

Persistence in Witnessing

Joseph Carty / General

Acts / Church at Corinth; Evangelism / Acts 18

Paul was about to give up on the people in Corinth. He didn't think it was a good place to plant a church. In his mind it was too worldly and too calloused to the truth. But God insisted he stay and be more persistent. What happens next is nothing short of amazing...

Pibernik celebrates early

Slovenia

Giro d'Italia

2017

Loses badly.

148th place.

Multiplication of Discipleship

Acts 18:2-3 ESV

And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently 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 worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.

- Later become great teachers.

- Join him in mission work.
- Went to Ephesus
- With him in Rome.
- teach Apollos.

- Multiplication of Discipleship
 - Paul
 - Aquila and Priscilla
 - Apollos
 - Believers in Achaia

Plato wrote the first sentence of his famous Republic nine different ways before he was satisfied.

Cicero practiced speaking before friends every day for thirty years to perfect his elocution.

Noah Webster labored 36 years writing his dictionary, crossing the Atlantic twice to gather material.

Milton rose at 4:00 am every day in order to have enough hours for his Paradise Lost.

Gibbon spent 26 years on his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

Bryant rewrote one of his poetic masterpieces 99 times before publication, and it became a classic.

It is said that Thomas Edison performed 50,000 (sic) experiments before he succeeded in producing a storage battery.

We might assume the famous inventor would have had some serious doubts along the way. But when asked if he ever became discouraged working so long without results, Edison replied,

"Results? Why, I know 50,000 things that won't work."

Today in the Word, August, 1990

"Genius is 2% inspiration and 98 % perspiration" (Thomas Edison)

- Don't give up.
 - Feel down and out
 - Don't quite

- Most of all
 - don't stop
 - serving
 - discipling

Synagogue Teaching

Acts 18:4 *ESV*

And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

- Again,
 - trying to reach the Jews.
- See Paul Preaching.
- Sanctuary theme:
 - Christ as the Lamb
 - Christ as the High Priest
- Attitude of Evangelism
 - May not agree
 - Sincere heart.

Earnest Preaching

2 Corinthians 2:15-17 ESV

For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

- We are
 - Smell
 - aroma
 - fragrance
 - attractive
 - disgusting
- › What type of scent
 - › are you giving off?

Acts 18:5-6 ESV

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, 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 on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

- Paul was called as
 - Apostle to the Gentiles
 - better to focus on that.

Winston Churchill seemed so dull as a youth that his father thought he might be incapable of earning a living in England.

G.K. Chesterton, the English writer, could not read until he was eight. One of his teachers told him, "If we could open your head we should not find any brain but only a lump of white fat."

Thomas Edison's first teacher described him as "addled," (confused) and his father almost convinced him he was a "dunce."

Albert Einstein's parents feared their child was dull, and he performed so badly in all high school courses except mathematics that a teacher asked him to drop out.

Acts 18:7-8 ESV

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 his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

- Many?
 - Paul not sure.

- work was worth it.
- Poor Success?
 - Ruler converted
 - people were
 - angry
 - not impressed

Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 24—Corinth)

He doubted the wisdom of trying to build up a church from the material that he found there. As he was planning to leave the city for a more promising field...

- He wanted to give up.
 - No hope here.
- These people
 - cannot be foundation of church.
- Worship of Venus
 - Lewd and evil

- worldly
- goddess of love, beauty, pleasure and procreation
- Hard to win souls there.

One day George Muller began praying for five of his friends. After many months, one of them came to the Lord. Ten years later, two others were converted. It took 25 years before the fourth man was saved. Muller persevered in prayer until his death for the fifth friend, and throughout those 52 years he never gave up hoping that he would accept Christ! His faith was rewarded, for soon after Muller's funeral the last one was saved.

- 5 Siblings

Acts 18:9-11 ESV

And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.” And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

- God told Paul
 - not to give up.
- Stay there.

- › Persistence
- › Don't give up
 - › Your efforts to witness
 - › Someone will respond

Lies and Manipulation

Acts 18:12–13 ESV

But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, saying, “This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.”

- Rinse and Repeat
- More angry Jews
 - Trying to stop his work
- Different outcome.

Acts 18:14–16 ESV

But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint. 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.

- The judge agrees with Paul
 - Before
 - Paul beating
 - Paul kicked out of town
 - Paul imprisoned
- Tables turn!

Jewish Mobs

Acts 18:17 ESV

And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of this.

- Paul not beaten
 - crowd turned

- beat Jewish leader!
- I wonder
 - what Paul thought...
 - retribution???
- Finally,
 - field opened.
 - people change minds
 - being to receive truth.

From the booklet *Bits and Pieces* comes an interesting story about Florence Chadwick, the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions. On the Fourth of July in 1951, she attempted to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast. The challenge was not so much the distance, but the bone-chilling waters of the Pacific. To complicate matters, a dense fog lay over the entire area, making it impossible for her to see land. After about 15 hours in the water, and within a half mile of her goal, Chadwick gave up. Later she told a reporter, "Look, I'm not excusing myself. But if I could have seen land, I might have made it." Not long afterward she attempted the feat again.

Once more a misty veil obscured the coastline and she couldn't see the shore. But this time she made it because she kept reminding herself that land was there. With that confidence she bravely swam on and achieved her goal. In fact, she broke the men's record by 2 hours!

Appeal

- Persevere in all good things.
 - But most of all.
- Persevere in reaching souls.