

God at work: His plan - His power

Acts 18-19:20

February 8, 2017

Paul in Corinth (18:1-17)

Capitol city of Achaia. Roman colony. Full of idols and immorality

God has plans for this city: Paul will minister here and many will believe

“Just by chance” Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla

- They are tentmakers like Paul. He stays with them for 1 ½ years.
- Able to work his trade, and do ministry too.

Seeing God’s Power

- Titius Justus, Roman worshiper of God believes & church meets in his home
- Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue believed in the Lord along with his entire household!
- Many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized!

Seeing God’s Presence

- Paul opposed and reviled in the synagogue
- God sees Paul needs encouragement

Jesus speaks to Paul one night in a vision

- Don’t be afraid! Go on speaking! Do not be silent!
- For I am with you! No one will attack or harm you!
- I have many in this city who are my people! (Yet to believe!)

Attempt by Jews to stop Paul - results in a precedent for protection by Gallio.

Paul returns to Antioch (18: 18-28)

Paul leaves A & P in Ephesus. While Paul was gone, Apollos arrived in Ephesus.

God has plans for Apollos: To hear the “whole story” of the gospel

- Who was Apollos? A Jew from Alexandria. An eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures, instructed in the ways of the Lord who taught accurately the things concerning Jesus..... BUT he knew only the baptism of John.
- He came to Ephesus and spoke boldly in the synagogue
- Aquila & Priscilla took him aside. Explained the way of God more accurately
- Apollos was a chosen instrument for God. He went to Corinth and greatly helped the believers and powerfully refuted the Jews.

Paul in Ephesus (19:1-20)

- Most important city in providence of Asia. Full of magic and occult practice
- Arrives by land and visits the disciples in Galatia and Phrygia on the way
- When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he met 12 disciples who didn't know about the Holy Spirit. They only knew the baptism of John.

God has plans for these men to hear very good news!

Although John spoke of Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit...they didn't realize it had become a reality. (John 7:37-39, Acts 2:1-4) They were in a time warp.

- John's baptism – anticipating what Jesus would do
- Jesus baptism – one of accomplishment. Jesus accomplished his mission, raised from the dead, glorified at God's right hand, and the gift of the Spirit has come!

Paul laid hands on them: Received Holy Spirit. Spoke in tongues, prophesied!

God's plan and power in Ephesus

- Paul reasons in synagogue for 3 months. Unbelieving Jews antagonized
- Paul begins reasoning in hall of Tyrannus. Probably taught between 11-4
- Taught for 2 more years! Endured much persecution but wasn't forced out
- Colleagues carried on missionary activities in neighboring cities.
 - Colossae, Hierapolis, Laodicea (Col 2:1, 4:13)
 - Seven churches of Asia mentioned in Revelation founded then too
 - Providence intensively evangelized - leading center for centuries

Seeing God's Presence: Watching God do extraordinary miracles thru Paul

God used cloth that touched Paul's skin to heal sick and cast out demons. Thus, He confirmed the gospel Paul preached and authorized him as His messenger.

God's Power: More powerful than magicians and their practices

- Itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to imitate these miracles. They were novice and didn't know Jesus personally or have authorization from Paul
- Attempted to cast out a demon. Instead the demon stripped and beat them
- Everyone in Ephesus heard about it.
- Fear fell on them all and the **NAME OF THE LORD JESUS WAS EXTOLLED**
- New believers left their magic and burned their books in the sight of ALL!
- Important concept in the establishing of the church! God is over all!!
- **So Word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily!!**