

Acts 18:18-19:7

January 4, 2026



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Map Quest

How to play:

- Ask students to flip to the map of Paul's missionary journeys in the back of their Bible.
- Instruct them to read Acts 18:18-23 on their own and find all the places mentioned on the map.

Discussion and Reflection:

- Instruct students to name all of the places they found in this passage.
- What did you learn by looking up the places mentioned?
- What surprised you?
- How does finding these places on the map help us to understand the story better?

DISCUSSION

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 18:18-19:7.

What stands out to you in verses 18-23? What details do you notice?

What action did Paul take? How did he act in accordance with his mission?

What do we learn about Apollos in verses 24-28?

How did Priscilla and Aquila seek to help him?

What does this teach us about relationships in the church?

What question did Paul ask those in Ephesus?

Why was this an important question for that time?

Why is it an important question for our time?

GOING DEEPER

How do you respond when someone offers helpful correction in your life?

Why is it important for us to be able to receive these types of help?

APPLICATION

What does today's passage teach us about God? About the church?

What can we learn about sharing the good news with others from the examples in our reading today?

What can we learn about the importance of correcting incorrect beliefs, and the best way to do so from our reading today?

PRAYER

Thank God for giving boldness to share the good news about Jesus. Thank Him for the people in your life who love you enough to correct where you have

misunderstandings and ask Him to give you the boldness to do the same. Ask Him to help you humbly seek growth in your faith like Apollos did.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead as we continue the series on Acts next week.

January 11, 2025 --- Acts 19:8-20

COMMENTARY

Acts 18:18-19:7

18:18 It is not clear that Paul was the one who shaved his head at Cenchreae. It may have been Aquila. The Greek syntax seems to indicate the latter, but it is uncertain. The vow may have been a Nazirite vow. If Paul was the person who made the vow, his going up to Jerusalem to visit “the church” (v. 22) may have included a stop at the temple to complete the vow and make an offering of his hair. Such activity was unusual for Paul, especially outside of Judea (cp. 21:26), but would have been consistent with his Jewish identity.

18:19-20 Paul’s stop at Ephesus must have been very short since he apparently did not encounter Apollos (vv. 24-28) or the misguided teaching that he countered in his later, extended visit to Ephesus (chap. 19).

18:21 Paul promised to come back to Ephesus if God wills, as indeed he did (19:1). Paul saw his ministry and his whole life as being in God’s service and control (see note at Rm1:1).

18:22 We know it was the Jerusalem church that Paul greeted since he went down from there (Jerusalem is at a higher elevation) to Antioch. His arrival back in Antioch marks the completion of his second missionary journey.

Gallio’s name (18:12-17) appears on an inscription at Delphi that refers to the twenty-sixth acclamation of Claudius as emperor. This places Gallio in office in Corinth between AD 51 and 53. He was apparently proconsul from May 1, 51 to May 1, 52 though dates a year later are possible. This dating gives evidence from outside the Bible for the time Paul was in Corinth and founded the church there.

18:23 This marks the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey. Like the first two, this one began from Antioch and retraced his steps through Asia Minor, particularly the Phrygian region of the province of Galatia.

18:24–25 Apollos was from Alexandria, Egypt, the most learned city in the Greco-Roman world. Since Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord, we know that Christianity had reached Egypt by this time. However, his knowledge of Christianity was deficient since he knew only the baptism of John the Baptist. Nonetheless, some take fervent in spirit to mean that Apollos was already filled with the Holy Spirit. However, it is more likely that Apollos was serious about his dawning faith in Christ but had not yet received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

18:26 We see here that speaking boldly about Jesus is not enough. One must also accurately understand the faith. Priscilla and Aquila served both Apollos and the kingdom by taking time to instruct him.

18:27–28 Once Apollos's rhetorical skills were coupled with accurate understanding of the Christian faith, he left Ephesus and went to Achaia (Corinth, 19:1). He vigorously refuted the Jews using apologetic and instructional techniques similar to Paul's. None of this would have been possible if not for the faithfulness of Priscilla and Aquila.

19:1–6 The disciples whom Paul encountered in Ephesus had never heard of the Holy Spirit or baptism into Christ (cp. 18:25). This is one of the most difficult NT passages to interpret. The basic question is whether these disciples were genuine Christians when Paul first met them. Some argue that they were not since they had neither received the Holy Spirit nor been baptized into Christ. Others insist that they were genuine Christians who had not yet received full knowledge of the faith. Numerous incomplete forms of Christianity were being spread in the early years of the church. The apostles obviously felt that it was important to check the progress of such strains and correct them, bringing the full and complete gospel message to would-be disciples.

19:4 By John's own confession his baptism was incomplete. He urged those whom he baptized to believe in the one who would come after him (see Mt 3:11).

19:5–7 The order of conversion here follows the typical pattern in Acts except for the laying on of hands, the mention of other tongues, and the ability to prophesy as immediate results of the Spirit's coming.