

Sermon Handout

God Protects His Church

Acts 18:9-17

I. St. Paul's Vision vv. 9-11

- a. What it meant
 - i. Visions in Acts (*cf.* 2:17; Joel 2:28)
9:3-6; 9:10-16; 10:1-6, 9-16; 16:9; 22:17-21; 23:11; 27:23-24
 - ii. God directed the early advance of the Gospel (*see* I Cor 13:8-11)
- b. The cause and purpose of the vision
 - i. Difficulty & anxiety 16:23; 17:10, 13-14; 32-33; II Thess 3:1-2
I Cor 2:3; II Cor 12:7-10 (*cf.* I Thess 2:17-18)
 - ii. Encouragement to persevere
“Don't be afraid . . . no harm will come to you”
cf. Dt 31:6; Josh 1:5-6, 9; Isa 41:10-11; 43:5-7; Jer 1:7-8
 - iii. God's specific purposes in Corinth
 1. Paul is to speak boldly, without hesitation
 2. Many converts are to be expected
- c. Paul remains in Corinth, establishing a church v. 11

II. St. Paul Before Gallio vv. 12-17

- a. Charged by the synagogue Jews v. 12 (*cf.* v. 8)
 - i. Brought before the proconsul of Achaia (Roman authority)
 - ii. “contrary to law” v. 13 (Moses – but subterfuge intended)
- b. Gallio's judgement
 - i. Does not wait for Paul's defense v. 14a
 - ii. Dismisses the charge peremptorily vv. 14b-16
 - iii. Influence of Seneca & Claudius is evident
- c. The beating of Sosthenes v. 17
 - i. The Jews turn on their own new “chief ruler”
 - ii. Sosthenes beaten in public before Gallio

III. The Church's Appropriate Response

- a. With the NT, we don't rely on visions, but on God's Word
- b. Danger must not dissuade the church from speaking the Truth
- c. Judgment is delayed, pending kingdom fulfillment II Pet 3:8-9
- d. Christ rules while his kingdom grows Mt 28:20; Heb 10:11-13