

Crossway Life Group, Week of September 15

See sermon notes on [CMC's webpage](#) for background information

Community

Take time to share and pray for each other's concerns and joys.

Scripture: Acts 18:1-17 Sermon: "The Often Hidden Work of God"

Reading & Discussing Scripture

- **Jenga** is a game where players stack wooden blocks in a sturdy tower, then take turns pulling out blocks one by one until the whole stack crashes down. If someone has the game, you might want to play a few rounds as a group.
 - How does this happen in life? How does it feel?
 - How might that happen in following God?
- **Background:** The Apostle Paul and his companions visited the city of Corinth during their second missionary journey. Acts 18 describes events from his first visit to Corinth, while his letters (written later) to the Corinthians show the challenges these believers faced to grow as Christians and as a young, multi-ethnic church.
 - **Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-3.** How does Paul describe his mindset as he arrived in Corinth? How might his past experiences account for a sense of "weakness, great fear, and trembling"?
- **Read Acts 18:1-4.** Who are Aquila and Priscilla? What did Paul have in common with them? Why are these connections and common experiences (especially hardship) significant?
- **Read Acts 18:5-8.** What kinds of responses (among Jews and Gentiles) did Paul encounter as he preached about Jesus as the Messiah? How does Paul respond? What might have prompted such a strong response against continuing his ministry among the Jews?
- **Read Acts 18:9-11.** What message does Jesus give Paul through a vision? Why is the mode (a personal vision) and the content of this message meaningful for Paul?
- **Read Acts 18:12-17.** How is Jesus' vision fulfilled?
- Do you have any other questions about the Bible passage or the sermon?

The Big Idea

**Jesus is building His Church/His kingdom
through His presence, protection, and redemption
which is often hard to see
and through the perseverance
of His servants on mission who walk by faith**

Application & Reflection Questions

- What does it mean to be 'on mission' with God? What are some obvious examples? What might be some less obvious examples?
- What has God "called" you to do this week, including both 'obvious mission' and 'not so obvious mission'?
- What kinds of circumstances bring discouragement when following God on mission?
- What promises of Jesus give you boldness to persevere "on mission"?
 - For example, read Paul's words to the church in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 15:58. The promise: No act of faith-based obedience is ever wasted or lost. What specific challenges are you facing where these words can inspire your hope and faith?

Growing in Cultural Understanding

Difficult cultures and subcultures make different assumptions about what successfully following God looks like. There are various assumptions about hardship, which might even seem like setbacks or lack of success. What assumptions were a part of your experience growing up? How was that expressed? Is that different from your own assumptions today? If so, in what ways?

Serving beyond ourselves

What are ways that your group can be for the benefit of people beyond yourselves?

1 Corinthians 2:1-3 - New International Version (NIV)

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ²For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.

Acts 18:1-17 - New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ²There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

⁵When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. ⁶But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

⁷Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. ⁸Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

⁹One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. ¹⁰For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.” ¹¹So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

¹²While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews of Corinth made a united attack on Paul and brought him to the place of judgment. ¹³“This man,” they charged, “is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law.”

¹⁴Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to them, “If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. ¹⁵But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law—settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things.” ¹⁶So he drove them off. ¹⁷Then the crowd there turned on Sosthenes the synagogue leader and beat him in front of the proconsul; and Gallio showed no concern whatever.

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.