

PAUL IN CORINTH

BIBLE STORY USING INTERLOCKING FACTS FOUND IN CROSS-REFERENCES

Paul in Corinth – Acts 18:1-18

(Cross-References – 1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila

Key-location: Corinth

Key-repetitions:

- Paul spoke about Jesus: in the synagogue (Ac 18:4); he spoke only about Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor 2:1-5); devoted himself exclusively to telling Jews about Jesus (Ac 18:5); when Jews rejected his message, he spoke to non-Jews (Ac 18:6); in a vision, God told Paul to keep on speaking (Ac 18:9).
- Persecution/opposition: Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome (Ac 18:2); Jews in Corinth opposed and insulted Paul (Ac 18:6); in a vision, God told Paul that no one would attack and harm him (Ac 18:10); Jews took Paul to court (Ac 18:12); Jews beat the synagogue ruler (Ac 18:17).
- Tent-making: Aquila and Priscilla were tentmakers (Ac 18:3); Paul was a tentmaker and worked with the couple (Ac 18:3); when Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul stopped making tents (Ac 18:5).

Key-attitudes:

- Friendship between Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila.
- Conflicts between Paul and Jews in Corinth.
- Paul's devotion to telling people about Jesus.

Initial-situation:

Paul chose Silas to accompany him on his second missionary journey. Paul and Silas arrived in the town of Lystra where Timothy joined the team. They went to the city of Troas where Paul had a vision of a man from Macedonia urging him to go to Macedonia. Dr. Luke joined the team and they traveled to Philippi, a leading city in Macedonia. From Philippi they went to Thessalonica, and then to Berea. At each place they left believers. Also they left each place after being persecuted. From Berea, Paul went to Athens without other members of the team. Paul had limited success in Athens. He left a few believers but did not establish a church.

Initial-problem:

Paul went to Corinth and met a Jewish couple named Aquila and Priscilla who were tentmakers, the same as Paul. He stayed and worked with them.

Final-situation:

Some Jews took Paul to court with the charge, "This man is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to our law." Gallio ejected them from the court. Paul stayed in Corinth a while longer and then Paul left for Ephesus.

BIBLE STORY

Paul left Athens and went to the city of Corinth. Paul met a Jewish couple named Aquila and his wife Priscilla in Corinth. They had recently moved from Italy, because Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome. Paul visited the couple. Aquila and Priscilla were tentmakers, the same as Paul. He stayed and made tents with Aquila and Priscilla. Every Sabbath Paul discussed Scripture in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and non-Jews who converted to Judaism to believe in Jesus (Ac 18:1-4).

In Corinth, Paul's message was not with wise and persuasive intellectual words as he testified about God (*as he had done in Athens*). Paul resolved that while he was in Corinth he would only speak about only one subject: Jesus Christ and him crucified. Paul didn't want their faith to be based on human wisdom, but on God's power (1 Cor 2:1-5).

Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia. Then Paul devoted himself exclusively to telling the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But the Jews opposed and insulted him. Then Paul shook out the dust from his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood is on your own heads! I'm clear of my responsibility. From now on I'll go to non-Jewish people."

Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a convert to Judaism who worshiped God. Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord. Many Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized (Ac 18:5-8).

One night the Lord told Paul in a vision, "Don't be afraid; keep on speaking! I'm with you. No one is going to attack and harm you. I have many people in this city." Paul lived in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them God's word (Ac 18:9-11).

Gallio was governor of Achaia. Some Jews came together against Paul and took him to court. They charged, "This man is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to our Mosaic Law."

Governor Gallio told the Jews, "If you Jews were making a complaint about some crime, I'd listen to you. But since it involves questions about words, names, and your Jewish law, settle the matter yourselves." Governor Gallio ejected them from the court. The Jews beat Sosthenes, the synagogue ruler, in front of the court. But Governor Gallio showed no concern (Ac 18:12-17).

Paul stayed in Corinth a while longer, then Paul left for Ephesus (Ac 18:18).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Paul resolve to do when he arrived in Corinth?
2. How did Paul pay his expenses when he first arrived in Corinth?
3. How did Paul's ministry change after Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth?
4. What were some of the conflicts that Paul faced?
5. What can we learn from Paul about how to face opposition when we are obeying God?
6. What encouragement did God give Paul?
7. When has God brought encouragement to you?
8. Who were some of the people who suffered because of their relationship with Paul?
9. What can you learn from Paul about how to evangelize?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **It is honorable for Christians to do manual labor.** Paul, Aquila and Priscilla made their living as tentmakers (Ac 18:2-3). Jewish rabbis taught that the father who failed to teach his son a trade, in fact educated him to be a thief. Jesus was known as both "the carpenter's son" (Mat 13:55), and "the Carpenter" (Mk 6:3).
2. **Successful ministries may take place in challenging locations.** Corinth was the political and commercial center of Greece. It had a reputation for wickedness and immorality. People worshiped the goddess of love at a temple to Aphrodite by giving money to the temple and having sex with male and female temple prostitutes. Paul found in Corinth both a challenge and a great opportunity. In a vision, Christ told Paul that he had many people in Corinth (Ac 18:10). Paul stayed in Corinth a year and a half (Ac 18:11), won many to Christ, and established a church.
3. **Undesirable changes forced on a person may become an open door to new opportunities.** In Corinth, Paul met a Jewish couple named Aquila and his wife Priscilla who had recently moved from Rome because Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from the city. The couple moved to Corinth where they met Paul, and became his co-workers, first as tentmakers, and then in sharing the gospel (Ac 18:2-4).
4. **In some situations, a spiritual leader may need to have employment outside of his ministry to pay expenses. In other situations, his only work may be his**

ministry. In the beginning of his ministry in Corinth, Paul made tents to make a living (Ac 18:3). Later when Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul was relieved from the need to make tents to pay expenses. He devoted himself exclusively to proclaiming Jesus' message (Ac 18:5). Paul recognized the right of the missionaries to have their expenses paid (1 Cor 9:6-14; Gal 6:6; 2 Thes 3:9). However, Paul worked with his own hands (1 Cor 4:12) in order to not be a burden to anyone (1 Thes 2:9; 2 Thes 3:8; 2 Cor 12:13) and to provide for his own needs (Ac 20:33-35; 1 Cor 9:15-18; 2 Cor 11:7-12). He only accepted money from the church at Philippi (Phi 4:10-19; 2 Cor. 11:8-12; Ac 16:15).

5. **Christians have the responsibility to tell others about Jesus, but the listeners are responsible for the response they make.** After the Jews opposed and insulted Paul, he shook out the dust from his clothes in protest. Paul said to them, "Your blood is on your own heads! I'm clear of my responsibility" (Ac 18:6).
6. **People in different places respond to the gospel in different ways.** On Paul's second missionary journey, he fled from Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea because of persecution. However, in Corinth, the Lord assured Paul that he would have a productive ministry. This explains why he stayed in Corinth for a year and six months (Ac 18:9-11).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Chant:

Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

Group 1	Group 2
When I came to you, I did <u>not come</u>	with eloquence or human wisdom as I <u>proclaimed</u> to you the testimony about God.
For I <u>resolved</u> to know nothing while I was with you <u>except</u>	<u>Jesus Christ</u> and him <u>crucified</u> .
I came to you in <u>weakness</u> with great fear and trembling.	My message and my preaching <u>were not</u> with wise and persuasive words,
but with a <u>demonstration</u> of the Spirit's power,	so that your <u>faith</u> might not rest on human wisdom, but on <u>God's</u> power.
All	
"When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Corinthians 2:1-5 NIV).	