

S. W. June 24 - 84 A.M. v.

## "SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY COMPLETED"

Acts 18

### INTRODUCTION:

We come to the completion of the second missionary tour by the Apostle Paul. He comes to the most corrupt city of the Roman empire.

You remember the (second) missionary journey began back in the last verses of Chapter 15. And then they traveled from Antioch across to Philippi - where they had the experience with the jailer. And last, Chapter 17, we discussed three stops on the journey at Thessalonica, where they were charged with turning the world upside down. And then the little country village of Berea, where the people studied the Bible. And finally, the stop in Athens - where Paul's spirit was stirred up and he preached a mighty sermon on the subject - "the unknown God." Following this sermon with them on (Mars Hill), where people had too much religion. They had more gods than anything else - and yet were ignorant of the living God. Paul travels on from Athens, which brings us to chapter 18. He has stirred up the Athenian mind. He gave them their understanding of a new theory of the universe. He helped them to discover a new way to find happiness. And he brought them the wisdom of the new manifestation of God. God in Christ. Which was a new theology for those people. And yet that is the theology that all men need to know, even today. If you are going to find God, you must come through Jesus Christ' manifestation. And he'll be manifest unto you.

Let us first look at the events in the city of Corinth - V. 1-18.

V. 1 We are told that Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth. Now let us first get some kind of description about this city. It was a famous Grecian

city. It was thoroughly destroyed by the Romans. It was rebuilt by Julius Caesar. And was when Paul entered it, a most flourishing city. At that time, a great city of commerce and swarmed with a trading population.

Famous for trade, wealth, luxury, and vice.

Athens was an intellectual capitol of the Roman world. Corinth was the center of sensuality. These two cities which Paul had left, and the one he had just entered, are symbols of twin evils. In every generation, there is a generation gap that enslaves the hearts of people. One is intellectual pride. There are always a group of people who pride themselves on having knowledge and knowing more than anyone else. On the other hand, the other evil is sensual lust.

Corinth is about 50 miles west of Athens. And Paul visited the city - it was the capitol of the Roman providence of Greece. Which is called Achaia.

It was located on a narrow neck of land between the Adriatic Sea and the Aegean Sea. So Corinth was connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus. About four miles wide. Over this crossing, they tell us that they actually dragged small ships on greased skids. That it was a port city. And that small ships or boats were hauling over land on rollers. Larger ships had to be unloaded while they transported the ship over land these four miles to the next sea.

The sailors considered Corinth a good liberty port. Because there on top of Acrocorinth was a temple to Aphrodite, with 1000 cult prostitutes free to any worshipper.

On our visit there, we find the scenery breath-taking. With the natural setting, and the beautiful mountain in the background. And the roadway that has

Canal ships pass -

been excavated going down to the sea. They tell us that from the hill in the back of the city, every evening, a thousand priestesses of the temple, would come down into the city streets. To ply their trade as a cult - prostitutes. Indulging in the worship of sex.

Thus Corinth had gained reputation throughout the whole Roman world as the center of sensuality.

When a citizen of Corinth was portrayed in a drama, it would be a morally loose character and usually a drunk. Now this is the city into which Paul came walking in on the road.

This was the Paris of the old world. The play, The Corinthian was an expression of being a man addicted to dissipation. Described - utter corruption.

It was the center of corrupt life. There were vulgar shows of all kinds. The city abounded in immorality. Heavy drinking at all of their affairs.

Even the most terrible phase of the corruption was found in their religion. The awful temples of shame.

Paul, Rom. 1:22-32 - describes the Gentile corruption.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he wrote about sexual license and proversion, and discord, family feuds. The city was much like our own city of today. We live in Corinthian conditions today. And if there is any church in the New Testament, I suppose in which a church today could identify, this is the one.

Paul arrived here as a total stranger - he had never been here before. And he knew no one. But he was going to depend on God to open the door for him.

Now what can the Gospel do in a sin city. Where is a sin city. In Paul's day it was Corinth. Because to play the Corinthian meant to be a harlot. And this is representative of any worldly city today. Paul wrote at least four or five letters to the church at Corinth. Because the sin of Corinth had seeped its way into the church. If you note, I Cor. 5, 7. It is an interesting sidelight on the accuracy of Luke who reports the facts here.

V. (2-3) Finding lodging. Paul entered Corinth alone. And he expected God to lead him to someone who would open the door to this city. He probably went to the marketplace and he ran into a fellow Jew. Who like himself, was a tentmaker.

*Happy Man Found Lodging - Ready to congratulate - "My Boy" said The Bride's Father to the New Son in-law, you're the second-happiest man in the world.*  
This was Aquila and his wife Priscilla. Paul was keenly aware and conscious that the corrupt city was in need of some awakening - but he was without money.

He made arrangements to stay with these two friends. They had been expelled from Rome. All Jews had to leave by command of the Roman emperor. They tell us that at one time 4,000 were put out of the Rome area. And somehow, we might imagine that sometime before these two people had been led to Christ. Maybe by Paul. Or maybe by his faithful helper.

You will notice in passing, that Paul led them to Christ while he was at work. I hope that this will encourage you as a place of getting to know people. Getting to understand their needs. And as a normal place for evangelism. Now I am not suggesting that you do this on company time. But I think your work is an excellent place while you are in contact with people who are searching for the answers in life.

Paul loved to work with his hands. You will remember the Jews glorified work in that, he who does not teach his son a trade, teaches him robbery. And that is very excellent. Paul was a tentmaker. He perhaps worked with leather work. And from what we read in the Scriptures, he was a skilled craftsman.

Now Aquila was of the same craft as Paul. Tentmaking. And of course, it is good today to teach boys some trade. Idleness often tempts them to be dishonest. And, we should also teach the youth today that it is not a disgrace to do manual labor.

Paul took care of his own bills. And every preacher should keep his bills paid up. That is, the ministry is no place for any man to beat people out of money. Every preacher ought to do this.

V. 4 The synagogue. He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. I want you to note here, one point - Paul did not reason with them merely to bring them over to his way of thinking. Nor did he do this to prove his own superior of scholarship. But he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. Acts 17:2. That it might bring them over to the mind of God. Concerning his son, Jesus Christ. If the will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures are truth - has not become the governing and impelling factor of our lives, all of our teaching and living is vain. And we remain in our sins.

Now many people today, and preachers are guilty, instead of reasoning out of the Scriptures - they go out of the Scriptures to reason. Instead of giving the people the manna, the bread of life, they only feed them with dust.

V. 5 The power of co-operation. V. 5. When Silas and Timothy were come from

last week prayer said  
I am a Christian - when I die  
I'm going to heaven

- 2. " Confess your Faith Publicly -
- 3. " Baptized
- 4. " Begin growing in your faith.

Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that

Jesus was Christ. His fellow missionaries arrived and Paul no longer had to stay at the task of tentmaking day by day, and work single-handed. But he had a little more time to press the issues. To testify, to witness. This means that Paul could not only open the Bible, but it means that he could give his personal testimony to the saving power of Jesus. Of the transforming, wonderful grace. This made his message more than cold, and stiff, and lifeless. God never sends anybody out to preach Christ, who has not first had Christ revealed to him. We preach and speak that we do know. And so his earnestness was fanned with fire into a flame.

The (responsibility of preaching) - V. 6. He declared unto them the truth.

It says here, he shook his raiment, or robe - thus declaring that he was free.

Your blood is upon your own hands!

Your life's a Book Before Their Eyes,  
They're Reading it Thro' & Thro';  
Say, does it point them to their skins,  
Do others see Jesus in you?

Having heard the Gospel, they had increased their own responsibility - the guilt of self-murder. They had no one to blame now that Paul had delivered the message to them.

The very dust that he shook off of his garment, shall remain as a witness against them. It is a very solemn thing to grieve the spirit of God. It is a very solemn serious thing to treat the message of the Gospel lightly. Paul says it will turn into a sentence of death. Ez. 3:18-19.

Another thing Paul was saying here in this 7th verse is - or the 6th verse, if you do not accept my message, I am going to go to the Gentiles.

Paul did not have to go very far.

V. 7 The house next to the church, Justus, whose house was next to the

synagogue, was a man who worshipped God. His house was right next door. We can understand that. It must have been just a common wall between the house and the synagogue. And there was still clear access to the synagogue. Evidently this god-fearing man is the subject of a wonderful truth with spiritual implications. That his house joined and bounded right next to the church. I want to say to you that every church and every home ought to be next to the church.

I remember reading a tragic story told by Dr. Paul Roberts, who received a letter from a woman who criticized him greatly. She not only criticized him but she criticized every pastor that the church had had. In the last part of the letter she said, I have five children. They all hate God, hate the church, and hate religion. Dr. Roberts said, of course they do. This woman was reaping what she had sown. She criticized every preacher the church had ever had. She criticized the church, and she planted the black seeds of irreligion in the hearts of her children.

I'd like to insert here, that in homes where the parents have a loving and vital connection to the church, their children will not turn out like that. The home that is next to the church will be one that is dedicated to God. Christian marriage. Second, Christ will be the center of that home. The first obligation is God. Christ is the head of the home. The unseen guest at every meal. The silent listener to every conversation. When husbands and wives are united in love and trust, then a Christian home is like a church. It is purposeful, it is spiritual. It meets the physical needs of the family.

And one that is next door to the church, produces Christ-like character. Men and women become leaders in the church. Suzanne Wesley, the mother of 19 children, found time to speak to each child about his spiritual life. It was no accident that Moses was willing to choose the suffering of the people - rather than the pleasures of sin.

A pastor stood once by a young mother and her baby - and as the minister talked about the spiritual opportunities and responsibility this young couple now had - the little mother said quietly, we hope that God will use, and give us the grace, to rear this baby, to be a worker in the church. It is my opinion that little children should be taken to the worship services. People quite often ask this question - my answer to it is yes. Many children are taken from the beginning and never left in the nursery. By the time the child begins public school, he will already be attending the church worship services. He will not understand at first, but he cannot fail to be impressed by the atmosphere and the presence of God, in the services.

We could stop here and preach a sermon on the house next door to the church. But for the sake of covering this missionary journey, I must move along.

V. 8 → Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue was converted. This demonstrates the power of the Gospel and how his family and whole household was won. That was a tremendous response. And Paul believed in baptism here. This family was converted and they were baptized.

→ An hour of fear - V. 9, 10. Literally here is a night vision. Perhaps the very success of his ministry brought on this fear. That he was in a sinful city, and Paul knew that trouble was in the making.

The Lord spoke to him - be not afraid. This was encouragement. This sounded like Elijah after his victory on Mt. Carmel. Stop being afraid - but keep right on speaking. This was revealed to Paul - but indeed he was becoming afraid. Quite understandable. He had been rejected. Now he turned to the Gentiles, and floods of people were coming. And he knew that the next stop was going to be trouble spelled with a capital "T".



I think about Paul's fear here, and it tells us something about the humanity of this man. We usually think of him as bold, fearless - but here he is full of fear. I Cor. 2 - he says, and I came to you - I was within weakness with much fear and trembling.

V. 10 Paul may have had a (case of the "blues") but here God told him in V. 10 - "I am with you. And no man shall set on thee and hurt thee." For I have much people in this city. This was the most encouraging thing that Paul could have received. That God was with him. Because I am going to keep on protecting you. For I have a lot of work for you to do yet in this city. You will just keep on preaching. There are many people here that haven't come to me yet. But they will.

Let me use a modern day illustration - the football quarterback is protective in a certain way. His teammates form a pocket. The quarterback drops back into the pocket they call it, and he is protected. So he can continue the assault. Now that is exactly what the Lord said to Paul - Paul don't you worry. You see the hostility and you see all the opposition. You see all of these things coming. Now I have built a pocket around you - and you just keep on throwing that Gospel and pitching that Gospel. And making the assault on this sinful city.

I think the most encouraging words were - God said I still have some people in this pagan city." There are some here who are not yet Christians but you will be able to reach them. And God was going to support his preaching of the truth.

V. 11 - The Bible says that he continued for a year and a half there - and he was able to preach unto those people.

(Religious intolerance) V. (12, 13) The Jews had been unable to hurt Paul so there was a new ruler that came along and his name was Callio. The people said

we will cease Paul and take him before Gallio. And see what he will do with him. Now the Romans called him sweet Gallio. He was always superbly dressed. He had gentle manners. There was nothing harsh about him. Everybody loves him.

V. 13  
So the reason of their opposition was, because he had violated a law. Simply he had led some to worship God. V. 13.

The spirit of their opposition was madness. It was not argument. But it was the substitute rage for reason. And the Jews now rush in before the judgement seat. Saying, this fellow has persuaded people to worship this way. Paul opened his mouth to speak.

V. 14 And Gallio said what is the charge - what is the crime. Gallio stopped Paul from speaking. If this man is charged with immorality or some similar crime, I will consider it. But since it is just a question of words, names, and your law - I am not interested. Case dismissed. He was not like Pilate - bowing to public fame. He would not even entertain the case. And Paul was about to ask the question or say something. And Gallio said the case is dismissed.

Now the place of the trial called the bema - has been excavated if you visit Corinth you will see it is called in the Greek the bema. The scale, that is, the judgement seat. When I was there, I walked around the bema and tried to visualize Paul standing in front. Of this well-known judge of Rome. Gallio is mentioned in historical accounts. He is said to have been a very just man, mind in is disposition and very impartial.

The charge against Paul by the Jews was that he violated the Roman law beginning a new religion. That men were being persuaded to worship God, contrary to the law. But Gallio weighed the matter, and because of this discussion - the

Gospel was able to go forward. And so, he just threw the case out of court. That was a very important decision because now Paul was free to preach the Gospel throughout the whole Roman Empire on that basis.

V. 17 - Sosthenes. The Jews wanted to gain favor with Gallio so they seized this ruler of the Jews and brought him in on the same charge. And they beat him before Gallio and then we read this tragic sentence - Gallio cared for none of these things.

Gallio had an opportunity to hear Paul preach Christ. But he cared for none of these things. A man was severely beaten right in front of him. And he cared not at all. The world is full of the same kind of indifference today. Men and women are like Gallio - they may be good but they care nothing for spiritual things.

The tragedy is we find people in the church who care nothing for these things. It does not matter for them whether we have Sunday services or not. They care nothing about prayer meetings. They do not care whether anybody is saved or souls won to Jesus. They could care less whether the budget is raised. Or whether the church gives anything to missions. They simply do not care for these things.

What will you say when you come before Christ? My church was there in the world and why were you so busy and why were you not faithful to it.

You might answer, well, I was doing no harm. But fellow Christians, we are doing harm if we are not actively serving God. To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not - to him it is sin. James 4:17.

We will get to Heaven if we have been born again. But we'll be saved as if

by fire. We will lose our reward if we do not faithfully serve Christ.

I think sometimes, life's greatest tragedy is - some Christian shrugs his shoulder. I am not interested. Now if you knew that Christ - certainly he does know that that is your interest. You are not interested in the terrors that await those. That fail to follow him.

Luke is very careful to say that (Paul) taught the word of God among them. V. (11). For Christ sent him to preach the cross. Now the preaching of the cross literally, was Paul's answer to the wisdom of words - it is the word of the cross. God's revealed religion. Now modernists today have drifted to a way that they have their own revelations. And what is suggested today by many people, and not a few, is what we preach today is not up to date. But it is a back number and it comes through ignorance. Actually my friends, the Gospel never gets to be an antique. We think about Paul without apology proclaimed the word of the cross. Realizing that such makes the cross of non-effect, void or empty. He chose to glorify the cross and to glory in it. And this is the power of a Christ centered religion. Now you may believe in a philosophy centered religion. The word perish is a present word in the Greek - Gal. 6:14. Which means to destroy. It means that they are perishing. It means that they are doing it to themselves. It means that they have placed themselves in the path of destruction. To them, the cross is foolishness. The Greek word is moros. Which is a word for moron. So the idea of salvation and the cross is moronic in modern thought. Now the word saved - to be saved is present, passive, and future. Paul describes salvation as something done in the past. We were saved. Rom. 8:24. It is a continuing state - you have been saved. Eph. 2:8. It is still going on and continues on to a finished work. Ye are being saved. I Cor. 15:2.

V. 18 tells us - Paul sails for Syria. It also gives us a side light here. Priscilla and Aquila with him. As they sail from one of the ports of Corinth.

The comment, he cut his hair for he had a vow. This must refer to some kind of religious vow. Or a way of expressing thanks - he had vowed that for thirty days he had not cut his hair. But would give thanks to God and worship him. He probably fasted during this period as well. And refrained from certain foods. At the end of the thirty days, he cut his hair, having fulfilled his vow. A simple Jewish way of giving thanks.

Now the voyage led him on where Paul had been forbidden by the spirit to preach the word of the Lord earlier.

V. 19 Ephesus he landed in Ephesus, a city of idolatry. There was the temple to Diana.

He entered the synagogue, he reasoned with the Jews.

V. 20 They wanted him to stay longer but he stated in V. 21 - that he must go on. He said but I will return again if God will. I think here is something that we say, or we have heard people say, God may have other plans for us. But if God will, I will do this or that tomorrow.

Now Priscilla and Aquila agreed to stay here at Ephesus. Paul was a very busy man - and they set up a Christian home and immediately got into the Christian work.

I wonder how it was with you when you moved to town, or to the country, or wherever you are now. You came in, your husband came, to get a job or to get located. Now nobody asked you about the church or about the community. What you

were interested in was a job. Now that you are settled, have you done anything about your religion. Have you forgotten God and the church. It is true that you have made some money. It is also true that you have left your children to drift. If you are not attached to the church.

These two wonderful Christian became very active in the church there.

V. (22) - Paul sails and lands at Caesarea and then went up to the church at Antioch. So he is completing his second missionary journey in these verses here. And of course he goes on down to the church at Jerusalem.

To round out our chapter, Apollos - V. (24) - here is a young preacher who came to Ephesus. A young man, a learned man. Mighty in the Scriptures. He was from Alexandria. A Greek learning and cultural center. He was eloquent. A great orator.

The description is - mighty in the Scriptures. He not merely knew them, nor did he have an ability to deal with the Scriptures. And to present them. But it meant that he had the ability to master them and to understand them. In other words, he seemed to have a special gift that this man possessed. A natural gift, a natural power. To know Scriptures and to be able to study them.

V. (25) - His ministry at first was not distinctly Christian. He was instructed in the complete way of the Lord.

He taught concerning Jesus - knowing only the baptism of John. The account of the ministry of John is found in Matt. 3:1, 3. Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord. Knowing only the baptism of John - the way of the Lord. Is the direct quotation from the prophesy - Isa. 40:3. The 40th chapter opens with

comfort ye, comfort ye my people. It is the beginning of a great minister of peace and results in judgement.

John proclaimed the way of the Lord. And Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord. Speaking of the coming Messiah. He did not know the meaning completely of the cross. Nor was he acquainted with the facts of the resurrection. Nor the outpouring of the spirit.

V. (26) - He was a disciple of John. And there were these two people - Priscilla and Aquila. They had been in Ephesus about a year. They heard him speak. They recognized the deficiency in his preaching. He used only the Old Testament Scriptures. His message was good - but he was not far enough.

Now these two Christian people did not criticize the young preacher to destroy him. But they took him aside to instruct him. In my thinking, this was a beautiful thing for these mature Christians to do. They endeavored to give him a more accurate idea of the Gospel. This experience helped him greatly in his work. I think it helped him by word of mouth. Also by prayer. And by hearing his messages. It assisted him. We make new discoveries every day, as preachers. I have listened many times to wonderful saints of God who have helped me with great profit.

Here are the features of a great preacher - Biblical knowledge. Effective power. And a gracious spirit. And a capacity for usefulness.

Mel Trotter said that when he went to London on a preaching tour, with a group - some of the high ups said we can't let Mel preach in one of the downtown churches. His grammer is bad. He has a poor vocabulary. So they arranged for him to speak in a hall at 3 P. M. Figuring just a few would hear him. That afternoon, the hall was crowded. And people were standing around the wall. Mel stood and told the

crowd they didn't want me to speak in one of the downtown churches because my vocabulary was bad. But I want you to understand that when I was saved, I lost 75% of my vocabulary. I am using the 25% left to win souls for Jesus. He gave a call and 60 people came forward.

Paul said to Timothy - preach the word. All Scripture is God breathed and is profitable. I charge you to preach the word. The evils of this world need to have the world turned on them.

V. (28) - Apollos now goes back to the ABC's of the Gospel. And he goes on to Corinth - to the church there. Somebody said that the church there at Corinth was the first Baptist Church. Later on, Paul in his writings - as we read them, we discover that the church was (split four ways.)

Now he was a great help to it. He had charm. And he was faithful to Christ.

David Livingston one of the great Christians, gave his life for Christ in Africa. When he died his body was brought back to England and buried. The crowds thronged the streets to pay him tribute. But one old man stood up, weeping as if his heart would break. Who was this man. He was a friend of David Livingston's - they had been reared together. They had played together. When Livingston decided to go to Africa, his friend told him he was crazy. He said he was going to stay in London and become rich.

He stayed in London and he lived for himself. He was known by very few people. While Livingston became the best-known and the most greatly loved man of his day. On the day that Livingston was buried, this man cried out - I put the emphasis on the wrong world.



What are you putting the emphasis on in your life. Is it on the world.

Are you going to look back on a wasted and misspent life and have no hope in the world to come.

You should give your life to Jesus. You should live for him - put him first.

And every good thing will be added unto you.