

TABLE TALK

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE for September 25-October 1, 2022

“ACTS IN 30” Chapter 18: Paul Receives – then Gives - Encouragement

CHAPTER OVERVIEW: Paul endures many hardships throughout his missionary journeys. Many times, however, the Lord supplies encouraging partners to help him, support him, and motivate him along the way. In Acts 18, we meet some significant “friends” in Paul’s ministry and also read about Paul receiving a special word of encouragement from the greatest encourager of all-time: **Jesus** (v.9-10). This chapter takes place in Corinth - a major cultural city in the ancient world known for its worship of Aphrodite – the goddess of love and war. Paul found many challenges in Corinth and later wrote two letters (I & II Corinthians), encouraging all of the believers there.

DAY 1: Priscilla and Aquila Join Paul’s Ministry

READ: Acts 18:1-4

REFLECT: When he arrives in Corinth, Paul meets a Jewish couple – Priscilla and Aquila – who were in exile from Rome. They were believers that had a tent-making business and invited Paul to join them (vs. 3). Priscilla and Aquila are an example of an incredible husband-wife team who knew God’s Word, practiced hospitality in their home, and supported ministers and churches (Romans 16:3-5)

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned 4 times in the New Testament, and they are always mentioned as a couple – not separately. What does that say about the potential impact a couple can have when they minister **together**?

Application Question: Because of persecution, Priscilla and Aquila often hosted ministry trainings and meetings in their home. **The home can be a powerful tool for evangelism.** How often do you open your home for ministry (hosting small groups, etc...)?

DAY 2: Timothy and Silas Rejoin Paul in Corinth

READ: Acts 18:5-8

REFLECT: There’s an old saying that says, “Friends are like family members you get to choose.” Like-minded friends can be tremendous sources of encouragement, accountability, and strength in our lives – especially during difficult times. When Silas and Timothy rejoin Paul in Corinth, they undoubtedly brought these resources and many more to him. Paul begins many of his letters as from the 3 of them.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Proverbs 12:26 says, “*The righteous choose their friends carefully.*” What are some ways that Paul demonstrates that mindset in this chapter?

Application Question: Jesus says in John 15:14, “*You are my friends if you do the things I command you.*” Why do you think Jesus connects friendship with obedience? What does “being a friend of Jesus” really look like practically for you in everyday life?

DAY 3: Jesus Encourages Paul in a Vision

READ: Acts 18:9-11

REFLECT: Paul gets very frustrated with the Jews who would not receive the fact that Jesus was the Messiah that he “*shook the dust from his robe*” (v. 6) and went on to preach to Gentiles. However, Jesus appears to Paul in a vision and encourages him to stay (v.9-11).

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Because of his vision from Jesus, Paul ends up staying 18 months in Corinth. What are 4-6 things from what Jesus said to him in that vision that could have caused Paul to change his mind and encouraged him to stay in Corinth?

Application Question: Have you been discouraged in your faith before because people do not want to keep pursuing Jesus with you? **You are not alone!** What are some things you can ask Jesus for in terms of guidance and encouragement today?

DAY 4: Paul Returns to Antioch, Galatia, and Others to “*Strengthen the Disciples*”

READ: Acts 18:12-23

REFLECT: After ministry in Corinth, Paul brings Priscilla and Aquila with him to Antioch – his home church. From there, they sail on to other cities where Paul and Barnabas had planted other churches in order to, “*strengthen the disciples*” in those churches also (v. 23).

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Jesus tells His disciples in Matt. 10:8, “*Freely you have received...now freely give.*” Do you think Paul was able to go strengthen other churches because he himself had been strengthened by Silas, Timothy and Priscilla and Aquila?

Application Question: As you receive encouragement from the Lord and others, who are some people in your life that you can now go and “*freely give*” encouragement to this week?

NOTE: Because Acts 18:24-28 describes ministry that takes place in the significant city of **Ephesus**, we are positioning the last 5 verses of Acts 18 to be combined with next week’s Table Talk on Acts 19, which also takes place in **Ephesus**.
