

WORSHIP SERVICE - 11.9.2025

PART 40 - FROM FERVOR TO FULLNESS

I. INTRODUCTION

- The main point from this passage is that we are to possess the truth with zeal, submit to correction with humility, and proclaim Christ with boldness for the advancement of his kingdom and the encouragement of his church.

Acts 18:24-28

24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures.

25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John.

26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

27 And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

II. FOUNDATIONS OF CONVICTION

He was a learned man (eloquent) with a sound knowledge of the scriptures

- In our text we are now introduced to Apollos. And for being such a short passage, we learn a surprising amount about this man and the advancement of the gospel through his life as he labored for the gospel.
- We see the advancement of the gospel in his life first, then an advancement towards knowing The Way more accurately.
- Apollos wasn't starting from a pagan background, like those in Athens, and he wasn't at war against Christians like Paul was when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- In fact, Apollos is portrayed in a positive way, even as we see the gospel progress in his life.
- Apollos was a Jew, brought up culturally and religiously in Judaism.
- He was from Alexandria in Egypt which was famous as a place of education, and knowledge.

- Apollos was educated. He was scholarly. He spoke eloquently, and he could reason and formulate thoughts and points and make arguments because he was competent in the scriptures.
- He knew his bible! He knew the law and the prophets.
- Are you competent in the scriptures? Are you capable and skilled? If you're not, get reading!
- 1 Peter 2:2 reminds us "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation"
- We should desire his word, drink it up, study it, learn it, and become skilled with handling it.
- The Holy Spirit uses the word of God to nourish us, sanctify us, convict us, teach us, guide us, and conform us to be more like Christ.

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke and taught fervently, and accurately

- Luke informs us that Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord. He had been taught the way of Jesus. He had heard the gospel, trusted in Christ Jesus the Messiah.
- You too have been instructed in the way of Jesus! It's him we preach here at Sent Church every Sunday!
- And what does Apollos do with this gospel truth he'd be instructed in?
- "And being fervent in Spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus"
- He speaks up and he speaks out!
- Now this fervency could mean that he brought an intensity and zeal to his teaching, but based on the original text, this would be more like "being fervent in the spirit" that is, filled with the Holy Spirit.
- And this fervency in the Spirit is what led to his bold teaching of God's word.
- Apollos was simply a man who knew Jesus, knew scripture, and opened his mouth. He was faithful. He taught and instructed others with what he had learned.
- And he did so accurately for the scope of what he knew.
- Even in Paul's absence, the Spirit was still at work in Ephesus. He is using Apollos for the spread of the message of Jesus. It's divine orchestration.

He only knew of the baptism of John; he didn't have the whole picture

- However, there is one thing that is lacking that Luke mentions: he only knew the baptism of John. He only had part of the picture.
- This isn't to say that there was false doctrine to correct or rebuke; he had trusted in Jesus and was faithful in preaching the truths he knew, but there were some additional points that he still needed understanding in.
- We aren't told what that was. The things he did know, he knew well, and taught well, but there were yet some things he didn't know.
- However, he didn't let his lack of this hinder his boldness. He preached what he knew boldly in the synagogue! I'm reminded of how many times many young believers, having received the grace and mercy of God and received salvation, boldly share of the grace and salvation they have received.
- Some of us have been Christians quite a while and have forgotten that it was through someone boldly sharing with us that we first heard the gospel and were saved!
- Some of you know your doctrine and theology far better than Apollos did, but are you boldly opening your mouths?
- If you believe theologically that you were created for the glory of God, and that you are to do everything to the glory of God, and you believe that our means of glorifying God is by loving him and obeying him, then obey his commands to preach the word!

- Ephesians 6:19: "that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak."

III. FUNDAMENTALS OF CORRECTION

Godly manner of giving correction

- Apollos shows up in Ephesus and he heads to the synagogue, and with eloquence of speech, with skill and knowledge of the scriptures, and being fervent in the Spirit, he begins to boldly speak and to teach what he knows.
- And Aquilla and Priscilla are there and hear him speak. They were the husband/wife duo whom the Lord providentially connected to Paul in Corinth and travelled with Paul to Ephesus, where they stayed.
- But as they listen, something is missing. What they are hearing is true, but there's more to it. The message is left wanting.
- Now I have to applaud them for not just hearing Apollos and receiving his teaching without any examination.
- Priscilla and Aquilla have the wisdom and discernment to not just hear this partial truth and call it a day, but to test it, and to examine what they were hearing thoroughly.
- We need to be testing the teachings that we hear against scripture.
- Notice they don't stand up publicly in the synagogue and announce to everyone that this man is leaving out some important things. They don't call him out publicly.
- No, they took him aside, gently, privately, away from all the crowds, and they sat down with him and explained the way of God more accurately.
- That is, not that they corrected him in what he was teaching, but they gave him more knowledge about the things he wasn't aware of.
- This was a godly couple that saw this man in need of more knowledge of the truths of scripture and the Messiah who had come, and they took the time to bring him aside and sit down and explain to him the way of God.
- And this is a prime example here of godly correction for us. This is a conversation with the intent of building up the church and imparting knowledge to a brother for his own strengthening and good.
- We live in a day and age where knowledge is abundant, we have easy access to it at our fingertips.
- Unfortunately, though knowledge is abundant, it's also of varying quality and truthfulness.
- And we don't live in a society that can discuss and easily give or receive correction. Everything is just someone else's opinion.
- Our culture is one of scoffing and rejection of differing beliefs.
- Aquilla and Priscilla corrected Apollos privately, directly, and with the intent not of setting him straight, but to refine and expand his understanding of the truth.
- Eph 4:14–16 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
- They lovingly spoke the truth to Apollos. They did so to point him towards Christ. They did so to further equip him with knowledge and truth with the intent to build up and strengthen a member of the body of Christ.
- Our correction should come from a place of love for our fellow brother. And the point is, as we speak with them, that we are pointing them back to

Christ, to the gospel, that we desire to see them living as a healthy member of the body of Christ.

- One of the things that struck me about this passage was that if Apollos had never been bold to speak up about the things he did know, he likely wouldn't have been corrected because others wouldn't have heard his understanding of scripture.
- If scripture isn't proceeding from our mouths, then why would anyone correct us? If we're not discussing the truth of God's word, if our conversations stick to sports and the weather and politics, it leaves little opportunity for building up one another in the faith.
- Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
- This Book of the Law shall not depart from our mouths church. We need to keep it on our lips! Meditating on it day and night. And then we need to do it.
- Then as we're speaking the truth to one another, as the opportunity arises, we correct in love and gentleness those who have the humility and wisdom to accept it.

Humility in receiving correction

- We're not just to offer godly correction, but also have the humility to accept it from others when it comes.
- We aren't told exactly how Apollos responded, but as the text continues to portray Apollos in a positive light, and mentions in the following verses that letters of recommendation were written for him as he traveled, we can understand that Apollos had the humility to accept this correction that had been given to him.
- He wasn't prideful and arrogant when this godly couple came to him to enhance his understanding of the way of the Lord.
- He was humble to receive their words.
- Proverbs 15:32 32 Whoever ignores instruction despises himself, but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence.
- If Apollos were to reject their instruction, it would be to despise himself. But by listening, he gained knowledge that he previously didn't have.
- His ability to receive correction humbly, to welcome it even, characterized him as a wise man.
- Proverbs 9:8b–9 8... reprove a wise man, and he will love you. 9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.
- When you instruct or correct a wise man, he will love you! He'll be wiser still! He'll increase in learning!
- This is what Apollos did! He welcomed correction and instruction, it refined his understanding of the truth.
- And church, how you receive instruction, or correction, speaks volumes about the type of man or woman you are.
- When you are taught here from the word, do you take it to heart, receive it and apply it, or do you think, "I already knew that." Or, "that doesn't apply to me." Maybe you just take it as knowledge and lack the wisdom to apply it to your own heart and own life.
- For children, when you are instructed by your parents or those whom the Lord has placed in your life to teach you, do you accept it gratefully and readily, or do you say "I know that already," "You don't need to tell me."
- We need the humility to receive correction. Apollos was fortunate to receive correction delivered in a godly manner. It's a lot harder to receive correction delivered in a harsh or finger pointing manner.
- But we need the humility and wisdom to receive correction and instruction which is edifying and useful to us, and not just reject it based

on how it was delivered.

- So if you're on the receiving end of correction, do so with humility. If you're on the delivering end, do so with love and gentleness.

IV. FRUIT OF CLARITY

He helped the church

- Now, unlike many of Paul's missionary journeys where he's headed into new territory, Apollos is going to Corinth, a place where Paul has already been and where there is an established church.
- And now at this point, Paul has left Corinth, heading down to Antioch, and now Apollos heads to Corinth to help and continue ministering to the church there. And having his understanding of the truth now refined, coupled with his knowledge of the scriptures, his eloquent speaking, he was therefore immensely helpful to the church!
- It says he greatly helped them!
- He is now fully equipped, rightly dividing the word of truth, able to preach, teach and exhort for the encouragement and building up of the church.
- Later on, the apostle Paul in his letter to these Corinthian believers takes a moment to recognize the work that Apollos did among them.
- 1 Cor 3:6 "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."
- Apollos came and continued the work watering this baby church so that it would continue to grow. And that was hard work.
- These were baby Christians, infants in Christ, and Apollos was a great help to these believers.
- There are people in this church that have extensive knowledge of the truth and have the abilities to explain doctrine and theological concepts. If that's you, are you using those gifts to help our church? Are you watering our church? Or are you still back in Alexandria, sitting in the library just learning knowledge?

He refuted the Jews

- Apollos didn't limit the application of his understanding of the truth to just the church. Nor should we. He applied his knowledge in the community as well! Verse 28 - he helped strengthen the church through his interaction with the community - powerfully refuting the Jews in public!
- He applied his knowledge of the scripture to challenge and refute the Jews using scripture to show them who the messiah was and the truth of salvation being offered to them.
- 1 Peter 3:15 "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"
- Apollos was prepared. He knew his bible and was ready to use it as the foundation to refute error. And as he did this, it was an encouragement to the church!
- He was engaging the culture for the sake of the gospel, not going in unarmed, but with knowledge and wisdom and humility to engage in dialogue with the Jews that they might see Christ!
- When we seek to refute error, it's not for the purposes of being argumentative or winning an argument, but to break down barriers that stand in opposition to the message of the gospel.
- Those around us may not be arguing for Judaism, but they will seek portray Jesus as just a nice guy with good quotes, or reject the scriptures as the authoritative word of God. They seek to justify or belittle their sin, or will argue that it's not sin but their own personal choice to live as they want without consequences or concern.

- The Jews didn't come to Corinth refuted! Apollos conversed with them where they were--in public.
- Boldness involves opening your mouth and proclaiming the truth in places that are uncomfortable or to people who will make that conversation uncomfortable.
- When was the last time you got out of your comfort zone and declared God's word to be true, the gospel to be truth, that sin is wrong and Jesus Christ is Lord over all?
- For parents, are you preparing your children to have these conversations with their peers? Or are you keeping them in a christian bubble, that someday they will emerge from, and have no idea how to preach, refute, exhort, and defend their faith to a world that is lost in sin and darkness and depravity.
- Set an example for them! Let them see you engaging those who don't yet know Christ with the truth.
- Set an example for your church! That's what Apollos did as he engaged the Jews and preached Christ to them - the church was greatly helped and encouraged by seeing him do this!

He preached Christ

- He showed them by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.
- That is who we preach! That is who we proclaim! Christ and him crucified!
- And so when we preach Christ, we do so with scripture!
- When we share the gospel, we preach:
- Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God! All are sinners and in need of salvation!
- Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!". Our sins demand death, judgement, but the gift of salvation, of eternal life is freely offered to us through Jesus Christ alone!
- Ephesians 2 which tells lost sinners that salvation is through grace alone, that they cannot earn this gift through their own works!
- Romans 10:9 that to every lost sinner the Lord says to them "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved!" Jesus paid the wages of your sin so that all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved!
- Apollos used scripture to show that the Christ, the messiah, was Jesus.
- Do you know his word? Have you hidden his word in your heart? Are you in the word and are you employing it in conversations with others to point them to Christ?
- Apollos left his mark on this church. In fact, this church in their own infancy and flesh would suffer a breakdown in unity and create division among themselves, with some saying "I am of Paul", "I am of Apollos", or "I am of Cephas."
- But Apollos was a faithful example for us to follow. He was bold. He was fervent. There was a progression of knowledge as he studied scripture and knew it in and out but was also humble enough to receive correction, and instruction in the areas he didn't know. He had a teachable heart.
- He loved Jesus, and was filled with the Holy Spirit. And he took action on his faith; his knowledge wasn't just for his own edification, it was to be used for Christ; for building and watering the church; for engaging in conversations with the lost.
- And he didn't just sit on the gifts he had been given, he put them to use for the glory of God and for the good of his church.
- He began with scriptural foundations of conviction, knowing the truth, though in part, and had in humility the ability to receive the fundamental

correction needed to gain clarity and bear much much fruit to the glory of God.

- We can be encouraged by the sovereignty of God to use Apollos to continue to minister to and build his church, placing Apollos in that time and place as one of many faithful servants who undertook the work of ministering to the church in Corinth.
- May we too possess the truth with zeal, submit to correction with humility, and proclaim Christ with boldness for the advancement of his kingdom and the encouragement of his church.
- May we have many among us who are like Apollos. Bold. Faithful. Humble. Having a deep love for the study of scripture.
- And may we be people of action, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the risen Christ, proclaiming him faithfully until his church is complete and he comes again.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?