

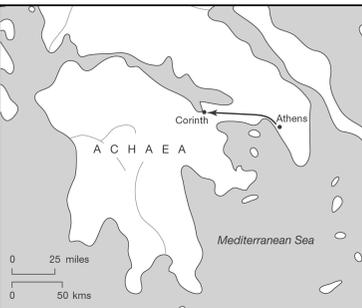
ENTRUSTED

WITH THE **GOSPEL** ACTS 18:12-28

What would happen if all who claimed to follow Jesus lived like they were empowered & expected to develop disciples?
Today we ask one question to measure our commitment to that mission.

Catch the Context: Paul had been discouraged as he came to Corinth. He had seen spiritual fruit, but he had also been ridiculed, beaten, & run out of towns. The Lord gave Paul a vision to encourage him saying 1) I am with you 2) no one will assault you to harm you 3) I have many people in this city (Acts 18:9-11). Because of God's protection, Paul had stayed for a year and six months - longer than anywhere else. Then came the persecution. Would God's promise hold true?

¹² Now while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews attacked Paul together and brought him before the judgment seat,¹³ saying, "This man is persuading people to worship God in a way contrary to the law!" ¹⁴ But just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of some crime or serious piece of villainy, I would have been justified in accepting the complaint of you Jews,¹⁵ but since it concerns points of disagreement about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I will not be a judge of these things!" ¹⁶ Then he had them forced away from the judgment seat.¹⁷ So they all seized Sosthenes, the president of the synagogue, and began to beat him in front of the judgment seat. Yet none of these things were of any concern to Gallio.



Just when Paul was about to defend himself, Gallio stepped in and judged that Jewish followers of Jesus would not be forced by the government of Achaia (central and southern Greece) to end their evangelism. This was a great victory for the Christians in this region! Yes, God was faithful to His promise (v.10).

Sosthenes, one of the leaders of the synagogue was beaten (possibly the man who had taken over for Crispus). Gallio's lack of **concern** shows his disinterest in real justice for the Jews.

Luke doesn't give us much info about **Sosthenes**. Was he leading the attack against Paul? Or was he, like Crispus, considering trusting Jesus? We simply don't know. Look how Paul opens up his letter to the Corinthians, well after his departure.

1 Corinthians 1:1-2 (NET) ¹ From Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and **Sosthenes**, our brother, ² to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.

Normally OTHERS decided when Paul was going to leave, but this decision by Gallio allowed Paul to stick around until HE was ready to leave.

Acts 18:18-23 (NET)¹⁸ Paul, after staying many more days in Corinth, said farewell to the brothers and sailed away to Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because he had made a vow.¹⁹ When they reached Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila behind there, but he himself went into the synagogue and addressed the Jews.

²⁰ When they asked him to stay longer, he would not consent,²¹ but said farewell to them and added, "I will come back to you again if God wills." Then he set sail from Ephesus,

²² and when he arrived at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church at Jerusalem and then went down to Antioch.²³ After he spent some time there, Paul left and went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.



After Paul gave his reports to Jerusalem & Antioch, he made his way back for his 3rd mission. Meanwhile, Dr. Luke puts the spotlight on another important matter back in Ephesus.

Acts 18:24-25 (NET)²⁴ Now a Jew named **Apollos**, a native of Alexandria, arrived in Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker, well-versed in the scriptures.²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John.

Apollos was from **Alexandria**, a city that was highly educated. Apollos knew the **Scriptures** (the Hebrew Scriptures = **TaNaKh** = **T**(orah) + **N**(evi'im) + **K**(etuvim); the Teachings, Prophets, & Writings).

The Scripture doesn't say he taught accurately about the *Messiah*, but **he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Jesus**. Yet **he knew only the baptism of John**.

Craig Keener writes: "*He seems to have been a follower of the message about Jesus yet not part of, and probably not familiar with, the Jesus movement—that is, the church.*"¹

Evidently, he taught passionately about Jesus, but his understanding about the baptism of Jesus and the Spirit was limited. That didn't go unnoticed.

Acts 18:26 (NET)²⁶ He began to speak out fearlessly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately.

Aquila & Priscilla didn't try to correct Apollos in public. Instead, **they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately**. This couple cares enough to help disciple Apollos.

- 🕒 God wants to use us to help young, passionate believers understand the way of God more accurately. Younger believers need your knowledge, wisdom, & experiences.
- 🕒 Apollos, the polished communicator, humbly sat at the feet of tentmakers² showing his willingness to learn. Are we humble enough to listen to others who are further down the trail?
- 🕒 Barnabas had taken Paul under his wing. Paul disciplined Silas & Timothy. This couple had done the same for Apollos.

¹ Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: 15:1-23:35*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 2806.

² R. Kent Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996), 247-248.

BIG QUESTION: *Who are YOU investing in & who's investing in you?*

²⁷ When Apollos wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he assisted greatly those who had believed by grace, ²⁸ for he refuted the Jews vigorously in public debate, **demonstrating from the scriptures that the Christ [Messiah] was Jesus.**

Now, better equipped by Aquila & Priscilla, Apollos helped share Jesus with the Jews **from the Scriptures.**

Who are YOU investing in & who's investing in you?

* **Homework:** Next week we will be looking at **1 Timothy 3:8-13**. Read it as your homework. Consider whether these characteristics are true of you and begin to pray over which men might serve in that position.