

“Letting Go & Receiving More”

November 5, 2017

CORE: The Book of Acts (“unstoppable exploits”) is filled with honesty & inspiration. People just like us (*examples, not “the elite”*) faced opposition from outside the church—and dealt with issues inside of the church—all the while **transforming their world.**

Here in chapter 18, we see seasons of **letting go** and seasons of **receiving more.**

NOTE: *This is not a book to observe—but rather one to both **experience & expect.***

Paul said: *“The things you’ve heard from me and have seen in me—do!”* Also: *“Follow me, as I follow Jesus!”*

Acts 18:1-11

1. LETTING GO

[**Corinth** was the prosperous capitol of the province of Achaia; a port city; home of the Temple of Aphrodite—boasting over 1,000 temple prostitutes. It’s name was synonymous with sexual immorality. Even as people came to Jesus & the Corinthian church was established—they were a lively, at times wild & unruly—people.]

For Paul to minister in Corinth, he had to let go of:

a. CONTROL

- **“Everyone born of the Spirit” is “like the wind”—moving spontaneously (John 3:8)**
- **“Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons and daughters of God” (Romans 8:14)**
- **To follow His leading—means we embrace CHANGE.**
- *“Spirit lead me where trust is without borders. Let me walk upon the waters, wherever You would call me...”*

b. FEAR

- **Paul would later write to the Corinthian believers admitting: “When I came to you I came in fear and much trembling” (1 Cor. 2:3)** NOTE: Athens—for the most part—dismissed Paul; “failed mission”
- But he “let go” of those fears, staying **“for a year and a half teaching them the word of God.” (Acts 18:11)**

c. ABUSES OF OTHERS

- **When the Jews “opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes” (v. 6)**
- **This is not a curse—but a “solid disclaimer of responsibility.” (A.T. Robertson)**
- **In essence: “I will not allow your accusations, frustrations, intimidations, or manipulations to direct my life!” (If it’s not true, don’t let it get to you!)**

d. **LIMITED PERSPECTIVES**

- In a vision, God gave Paul *His* view of the situation: SEE 18:9-11
- “I have many people” (Sometimes the “unlikely” are the 1st to come)
- God literally said: “STOP being afraid!” (FEAR quenches LOVE)

2. **RECEIVING MORE**

a. **EXPECTANCY**

- The Book of Acts (and this chapter in particular) is filled with accounts of **closed doors** followed by **new opportunities**
- Disappointments happen—but if we dwell in disappointment we can miss the next appointment!
- Paul’s rejection by his own Jewish brothers—opened the door for his ministry to the Gentiles.
- HBD- *“Looking back on seasons of disappointment, I realize that if I had fought the changes God was bringing or sulked in self-pity or gathered a mutually offended coalition—I would have missed some of the most amazing opportunities...It is vital we move beyond disappointment to renewed expectancy.”*

b. **GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- Paul stated that when he came to Corinth, he didn’t try to convince them with “eloquent speech” (that was his approach in Athens), but “with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power” (1 Cor. 2:4)
- Paul would also encourage the Corinthians to “desire earnestly the spiritual gifts” (1 Cor. 14:1)

c. **VISIONS (and other revelations)**

- A vision from the Lord inspired Paul to press in—turned a turbulent city into a revival center (which still has a powerful remnant)!
- Hebrews 12:25- “Do not refuse the One who IS speaking!”
- Ask for, anticipate, AND **RESPOND TO** increasing revelations from the Lord!

d. **FRESH FIRE**

- Apollos was a dynamic new believer and teacher who “spoke with great fervor (*Lit- fire*)” (18:25)
- Yet, Priscilla & Aquila discerned that he needed even more fire.
- As a result of their instruction and prayers, his already powerful ministry rose to fresh effectiveness—with fresh fire!
- SEE vv. 27-28. NOTE: The “grace” (*Lit- divine enablement*) dimension in his ministry.

RESPONSE