

INTRO

- What's the longest you've lived in a place?

READ

Acts 18:1-11

Acts is about the mission and ministry of Jesus continuing through his Spirit and his Church, and followers of Jesus today are called to participate in this unstoppable movement Jesus began.

REFLECT & RESPOND

As Paul approaches the end of his 2nd missionary journey, he enters Corinth somewhat apprehensive (1 Cor 2:3) partly because of what was behind him (physical and emotional toll of the journey thus far) and what was ahead of him. Corinth was a new, progressive and growing city with great influence. It was also known for its corruption and sexual immorality. Ministry in Corinth begins slow and is difficult.

Like Paul, life is held in tension of highs and lows. We'll all experience times of disorientation, discouragement and distress. So, how does God encourage and help us to persevere in facing such obstacles? 4 crucial ways God provides staying power in a place or situation that is difficult.

1. God's People

God's help comes in the form of community and friends (Priscilla & Aquila, Silas & Timothy). One of the main ways God gives us what we need is through other Christians.

Qu: how have you seen God's help come through others?

2. God's Provision

God's provision for Paul comes through a job and then through a financial gift from the Macedonian church.

3. God's Presence

God's help comes through his Word to Paul: "Don't be afraid for I am with you." This is a consistent encouragement God gives to his people.

4. God's Purpose

Ultimately, God says to Paul, "I'm at work, trust me, stay and do your part." This reminds us that we need to see people and our city through God's perspective.

What this means is that, in general, the most strategic place for Christians to live, work and minister is large cities. —

Tim Keller commentary on this passage

Qu: why is a city like Toronto so strategic for Christians to stay, work and minister in? What makes it hard to stay?

In order for our church to establish and grow in Toronto and beyond, it will take many people to sacrifice to stay in the city or GTA.

Qu: how about you, do you desire to stay despite the challenges? Why/not?

RESPOND & PRAY

- Pray for God's provision and purpose to be made available
- Pray for many in our church community to hear the word to stay as long as they can!