**Truth Sowers Life Group**

May 12, 2013

**Who Was the Apostle Paul?**

**Paul Travels to Athens**

**Introduction:**

Our key scripture for this study is:

**1 Thess 5:12, 13**

*12And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.*

**PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

**Paul at Corinth and the End of His Second Missionary Journey**

### Acts 18

New Living Translation (NLT)

### Paul Meets Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth

18 Then Paul left Athens and went to Corinth **(48 miles West of Athens) Somewhere around this time Paul writes his letter to the churches in the region of Galatia. We know it as the Book of Galatians. While in Corinth, he also wrote his two letters to the believers in Thessalonica. We know them as 1st and 2nd Thessalonians.**

The capital of Greece at this time and seat of the Roman proconsul ([Acts 18:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+18%3A12)), as Athens was its center of learning. It was 46 miles west of Athens. The worship of Aphrodite (Latin: Venus) and the Astoreth of [Judg. 2:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jdg+2%3A13), was carried on here, with all the Eastern immorality, probably introduced by Phoenicians ([1Ki. 11:33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ki+11%3A33)).

2There he became acquainted with a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently arrived from Italy with his wife, Priscilla. They had left Italy when Claudius Caesar deported all Jews from Rome. 3Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers just as he was.

4Each Sabbath found Paul at the synagogue, trying to convince the Jews and Greeks alike. 5And after Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul spent all his time preaching the word. He testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. 6But when they opposed and insulted him, Paul shook the dust from his clothes and said, “Your blood is upon your own heads—I am innocent. From now on I will go preach to the Gentiles.” **This changed Paul’s approach in Ministry. He had always approached the Jews first, then the Gentiles.**

7Then he left and went to the home of Titius Justus, a Gentile who worshiped God and lived next door to the synagogue. 8Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, and everyone in his household believed in the Lord. Many others in Corinth also heard Paul, became believers, and were baptized.

9One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision and told him, “Don’t be afraid! Speak out! Don’t be silent! 10For I am with you, and no one will attack and harm you, for many people in this city belong to me.”**It is easy for us to think of Paul as some kind of superman but he must have gotten REALLY discouraged at times and he must have gotten scared at times. He must have been afraid here for God to come to him in a vision and to tell him not to worry. God put a big job on his shoulders plus give this evil spirit to be a thorn in his flesh. How many of us would continue?**  **PRAY FOR YOUR PASTORS – PRAY FOR YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS !!!**

**Elijah killed the 450 prophets of Baal after a great miracle. Then Jezebel said she would have him killed and he got very depressed. 1 Kings 18**

11So Paul stayed there for the next year and a half, teaching the word of God.

~~12~~~~When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat,~~ ~~13~~~~saying, “This~~ *~~fellow~~* ~~persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”~~

~~14~~~~And when Paul was about to open~~ *~~his~~* ~~mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you.~~ ~~15~~~~But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look~~ *~~to it~~* ~~yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such~~ *~~matters.~~*~~”~~ ~~16~~~~And he drove them from the judgment seat.~~ ~~17~~~~Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat~~ *~~him~~* ~~before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.~~

### Paul Returns to Antioch

18So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. 19And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, 21but took leave of them, saying, “I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.” And he sailed from Ephesus.

22And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. 23After he had spent some time *there,* he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

**END OF PAUL’S 2ND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

### Ministry of Apollos

24Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. 27And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; 28for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

**While Paul was at Corinth, he wrote his letter to the churches in Galatia and to the church at Thessalonica.**

**Galatia was not a city, it was a region. It included the cities of Antioch (Paul’s Home Base), Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.**

**Overview of Galatians: Salvation by faith, not by works.**

**Paul said if ANYONE, EVEN HE OR AN ANGEL preached a gospel different than what he preached (salvation by faith), let them be accursed!**

NLT**Galations 1:** 1Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— 2and all the brothers and sisters with me,

**Paul reminds the believers that he was not appointed by men but by Jesus Christ.**

**The ministry is NOT a profession – it IS a CALLING!**

**Ephesians 4:7-14**

7But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8This is why it says (Psalm 68:18):

“When he ascended on high,  
    he took many captives  
    and gave gifts to his people.”

9(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

**Paul is telling us that Jesus, when He died, went to hell just like the prophets had told us in the Old Testament.**

**Illustration: When I was 19, in Sunday School, our teacher said Jesus had gone to Hell and I didn’t believe it. He gave me scriptures. Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:27, Mt 12:40.**

For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

***Dead people in Christ, When Jesus Died, rose from the dead and went into Jerusalem. Matthew 27:50-52***

**There are 5 (Five) distinct Ministry gifts given to the church (That is ME & YOU) They are 1. The Apostle 2. The Prophet 3. The Evangelist 4. The Pastor 5. The Teacher.**

**There is a descending order of authority.**

**These are known as the “Ministry Gifts” or the “Ascension Gifts”. They were given to the Church when Christ ascended to Heaven, we think, at the end of His 40 (Forty) days on Earth after being resurrected from the dead.**

**It could have been after He saw Mary and Martha. Jesus told them NOT to touch Him because He had not ascended to His Father yet.**

**John 20:** 17“Don’t cling **(Hebrew “TOUCH”)** to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

18Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message.

19That Sunday evening**(the self same day)** the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. 20As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! 21Again he said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” 22Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

24One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. 25They told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.”

26Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. 27Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

28“My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed.

**In the Old Testament, once a year, the High Priest had to go into the Holy of Holies, the most Holy Place in the tabernacle and perform certain rites with the blood of a young bull, and with the blood of a goat. Then he had to burn parts of those animals. He also had to sacrifice a spotless lamb.**

**There were certain things that High Priest had to do with that sacrifice. He did things with parts of its body and with its blood. Leviticus 16**

**This went on yearly and was a “type and shadow” or a picture of what Jesus would finally do, “once and for all” for us. The TABERNACLE on earth was a representation of the tabernacle in Heaven.**

**Jesus is our HIGH PRIEST.**

Hebrews 4:14Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

**Let’s Go Back to the Book of Galatians**

To the churches in Galatia:

3Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### No Other Gospel

6I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! 9As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!

**1 Thessalonians deals with special problems, particularly the second coming of Christ. Paul describes how Jesus will return, but doesn’t address when but admonishes the believers to walk worthy. It is one of Paul’s most personal books. Paul worked to help support himself in the ministry while at Thessolonica and also received support from the believers at Phillipi. He was persecuted by the Jews at Thessalonica a great deal.**

**Key Scriptures of 1 Thess**

**1 Thess 4 NLT**

1As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. 2For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

3It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4that each of you should learn to control your own body[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%204&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29608a)] in a way that is holy and honorable, 5not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; 6and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%204&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29610b)] The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. 7For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. 8Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

13Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**2 Thessalonians deals further with the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Apparently some believers had quit working anticipating the Lord’s return. Paul talks about the coming of the antichrist.**

**2 Thessalonians 2**

2 1Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, 2not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. 3Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Thessalonians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29665a)] is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

5Don’t you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? 6And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. 7For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. 8And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. 9The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, 10and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.