



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Paul Wins the Religious Leader in the Capitol

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Acts 18:5-8 *But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. 6) And when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads! I am clean. From now on I shall go to the Gentiles.” 7) And he departed from there and went to the house of a certain man named Titius Justus, a worshipper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue. 8) And Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. (NASB)*

“CRISPUS, THE SYNAGOGUE RULER, WITH HIS FAMILY BELIEVED ... AND HIS CONVERSION UNDOUBTEDLY WAS AN IMPETUS FOR MANY MORE CORINTHIANS TO BE CONVERTED.”
STAN TOUSSAINT

What changed when Silas and Timothy arrived? Had Paul been building toward presenting Jesus as the Christ? What was the meaning of Paul’s shaking out his garments? Why did Paul say they had blood on their head? Did He go back to the synagogue after this confrontation? Is there significance in the fact that Titius Justus was just next door? Were there other synagogue leaders who had believed? Did Crispus’ household follow his influence just as the Corinthians later?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 17: ACTS 18:9-17 *GOD’S PREACHER GIVEN PROMISE & PROTECTION*
- JANUARY 24: ACTS 18:18-23 *THE GREATEST MISSIONARY ON THE MOVE*

Paul had won many leaders since receiving his Macedonian Call. In Philippi he had seen wealthy Lydia, trading in costly purple garments, not only receive Christ, but all her household with her (Acts 16:14-15) and the same household salvation had happened to the head of the prison (30-33). In Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia, after only three weeks teaching, a great multitude of Greeks and many of the leading women joined Paul and Silas (17:4). At Berea, a provincial capital, the synagogue seemed to have turned into a church as they searched the Scriptures to check Paul’s claims and both prominent men and women believed (11-12). At Athens, the capital of Greece and the mother of arts, eloquence, and philosophy, Paul had spoken to the philosophical supreme court of the world at the Areopagus and one of the members of the court, Dionysius, had joined Paul and believed (34). At Corinth, the capital of Achaia, Paul was still alone and had a slow start as he made tents with two Jews from Rome and taught every Sabbath in the synagogue. A spiritual Mt. Rushmore was being created through the leaders being saved in the capitals throughout the Roman Empire.

“HIS LOVE TO CHRIST WAS SO GREAT, AND HIS CONVICTION OF THE TRUTH SO STRONG, THAT HE LABORED TO MAKE KNOWN TO THEM THE TRUTH THAT JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH.” ALBERT BARNES

I. THE SAVIOR PROCLAIMED ACTS 18:5

Corinth was renown, not only for its wealth, but also for its rampant wickedness. The whole empire knew the verb “to corinthianize” meant to commit sexual immorality and perversion. On the flat summit of the Acrocorinth, stood the temple of Venus, the goddess of love, from which a thousand temple prostitutes would corrupt the city by night. In the past four cities Paul had been greeted with mostly violent or professional contempt (Athens). At this capital of wealth and corruption, Paul must have

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 6TH FLOOR SPEAKER’S CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 6TH FLOOR SPEAKER’S CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

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known that if the gospel could penetrate this stronghold of iniquity, then it could prevail anywhere. Though Paul began in weakness (1 Cor 2:3), he sought to persuade those in the synagogue through their Scriptures. When Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul received a three-fold encouragement. First, he was encouraged by the renewed fellowship with his team. Second, Timothy brought good news that the Thessalonian church was thriving, even amidst intense persecution (1 Thess 3:6-8). Third, they probably would have brought with them a monetary gift from the church at Philippi (Phil 4:14-16). If there was a sufficient gift from Philippi to support the team, it would explain why Paul would have left tent making and “*began devoting himself completely to the word.*” He evidently had also sufficiently prepared his hearers to begin “*solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.*” This most important element of the Gospel is the hope of Israel.

“WE ARE TO PERSIST IN MINISTRY DESPITE OPPOSITION, KNOWING THAT THE MEASURE OF EUROPE’S GREATNESS, AND THE MEASURE OF ANY NATION’S GREATNESS, IS THE MEASURE IN WHICH SHE HAS OBEYED THE WORD TO THE JAILER: ‘BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND YOU WILL BE SAVED.’” **DAVID COOK**

II. THE SYNAGOGUE ABANDONED ACTS 18:6-7

The response to the truth of Jesus as the Messiah was a continual “*resisting,*” a military term with the concept of putting soldiers in array for battle. Though Paul had showed them from their own Old Testament Scriptures how the Messiah had been clearly prophesied as suffering death, even by crucifixion (Ps. 22), these Jews not only continually resisted, but also were “*blaspheming*” their own Messiah. As these Jews sought to extinguish the light of life, Paul so abhorred their blasphemy that he performed a Jewish act, commanded by Christ for such occasions (Mt 10:14, Mk 6:11, Lk 9:5). As he shook out his garments, he said, “*Your blood be upon your own heads! I am*

clean.” Paul was reminding them of the responsibility of the watchman in Ezekiel 33:2-5. He had warned them. It was now their own responsibility if they died in their sins. With those words Paul abandoned the synagogue and went next door to teach and preach in the house of a Gentile who had received the truth, Titius Justus. Would God use such direct words and actions to draw others?

“AND WHOEVER WILL NOT RECEIVE YOU NOR HEAR YOU, WHEN YOU DEPART FROM THERE, SHAKE OFF THE DUST UNDER YOUR FEET AS A TESTIMONY AGAINST THEM. ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, IT WILL BE MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM AND GOMORRAH IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT THAN FOR THAT CITY!” **MARK 6:11**

III. THE SALVATION IGNITED ACTS 18:8

Paul’s passion for his people did not let him go far away, which probably made some of the Jews even angrier. But the conscience of the man who presided over that abandoned synagogue was awakened. He knew the Scriptures well enough to know that Paul was right and he must repent and turn to Jesus as his Messiah and Lord. Just as Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum, ignored all the opposition against Jesus Christ and simply placed his faith in Jesus Christ for his own life and that of his daughter, so now Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, places his faith in Jesus Christ with all of his family. Because he was a leader, “*many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized.*”

“IT WAS A NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENT TO CONVERT A RULER OF A SYNAGOGUE, AND 1 COR. 1:14-16 CONFIRMS HIS BAPTISM. THIS VERSE IN ADDITION SUGGESTS THAT ONCE CRISPUS CONVERTED MANY OTHER CORINTHIANS FOLLOWED.” **BEN WITHERINGTON**

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you willing to boldly proclaim the Gospel and Jesus as your Lord and Savior to others around you and above you?
- 2) Are you aware of the judgment that comes unexpectedly upon those who resist the truth and refuse to believe in Jesus?
- 3) Are you as a leader delighting to influence others to come to faith in Jesus Christ by your life and testimony to them?