

Subject	Lessons from Acts Series	4418
		Acts 18
Title	7 Lessons from Acts 18.	
Proposition	To study Acts 18.	
Objective	To consider seven lessons which Acts 18 helps me to consider and appreciate and apply in my own life.	

7 Lessons from Acts 18

Introduction:

1. In this chapter Paul comes to one of the two places where we are sure that he stayed more than a year (Corinth and Ephesus).
 - 1) He stayed in Corinth 18 months (18.11).
 - 2) He had great challenges in preaching the gospel in Corinth and in helping the newly established church to grow.
 - 1- One of the great challenges had to be the unrivaled IMMORALITY of that city.
 - 2- In the 1st Century and even much later the city had great fame as a city to visit for all kinds of evil activities.
 - 3- Even today, you can look up in some English dictionaries (e.g., Collins Online) and find the word [CORINTHIANIZE](#), meaning: *to live a promiscuous life*.
 - 4- It was NOT the best place in the world to live for Christ because of the peer pressure to do evil.
 - 3) His two letters to these Christians indicate his deep concern for their spiritual well-being.
 - 4) The very special encouragement he received at verses 9 and 10 must have been an amazing help to him— Acts 18:9-10 **Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: (10) For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.**
2. At 18:23 we find the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey.
 - 1) Paul visited the churches of Galatia for a third time, and settled in Ephesus for about three years.
 - 2) He traveled to Macedonia and Achaia for a long stay.
 - 3) On this third journey Paul wrote...
 - 1- 1 Corinthians from Ephesus,
 - 2- 2 Corinthians from Macedonia,
 - 3- And Romans from Corinth.
3. We meet Apollos in this reading.
 - 1) He was an eloquent preacher who needed further instruction.
 - 2) That instruction was provided by Aquila and Priscilla.

DISCUSSION: Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

I. Gives me more information about the Apostle Paul (3).

Acts 18:3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

1. **THEY WERE TENTMAKERS...** Paul is described as a tent-maker.
2. **Saul's native city of Tarsus was in Cilicia—**In that province there were herds of a certain kind of goat with a special kind of fleece.

- 1) Out of that fleece a cloth called *CILICIUM* was made which was much used for making tents and curtains and hangings.
 - 2) Doubtless Paul worked at that trade, although the Greek word used means more than a tent-maker.
 - 3) It means a leather-worker and Paul must have been a skilled craftsman.
3. Always he gloried in the fact that he was a burden to no man (1 Thessalonians 2.9; 2 Thessalonians 3.8; 2 Corinthians 11.9).
- 1) 1 Thessalonians 2:9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would **not be chargeable unto any of you**, we preached unto you the gospel of God.
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; **but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:**
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 11:9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.
4. It seems very likely when Silas and Timothy arrived they brought a present, perhaps from the church at Philippi.
- 1) They loved Paul so much.
 - 2) And such a present made it possible for him to devote his whole time to preaching.” [William Barclay, *DSB*].

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

II. Provides insight into Chronology of these events (12) .

Acts 18:12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

1. Luke is noted by many Bible scholars for his historical accuracy in mentioning things that can be compared to secular writings of the times of the 1st Century.
2. We have mentioned before William Ramsay's lifetime goal of proving the INACCURACY of Luke's writings in Acts, and coming to the conclusion that he could not do so.
3. *Baker's New Testament Commentary*: Inscriptions discovered near Delphi provide NEAR CERTAINTY in establishing the EXACT TIME Gallio served as proconsul of Achaia.
 - 1) One inscription reveals that Claudius, in the 12th year of his reign ..., mentions his friend Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia.
 - 2) From these data, we are able to deduce that Gallio served his term of office from July 51 to June 52.
 - 3) Imperial decree limited the proconsul's term in a given place to one year.
4. It is certainly faith-building and pleasant to know that there are EXTERNAL evidences to the accuracy of the Bible!

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

III. Mentions one IMPORTANT purpose of preaching (23).

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.**

1. Since the church is **THE LORD'S ARMY** and is involved in a spiritual battle with **SATAN** for the souls of men, **HOW IMPORTANT THIS PURPOSE** for preaching is!!!
 - 1) **Ephesians 6:10** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
 - 2) Not only did Paul challenge Christians to **BE STRONG**, he participated in bringing about that very result.
 - 3) Preachers of the 21st Century are wise to see this important work as a **VITALLY** important part of the work they seek to accomplish.
 - 4) The goal of preachers must be to **INCREASE** the strength of the members by promoting spiritual growth with Bible preaching.
2. From time to time it is wise for preachers to consider (carefully and honestly) if they are being a help in this matter of strengthening all of the disciples.
 - 1) Preachers should welcome **INPUT** from the members as to whether or not he is helping them grow stronger in the Lord.
 - 2) Elders need to be evaluating the same criteria with regard to the local preacher who serves under them.
3. There is a **GREAT BATTLE** with Satan and only the strong will survive.
4. Paul's preaching efforts were **FRUITFUL** because he did strengthen the brethren!

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

IV. Invites me to study Bible Geography (24).

Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named **Apollos**, born at **Alexandria**, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

1. **ALEXANDRIA** was an Egyptian city established by Alexander the Great about 331 B.C.
 - 1) It was the capital of Egypt during the Greek and Roman Empires.
 - 2) Next to Rome it was the most important city in the ancient world.
 - 3) Built on the western edge of the Nile River delta on a peninsula between the mainland of Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea.
 - 4) Its harbor was protected by the island of Pharos—site of a **HUGE LIGHTHOUSE**, one of the 7 Wonders of the Ancient World.
2. It was **FAMOUS** in ancient times for its **ARCHITECTURE**.
 - 1) The lighthouse
 - 2) The **MUSEUM**—*not a museum in the way we think of one, but a university, library, and learning center*
 - 3) The **SERAPEUM**, a temple to Pan (in the shape of a pine cone).
 - 4) And the commercial buildings.
 - 5) An earthquake destroyed the lighthouse in AD 796 and then it was totally destroyed about 500 years later.
3. Alexandria was divided up into **FIVE QUARTERS**: corresponding to the first five letters of the Greek alphabet.

- 1) **Strabo indicates that the city was 30 stadia (about 3.5 miles long, E to W); by 8 stadia (~1 mile, N to South).**
- 2) **The number of Jews living in Alexandria is difficult to know, but Philo believed that the total was not less than a million living in Alexandria and Egypt.**
4. **Julius Caesar admired Alexandria as VAST IN SIZE AND OPULENT.**
 - 1) **A writing attributed to HADRIAN describes it as: *great, splendid, and luxurious. No one lives here idly. ... Everyone is master of some trade, and attached to the service of it. ... Their only god is money.***
 - 2) **The common idea about Alexandria is that it was a city of great economic and commercial success.**
 - 1- **Due, in part, to its Great Harbor.**
 - 2- **Also, its prime location on the Mediterranean Sea.**
5. **Alexandria's large Jewish community was concentrated in the EPSILON section.**
 - 1) **But the Jews had synagogues all over the city.**
 - 2) **One synagogue was so magnificently fitted and so vast that FLAGS HAD TO BE USED to signal the last AMEN.**
 - 3) **It was here in Alexandria that the Greek OT, the LXX, was produced.**

--Tyndale Bible Dictionary

--Lexham Bible Dictionary

--New Bible Dictionary

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

V. Gives a description worthy of EVERY CHRISTIAN working to FIT (24).

Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

1. **MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES.**
2. **Churches of Christ used to have a reputation of knowing the Bible—not so much in recent times, sadly!**
3. **Apollos' name and description, here, especially the last description should move us to want that too!**
4. **Wayne Jackson says: *He both knew the text and how to effectively employ it in argument.***
5. **McGarvey points out: In a day when a knowledge of the word of God had to be acquired from manuscripts, and in which the art of reading was acquired by only a few, it was NOR ORDINARY ENDOWMENT to be familiar with the Scriptures.**
 - 1) **Such a man as Apollos would and did have a powerful impact on the lives of those he taught.**
 - 2) **The encouragement you and I can give to one another to be more like Apollos as Christians in Marshall County would surely reap tremendous fruit.**
6. **What do you want to do with your life?**
7. **HOW could we choose anything with a more important end result than to BE MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES???**

8. One of the passages we may miss if we are not careful is Hebrews 10:24 **And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**
- 1) This is what we, as Christians, are to do when we come to the assemblies.
 - 2) We are urged to **STIR UP** one another toward love and good works.
 - 3) Personally, I cannot think of any greater good work than becoming **MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES**.
 - 4) Let's encourage one another to see the value of meeting this important challenge.

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

VI. Answers the Question: CAN A CHRISTIAN WOMAN ever teach a man (26).

Acts 18:26 **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.**

1. Some brethren have written on this question and have concluded that the answer is a definite NO.
 - 1) I appreciate their interest and have considered their arguments.
 - 2) However, it seems quite clear in this context that Priscilla did participate in teaching Apollos.
 - 3) 1 Timothy 2:12 **But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.**
 - 1- This text prohibits teaching that is associated with **EXERCISING AUTHORITY**.
 - 2- Without doubt, the Christian woman is **NOT** to teach in a situation where she exerts **AUTHORITY** as **THE TEACHER** over the man *in an assembly of the church!*
2. Let's notice more carefully Acts 8.26.
 - 1) While Priscilla and Aquila were in Ephesus (Acts 18.18ff), they met a Jewish convert named Apollos.
 - 1- He was **MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES** (v. 24).
 - 2- But he also was lacking in certain facts of the gospel message—**KNOWING ONLY THE BAPTISM OF JOHN** (v. 25).
 - 1] It seems pretty obvious that he was the teacher of the disciples described in 19.1-3.
 - 2] He needed to be taught right so that he could teach others right.
 - 2) This couple heard him, noticed the need for correction, and **THEY TOOK HIM UNTO THEM, and expounded (plural form) unto him the way of God more perfectly.**
 - 3) **EXPOUNDED** (*explained in ESV*), is used in three texts in the sense of **TO CONVEY INFORMATION BY CAREFUL ELABORATION** (*Danker, et.al.*).
 - 1- Acts 18.26
 - 2- Acts 11:4 **But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,**

- 3- Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he **expounded** and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.
- 4) The idea is of presenting Christian truth with painstaking thoroughness and suggests an extended one-way presentation.
3. Those who disagree argue the theory that Priscilla was not involved in teaching gospel truth here and they try to say that Apollos was NOT PROVIDED ANY NEW INFORMATION.
4. Luke, however, lets us know that Apollos' understanding was lacking in that he: DID NOT KNOW John's baptism was obsolete and that the baptism of the Great Commission had superseded it.
- 1) It seems to me most likely that Apollos had been baptized properly into John's baptism, sometime before Acts 2.
- 2) But was teaching John's baptism to others AFTER GC baptism had made John's baptism obsolete (i.e., after Acts 2).
5. Had Priscilla interrupted a public assembly and began preaching she would have been wrong.
- 1) She would have been usurping authority.
- 2) However, along with her husband, discussing the matter calmly with Apollos (away from the assembly) teaching him, was not wrong.

<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1569-may-a-woman-ever-teach-a-man>

Acts 18 Helps me in that it—

VII. Along with Romans 16.3-4, we see an example of TRUE DEDICATION AND FRIENDSHIP (Acts 18 + Rom 16.3-4).

Acts 18 introduces us to some great friends and co-workers of Paul.

Romans 16:3-4 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: (4) **Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.**

1. We so appreciate the work of the Apostle Paul.
- 1) What great zeal he had for the Lord and His cause.
- 2) At one time he had great zeal for Judaism, but he learned better.
2. It is wonderful to know that there were sources of encouragement for the outstanding work he did.
- 1) Two of those sources are mentioned in this chapter.
- 2) Acts 18:9-10 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, **Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: (10) For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.**
- 3) The second was from Aquila and Priscilla.
- 1- We do not have the details, but obviously Paul did not forget about it.

- 2- He included a **THANK YOU** to them in his letter to the church at Rome (16.3-4).
3. Our bulletin today has an article about Satan's powerful tool of **DISCOURAGEMENT**.
 - 1) When Paul was in the midst of the wickedness of Corinth, he was discouraged—but the Lord encouraged him.
 - 2) Also, this godly couple did likewise as they stood beside him in his vital work.
 - 3) We have to ask ourselves: **AM I AN ENCOURAGER** or **AM I A DISCOURAGER**.
 - 4) Encouragers were in great demand in the 1st Century as the gospel was being spread.
 - 5) They will always be so—let's try to be one!

Conclusion:

1. What a blessing it is to have a history book of our spiritual family.
2. How helpful it is to read it and learn about ways to bring forth fruit in the kingdom!