

Woodland Baptist Church

October 24, 2012 - Wednesday Night in the Word

Acts 18:1-17, Part 2 [5-11] - Reinforcements and Resistance in Corinth

- a) **1 Corinthians 2:1-4** - And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. 4 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

1) Verses 5-11 _____ and _____ in Gospel Ministry

- a) **5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. 6 And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."**

i) *Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia* - after a few weeks, Paul was rejoined by his companions Silas and Timothy, who had returned from Macedonia. The news that they brought (reflected in the Thessalonian letters) came as a great relief to Paul. At the same time, a gift of money from his friends in Philippi relieved him for the time being of the necessity to support himself by tent-making; he was therefore able to concentrate on the preaching of the gospel, and he sought to convince his Jewish hearers that the promised Messiah had come, and had come in Jesus Christ.

ii) *Paul was occupied with the word* - [synecho] - to continue with close attention and devotion; the word [logos] - the good news of Jesus Christ's coming in fulfillment with the OT scriptures.

(1) *Testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus* - [diamartyromai] - give evidence as a witness in a law court about the truth of who Jesus Christ is.

(a) Similar to other times: Pisidian Antioch 13:23-37 and Thessalonica 17:2-3

iii) *They opposed and reviled him* - [antitassomenon & blasphemounton] - to go against someone in attitude and behavior; to speak against someone in such a way to harm the reputation of the one speaking against the other.

- (1) Interesting that in this instance, the roles are reversed from other instances of rejection; This time, Paul shakes the dust from himself and condemns their lack of belief.
- iv) He shook out his garments* - this was a symbolic way to show disgust and break off relations with these people (Pillar NT). Matt 10
- (1) *“Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles”*
- (a) Paul did not mean that he would no longer reach out to Jews, as we know he will many more times. He meant that from now on for his efforts in Corinth, he would predominantly go to the Gentiles.
- (2) **Ezekiel 3:16-21** - And at the end of seven days, the word of the Lord came to me: 17 “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you **hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me.** 18 If I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and **you give him no warning,** nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but **his blood I will require at your hand.** 19 But if **you warn the wicked,** and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, **he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.** 20 Again, if a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because **you have not warned him,** he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds that he has done shall not be remembered, **but his blood I will require at your hand.** 21 But if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning, and you will have delivered your soul.”
- (3) Paul was clearly saying that he had been faithful to go “first to the Jew and then the Gentile,” so he could leave them free in his conscience and go to the Gentiles in Corinth.
- v) Notice Christ’s change in teaching methods from Matthew 12 to 13; this is similar to Paul’s shaking off his clothes, in that Christ shows his contempt by making his message much harder to understand.

- (1) Jesus claims to be Lord of the Sabbath in Matthew 12:8, then heals a man with withered hand in the synagogue...right after that, for the first time, the Scripture says that...the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.
- (2) Then Jesus healed a demon possessed man and the Pharisees accuse of him of wielding the power of Satan...not long after that, Christ changes his teaching from plainly spoken truths, to parables - in a sense making it that much harder for the Jews to understand him.

2) Verses 7-11 Key _____, _____ and _____.

- a) **7 And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. 9 And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." 11 And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.**
 - i) Key Community and Convert - **7 And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue.**

(1) Titius Justus - worshiper of God

- (a) This Gentile God-fearer was presumably converted during Paul's time in the synagogue and his willingness to use his house as a base for Christian ministry displayed great courage and commitment.

(2) House next door to the synagogue

- (a) What would we think about someone taking one of our members and starting a church next door? Should it be disturbing? Why or why not?
- (b) It must have been very disturbing for the synagogue to have the rival Christian meeting taking place in the house next door. But worse still was yet to come for Paul's opponents...

(3) The house of Titius Justus became the place where the whole church met (assuming this is the same Gaius mentioned in Romans 16:23).

ii) **Key Convert - 8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.**

(1) **Crispus, ruler of the synagogue** - Although he was a notable convert, his action was evidently not weighty enough to carry with him the Jews as a group, or even his colleagues in office, however, the conversion of this synagogue ruler is extraordinary.

(a) **Believed in the Lord (household)...Many Corinthians believed**

iii) **Key Commission - 9 And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people."**

(1) **Vision** - Many times in Scripture God will communicate with his preacher/prophet in a way to encourage them to continue on in ministry or give them direction in ministry. In this case, it seems that Paul was becoming fearful or worrisome that perhaps the city was about to explode again, especially with the church being located right next to the synagogue. Many scholars believe that Christ, knowing the thoughts in Paul's heart, came to him to encourage him through his concerns of what may lie ahead.

(a) Several times in Acts we see the Lord providing this for his people through visions of encouragement:

(i) **5:19-21** - [Apostles escape from prison] 19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 20 "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life." 21 And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

(ii) **9:10-17** - [Ananias] 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

- (iii) **16:6-10** -[Macedonia] 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- (iv) **23:11** - 11 The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."
- (v) **27:23-24** - For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, 24 and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

(2) **"Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.**

- (a) Command - *Do not be afraid but go on speaking and do not be silent*
- (b) Promise of Protection - *I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people*

- (i) Paul will not be forced out of Corinth, he will have a lengthy ministry there and develop long term ministry objectives, there is to be no quick mission and escape as has happened in the past.
- (ii) Construction is similar to Jeremiah 1:17-19 -But you, dress yourself for work;[c] arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them. 18 And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. 19 They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the Lord, to deliver you."

3) CLOSE

- a) There will always be times in our lives when we think that we have been forgotten in ministry and the obstacles seem to be impossible to overcome, but the reality is that we are never left alone, God is always with us in Christ and has *reinforcements* headed our way because the *resistance* is coming, guaranteed.
- b) The Lord will always make available to us *key communities, conversions* and when we need it, *commissions*, to help us fulfill our call to witness to Jerusalem, Judea Samaria and the ends of the earth.