

Acts 18:1-17
The Need For Encouragement

Introduction:

The ministry of the gospel has its points of tension between discouragement and encouragement. All of God's people have experienced this not only in the early church setting but in our present time in the church. Discouragements are not a figment of our imagination they are very real in a sin fallen world. But our Lord will not abandon us like orphans; for the Spirit of Christ is with us since His ascension having sent to us the Holy Spirit. "He abides with you," Jesus said, and "will be in you." (John 14:16-18)

I. The Ministries Discouragements – v. 1-6

A. Corinth – I Cor. 2:1-5

1. Cosmopolitan
2. Commercial
3. Corrupt

B. Lack of success –v.4

1. Pastoral "burn-out" (Gordon Keddie)
2. The Ministers Fainting Fits – Charles Spurgeon)

C. Paul pressed on

1. With his policy of preaching the gospel to Jews first and then to Gentiles – Rom. 1:16
2. With his devotion to the Word – v.5

D. Rejection

1. Corresponds to our Master – John 15:20
2. Paul handles rejection by shaking the dust off his clothes – (Acts 13:51; Matt. 10:14; Ex. 18:30; 33:5)
3. How do you handle rejection? II Tim. 1:7 (Moses – Ex. 5:22,23 Joshua – 7:7-10; II Cor. 12:9,10)
4. Do not give up when discouragements come your way – Gal. 6:9

II. The Ministries Encouragements – 7-17

A. The Companionship of Silas and Timothy – v.5

B. Silas and Timothy brought financial support – Turn To: II Cor. 8:1-9; 11:9

C. There was real fruit for Paul's efforts – v.7,8

D. Paul's Vision:

1. Do not be afraid – v.9a
2. Keep on preaching – v.9b (Acts 9:15; Rom. 10:17)
3. The promise of the Lord's presence – v.10; Deut. 31:6; Matt. 28:20; Psa.5:12
4. The promise of the Lord's protection – v.12-17
5. The ultimate reason for the gospel ministry – v.10b.(Eph. 1:22; Prov. 21:1) II Tim. 2:10

Conclusion:

1. *Satan may hurl his fiery missiles at us, wicked men may assault us, but it shall all be in vain because nothing can withstand the power of the gospel of Christ – Rom. 1:16*
Luther's Might Fortress – (1528)
2. *The gospel shall prevail because our Sovereign Lord has willed to build His church.*
Matt. 16:18

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