

I Am With You

Acts 18.1-17

The presence of God with the people of God is the only thing that guarantees that the plan of God for our lives will not and cannot fail.

“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20

“Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you.” Acts 18:9

“Christ is beside me, Christ is before me,

Christ is behind me, King of my heart;

Christ is within me, Christ is below me,

Christ is above me, never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,

Christ all around me, shield in the strife;

Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,

Christ in my rising, light of my life.

Christ is beside me, Christ is before me,

Christ is behind me, King of my heart;

Christ is within me, Christ is below me,

Christ is above me, never to part.”

- St. Patrick's Breastplate

I. Christ Before Us. Acts 18.1-17

“After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudias had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.” Acts 18:1-4

“But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.” 2 Corinthians 2:14

“It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.” Deuteronomy 31:8

If God is leading the way, He is not leading us to hopelessness and to despair but to fruitfulness and ultimately to Himself our true and everlasting home.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” John 14:1-3

II. Christ Beside Us. Acts 18:5-8

Christ is always present to actively provide us what we need to serve Him in hard and seemingly uncertain times.

“When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the Word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they had opposed and reviled him, he shook 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.’ 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. 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.” Acts 18:5-8

What does Christ provide Paul?

- Partners
- Place for Ministry
- A Plausible Convert

“Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:8

“So Abraham called the name of the place, ‘The Lord will provide’”, as it is said to this day, ‘On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.’” Genesis 22:14

"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Romans 8:32

III. Christ Behind Us. Acts 18:9

"And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack and harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.'" Acts 18:9

What fears are in this passage?

- Fear of Abandonment:

"Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you."

- Fear of Harm: "No one will attack and harm you."
- Fear of Failure: "I have many people in this city."

"and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Romans 5:5

We have nothing to fear because the Lord has our backs. He is the One who has taken it upon Himself to bring us safely home.

Study Questions:

I. Christ Before Us (Acts 18:1–4)

1. How do Aquila and Priscilla's circumstances (being expelled from Rome) demonstrate God going **before** Paul to prepare the way in Corinth?
 2. Why do you think Luke emphasizes that Paul *found* Aquila and Priscilla? What does this suggest about God's providence?
 3. How does 2 Corinthians 2:14 help you understand what it means for Christ to "lead us in triumphal procession," even in difficult ministry contexts like Corinth?
 4. In Deuteronomy 31:8 and John 14:1–3, how does God's promise to go before His people shape their ability to resist fear, discouragement, or hopelessness?
 5. Where do you see evidence—recent or past—that Christ has gone **before you** to prepare people, places, or opportunities you needed?
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II. Christ Beside Us (Acts 18:5–8)

6. What difference do Silas and Timothy's arrival make in Paul's ministry rhythm, courage, and fruitfulness?

7. What does the story of Titius Justus—whose house is “next door to the synagogue”—teach us about how Christ often provides *ordinary, providential* help right beside us?
 8. Why is Crispus’s conversion significant, and how does it show Christ providing a “plausible convert” to encourage Paul?
 9. How do the promises of Matthew 6:8, Genesis 22:14, and Romans 8:32 deepen your understanding of God's active provision in the middle of hardship?
 10. When you think of your own ministry, work, or relationships, what are the “partners,” “places,” or “plausible converts / encouragements” Christ has given you right beside you?
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III. Christ Behind Us (Acts 18:9–10)

11. What do the three fears identified—abandonment, harm, and failure—show us about Paul’s emotional and spiritual condition at this moment?
12. Which of these fears do you most identify with, and why?
13. What does Christ’s reassurance (“I am with you... no one will attack and harm you... I have many in this city”) reveal about His character and His commitment to His mission?
14. How does Romans 5:5 support God’s promise that He is behind His people, ensuring that their labor is never in vain?
15. How might believing that Christ stands **behind you**—protecting, guiding, and guaranteeing fruit—change the way you face opposition, uncertainty, or discouragement this week?