



First Corinthians /Introduction/ Acts 18:1-11

Writer: The apostle Paul. We will see his relation to the church at Corinth in today's study.

- Born around A.D. 10. in Tarsus of Cilicia (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3), a Roman (politically speaking) city, but a Greek city in character, meaning the Greek language was spoken there, and Greek literature was taught which is why Paul could speak Greek fluently (Acts 21:37).
- His parents named him Saul, perhaps after the first king of Israel, who was also a Benjamite (1 Samuel 11:15; Acts 13:21). But he was also called Paul (Acts 13:9), a Roman name, the name he uses throughout his letters.
- He was a Jew in a family of Pharisees (Acts 23:6).
- His family was of the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5)
- He had a great advantage in that he was a Jew, yet he was also a Roman citizen

To whom was it written: Jew and Gentile Christian believers.

Date of writing: First Corinthians was written in A.D. 59.

What is it about: There are various subjects in this letter, but the general theme of the letter is Christian conduct.

More about the apostle Paul: Acts 7:58; 8:1-3; 9:1-30; Galatians 1:11-24; Acts 18:1-18.

Verse 1 –

- Paul had come from Athens. From Athens Paul went to Corinth, traveling alone.

Verse 2 –

- In Corinth he meets a Jewish husband and wife couple, Aquila and Priscilla.
- Aquila and Priscilla were from Rome but they were kicked out by the emperor Claudius (ruled from AD 41 to AD 54). Anti-semitism (or hatred for Jews) is nothing new.
- This happened, according to historical accounts outside of the Bible, around AD 49 to 50.
- We can date Paul's first visit to Corinth around that same time period.
- The three of them had the same mindset.

Verse 3 –

- He most likely arrived in Corinth with little money and had to find a job.
- Paul knew how to make tents, and teamed up with Aquila and Priscilla who also were tentmakers. He stayed with them, and worked with them all week long.
- There is nothing wrong with a pastor having another job to support himself when a church is starting up. At some point Paul is able to quit his job and work full time in the ministry (we will see that in a moment).

Verse 4 –

- Paul had a consistent missionary strategy. **He reasoned...and persuaded.**
- He went to the Jew first. Every Sabbath day he went to the synagogue where both Jews and Greeks gathered. What did he teach? The message of grace! "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God..."
- **Reasoned:** Greek word = dialegeto. "dia" means "through" and from "legeto" we get "logos" meaning "word" and "logic". So he reasoned with logical words. This is the Biblical model.
- Today's strategy in missions and churches is develop "friendships" or "build relationships". The popular method today is to use other methods besides the Biblical model, like "social action" or "let's just love them into the kingdom." Another buzzword in Christendom today is we need to be "winsome" i.e., appealing to people in character. Paul's model was to "reason logically."
- **Persuaded:** meaning it was a continuing action, not a one-time victory. The pastor's job is to persuade with the truth.

Verse 5 –

- When Silas and Timothy showed up (from Macedonia) they apparently brought a financial gift with them for Paul (See Acts 17:15; 2 Corinthians 11:9).
- Because of that gift Paul was most likely compelled by the Spirit to begin full time ministry to the Jews (which didn't bare a lot of fruit). He gave them an opportunity to recognize their Messiah. Now he is compelled to do it not just on the Sabbath, but full time.

**Verse 6 –**

- Now that he is full time, **"But when they opposed him and blasphemed."**
- The Jews continue rejecting the Messiah.

- “Shook his garments.” A very Jewish way of showing he was not responsible for their rejection. We might use the word “brush off someone”.
- **“Your blood.”** He does more than shake them off he condemns them. It places the full burden on them for rejecting the Messiah. While Paul will surely continue to persuade the Jews, from this point on he begins preaching in earnest to the Gentiles.

Verse 7 –

- **“Justus”** lived right next door to the synagogue. The phrase “worshiped God” shows he recognized the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but he was not a Jew.

Verse 8 –

- **“Crispus”** was not the rabbi, but a layman who would have probably been called the “president” of the synagogue. We will hear his name again when we get to First Corinthians.
- “Many of the Corinthians...believed” refers to Gentiles.
- Note that baptism follows belief.

Verse 9 –

- **“Do not be afraid.”** We may find it difficult to see the great apostle Paul as being afraid. Remember, he was a man like us. 1 Corinthians 2:3.
- Note also his prayer for courage in 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2.
- **“But speak, and do not keep silent.”** Use words, logos. Use logic. Take the written word and use it to persuade. Touchy-feely experiences and music on K-Love will not persuade a heart.
- A note about visions: Don’t make a historical account into a doctrine. That is irresponsible. God gave direct revelation to His apostles, but speaks through His Word today.

Verse 10 –

- **“I have many people in this city.”** God always has a remnant. You are not alone. Paul feels that way and that is frightening to believe you are alone. That is why we must encourage one another. Anyone who is on the front lines of “Christian combat” are continually in need of your encouragement.

Verse 11 –

- He **“continued”**... Yes, he was afraid, but he continued. Don’t quit. He stayed there eighteen months teaching and training the new church in the Word of God.