Aquila and Priscilla, who were tent-makers by trade, like he was. Jewish boys all learned a trade to support themselves, even if they were going to become rabbis like Paul. He made tents six days a week and then headed to the synagogue on the Sabbath. When his traveling companions Silas and Timothy arrived, they brought a gift from the Macedonian churches Paul had started earlier on this second journey (2 Corinthians 11:7-9; Philippians 4:15-16). That freed Paul to devote himself completely to the work of spreading the gospel.

As we learned earlier was his custom, Paul began persuading people in the synagogue. And just like almost everywhere else he went, Paul met resistance there from the Jews. He boldly proclaimed that he was clean of their blood and was going to the Gentiles. He moved right next door to a Gentile's home, and many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized.

At that point the Lord gave Paul a vision, unlike anything he had seen before. The Lord told him that no one there would attack him in order to harm him. What a relief that must have been to Paul after all the mobs that chased him out of town elsewhere! And despite the moral corruption in Corinth, the Lord told Paul, "I have many people in this city."

The door was now open for Paul, and he walked boldly right through it. He stayed in Corinth 18 months – far longer than he had stayed anywhere else on his two journeys – so he could teach the word of God among the Lord's "many people" there.

After a while there, the Jews resorted to their usual tactics of rising up against Paul. This time they brought him before the local governor with religious charges. Gallio saw right through that and put a stop to it immediately. He would have nothing to do with their religious disputes and drove them all away. Paul was seeing the Lord's promise of verse 10 come true!

A few years later, Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. We see there mentions of Sosthenes and Crispus (1 Cor. 1:1,14), as well as Paul's determination to reach them for Christ (1 Cor. 2:1-5). He also called himself their spiritual father through the gospel (1 Cor. 4:15).

Paul then started his return journey to Antioch in Syria, taking his new friends and co-workers Priscilla and Aquila with him. He left them at their stopover in Ephesus, another important port city that would soon play a major role in Paul's third journey. The Jews there asked him to stay, but he felt the Holy Spirit wanted him to move on at that time. He told them he would return "if God wills," which would be fulfilled in chapter 19. This was the first time we see Paul telling interested people that he would come back later!

Paul concluded his second missionary journey by sailing to Caesarea, heading up into the Judean hills to greet the church in Jerusalem, then returning to his sending church in Antioch.

