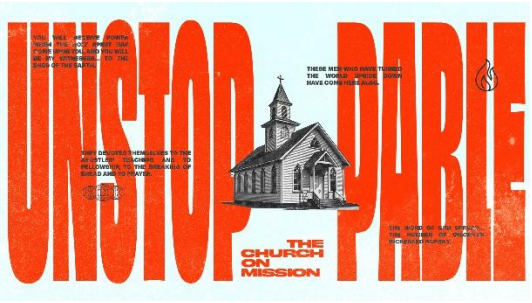


GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Unstoppable Church Wk 17: Speaking Without Fear Because Christ Is with Us
Acts 18:1–18
10.04.26 | Tony Bryant

About This Week's Message:

Paul arrives in Corinth after a difficult stretch of ministry. He has faced opposition, disappointment, loneliness, and uncertainty, and Scripture gives us a glimpse of a man who came in "weakness and in fear and much trembling." Yet Acts 18 shows us that God does not abandon Paul in his weakness. He meets him there, provides people to walk alongside him, and reminds him of the promise he needs most: "I am with you."

Through Aquila and Priscilla, the return of Silas and Timothy, and the fruit of the gospel in Corinth, God strengthens Paul for the work in front of him. Then, in a vision, the Lord tells Paul not to be afraid, but to keep speaking and not be silent. Paul's courage is not rooted in easier circumstances or greater confidence in himself. It is rooted in the presence and sovereign care of Christ.

Acts 18 reminds us that fear does not have to dictate our obedience. We can bring our fear to Christ, keep bearing witness to the gospel, and trust that God is already at work in people and places we cannot yet see. Faithfulness is measured by obedience, not by immediate results. Because Christ is with us, we can speak with courage right where He has placed us.

Goals of This Week's Discussion:

- Recognize that faithful followers of Jesus can experience weakness, fear, and discouragement.
- See how God uses His presence, His people, and His Word to strengthen us.
- Consider what it means to keep speaking about Jesus even when doing so feels costly.
- Learn to draw courage from Christ's presence rather than from our circumstances or our own strength.
- Identify the places where God may be asking us to trust Him and speak with greater courage.

Connections with the 7-Marks of a Jesus Follower:

- **Walk in the Word**: Remember and trust God's repeated promise throughout Scripture that He is with His people.
- **Keep in Step**: Follow the Holy Spirit with obedience even when we feel weak, afraid, or uncertain.
- **Share Your Story**: Keep bearing witness to Jesus, trusting God with the response.
- **Play Your Part**: Faithfully speak and serve in the places where God has already positioned us.

Starter Questions:

- When you feel overwhelmed or uncertain, what is your natural response?
- Who has God used to encourage or strengthen you during a difficult season?
- What makes speaking openly about your faith feel difficult or costly at times?

Read Acts 18:1–8

1 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 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, 3 and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. 6 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." 7 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. 8 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.

Discussion:

- What evidence do you see in this passage that God was caring for Paul as he arrived in Corinth?
- How might the friendship and fellowship of Aquila and Priscilla have encouraged Paul?
- What changes when Silas and Timothy arrive in verse 5?

- What does this passage teach us about the value of godly relationships and partners in the Kingdom mission?
- Where have you experienced God strengthening you through other believers?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:3 & Acts 18:9–11

3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling.

9 And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 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." 11 And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Discussion:

- What does 1 Corinthians 2:3 reveal about Paul's condition when he ministered in Corinth?
- Why is it important to remember that courage and fear can exist at the same time?
- Which part of Jesus' words to Paul in Acts 18:9–10 stands out to you most? Why?
- What is the difference between trying to overcome fear through our own strength and drawing courage from Christ's presence?
- How does "I am with you" change the way we understand difficult or intimidating circumstances?
- Why do you think God tells Paul, "Keep on speaking and do not be silent"?

Read Isaiah 43:5, Jeremiah 1:8 & Matthew 28:20

5 Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you.

8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD.

20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Discussion:

- What common promise do you hear in these passages?
- Why is God's presence such a powerful answer to fear?
- How might Paul's knowledge of Scripture have helped him receive Jesus' words in Acts 18?

- What promises from Scripture help you remember that you are not alone?
- Where do you need to stop striving in your own power and trust that Christ is with you?

Read Acts 18:12–17

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, 13 saying, “This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.” 14 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. 15 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.” 16 And he drove them from the tribunal. 17 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.

Discussion:

- How do these verses demonstrate God’s sovereign care for Paul?
- God’s promise did not mean Paul would never face opposition. What did it mean in this situation?
- How can we trust God’s care without assuming that obedience will always lead to easy circumstances?
- What helps you remain faithful when opposition or uncertainty does not immediately disappear?

Read Acts 18:18, 24–28

18 After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila.

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.

Discussion:

- What changes do you see in Paul from his arrival in Corinth to his departure?
- How do Aquila and Priscilla demonstrate the multiplying effect of faithful ministry?
- What does Apollos' story show us about the importance of both courage and teachability?
- How can our faithfulness today strengthen someone else to faithfully carry the gospel tomorrow?

Reflection:

- Where are you currently experiencing weakness, fear, or self-doubt?
- What fear is most likely to keep you silent about Jesus?
- Where might God already be at work even though you cannot yet see it?
- What is your "Corinth," the place where speaking feels costly?
- What would obedience look like there this week?

Application:

- Bring your fear to Christ. Name what you are afraid of instead of allowing fear to dictate your agenda.
- Remember His presence. Return to Jesus' promise, "I am with you," and draw courage from Him rather than from your circumstances.
- Keep speaking. Look for one opportunity this week to bear witness to Jesus rather than remaining silent.
- Trust God with the results. Faithfulness is measured by obedience, not by immediate results.
- Share with expectancy. Pray for the people around you believing that God is already at work in ways you may not yet see.

Pray:

- Ask Jesus to meet us in places of weakness, fear, and discouragement.
- Thank God for His promise to be with us and for the people He uses to strengthen us.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for courage to keep speaking about Jesus when it feels costly.
- Pray for trust in God's sovereign care when circumstances remain difficult or uncertain.
- Ask God to show us where He is already at work in the lives of people around us.

- Pray that Revive would be a church that speaks without fear because Christ is with us.