

The Book of Acts Chapter 18 Part 2
Two Missions and Two Missionaries (Acts
18:18-28)

1 Cor 3:3-6

*3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you **envying**, and **strife**, and **divisions**, are ye not **carnal**, and walk as men?*

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

I. Review

1. Last lesson, we began chapter 18 and discussed Paul arriving in Corinth and meeting Aquilla and Priscilla, getting a job with them, and lodging with them.

2. In time, Timothy and Silas who had stayed behind in Thessalonica and Berea, now rejoined Paul.
3. Paul preached at the synagogue in Corinth, many Jews rejected the gospel, Paul shook off the dust, and moved on to minister to the Gentiles.
4. A Gentile man named Justus who lived next door to the synagogue, accepted the message, and eventually so did two rulers of the synagogue, Crispus (and his household) and Sosthenes.
5. This is when Jesus appeared to Paul and assured him, **“I have much people in this city.”** Acts 9:10
6. Eventually unbelieving Jews harassed Paul by trying to get the Roman Governor, Gallio, to punish Paul for trying to persuade “men to worship God contrary to the law.”
7. Gallio didn’t care about their religious complaint about “words and names” of their law, so he sent them away. Then a

mob of Greeks rose up and captured the chief of the Jewish synagogue and beat him. (Sothenes)

- II. Paul's Return from his Second Missionary Journey (Verses 18-22)
 - A. Preparing to sail home
 - 1. After Paul's experience before Gallio, apparently the tide of opposition quieted against him as the tide turned against Paul's persecutors.
 - 2. Other than their stay at Troas when they were waiting to get direction from the Lord, it is likely that his stay here in Corinth was the first time Paul remained for any space of time on this journey.
 - 3. Verse 11 said he stayed in Corinth 18 months.
 - 4. So it is quite possible that Paul wrote his first epistle, the letter to the Galatians, either during their wait in Troas, or perhaps here in this lengthy stay in Corinth.

Acts 18:18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria [his home province-Tarsus and Antioch], and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a VOW.

5. But as we see, the time had come for his second missionary journey to conclude.
6. So after spending eighteen months in Corinth, he decided to return to Antioch in Syria.
7. Apparently, he left Silas and Timothy in Corinth and sailed from Cenchrea, accompanied only by Aquila and Priscilla.
8. Cenchrea was located a few miles south of Corinth, and was a sea port which opened into the Aegean Sea. **[Map: Cenchrea]**
9. Before sailing from Cenchrea, note that Paul shorn his head, meaning he got a hair cut.

- B. Nazarite vow and hair issues in Corinth
1. The passage mentions Paul had taken vow that had now ended. It sounds like Paul had taken the Nazarite vow of consecration sometime on this missionary trip, perhaps to have a greater influence among the Jews.
 2. The Nazarite vow was a period of consecration taken by Jews as described in Num 6:1-21 where the one taking the vow (either man or woman) would greatly restrict their diet and drink, would separate themselves from all uncleanness, and would not cut their hair during the period of the VOW.
 3. Then when the vow ended, a man would shave, get a haircut, bring various burnt offerings, and also burn his shaved hair in the fire.
 4. Only men would cut their hair after the completion of the vow, because it was and is a shame for women to cut their hair.

- c. Teaching to the Corinthians on hair
 - 1. Perhaps that is why Paul took time to address men wearing short hair and women wearing long hair when he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, since they had seen him go from longer hair from his vow, to having shorter hair.
 - 2. Maybe that caused some in the church to ask the question about the church's teaching on hair length for men and women. Since they saw Paul cut his hair while their, that brought up the practical question about women cutting their hair.
 - 3. Paul clarified that in 1 Corinthians 11.

1 Cor 11:14-15

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

*15 But if a woman have long hair, **it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.***

4. In case Paul taking the vow caused confusion, he clarified that a man wearing long hair was a shame, but for a woman, her long hair was a glory to her.
5. The phrase in English, have long hair, comes from one Greek word, Ko-ma-o, which translates: “to let one’s hair grow long” or “not to cut one’s hair.”
6. Plus her long hair was given as a covering, and should not be cut or shaved, because it would be a shame to the woman:
1 Cor 11:6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.
7. If find it interesting that Paul made it a point to clarify this issue of distinct hair for men and women, as it evidently had been a point of contention brought up by someone in the church—possibly because of his vow:
1 Cor 11:16 But if any man seem to be contentious [if anyone intends to quarrel

about this], *we have no such custom* [practice], *neither the churches of God.*

8. That is why the Apostolic church teaches the same: men keep their hair short, because long hair on a man is a shame. Ladies allow your hair to grow without cutting, because your long hair is your glory.
9. God is the author of gender distinctions, as her long, uncut hair is a symbol of spiritual authority before God and the angels:
1 Cor 11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.
10. Paul did not go on to explain exactly how this works, so we can speculate.
11. Just as the angels clearly understood God's power and authority, as they saw satan and his angels cast out of heaven when they rebelled against God's authority, so ought the woman understand her place of spiritual power by obeying this teaching of long hair.

- D. Teaching to Timothy on garments
 - 1. Not only does the scripture describe gender rules for hair, but also for apparel. And it is a shame to disobey the hair rules and it is an abomination to God to disobey the clothing rules.
 - 2. But that is a subject for another study, but I'll mention only briefly that Paul later wrote to Timothy who was overseeing the church in the city of Ephesus, the place Paul is heading next.
 - 3. And teaching about women's apparel, as distinct from men's apparel, women's adorning, or dress, should be modest, let down and free flowing, (1 Tim 2:9) as opposed to the male garment that is girded at the loins. The modern garments that match those apparel distinctions are dresses/skirts for the woman and pants for the man.
- E. Sailing for Ephesus

1. Back to the end of the second missionary journey. Paul, with Aquila and Priscilla, then sailed across the Aegean Sea, a journey of 250 miles to the east, to Ephesus on the west coast of Asia Minor. **[map: Ephesus]**
2. If you remember, the Holy Ghost had forbidden the missionary team to go into Asia (Ephesus is the capital) at the beginning of this journey:

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

3. But apparently it was ok at this end point of the journey, to visit there, at least briefly.

Acts 18:19-21

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

*20 When **they desired him to tarry longer time with them**, he consented not;*

21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by

all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

4. Their desire for him to remain with them was Paul's open door invitation to return to Ephesus, which he did on his third missionary journey. He eventually ends up spending a great deal of time in Ephesus and the region.
5. So after this short stopover in Ephesus, he hurried on to Jerusalem to be present for the fall Jewish feasts, and to prevent dangerous sea travel in the winter.
6. Paul left Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus and sailed to the seaport of Caesarea:
Acts 18:22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.
7. **[map: Caesarea to Antioch]** After arriving, Paul "went up," which means he went to Jerusalem, and saluted the church. That

means he greeted, or perhaps preached and gave report to them.

8. Then he “went down,” which is what one does whenever they leave Jerusalem, and returned to his headquarters in Antioch of Syria

III. Third Missionary Journey

A. Paul’s Third Visit to Central Asia Minor (Verse 23)

1. *Acts 18:23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.*
2. **[map: Galatia, Phrygia]**
3. At this point in Paul’s life, with seeing all the successes for the kingdom of God on the missionary field, he could not sit idle in Antioch very long.
4. So after **he had spent some time** (perhaps a few weeks or months) in Antioch, he felt the need to revisit the churches in Central

Asia Minor, where he had the revival/persecution cycle repeated many times on his first and second missionary journeys.

5. He followed the same route from Antioch over which he had traveled on his second journey. This course would have led first to Derby, then Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, and perhaps other cities where, by this time, there were other Christian congregations.
- IV. Apollos Converted (Verses 24-28)
- A. Apollos, a disciple of John the Baptist
 1. Then in verse 24, the subject abruptly changes from Paul to introduce another preacher named Apollos.
 2. When Paul left Ephesus, he left Aquila and Priscilla there. Perhaps to continue working with those from the synagogue who had asked Paul to remain.

3. So they continued to attend the synagogue services, and no doubt found many opportunities to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
4. And while there, they met an eloquent preacher whom they led to Jesus.

Acts 18:24-26

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

*26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and **expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.***

5. Apollos was a zealous Jew from Alexandria, Egypt, who had come to Ephesus and spoke in the synagogue.

6. Notice in verse 25 that he had heard and been converted to the message and the baptism of John the Baptist.
 7. It is interesting how a Jew living in Egypt had heard the message about John the Baptist, a Jew who had ministered in the wilderness areas of Judea, but he had not heard the message about Jesus, the one whom John pointed people to.
- B. Sincere in partial truth
1. This is a case of a sincere and godly person who has partial truth just because that is all they had been exposed to. Should you leave them alone and not bother to share complete revelation with them since they are sincere in their beliefs?
 2. After all, he was eloquent, meaning he was a trained speaker, likely in formal rhetorical speaking, and was also mighty in the scriptures, meaning, he was well-versed,

and very knowledgeable in the Old Testament.

3. But in all his learning, Apollos had not heard the full gospel truth. What do you do with people like that?
4. Aquila and Priscilla knew what to do with Apollos.
5. Perhaps they invited him to their home where they ***expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*** or completely.
6. They would have taught him the same gospel message Paul had been preaching everywhere.
7. Apollos readily believed their message, and no doubt was rebaptized. John's baptism was an introduction. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was the fulfillment. And it is likely that Apollos was filled with the Holy Ghost.
8. And now armed with the full gospel message, he wanted to go share that message.

- c. Apollos the missionary
 - 1. Now remember, Paul had just left Corinth and went to Ephesus before returning home.
 - 2. Now we see Apollos, armed with the message of truth, he now goes to Corinth to preach among the churches there, and maybe start other churches.

Acts 18:27-28

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

- 3. Apollos learned from Aquila and Priscilla of the church in Corinth in the region of Achaia, and he desired to go there.

4. So they wrote a letter of recommendation to the saints in Corinth, and asked them to receive him.
5. And he, being eloquent and very learned in the Old Testament Scriptures, performed a very commendable work among the Jews in Corinth.

D. Division caused by carnality

1. He later was involved indirectly in a division in the church in Corinth but not from any fault of his own.
2. Paul had heard from someone in the church of Corinth about these divisions:

1 Cor 1:10-12

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you,

my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

3. And he adds a little more about the cause of the division--carnality:

1 Cor 3:3-6

*3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you **envying**, and **strife**, and **divisions**, are ye not **carnal**, and walk as men?*

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

4. Notice how Paul looked at the success of another minister:

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

5. We are co-laborers together in the work of God and there is no place for envy, strive, or divisions.
6. Notice how the last verse in Acts 18 described Apollos' success among the Jews in Corinth:
Acts 18:28 For he mightily convinced [vigorously refuted] the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.
7. Paul had been rejected by the Jews in Corinth, and now Apollos looks at them as a target to preach to.
8. Perhaps that is how Sosthenes, the new ruler of the synagogue came to believe in the truth.
9. And it is important to note that although some in the church of Corinth wanted to boast about which minister had baptized them, Paul, Apollos, or Peter, and even brought about divisions in the church based

on those divisions, Paul said that was nothing but carnality.

- E. Unity among the ministers
 - 1. That did not create division among the ministers. Paul said each had a purpose to bless them:
 - 2. *1 Cor 3:21-22*
21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;
22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;
 - 3. And years later, they were still working together. Paul would later write to his son in the gospel, Titus:
Titus 3:13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.
 - 4. “Bring them on their journey” means do whatever is necessary to help these ministers, providing for their needs.

5. Paul saw Apollos as a coworker not a competitor.