

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – March 1, 2020

Theme: The Acts of the Apostles

Topic: Speak for I am with you

Main Text: Acts 18:1-28

Key verse: Acts 18:9-10 – *‘Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.”’* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: From Athens, the apostle Paul travelled to Corinth (Acts 18:1). Corinth was the political and commercial center of Greece; and perhaps the most important city Paul had visited since crossing over to Europe (Macedonia). It is also the city where he stayed the longest in the course of his missionary journeys. Being a commercial hub, Corinth attracted people and merchants from all over, making her an ethnically and religiously diverse city. That diversity earned her a reputation for great wickedness and immorality. So, Corinth was both a challenging as well as a great ministry opportunity for Paul. His letters (1 & 2 Corinthians) would later address some of the challenges he faced in Corinth.

1. Corinth is a typical image of any major city in the world today: multi-cultural/religious/ethnic; highly mobile workforce, declining morals, etc. (a) let participants identify possible challenges and opportunities for the gospel in such setting see 1 Corinthians 1:10; 3:3; 5:1; 10:14 (b) How many of such challenges or opportunities exist in Lagos? (c) What practical steps can we, individually and collectively take to make the most of those opportunities to further the advance of the gospel?

Ministry can be tough, more so in some environments than others. Paul was familiar with these. Yet Corinth seemed to be in a class of its own. It seemed so challenging that God had to step in with a special encouragement, saying: *“Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, ... ; for I have many people in this city.”* (Acts 18:9-10 NKJV). In keeping with God’s promise, Paul did not suffer any physical attacks, yet his letters to the Corinthians speak of great difficulties and anguish.

2. Let participants read 2 Cor 4: 8 – 12 and 2 Cor 12: 11, 20-21 (a) what are some of the challenges Paul faced in Corinth? (b) How did God’s special encouragement help Paul in his ministry in Corinth? E.g. 1 Corinthians 9:15-23, (c) In what ways can we be motivated by God’s encouragement to Paul as we consider how to penetrate our City and country with the gospel?

While in Corinth, Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, two Jewish tentmakers from Rome (Acts 18:2-3). The couple eventually became Paul’s ministry partners, not only hosting Paul, but travelling with him to Ephesus. They would later become major influences and blessing to the new testament church: in straightening Apollos out (Acts 18:24-26); years later, they return to Rome and are the host of one of the home churches (Romans 16:3-4)

3. (a) All the mention of Priscilla and Aquila in the Bible are of them as a couple, ministering together. What can we learn from that? (b) Priscilla and Aquila were not ‘full time’ missionaries like Paul, yet they greatly influenced the church and blessed itinerant missionaries like Paul and Apollos. What encouragement is there for us as people who will mostly be marketplace ‘missionaries’? (c) What attitude of Aquila and Priscilla enabled them to be such great influence and blessing? E.g. Acts 18:18-19. And what adjustments do we need to make in our priorities in order to be a blessing like they were?

Prayer: Father, thank You that even when Your gospel takes us to the ‘slums’ of society, that we can be assured of Your presence with us. So, please help us to look to You alone for the encouragement we need to continue. In Jesus Name, Amen.