



## Acts: Corinth

Sept 13

**INTRODUCTION:** Having been forced from Macedonia and into Achaia, Paul moved from the cultural capital of the Greek world to the capital of Achaia, of commerce and immorality. How would he witness in this context for some 18 months?



**KEY POINT:** cities, assurance, vindication in mission, election

### A.M. SERMON RECAP (Ro 1:16, Not Ashamed)

- Reflections from Creation Café or baptism
- Why might the Romans/we be ashamed of the Gospel? (What is the Gospel?)
- Why ought we not be ashamed? How is it powerful? What does it lead to? For whom?

### P.M. SERMON RECAP (Acts 17:22–33, Areopagus)

- Why is what Paul said, his speech, significant?
- How do we begin where people are?
- Why must we respectfully challenge their beliefs?
- How can we tap into their own thinking as an authority to lead to repentance?
- How do we culminate in God's Word/the Gospel?
- Why 3 responses might our witness receive?

**READ:** Acts 18:1–17

### QUESTIONS:

#### Witness

1. *Rome boasted many large cities: Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. There were other large ones, like Corinth and Ephesus. Because of the slip way across the isthmus Corinth was a commercial centre where the Gospel could go out from. Because of its Temple to*

*Aphrodite with 1000 prostitutes 'to Corinthianize' became a verb to describe immorality. What was Paul's missional strategy? Why is idolatry and immorality more evident in cities? In a world of big cities, do we pray for the Gospel in them?*

2. *Paul had just preached the Resurrection in Athens but in Corinth stressed Christ crucified (1 Cor 1:23–30, 2:2–3). How may Corinth's civic and commercial pride have been a key reason for this? What about today?*
3. *Aquila and Priscilla were Jews from Rome. In AD 49 Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews because they "were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus." How does this show the Gospel was spreading even where Paul hadn't been? It is likely that both unbelieving and believing Jews were expelled. From these verses does it appear the couple are Christians or not?*
4. *While Paul accepted support from Macedonia (2 Cor 11:9, 1 Ti 5:18), at this early stage he laboured to support his ministry (he gave up his right so non-believer's couldn't charge him with taking advantage of them). What missional benefit was there in 'tent-making'? What draw backs? (c.f. v. 5- enabling him to be 'occupied').*
5. *V. 4+, Again, what words in this passage speak of witness? What was he trying to prove? Do we seek to do this?*
6. *V. 6- Did Paul invest time when there wasn't interest and openness? Should we?*
7. *Shaking one's garment was like shaking the dust off one's feet. It was a sign of rejection. "Your blood" was a sign of fulfilling one's calling so all responsibility of judgment lay upon the hearer (Ezk 33:1). Can you share a personal example of this? [God/] Paul hadn't reject the Jews, just these Jews for he continued to witness to them throughout his ministry.*
8. *Paul was vindicated by God, in establishing a new base, in conversions and in being legitimized by the authorities.*
9. **V. 7- Where did he go instead of the synagogue? Do you think this made the unbelieving Jews happy, especially when their leader became a Christian (v. 8)!?**
10. *V. 8b- A fruitful ministry. Discuss the closeness of belief and baptism? How soon ought someone be baptized?*

11. *V. 9–10- All of this put great pressure on Paul, should he stay or leave as in past instances? He received specific guidance in a vision. **What was He promised?** Why is it important to re-evaluate our callings? How can God guide/encourage?*
12. *V. 10b- “Many people.” The language used of Israel in the OT is now used of Gentiles. Jesus likewise alluded to sheep in other folds (Jn 10:16).*
13. *V. 10b- Predestination<sup>1</sup> is a great encouragement in evangelism. Calvin, Edwards, Whitefield, Carey, Spurgeon, Shields, Stott, etc, all believed this and were effective missionaries. **How does a knowledge that God has chosen to save some (vs. hasn’t guaranteed the salvation of any) encourage us to keep preaching?***
14. *Vv.12–17- This story shows that initial persecution came from Jews, not Romans. They held a policy that these were religious matters of no concern to them, thereby setting a precedent that gave Christianity legal protection. **How does this fulfil God’s promise from the vision? How has Jesus promised to be with us as we fulfil the Great Commission?***

**NEXT:** Sept 20- Acts 18:24–28, Apollos

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<sup>1</sup> *Predestination (pre-written) or election (chosen) is the Biblical/Christian teaching that God, in His hidden counsel, has appointed or chosen some to come to saving faith based not upon foresight of choice but His own good pleasure or grace (Eph 1:5, 2:8; 2 Ti 1:9). Unbelievers need only concern themselves with the Gospel. **However, for Christians Luke has made a point of noting this doctrine (e.g. Acts 13:48, 16:14), why? Corinthian/human pride would demand we all be saved, yet as sinners, God is entirely just not to save anyone. How does it magnify His grace that He chose to save some?***