

## Paul at Corinth

ACTS 18:1 *After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;...  
....11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.* A lot of things transpire between these two verses. The last time that we find Paul spending a year anywhere was back in ACTS 11:26 when it is recorded that he was in Antioch, Syria a whole year. Again in ACTS 14:28 we find Paul back in Antioch, Syria, where once again he spent a "long time" with them. When Paul first arrives at Corinth he has no idea how long he will stay there, but Luke records in ACTS 18:11 above that Paul preached the word of God among the Corinthians a year and six months. This will be the first of several extended stays that Paul will be blessed with during the rest of his ministry. Later we will find Paul at Ephesus for three years (ACTS 20:31), in Caesarea for at least two years (ACTS 24:27), and in Rome for at least two more years (ACTS 28:30). During these extended visits Paul will get to know well several people, and these people will in turn help spread Paul's gospel. Some names mentioned in Paul's epistles to the Corinthians include Sosthenes (1 CORINTHIANS 1:1), the house hold of Chloe (1 CORINTHIANS 1:11), the house hold of Stephanas, who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, (study 1 CORINTHIANS 1:16; 16:15; and 16:17), Fortunatus (1 CORINTHIANS 16:17), Achaicus (1 CORINTHIANS 16:17), Crispus, (ACTS 18:8, and 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14), Gaius (1 CORINTHIANS 1:14), and Luke makes mention of a man named Justus (ACTS 18:7). There are others Paul will come in contact with at Corinth, such as Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who become pillars in establishing Paul's gospel. Aquila and Priscilla will learn Paul's gospel from Paul himself while he spends these 18 months in Corinth. Aquila and Priscilla will follow Paul to Ephesus, and help establish the church there. Aquila and Priscilla will then teach Apollos Paul's gospel, and Apollos will in turn preach Paul's gospel to these very same Corinthians. This is just a hint of what we know took place at Corinth because of Paul spending a year and six months there. Because of the time Paul spent there at Corinth, he wrote them two epistles, which we know as 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS, where Paul further expounds his doctrines. 1 CORINTHIANS 13 we know as the LOVE chapter. 1 CORINTHIANS 15 we know as the resurrection chapter, just to mention a couple of highlights from these books. In 1 CORINTHIANS 9 Paul talks about the race course, with which all full overcomers are very familiar. These then are a part of the doctrines Paul taught at Corinth. We should all be thankful that God allowed him to spend a year and six months at Corinth.

Let's look at a little background on Corinth before we get into the next few verses in ACTS 18. Corinth was a modern city at the time Paul arrived there. It is located about 46 miles west of Athens. The original Corinth had been destroyed in 146 B.C., but was later restored by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. From it's location on the sea, Corinth became a boom town, and a center of commerce, probably a little like Antioch, Syria, Paul's Christian home church. In Paul's time Corinth was the capital city of Achaia, and the seat of the Roman proconsul, whom we find in ACTS 18:12 was Gallio. So at the time of Paul's arrival in Corinth, it was a Roman colony, and grew rapidly in size to be second in prominence in the Roman empire, second only to Rome. The population of Corinth was largely Greek because of it's location, but as it grew, it's population base varied from people all over the world. Corinth was a city of commerce, and attracted businesses from all parts. A large population of Jews recently had arrived in Corinth by the time Paul got there, for according to ACTS 18:2 the Roman Emperor Claudius Caesar had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. In wealth, Corinth was among the richest cities in Greece, and had a reputation for being one of the most luxurious and extravagant cities. Perhaps you have heard of rich Corinthian leather, a famous luxurious commodity. Corinth also was famous for a temple called Venus Pandemos, where more than one thousand prostitutes were provided. Needless to say, Corinth was an immoral city full of fornication, lasciviousness, idolaters, adulterers, drunkards, revilers and extortioners. Why would the Lord send the Apostle Paul to such a place? Because the Lord had given Paul a message to preach, and, in part, Paul's message was: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..." (1 TIMOTHY 1:15).

Each of these very sinful topics were addressed by Paul in his writings to the carnal believers in Corinth. Let's note some of what he wrote. 1 CORINTHIANS 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. ...3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. ...5:9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. ...6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. ...10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ...12: 20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: 21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

What we have noted here is that Corinth was a wealthy city, and also an immoral city full of fornication, lasciviousness, idolaters, adulterers, drunkards, revilers and extortioners. Corinth means "satiated," which is to say: to have more than enough, and as we have noted above, the Corinthians had "satiated" themselves with the immorality of this world. We find the word "Corinth" six times in scripture. Six is the number that has to do with MAN; SATAN; and SATAN'S INFLUENCE OVER WORLDLY MAN. A Godly man

like the Apostle Paul saw Satan's influence over these worldly Corinthians, but I am sure he also knew a fact found in 1 JOHN 4:4 *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* As we study about Paul's visit to Corinth we will find that he had quite a spiritual battle with the unbelievers in this city. The Lord Himself had to give Paul assurance that he was in the right place doing the right thing at this particular time of his life. So we read in ACTS 18:9 & 10 -- *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*

From what we now know of Corinth it would seem by the outward appearance that Paul would be better off to leave this corrupt city in short order. But the Lord knew that He had much people in this city, and it would take the preaching of the Apostle Paul to bring these very same people into the sheep fold. Note what Paul wrote concerning this very subject in 2 CORINTHIANS 10. 2 CORINTHIANS 10:1 *Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: 2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. 7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's. From the outward appearance it would seem Paul would be more or less wasting his time here in Corinth, but the Lord, who looks upon the heart, knew he had much people in this city. Samuel learned this very same lesson from the Lord when choosing a King for Israel. We read this statement in 1 SAMUEL 16:7 as David was chosen to become King: *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.* The Apostle Paul had already acknowledged the fact that David was a man after God's own heart back in his sermon to those of Antioch in Pisidia found in ACTS 13:22. Jesus Christ Himself states in REVELATION 2:23 *...and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**

Let's again pause here a moment and read once again a portion from 1 CORINTHIANS 6, which we noted above: 9 *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* We all fit into the category of "all have sinned." ROMANS 3:23 tells us: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* and ROMANS 5:12 states: *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:...* We may not have all fallen into the same sinful activities that some of these Corinthians did, never the less we all need the grace of God in order to be saved, for EPHESIANS 2:8 tells us: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...* Note again 1 CORINTHIANS 6:11 *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* The phrase "some of you" in this verse is found exactly five (GRACE) times in scripture. In other words it doesn't matter if you live in an immoral city full of fornication, lasciviousness, idolaters, adulterers, drunkards, revilers and extortioners, and have participated in all of it's sinful activities, the fact remains *...by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...*

So as we begin to study a little more about Paul's visit here to Corinth, let us see things here, not from the outward appearance, which in the case of Corinth was sinful

ugly, but let us see things here through they eyes of the Lord, who told Paul ...*I have much people in this city.*

God is good. And God was good to the Apostle Paul. As Paul comes to Corinth, we find that he most likely is still alone. So the Lord introduces him to a man and his wife, who will become one of Paul's closest friends for the next few years. *ACTS 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; 2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. 3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.*

There is a lot of information conveyed in these three verses. Briefly what we see is that the Apostle Paul now visits for the first time Corinth. Having no acquaintance in Corinth, Paul finds a man of the same craft as himself, a tentmaker named Aquila, who also is a new visitor to Corinth. Interestingly this is the only mention in scripture as to the craft of the Apostle Paul; a tentmaker. Paul and Aquila are both Jews. Their occupation as tentmakers becomes their initial bond of friendship. The word "wrought" in verse 3 means that they carried on business together. It wouldn't take the Apostle Paul very long to testify to Aquila in their course of working together. We are not told if Aquila or Priscilla were believers before they met Paul, but we do know that they readily received his gospel, and that they encouraged him to stay with them so that they could spend more time with him, and further learn his doctrine. And learn his doctrine they did, so much so that in time they started a church in their house, (*ROMANS 16:3-5; 1 CORINTHIANS 16:19*). Actually this church that Aquila and Priscilla had in their house probably first started with Paul preaching to them and their friends in meetings in their home.

We can glean a lot of spiritual information often times in scripture by examining the meanings of people's names. Aquila's name means "an eagle" (in Latin). The eagle points us to the king of the birds, and is typical of Christ in that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. *1 TIMOTHY 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. REVELATION 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. REVELATION 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.* So we see that "an eagle" reminds us of Christ. Aquila's name also means "I shall be nourished" (in Hebrew). *JOHN 6:57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.* Who fed the five thousand? Jesus, and all four gospel records record this fact. See *MATTHEW 14:13-21; MARK 6:32-44; LUKE 9:10-17, and JOHN 6:1-14.* Aquila's name also means "immovable" (in Greek). *1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* As you can see Aquila's name in any language points us to Christ Jesus. Aquila's name is found in six scriptures. Six being a number of man, also points us to the most important man of all, the *...one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* {*1 TIMOTHY 2:5*}. Aquila is typical of Christ.

We notice in *ACTS 18:2* that Aquila was from Pontus. Pontus was a provience south east of the Black Sea. In *ACTS 2:8-11* we find that there were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost people from Pontus, as well as other places, who heard the Galilaeans speaking in the native language of Pontus, as well as the language of the other places, the wonderful works of God. Even though the scripture doesn't tell us, it is possible that Aquila may have been one of those from Pontus there on the day of Pentecost. If so then Aquila got to hear Peter preach his first sermon recorded in *ACTS 2:14-39*. In *1 PETER 1:1* Peter addresses those of Pontus. Perhaps Peter was familiar with Aquila because of the day of Pentecost, but once again we are not told this in scripture. It is also possible that Aquila may have met the Apostle Paul during the time frame of *ACTS 16:6 & 7* when Paul traveled in this part of the world, however once angain the scripture doesn't tell us this either. Quiet probably the fame of the Apostle Paul had reached the ears of Aquila before Paul came to Corinth. Even if Paul and Aquila never met before Paul reached

Corinth, the two of them became good friends almost instantly, with the fellowship of the Lord being their common bond.

Scripture, and history records one more famous person that came from Pontus, that being Bernice the wife of King Agrippa, (study ACTS 25:13; 25:23 and 26:30).

Aquila's one and only wife is named Priscilla. Priscilla is mentioned five (GRACE) times in scripture as Priscilla {ACTS 18:2; 18:18; 18:26, ROMANS 16:3 and 1 CORINTHIANS 16:19}, and one (GOD) time as Prisca {2 TIMOTHY 4:19}. Priscilla is typical of Christ's Bride. Every time her name is mentioned in scripture it is in connection with Aquila. The two of them together were as one in other words. In EPHESIANS 5 Paul reveals a little about the mystery of the Bride of Christ, and writes: *30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* Aquila and Priscilla were really one, thus they are always found mentioned together. I believe in scripture whenever there is teaching concerning the Bride of Christ you will find Jesus nearby, if not right by her side. Bridal Saint's are the ones found closest to Jesus.

Priscilla's name means "ancient," and as such she shows the characteristics of the Ancient One who was in the beginning, called in JOHN 1 "The Word of God," who was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Jesus Christ the Ancient One *...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross....*, PHILIPPIANS 2:7 & 8 tells us. Over forty different New Testament scriptures tells us that God raised Jesus from the dead! ROMANS 10:9 further tells us: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* Aquila and Priscilla believed this, for this was Paul's gospel.

Again we have a picture with Aquila and Priscilla of Christ and His Bride. ROMANS 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.* Aquila and Priscilla are found bringing forth fruit unto God by the end of the 18th chapter of ACTS.

What we have studied so far of Aquila and Priscilla takes place in the first three verses of ACTS 18. Luke mentions no more of Aquila and Priscilla for several verses. In the mean while Luke tells of the events surrounding the Apostle Paul, and mentions in ACTS 18:11 that Paul stayed in Corinth a year and a half. Then in ACTS 18:18 Luke further states that Paul stayed in Corinth "yet a good while." What all of this means is that Aquila and Priscilla have had approximately two years to learn Paul's gospel first hand from the Apostle Paul himself by the time we read of them again in ACTS 18:18.

ACTS 18:18 tells us that after this time Paul left Corinth, *...and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila....* Note that Priscilla is mentioned here before Aquila. Why? Priscilla as a type of the Bride of Christ is the one who needs to follow Paul. In order to be in the Bride of Christ we too need to follow the Apostle Paul. Note how the Apostle Paul stated this in his gospel. 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2 *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

ACTS 18:19 tells us that Paul, and Aquila and Priscilla came to Ephesus, and that Paul *...left them there.* We find Aquila and Priscilla still in Ephesus whenever else they are mentioned in scripture. Paul himself only briefly stays in Ephesus at this time, and returns to Antioch in Syria to conclude his second missionary journey. Meanwhile back in Ephesus the events of ACTS 18:24-28 take place, where Apollos learns Paul's gospel from Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila and Priscilla in these verses really establish in their house the first church in Ephesus that preaches Paul's gospel.

Later (in time) in 1 CORINTHIANS 16:19 (written from Ephesus) Paul gives a salutation from Aquila and Priscilla: *...Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord,*



with the church that is in their house.

Brother Copley points out in his EPHESIANS study book that the first 20 verses of ROMANS 16 really belong with Paul's letter to the Ephesian Saints. ROMANS 16:3-5 states: *Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house.* Paul wrote these words to Aquila and Priscilla after the great uproar in Ephesus recorded by Luke in ACTS 19 and 20. (In ACTS 19 & 20 the Apostle Paul establishes the church at Ephesus, being there three years). Aquila and Priscilla had two outstanding references from the Apostle Paul here. (1) They were helpers in Christ Jesus, and (2) they laid down their own necks for the Apostle Paul and the furtherance of the gospel. Furthermore Aquila and Priscilla still had a church in their house, they still preached Paul's gospel, they continued to be race course runners. Aquila and Priscilla were steadfast and sure. The kind of people Paul referenced in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Paul's last letter was written unto Timothy, his likeminded son in the faith, who was in Ephesus at that time. Once again Paul remembers his dear friends Aquila and Priscilla, and writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:19 *Salute Prisca (a shortened version of Priscilla) and Aquila,...*

One final thought concerning Aquila and Priscilla, who first followed Paul to Ephesus, and then stayed there. One of the meanings of Ephesus is "full purposed," and certainly Aquila and Priscilla were full purposed having been fully grounded in Paul's gospel. Those that followed Paul at Ephesus, like Aquila and Priscilla, were equipped to grow up into Christ in all things. The provision for all Ephesian Saints to be in the Bride of Christ was (in Brother Copley's words) "complete and adequate." The fact that the Apostle Paul founded the church of Ephesus doesn't automatically qualify them to be in the Bride of Christ, but it certainly was to their advantage to have been taught and learned Paul's gospel. Aquila and Priscilla were equipped with Paul's gospel when they got to Ephesus. Aquila and Priscilla we have seen in this study to be steadfast race course runners who possessed all of the fine qualities found of the Saints in Ephesus in REVELATION 2. All indications in scripture are that Aquila and Priscilla never left their first love, as others later did in Ephesus.

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Sixteen is the number of LOVE, and we know the Apostle Paul loved the Jews, himself being a well educated Hebrew Pharisee of the tribe of Benjamin. In ROMANS 1:16 Paul wrote: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* In ROMANS 10:1 Paul states his heart's desire concerning the Jew, saying: *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* Thus the pattern of the Apostle Paul on his missionary journeys was to first go unto the synagogues of the Jews (if there was a synagogue to go to) in the cities he visited. ACTS 17:1 & 2 even makes note of this fact, stating in part that Paul: *...came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,...* In the synagogues is where the Jews met for their Sabbath day services. Corinth had a synagogue. Paul being a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee, and dressed as a Pharisee would be asked by the Jews in these synagogues to speak unto them. He was more than willing to do this, and many Jews got saved because of Paul's preaching. But as strange as it may sound, Paul's going to the synagogues also opened the door for him to speak unto the Gentiles. ACTS 13 records one of Paul's early sermons, and in ACTS 13:42 we read: *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.* The next Sabbath day came, and so did the whole town to hear

Paul preach. The Jews were envious and spoke against the words of the Apostle Paul, which was not really a smart thing to do in the eyes of God. ACTS 13:46-48 records what happened next: *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.* Multiply this times the number of synagogues Paul attended and spoke to, and you can see how he preached to untold thousands of Jews, and in the process reached untold thousands of Gentiles. So much so that in ACTS 17:6 Paul was accused of turning the world upside down. Now here in ACTS 18:1 Paul has left Athens, and came to Corinth. Since Corinth had a synagogue, it should be no surprise where we find Paul in ACTS 18:4 -- *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.*

Remember Silas and Timothy? We haven't heard from them since the night Paul left them in Berea in ACTS 17:13. Upon his arrival in Athens a few weeks later Paul had sent a message unto them to "come to him with all speed." {ACTS 17:15}. We next read of Silas and Timothy in ACTS 18:5, which reads: *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia,...* No information is given between ACTS 17:13 and ACTS 18:5 as to the activities of Silas and Timothy per se, which in some inquiring minds raises a lot of questions. Did Silas and Timothy stay together, or was each sent by Paul to different cities? Did one of them arrive at Athens, and then return to Thessalonica at the request of Paul? These kinds of questions are not answered for us in scripture, but we are told that Silas and Timothy came unto Paul here at Corinth. How did Silas and Timothy know where to find Paul, since he wasn't in Athens any more? I think by now we all could have all found the Apostle Paul, for all we would need to do is to go to the Jewish synagogue and inquire of his whereabouts. Those of the synagogue of Athens would have known, or at least heard that Paul was now in Corinth.

Imagine the reunion between Paul and Silas and Timothy. Oh, the stories they had to tell each other. And the wonderful visit they all must of had with Aquila and Priscilla. Luke, however, records none of this. That doesn't mean scripture records none of this, for we have recorded for us in scripture Paul's gospel, in which facts are given concerning what his thinking was during certain times of his life. It was while Paul was at Corinth that he wrote his first two epistles, 1 and 2 THESSALONIANS. Note that he addresses each of these letters from himself, Silas (Silvanus), and Timothy (Timotheus). 1 THESSALONIANS 1:1 *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 THESSALONIANS 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* Obviously Silas and Timothy were with Paul when he wrote these epistles, and obviously they had talked at length about what was going on with the Saints at Thessalonica. In 1 THESSALONIANS 3 we read the following account concerning Timothy. 1 THESSALONIANS 3:1 *Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; 2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: 3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. 4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. 5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain. 6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: 7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: 8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.* In this portion of scripture we find that Paul was encouraging them concerning their own faith, and was telling them some what of his own tribulations and afflictions, and not to be moved from the faith because of trials and tests.

Even as Paul wrote these words he was "pressed in the spirit." ACTS 18:5 tells us so. ACTS 18:5 *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.* Since none of us are Apostles, I doubt if words can really express what the Apostle Paul felt when "pressed in the spirit," but never the less we will try to find the words that portrays the picture of what Paul was going through. The Apostle Paul himself probably expressed it best himself in a letter later written unto these very same Corinthians. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:22 *Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.* From these verses we know a little about what the Apostle Paul went through, and recall that the Lord had even told Ananias in a vision this concerning the Apostle Paul: ACTS 9:16 *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* Note again these words of 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28 *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.* Paul was greatly "pressed in the spirit" here at Corinth in part because the Lord was using him here to establish yet another church, and he would be here approximately two years establishing the church at Corinth. No wonder Paul was "pressed in the spirit."

All of the different translations of "pressed in the spirit" make reference to the word of God. Different translations of this phrase "pressed in the spirit" read: "constrained by the word;" "engrossed with the word;" "completely given up to the word;" "completely possessed by the message;" "began to urge on in the word;" "was hard pressed with teaching the word;" "was preaching fervently;" and "was absorbed in preaching the message." The Greek word translated "pressed" here is *sunecho* {soon-ekh'-o} (number 4912 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), translated this one time as "pressed." One connotation is of this is to press on every side sort of like a cattle squeeze, where fences are put in place that push in on each side, which forces the cow into a position where it cannot move so the farmer can administer medication. I have actually helped with some cattle on a farm up in South Dakota where we did this very thing. Once the cow was in position in this device, they couldn't really escape, or move much in any direction until the rancher released them from the "press." Now Paul wasn't in such a position here in Corinth, and yet in a spiritual way he was, being "pressed in the spirit," he couldn't really escape, or move much in any direction until the Lord released him from the "press." Once again I don't think any one of us really understand the kind of pressure Paul faced here, for none of us have faced daily the care of all the churches. And as we will see later in this same chapter, Paul message was being fought on all sides, a real spiritual battle. This is part of why he was so "pressed in the spirit" here at Corinth.

And notice once again whom it was Paul was first preaching unto here in Corinth. It was the Jews. And Paul's message that he was so "pressed in the spirit" about was that *...Jesus was Christ.* Again ACTS 18:5 *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.* An expounded translation of this verse reads: "Now at the time Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was completely given up to the word, using his own experience as evidence to convince the Jews that the Messiah was Jesus." We know from previous initial visits to different cities how the Jews reacted to Paul's gospel message, and Paul had learned from these previous experiences what kind of reaction to expect from these Jew's himself, which was usually some degree of opposition mixed in with a certain amount of very harsh words. As Saul of Tarsus, Paul himself used to dish out this same kind of treatment. Recall in ACTS 9:1 that Saul of Tarsus went to Damascus *"...yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord..."* Now as a



disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself it is no wonder then that Paul was so "pressed in the spirit" as he testified unto these Corinthian Jews that ...*Jesus was Christ*.

ACTS 18:6 verifies how the Corinthian Jews reacted to Paul's gospel message. ACTS 18:6 *And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

There are two key words found in this verse, which unlock our understanding as to what was being stated here. The first word is "opposed." The Greek word for this is *antitassomai* {an-tee-tas'-som-ahee} (number 498 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), which is an old Greek verb meaning: to range in battle array face to face, or against (a foe). Here the Corinthian Jews were opposing themselves to Paul's doctrine. To express their opposition these Corinthian Jews then "blasphemed," which is another way of saying they were using abusive evil speaking language, similar to R and X rated Hollywood today. Again Paul himself as Saul of Tarsus had familiarity with this kind of traditional Jewish thinking and speaking, and specifically talks about it in ACTS 26:9-11 in his defence speech before King Agrippa, stating: *9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.* Later in life in 1 TIMOTHY 1 Paul writes a letter unto Timothy explaining his own line of old traditional Jewish thinking before he was saved, stating in verse 12: *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* So we see that the Apostle Paul was very familiar with the kind of Jews found everywhere he went who "...opposed themselves, and blasphemed..."

The Greek word translated here "blasphemed" is *blasphemeo* {blas-fay-meh'-o} (number 987 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and is found in 35 scriptures in the New Testament. 35 is the number having to do with HOPE, and as we have already pointed out certain blasphemers, such as Saul of Tarsus, found HOPE and salvation through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who also is our HOPE. 35 you may have noticed is the product of 5 times 7; GRACE times SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. No wonder then that the Apostle Paul could write such statements as found in 2 THESSALONIANS 2:16 & 17, which reads: *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.* Are you too Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; which the Apostle Paul wrote about in TITUS 2:13?

Our discussion of blasphemy wouldn't be complete without noting what Jesus himself taught on this very same subject. MATTHEW 12:31 & 32 tells us: *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* {See also MARK 3:29 and LUKE 12:10.}

Let's turn back to ACTS 13 and see the previous time the Apostle Paul faced blasphemy. The events that led up to the Jews blaspheming against the Apostle Paul in ACTS 13 in Antioch in Pisidia concerned their disagreement again with what he was preaching. In ACTS 13:15-41 we find Paul's sermon in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, then we read starting in ACTS 13:44 *And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when*

the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

We see the same reaction by the Apostle Paul here at Corinth in ACTS 18:6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, *Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.* The act of shaking off his raiment was an outward act expressing Paul's shaking off the guilt of their condemnation. Similar instruction were given by Jesus to His disciples in MARK 10:14; MARK 6:11; and LUKE 9:5, which reads: *And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.*

Furthermore Paul said this to them as he shook off his raiment: *Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.* The Jews of all people knew from their Sabbath day services the significance of blood. LEVITICUS 17:11 reads: *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* There was another fact that all synagogue attending Jews were familiar with, which is summarized by the Apostle Paul this way in HEBREWS 9:22 *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* There was only one sinless Man, the Man Christ Jesus, whose innocent blood was shed for all mankind to make an atonement for the soul. The Apostle Peter concluded his sermon to those at the house of Cornelius by stating this in ACTS 10:43 *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* I am sure similar words were spoken by Paul to the Corinthian Jews. Most of these Corinthian Jews were like the Jews in Jerusalem during the crucifixion of Jesus, who we read about in MATTHEW 27. MATTHEW 27:22 *Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.* 23 *And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.* 24 *When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.* 25 *Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.* Essentially Paul had asked these Corinthian Jews the very same thing Pilate had asked the Jews at Jerusalem who wanted Christ crucified: "What will you do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" They answered with opposition and blasphemy as they rejected Jesus causing Paul to say: *Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

There is a principle theme found throughout all scripture alluded to in the verses we have just read above. The theme interwoven throughout the scriptures from GENESIS through REVELATION is the fact that there is power in the blood. There is power in the blood in the natural, which we just read in LEVITICUS 17:11, which again reads in part: *For the life of the flesh is in the blood:...* . Take the blood out of the flesh, and the flesh dies, for again *...the life of the flesh is in the blood:...* . So we know in the natural that there is life giving power in the blood. God ordained it so. God also ordained it that the only way anyone can have eternal life is through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, *...the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* {See JOHN 1:29}. It was Christ who was pictured in type in GENESIS 3:21 where we find the first blood shed in the Bible. Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain HEBREWS 11:4 records when he offered the firstling of his flock in GENESIS 4:4, which sacrifice was another picture of Christ in type in scripture. The children of Israel in the land of Egypt found out that there was power in the blood in EXODUS 12 when the Lord's passover was instituted, a type and a shadow of Jesus Christ in scripture. EXODUS 12:21 *Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.* 22 *And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side*

posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. 24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. 25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. 26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. We are not going to go over all of the times in scripture that point out the fact that there is power in the blood of Jesus, just note in your mind once again that this is a principle theme found throughout all scripture, which makes LEVITICUS 17:11 more meaningful. LEVITICUS 17:11 reads: *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

Again repeating what we stated above, God ordained it that the only way anyone can have eternal life (atonement for your soul) is through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. JOHN 6:54 tells us: *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.* We have noted that there is power in the natural in the blood, and now we see (if we haven't before) that there is eternal life power in the blood of Jesus, which we can only receive by believing on Jesus, ...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. {1 JOHN 1:7} 1 PETER 1:18-21 tells us: *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*

We made quick reference to JOHN 6:54 above. In JOHN 6:1-21 we have the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand, which you can read, and study on your own. In JOHN 6:22-59 we find the great discourse on the bread of life. Jesus knew that those which sought Him out here in Capernaum, sought Him because they were a part of those who ...did eat of the loaves, and were filled {JOHN 6:26}. Let's read some of the verse from this great discourse on the bread of life found in JOHN 6. JOHN 6:27 *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. ...32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. 34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. 35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. 36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. ...44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ...53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the*

flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. After this we then read starting in JOHN 6:66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Essentially what Peter said here was the same thing he later wrote about, which we read above in 1 PETER 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Here is the sum of our thought concerning the fact that there is power in the blood. There is power in the blood in the natural, LEVITICUS 17:11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood:...* . And there is power, much more power in the blood of the Lamb of God; everlasting life power, eternal life power, endless spiritual life power. EPHESIANS 1:7 speaking of Jesus reads: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,...* . COLOSSIANS 1:14 nearly says the same thing: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:...* . In the natural we receive life through our blood. In the spiritual, and in the eternal we receive everlasting life through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! COLOSSIANS 3:4 states it this way: *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* LEVITICUS 17:11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* It is the blood of Jesus who has made atonement for our soul, and it is the blood of Jesus who gives us our eternal everlasting life. It really is Christ who is our life.... . Twice Paul would later write the Corinthians and make this statement in 1 CORINTHIANS 6:20 and 7:23 -- *Ye are bought with a price...* . That price was the precious shed blood of Jesus, who is our life!

This fact is never to be forgotten among believers, and the Apostle Paul later wrote the Corinthian believers and once again reminded them of this fact. We find how the Apostle Paul stated this in 1 CORINTHIANS 11. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23 *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:...* . {This fact is recorded for us in the following gospel records: MATTHEW 26:26-29; MARK 14:22-25; and LUKE 22:15-20}. ...24 *And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.* 25 *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.* 26 *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.* May we, like the Corinthians were encouraged to do by the Apostle Paul, take inventory in our own lives, and always remember that we were redeemed by the precious life giving blood of Jesus Christ, so that we too could have everlasting life, eternal life, abundant life, and a life filled with hope looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who indeed is our life!

ACTS 18:6 *And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

There is a number we learned in our meaning of the Bible numbers study that points to ETERNAL LIFE, and that is the number twenty-eight. The reason I mention this

fact here is because the Greek word translated "clean" in our text here is found twenty-eight times in New Testament scripture. {See 2513 katharos {kath-ar-os'} in the Strong's Greek Concordance.} When Paul says "I am clean" here, he is saying in essence "I am pure, blameless and innocent from sin and the guilt of sin, because I have believed on the precious shed blood of Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer." That self righteous old Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, truly had found ETERNAL LIFE, and later noted in ROMANS 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Later still the Apostle Paul wrote these words found in PHILIPPIANS 3:9 *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:....*

After Paul tells these Corinthian Jews who were blaspheming him "I am clean," he then states: *...from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.* In other words Paul was saying to the Corinthians Jews: "from this point in time forward I am going unto the non-Jews." I think if you will study it out carefully for yourself you will find that there are few Corinthian Jews mentioned by name in Paul's epistles. The vast majority of people mentioned by name associated with Corinth were Gentiles, which in a way emphasizes to us the fact that from this point in time forward at Corinth, Paul went unto the Gentiles.

It was approximately at this point in time in Paul's life when he wrote his epistles unto those of Thessalonica, know as 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS. Let's look at 1 THESSALONIANS 2:13-16, and note how Paul put in his own words his thoughts on what was happening unto him at this point in his life concerning the Jews. From Conybeare's translation we read: 1 THESSALONIANS 2:13 *"Wherefore I also give continual thanks to God because, when you heard from me the spoken word of God, you received it not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God; who Himself works effectually in you that believe. 14 For you, brethren, followed in the steps of the churches of God in Judaea, which are in Christ Jesus, inasmuch as you suffered the like persecution from your own countrymen, which they endured from the Jews; 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus, and the prophets, and who have driven me forth [from city to city]; a people displeasing to God, and enemies to all mankind, 16 who would hinder me from speaking to the Gentiles for their salvation: continuing always to fill up the measure of their sins; but the wrath [of God] has overtaken them to destroy them."*

In The Life and Epistles of St. Paul by Conybeare and Howson we find this commentary concerning this portion of scripture: "The strong expressions used in this letter {1 THESSALONIANS} concerning the malevolence of the Jews, lead us to suppose that the Apostle was thinking not only of their past opposition at Thessalonica, but of the difficulties with which they were beginning to surround him at Corinth. At the very time of his writing, that same people who had 'killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets,' and had already driven Paul 'from city to city,' were showing themselves 'a people displeasing to God, and enemies to all mankind,' by endeavoring to hinder him from speaking to the Gentiles for their salvation (1 THESSALONIANS 2:15 & 16). Such expressions would naturally be used in a letter written under the circumstances described in the ACTS 18:6, when the Jews were assuming the attitude of an organized and systematic resistance, and assailing the Apostle in the language of blasphemy, like those who had accused our Saviour of casting out the devils by Beelzebub." {End of quote from Conybeare and Howson Study. MATTHEW 12:24-27 and LUKE 11:15-19}.

ACTS 18:6 *And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.* It goes without saying that the Apostle Paul here at Corinth was once again facing another time of PERFECT TESTING in his life. By now we should all be familiar enough with the meaning of some of the Bible numbers to recall that the number forty is the number that has to do with PERFECT TESTING.

When we did a study on GENESIS 24 concerning a Bride for Isaac, we came across a phrase (see GENESIS 24:58) found forty times in scripture, and that phrase was *...I will go...*, which is found for the last time in scripture here in ACTS 18:6. I want here to review some of the facts we uncovered in our GENESIS 24 study, and see how the very same points apply here to the life of the Apostle Paul, as well as to our own lives.



Again the phrase *...I will go...* is found forty times in scripture, and the number forty stands for PERFECT TESTING. The use of this phrase *...I will go...* forty times in scripture is not an accident, but rather shows us the depth, the detail, and superiority of God over man, and His intricate plan for our lives. When Rebekah's family asked her *...Wilt thou go with this man?...* in GENESIS 24:58, it was a test for her. Her answer *...I will go...* shows that she was perfectly tested, and her faith was perfectly tested with this question. Her family wanted her to stay, as is noted in GENESIS 24:55: *And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.* So don't you know that their love of her, tested her? And the comforts of her home, no doubt, tested her. Rebekah are you willing to go to a far away country leaving your family, your comforts of home, your friends, to be a bride to a rich man you have never met? These kinds of questions, and thoughts tested her. So the commitment *...I will go...* was a life changing statement, and a life changing commitment for Rebekah. It is also a life changing statement for all who commit in their hearts to go on with God. *I will go...* is a statement that perfectly tests all who commit in their hearts to go on with God, follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, and ultimately marry Jesus Christ. Few Holy Spirit filled Christians make such a commitment; only a rib portion company are willing to be PERFECTLY TESTED. Ask yourself, where do I fit in?

In our GENESIS 24 study we also commented on the heart attitude of a full overcomer, and used David as an example. In that portion we found the heart attitude of David was of the quality that God is interested in. Here is some of what we had to say concerning the full overcomer: "In 1 SAMUEL 13:14 the Lord gave the prophet Samuel these words to speak unto Israel's king Saul: *But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.* In this statement we find one of the great qualities that all full overcomers must have, and that is being men seeking to do the will of God's own heart. David was such a man, and the Apostle Paul again acknowledges this scriptural fact in ACTS 13:22 *And when he (God) had removed him, (Saul) he (God) raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.* With this statement we see (among many things) the heart attitude of the full overcomer, for the full overcomer is a man (male or female) after God's own heart, one who will fulfill the will of God. David was such a man, and Paul was such a man. Ask Paul, Paul what do you remember of David? And he answers "he was a man after God's own heart." In 1 SAMUEL 16 God instructed Samuel to anoint a new king of Israel, and God specifically told him this in verse 7: *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.* After Samuel looked at all of the sons of Jesse he said in 1 SAMUEL 16:11 *...Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. 12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. And David reigned as king of Israel forty years (2 KINGS 2:11)." Again we see the number forty in the reign of King David pointing us to the PERFECT TESTING that will be found in the faith life of a full overcomer. David is an Old Testament example of a full overcomer, and Rebekah is an example for us in the 24th chapter of GENESIS of an Old Testament full overcomer.*

*I will go...* is a statement that perfectly tests all who commit in their hearts to go on with God. *I will go...* was a life changing statement for Rebekah. Rebekah with this statement was committing to be bride to Isaac. Furthermore she was accepting the leading and the guidance of Abraham's servant for herself. Whether or not she realized it, Abraham's servant was really her servant! His very job was to bring her to Isaac. But in GENESIS 24:65 we read that Abraham's servant was also Isaac's servant. And with Rebekah now being committed unto Isaac as his wife, Abraham's servant would now

become Rebekah's servant, and in fact he was Rebekah's servant from this point forward. Rebekah's responsibility unto Isaac was to follow the leading of Abraham's servant, follow his instructions, ride his camels, trust his leading, trust his knowledge and experience, learn of Isaac from him: to find out what Isaac was like, what he liked to do, what he liked to eat, and what were his dislikes. Thus in following the expert leading of Abraham's servant she was really claiming him to be her servant. The fact of the matter was that Abraham's servant was really now and forevermore Rebekah's servant too! Bring this down to you and me. The Holy Spirit was given to us on the day of Pentecost on the behalf of Jesus, sent from God the Father for the express purpose of being a teacher, a guide, a Comforter, to instruct us in all things, and help us learn all things of Christ that are important for us to know, especially of the deeper things that we need help with in running the race to be a part of that company that will be in the bride of Christ. Are you following His leading? Are you running the race? Have you too in your heart said like Rebekah, *I will go...*? I will go on following the Holy Spirit's leading. Wherever He leads I will follow for the express purpose of being married to Jesus! Don't be hindered. After Rebekah spoke *...I will go...* her family no longer hindered her, and, in fact, they encouraged her as stated in GENESIS 24:60 -- *And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.*

The decision that Rebekah made to go on with Abraham's servant also greatly directly affected the lives of those closest to her. The decisions we make will always directly affect those closest to us, so hopefully our decisions are made with the will of God in mind. In ACTS 9:6 Saul of Tarsus made a life changing decision for himself when he asked *...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* His decision to go on with the Lord directly affected those closest to him, and since he decided to go on with the Lord, old Saul of Tarsus' decision to go on with the Lord has also directly affected the lives of literally millions, for Saul of Tarsus turned out to be the Apostle Paul whose gospel record states in ROMANS 2:16 *...God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* Has Paul's gospel record been a positive influence in your life? Paul's gospel will be a positive influence in the lives of those who also choose to go on with Christ, and follow the Holy Spirit's leading through out their lives. Note how the Apostle Paul encourages us to follow in his footsteps in running the race to have God's best in our lives: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Furthermore Paul's gospel is needed in our lives to establish us and help us grow up into Christ Jesus in all things. The Apostle Paul states this fact like this in EPHESIANS 4. EPHESIANS 4:11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.* Paul also encourages us to be established in his gospel with these words found in ROMANS 16:25 - 27: *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.* Furthermore the Apostle Paul writes in HEBREWS 13:7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

By the time Paul utters the phrase *...I will go...* for the fortieth time in scripture in ACTS 18:6 he has been PERFECTLY TESTED an untold number of times. There was no hesitation or second thought in his mind as to whether or not he would go on and follow

the leading of the Lord, for years before on the road to Damascus Paul had committed his life unto following Jesus, and in his heart had said: no matter the cost *...I will go;... wherever the Lord leads: ...I will go;... and if my fellow Jews don't like it, yet still ...I will go;... from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.* It was from this point in time forward that the ministry of the Apostle Paul really reached out unto the Gentiles like never before. It was from this point in time forward that the epistles of the Apostle Paul were written! It was from this point in time forward that Paul's gospel record reaches down some two thousand years to you and me! Are you not glad that the Apostle Paul said: *...I will go;... from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles...?*

In ACTS 18:7 we see how it was that Paul reached forth unto the Gentiles. ACTS 18:7 *And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.* An expounded version of this verse reads: "So he (Paul) left, and entered into the house of a devout proselyte called Titus Justus, a man that worshipped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue."

Once again we find a considerable amount of information conveyed in this verse. Our main attention in this verse is drawn unto a man named Justus, who is also noted in some translations, and found noted in the margin of the Scofield Bible, to be called Titus Justus. (This is not the same Titus that was a frequent traveling companion of Paul's found mentioned in GALATIANS 2, who went with Paul and Barnabas unto Jerusalem in ACTS 15.) Little is known of Titus Justus other than the facts found in ACTS 18:7. Here is what we do know of him. He is the third person we find mentioned so far in ACTS 18 that is living in Corinth when Paul arrives, Aquila and Priscilla being the other two. Justus has a house that is adjoining to the Jewish synagogue. This fact helps explain a little more about Justus. It is probable that Justus was a convert to Judaism, in other words a Greek proselyte, who attended Sabbath day services at the Jewish synagogue where he first heard Paul preach. Justus no doubt readily accepted Paul's gospel message, thus when Paul was opposed by the Jews of Corinth in ACTS 18:6, and stated that he would from henceforth go unto the Gentiles, the logical place for Paul to continue preaching his gospel to the Gentiles would be in the house of one of the Gentiles who believed. Justus' house became such a place. Other proselytes who attended the Jewish sabbath day services that had also received Paul's gospel message, as well as any Jews, like Aquilla and Priscilla, who weren't opposed to Paul preaching, would feel welcome in the private house of Justus, where, with Justus blessing, they were allowed to continue to hear the preaching of Paul. And since Justus house was next door unto the synagogue, one could imagine how easy it was for the believers to attend both services. It appears from looking ahead in verse 8, as well as remembering in Antioch in Pisidia how the whole town came on the next Sabbath day to hear Paul preach, {see ACTS 13:44}, that it wasn't very long before Paul's preaching attracted a larger crowd in Justus house, than those who attended the Jewish synagogue Sabbath day services next door. Perhaps this helps explain the Jew's later actions here at Corinth in ACTS 18:12-17 when they had Paul brought before the governor, which we will get to later in this study.

Justus name means "just." It points us to one who has been justified, and Brother Hill used to define justified as meaning: "just as if I had never sinned." Of course there is only one way any of us can ever be justified, and that is by believing on the only Just One, who is Jesus Christ our lovely Lord and Saviour! Paul stated it like this in ROMANS 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* We find Noah was a "just man" in GENESIS 6:9, and he is found mentioned as an Old Testament worthy of faith in HEBREWS 11! ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11; and HEBREWS 10:38 all tell us: *"The just shall live by faith."* In ACTS 10 there was an Italian man named Cornelius, also called a "just man" in ACTS 10:22, and it was in his house where the Holy Ghost was first poured out upon Gentile believers! What kind of men were Noah, and Cornelius? They were men of faith. And what kind of man do you think Justus was here in ACTS 18? Think about it for a moment, and I guarantee you will come up with the same conclusion I came up with, and that is Justus too was a man of

faith. I think we can safely say: By faith Justus believed God, and because he believed God he allowed the Apostle Paul to preach in his house even though Paul was not popular to listen too, and through the preaching of Paul in Justus' house many of the Corinthians also believed God, and went on to become race course runners, many of whom will be found to have attained God's best! By faith Justus believed God, and in time the church of Corinth was truly established first in his house! By faith Justus believed God, and in the process of time the Apostle Paul wrote two epistles to those who were first established in Justus house! By faith Justus believed God, and you and I are beneficiaries of the very same epistles, 1 and 2 CORINTHIANS, written first unto those who were first established in Justus house! Thus we see through Justus, whose name means "just," that a little faith can go a long way, and reach down even through generations. I won't be surprised to see Justus among that small rib portion company of believers, just men and women of New Testament times, who by faith believe God for many impossible things, and go on to have God's very best ending up being the Bride of Christ!

We next begin to glimpse some wonderful things that started to take place at Corinth because of Paul's preaching, the likes of which he himself hasn't witnessed since leaving Berea. ACTS 18:8 reads: *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.* Note that *...many of the Corinthians hearing believed...* . Where again were these "many" hearing Paul's gospel? In the house of Justus, who lived next door to the synagogue. We haven't read of "many" believing since ACTS 17:12 in Berea where *...many of them believed...* .

With ACTS 18:7 & 8 we begin to build a list of names of a part of these many believing Corinthians. We now read of *...Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue,...* who *...believed on the Lord with all his house...* . Crispus name means: "curled," or "curly-haired." He is the first Corinthian Jew mentioned in scripture who became a believer there in Corinth.

ACTS 18:8 *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.* Water baptism is a subject we have discussed a couple of different times before in this study, {see again pages 58, 59, 326, & 327 of these notes}. Before we comment further, let's note what the Apostle Paul himself wrote unto these very same Corinthians concerning this subject, and also see some more of how he taught.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:14 *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. ...2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Note in this portion of scripture how the Apostle Paul noted that water baptism wasn't the emphasis of his preaching, but rather the preaching of the gospel was what was important. However since *...the Jews require a sign...* as Paul noted above in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22, Paul did baptize some here at Corinth, as also noted in our text of ACTS 18:8. Before Paul came on the scene, and even before Jesus came on the scene, the Jews

were sent by God one John the Baptist, whose message was *...To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.* {See LUKE 1:77}. John the Baptist didn't come to preach before the Gentiles like the apostle Paul did. John the Baptist preached *...the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.* {See ACTS 13:24}. John the Baptist preached before the time of Jesus ministry. In ACTS 19:4 Paul states: *...John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* In John the Baptist's day water baptism was an outward expression of an inward belief in the soon coming Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and His forgiveness of sins. After the resurrection of Jesus water baptism to a Jew was an outward expression of an inward belief that they had accepted Jesus as their own personal Saviour, His forgiveness of their sins, and that they had died unto the law of Moses and were to be counted among those who believed in the resurrected Jesus Christ. Brother Copley points out that a fellow Jew will not believe that a Jew is saved if they are not willing to be baptized in water, thus when a Jew is baptized in water the unbelieving Jews denounce the baptized Jew from Judaism, and even from their family. They are referred to by other Jews as "the blotted out," having denounced Judaism and accepted the message of the Saviour. Recall also in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22 that Paul writes: *For the Jews require a sign,....* Water baptism was a definite sign unto the Jews that one had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.

In 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14-16 we find that Paul mentioned three people by name whom he had baptized here at Corinth: Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14 *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.* We have already talked about Crispus of whom it is said in ACTS 18:8 *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house;...*

Here in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14 we find mention of Gaius being baptized by Paul. In total we find the name "Gaius" mentioned in five scriptures: ACTS 19:29; ACTS 20:4; ROMANS 16:23; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14; and 3 JOHN 1:1. Probably at least two different men in scripture are called by this name "Gaius." This Gaius mentioned with Crispus in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14 is the same man Paul mentions in his letter to the ROMANS in ROMANS 16:23, which reads: *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you.* Gaius name means "on earth" by some dictionaries, and "lord" in others. Combining these two meanings we come up with "lord on earth," or as we may think of it, a nobleman. Gaius may very well have been a nobleman, or a "lord" there in Corinth. Certainly Erastus, a chamberlain of the city of Corinth, and a follower of the Apostle Paul, of whom we will study more about later in this study, was a nobleman from Corinth. {Study ROMANS 16:23}. Note what the Apostle Paul wrote concerning noblemen in 1 CORINTHIANS 1. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26 *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:* Brother Hill always used to like to point out that thank God that Paul said "not many" instead of "not any." Gaius speaks to us of the best "on earth" in his treatment of the Apostle Paul. Certainly Gaius showed his love to and for the Apostle Paul in being Paul's host at a future visit of Paul's to Corinth. The following scriptures expound this thought: JOHN 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* JOHN 15:12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.* JOHN 15:17 *These things I command you, that ye love one another.* 1 JOHN 3:11 *For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.* 1 JOHN 3:23 *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.* 1 JOHN 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.* 1 JOHN 4:11 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* 1 JOHN 4:12 *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* Note that the above scriptures about loving one another were all written by the Apostle John. In 3 JOHN 1:1 the Apostle John addresses a man named Gaius, stating: *The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.* When we get to heaven we will know if this is the very same Gaius whom Paul baptized here in Corinth, for it very well may have been.



We are examining ACTS 18:8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. And this verse has taken us to the time table of events recorded by the Apostle Paul in 1 CORINTHIANS 1 where we again read: 14 *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.* Obviously the household of Stephanas was among the many Corinthians who heard the message of the Apostle Paul, readily believed it, and were baptized by the Apostle Paul himself. We have in Paul's gospel records further information on those of the household of Stephanas. This information is found in 1 CORINTHIANS 16.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:15 *I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth. 17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.* Before we get into the meaning of Stephanas name, note that those included in the house of Stephanas "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." The word "addicted" here means to have made up one's mind; to set in one's mind; to determine; to appoint or arrange in a certain order; to have set themselves, or to appoint on one's own responsibility or authority to do something. These of the household of Stephanas had collectively set themselves to the ministry of the saints. In other words they saw to it by whatever means was available unto them to help the saints of Corinth; to cheerfully and willingly engage in the care of the flock. Some commentators have the household of Stephanas as being the deacons of the church at Corinth, perhaps even being some called of the noble class of Corinth. Whether or not this is true or not, only God knows, however the fact remains that those of the house of Stephanas "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Certainly this was, and is a noble addiction. There is another word which sums up the heart attitude of these of the house of Stephanas, and that word is "godliness." In 1 TIMOTHY 4:8 & 9 we read this statement concerning godliness: 8 *...but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation.* Later in 1 TIMOTHY 6:11 the Apostle Paul once again encouraged Timothy to *...follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.* Certainly those of the house of Stephanas were following the same things.

Stephanas means "crowned." The Bible student knows full well that there are in REVELATION 2 & 3 only two representative churches from this yet present church age whose overcomers are seen with crowns, the church of Smyrna in REVELATION 2:10 who are given a crown of life having been faithful unto death, and the overcoming Saints of Philadelphia, who heed the warning not to let any man take their crown. The church in Smyrna, and the church in Philadelphia are types, or figures of the full overcomers. Those of the church in Smyrna figure all the full overcomers who died during this church age. Those in Philadelphia figure all the full overcomers who are still *...alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord...* who, as 1 THESSALONIANS 4:17 tells us: *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* Stephanas then points us to such a Saint, and no doubt was a good race course runner in his following the Apostle Paul.

Let's review a little of what we noted in an earlier study about crowns.

A "crown of life" is one of the things given unto those full overcoming Saints of the church of Smyrna after they endured their perfect and complete seven-fold time of testing found mentioned in REVELATION 2:9 & 10. REVELATION 2:9 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.* There are

seven elements of suffering that given here in these verses. Seven being representative here of the SPIRITUALLY COMPLETE and PERFECT suffering that those full overcomers of Smyrna would face. These seven elements are: (1) tribulation or trials which are spoken of in a general sense in verse 9; (2) poverty, which in itself causes suffering, and may in fact be a result of suffering; (3) the blasphemy of them, which is a strong irreverent talking against what one believes in, in other words the suffering of verbal persecution; (4) suffering things, that is suffering loss and persecution for the cause of Christ; (5) the trial of being cast into prison; (6) the kind of tribulation that comes as a testing of one's responsibility according to ability spoken of in verse 10, which is possibly the final defining trial of one's faith during this life, and; (7) death, the final act of suffering.

Two scriptures mention the "crown of life," JAMES 1:12 and REVELATION 2:10. JAMES 1:12 *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* REVELATION 2:10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Comparing these two scriptures we see that those who received the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, also had that first place preeminent love of Christ in their heart. Also besides the crown of life being mentioned in both of these scriptures, we find that the Saints who get to wear this crown have been "tried" in both scriptures. This word "tried" in JAMES 1:12 comes from the Greek word dokimos {dok'-ee-mos}, number 1384 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and is only used seven times in New Testament scripture, which usually translates to "approved," but here in JAMES 1:12 is translated this one time into our English as "tried." Now let's read JAMES 1:12 like this: *Blessed is the man that endureth fiery trials; for when he has been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* Those that were "tried" in REVELATION 2:10, and suffered tribulation ten days, were also approved of God and received ...a crown of life. These two scriptures bring together the fact that this crown of life belongs to the full grown mature overcoming sons of God who fit the description of ROMANS 8:14-18. ROMANS 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* 15 *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* 16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:* 17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* 18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

The other church mentioned in REVELATION 2 & 3 that receives a crown is the church of Philadelphia. REVELATION 3:11 tells us: *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* Let's now briefly look at the last phrase of this sentence: ...that no man take thy crown. This crown is a symbol of triumph showing an exalted rank, given as an honour for distinguished service. The only other church in REVELATION 2 & 3 to have a "crown" mentioned was the Smyrna church, which we noted above. Again both Smyrna and Philadelphia figure the full overcomers from this church age. The overcomers from these churches will receive crowns. We also see here in this last phrase of verse 11 that this crown can be taken by man. In other words man can rob you of this crown. The warning here concerns our spiritual focus. The deeper spiritual things that these of Philadelphia rank have latched on to are lessons learned from Paul's gospel. However, especially in today environment, there is a majority of men out there that doesn't understand, or go along with Paul's gospel, for as even Peter noted in 2 PETER 3:15 & 16 that Paul has written "some things hard to be understood." Thus often Paul's gospel is not preached, or if it is, it is not understood, for most men lack spiritual understanding. Do you hear gospel preachers today emphasizing the sufferings that the Apostle Paul emphasizes, or do you hear the preachers today emphasizing the doctrines of prosper and being in health? Listen to what Paul wrote in HEBREWS 2:10 speaking of Jesus: *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the*

*captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* The doctrines of men today really emphasize, and focus on worldly things, but the doctrine of Paul focuses on the spiritual things of God. The doctrines of men today draw attention to themselves, but the doctrine of Paul draws attention to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus warns those of Philadelphia to *...hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* What do your ears hear? ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God..., ...that no man take thy crown.*

A majority of the sufferings that the Apostle Paul endured was because men did not like, nor agree with his doctrine. Why were the Jews so disposed to rid the earth of the Apostle Paul? They did not like, nor agree with his doctrine. In ACTS 17:6 they complained that Paul had turned the world upside down with his doctrine. Why did Alexander the coppersmith do Paul much evil? (2 TIMOTHY 4:14). He did not like Paul's doctrine, nor did he agree with Paul's teaching. Why did they of Philippi cast Paul and Silas in prison? They did not like, nor agree with Paul's doctrine. Why did the silversmiths of Ephesus create such an uproar against Paul and his followers? Because they did not like, nor agree with Paul's doctrine. The list goes on and on, and even on and on today of those who don't like or agree with Paul's doctrine. Paul did not allow any of these men of opposing forces to take his crown. Note what Paul wrote Timothy, his close follower and fellow Apostle: 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* (Hopefully most of us know, and heed this admonition concerning the proper study of God's word. Then Paul issues a warning to Timothy...) 16 *But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.* (The word "shun" here literally means in our language of today to do a one-eighty, that is to turn one's back upon and avoid *...profane and vain babblings.* "Profane" is the opposite of sacred, and simply means ungodly. "Vain babblings" means: empty discussion, discussion of vain and useless matters. In today's world we are constantly bombarded with *...profane and vain babblings...*, and unfortunately the topics of many sermons preached today from so called modern and politically correct pulpits are nothing more than these very same *...profane and vain babblings.* The Apostle Paul has already written Timothy in 1 TIMOTHY 6:20 & 21 this same warning stating: *C Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: 21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.* Paul here in 2 TIMOTHY 2 goes on to warn Timothy *...17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.* Again we see it was men like Hymenaeus and Philetus who didn't agree with, nor go along Paul's doctrine, nor did they rightly divide the word of truth. Once more Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 3:8 warning him of men such as *...Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.* This is why the Apostle Paul wrote in ROMANS 16:17 *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

So we note in REVELATION 3:11 that those of the Philadelphia church are to keep their focus on Jesus Christ, (look at Me, *Behold, I come quickly*); to latch onto the deeper spiritual things found in the gospel record left us of the Apostle Paul, (*...hold that fast which thou hast...*); and to *...Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ...* (COLOSSIANS 2:8), (*...that no man take thy crown*).

To the Philadelphia full overcomer Jesus stated this in REVELATION 3:12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.* This verse contains a crescendo of facts, of which we will emphasize two. First in REVELATION 2 & 3 Jesus states: *He (or Him) that overcometh...* seven times, (2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26; 3:5; 3:12; 3:21). Seven is the number of SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. These of Philadelphia are in the end Spiritually Perfected Saints.

The second point concerns the word "overcometh," number 3528 in our Strong's Concordance, which is the Greek word nikao {nik-ah'-o}, that translates to "overcome,"

and "overcometh," "conquer," "prevail," and "get the victory." It means: to conquer, to carry off the victory, or to come off victorious, to overcome, to prevail, and to get the victory. We have spent hours here in Sunday School just talking about what it means to be a full overcomer. To be a full overcomer means to cast your lot with the original full overcomer, who is Jesus Christ our precious Lord and Saviour, and soon coming Bridegroom; the "first love" and main focus of all full overcomers. The Greek word nikao numerically adds up to 881. Jesus is Iesous {ee-ay-sooce'} in the Greek, six letters that add up to 888. To us then numerically Jesus is the number 888. 881 is seven numbers short of Jesus (888). The full overcomer (881) will never be Jesus (888), but the full overcomer (881), added together with the SPIRITUAL COMPLETE, and SPIRITUAL PERFECT number (7) will be a coequal with Jesus (888). The Bride of Christ will be coequal with Jesus, and will rule and reign with Him. This is what it means to be a full overcomer. This is why Jesus tells us in REVELATION 3:11 *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

Again Stephanas means "crowned," and perhaps now we have a better appreciation of what the Apostle Paul was acknowledging when he wrote: 1 CORINTHIANS 16:15 *I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.*

Associated with Stephanas, and perhaps even of the same household as Stephanas, are two more Corinthian saints found next mentioned in 1 CORINTHIANS 16:17, which reads: *I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.* Little else is known of Fortunatus and Achaicus since they are only mentioned in this one verse of scripture. By association with Stephanas we see that they too are a part of the ones who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, who also were a help to Paul in the spreading of his gospel.

Fortunatus name means: "well freighted." Recently a "well freighted" cargo ship tipped on it's side in the Alaska gulf, and perhaps you saw pictures of it on the news, or in the newspaper. This "well freighted" cargo ship contained over 7,900 new Mazda cars, which were obviously worth millions of dollars, and millions of dollars will be spent trying to salvage this wreckage. In the light of eternity how much value can be placed on the "well freighted" ministry of just one follower of the doctrines of the Apostle Paul, as was Fortunatus? Only God can answer such a question. How much value can be placed just in your own life on the "well freighted" gospel of Paul that you have learned? Again only God can answer such a question.

Let me with some scripture give a little help in trying to comprehend some of the value of the "well freighted" cargo ship entitled the Word of God, as brought to us by the Apostle Paul, and the Apostle John. Of course we know from many scriptures that The Word of God Himself is Jesus Christ our precious Lord and Saviour, whose value is immeasurable. But as we go through this thought let's focus on five scriptures which show our value to God in what He has made us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Before we even get to these five scriptures let's note this fact: the phrase "made us" is found in seventeen scriptures. Seventeen is the number that has to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. And, of course, five is the number of GRACE, that is magnified in EPHESIANS 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith;...* Here are our five "well freighted" scriptural points. First, let's note that since *...by grace are ye saved through faith;... Christ hath made us free...* GALATIANS 5:1 tells us. Secondly, since *...by grace are ye saved through faith;... he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* {EPHESIANS 1:6}. Thirdly, since *...by grace are ye saved through faith;... God ...hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* {EPHESIANS 2:6}. Additionally, and our forth point, since *...by grace are ye saved through faith;... God ...hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.* {COLOSSIANS 1:12}. And fifth, since *...by grace are ye saved through faith;... Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* {REVELATION 1:5 & 6}. Perhaps these five scriptures gives each of us a little better glimpse of just how "well freighted" we too are.

In 1 CORINTHIANS 16:17 the other man mentioned along with Stephanas and Fortunatus is Achaicus. Achaicus means: "belonging to Achaia," and Achaia itself means "trouble." In one sense we can all identify with "belonging to Achaia," for "trouble" follows each one of us around, even though we may not be looking for trouble. JOB 5:7 states: *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.* Trouble is defined as tribulation, affliction, anguish, persecution, burdened, distress, oppression, and pressure. All full overcomers will face such trouble, for it is this kind of pressure and tribulation that causes the full overcomer to whole heartily seek the Lord. In PSALMS 34:19 Old Testament full overcomer David writes: *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.* Again in PSALMS 60:11 David penned his heart felt cry unto the Lord: *Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.* David wrote in PSALM 54:7 *For he hath delivered me out of all trouble:...* And again in PSALMS 86:7 we read this prayer of David's: *In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.*

Consider the Apostle Paul; was he ever in any kind of trouble? Yes, Paul's troubles followed him daily, and we have talked about many of his daily troubles as we have thus far considered his life in this study. At the end of his first missionary journey in ACTS 14:22 we read that Paul *...Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* Again tribulation is trouble, and much tribulation is much trouble. In ACTS 20:23 Paul made this statement unto the Ephesian elders, with whom he had spent three years: *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.* Afflictions are trouble too. Concerning the trouble of tribulations Paul wrote this in ROMANS 5. ROMANS 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.* Later the Apostle Paul would write unto these very same Corinthian saints this statement: 2 CORINTHIANS 1:4 *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.* Again in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:17 & 18 Paul wrote: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* Paul also wrote these very same Corinthians a little about some of the trouble he had faced up to this point in his life, stating in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. 32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: 33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

We have now noted several of the Corinthian saints, and have seen in them qualities that are found in all full overcomers. It was to these very same belonging to trouble, well freighted saints that Paul wrote these encouraging, and crowning words in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the*



*mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

Before the Apostle Paul could write such statements, he too had to live such statements. And we have many times noted the troubles that Paul faced along his journeys. Here at Corinth in ACTS 18:8 we are finding that *...many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.* The Lord Himself, knowing full well the troubles that surrounded the Apostle Paul, then spoke these words of encouragement to Paul by night as noted next in ACTS 18:9 & 10 -- *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*

Recall some things we noted earlier in this study when we covered ACTS 16:25, and found Paul and Silas singing in the prison at midnight. {Review that portion starting on page 338 of these notes.} We noted there how the word "midnight" is found fourteen times in the Bible with two basic meanings. One expresses the thought that midnight occurs in the middle of the night, and the other expresses the darkness of gloom found at midnight. Let's consider "midnight" as expressing the darkest hour of the night; half way between daylight and daylight if you will. "Midnight" can be expressed in literal terms, in figurative terms, and in spiritual terms. The full overcomer will face many "midnight's" in spiritual terms throughout his or her life time. I know the Apostle Paul did. I know all the Old Testament worthies of faith did too. Even though it may not appear to us on the surface that the Apostle Paul was once again facing another spiritual midnight situation here in ACTS 18, verses 8 and 9 indicate that he was, and (of course) the Lord knew that Paul was facing this dark time in his life. Recall also from our studying a little about "midnight" that we found the word "midnight" in fourteen scriptures, and that the number fourteen is the number that has to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. It was the Lord Himself here who reminded Paul that his purpose of being here in Corinth in the first place was to preach a message of DELIVERANCE and SALVATION to the Gentiles of Corinth. Thus during this dark "midnight" time here at Corinth we find in ACTS 18:9 & 10 -- *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*

Also recall something we have read earlier how it was when Paul first spoke unto these very same Corinthians, as noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 2. 1 CORINTHIANS 2:1 *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Note especially again verse 3 *...I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* This isn't the way we picture in our mind the preaching of the great Apostle Paul, preaching *...in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* Paul mentions again his sometimes emotional state in a statement found in 2 CORINTHIANS 7:5, where he states: *...without were fightings, within were fears.* Thus we note the fragile emotional state of the Apostle Paul at this particular time in his life. The Lord knew Paul needed his batteries recharged so to speak, so at this "midnight" time in Paul life, *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.* {ACTS 18:9 & 10.}

We also noted earlier in this study a little bit concerning the word "vision." {Review page 317 of these notes.} The word "vision" is found 79 times in scripture starting in GENESIS 15:1 where we find *...the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision....* Without exception each vision referenced in scripture is forward looking, that is a vision points to things future. PROVERBS 29:18 in part tells us: *Where there is no vision, the people perish...* Brother Hill at least once preached a sermon from this scripture. Brother Hill was always looking forward to the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and wanted each of us to be forward and upward looking also. More recently Brother Hawkins preached to us a sermon on this very same subject.