

A photograph of ancient Greek temple ruins, featuring several tall, fluted Corinthian columns supporting a stone entablature. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with distant mountains and some greenery visible in the background.

The CHURCH Series

Part 17 – Corinthians & Ephesians

Introduction...

- In the last session, we saw Paul go through three regions – Thessalonica, Berea and Athens.
- We are going to travel fast through chapters 18 to 21 as these cover Paul's third and last mission travel.
- By now we see the pattern of Purpose mixed with determination and grit despite opposition and sufferings.
- The model of Paul and his companions sets a standard for Christians today.



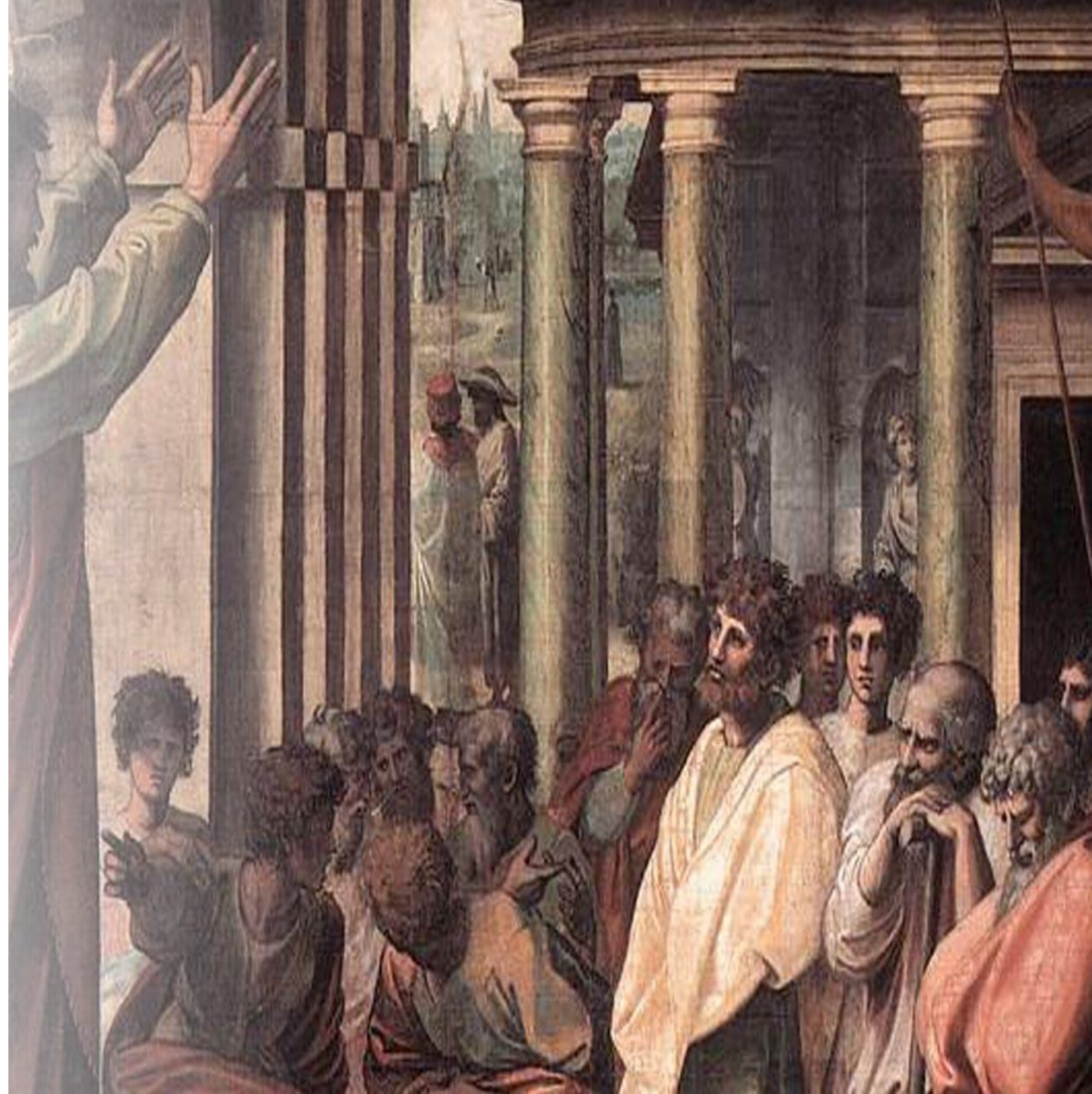
Corinth

- *After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.*
- *²And he found a certain Jew named **Aquila**, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife **Priscilla***
- *(because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.*
- *³So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.*
- *⁴And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks. Acts 18:1-4*



Corinth

- ⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.
- ⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”
- ⁷ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.
- ⁸ Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the **Corinthians**, hearing, believed and were baptized. Acts 18:5-8



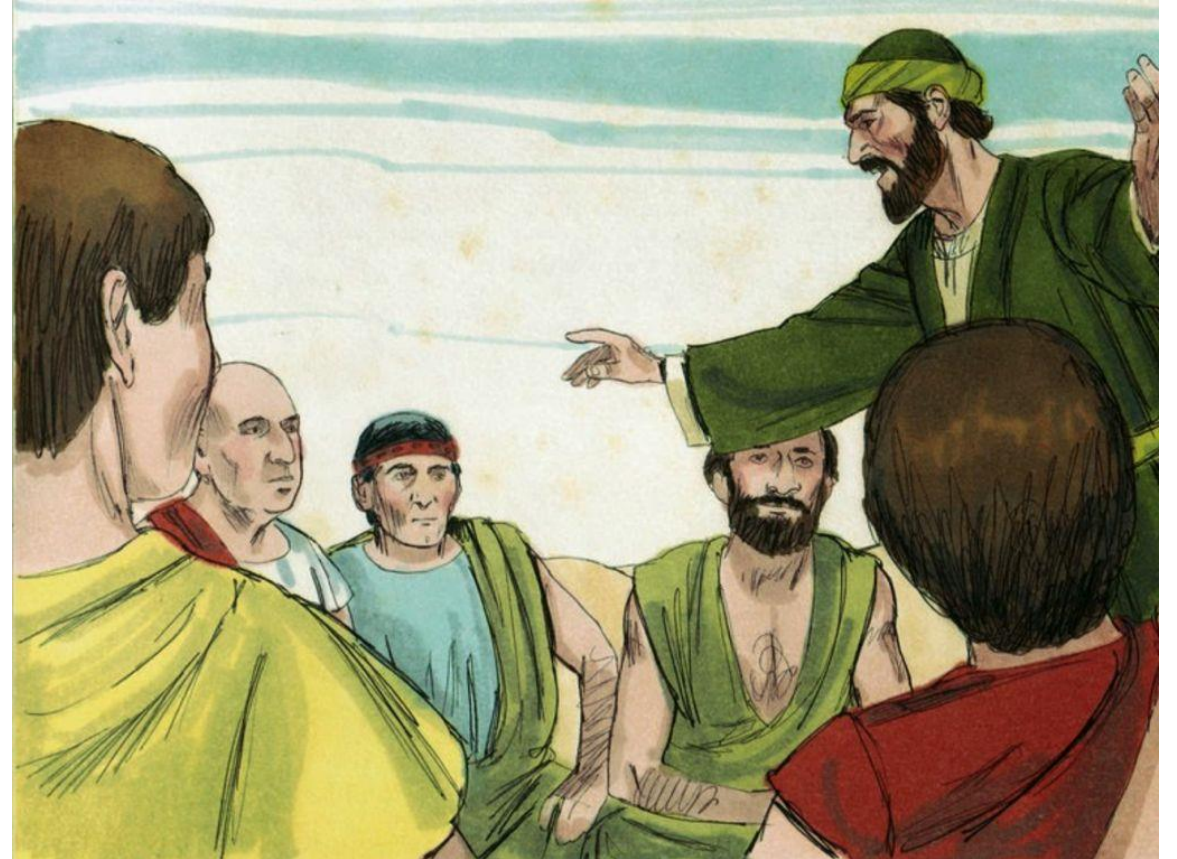
Corinth...

- Paul arrives in Corinth after being expelled from Thessalonica and Athens.
- Corinth was a city known for its immorality, and it seemed like an unlikely place for a successful ministry.
- Paul meets **Priscilla and Aquila**, a married couple who were also tentmakers.
- They become his ministry partners, and together they continue to preach and spread the gospel in Corinth and beyond.
- Paul applies himself to non-ministry work to make a living. It seems he worked during the week and then preached at weekends
- This shows Paul's versatility and ability to adapt to the necessary reality he faced.
- When his team arrived, it seems he focused on ministry alone.



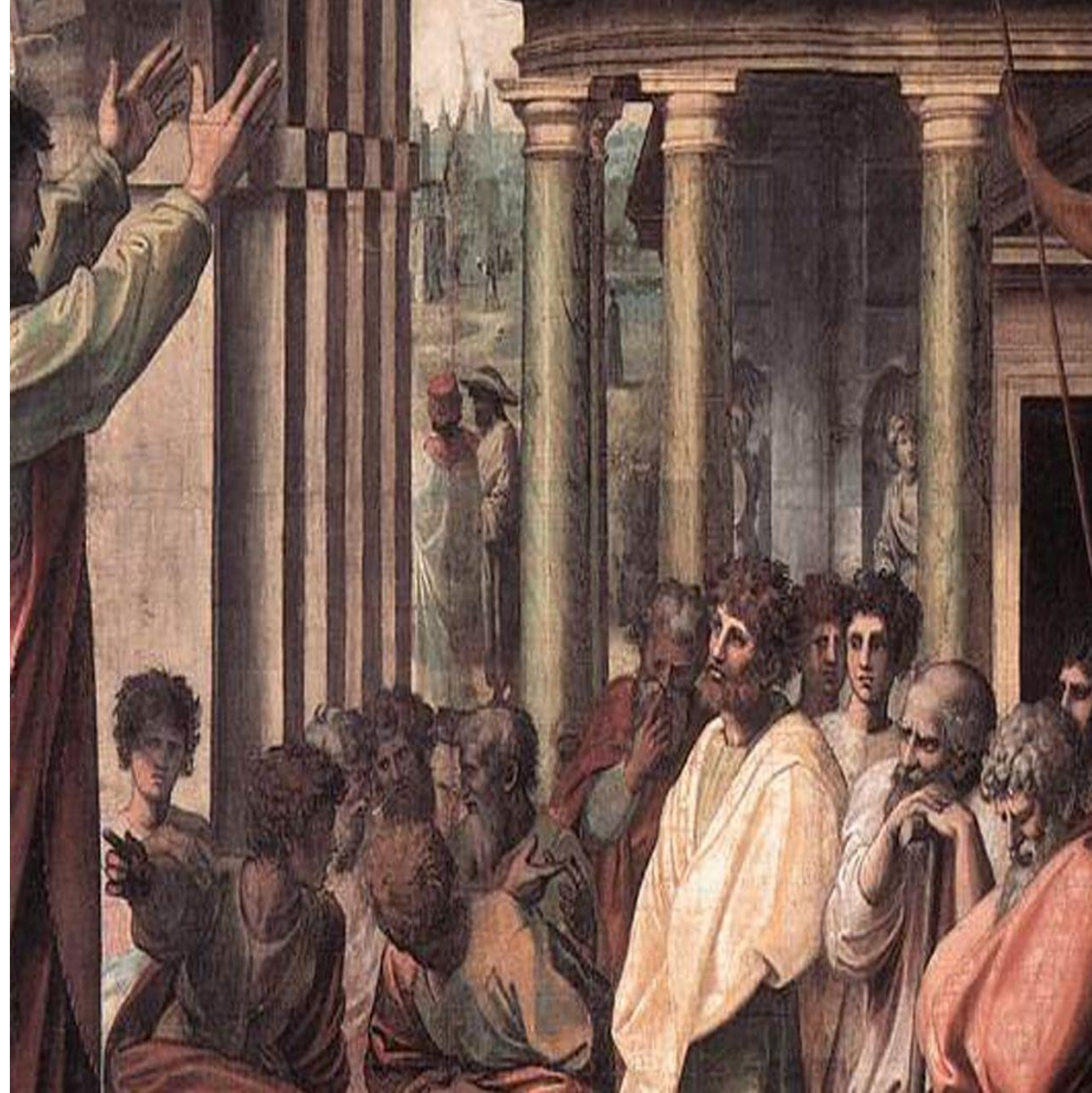
Eject!

- Paul, after facing opposition from the Jewish community in Corinth, boldly declares,
- “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles”
- Paul’s boldness in declaring the gospel, even when facing rejection and opposition, is an example for us to follow.
- When the message of Christ is rejected, it is not our fault. Our responsibility is to share the gospel faithfully, leaving the results to God.
- Don't be afraid to proclaim the gospel even when faced with rejection or hostility. Be faithful in your calling and trust God with the outcome.



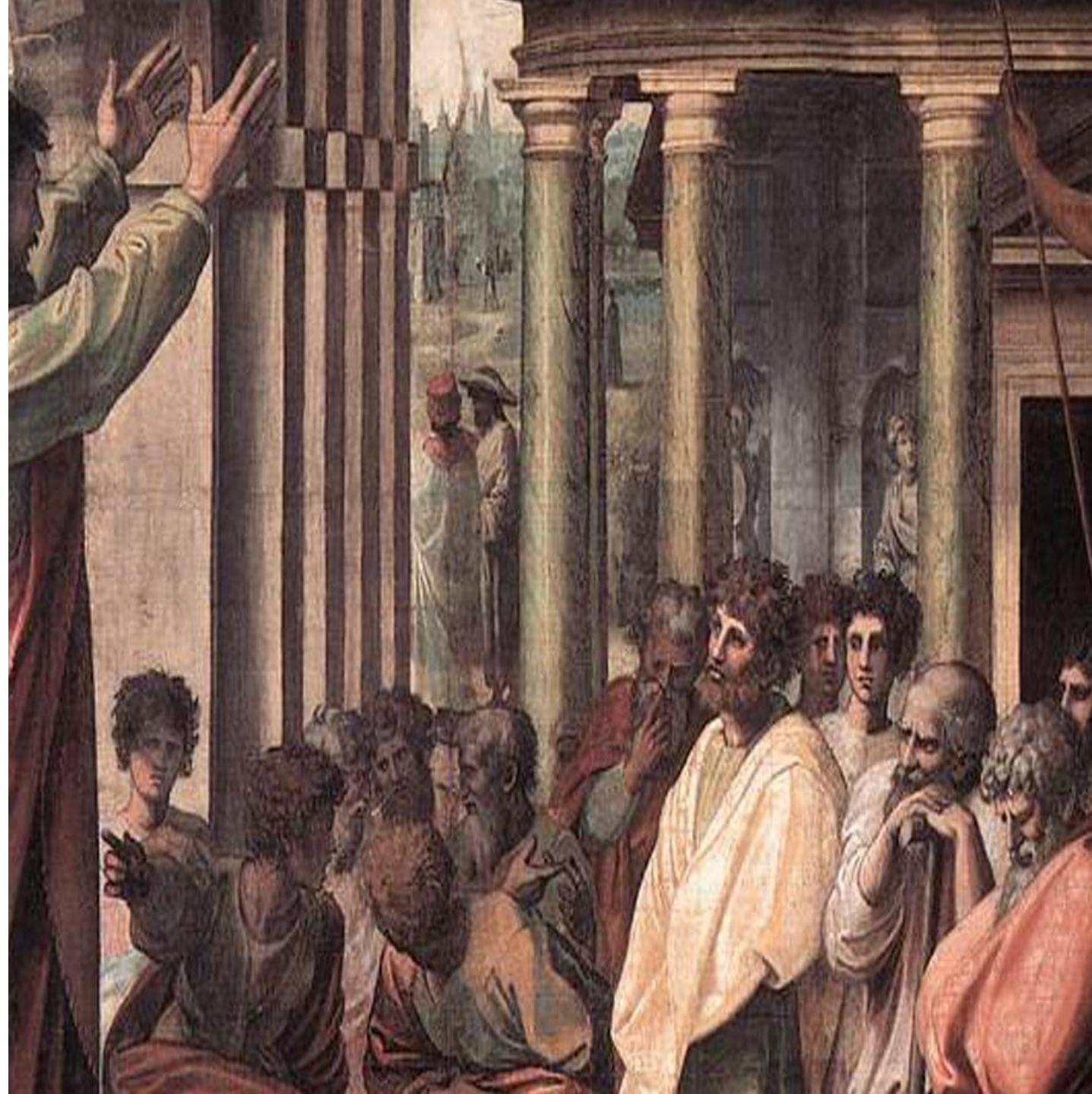
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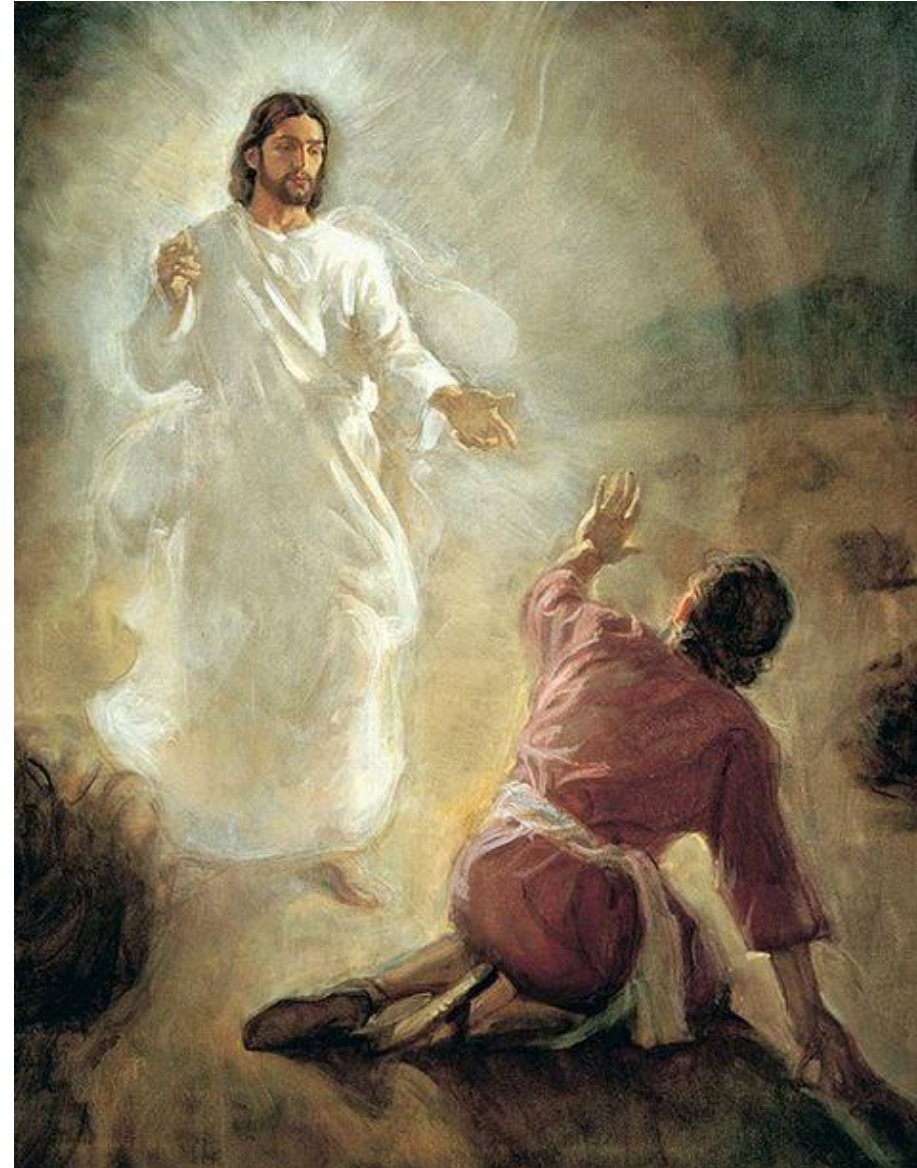
Rejected!

- After being rejected by the Jewish synagogue, Paul moves to the home of Titius Justus, a Gentile who worshiped God.
- The Corinthian synagogue leader, Crispus, and his entire household also come to faith.
- God's work is not limited to a particular group of people. He uses unlikely people—
- such as Gentiles and former opponents of the gospel—to bring others to faith.
- The conversion of Crispus, the synagogue leader, shows that no one is beyond the reach of God's grace.



Do Not...

- ⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;
- ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.”
- ¹¹ And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.
- ¹² When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the ^[c]judgment seat,
- ¹³ saying, “This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”



Keep Silent...

- 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 ^[d]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.
Acts 18: 9-17



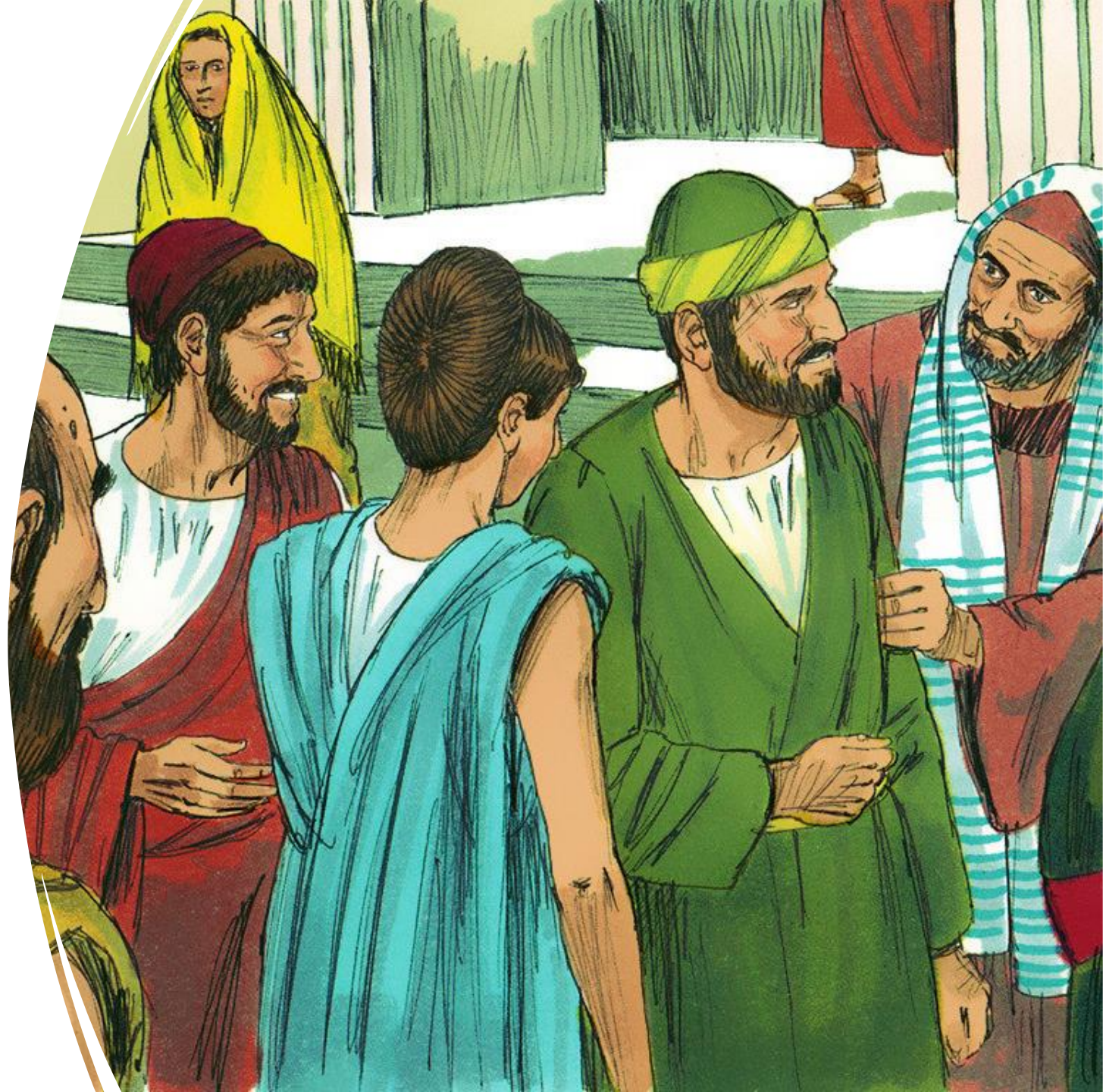
Facetime...

- We see something very interesting in these passages.
- The LORD visited Paul and spoke to him in a vision.
- A vision from the Lord is like getting a 'FACETIME' message from someone very far away.
- These visitations are important in ministry especially when you are on the frontline.
- It is also important to note that the visitation came BEFORE the enemy came roaring with opposition.
- So Paul was already fortified for the storm ahead of its arrival!
- You need the WORD of the Lord before the Lord of the World arrives.



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, “ 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.** Acts 18:18-22



Antioch

- This passage marks the end of Paul's second missionary journey.
- Antioch (Chapter 13:1) was the focal point for Paul. He would always return to give an account or report.
- This shows accountability and a spiritual home context for Paul.
- It is important to have a base a ministry; somewhere you can call home.
- It gives an anchor for the heart and relational stability and accountability.
- Endeavour to have a base; endear yourself to a community and establish covenant relations with them.



Third Mission....

- ²³ After he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.
- **Apollos**
- ²⁴ Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.
- ²⁵ This 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.
- ²⁶ So 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.
- ²⁷ And 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;
- ²⁸ for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Third Mission...

- Acts 18:23 marks the beginning of Paul's last mission away from Antioch.
- Paul travels through Galatia, Phrygia and Ephesus strengthening the churches established on his previous two trips.
- He visits Macedonia and Greece before returning to Jerusalem.
- He never returns to Antioch according to recorded Bible scriptures.
- Let us learn a few things from these passages.



Apollos..

- Apollos is a remarkable man
- Mighty in scriptures – probably memorised the Old testament scriptures
- Apollos was a **Jew from Alexandria** in Egypt, which was a major centre of learning and culture in the ancient world.
- He was highly educated and skilled in speaking and teaching (Acts 18:24).
- Alexandria was known for its large Jewish population, and Apollos was likely well-versed in the Hebrew Scriptures.



Apollos

- Initially, Apollos only knew about John the Baptist's baptism
- and had not yet received full understanding of the Christian gospel as taught by the apostles.
- However, he was fervent and passionate about the faith he knew.
- Apollos came to Ephesus, where he began preaching boldly in the synagogue.
- However, his knowledge was incomplete. Priscilla and Aquila, a married couple who were disciples of Paul,
- heard him and took him aside to explain to him the full message of Jesus Christ



Priscilla...

- The intervention of Priscilla and Aquilla brings up the argument around the role of Women in ministry.
- Some Believers teach that a Woman cannot or should never teach Men in the Church.
- In this case, without stepping into that debate (for now!), we see a Woman and a Man teach a Mighty Man of God the WORD.
- The four times Priscilla and Aquilla are mentioned, she is mentioned first twice and he first twice.
- Indicating that the Grace was upon them equally. Sometimes she took the lead in the ministry and sometimes he took the lead.
- Please not that the Lord said He would pour out His spirit upon ALL flesh – Male and Female.



Apollos...

- After being instructed by Priscilla and Aquila,
- Apollos went to **Achaia** (a region in Greece), specifically to **Corinth**, where he helped to strengthen the church there.
- He was known for his powerful preaching, and many in Corinth were impressed by his eloquence.
- According to 1 Corinthians 3:6, Paul refers to Apollos, saying,
- "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."
- This highlights the collaborative nature of early Christian ministry



HOMework...

- HOMEWORK
- Read and Meditate on Acts 18 -21
- Let the LORD Himself speak to your heart about Paul's third mission trip.
- We will begin our study next week from Paul's arrest in Jerusalem

