

"The Second Missionary Journey"

Part 19

Acts 15:41-18:22

Introduction: When we left Paul in Corinth last week he was battling with fear and weariness.

2 Corinthians 2:1-3

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

² *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

³ *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.*

Notice Acts 18:8-9

Something happened between verse 8 and verse 9 that Luke does not tell us about. It may have been the threats from the Jews because of the salvation of Crispus, who was the chief ruler of the synagogue and Justus who lived beside the synagogue and who opened his house to Paul. Whatever it was, the enemy was attempting to use it to discourage and frighten Paul. Paul may have been thinking about leaving the city of Corinth and it was then that God gave him Words of encouragement.

➤ **The Ministry in Corinth**

➤ **Part 3**

Notice Acts 18:9-10

God promised him protection from any harm. This was not a promise that was an umbrella promise because Paul would later go through some very difficult experiences and he would eventually die by the sword. But while he would minister in Corinth he was protected. God also revealed something to Paul that was a means of encouragement to continue to share the Gospel. God revealed that He had many people in the city. This was God revealing His foreknowledge to Paul. God knew who would receive Jesus Christ as their Savior before Paul ever preached the Gospel to them.

When I searched out what is said here in verse 10, I continued to come across the same thoughts and teaching by many teachers. They were teaching that God had chosen many

people in this city who would be saved. They went on to say that this was election. I am shocked at some of the people who will teach this and not think it through.

If these people were chosen by God for salvation, then there are two main doctrinal problems.

1. If these people were chosen for eternal life, then we must conclude that the others were chosen to die in their sins. If this is true then there is a major problem when we search the Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

⁹ *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

If God only chose certain people in Corinth for eternal life, then He has gone against His own will.

2. If God only chose certain people for salvation in Corinth, then Paul was proclaiming a false message to those who were not saved when he preached the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 2:1-2

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

² *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

² *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

³ *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

When Paul went to Corinth, he preached Christ crucified, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day for their sins and if they would just believe they would be saved.

But if only the chosen could be saved then this was a lie to the ones who were not chosen.

Revelation 22:17

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Jesus tells us why some will not believe.

John 3:14-21

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

¹⁵ That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Getting back to the verse in Acts, when God told Paul that He had much people in the city God in His foreknowledge was looking ahead to those who would believe the Gospel and accept Jesus Christ as Savior.

Notice Acts 18:11

Paul trusted the Lord and he remained in the city for a period of 18 months. He was very busy while he was in Corinth as he continued to teach the Word of God to the believers. He also wrote first and second Thessalonians and Romans while he was in Corinth.

Notice Acts 18:12

Now we are going to be given the record of something that took place because Luke desires to make a point. We are introduced here to a man by the name of Gallio and he is the deputy of Achaia. The year is AD 52 and that is important because it is the year that Gallio became the governor. He was new and the Jews would do their best to play on that. They made an insurrection and took Paul before Gallio at the judgment seat. Gallio was known to a very fair and friendly man and the Jews were counting on him showing favor to them. But there was something that they did not take into consideration and that was the sovereignty of God.

Notice Acts 18:13

When Gallio first heard the word "law" his mind would have gone directly to Roman Law. But it did not take him long to understand that the Jews were speaking of their Law. If we notice this verse closely, we can see that God was truly using Paul in the city. They said "He persuadeth men to worship contrary to the Law," they did not say, "He is TRYING to persuade men to worship contrary to the Law."

Notice Acts 18:14

Paul was ready to defend himself but was not given the opportunity. Gallio would not get involved in the accusations against Paul because there were no crimes committed against Roman law.

Notice Acts 18:15-16

Apparently, the Jews were upset over "names." They were upset over the names that Paul had attached to Jesus such as Messiah. Paul was proclaiming Jesus as the Promised Messiah and the Jews did not believe He was the Messiah. The Jews wanted Paul and those with him to be punished and expelled from the city. Notice the words of McGee.

"Gallio said that if the matter was concerning religion or about some religious thing, then they should take it and handle it themselves. He was a Roman magistrate and he was

concerned with enforcing Roman law. But when the case did not involve Roman law, he would not interfere. He told them to handle religious matters themselves. He adopted a "hands off" policy. He separated church and state. He would not interfere with Paul's preaching in the city of Corinth."

Had Gallio ruled differently and chose to charge Paul with a violation of Roman law, it would have had major consequences on the spread of the Gospel. Notice the words of Bruce.

"The verdict of a Roman governor would not only be effective within his province but would be followed as a precedent by the governors of other provinces. Had the proconsul of Achaia pronounced a verdict unfavorable to Paul, the story of the progress of Christianity during the next decade or so would have been very different from what it actually was."

In a situation that was meant to bring punishment upon Paul, he walks away from this judgment seat with absolutely no harm. Why does Luke record this? To show us that God is true to His Word.

Notice Acts 18:10 again.

Application:

God was true to His promise to Paul and in order to see that His promise was fulfilled He turned the heart of Gallio to favor Paul and the Gospel. This is a picture of the Words in Proverbs 21:1.

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

I am also reminded of another verse from Proverbs here.

Proverbs 16:7

⁷ When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

God turned the heart of Gallio in order to keep Paul from harm but even more importantly it was to keep the path open for the spread of the Gospel. In our lives God can work the very same way. He can turn the hearts of people in our favor.

Isaiah 44:24-28

²⁴ Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

²⁵ That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

²⁶ That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:

²⁷ That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

²⁸ That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Conclusion:

So how does this apply to us? It applies in many ways. If there is someone who stands in your way of sharing the Gospel to a certain person or at a certain place, let us keep in mind that God can turn that person's heart just as the king's heart. That means that we must put forth an effort without being offensive. We are not to sit back and look at the situation and then give up. We must try in order to give God a chance to move.

If there is a place that we need to get to but our resources have all been exhausted, then let us know that God can step in and move the heart of anyone He chooses to help us get from one place to another. He can cause people to show us favor, He can cause people to provide what we need to meet the cause, and He can move people who stand in the way.

Let us know that God is able to turn any heart. It can be a believer or it can be an unbeliever. There is no person on the earth that can stop the plan of God from being fulfilled.