

**Acts for today****'The Growing Church in the Acts of the Apostles'**

No. 11: Corinth

Many churches today have found positive opportunities for mission among refugees and asylum seekers. The church in Corinth (Acts 18) was planted by Paul in a similar context among Jewish refugees who had been expelled from Rome by Claudius. What principles for growth do we find in this situation?

God uses individuals: The Corinthian church was started by one man's vision and obedience to share the gospel, despite previous discouragements. Remember, one person plus God always constitutes a majority! How do we identify those with a passion to spread the gospel in our churches?

God uses community: Paul sought out the fellowship of Aquila and Priscilla, as they were all leatherworkers. They worked together and shared a house, while Paul spoke in the Jewish synagogue. How should we be using our homes and workplaces as places to share the good news?

God uses circumstances: When the Jews opposed his preaching, Paul simply went next door to work among the Gentiles! It was a fruitful move, as many responded including the head of the synagogue and his household. For us, what unexpected difficulties have become gospel opportunities?

God uses encouragement: In a growing church encouragement is essential! Silas and Timothy were able to encourage Paul to keep going by their words, as well as the practical support that enabled him to preach full-time. How can we help others to give their time and money in God's service? God also spoke words of encouragement to Paul about his work in Corinth; allow these same words to encourage you to keep going in your own situation.

'Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no-one is going to harm you, because I have many people in this city' (9, 10).

**The Rev Paul Hardingham  
continues his series on the early Church.**

**When we are in trouble or despair or have lost hope, we  
should do what David did: pour out our hearts to God and tell  
him of our needs and troubles just as they are.**

Hesychios of Sinai