



Acts 18:9–17

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Acts 18:9–10

MEMORY VERSE

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." **Acts 18:9–10**

Missionaries deal with incredible obstacles. They are prepared for some challenges, but for many they are not. One missionary told of serving in an Eastern European country. His wife became strangely ill one night, awakening to an extremely rapid heart rate. She didn't know what was happening to her. The problem was that they had not been in the country long and had not had a hospital experience there. They didn't know where to go, who to call, or how to convey in the native tongue just what was happening to her. They did manage to get her into the hospital but found that she needed to be transported to a Western country for further diagnostics and treatment.

From out of the back seat of their car, the missionary's eight-years-old son said, "Dad, remember what it says

in 1 Peter 5:7—Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." The missionary fought to hold back the tears, releasing his fear and anxiety to the One who held the answers.

Read Acts 18:9–17. Paul knew what it was like to be afraid in the middle of adverse circumstances on the mission field. God provided the encouragement he needed at just the right moment.

Being missional doesn't provide assurance that we'll always be safe. Being a follower of Christ does mean that Christ will always be with us. He provides the encouragement and assurance of His presence when we are in need of it the most.

FAMILY DEVOTION TIME

Connect . . .

First, family members share testimonies of times God encouraged them in the middle of difficult circumstances. Then, family members share what they learned about God because of His help.

Explore . . .

A family member asks: **At what point do you get discouraged, feel tired, and just want to give up on a project?** A family member reads Acts 18:9–17. Say: **Paul was at the end of his second missionary journey. He was in Corinth, dealing with opposition to his message by the Jews. He must have been tired and weary. God's words of encouragement came at just the right time.**

Transform . . .

First, a family member asks: **Paul's experience in being obedient to God's call meant he would face a lot of discouragement and great physical pain. Isn't it interesting that God's encouragement would be enough to keep him in place for another year-and-a-half? What does Paul's response to God mean for you?**

Pray that your family will not give up being a strong witness for Christ. Pray that they will learn the meaning of perseverance and determine to have the staying power of Paul.