

Acts
Still Following Paul Following Jesus
Acts 18:1-23

[Charge as we embark on our next 35 years; Inspiration of 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Contrasts of churches at Philadelphia and Laodicea in Revelation 3; What does our daily living look like? Individually? Corporately? 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 - Bookends = Glory of God, Obedience; Desired Outcome on Earth = Maximum impact on others, so that many will be saved; Similar bookend theme found in John 17:4 as modeled by Jesus; See Matthew 7:24-27 re: following Jesus - storm illustration]

[Read passage; Commentary on passage background and highlights]

- I. Paul's Report (1-8)
 - "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." (v6)

- II. The Lord's Report (9-11)
 - "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city." (vv9-10; cf 1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

- III. Opponents' Report (12-13)
 - "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law." (v13)

- IV. Official's Report (14-17)
 - "If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you; but if there are questions about words and names and your own law, look after it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters." (vv14-15)

- IV. Paul's Report...Still (18-23)
 - "I will return to you again if God wills...." (v21)

Go Forward

Know: Your life following Jesus Christ should have one constant (glorifying Him through obedience) and other variations (periods of peace, periods of trouble, etc.). Through the grid of Matthew 7:24-27, consider the risk of messing with that one constant.

Grow: Spend some time praying about and thinking on the following Scripture passages: John 17:4; 1 John 5:3; Philippians 3:7-14; Hebrews 12:1-3. Use the following priority order as you pray, think and process the passages: (1) God's glory, then (2) your obedience.

Show: Pray for God to give you the opportunity to share with one person this week what you're learning and applying from the things above. If God puts a person on your heart, take a proactive step and schedule a time to get together and share. For sure, ask God to help you "proclaim" the message through your God-glorifying, obedient actions.

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. (Revelation 3:8)

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. (Revelation 3:15-16)

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ. (1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1)

I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. (John 17:4)

Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell-and great was its fall. (Matthew 7:24-27)

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)