

The Cross in Corinth

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Acts 18:1-22.

B. Athens and Corinth picture intellectual pride and sensual lust.

II. Paul expected that God would lead him to someone who would open up the door to evangelize the city.

A. Paul led Priscilla and Aquila to Christ while at work.

B. There was a great period of success in the Jewish synagogue in Corinth.

1. It was not long before the cross of Christ stirred up enmity among the Jews.

2. Still, the leader of the synagogue came to Christ.

III. Paul's response to the city.

A. He was afraid—he suffered just as we do. (I Corinthians 2)

B. The only legitimate mark of success of the church is whether strongholds are being defeated in the world.

C. Paul was not to be afraid—he was to keep preaching because God would protect him.

D. Paul's preaching had a powerful effect, and some of his earliest extant letters were written.

IV. The Jews rose up against Paul and brought him to trial.

A. They argued he was beginning a new religion.

B. Gallio threw the case out of court because he saw that the case was an inner dispute.

C. This gave Paul freedom to preach since Judaism was an established religion within the empire.

D. The Jews were so upset that they seized their leader Sosthenes and beat him up before the tribunal, but this led to his Christian conversion.

E. Behind the scenes, God watches over His people.

V. Paul took a vow that he would not cut his hair. This was a Jewish way of giving thanks.

VI. God's program.

A. The early Christians begun with the preaching of the Word.

B. When people were won over, body-life was stirred.

C. As the body began to operate, the Spirit began to work uniquely in the church.

Application questions:

1. How did God take seemingly bad circumstances in Acts and turn them around for His glory?

2. Has there been a time when you were afraid to witness? What security does God offer in this passage?

3. What elements of God's program do you find most challenging? Explain.
