

Acts of the Holy Spirit  
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

NOTE TAKERS...

- I’ve titled today’s message: **“The Up’s And Down’s of Ministry”**
  - (Acts 18:1-17)

**~ INTRO ~**

TWO WEEKS AGO WE LEARNED... “*How Ministry Happens*”...

- And the way God uses our...
  - Life
  - Words
  - Service
  - Money
  - Prayers

AND IN A VERY USEFUL WAY...

- Finding common ground with people opens discussion...
  - Before... we share Jesus!

LAST WEEK...

- We learned that... in an **“Effective Ministry”**
  - Some respond in faith & others reject placing faith in Christ.

BECAUSE... GOD SENDS HIS WORD OUT...

- And accomplishes what He desires.

(Isa. 55:11) NKJV

*My word... that goes forth from My mouth;  
It shall not return to Me void,  
But it shall accomplish what I please,  
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

TODAY WE’LL SEE...

- **“The Up’s And Down’s of Ministry”**

HERE’S A FEW THINGS WE CAN LEARN:

**IDEA #1 – MINISTRY PARTNERS:**

READ (vv.1-5)

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I LOVE THIS SECTION...

- Because it reminds me of how Jesus trained & sent His disciples out.
  - (Mark 6:7) NKJV
  - (Luke 10:1) NKJV

IT ALSO REMINDS ME...

- Of that Bible verse in (Ecc. 4:9-12) NKJV...
  - About the value of a friend.

HERE IN (Acts 18)...

- God provided Paul with other ministry partners...
  - While he was waiting for Silas & Timothy (v.5).

AND... THERE’S A SIMPLE PRINCIPAL HERE.

- Don’t embark on solo ministry!
  - Allow God to provide ministry partners.
- Partners brings accountability / prayer support / wisdom / & protection.

**TWO EXAMPLES OF PROTECTION:**

- 1) A single man counseling a woman with marital problems...
  - And the next thing you know... the woman has “*feelings*” for this guy.
  - Opposite-sex biblical counseling is always a NO-NO!!!
- 2) One adult with one teenager after a church event...
  - Same principal it’s a NO-NO!!!
    - Never be in a closed room with one adult & one child.

Always do ministry two-by-two.

**IDEA #2 – KNOWING WHEN TO STOP A MINISTRY:**

READ (vv.6-11)

PAUL FACED OPPOSITION...

- In every town he preached the gospel in...
  - And in several cities, he was sent running.

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HERE AT CORINTH...

- God had a different plan.
  - 1) God provided ministry partners (v.2)
  - 2) God provided a place to stay (v.3)
  - 3) God provided fruit – conversions *Crispus* (v.8)
  - 4) God sent Paul to fulfill a need in this city (vv.9-10)

BUT... PAUL...

- Had to discover what the ministry focus was.
  - (v.6) says the Jews *opposed & blasphemed*

HOWEVER... THIS WAS NOT A TIME TO STOP MINISTRY...

- Rather... it was a time to discover where God was at work!

A FEW YEARS LATER...

- Paul writes two letters to the church in this city.
  - There was belief in Jesus...
    - BUT... the cultural influence kept Christians weak.

SO...

- God spoke to them thru Paul...
  - And brought them out of the darkness.

(John 8:32) NKJV

- “... *you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*”
  - Literally... set at liberty from sin.

PEOPLE GROWING UP IN THIS TOWN...

- Where 1,000 temple prostitutes worked the city every night.
  - Sexual dysfunction was part of the costal culture at Corinth.

AND... WHAT GOD WAS DOING...

- Was bring people out of that darkness.

**IDEA #3 – BATTLE FOR BELIEF:**

READ (vv.12-17)

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AS WE READ THRU (Acts) PAUL...

- Is in a continual battle with the Jews in town-after-town.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED...

- Why the Jews hated him so much?

THIS CHAPTER GIVES US SOME INSIGHT.

- Paul kept converting people right out of their synagogues.

**FOR EXAMPLE:**

- (Acts 17:4) in Thessalonica
- (Acts 17:12) in Berea

NOW... HERE IN (Acts 18) GOSPEL CONVERSION CONTINUES...

- 1<sup>st</sup> at (v.8) *Crispus* believed in the Lord...
  - And abandons his role as Synagogue leader.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> at (v.17) *Sosthenes* believed in the Lord...
  - And he too.... abandons his role as Synagogue leader.

IN FACT...

- In (1 Cor. 1:1) *Sosthenes* becomes part of Paul's ministry team.

INCREDIBLE!!!

RECENTLY...

- I performed a funeral, and the audience was filled with...
  - Many people trapped in serious darkness.
    - Several trans individuals
    - A witch who felt the need to talk to me after the service
    - Some were literally borderline drunk
    - Many were visually disturbed individuals
    - AND you could see drugs had taken a toll on several

BUT HERE'S THE CRAZY THING...

- There were 11-people in a crowd of 75 that came to faith.

**HERE'S THE POINT...**

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- (Matt. 4:16) NLT ...
  - God’s at work in darkness saving people.

AND...

- We’re NOT to shrink back...
  - (Rom. 1:16-17) NLT

~ IN CLOSING ~

If you’re stuck today...

- And recognize your need for help to move forward...
  - You can call on God!
    - (Ps. 116:1-7) NLT