



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

## Study 26: **PERSEVERANCE IN THE EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY** **Acts 18:1-28**

In the previous chapter, we followed the Apostle, Paul, as he evangelized and ministered in Thessalonica, Berea and Athens. The results, responses and reactions were varied and profitable. In Thessalonica, a great multitude of men and women believed (Acts 17:4); in Berea, many of them also believed and became committed to studying the Scriptures and growing in grace and godliness (Acts 17:11,12); the Athenians responded differently, yet certain men and women believed and continued in the faith (Acts 17:32-34). In each city, there was persecution but the Apostle persevered and continued preaching the gospel of Christ. ***“In the world ye shall have tribulation”*** (persecution) but ***“this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world”*** (John 16:33; Matthew 24:14). While the persecutors in obedience to their master oppose the evangelization of the world, Christ’s ambassadors in obedience to our Master must remain committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

### **GOD’S PRESENCE WITH THE PERSEVERING APOSTLE**

Acts 18:1-11; 20:33-35; Romans 16:3-5; Acts 17:2-4; Romans 1:14-16; Acts 13:45-48; Mark 16:15,16; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 13:5,6.

Paul’s evangelistic ministry is a model for every minister. His pastoral and teaching ministry strengthened the established churches, yet his evangelistic commitment saved multitudes of lost sinners. And he was not alone; there were men of like passion and commendable commitment who laboured with him to produce fruits in the harvesting of souls and preserve abiding fruits for heaven and glory. Paul sometimes laboured to minister to his own needs and necessities but his secular engagements were never allowed to hinder or even limit his primary calling or commission. We may have ‘secular’ responsibilities and duties but these legitimate things must not hinder the salvation of eternal, never-dying souls. It was Paul’s privilege to always experience God’s presence, power and protection. The same promises are ours as we faithfully commit our lives to seeking to save the lost.

### **GRACEFUL PERSEVERANCE AMIDST PERVERTED ADVERSARIES**

Acts 18:12-23; 4:18-21; 5:27-29,40-42;16:22-26,39,40; 20:22-28; 26:19-23; 2 Timothy 3:10-14; Romans 15:19-21; Revelation 2:25,26.

***“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries”*** (1 Corinthians 16:9). Paul’s ministry of evangelization and edification was mightily blessed in Corinth. As predicted and prophesied by Christ, persecution arose against him at Corinth. God had said, ***“I have much people in this city”***, and it was Paul’s unrelenting purpose and pursuit to bring them to the Lord. That is why he graciously persevered despite unexpected slander and false accusation against him. He was ***“stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as”*** he knew that his ***“labour [was] not in vain in the Lord”*** (1 Corinthians 15:58). He looked beyond the temporary suffering of earthly persecution and kept his eyes on the eternal joy of saved souls. We are all called to rescue the perishing and bring sinners to Christ. Eternal rewards await the faithful.

### **GREAT PROGRESS THROUGH A PASSIONATE AMBASSADOR**

Acts 18:24-28; 19:1-3; 1 Corinthians 1:12,13; 3:4-9; 4:5-7; 16:12-14; John 16:7-13; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Luke 24:45-49.

After a successful ministry at Corinth, Paul ***“departed, and went over all the country... strengthening all the disciples”*** (Acts 18:23). Aquila and Priscilla remained at Ephesus. A preacher named Apollos, a Jew by birth, arrived there. He was mighty in the Old Testament Scriptures but deficient in his knowledge of Christ, the new covenant and full redemption through the risen Christ. He was an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, diligent, zealous and fervent in spirit, ***“knowing ONLY the baptism of John”***. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him speak, they recognized that he needed further instruction and Christian experiences. He was teachable, willing to learn and know the Lord more. Eloquent, mighty, bold, fervent, recognized, industrious and knowledgeable, yet ***“the Spirit”*** was missing in his ministry. He was led to go beyond John and come fully to Jesus.

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