

The Parish of Wellow

'Be Daring and Dynamic' 24 Studies in Acts Acts 18:1-18a Encouragement to go forward Passage, Talk Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these talk notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during this week to consider the questions below or join us at **Coffee 'n' Stickers** Wednesday 18th October 7.30pm at The Cottage, High Street, Wellow, Bath (Call Pauline Preddy 01225 832625 for directions) to discuss the questions further.

1. Talk Passage

Acts 18: 1-18a

1 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,

3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.

4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

6 But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

7 Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God.

8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.

10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."

11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

12 While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court.

13 "This man," they charged, "is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law."

14 Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanour or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you.

15 But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law-- settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things."

16 So he had them ejected from the court.

17 Then they all turned on Sosthenes the synagogue ruler and beat him in front of the court. But Gallio showed no concern whatever.

18 Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time.

2. Talk Notes

2.1 As Paul considers his ministry to the lost in Corinth the devil may well have been using the following to discourage him:

- i. The enormity of the task in Corinth.
- ii. The lack of any real success in Thessalonica, Berea or Athens – the last three places he has visited
- iii. The loneliness of the task and journey God has called him to.

2.2 As actively as the devil is trying to discourage us God is always doing the opposite

- In the first 11 verses of Acts we are given “Three Encouragements to Keep Going.”
 - i. Encouragement of Friends (verses 1-5a)
 - ii. Encouragement of Results (verses 5b-8)
 - iii. Encouragement of God himself (verses 9-11)

2.3 Encouragement of Friends (verses 1-5a)

- God arranges for Priscilla and Aquila plus Silas and Timothy to be brought alongside Paul to encourage him in his ministry to the lost in Corinth.
- How good are at encouraging our friends?

2.4 Encouragement of Results (verses 5b-8)

- As Paul’s ministry develops in Corinth he can either focus on what God is not doing or what God is doing. – We can so easily do the same!

2.5 Encouragement of God himself (verses 9-11)

- God tells Paul not to mince his words. Don’t stop, don’t quit, don’t let up, but speak.
- God then promises Paul three things:
 - i. To be with him
 - ii. Protection
 - iii. Power

3. Coffee ‘n’ Stickies Questions

3.1 In what ways is Corinth similar or dissimilar to Wellow?

3.2 Priscilla and Aquila make a crucial difference to Paul’s ministry, what practical steps can we take today to do the same?

3.3 How should we measure results in ministry? What would Paul suggest? What would Jesus suggest? What would you suggest?

3.4 How do we *‘keep on speaking’* here in Wellow?

3.5 A friend of yours says one day that her church is really struggling at the moment, numbers are falling and money is tight. How would you respond?