

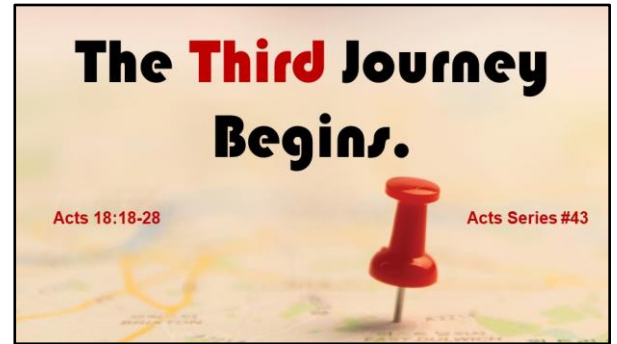
# ACTSFACTS

C@G Supplementary Study Notes for ACTS

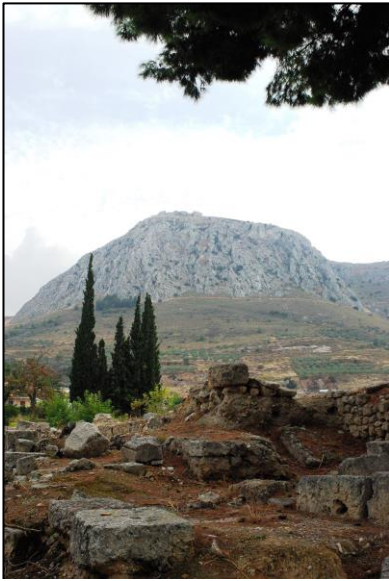
## Message #43

### “THE THIRD JOURNEY BEGINS”

(Acts 18:18-28)



In the previous passage, we saw the Roman pro-consul, Gallio, throw out the trumped-up charges against Paul that were brought by the Jews of Corinth. He wisely saw this for what it was...an attempt to manipulate he and his role to achieve their own religious (and prejudiced) desires...to silence the message of the Gospel by silencing the voice of the messenger, Paul.



Ancient Corinth.

Paul stayed and proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ here for 18 months before heading back to Syrian Antioch, via Jerusalem.

#### Paul's Return to Antioch (18:18-22)

After this favourable ruling by Gallio, Luke tells us that Paul remained in Corinth for some time (all up about 18 months) and continued to take advantage of the opportunity to preach the gospel.

And then he left Corinth to head back to Syria (Antioch, the sending church). Accompanying him on this first part of the journey were his fellow tentmakers, Priscilla and Aquilla.

But just before he left, he had his hair cut off to fulfil a vow he'd made (see below).

So they (Paul, Priscilla & Aquilla) sailed east from Corinth to Ephesus. Paul continued to witness of Jesus as the Messiah to the Jews in the synagogue, but declined the invitation to stay in Ephesus longer (committing to return if it was the Lord's will).

He left Priscilla & Aquilla in Ephesus and set sail for Caesarea, some 600 miles away. Arriving safely in Caesarea, he then went “up” to Jerusalem (where he reported to the church) and then “down” to Antioch, thus completing the Second Missionary Journey.

**The term “tentmaker” comes from the fact that Paul (and Priscilla & Aquilla) worked as a tentmaker on his second missionary journey. What are some reasons for tentmakers in modern missions?**

Interestingly, the Jews in Ephesus seemed to respond warmly to Paul and invited him to stay longer, but he declined, only promising to return “if it is God's will”. Undoubtedly, Paul would have liked to have stayed but he was sensitive to God's leading through the Holy Spirit.

**Have you ever been prompted to do (or not do) something because of your obedience to God's will, even though it was contrary to your own desires?**

**A NAZARITE VOW?** – Luke's use of the terms “hair” and “vow” leads us to assume that this vow of Paul's was a Nazarite vow. **Numbers 6:1-21** details the requirements of this vow. A Nazarite vow was usually made for a specific period, although Samson (1 Samuel 1:11) and John the Baptist (Luke 1:15) were Nazarites for life. At the end of that specific period, there was often an elaborate ceremony.

Paul did not take such a vow because of the previous-held devotion to the “requirements of the old covenant law”. Many scholars believe that Paul took this vow when he was in a discouraged state at the start of his ministry in Corinth, or perhaps in connection with the vision he received with the promise of God's blessing. If so, cutting his hair was an act of thanksgiving for protection while in Corinth.

**Have you ever made a vow to God? Care to share?**

### **The Third Journey Begins (18:23)**

In this very simple and understated way, Luke describes the start of Paul's third missionary journey. He stayed in Antioch for about a year, in which time he reported to the church there on the journey just completed and, most likely, he took some time to recover from the physical and spiritual demands of the trip. And, then, off he went again! Luke covers a lot of territory and activity in this simple verse. He tells us that Paul heads back to Galatia and Phrygia, visiting the churches he had established in the past few years and encouraging and strengthening the disciples there. Undoubtedly, it would have been a time of great blessing... catching up on those who had come to the Lord under his ministry, and also meeting the newer believers.



**Using 18:18-23 as your guide, what do you learn about Paul's relationships?**

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**Has there been someone in your life who had a special role of strengthening/encouraging you in faith?**

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### **Introducing APOLLOS (18:24-28)**

Luke then leaves Paul and turns his (and our) attention to another great character...Apollos. Apollos was a man of considerable talents and standing. He....

- Was from Alexandria (Egypt)
- Was a great scholar
- Was a great speaker
- Had a great fervour/passion/heart.

But he only had a limited/incomplete knowledge of the Gospel.

Most likely he was well-schooled in the Old Testament Scripture and had obviously come across the teaching of Jesus, or at least some aspects of His life and ministry. However, it would appear that he had not grasped all the significance and implications of his limited knowledge, or understood the full story of the Gospel.

Priscilla & Aquilla (remember them?), who had stayed on in Ephesus, heard Apollos speaking. They realised he was incomplete in his knowledge and understanding of the gospel and, so, they took him "under their wing" and disciplined him privately in the "way of God".

**It's easy to have incomplete knowledge. How can we make sure we grow in our knowledge? How can we encourage others to grow in their knowledge?**

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**Priscilla & Aquilla took Apollos aside and "corrected" him in private. What does this teach us about correction and confrontation? Why is such correction necessary?**

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Obviously, Apollos was responsive to this correction, discipling and encouragement from Priscilla & Aquilla. **How was Apollos's ministry affected by his relationship with Priscilla & Aquilla (see 18:27-28)?**

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**As you review this passage, how do you need to develop, build and nurture relationships that will contribute to your spiritual growth and outreach?**

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### **PRAY:**

***Think of several people who have influenced your walk with God. Give thanks to God for their spiritual mentorship in your life...and ask the Lord to help you to have a similar role in someone else's life.***