



A *rise* Ω

reaching all people



WEEK 33 • NOV 2

## **NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT**

Hope changes everything.

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### **ICE BREAKER**

What stands out to you about how the Gospel took root in this wildly culturally diverse and immoral society?

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### **BACKGROUND**

What is it like to live for Christ and communicate about him in a profoundly immoral culture? That is what Paul is called to do in the ancient city of Corinth.

David Guzik comments:

In Paul's day, Corinth was already an ancient city. It was a commercial center with two harbors and had long been a rival to its northern neighbor, Athens. Corinth was a city with a remarkable reputation for loose living and especially sexual immorality. In classical Greek, to act like a Corinthian meant to practice fornication, and a Corinthian companion meant a prostitute. This sexual immorality was permitted under the widely popular worship of Aphrodite (also known as Venus, the goddess of fertility and sexuality). ...One ancient writer described Corinth as a town where "none but the tough could survive." (Williams)

Paul knew that because people from all over the Empire passed through Corinth, a strong church there could touch lives all over the Empire. He knew Corinth was a tough city, but he wasn't only interested in planting churches where he thought it was easy.

### **REVIEW**

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



**KEY VERSES:** Acts 18:9-10

*And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.”*

**READ:** Acts 18:1-17



**HEAD LEVEL:** *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. How did Paul’s trade as a tent-maker set him up to meet Aquila and his wife, Priscilla?
2. How did the Lord use Aquila and Priscilla’s expulsion from their home in Rome to spread the Gospel?
3. Reread Acts 17:9-11. In what ways does the Word of the Lord delivered to Paul in his dream encourage Paul’s long stay in Corinth?

**DEEPER DISCOVERY**

- The Roman historian Suetonius wrote that Claudius banished Jews from Rome because they were “indulging in constant riots at the instigation of Chrestus.” There have been many attempts to explain who Chrestus was, but a likely solution is that Suetonius referred to Jesus Christ, but writing some 70 years after the events, had the name somewhat mixed up.” (F.F. Bruce) In what ways does it bolster your faith in Jesus to see him referred to in secular sources from the ancient world?
- It is significant that in half of the times that this couple is mentioned in the Bible, Priscilla’s name is mentioned first. We also know that she comes from one of the leading families in Rome (The Prisca family). What does this say about the significance of women who spread the word of the Lord in the book of Acts?



**HEART LEVEL:** *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God’s word.*

1. In what ways does Paul demonstrate Spirit-inspired wisdom and courage in the situation he faced in Corinth (vv. 4, 6, 7)? How does this resonate with your own desire that others may come to know, love and trust in Jesus?
2. Reread v. 6: Paul mirrors the Lord Jesus’ instruction about shaking the dust off of our feet when someone has rejected the message of Christ. How difficult is it to turn away from your witness to such a friend or loved one?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. According to 2 Corinthians 11:8-9, while Paul was in Corinth, financial support arrived from the Christians in Philippi. He was able to put aside tentmaking for a while and concentrate more fully on the task of building the church in Corinth. How does this encourage your generosity for front-line workers of the Gospel?
2. Think about a time when you needed courage to publicly follow and speak for the Lord Jesus. What did you do? In what ways were you inspired by the courage of other believers? How did the Lord express his favor to you?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 18:6  
*But when the Jews 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 clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."*

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

*(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)*