



## WEEKLY STUDY

### ***Fully Persuaded - Week Three***

As busy as he was traveling and preaching about Jesus Christ, Paul also had to work in order to eat and travel. We talk about the ministry of all believers. It's true. Each of us who believes in Jesus Christ is called into ministry. What that looks like varies based on our particular calling. As you read and pray through the account of Paul, the tent maker, consider what it means for you to be called to share the gospel.

Please note our prayer focus for the week in the box below. Join us in seeing what God will do as we unite in prayer.

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

#### Prayer Focus:

- Pray for all of those impacted by winter weather.
- Pray for unity and compassion across our nation and around the world.
- Pray for those who toil in their work and struggle to see how God desires to use them.

## DAILY STUDY

### **MONDAY: ACTS 18.1-4 (NIV)**

*After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.<sup>2</sup> There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul*

went to see them,<sup>3</sup> and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.<sup>4</sup> Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

- Paul arrived in Corinth alone. He traveled the 50 miles from Athens and was immediately met by Aquila and his wife Priscilla. They connected over their common craft of tent-making. It's amazing how God will provide us with people when we feel like we are on our own. Who are the people that God has put in your life to encourage you in hard times?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”),<sup>37</sup> sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet. (Acts 4.36-37)**
- *God, thank you for the Priscillas and Aquilas that you have placed in my life. Make me aware of my own ability to serve in that same capacity for someone else. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: ACTS 18.5-6 (NIV)

When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.<sup>6</sup> But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

- Paul was glad to see Silas and Timothy. They brought with them the offerings of support from Macedonia ([2 Corinthians 11.9](#)), and this allowed him to devote himself fully to preaching the gospel. Notice how he balanced individual strength with the need for others. Have you ever received a surprising gift that freed you to live more fully into your calling?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9.7)**
- *God, you have given so much to me. More than I know. Increase my heart of gratitude and use me to bless those around me. Amen.*

### WEDNESDAY: ACTS 18.7-8 (NIV)

*Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God.<sup>8</sup> Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.*

- Paul had been struggling to reach Jews in the synagogue. Notice how he always seemed to start with the local synagogue when he went to a new place. Rarely was he well received there. Why is it more difficult to reach people who are already convinced that they know the truth?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.<sup>3</sup> And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. (Colossians 4.2-3)**
- *Lord God, may I be open to the power of the gospel. And may you work through me to share Jesus in a broken world. Amen.*

### THURSDAY: ACTS 18.9-11 (NIV)

*One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent."<sup>10</sup> For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."<sup>11</sup> So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.*

- Paul received a vision and persistent word from God that served as encouragement to keep going even in the face of resistance. Clearly he was facing some difficulties beyond what is described in the book of Acts. When we do something hard, we tend to face resistance. Is there an area of your life where you are feeling discouraged? Can you imagine God saying these words to you? **"Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you."**
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- **Prayer Prompt: So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. (Isaiah 41.10)**
- *Almighty God, I know that you are always with me, but I need to hear from you. Speak to me your words of encouragement. I do not want to be silenced. Amen.*

## FRIDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 2.1-5 (NIV)

*When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God.<sup>2</sup> For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.<sup>3</sup> I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.<sup>4</sup> My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,<sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.*

- Paul approached his ministry in Corinth with “fear and trembling”. He did not want them to remember him and his wise words, rather he wanted them to hear the message. He wanted them to experience God’s power, not the persuasiveness of a man. When we are in a position of influence, we can become enamored with the attention we receive. How do you stay humble in such situations? How does God help you keep perspective?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. (James 4.10)**
- *God, I want to remain humble as you use me more and more. Use me or lay me aside for your purpose. May your Kingdom come! Amen.*

## SATURDAY: 1 THESSALONIANS 3.6-8 (NIV)

*But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.<sup>8</sup> For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.*

- This passage provides great insight into Paul’s relationship with the believers in Thessalonica. He had been discouraged by the outcome of his visit there. But Timothy brought word that a healthy community of believers was thriving there. Have you ever been surprised to learn of good things happening in situations you thought had been failures?
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- **Prayer Prompt: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8.28)**

- *God, I know that you work all things for your good. Show me how you are working even through the difficult situations I face today. Amen.*

## **GROUP DISCUSSION**

Sunday's message highlighted the fact that Paul had a day job. We tend to think of a great missionary like him as preaching around the clock, but there were times when he spent a good amount of time working with leather as a tentmaker. This is how he supported the ministry. There were other times when the offerings from churches allowed him to focus on preaching.

- What are some of the possible implications of a tent-making supported ministry?
- In what ways is your workplace (business, home, school, etc) a place of ministry?
- In what ways does your work support your ministry and witness to Jesus Christ?