

Trading Your Plan for God's Plan
Date: 5/22/16

Read Together

Read the Scripture and overview below before your Life Group meets.

Scripture passage: Acts 18

Paul was no stranger to change. Often he found himself in the midst of turmoil and trouble, yet he always managed to portray a sense of faithful perseverance and steadfast trust. His secret? As the result of a blinding light and prophetic word, his encounter with the living God caused him to learn how to trade his plans for God's plans and rest in the sovereign Savior he loved. Practically speaking, though, how does God help us cope with change, manage hardship, and advance when life's circumstances are changing all around us? From the vantage point of Acts 18, we will see how God teaches and trains us in the area of change, all the while providing us with the encouragement of friends and the guardianship of His Word. As God moves and adjusts the mission He has for each of us personally, He daily demonstrates our need to trade our plans for His so we can *go there* with the Gospel for His glory.

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your lesson to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- Describe a recent time when you had to deal with a change in plans. How did you respond? How should you have responded?

Read Acts 18:1.

- Compare and contrast Corinth and Athens. (See Acts 17, Romans 1:8-32, & 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 for background)
- What was Paul's physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual state as he entered Corinth? Remember Paul had endured rioting, beating and imprisonment, separation from his friend, Barnabas, and a change in culture. (See 1 Corinthians 2:3-5)
- Is there anyone in your life who is enduring hardship and turmoil right now? How can you minister to them with the Gospel this week?



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Read Acts 18:2-8

- Who does Paul meet and also reunite with in this passage? How would this have encouraged him?
- In the midst of change and difficulty, God blessed Paul with some new friends and with some old ones. What does this tell you about the character of God?
- When has God encouraged you by providing others to bear your burdens and befriend you?
- One thing that each of these friends had in common was that their belief in the Gospel caused them to rearrange their lives and trade their plans for God's plans. What about you? Have your relationships and your growth through change reflected a greater pursuit of the will of God or are you a casualty to the cause of Christ? What about five years from now? How will your relationships affect growth and change in your life?

Read Acts 18:9-10

- What does God encourage Paul with in these verses?
- How has God's Word been a guard for your mind and heart?
- Read Isaiah 41:10. Recently, Pastor McKinley preached a message on this verse. He reminded us of five certainties we have as believers for every circumstance. He emphasized that God is there, that "I AM" is bigger, that God supplies, that God assists, and that God lifts. How does remembering this enable you to trade your plans for God's plans and experience His power to see you through?

Read Acts 18:18-28

- Discuss this truth: God moves the mission He intends for us.
 - How did He do this with Paul in his many missionary journeys?
 - How did He do this with Priscilla and Aquila?
 - How has God done this with you?
- Do you allow yourself to be interrupted by God? Why or why not?
- If you are constantly investing in your plans rather than God's plans, refusing to be interrupted by God, could it be that you are being disciplined by the world rather than by the Word of God? Will you turn from this and ask God to realign the plans and purposes of your life for His glory?
- How have you seen God give you grace for every season and ministry of life He has placed you in? Share a brief testimony about this.

Do Life Together

These questions are meant to encourage you to apply spiritual truth and live on mission for Jesus. It is your Life Group leader's responsibility to challenge you and hold you accountable to taking steps of growth and faith. Take these questions to heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you to grow in your role as a disciple and ultimately, a disciple-maker.

Who are you building a relationship with right now who needs to know Jesus? Will you share your story with this person this week and encourage them to allow God to interrupt their life with the Gospel?



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