

1. Paul's strategy on his missionary journeys (reinforcing what we talked about last week):

- a. Paul gravitated toward the principal cities in the geographic region he entered.
 - 1) The normal flow of people in and out of a major center of culture and commerce will naturally carry with it the Gospel.
 - 2) Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.
 - a) It was known for its moral degradation.
 - b) Paul went there in "weakness and fear."
- b. Paul located the most receptive group of people.
 - 1) Since God had called him to be the "Apostle to the Gentiles", he started at the synagogue where the God-fearing Gentiles would be.
- c. Paul worked "Webs of Influence."
 - 1) The Principle: The Gospel spreads most easily and most effectively across already existing lines of social communications – through trust relationships.
 - 2) Examples:
 - a) Philippi – Lydia and the jailer
 - b) Corinth – Titius Justus and Crispus

2. Roman citizens had 3 names (a nomen, a cognomen and a praenomen) – as in Titius Jutus (Gaius - perhaps)

3. Aquilla and Priscilla:

- a. They had recently come from Rome
- b. God brought them to Corinth to encourage Paul, who went to Corinth alone.

c. God also used a vision to encourage Paul.

1) Visions were more common before people had the completed Scriptures.

2) We have God's promises always before in the Word of God.

4. Paul faced opposition yet again in Corinth.

a. This time the Judaizers bring a formal charge to the Roman proconsul in Achaia, Gallio.

b. His judgment was that Paul was not propagating a religion that violated Roman law.

5. Paul took some kind of vow when he left Corinth, requiring him to cut off his hair.

6. Apollos:

a. He was an apologist.

b. His theme – "Jesus as the Christ."

c. Though he had great gifts, he needed Aquilla and Priscilla to teach him about baptism and other Christian truths.

1. The letters to the Thessalonians help us to understand Paul and imbibe his spirit.
2. The establishment of the church at Thessalonica:
 - a. Paul and Silas went there after leaving Philippi.
 - b. He went and preached at the synagogue for 3 weeks with great effect.
 - c. The Jews who had come from Philippi stirred up a riot.
 - d. Paul's host, Jason, was dragged by the mob before the politarch.
 - e. Paul and Silas had to leave Thessalonica.
3. Paul was concerned about the Thessalonian believers, so he sent Timothy back to them while he went on to Corinth alone.
4. Things that are important to notice:
 - a. Paul commends the Thessalonian Christians for 3 things:
 - 1) Their work of faith
 - 2) Their labor of love
 - 3) Their steadfast hope in the Lord Jesus Christ
5. Each chapter ends with Paul talking about the coming of Jesus Christ.

6. Paul's ministry style: Imitation

- a. You imitated me.
- b. You became imitators of the church in Judea.
- c. People are imitating you.

7. 2 questions:

- a. Who are you imitating?

- b. Who are you mentoring?

8. The challenge:

- a. Make yourself accountable to someone.

- b. Make yourself available to someone.

9. Paul's goal was to help the Thessalonians reach their full potential in Christ.

1. All through the New Testament there is the assumption – the expectation – that the church is going to grow.
2. Although Gallio made the expansion of Christianity easier because he chose not to outlaw it, it does not mean that there was no persecution or suffering.
3. “All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”
4. While we may suffer at the hands of persecutors, we will be totally delivered from the wrath of God.” (I Thessalonians 5:9)
5. The biggest reason Paul wrote these 2 letters was to answer some important questions about the return of Christ at the end of the church age:
 - a. Christ will return physically, visibly and triumphantly at the end of the age.
 - b. That fact is meant to be a motivating force in the life of every believer, causing us to strive for holiness and righteousness.
 - 1) Jesus is coming - you be ready!
 - 2) Every time the New Testament mentions Christ’s return, it is always tied to an exhortation to holiness.
 - 3) We are not to try to figure out the timing of Christ’s return – it is foolishness.

4) “Let me live as though Jesus died for me yesterday, rose for me this morning and is returning for me tomorrow.” (Richard Baxter, an old Puritan)

- c. When Christ does return, all His saints (dead or alive) will be caught up to be with Him.
- d. The “parousia” (the Greek term for the second coming) will come suddenly.
- e. The “parousia” will not occur until after the Antichrist (man of lawlessness) appears.
- f. The present work of the Spirit is to restrain the influence of evil and the Antichrist in our world.

8. The 3 major schools of thought with regard to the sequence of events surrounding Christ’s return in the pre-millennial view:

- a. Premillennial:
 - 1) pre-tribulational school
 - 2) mid-tribulational
 - 3) post-tribulational

d. Snapshot #4: The disturbance that Demetrius and the idol-makers initiated.

e. Snapshot #5: The raising of Eutychus from the dead

f. Snapshot #6: Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders

4. During Paul's time in Ephesus, churches were planted in Colossae and Laodicea, and Paul probably spent some time in prison.

- b. fore-telling

- g. The leaders of the church in Jerusalem must have been both pleased and distressed to see Paul arrive in the city.

- h. Paul joins some of the men who have taken vows and are undergoing cleansing rituals, with disastrous results.

- i. Chapter 22 contains Paul's testimony.

- j. Paul's Roman citizenship plays an important role here and will for the rest of the Book of Acts.