

THE BOOK OF ACTS

ACTS 18:1-17 | LESSON SUMMARY

Priscilla & Aquila

ACTS 18:2, "...he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them..." (ESV)

- Paul has left Athens for Corinth
 - Corinth is a highly pagan environment, but he finds refuge with a couple of Jewish Christians who actually share his trade
 - Tentmaking is how Paul supports his ministry; hard, manual labor
 - 1 Corinthians 9:6
- Claudius (another especially twisted emperor) forced the Jews in Rome out of the city after riots
 - Documented by secular historian Suetonius, 49 A.D.
 - Corinth is infamous for its sexual immorality; to "act like a Corinthian" was a euphemism for sex and a "Corinthian companion" literally meant prostitute.
 - Result of the cults of Aphrodite and Venus



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- Priscilla & Aquila
 - The two will figure prominently throughout Paul's ministry
 - Priscilla's name is often mentioned first. Her name is also thought to connect her to the very prominent family "Prisca" of Rome.
 - Both highly trusted and key figures in what Paul is able to accomplish throughout the course of his ministry.

Claudius & the Jews

ACTS 18:6, "And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." (ESV)

- Silas and Timothy have just joined Paul from Macedonia
- Their teaching is immediately met with strong opposition
 - Paul rebukes and "shakes the dust off"
 - Though Paul aligned in his beliefs with Peter—that their responsibility was first to the Jews—he turns now to make Gentiles his primary focus
 - This is not an abandonment of the Jews
 - Crispus, ruler of the synagogue; one of only a few that Paul personally baptized (1 Corinthians 1:14)



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- Culture shock of Athens similar to what Paul experiences here in Corinth
 - Some theologians believe Paul became depressed here

ACTS 18:9, "And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." (ESV)

- Paul and the others are being pressed on all sides, yet God is very much present
- Gallio
 - Likely only considers the Jews a nuisance
 - Jewish religious leaders seize Sosthenes and beat him
 - Sosthenes likely replaced Crispus after Crispus' conversion
 - Sosthenes later becomes a Christian (1 Corinthians 1:1)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Marie Noel Keller, Paul's Coworkers, Zondervan, Holman Bible Atlas, Acts: Archeological Study Bible, John B. Miller, Convinced That God Had Called Us

