

Acts 18:1-17

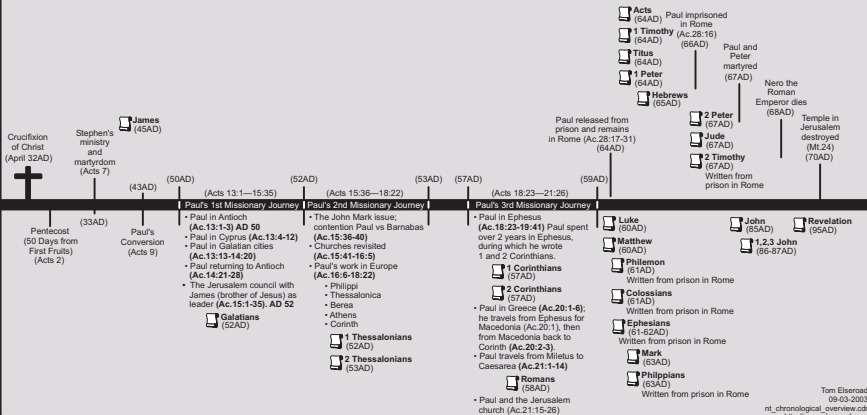
Paul's Ministry at Corinth

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New Testament Chronological Overview





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PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Being in the world

What can we learn from Paul about engaging people in the culture?

- 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, 2:14 – foolishness of the truth
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 – the importance of love (also John 13:35)
- 1 Corinthians 9:22 – empathy and understanding (also 1 Peter 3:15-16)

Other observations

- The Bible provides the solution for what is wrong with the world
- People are not going to be won by a solid argument alone
 - As they say, “Your walk talks louder than your talk talks”¹
 - Should our goal be to “convince others”?
- There are times where we are just casting our pearls before swine
- It must be Christ in us speaking to/living in the world
 - And it must be Christ we are speaking to the world

¹which is not to say we don't speak

Tent-maker by day

1 After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.

- *After these things*
 - Paul's teaching and preaching in Athens
 - Very few responded positively to Paul's teaching
- *[He] went to Corinth*
 - Population of over 200,000 inhabitants – much bigger than Athens
 - Major commercial center of the day
 - Contained the temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love
 - Supposedly had 1,000 temple prostitutes
 - Immorality was rampant
- *And he found a Jew named Aquila...with his wife Priscilla*
 - Several references to them – Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19
 - Apparently became close collaborators with Paul

Devoted to the Word

4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks

- He supported himself by tent-making during the week
 - Did receive some support – Phil. 4:15
 - Did not seek payment for his teaching – 1 Cor. 9:1-18; 2 Cor. 11:9
- He resumed reasoning in the synagogue on the Sabbath
 - *Reasoning* = public teaching; presenting intelligent arguments
 - *Persuade* = to convince another to receive a belief
- *But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word*
 - Presumably, they supported Paul while he taught
 - Silas had brought money from Philippi – see Phil. 4:14-16
 - Timothy probably brought news about the Thessalonians
 - Most likely this is when Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians

The resistance

6 But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

- *But when they resisted and blasphemed*
 - *They* = the Jewish listeners
 - *Resisted* = to set oneself in opposition to or in array against
 - *Blasphemed* = to hurt the reputation of; smite with reports or words; speak evil of; slander
- *He shook out his garments* – see Matthew 10:14
 - He had done his part in trying to convince the Jews – see Ezekiel 33:1-9
 - He went next door, to the house of Titus Justus
 - Possibly the person referred to in Rom. 16:23 & 1 Cor. 1:14
 - Paul baptized Crispus personally – see 1 Cor. 1:14

I have many people in this city

9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent;

- *And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision*
 - Second time God to spoke to Paul directly through a vision – see also Acts 16:9
 - The Lord speaks to calm Paul's fears
 - What could have been worrying Paul?
 - *"I have many people in this city"*
 - Does this support the idea of divine election?
- *He settled there a year and six months*
 - Corinth, being a prominent city in the Roman empire, seems to have been prominent in the Lord's plans
 - Paul wrote at least three epistles to the body there

Contrary to the law

12 But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat,

- *“This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”*
 - What was the Jews gripe with Paul?
 - Notice, they did not put this in terms of reverence for Caesar
- *“I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters.”*
 - Gallio, the Roman governor, seems to have had a particularly pleasant disposition
 - “No mortal is so pleasant to any person as Gallio is to everyone.”²
 - Seems completely uninterested in the squabbles amongst the Jews
 - He ignores the beating of Sosthenes
 - This sets a precedent for how Christians are treated

²Seneca, his brother and Stoic philosopher

Taking leave

18 Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

- *Paul...put out to sea for Syria*
 - Possibly to go to Jerusalem for the Passover feast
 - Dangerous time to travel; possibly one of Paul's shipwrecks occurred during the voyage
- *With him were Priscilla and Aquila*
 - They will be left in Ephesus
- *In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow*
 - This would have been a Nazarite vow – see Lev. 27 & Num. 6:1-21
 - Doesn't this mean Paul is living under some law?