



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Paul's New Team in the Wealthiest Capitol

JUNE 27-29, 2018

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Acts 18:1-4 *“After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. 2) And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. 3) So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.”* (NKJV)

“AS ATHENS WAS THE SEAT OF CULTURE, SO CORINTH WAS THE SEAT OF COMMERCE AND WEALTH.”
JOHN WESLEY

Does Luke provide a word that lets the governor know why Paul was compelled to leave Athens? What was unique about this city that could bring it such great wealth? How did they become so immoral? Did Paul look for a new team? Why had the Jews been expelled from Rome by the Emperor? When had Paul learned to make tents? What was Paul's schedule while he remained by himself in Corinth? Was the reasoning approach in the synagogue on the Sabbath successful?

FOCUS ON FUTURE EVENTS:

- > SEPTEMBER 21: LIFT-DELTAVILLE **THE LEGISLATIVE INVITATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT**
- > NOVEMBER 5: LIBRARY OF VA/CAPITOL SQUARE **THE CAPITOL COOKOUT AND PRAYER WALK**

The Macedonian Call while Paul was in Troas had been embraced by everyone on his mission team, including Luke, who seems to have become the pastor the first church in Europe, when Paul left him in Philippi. With their backs still bloody and bruised they entered Thessalonica the capital of Macedonia and had planted a

church in less than a month. Yet they were again run out of town by persecution and had to escape by night to Berea. Those in the synagogue were so diligent in the Scriptures that they looked up and checked Paul's references to the Old Testament every day as they learned about the vast number of incredible prophecies that all were fulfilled in their Messiah, Jesus Christ. This was the only synagogue in all Paul's travels and ministry which carefully researched everything he said and thereby immediately became a church as they all turned in repentance to their Redeemer King. Yet the persecution became so intense by the threats of the Jews from Thessalonica that Paul was immediately forced again to escape, this time accompanied by a security team from the new church. His Christian bodyguards sailed with him all the way to Athens and were instructed by Paul to send Silas and Timothy immediately. Both of them had come and were sent back to the churches in Macedonia, particularly Thessalonica and probably Philippi. Paul had been alone when he was brought before the most intellectual court of his day on Mars Hill and he had given them the gospel in the most profound and persuasive way he could possibly devise. Even a member of the court had been persuaded to believe, yet most of the others had mocked and jeered when he had spoken of the resurrection, while others continued to deny Paul the opportunity to teach by procrastinating and requesting a future hearing without a specific date. With the choice of an uncertain wait or moving on to the next city, Paul chose to evangelize the next capitol, Corinth.

“BECAUSE NO ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO APPROVE PAUL'S RIGHT TO CONTINUE TEACHING IN THE CITY, HIS HANDS WERE LEGALLY TIED. ALL HE COULD DO WAS WAIT IN ATHENS TILL THE COUNCIL GAVE HIM THE RIGHT TO TEACH THERE OR MOVE ON TO SOME OTHER PLACE WHERE HIS MESSAGE WOULD BE MORE FAVORABLY RECEIVED.” RICHARD LONGENECKER

BIBLE STUDIES

- WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3 & 12:00 NOON – OAKTON – BOB EVANS – 10443 WHITE GRANITE DR.
- THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY'S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)
- FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

Virginia

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I. A DEPARTURE FORCED ACTS 18:1

Since Paul has entered Europe, there has been only one actual response in every city—forced departure or escape. Even though there is not physical persecution, the intellectuals in Athens have done the same with their academic decisions. Either mocking in clear rejection of the truth or public openness to the truth while rejecting it with actual outcomes, they know they are forcing Paul out of town and Luke reveals it by using the same verb implying a forced departure that is used in verse two of the Jews being forced to depart from Rome. Thus, Paul moves on to the most immoral metropolis in the Roman Empire. Corinth is the largest city in Greece with as many as 400,000 inhabitants. They not only captured the north/south traffic by land but they also provided for the traffic of the sea going east and west. Ships could sail the perilous 200 miles around the end of the peninsula or pay a significant fee for their cargo to be transferred, or even their ship to be transported, to the other side. This continual payment for sea traffic, as well as the natural trade within the city and all its attractions, brought it the greatest wealth. But just as deeply as Paul had been grieved with the rampant idolatry in Athens, he would have mourned the unrestrained immorality in Corinth.

“THE NAME ‘CORINTHIAN’ WAS SYNONYMOUS FOR THE MOST PERVERTED BEHAVIOR. CORINTH WAS THE CENTER OF THE CULT OF THE LOVE GODDESS APHRODITE ... THE TEMPLE OF APHRODITE IN CORINTH WAS ONE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL WONDERS OF THE WORLD, AND AT ONE TIME THERE WERE TEN THOUSAND TEMPLE PROSTITUTES.”
JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE

II. A DELIGHTFUL FIND ACTS 18:2-3

Paul needed a place to stay and a job to pay his way, so he looked for someone that he could partner with in his trade of making tents. It must have been a delightful surprise to him to find Aquila because he not only shared

the same trade, but also the same nationality. Most scholars place the year at AD 49 when Claudius the Emperor had expelled all the Jews from Rome. Aquila had already left the place of his birth in Pontius near the Black Sea to go to Rome and now he was in Corinth as an exile from the Imperial Capital. Though Paul was a traveling Rabbi, he had been taught a second trade in order not to be an imposition anywhere he went, and thus he partnered with these Jews from Rome. It seems that Aquila and Priscilla were also believers, because there is never a time when they are said to have become Christians by the witness of Paul. He chose to stay with them and they are later so devoted to him that they are willing to risk their own lives for him (Rom 16:3-4).

“SOME OF THEM WERE CONVINCED BY HIS REASONINGS, AND YIELDED TO CHRIST.” MATTHEW HENRY

III. A DEVOUT FOLLOWING ACTS 18:4

This was the seventh city that Paul evangelized which had a synagogue. Paul always used the same strategy in reaching a city for Christ. He would first approach and teach those who already knew the Scriptures and teach them the correct interpretation. There are numerous prophecies and symbols in the Old Testament pointing to the work of atonement to be performed by their Messiah, Jesus Christ, yet many were ignorant of them and have never been taught them, just as many of the Jews today. Paul, as a visiting rabbi, would be invited to speak and he would reason with them from their own Scriptures, showing them the precise predictions of their Messiah, the necessity of their being fulfilled, and showing them that there is only one person who perfectly fulfills them all in His sacrificial death as the atoning sacrifice for our sin, and His resurrection-guaranteeing new life in Him. He “*persuaded both Jews and Greeks.*”

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you willing to suffer hardship and even persecution to present the truth of the gospel to others around you?
- 2) Do you make friends of believers and help them practically in giving the truth to others and even take risks for them?
- 3) Are you a strategic witness in that you meet people where they are and help improve their knowledge of the Scriptures?