




OPENING UP: Paul was encouraged through the friendship of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1–3). Who has God brought into your life to encourage or partner with you spiritually? How have these relationships strengthened your walk with Christ?

 *What practical ways can our participation in community groups strengthen our outward-facing ministry?*

1 A common theme in the book of Acts is the intense rejection that Paul experienced from the Jews (See Acts 18:6). What are some of the ways that Christians today face rejection or ridicule because of their faith in Christ?

 *What encouragement does God's word offer us when we face rejection for the cause of Christ? See John 15:18-20, Matthew 5:10-12, 2 Corinthians 4:8-10, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Timothy 1:7-8, Acts 5:41, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7, Hebrews 12:2-3*

 *Take time to specifically and personally encourage each other in the discouragements that come from being ridiculed for following Jesus.*

2 One of our culture codes is Committed Discipleship. Read Matthew 28:19, 2 Timothy 2:1–3, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Ephesians 4:11–16, Philippians 3:17, Philippians 4:9, 1 Thessalonians 2:11, then discuss the description below together and then discuss its key elements.

Committed discipleship is a life-long process of becoming more like Christ and helping others do the same. We want believers of all ages to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. With the help of God's Spirit, we lovingly commit ourselves to helping other believers mature in Christlikeness. We will provoke one another to love and good works through scriptural instruction and our life example.

💡 *What would it look like to live out this core value this week?*

♥ *This is not a task for a professional Christians or the spiritually elite. God delights in using ordinary believers like Aquila and Priscilla to disciple and equip leaders like Apollos (Acts 18:24–28). What keeps people from discipling others?*

💡 *Share some ways that someone in your community group who is never discipled somebody else could begin to be a disciple-maker.*

3 **Crispus, a synagogue leader, was an unlikely convert (Acts 18:8).** Think of some of the people in your life you consider unlikely or difficult to reach with the gospel. What are some the ways you are tempted to think they are beyond God's saving work?

♥ *How does Crispus's conversion encourage your prayers and evangelism efforts?*

4 **Often, theological discussions get reduced to a tension between the initiative of God and the responsibility of man.** Survey Act 18 and find five ways that each is emphasized. Discuss why it is healthy to hold in tension the sovereignty of God and the Christians' responsibility.