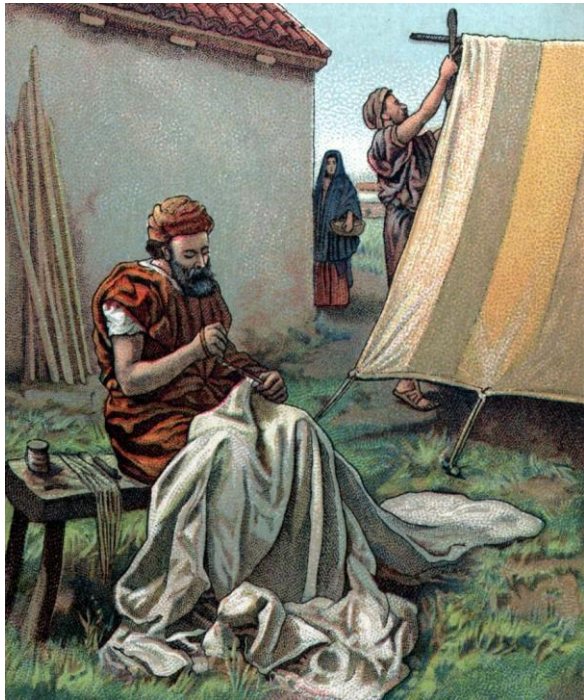


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 10



PAUL'S WORK IN CORINTH

Scripture Text: Acts 18:1-23

"After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth." Later on, Silas and Timothy joined him. His labors had been very trying at Athens. Stoned at Lystra and dragged out of the city for dead, Paul was roused to greater vigor. Scourged at Philippi, he and Silas were cast into prison, where they sang praise to God at midnight. But at Athens no one had the least intention of persecuting the Apostle. They simply laughed at him. Thus Paul went out from them. And well he might, for Athens had shut the door on the Gospel.

Corinth was the busiest city in the Roman Empire and the wickedest. Paul had failed in Athens. How could he ever expect to succeed in Corinth? While there, Paul met Aquila and Priscilla, tentmakers who shared Paul's craft. The Lord encouraged Paul in a vision. Insurrection against Paul came to naught.

MEMORY VERSE: *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace.*

—Acts 18:9

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—Ephesians 1:1-14 Eternal purpose of God.
- Tue.—John 5:22-47 Unbelievers rebuked.
- Wed.—John 12:37-50 The cause of unbelief.
- Thu.—Romans 12:9-21 The new man is forgiving.
- Fri.—Hebrews 12:1-13 Chastening and love of the Lord.

Devotional Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:1-18 Support the pastor.

Pressed in the Spirit

Acts 18:1-8 In Corinth Paul found Aquila and his wife Priscilla, Jews **lately come from Italy** because Claudius Caesar had expelled Jews from Rome. We read of them in **Romans 16:3**. They were tentmakers as was Paul, so worked together. This was Paul's means of supporting himself. Every Sabbath Paul **reasoned in the synagogue**. Then Silas and Timothy arrived. **Paul was pressed in the spirit**. Something within Paul was pressing him to do what he could to fill the needs before him. Obeying God's leading, Paul **testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ**—the anointed Son of God. This point, more than any other, the Jews objected to. This is the vital point that must be believed to bring salvation (**John 8:24**). The Jews set themselves against the doctrine. They **blasphemed**—denied this Truth. Claiming that Christ is only a man is blasphemy. Paul **shook his raiment**—a gesture of abandonment. **Your blood be upon your own heads**—bear the responsibility, reap the results, take your own punishment. **I am clean**—am not responsible for the results of your rejection. The reason Paul could say this was that he had given the people the Gospel. He had told them plainly who Christ is and what He would do for them. He could do no more. As he had often done before, Paul turned to the Gentiles. Many Gentiles **believed, and were baptized**.

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Encouraged by a Vision

Acts 18:9-11 In love and to encourage and direct, God sent a night vision to Paul. He said, **Be not afraid . . . For I am with thee.** Jesus told him to fearlessly teach and promised to be with him, that **no man shall . . . hurt thee.** Jesus had many people there who would believe if they heard. Paul stayed on and continued teaching.

As we look at the life of Paul, we learn that he did not consider the things he suffered as hurt. Should a word of ridicule, a little inconvenience seem to us as persecution? Everyone who does anything, even of a worldly nature, has problems and hardships. So it is in living the life of a Christian. We should ignore small irritations and bear patiently real persecution for our Lord and the greatest cause in the world.

God could see in the persecutor Saul the possible Apostle Paul. He can see in low, wicked sinners possible redeemed, holy saints. He has people in our communities whose salvation depends upon our telling them of Jesus Christ.

We must be obedient to the Spirit of God and tell others that they, too, can be saved. We will be so happy for those who take heed.

Insurrection Against Paul

Acts 18:12-17 The Jews, in fury, raised a disorderly mob and accused Paul before the deputy, Gallio, of teaching to worship contrary to the Law. Paul taught a doctrine that was not contrary to the Law, but was the fulfillment of the Law (**Matthew 5:17**). It went beyond the Law. It was the reality of which the Law was the shadow (**Hebrews 10:1-10**). He taught that the ceremonies of the Law were no longer binding and were powerless to save (**Acts 13:39**), but that Jesus Christ saves repentant sinners. The deputy would not even listen to their accusation and drove them from the judgment seat.

Going to Ephesus

Acts 18:18-23 Still, Paul stayed on a **good while.** Then bidding farewell to the church, he, Priscilla, and Aquila sailed to Syria, then to Ephesus, where Priscilla and Aquila remained. After reasoning with the Jews there for a short time, Paul went on by way of Caesarea to a feast in Jerusalem. From there, he **spent some time** in Antioch, teaching and refreshing the saints. Then he traveled on, **strengthening all the disciples** in the churches in Galatia and Phrygia.

Paul was a true pastor. He fed his flock. He planned to nourish, teach, and encourage them to keep them spiritually healthy and growing. He felt he had accomplished nothing unless his converts continued saved to the end.

JUST A THOUGHT

The value of salvation lies not in what we give up but in what we gain.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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