

ACTS 18:1-22 - PREACHING CHRIST IN THE CITY

INTRODUCTION:

In the first few verses of Acts 18, we find Paul arriving in the city of Corinth, and Luke gives us a brief account of Paul's setting up of the church during his second missionary period. Notably, the books of 1st and 2nd Corinthians are actually Paul's writings to the church of Corinth at a later time (i.e. during his 3rd missionary journey; chapter 18 of Acts occurs during his second missionary journey).

What's important for us to take note of is the relative importance of this city during Paul's time. It was a relatively new city, with no buildings more than 100 years old. The two main ports on the east and west of the city made this an ideal maritime port. But with it came the influx of not only trade, but all sorts of ideas and all manners of people. Among the Greeks the word translated "to live like a Corinthian" (*korinthiazesthai*) meant to *live immorally*. It is here however, that Paul spends a considerable amount of time (cf. Acts 18:11). Put simply, this wouldn't exactly be the "dream destination" for any missionary or minister of the gospel. Hence, this chapter is significant in showing not only how gospel reached those in Corinth, but perhaps more importantly, how Paul dealt with numerous instances of opposition.

While Singapore is no Corinth, some similarities do appear:

- 1) *Like Corinth, we are very much an increasingly cosmopolitan city with an influx of people and pluralistic ideologies*
- 2) *Like Paul, these competing ideas bring about challenges to sharing the gospel effectively*
- 3) *The people in Corinth were mostly non-believers; many of us today also interact with non-Christians in our ministry*

As we look at Acts 18:1-22 together, let us learn from the life of Paul and ask ourselves an important question: How can I be a witness for the gospel in an increasingly hostile environment? How do I be an effective herald of God's Word where God has placed me? When faced with opposition, when should I "move on", and when should I determine to "stand my ground"?

Devotional Sharing Outline:

How should we face opposition when sharing the gospel? Three reminders from Acts 18:

1. _____. (v. 1-8)
2. _____. (v.9; 12-17)
3. _____. (v.9; 11; 18-22)

Questions for Reflection:

- 1) When faced with opposition in ministry, what tends to be our first response? Disappointment? Doubt? Depression?
- 2) What can we learn from how Paul endured opposition in his ministry?
- 3) How can I lift up my fellow co-worker in Christ as we serve God together?