

LIFE GROUP GUIDE: The Naked Christian #9 "SHOULDERS" (ACTS 18:1-11)

CONNECT IN with one another: *Can you tell us about about a job or a situation which was hard work, especially if it was physically demanding, like the Apostle Paul's "tent-making"? (Acts 18:3) OR tell us about the best job you've ever had? OR have you ever had fun working hard? If so when and where and why was that?*

CONNECT UP with God:

- **PRIMING THE PUMP:** *When you think back to Sunday's sermon, what is the first thing that springs to mind? Did you hear anything on Sunday that was new or different? [NOTE TO LEADER: If you weren't there, Sunday's talk had only two points: 1. That Paul was afraid and tempted to give up and walk away (Acts 18:9-10); and 2. That Paul didn't quit and that's how the city meets Jesus (Acts 18:11) The longest illustrations were about William Wilberforce's determination to not give up when seeking to abolish slavery in the British Empire, and about how Jesus was tempted to walk away from his Father's plan in the Garden of Gethsemane]*
- **GETTING TO KNOW ME:** *How do you feel about the idea that Paul was tempted to give up and walk away from Corinth? (Acts 18:6,9-10)*
- **GETTING TO KNOW ME:** *Looking back at the whole of your life, can anyone tell us about a time when they felt a strong urge to quit? [NOTE TO LEADER: This could be giving up on a job, a relationship, a church, but it could equally be something mundane, remember, we're just trying to get people talking and engaged with each other at this stage!]*
- **INTO THE BIBLE:** *Read Acts 18:1-11. Why do you think that when Silas and Timothy arrived that Paul "devoted himself exclusively to preaching"? [NOTE TO LEADER: The answer is that they brought money, so Paul no longer needed to make tents. Paul says: "And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so." (2 Corinthians 11:9) Paul refused to use his right to make a living out of preaching the gospel. He went round the early world making tents, even though he was an apostle of God because he didn't want anyone to be able to accuse him of scrounging off his converts. The three relevant passages which were put on the ppt screen were: 1 Corinthians 1:27; 2 Corinthians 11:9; and 2 Thessalonians 3:7-10]*
- **PRAYER:** *Is anyone in the group 'fighting the good fight' at the moment? (See 2 Timothy 4:6-8). If so, can we pray for you? Or maybe we can pray for someone, not in the group, who is? Or for someone who's battling to 'keep the faith' or for someone else who needs to 'finish the race'. Perhaps we can also pray that new servers will be raised up in the Wimbledon venue, following the recent launch of Everyday Church, Sutton.*

- **CONNECT OUT with the non-church people around you** *When Paul refers to his work (See 1 Corinthians 15:10), he is referring to sharing the gospel, but he managed to work hard without burning out. This must be the case because we know that his appeal to (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1) 'be like me' was successful with 100s of people! Let us pray for ourselves that our example of working hard by the grace of God will be attractive to others, that they won't find us 'stressed out', but rather living in Amazing Grace.*