

- Song 78 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching”:** (10 min.)
Ac 17:2, 3—Paul reasoned from the Scriptures and used references when teaching (*nwtsty* study notes)
Ac 17:17—Paul preached wherever he found people (*nwtsty* study note)
Ac 17:22, 23—Paul was observant and established common ground (*nwtsty* study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ac 18:18—What can be said about the vow Paul made? (*w08* 5/15 32 ¶5)

Ac 18:21—How should we imitate Paul as we pursue spiritual goals? (*nwtsty* study note)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?
- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 17:1-15

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. Introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?*
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *jl* lesson 7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 70
- **Thoroughly Preach and Teach the Good News:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News* (video category THE BIBLE). Then ask the following questions: How did the family in the video recognize that they needed to improve the quality of their ministry? What facets of the apostle Paul’s ministry did they imitate? What blessings did they experience as a result? What are some ideas for family worship that you might use?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 47
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 151 and Prayer

ACTS 17-18 | Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching



17:2, 3, 17, 22, 23

How can we imitate the apostle Paul’s example?



- We can use the Scriptures to reason with people, and we can adapt our reasoning to our audience
- We can preach where and when we are likely to find people
- We can tactfully acknowledge others’ beliefs in order to establish common ground

FOR MEDITATION: Where and when can I find more people to witness to in my congregation’s territory?

78 *“Teaching the Word of God”*

(Acts 18:11)

1. For those who teach the Word of God,
 There is a joyful share.
 The benefits that we receive
 Are far beyond compare.
 We imitate the Son of God
 And how he taught with love.
 And as we teach, the ones we’re helping
 Draw close to God above.
2. As teachers of Jehovah’s Word,
 We strive to do what’s right,
 So all may see sincerity
 As we reflect God’s light.
 With diligence we search God’s Word,
 For it has news to tell.
 So we can share our heart’s good treasure
 And teach ourselves as well.
3. Jehovah gives us all we need
 To teach his precious Word.
 So if we pray to ask for help,
 We know that we’ll be heard.
 We love what’s in the Word of God;
 What’s more, we know it’s true.
 And as we love the ones we’re teaching,
 They’ll soon be teachers too!

Acts 17-18

17 They now traveled through Am-ship'o-lis and Ap-ol-lo'ni-a and came to Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² So according to Paul's custom he went inside to them, and for three sabbaths he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, saying: "This is the Christ, this Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." ⁴ As a result, some of them became believers and associated themselves with Paul and Silas, and so did a great multitude of the Greeks who worshipped God, along with quite a few of the principal women.

⁵ But the Jews, getting jealous, gathered together some wicked men who were loitering at the marketplace and formed a mob and proceeded to throw the city into an uproar. They assaulted the house of Ja'son and were seeking to have Paul and Silas brought out to the mob. ⁶ When they did not find them, they dragged Ja'son and some of the brothers to the city rulers, crying out: "These men who have overturned the inhabited earth are present here also, ⁷ and Ja'son has received them as his guests. All these men act in opposition to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, Jesus." ⁸ When they heard these things, the crowd and the city rulers were alarmed; ⁹ and after taking sufficient security from Ja'son and the others, they let them go.

¹⁰ Immediately by night the brothers sent both Paul and Silas to Be-roe'a. On arriving, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, for they accepted the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. ¹² Therefore, many of them became believers, and so did quite a few of the reputable Greek women as well as some of the men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca learned that the word of God was also being

proclaimed by Paul in Be-roe'a, they came there to incite and agitate the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul away to the sea, but both Silas and Timothy remained behind there. ¹⁵ However, those accompanying Paul brought him as far as Athens, and they departed after receiving instructions that Silas and Timothy should come to Paul as quickly as possible.

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit within him became irritated on seeing that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshipped God and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand. ¹⁸ But some of both the Ep-i-cu-re'an and the Sto'ic philosophers began disputing with him, and some were saying: "What is it this chatterer would like to tell?" Others: "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign deities." This was because he was declaring the good news of Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ So they took hold of him and led him to the Ar-e-op'a-gus, saying: "Can we get to know what this new teaching is that you are speaking about? ²⁰ For you are introducing some things that are strange to our ears, and we want to know what these things mean." ²¹ In fact, all Athenians and the foreigners staying there would spend their leisure time doing nothing else but telling or listening to something new. ²² Paul now stood in the midst of the Ar-e-op'a-gus and said:

"Men of Athens, I see that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. ²³ For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration, I found even an altar on which had been inscribed 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore, what you are unknowingly worshipping, this I am declaring to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and all the things in it, being, as he is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples; ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to all people life and breath and all things. ²⁶ And he made out of

one man every nation of men to dwell on the entire surface of the earth, and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of where men would dwell, ²⁷ so that they would seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. ²⁸ For by him we have life and move and exist, even as some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his children.'

²⁹ "Therefore, since we are the children of God, we should not think that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and design of humans. ³⁰ True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance; but now he is declaring to all people everywhere that they should repent.

³¹ Because he has set a day on which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has provided a guarantee to all men by resurrecting him from the dead."

³² Now when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to scoff, while others said: "We will hear you again about this." ³³ So Paul left them, ³⁴ but some men joined him and became believers. Among them were Di-o-nys'i-us, who was a judge of the court of the Ar-e-op'a-gus, and a woman named Dam'a-ris, and others besides them.

18 After this he departed from Athens and came to Corinth. ² And he found a Jew named Aq'ui-la, a native of Pon'tus who had recently come from Italy with Pris-cil'la his wife, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. So he went to them, ³ and because he had the same trade, he stayed at their home and worked with them, for they were tentmakers by trade. ⁴ He would give a talk in the synagogue every sabbath and would persuade Jews and Greeks.

⁵ When, now, both Silas and Timothy came down from Mac-e-do'ni-a, Paul began to be intensely occupied with the word,

witnessing to the Jews to prove that Jesus is the Christ. ⁶ But after they kept on opposing him and speaking abusively, he shook out his garments and said to them: "Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean. From now on I will go to people of the nations."

⁷ So he transferred from there and went into the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshipper of God, whose house adjoined the synagogue. ⁸ But Cris'pus, the presiding officer of the synagogue, became a believer in the Lord, along with all his household. And many of the Corinthians who heard began to believe and be baptized. ⁹ Moreover, the Lord said to Paul in a vision by night: "Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking and do not keep silent, ¹⁰ for I am with you and no man will assault you to harm you; for I have many people in this city." ¹¹ So he stayed there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹² While Gal'li-o was proconsul of A-cha'ia, the Jews made a concerted attack against Paul and led him to the judgment seat, ¹³ saying: "This man is persuading people to worship God in a way contrary to the law." ¹⁴ But as Paul was about to speak, Gal'li-o said to the Jews: "If, indeed, it were some wrong or a serious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to hear you out patiently. ¹⁵ But if it is controversies over speech and names and your own law, you yourselves must see to it. I do not wish to be a judge of these things." ¹⁶ With that he drove them away from the judgment seat. ¹⁷ So they all seized Sos'the-nes, the presiding officer of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gal'li-o would not get involved at all with these things.

¹⁸ However, after staying quite a few days longer, Paul said good-bye to the brothers and sailed away for Syria, accompanied by Pris-cil'la and Aq'ui-la. He had his hair clipped short in Cen'chre-ae, for he had made a vow. ¹⁹ So they arrived at Eph'e-sus, and he left them there; but he entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ Although they kept requesting him to stay longer, he would not consent ²¹ but said good-bye and told

them: "I will return to you again, if Jehovah is willing." And he put out to sea from Eph'e·sus²² and came down to Caes·a·re'a. And he went up and greeted the congregation and then went down to Antioch.

²³ After spending some time there, he departed and went from place to place through the country of Ga·la'ti·a and Phryg'i·a, strengthening all the disciples.

²⁴ Now a Jew named A·pol'los, a native of Alexandria, arrived in Eph'e·sus; he was an eloquent man who was well-versed in the Scriptures.²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of Jehovah, and aglow with the spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things about Jesus, but he was acquainted only with the baptism of John.²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, and when Pris·cil'la and Aq'ui·la heard him, they took him into their company and explained the way of God more accurately to him.

²⁷ Further, because he wanted to go across to A·cha'ia, the brothers wrote to the disciples, urging them to receive him kindly. So when he got there, he greatly helped those who through God's undeserved kindness had become believers;²⁸ for publicly and with great intensity he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong, showing them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

- Song 78 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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 Ac 18:18—What can be said about the vow Paul made? (*w08* 5/15 32 ¶5)

 Ac 18:21—How should we imitate Paul as we pursue spiritual goals? (*nwtsty* study note)

 What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

 What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?
- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 17:1-15

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. Introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?*
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *jl* lesson 7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 70
- **Thoroughly Preach and Teach the Good News:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News* (video category THE BIBLE). Then ask the following questions: How did the family in the video recognize that they needed to improve the quality of their ministry? What facets of the apostle Paul’s ministry did they imitate? What blessings did they experience as a result? What are some ideas for family worship that you might use?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 47
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 151 and Prayer

ACTS 17-18 | Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching



17:2, 3, 17, 22, 23

How can we imitate the apostle Paul’s example?



- We can use the Scriptures to reason with people, and we can adapt our reasoning to our audience
- We can preach where and when we are likely to find people
- We can tactfully acknowledge others’ beliefs in order to establish common ground

FOR MEDITATION: Where and when can I find more people to witness to in my congregation’s territory?

December 24-30

Treasures From God's Word

Acts 17:2, 3—Paul reasoned from the Scriptures and used references when teaching

Acts 17:2, 3: So according to Paul's custom he went inside to them, and for three sabbaths he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, saying: "This is the Christ, this Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you."

Study note on Acts 17:2

reasoned: Paul did not simply tell them the good news. He explained it and presented proof from the Scriptures, that is, from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. He did more than read the Scriptures; he reasoned from them, and he adapted his reasoning to his audience. The Greek verb *diale'gomai* has been defined as "to engage in an interchange of speech; to converse; to discuss." It denotes interacting with people. This Greek word is also used at Acts 17:17; 18:4, 19; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 9.

Study note on Acts 17:3

proving by references: The Greek word literally means "to put alongside (place beside)." This may imply that Paul carefully compared the Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures with the events of Jesus' life, showing how Jesus had fulfilled those prophecies.

Acts 17:17—Paul preached wherever he found people (“the marketplace” study note on Acts 17:17, *nwtsty*)

Acts 17:17: So he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshipped God and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand.

Study note

the marketplace: Located NW of the Acropolis, Athens’ marketplace (Greek, *agora*) covered 5 hectares (12 acres) or so. The marketplace was much more than a location for buying and selling. It was the center of the city’s economic, political, and cultural life. Athenians enjoyed meeting at this center of public life to engage in intellectual discussions.

Acts 17:22, 23—Paul was observant and established common ground

Acts 17:22, 23: Paul now stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said: “Men of Athens, I see that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration, I found even an altar on which had been inscribed ‘To an Unknown God.’ Therefore, what you are unknowingly worshipping, this I am declaring to you.

Study note

To an Unknown God: The Greek words *Agno'stoi theoi* were part of an inscription on an altar in Athens. The Athenians expressed their fear of deities by building many temples and altars, even making altars to abstract deities, such as Fame, Modesty, Energy, Persuasion, and Pity. Perhaps fearing that they might omit a god

and thereby incur that god's disfavor, they dedicated an altar "to an Unknown God." By means of such an altar, the people admitted the existence of a God about whom they knew nothing. Paul skillfully used the presence of this altar as a basis for his preaching to introduce his audience to the God—the true God—who until then was unknown to them.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Acts 18:18—What can be said about the vow Paul made?

Acts 18:18: However, after staying quite a few days longer, Paul said good-bye to the brothers and sailed away for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. He had his hair clipped short in Cenchreae, for he had made a vow.

w08 5/15 32 paragraph 5

Acts 18:18—What vow did Paul make? Some scholars suggest that Paul had taken a Nazirite vow. (Numbers 6:1-21) However, the Bible does not state what Paul's vow was. Moreover, the Scriptures are silent as to whether the vow was made before or after Paul's conversion or if he was starting or ending the vow. Whatever was the case, the taking of such a vow was not sinful.

Acts 18:21—How should we imitate Paul as we pursue spiritual goals?

Acts 18:21: but said good-bye and told them: "I will return to you again, if Jehovah is willing." And he put out to sea from Ephesus

Study note

if Jehovah is willing: An expression that emphasizes the need to take God's will into account when doing or planning to do anything. The apostle Paul kept this principle closely in mind. (1 Corinthians 4:19; 16:7; Hebrews 6:3) The disciple James also encouraged his readers to say: "If Jehovah wills, we will live and do this or that." (James 4:15) Such expressions should not be empty phrases; anyone who sincerely says "if Jehovah is willing" must try to act in harmony with Jehovah's will. The expression does not always need to be made audibly but is often made only in the heart.—See study notes on Acts 21:14; 1 Corinthians 4:19; James 4:15 and Appendix C.

What has this week's Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week's Bible reading?

Bible Reading: (4 minutes or less) Acts 17:1-15

ACTS

Study Notes—Chapter 17

17:2

reasoned: Paul did not simply tell them the good news. He explained it and presented proof **from the Scriptures**, that is, from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. He did more than read the Scriptures; he reasoned from them, and he adapted his reasoning to his audience. The Greek verb *di-a-le'go-mai* has been defined as “to engage in an interchange of speech; to converse; to discuss.” It denotes interacting with people. This Greek word is also used at Ac 17:17; 18:4, 19; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 9.

17:3

proving by references: The Greek word literally means “to put alongside (place beside).” This may imply that Paul carefully compared the Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures with the events of Jesus’ life, showing how Jesus had fulfilled those prophecies.

17:6

the city rulers: Lit., “politarchs,” meaning “rulers of the citizens.” This Greek term (*po-li-tar'khes*) is not found in classical Greek literature. Yet, inscriptions bearing this title, some dating to the first century B.C.E., were uncovered in the Thessalonica area as well as elsewhere in the province of Macedonia. These findings confirm the Acts account and the reliability of Luke as a historian.

17:7

Caesar: Or “the Emperor.” The Roman emperor at this time was Claudius, who ruled from 41 to 54 C.E.—Ac 11:28; 18:2; see study note on Mt 22:17 and Glossary.

17:11

carefully examining: Or “thoroughly studying.” The Greek term *a-na-kri'no* has been defined as “to sift; to divide up; to separate.” It is sometimes used in the sense of conducting a judicial hearing. (Lu 23:14; Ac 4:9; 28:18; 1Co 4:3) Therefore, in this context, it conveys the idea of doing careful and exact research as in a legal process. The examination done by the Jews in Beroea was therefore not superficial; they probed carefully to confirm that what Paul and Silas were teaching from the Scriptures about Jesus as the long-promised Messiah was true.

17:17

the marketplace: Located NW of the Acropolis, Athens' marketplace (Greek, *a-go-ra'*) covered 5 ha (12 ac) or so. The marketplace was much more than a location for buying and selling. It was the center of the city's economic, political, and cultural life. Athenians enjoyed meeting at this center of public life to engage in intellectual discussions.

17:18

the Epicurean . . . philosophers: Followers of the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 B.C.E.), they taught that experiencing pleasure was the ultimate goal in life. The Epicureans believed in the existence of gods but thought that the gods had no interest in humans and would neither reward nor punish them, so prayer or sacrifice was useless. The Epicureans' thinking and actions were devoid of moral principle. They urged moderation, however, on the grounds that it would prevent the negative consequences of overindulgence. And they believed that knowledge should be sought only to rid a person of religious fears and superstition. Neither the Epicureans nor the Stoics

believed in a resurrection.—See study note on **the Stoic philosophers** in this verse.

the Stoic philosophers: A Greek school of philosophers who believed that happiness consists of living in accord with reason and nature. In their estimation, the truly wise man was indifferent to pain or pleasure. The Stoics believed that all things were part of an impersonal deity and that the human soul emanated from such a source. Some Stoics held that the soul would eventually be destroyed along with the universe. Other Stoics believed that the soul would ultimately be reabsorbed by this deity. Neither the Stoics nor the Epicureans believed in a resurrection.—See study note on **the Epicurean . . . philosophers** in this verse.

chatterer: Lit., “seed picker.” The Greek word used here, *sper-mo-lo'gos*, was applied to a bird that picks up seeds. Figuratively, it was used in a derogatory sense of a person who picks up scraps by begging or stealing or of an unqualified, unsophisticated person who repeats scraps of knowledge, an idle babbler. In effect, those learned men were saying that Paul was ignorantly chattering about things he did not really understand.

17:19

the Areopagus: Or “Hill of Ares.” Ares was the Greek god of war. Located NW of the Acropolis, the Areopagus was the traditional meeting place of the chief council of Athens. The term “Areopagus” may refer to the actual hill or to the council. (Ac 17:34) Therefore, some scholars feel that Paul was brought to this hill or nearby to be questioned, while other scholars believe that he was taken to a meeting of the council held elsewhere, perhaps at the agora. Because Ares corresponds to the Roman god Mars, some translations refer to this place as “Mars’ Hill.”

17:21

staying: Or “visiting.” The Greek word used here, *e·pi·de·me'o*, has been defined “to stay in a place as a stranger or visitor.”

17:23

To an Unknown God: The Greek words *A·gno'stoi the·oi'* were part of an inscription on an altar in Athens. The Athenians expressed their fear of deities by building many temples and altars, even making altars to abstract deities, such as Fame, Modesty, Energy, Persuasion, and Pity. Perhaps fearing that they might omit a god and thereby incur that god's disfavor, they dedicated an altar “to an Unknown God.” By means of such an altar, the people admitted the existence of a God about whom they knew nothing. Paul skillfully used the presence of this altar as a basis for his preaching to introduce his audience to the God—the true God—who until then was unknown to them.

17:24

the world: The Greek word *ko'smos* is closely linked with mankind in secular Greek literature and particularly in the Bible. (See study note on Joh 1:10.) In secular Greek writings, however, the term was also used to refer to the universe and to creation in general. It is possible that Paul, who was trying to establish common ground with his Greek audience, here used the term in that sense.

handmade temples: Or “temples made by human hands.” The Greek word *khei·ro·poi'e·tos* is also used at Ac 7:48 and Heb 9:11, 24, where it is rendered “made with hands.” Unlike the Greek goddess Athena or the other deities whose glory depended on temples, shrines, and altars made by humans, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth cannot be contained in physical temples. (1Ki 8:27) The true God is grander than any

idols found in man-made temples. (Isa 40:18-26) Paul may have made this comment because he saw the many temples, shrines, and sanctuaries devoted to various deities.

17:28

we have life and move and exist: Some suggest that this statement reflects a Greek rhetorical style called tricolon, which uses three parallel words to express a thought. Philosophers Plato, Sophocles, and Aristotle used this technique. Others suggest that this was an allusion to a poem by Epimenides, a Cretan poet of the sixth century B.C.E.

some of your own poets: Paul apparently quoted the expression “for we are also his children” from the poem *Phaenomena*, by the Stoic poet Aratus, and similar words are found in other Greek writings, including *Hymn to Zeus*, by the Stoic writer Cleanthes. Paul may have quoted Greek poets because educated speakers were expected to offer classical quotations among their proofs.

17:31

the inhabited earth: Here the Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi-kou-me'ne*) is used in a broad sense and refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind. (Lu 4:5; Ro 10:18; Re 12:9; 16:14) In the first century, this term was also used in reference to the vast Roman Empire, where the Jews had been dispersed.—Ac 24:5.

guarantee: Or “proof.” Lit., “faith.” The Greek word *pi'stis*, most often rendered “faith,” is apparently used in this context to convey the idea of a proof that gives reason for complete confidence in something promised.

17:34

who was a judge of the court of the Areopagus: Or “an Areopagite,” that is, a member of the council or court of the Areopagus.—See study note on Ac 17:19.

ACTS

Study Notes—Chapter 18

18:1

Corinth: One of the oldest and most prominent cities of ancient Greece, located about 5 km (3 mi) SW of the modern-day city. The importance and great wealth of Corinth resulted largely from its strategic location at the isthmus, or narrow neck of land, connecting central Greece with the southern peninsula, the Peloponnese. Not only did Corinth control the flow of goods between northern and southern Greece but it also controlled maritime traffic between E and W on the Mediterranean Sea, since traveling the sea/land route via the isthmus was safer than making the trip around Greece. Achaia, as the Romans called Greece apart from Macedonia, became a Roman senatorial province during the reign of Caesar Augustus, and Corinth was made its capital. (See study note on Ac 18:12.) A large number of Jews had settled in Corinth and had established a synagogue, drawing some Greek adherents. (Ac 18:4) The presence of Jews in ancient Corinth is attested to by first-century writer Philo and by an ancient Greek inscription on a marble lintel found near the gate toward the harbor of Lechaem. The inscription reads “[*Sy·na·]go·ge' He·br[ai'on]*,” meaning “Synagogue of the Hebrews.” Some suggest that the lintel is from the time of Paul, but most favor a later date.

18:2

Aquila: This faithful Christian husband and his loyal wife, **Priscilla** (also called Prisca), are described as being “fellow workers” with Paul. (Ro 16:3) They are referred to a total of six times in the Christian Greek Scriptures (Ac 18:18, 26; 1Co 16:19; 2Ti 4:19), and on each occasion they are mentioned together. The name Priscilla is the diminutive form of the name Prisca. The shorter form of the name is found in Paul’s writings, the longer form in Luke’s. Such a variation was common in Roman names. Banished from Rome by Emperor Claudius’ decree against the Jews sometime in the year 49 or early 50 C.E., Aquila and Priscilla took up residence in Corinth. When Paul arrived there in the autumn of 50 C.E., he worked with this couple at their common trade of tentmaking. Aquila and Priscilla doubtless aided Paul in building up the new congregation there. Aquila was a **native of Pontus**, a region of northern Asia Minor along the Black Sea.

18:3

tentmakers: Here the Greek term *ske·no·poi·os*’ is used to describe the trade of Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla. Various opinions have been offered as to the exact type of craftsman indicated by this word (whether tentmaker, tapestry weaver, or ropemaker); however, a number of scholars hold that “tentmaker” is the probable meaning. Paul was from Tarsus in Cilicia, an area famous for its goat-hair cloth named *cilicium*, from which tents were made. (Ac 21:39) Among the Jews of the first century C.E., it was considered honorable for a young man to learn a trade even if he was also to receive a higher education. It is possible, then, that Paul learned to make tents while he was still a youth. The work was not easy, for it is reported that the *cilicium* was usually stiff and rough and, consequently, difficult to cut and sew.

18:4

give a talk: Or “reason with people.” The Greek verb *di·a·le'go·mai* has been defined “to discuss; to converse.” It can describe the delivering of an instructional discourse as well as an interaction with people that includes an exchange of opinions. This same Greek word is also used at Ac 17:2, 17; 18:19; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 9.

18:5

intensely occupied with the word: Or “fully absorbed in preaching the word.” This expression indicates that Paul at this point began to devote all his time to preaching.

18:6

he shook out his garments: This gesture by Paul indicated that he was free of responsibility for the Jews in Corinth who refused to accept the lifesaving message about the Christ. Paul had fulfilled his obligation and was no longer accountable for their lives. (See study note on **Let your blood be on your own heads** in this verse.) This type of gesture had a precedent in the Scriptures. When Nehemiah spoke to the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem, he shook out the folds of his garment to signify that a person who did not fulfill a certain promise would be cast off by God. (Ne 5:13) Paul performed a similar gesture in Pisidian Antioch when he “shook the dust off [his] feet” against those who opposed him in that city.—See study notes on Ac 13:51; Lu 9:5.

Let your blood be on your own heads: Paul uses this expression to show that he is not accountable for the consequences that would come upon the Jews who refused to accept the message about Jesus, the Messiah. Similar statements found in the Hebrew Scriptures convey the idea that a person who pursues a course of action worthy of death is

responsible for the loss of his own life. (Jos 2:19; 2Sa 1:16; 1Ki 2:37; Eze 33:2-4; see study note on Mt 27:25.) Paul adds the declaration: **I am clean**, that is, “I am innocent [“guiltless; clear of responsibility”].”—See study note on Ac 20:26.

18:7

transferred from there: That is, from the synagogue to the house of Titius Justus, where Paul continued preaching. The home of Aquila and Priscilla remained Paul’s residence while he was in Corinth, but the house of Justus apparently became the center from which the apostle carried out his preaching activity.—Ac 18:3.

Titius Justus: A Corinthian believer identified as **a worshipper of God**, an expression that indicates that he was a Jewish proselyte.—See study notes on Ac 13:43; 16:14.

18:12

proconsul: A provincial governor for the Roman Senate. Here Gallio is mentioned as being proconsul of the province of Achaia. Luke is accurate in using the term “proconsul” in this case, for Achaia was a senatorial province from 27 B.C.E. to 15 C.E. and again after 44 C.E. (See study note on Ac 13:7.) An inscription from Delphi that refers to proconsul Gallio not only supports the accuracy of Luke’s account but also helps in dating Gallio’s term of office.

Achaia: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, Achaia refers to the Roman province of southern Greece with its capital at Corinth. In 27 B.C.E., when Caesar Augustus reorganized the two provinces of Greece, Macedonia and Achaia, the name Achaia applied to all of Peloponnese and to part of continental Greece. The province of Achaia was under the administration of the Roman Senate and was ruled through a proconsul from its capital,

Corinth. (2Co 1:1) Other cities of the province of Achaia mentioned in the Christian Greek Scriptures were Athens and Cenchreae. (Ac 18:1, 18; Ro 16:1) Achaia and Macedonia, its neighboring province to the N, were often mentioned together.— Ac 19:21; Ro 15:26; 1Th 1:7, 8.—See App. B13.

18:18

Cenchreae: One of Corinth's seaports, Cenchreae lay on the Saronic Gulf side of a narrow isthmus about 11 km (7 mi) E of Corinth. Cenchreae was Corinth's port for points E of Greece, while Lechaeum, on the opposite side of the isthmus, served as Corinth's port for Italy and other points W of Greece. Ruins in the area today include buildings and breakwaters near the present village of Kehries (Kechriais). According to Ro 16:1, there was a Christian congregation in Cenchreae.

18:21

if Jehovah is willing: An expression that emphasizes the need to take God's will into account when doing or planning to do anything. The apostle Paul kept this principle closely in mind. (1Co 4:19; 16:7; Heb 6:3) The disciple James also encouraged his readers to say: "If Jehovah wills, we will live and do this or that." (Jas 4:15) Such expressions should not be empty phrases; anyone who sincerely says "if Jehovah is willing" must try to act in harmony with Jehovah's will. The expression does not always need to be made audibly but is often made only in the heart.— See study notes on Ac 21:14; 1Co 4:19; Jas 4:15 and App. C.

18:22

he went up: Although Jerusalem is not specifically mentioned in the Greek text, Paul was apparently heading to that city. Jerusalem is about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level, and the Scriptures often speak of worshippers as "going up to

Jerusalem.” In fact, the Greek verb *a·na·bai'no* (“to go up”) is many times used when Jerusalem is specifically mentioned as the destination. (Mt 20:17; Mr 10:32; Lu 18:31; 19:28; Joh 2:13; 5:1; 11:55; Ac 11:2; 21:12, 15; 24:11; 25:1, 9; Ga 2:1) In addition, a verb meaning “to go down” (*ka·ta·bai'no*) also appears in this verse, and this verb is sometimes used when referring to going away from Jerusalem.—Mr 3:22; Lu 10:30, 31; Ac 24:1, 22; 25:7.

18:24

Apollos: A Jewish Christian who had apparently been raised in the city of **Alexandria**, the capital of the Roman province of Egypt. Alexandria was a center of higher learning, renowned for its great library. It was the largest city in the Roman Empire after Rome and had a large Jewish population. It was one of the most important centers of culture and learning for both Jews and Greeks. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the *Septuagint* was produced there. This background may help explain why Apollos is described as being **well-versed** [lit., “powerful”] **in the Scriptures**, that is, the inspired Hebrew Scriptures.

18:25

instructed: The Greek verb *ka·te·khe'o* literally means “to sound down,” and it may include the idea of oral instruction. When the truths of God’s Word are repeatedly sounded down into the mind and heart of a learner, he becomes qualified to teach others.— Compare Ga 6:6, where the same Greek word is used twice.

the way of Jehovah: In the following verse, the synonymous expression “the way of God” is used. The Christian way of life is centered on worship of the only true God, Jehovah, and on faith in his Son, Jesus Christ. The book of Acts refers to this course of life simply as “The Way” or “this Way.” (Ac 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22;

see study note on Ac 9:2.) Also, the expression “the way of Jehovah” appears four times in the Gospel accounts, where it is part of a quote from Isa 40:3. (See study notes on Mt 3:3; Mr 1:3; Lu 3:4; Joh 1:23.) At Isa 40:3, the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton. The expression “the way of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s way”) also occurs at Jg 2:22; Jer 5:4, 5.—See study note on Ac 19:23 and App. C.

aglow with the spirit: Lit., “boiling to the spirit.” The Greek word rendered “aglow” literally means “to boil,” but here it is used metaphorically to convey the idea of overflowing with or radiating zeal and enthusiasm. In this expression, the Greek word for “spirit” (*pneu'ma*) apparently refers to God’s holy spirit, which can act as a driving force, moving and energizing a person to do things in accord with Jehovah’s will. (See study note on Mr 1:12.) However, the term “spirit” may also refer to the impelling force that issues from a person’s figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way. So this verse may express a combined idea of a person showing zeal and enthusiasm for what is right as he is guided by God’s spirit. However, some feel that in this context, this expression is simply an idiom for great eagerness and enthusiasm. If so, this may explain how Apollos could be “aglow with the spirit” even though he was unacquainted with baptism in the name of Jesus. In either case, Apollos’ spirit needed to be guided by God’s spirit in order for him to show enthusiasm for the right things and to be willing to accept teachings that were more accurate.—See Glossary, “Spirit.”

the baptism of John: This baptism was a public demonstration of the individual’s repentance over his sins against the Law that Jehovah gave to Moses, a Law that the Jews had agreed to follow. (Ex 24:7, 8) Undergoing the baptism of John, however, was not valid after Pentecost 33 C.E. when the Law covenant ended. (Ro 10:4; Ga 3:13; Eph 2:13-15; Col 2:13, 14) From that

time on, the only baptism approved by Jehovah was the one that Jesus instructed his disciples to carry out. (Mt 28:19, 20) The events involving Apollos, described here, happened about the year 52 C.E.

18:27

God's: Lit., “the.” Although the Greek text does not have the word for “God’s” here, many scholars agree that it is understood. In the book of Acts, the expression “undeserved kindness” is most often connected with “God.”—Ac 11:23; 13:43; 14:26; 20:24, 32.

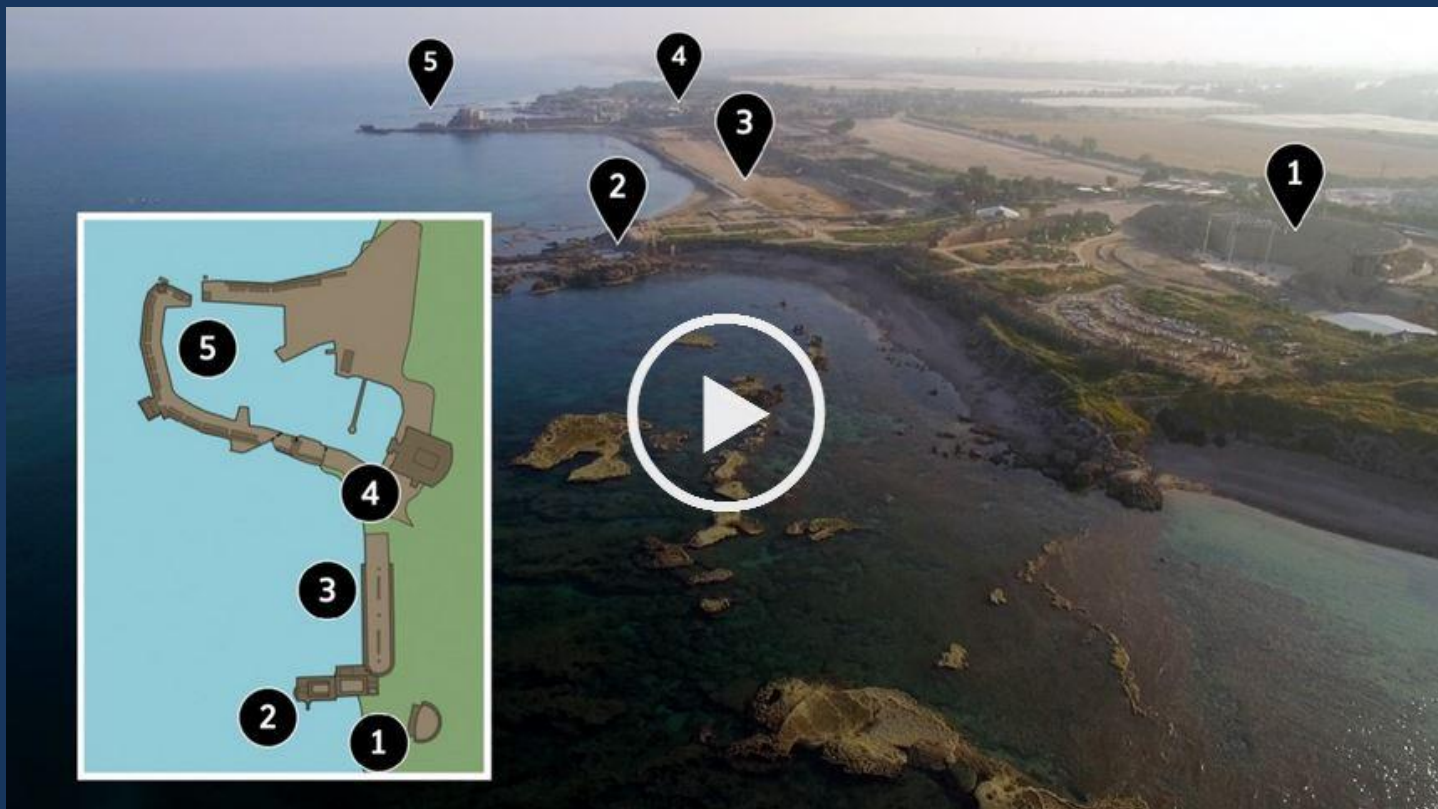


Su concessione del Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo; Soprintendenza Speciale per il Colosseo e l'Area archeologica centrale di Roma

Altars to Unknown Gods

In his speech at the Areopagus in Athens, Paul spoke of “an altar on which had been inscribed ‘To an Unknown God.’” (Ac 17:23) There is both literary and archaeological evidence supporting the existence of such altars in the Roman Empire. For example, second-century C.E. geographer Pausanias wrote about altars to unknown gods that were located in Greece, and Philostratus of the second and third centuries C.E. specifically refers to such altars in Athens. Photograph 1 shows the remains of a second-century C.E. altar in Pergamum (in modern-day Turkey). The inscription is incomplete, but a plausible restoration of the first line reads: “To unknown gods.” Photograph 2 shows an altar found on Rome’s Palatine Hill. The altar dates to about 100 B.C.E. and is dedicated to an unnamed deity. These examples support the Bible record about the existence of such altars.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 17:23



Caesarea

1. Roman theater

2. Palace

3. Hippodrome

4. Pagan temple

5. Harbor

This video of the ruins of Caesarea includes 3-D reconstructions, showing what some of the main buildings may have looked like. The city of Caesarea and its harbor were built by Herod the Great toward the end of the first century B.C.E. Herod named the city after Caesar Augustus. Located about 87 km (54 mi) northwest of Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Coast, Caesarea became an important maritime hub. The city included a Roman theater (1), a palace that extended into the sea (2), a hippodrome, or stadium for horse racing, that could hold an estimated 30,000 spectators (3), and a pagan temple (4). The man-made harbor (5) was an engineering marvel. An aqueduct supplied Caesarea with fresh water, and the city had its own sewer system. The apostle Paul and other Christians traveled to and from Caesarea by boat. (Ac 9:30; 18:21, 22; 21:7, 8, 16) Paul was imprisoned there for about two years. (Ac 24:27) Philip the evangelizer traveled to Caesarea at the end of a preaching tour and possibly settled there. (Ac 8:40; 21:8) Cornelius, the first uncircumcised Gentile to become a Christian, lived in that city. (Ac 10:1, 24, 34, 35, 45-48) It was probably in Caesarea that Luke wrote his Gospel.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 8:40; Ac 18:22



© PRISMA ARCHIVO/Alamy Stock Photo
Per concessione dei Musei Vaticani

Emperor Claudius

The book of Acts twice refers to Roman Emperor Claudius by name. (Ac 11:28; 18:2) He succeeded his nephew Caligula (who ruled from 37 to 41 C.E. and who is not mentioned in the Scriptures) to become the fourth emperor of Rome, ruling from 41 to 54 C.E. About the year 49 or 50 C.E., Claudius ordered all Jews to leave Rome. As a result, Priscilla and Aquila moved to Corinth, where they met the apostle Paul. Claudius' fourth wife reportedly poisoned him in 54 C.E., and he was succeeded by Emperor Nero.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 11:28; Ac 18:2



Courtesy of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports

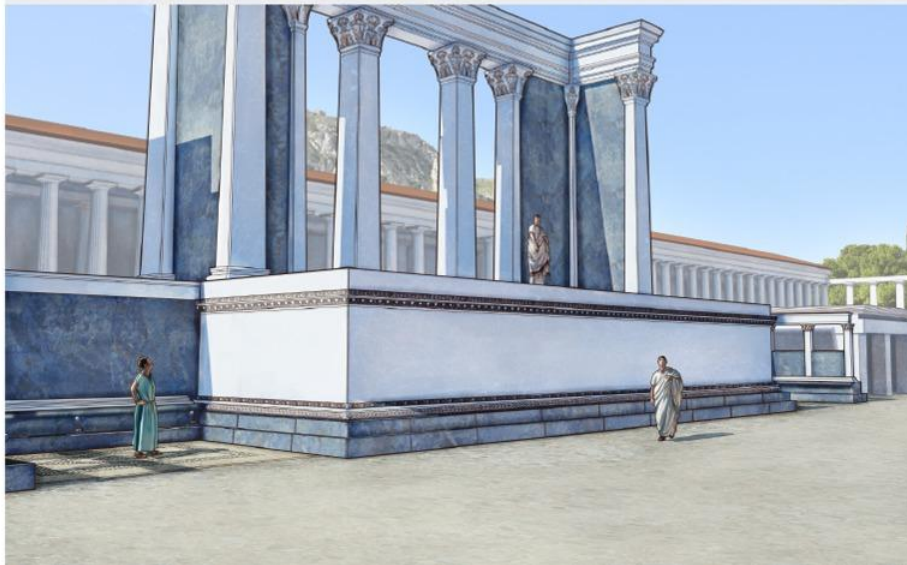
Gallio Inscription

This inscription found in Delphi, Greece, dating to about the middle of the first century C.E., refers to the proconsul Gallio. (His name is highlighted.) Ac 18:12 correctly states that “Gallio was proconsul of Achaia” at the time that the Jews in Corinth led the apostle Paul to him to be judged.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 18:12-14



Courtesy of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports



Judgment Seat in Corinth

The photograph shows the remains of “the judgment seat,” or bema, in Corinth. It was a large, raised platform used for public speaking. Corinth’s judgment seat was located near the center of the city’s agora, a large public area. A magistrate would use the platform to announce the judgments he rendered. The judgment seat was made of white and blue marble and was richly decorated. People who were to approach the magistrate waited in rooms that had mosaic floors and benches and were attached to the platform. Shown here is an artist’s conception of what the Corinthian judgment seat may have looked like in the first century C.E. It is believed to be the place where the Jews brought Paul before the proconsul Gallio.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 18:12

- Song 78 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching”:** (10 min.)
 Ac 17:2, 3—Paul reasoned from the Scriptures and used references when teaching (*nwtsty* study notes)
 Ac 17:17—Paul preached wherever he found people (*nwtsty* study note)
 Ac 17:22, 23—Paul was observant and established common ground (*nwtsty* study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Ac 18:18—What can be said about the vow Paul made? (*w08* 5/15 32 ¶5)

 Ac 18:21—How should we imitate Paul as we pursue spiritual goals? (*nwtsty* study note)

 What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

 What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?
- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 17:1-15

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. Introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?*
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *jl* lesson 7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 70
- **Thoroughly Preach and Teach the Good News:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News* (video category THE BIBLE). Then ask the following questions: How did the family in the video recognize that they needed to improve the quality of their ministry? What facets of the apostle Paul’s ministry did they imitate? What blessings did they experience as a result? What are some ideas for family worship that you might use?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 47
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 151 and Prayer

ACTS 17-18 | Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching



17:2, 3, 17, 22, 23

How can we imitate the apostle Paul’s example?



- We can use the Scriptures to reason with people, and we can adapt our reasoning to our audience
- We can preach where and when we are likely to find people
- We can tactfully acknowledge others’ beliefs in order to establish common ground

FOR MEDITATION: Where and when can I find more people to witness to in my congregation’s territory?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: What is the purpose of life?

Scripture: Ge 1:27, 28

Link: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?



○●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?

Scripture: Jos 21:45

Link: What has God promised for the future?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What has God promised for the future?

Scripture: Re 21:4

Link: How can we experience the blessings that God has promised?



New Zealand



Japan



Uganda



Lithuania

What Are Our Meetings Like?

Early Christian meetings consisted mainly of songs, prayers, and the reading and discussing of the Scriptures—all free of any ritual. (1 Corinthians 14:26) You can expect something very similar at our meetings.

The instruction is Bible-based and practical. On the weekend, each congregation meets to hear a 30-minute **Bible discourse** on how the Scriptures relate to our lives and to the times we live in. All of us are encouraged to follow along in our own Bible. After the discourse, there is a one-hour **“Watchtower” Study**, in which members of the congregation are welcome to participate in a discussion of an article from the study edition of *The Watchtower*. This discussion helps us to apply the Bible’s guidance in our lives. The same material is studied in every one of our more than 110,000 congregations earth wide.

We are helped to improve our teaching skills. We also meet together on a midweek evening for a three-part program entitled ***Our Christian Life and Ministry***, based on material provided in a monthly *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. The first part of this meeting, *Treasures From God’s Word*, helps us to become familiar with a portion of the Bible that the congregation has read in advance. Next, *Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry* includes demonstrations of how to discuss the Bible with others. A counselor makes observations that help us improve our reading and speaking skills. (1 Timothy 4:13) The last part, *Living as Christians*, considers the practical application of Bible principles in day-to-day life. This includes a question-and-answer discussion that deepens our understanding of the Bible.

When you attend our meetings, you will no doubt be impressed by the quality of Bible education that you are receiving.—Isaiah 54:13.

- What can you expect to hear at the meetings of Jehovah’s Witnesses?
- Which of our weekly meetings would you like to attend next?

FIND OUT MORE

Examine some of the material that will be discussed at the next few meetings. Note what you will be able to learn from the Bible that can be useful in your everyday life.



70 *Search Out Deserving Ones* (Matthew 10:11-15)

1. In preaching the Kingdom and teaching the truth,
Our Lord showed us how to proceed:
'Search out those deserving and ready to hear,
Those aware of their spiritual need.
By greeting the household and wishing it peace,
Then it may be that peace you'll impart.
But when they refuse you or turn you away,
Shake the dust from your feet and depart.'
2. All those who receive you receive him as well,
Respond when their heart opens wide.
Their right disposition for unending life
Will impel them to serve at your side.
And never be anxious about what to say,
For Jehovah will help you to speak.
Your answer when gracious and seasoned with salt
Will appeal to the humble and meek.

- Song 78 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching”:** (10 min.)
 Ac 17:2, 3—Paul reasoned from the Scriptures and used references when teaching (*nwtsty* study notes)
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- Song 70
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- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 47
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ACTS 17-18 | Imitate the Apostle Paul in Preaching and Teaching



17:2, 3, 17, 22, 23

How can we imitate the apostle Paul’s example?



- We can use the Scriptures to reason with people, and we can adapt our reasoning to our audience
- We can preach where and when we are likely to find people
- We can tactfully acknowledge others’ beliefs in order to establish common ground

FOR MEDITATION: Where and when can I find more people to witness to in my congregation’s territory?

Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News

Bro. Sanderson: While very few of us have taken part in the translation of the Bible, all of us can share it with our neighbors and help them to gain accurate knowledge of Jehovah.

In the following dramatization, note some of the theocratic activities that this family enjoys and what they had to do to become so zealous.

[A Japanese family out witnessing from door to door and informally, conducting Bible studies and at a meeting at the Kingdom Hall]

[Brother sits at his desk completing an Application for Auxiliary Pioneer Service]

[Scene rewinds back to the beginning]

[Brother Narrates]

OK, OK.

We already know how this story is going to end. No real surprises there.

[Family all get into their car ready for field service]

So the real question is, How did we get here?

For the record, I never thought our ministry really needed help.

My wife and daughter were both regular pioneers.

My son was a solid publisher.

And while my schedule didn't let me pioneer yet, I was trying to do all I could to support them.

Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News

I always assumed the best support I could provide was just being out with them as much as possible, but I quickly realized more was needed.

Our Field Service Group Overseer had been making a real effort to work in the ministry with us regularly the last few weeks, and he kindly mentioned he'd noticed a few challenges.

While our service time was great, he pointed out that our return visits were slowly dwindling.

And other than the studies I had with the children, no one in the family was conducting a Bible study.

I asked him what we could do to try and improve the **quality** of our ministry.

He showed me Romans 15:19, highlighting Paul's words: "I have thoroughly preached the good news about the Christ."

He suggested on our next Family Worship night studying Paul's ministry and seeing what we could learn from his example.

[The Family Worship night at the kitchen table]

As we looked at Paul's ministry, we realized **to be more productive we needed boldness.**

Ephesians 6:19 says: "Pray also for me, that the words may be given to me when I open my mouth, so that I may be able to speak boldly in making known the sacred secret of the good news."

Rina [daughter] also noticed how **Paul reasoned persuasively with people.**

And Keiko [wife] liked how he **found common ground with those he talked to** —even referring to a pagan altar to an unknown god as a way to direct the conversation to Jehovah.

Family Worship: Paul—He Thoroughly Preached the Good News

Finally, Haruto [son] noted how 2 Timothy said Paul was “a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright.” So **he was skilled in using the Scriptures** with those he witnessed to.

[Back at the beginning]

See, I told you. You already knew how this was going to end.

I started auxiliary pioneering.

We now have a number of return visits and a few progressive Bible studies.

But how did we get here? **We learned from the example of Paul and how he “thoroughly preached the good news.”**

A YOUNG GIRL LIVES AGAIN!

MATTHEW 9:18, 23-26 MARK 5:22-24, 35-43
LUKE 8:40-42, 49-56

- JESUS RESURRECTS JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

Jairus sees that the woman with the flow of blood was healed by Jesus. Surely, Jesus can help his daughter too, though he feels that ‘by now his daughter must be dead.’ (Matthew 9:18) Could it be that she can still be helped?

While Jesus is still speaking with the woman he has healed, some men arrive from Jairus’ home and tell him: “Your daughter died!” They add: “Why bother the Teacher any longer?”—Mark 5:35.

What devastating news! This man, so highly respected in the community, is now completely helpless. His only daughter has died. Jesus, however, overhears the report, and turning to Jairus, he says encouragingly: “Have no fear, only exercise faith.”—Mark 5:36.



Jesus then accompanies Jairus back to his home. On arriving, they find a great commotion. Those who have gathered there are weeping, wailing, and beating themselves in grief. Jesus steps inside and makes the startling statement: “The child has not died but is sleeping.” (Mark 5:39) On hearing this, the people laugh at Jesus. They know that the girl really is dead. Yet, using his God-given powers, Jesus will show that it is possible for people to be brought back from death just as they can be awakened from a deep sleep.

Jesus now sends everyone outside except for Peter, James, John, and the dead girl’s parents. Jesus takes these five with him and goes to where the girl is lying. Taking her by the hand, he says: “*Tal’i-tha cu’mi,*’ which, when translated, means: ‘Little girl, I say to you, “Get up!”’” (Mark 5:41) Immediately, she rises and begins walking. Imagine the ecstasy that Jairus and his wife feel on seeing this! Providing further evidence that the girl really is alive, Jesus directs that she be given something to eat.

On earlier occasions, Jesus ordered those whom he healed not to publicize what he had done

for them, and he does so again with these parents. Nevertheless, the delighted parents and others spread the news “into all that region.” (Matthew 9: 26) Would you not talk about it excitedly if you had seen one of your loved ones raised from the dead? This is the second recorded resurrection Jesus performs.



- ◇ What report does Jairus receive, and how does Jesus encourage him?
- ◇ When Jesus and Jairus arrive at the home, what is the situation there?
- ◇ Why does Jesus say that the dead child is only sleeping?

1. Life, like a mist, appears for just a day,
Then disappears tomorrow.
All that we are can quickly fade away,
Replaced with tears and sorrow.
If a man should die, can he live again?
Hear the promise God has made:

*(CHORUS)**He will call; The dead will answer.**They will live at his command.**For he will have a longing**For the work of his own hand.**So have faith, and do not wonder,**For our God can make us stand.**And we will live forever,**As the work of his own hand.*

2. Friends of our God, though they may pass away,
Will never be forsaken.
All those asleep who in God's mem'ry stay,
From death he will awaken.
Then we'll come to see all that life can be:
Paradise eternally.

(Chorus)

OCTOBER 2018

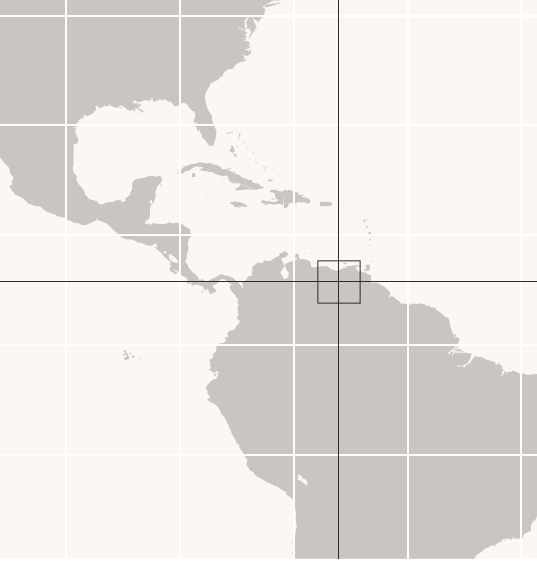
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 3-30, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

VENEZUELA

A mother and her children enjoying some refreshment while sharing together in the ministry in Telares de Palo Grande, Caracas

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Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

29 WEEK OF DECEMBER 17-23

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Maintain Inner Peace Despite Changing Circumstances

As imperfect humans, we tend to struggle with change, whether in our life or within the organization. These two articles will help us to maintain inner peace and to put trust in our active Leader, the Christ, even when our life takes an unexpected turn.

51 LIFE STORY

Jehovah Richly Blessed My Decision

1. God's Word and all its promises
Give reason to endure.
The things you've learned and come to love
Are all well-founded and sure.

Be stabilized in holy faith,
Keeping God's day close in mind.
Stand firm in your integrity;
By tests you will be refined.
2. Maintain the love you had at first,
Which somehow could be lost.
Despite the trials you will meet,
Endure no matter the cost.

Whatever test may come your way,
Never yield to doubt or fear.
Jehovah will provide escape,
Our God ever will be near.
3. All those enduring to the end
Are those who will be saved.
The book of life will list their names,
A record clearly engraved.

So let endurance be your aim;
Let it have its work complete.
Jehovah's favor you will know;
With joy you will be replete.



SONGS:
128, 129

DO YOU RECALL?

How can “the peace of God” help us in times of change?

How can we imitate Joseph’s example when our circumstances unexpectedly change?

What important lesson can we learn from Philip the evangelizer?

Maintain Inner Peace Despite Changing Circumstances

“I have calmed and quieted my soul.”

—PS. 131:2.

WHEN Lloyd and Alexandra learned that they had been re-assigned to the field, they at first felt sad. After all, they had been

1, 2. (a) How might a Christian be affected by unexpected changes in his life? (See opening picture.) (b) According to Psalm 131, what attitude can help us to maintain our inner peace?

serving at Bethel for over 25 years. Lloyd says: “I felt as if Bethel and my work assignment had become my identity. I mentally appreciated the reasons for the change, but in the weeks and months that followed, I often experienced feelings of rejection. It was an emotional roller coaster. One minute I felt positive; the next I felt dejected.”

² When our life takes an unexpected turn, the changes that we have to face may cause us apprehension and emotional stress. (Prov. 12:25) We may even find it hard to accept those changes. In such circumstances, how can we ‘calm and quiet’ our soul? (Read Psalm 131:1-3.) Let us consider how some Bible characters and some modern-day servants of Jehovah managed to maintain their inner peace despite changing circumstances.

EXPERIENCING “THE PEACE OF GOD”

³ Joseph was about 17 years old when his own brothers out of jealousy sold him as a slave. Prior to this, Joseph had been his father’s favorite. (Gen. 37:2-4, 23-28) For about 13 years, Joseph had to endure slavery and imprisonment in Egypt, far away from his beloved father, Jacob. What helped Joseph not to give in to despair and bitterness?

3. In what situation did Joseph find himself?

⁴ While suffering in prison, Joseph must have focused his mind on evidence of Jehovah's blessing. (Gen. 39:21; Ps. 105:17-19) The prophetic dreams that Joseph had when he was younger would also have given him confidence that he had Jehovah's favor. (Gen. 37:5-11) He likely poured out his anguish to Jehovah on more than one occasion. (Ps. 145:18) In response to Joseph's heartfelt prayers, Jehovah gave him the inner conviction that He would be "with him" in all his trials.—Acts 7:9, 10.*

⁵ Despite adverse circumstances, we today can experience firsthand the soothing effect of "the peace of God" that guards our mental powers. (Read **Philippians 4:6, 7.**) Thus, if we turn to Jehovah when we feel overwhelmed by anxiety, God's peace can strengthen our determination to reach spiritual goals and guard us against any tendency to give up. Let us consider some modern-day examples that illustrate this.

* Sometime after his release from prison, Joseph acknowledged that Jehovah had soothed his painful memories by giving him a son. He named his firstborn Manasseh because, he said: "God has made me forget all my trouble."—Gen. 41:51, ftn.

4. (a) While in prison, on what did Joseph focus his mind? (b) How did Jehovah respond to Joseph's prayers?

5. What effect can "the peace of God" have on our desire to pursue spiritual goals?

TURN TO JEHOVAH TO REGAIN INNER PEACE

⁶ When Ryan and Juliette were informed that their assignment as temporary special pioneers had come to an end, they felt dejected. “We took this straight to Jehovah in prayer,” Ryan says. “We knew that we had a special opportunity here to display trust in him. Many in our congregation were new in the truth, so we prayed that Jehovah would help us to set an excellent example of faith.”

⁷ How did Jehovah respond to their prayer? Ryan recalls: “Immediately after the prayer, the negative feelings and worries that we initially experienced disappeared. The peace of God was guarding our hearts and mental powers. We realized that we could continue to be useful to Jehovah if we maintained the right attitude.”

⁸ In addition to calming us down, God’s spirit can draw our attention to key scriptures that will help us to keep our spiritual priorities. (Read John 14:26, 27.) Consider a married couple, Philip and

6, 7. How can being specific in our prayers help us to regain inner peace? Give an example.

8-10. (a) How can God’s spirit help us to cope with anxiety? (b) In what ways may Jehovah respond to our efforts to maintain a spiritual outlook?

Mary, who had served at Bethel for nearly 25 years. Within four months, both lost their mothers and another relative in death and began caring for Mary's father, who has dementia.

⁹ Philip recalls: "I thought I was coping well to a certain point, but something was missing. I came across Colossians 1:11 in a *Watchtower* study article. I was enduring, true, but not in the fullest sense. I needed to 'endure fully *with patience and joy*.' This verse reminded me that my joy in life is dependent, not on my circumstances, but on the effect that God's spirit has in my life."

¹⁰ In response to their efforts to maintain a spiritual outlook on their situation, Jehovah blessed Philip and Mary in many ways. Soon after leaving Bethel, they both found progressive Bible students who wanted to study more than once a week. Looking back, Mary says, "They were our joy and Jehovah's way of telling us that everything was going to be fine."

GIVE JEHOVAH SOMETHING TO BLESS

¹¹ When we are faced with sudden changes, we might easily let worries about the future paralyze

11, 12. (a) How did Joseph give Jehovah something to bless?
(b) How was Joseph rewarded for his endurance?

our life. This could have happened to Joseph. Instead, he evidently decided to make the best of his situation, thus giving Jehovah something to bless. Although in prison, Joseph worked hard to fulfill any task given him by the chief officer, just as he had done when working for Potiphar.—Gen. 39: 21-23.

¹² One day, Joseph was entrusted with the care of two men who had formerly served in prominent positions in Pharaoh’s court. Reassured by Joseph’s kind manner, both men disclosed their troubles and the puzzling dreams they had the night before. (Gen. 40:5-8) Joseph did not realize it, but that conversation would lead to a happy outcome for



How can we imitate Joseph’s example regardless of our circumstances?

(See paragraphs 11-13)

him. Although he had to endure two more years in jail, he was eventually released and, the same day, appointed as ruler second only to Pharaoh.—Gen. 41:1, 14-16, 39-41.

¹³ Like Joseph, we may find ourselves in a situation over which we have little or no control. However, if we remain patient and work hard at making the best of our circumstances, we will give Jehovah something to bless. (Ps. 37:5) True, we may at times feel “perplexed,” but we will never, as the apostle Paul put it, be “left in despair.” (2 Cor. 4:8; ftn.) These words of Paul will come true in our case, especially if we stay focused on our ministry.

STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR MINISTRY

¹⁴ Philip the evangelizer provides a fine example of one who stayed focused on his ministry despite changing circumstances. In Jerusalem, a wave of persecution arose following the martyrdom of Stephen.* At the time, Philip was enjoying a new priv-

* See the article “Did You Know?” in the regular print of the study edition.

13. How can we give Jehovah something to bless regardless of our circumstances?

14-16. How did Philip the evangelizer stay focused on his ministry despite changing circumstances?

ilege of service. (Acts 6:1-6) But when Christ’s followers were scattered, Philip could not just watch and do nothing. He went to preach in Samaria, a city that was largely untouched by the good news at that time.—Matt. 10:5; Acts 8:1, 5.

¹⁵ Philip was willing to go wherever God’s spirit would lead him, so Jehovah used him to open up new territories. His impartial approach was likely refreshing to the Samaritans, who were used to being treated with disdain by the Jews. Little wonder that crowds listened to him “with one accord”! —Acts 8:6-8.

¹⁶ Philip was then led by God’s spirit to Ashdod and Caesarea, two cities that had large Gentile populations. (Acts 8:39, 40) Some 20 years after his initial preaching in Samaria, Philip’s circumstances had evidently changed again. Now a family man, he was settled in his preaching territory. Despite his changing circumstances, Philip stayed focused on his ministry, and as a result, he and his family were richly blessed by Jehovah.—Acts 21:8, 9.

¹⁷ Many full-time servants can testify that focusing on the ministry helped them to maintain their

17, 18. How can being focused on the ministry help us to maintain our balance in times of change?

balance despite changing circumstances. When Osborne and Polite, a South African couple, left Bethel, they thought they would soon have part-time work and a place to live. “Unfortunately,” recounts Osborne, “secular work did not come as soon as we had hoped.” His wife, Polite, recalls: “We did not find work for three months, and we had no savings. It was a real challenge.”

¹⁸ What helped them to cope with their stressful situation? Osborne sums it up this way: “Preaching along with the congregation helped us a lot to keep our minds focused and positive. We decided to be absorbed in the preaching work rather than to sit and worry, and that brought us great joy. We searched all over for jobs, and eventually we found work.”



WAIT PATIENTLY ON JEHOVAH

¹⁹ As these examples show, if we make the best of our circumstances and wait confidently on Jehovah, we will maintain our inner peace. (Read Micah 7:7.) We may even realize that we have derived much spiritual benefit from adjusting to a new set of circumstances. Drawing on her experience, Polite, quoted earlier, says: “Being reassigned has taught me what it really means to depend on Jehovah even when the odds seem to be against me. My relationship with him has deepened.”

²⁰ Mary, quoted earlier, is still looking after her aging father while pioneering. She admits: “I have

19-21. (a) What will help us to maintain inner peace? (b) What personal benefits may we derive from adjusting to a new set of circumstances?



Unexpected changes
can lead to
unexpected blessings!
(See paragraphs 19-21)

learned that when I feel anxious, I need to stop, pray, and then relax. To leave things in Jehovah’s hands has probably been the biggest lesson that I have learned, and it will be ever so needed in the future.”

²¹ Lloyd and Alexandra, mentioned at the outset, admit that their change of circumstances tested their faith in ways they had not anticipated. But they say: “Tests of faith reveal whether our faith is genuine and has the strength to support and comfort us in times of difficulty. We come out better people.”

²² If life takes an unexpected turn—whether as a result of a change in our theocratic assignments, health problems, or new family responsibilities—be assured that Jehovah cares for you and will help you at the right time. (Heb. 4:16; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7) In the meantime, try to make the best of your situation. Draw close to your heavenly Father through prayer, and learn to leave yourself in his caring hands. In this way, you too will maintain inner peace despite changing circumstances.

22. If we seek to make the best of our current circumstances, of what can we be assured?

We Will Keep Enduring

(Matthew 24:13)

1. How can we endure

When trials come, as Jesus said?
Through his pain he saw
The joy of better things ahead.
God's promise, God's justice,
Were thoughts on which he fed.

(CHORUS)

*We need to have endurance.
Our faith we must defend.
His love is our assurance.
So we will keep enduring to the end.*

2. Though the passing years

May bring us sorrow, bring us pain;
There beyond the tears,
We see the life that we can gain.
To be there, feel free there,
Determined we remain.

(Chorus)

3. We will not give up

Nor see the need for doubt or fear.
Faithfully we'll serve
Until Jehovah's day is here.
Let's keep on enduring.
That time is very near.

(Chorus)

