



THE GOSPEL: UNDER GOD'S PROTECTION

Open it

1. Share a time when you were scared for your life. What got you out of the situation? Looking back, did you have any reason to be scared in the first place?

Daily devotions

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Acts 18:1–17

2. What stood out to you in this passage?
3. What did you learn about God from this passage?
4. What questions do you have after reading this passage?
5. How did Paul respond to the Jews?

Day 2

TODAY'S THEME: THE CITY OF CORINTH

Read Acts 18:6–3

Corinth was fifty-three miles west of Athens, so it was the next natural stop for Paul; but it was also strategic. Rome destroyed Corinth in 146 BC; some Greeks continued to live on the site, but it was revived as a city again only when Julius Caesar refounded it as a Roman colony in 44 BC. Although one of Athens's ancient rivals, after being revived it had long since surpassed Athens. Its citizens were citizens of Rome, and official inscriptions emphasize its Roman character, but many Greeks (and others) continued to live there, with an apparent influx of more non-Romans in this period. Roman Corinth was the political and economic center of Greece, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, and the transit point for all maritime trade between Rome and the prosperous Roman province of Asia.¹

- 6. Corinth was a trade hub for the Roman Empire, which made it a strategic place for Paul to share the gospel. Think about your context today. What would be a strategic place for the gospel to be preached today?**

- 7. When it comes to sports, business, and planning for our futures, we are taught to be strategic in what we do. Why is it important for the church to be strategic as it plans for its future?**

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✎ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

- Pray that God would allow strategic opportunities for the gospel to spread today.
- Pray that God would help you think strategically for the sake of the gospel.
- Pray for those who are ministering already in strategic places around the world, even here in our own backyard, that people would hear the gospel message and take it home to their families!

¹ *The IVP Bible Background Commentary—New Testament* [Book] / auth. Keener, Craig S. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014. Second Edition: pp. 378–379.

Day 3

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLAINING THE BIBLE

Read Acts 18:4–5

As Paul traveled from one city to another, he would spend a whole lot of time teaching people in these cities about the Bible, especially the Jews. He would reason with them and explain the truth about the Messiah that they were not understanding. You know, there are times even in our lives today where we need to be patient with people and explain the Scriptures to them. Sometimes we may even be the ones that someone else is explaining the Bible to.

The bottom line is that it's so important that everyone, even us, understand what the Bible has to say because it's not just a matter of enjoying life right now, but a matter of eternal destiny!

8. What are some dangers of not understanding the Bible truthfully?

9. What tools do you have that can help you understand the Bible better? What tools do you need to help you more?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

- Clear and accurate understanding of the Bible and all its teachings.
- The ability to help explain the Bible to other people who need to understand it!

Day 4

TODAY'S THEME: "I'M INNOCENT!"

Read Acts 18:6

Why in the world would Paul shake his garments at these people and declare that he is innocent?! That seems so random and crazy! Well, it's because in Ezekiel, Ezekiel argues that if you don't warn a wicked person of their sinfulness and they are punished for it, their blood is on your hands because you didn't warn them. So essentially what Paul is saying here in modern language is this: "I've done what I need to do and if you're going to reject Jesus then that's on you, not me!"

We need to share the message of salvation in Christ with everyone, even those we don't think would accept it! Our job is to share it. How terrible would it be for your family, friends, neighbors or co-workers to go to hell someday because you didn't tell them about Jesus? Everyone needs to hear this message! Will you be an ambassador for God?

10. We talk about sharing the gospel with our friends, but before we can do that, we need to know what the gospel is. What is the gospel message?

11. Why is it so important for us to share the good news about Jesus? Why is it so difficult for us to share that message sometimes?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here is something you could pray for today:

- Confidence to know what the gospel message is.
- Courage to share the gospel with your friends and family.
- Wisdom to know how to bring it up in conversations.

Day 5

TODAY'S THEME: GOD'S PROTECTION

Read Acts 18:7–17

God promised Paul that He would protect him and that he should not be afraid in Corinth. But the crazy thing is that it seems like not long after, people drag Paul in front of the Roman proconsul to have him judged in Roman courts as a criminal. I don't know about you, but I imagine that I would be second-guessing God's promise at that point. Like, "God, I thought you said you'd keep me safe!" Well, God did keep him safe! We have a tendency to sometimes begin doubting God's promises too early, and we fail to trust God. See, Paul was never harmed, and his life was not threatened in Corinth. The Romans wouldn't judge Paul and left it all to the Jews who didn't have any legal power or authority to harm Paul for proclaiming the gospel. So even though people tried to stop Paul and prevent his ministry from continuing, God stepped in and kept His promise.

Now, we have to remember that this is not a blanket promise for all people that God will keep them safe when they go out and preach about Jesus. He was speaking specifically to Paul in a specific city at a specific time. Many people suffer greatly around the world for proclaiming the good news about Jesus. But we can be encouraged that if God has called you to do something, He is going to see to it that you are able to carry it to completion.

12. Are there any promises from God that you have a hard time trusting? What is making it difficult for you to trust those promises?

13. How have you seen God's protection in your life or in your family's life?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

- Thank God for the freedom we have to share the gospel in our country.
- Pray for those around the world who suffer for the sake of Jesus.
- Pray that God would give you strength to proclaim the gospel no matter what opposition you may face.