



Senior Pastor, Kevin Flannery

Series: *The Word of God Continues to Spread and Flourish*

Sermon Title: *God's Sustenance in the Midst of Weakness – Acts 18:1-22*

Big Idea: God advances His mission not through human strength, but through His people, His presence, and His providence.

Fall Term – Week 3 of 12

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker: Have you ever started something new—job, school, moving—while already exhausted? How did it feel?

Read and Reflect on Acts 18:1-22:

After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² 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, ³ and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴ Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. ⁵ When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. ⁶ 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." ⁷ Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. ⁸ Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized. ⁹ One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. ¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." ¹¹ So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. ¹² While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews of Corinth made a united attack on Paul and brought him to the place of judgment. ¹³ "This man," they charged, "is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law." ¹⁴ Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to them, "If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. ¹⁵ But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law—settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things." ¹⁶ So he drove them off. ¹⁷ Then the crowd there turned on Sosthenes the synagogue leader and beat him in front of the proconsul; and Gallio showed no concern whatever. ¹⁸ Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a vow he had taken. ¹⁹ They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. ²¹ But as he left, he promised, "I will come back if it is God's will." Then he set sail from Ephesus. ²² When he landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch.

Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion:

God Sustains His Servants Through His People (Acts 18:1–8)

1. Read Acts 18:1–3. How does God's provision of Aquila and Priscilla encourage Paul? Who has been an "Aquila/Priscilla" in your life—someone God brought at just the right time?
2. In Acts 18:3–4 (see also 1 Thessalonians 2:9), Paul used his trade (tentmaking) as a platform for ministry. How can our everyday work be a way to love and witness to others?
3. In Acts 18:6–8 (cf. Ezekiel 33:1–9), When Paul was rejected in the synagogue, God opened a new opportunity right next door. The gospel often takes root in the quiet moments of life—over a simple meal, among ordinary people, through the power of an extraordinary God. Where have you seen God redirect you after a closed door?

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God Sustains His Servants Through His Presence (Acts 18:9–11)

4. Read Acts 18:9–10a (cf. Joshua 1:9; Jeremiah 1:8). Jesus told Paul, “Do not be afraid; I am with you.” Why do you think presence, not just words, is so powerful in overcoming fear? What fears tend to silence you or keep you from speaking about your faith? How does Christ’s promise of His presence address those fears?
5. In Acts 18:10b–11, Jesus assures Paul that no one will harm him and that He has “many people in this city.” How does knowing that God already has people He’s drawing to Himself give you courage to persevere in sharing the gospel? Paul stayed for 18 months, teaching patiently. Why is perseverance so important in ministry and discipleship?

God Sustains His Servants Through His Providence (Acts 18:12–22)

6. Read Acts 18:12–16. How does Gallio’s unexpected decision to dismiss the charges show God’s providence? Even with protection, injustice still happened (Sosthenes beaten). How do we trust God when His providence feels partial or incomplete?
7. In Acts 18:18–22 (cf. James 4:13–15), Paul leaves Corinth, marks his gratitude with a vow, and holds his plans loosely before God. Paul made plans with the mindset “If the Lord wills.” How can we practice that same posture in our planning today?

In Conclusion

8. Where are you feeling weak, fearful, or uncertain right now? How might Acts 18 encourage you personally?
9. Who are the people, what are the promises, and what providences has God placed in your life recently that you can name and thank Him for?

Closing Prayer:

As Paul entered Corinth in weakness, with great fear and trembling, sometimes we’re not at our strongest. We’re worn down, uncertain, fearful. Acts 18 reminds us; weakness is not the enemy of mission. It’s the very place where God’s power is displayed. You, God provide people to encourage us; you reassure us with Your presence and promises, and direct us with Your providence. We pray that the Word continues to spread and flourish—not because of human strength, but because of the God Who is with us in our weakness.

Faith in Action:

- Welcome Emily Bower, Interim Kids Min Director! Contact Emily to serve individually or as a Community Group in Kids Min to help disciple our children: emilyb@coswayne.org
- October 14, 12 PM, Adult Fellowship Luncheon, F101
- October 19, 11:45 AM, Concerts of Prayer for New Partnership in India, F101