

Be Not Silent

Acts 18:1–23

Each day, it's important to take your bearings. Where are you today? In the Easter season, in the scriptures, in your daily life, in your very self? Spend a few minutes getting your bearings for the day.

Let's briefly examine where we are in the Book of Acts and then begin our day with a prayer for deliverance—for ourselves, our fraternity brothers, and all Exodus Men.

You are fighting through difficulties. Whenever we set out on mission, there will be many obstacles. We have to remain faithful, no matter the challenge, and look for new ways to witness to Jesus.

Pray that the Lord grants deliverance to you, your family, and your fraternity.

Pray for freedom for all men in Exodus, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of Acts

After this he left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them; and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them, and they worked, for by trade they were tentmakers. And he argued in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with preaching, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God; his house was next door to the synagogue. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man shall attack you to harm you; for I have many people in this city." And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack upon Paul and brought him before the tribunal, saying, "This man is persuading

men to worship God contrary to the law.” But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, I should have reason to bear with you, O Jews; but since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves; I refuse to be a judge of these things.” And he drove them from the tribunal. And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to this.

After this Paul stayed many days longer, and then took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchre-ae he cut his hair, for he had a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined; but on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.

When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the Church, and then went down to Antioch. After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Reflection

After limited success in Athens with the philosophers, Paul sees more abundant fruit in Corinth, the sin-city of the time. Sinners—those who are cold—sometimes see the need for salvation more clearly than the comfortable—lukewarm. These sinners would not have the chance to repent if no one offered it to them. Condemning people does not work, but offering hope does by providing a vision of something more compelling than the brokenness of sin.

We offer God’s love to those who need it. Coming to Corinth, God gives Paul clear instructions: do not be afraid and speak up! We certainly can be afraid to offer faith to others.

Accepting Christ does not take away all of our problems. We still need to work through them over time with the help of our brothers. Paul’s two letters to the Corinthians testify to this, as he continues to help them to grow and work through their divisions. The Church in Corinth can serve as a model for us, accepting Christ into our brokenness and continuing to grow. Although we need support from our brothers, we can also be like Paul by encouraging our fraternity brothers to keep persevering.

Paul continues to preach the Lordship of Christ as his central message. In this Easter season, as we aim for continual growth, we can reflect on Christ’s Lordship in our own lives. Pray that the Lord will draw you to areas that need greater openness to him.

Week 5 Action Items

Pray about your mission.

Watch an uplifting movie.
Stay vigilant with technology use.