

**TENT-MAKING IN ACTS 18:1-4, A MODEL FOR THE WELL-BEING OF CLERGY IN
SOROTI ARCHDEACONARY, DIOCESE OF SOROTI**

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DECLARATION

I, Ameri Hellen Magret, under the supervision of my University supervisor, hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that this work contained in this research is clearly a result of my initiative, hard work, and analysis. The content contained here is original and has never been presented to any University or institution of higher learning for any award in any discipline.

SIGNATURE 

DATE th 27/2/2026.

APPROVAL

This research has been under my supervision and has my approval for submission.

Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Mukeshimana.

Signature 

DATE 27/2/2026

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This study was focused on tent-making based on the book of Acts 18:1-4 as a model for the well-being of clergy in Soroti. The well-being of clergy is a diverse issue involving their financial stability, mental and physical health, social support, and overall well-being. The clergy plays a vital role in communities by offering spiritual guidance, emotional support, and various services that uphold the social and moral values of society. Despite their significant contributions, clergy members encounter challenges that negatively impact their well-being. The practice of tent-making by the Apostle Paul, particularly during his time of ministry in Thessalonica, acts as a model for the clergy to address their contemporary issues or challenges that are related to their well-being. The Biblical text was from the book of Acts 18:1-4, which acted as the foundation of the study, where the writer was emphasizing work for their sustainability/ earn a living. *“After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.” (ESV Bible version)*. These, therefore, gave a bench mark for the writer to encourage the brethren to work for themselves to earn a living, just as he and the two did.

1.1.2. Background of the study.

As the world is changing rapidly, the world's economy of the world has completely changed, which calls for innovation and creativity to cope with. The role of the clergy has evolved significantly over the centuries, deeply rooted in religious traditions and community leadership. In ancient times, the clergy was often supported by their congregations through tithes, offerings, and other forms of assistance, and in many communities, the clergy was provided with housing, known as a parsonage, and a modest stipend, allowing them to focus on their spiritual duties without financial distractions. Looking at today's society, the situation has changed dramatically. Many churches now days experience financial instability due to declining church members, reduced tithes and offerings, and rising living costs. This financial strain has led to stress and burnout, affecting the clergy's abilities to effectively serve their congregations.

Clergy often work long hours and carry heavy emotional burdens due to the nature of their work. They are frequently called upon to provide counseling, conduct services, manage church operations, and engage in community outreach. These kinds of workloads have resulted in physical and mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, and burnout. Clergy are often expected to uphold high moral standards and serve as role models, which has created additional pressure. Furthermore, the cultural shift towards secularism in many parts of the world has changed the

traditional support structures for pastors or clergy, making their roles more challenging. Despite these, the tent-making model of Paul has acted as a way forward for the clergy to learn from (work plan for the clergy), and see how to support themselves and achieve financial independence. Through Paul's experience, the clergy can be able to sustain themselves while fulfilling their ministry obligations without having excuses.

Additionally, there are some congregations that recognize the importance of pastoral welfare and have implemented measures to support their clergy, such as providing sabbaticals, counseling services, and financial planning assistance. But also, for the clergy, they should be in a position to learn from Apostle Paul's tent-making experience to promote self-sufficiency, financial integrity, and avoid depending on the Christians, because this can lead to loss of integrity and trust. Clergy should manage their needs by venturing into other occupations so as to supplement what they get from the church, for example, they can do other projects like piggery project, poultry keeping, and other projects which are income-generating activities for their sustainability while maintaining their focus on ministry.

1.1.3 Justification of the study

This study focused on the possible ways or the strategies that clergy men or women in Soroti can be in a position to improve their well-being for effective ministry. In the biblical perspective, the welfare of clergy is critical because they are the shepherds of God's flock entrusted with the spiritual care of their congregations. If the clergy is neglected, the entire body of Christ suffers; in other words, the welfare of the clergy affects the performance of the entire congregation. Understanding and improving the welfare of the clergy has practical implications for the health of the church. Burnout, stress, and discouragement can lead to decreased effectiveness in ministry, which in turn affects the spiritual growth and the unity of the church as a whole. The study, therefore, was intended to offer practical solutions, and its potential inspired sustainability and indecency from the tentmakers (Aquila and his wife Pricilla).

1.1.4 The problem statement

The clergy in the Soroti archdeaconry are struggling as far as their well-being and development are concerned. In this matter, I borrowed a leaf from Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla¹ on how the clergy in Soroti should support themselves in ministry, and the community for the clergy in that archdeaconry.

1.1.5 The objectives of the study

My primary objective in this research was to assess the well-being of pastors or clergy in Soroti. I focused on the following;

¹ Acts 18:1-4.

- (i). To exegete (exegesis of) Acts 18:1-4, basing on tent-making as a model for the clergy.
- (ii) To contextualize Acts 18:1-4 into the clergy's daily living today.
- (iii) To elaborate biblical models for the well-being of the clergy.

1.1.6 The Research Questions of the Study

These were the questions that guided me in gathering the findings based on the area of the study.

- 1) What is the Bible saying about tent making in Acts 18:1-4, then?
- 2) What do the clergy today understand of tent-making following Acts 18:1-4?
- 3) In what ways can the lessons learn from Acts 18:1-4 help the clergy in their ministry today?

1.2 Literature Review.

This section presents the literature that other people have written concerning the issues of the Clergy welfare and varying it to what the writer of Acts 18:1-4 says about tent-making. The comprehensive review of existing literature on pastoral welfare reveals various dimensions of this issue, including financial, emotional, and social aspects. This review synthesizes findings from diverse sources, providing a rounded understanding of the challenges faced by the clergy and offering insights into effective strategies for improving their welfare.

The financial pressures that many clergy face, particularly those in smaller congregations or rural areas. He highlights how an inadequate stipend can lead to financial stress, which in turn affects the clergy or the pastor's ability to focus on ministry. McCormick suggests practical solutions, including better financial planning, education of the clergy, and fair stipends to alleviate financial burdens. This, therefore, goes in line with what Paul and Aquila used to do to earn a living, about tent-making; there should be something that one should do to earn a living and avoid being a burden to others.² In other words, clergy in the Soroti Archdeaconry are encouraged to use their strength and knowledge to do something beneficial to themselves to earn a living.

The clergy often face high levels of job-related stress and burnout due to the emotional demands of their role. Stressors include long working hours, financial pressures, and high expectations from their congregations. If he/she has some other project, this can act as a relief as he/she goes to check on the progress of the project. Tent-making to the clergy acts as a leisure activity for them; therefore, clergy in the Soroti Archdeaconry are encouraged to emulate such good examples to better their lives, families, and ministry for the glory of God.

Again, Mary K. Robert took a closer look at the financial management practices that can help clergy achieve better financial stability. She emphasized the importance of budgeting, proposing that better financial management not

² McCormick, J.W (2012: 21-46). Economic Challenges in Pastoral Ministry.

only alleviates personal financial stress but also sets a positive example for the congregants. Robert's work suggests that churches should provide financial management training as a part of pastoral development programs.³ Based on this, the clergy should also embrace such opportunities to help them move forward for their well-being.

The clergy are seen to be at a higher risk for mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Emotional being of a clergy is crucial for their effectiveness and overall satisfaction in their roles, but if they have some other thing to do outside the church "work" δουλειά (*douleia*) in Greek. This helps to occupy them and helps them relax (stress reliever)⁴. To avoid such circumstances, the clergy in Soroti Archdeaconry are encouraged to see how they should avoid such risks in their lives by making themselves busy with things that are stress relievers, such as opening other projects.

Similarly, Timothy A. Williams discussed how biblical principles can inform and enhance practical care practices. He also emphasizes the importance of clergy modeling Christ-like behaviors, not only in their ministry but also in how they care for their well-being. Therefore, Williams suggests that effective pastoral care is deeply rooted in scriptural teachings, and the clergy must prioritize their health to serve as strong leaders within their congregations.⁵ Meaning the Clergy should also be mindful of their health. In the Diocese of Soroti in 2026, the Bishop Rt. Rev. Cap. Kosea Odongo has encouraged his clergy to have time of rest and start some projects so that their health is restored, but also to better their lives after retirement.

Furthermore, Johnson in her journal suggests that while many churches offer some levels of support, there is often a lack of comprehensive care that addresses all aspects of the clergy's well-being. She therefore advocates for a more holistic support system that includes financial, emotional, and spiritual resources, tailored to the specific needs of the clergy.⁶ In agreement with this, the clergy should also have a good working relationship with the people that they are leading, but also be in a position to do something, and the congregation will just come in to supplement. For there is a phrase that says, "God helps those who help themselves," meaning try to do something, then others can come and help.

Also, the effective coping strategies and support systems are vital for maintaining the welfare of clergy. This includes personal care practices, peer support, and professional counseling.⁷ In the same way, the specific context, such as culture and economic factors, in different regions can influence the welfare of clergy and their coping mechanisms.⁸ By so doing, the clergy in Soroti should be willing to adopt such innovations, copy and practice them to better their lives, families, and for effective ministry.

³ Roberts, M.K (2014: 21). Financial Management in Pastoral Ministry.

⁴ Ellison, C.G & Levin, J.S (1998: 25, 700-720). The Religious-Health Connection.

⁵ Williams, Thomas. A (2011: 95). Biblical Principles for Effective Pastoral Care.

⁶ Johnson, Elizabeth. M (2023:15-20). Church Support System for Pastors.

⁷ Geyer, T & W.R (2013: 62, 159-174). Coping Mechanism and well-being among Clergy.

⁸ Richard, P.S & Bergin, A.E (1997: 12-34). A Spiritual Strategy for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Additionally, the clergy's welfare is closely linked to their effectiveness in ministry and overall job satisfaction.⁹ Poor well-being of clergy and pastors can negatively affect their ability to provide effective service in their communities. However, one of the writers stated that the clergy is at risk of physical health issues due to sedentary lifestyles and related stress conditions. The clergy often neglect personal health while focusing on the needs of their congregations.¹⁰ He therefore encourages physical health through exercise, healthy eating, and regular medical checkups as being essential for maintaining the well-being of clergy.

Notably, Clinebell's work is foundational in understanding the emotional and psychological burdens that the clergy often carry. He emphasizes that the clergy, due to the nature of their work, are frequently exposed to the emotional traumas of their congregants, leading to significant emotional fatigue. Clinebell offers practical counselling methods aimed at helping clergy to manage their emotional and psychological health, underlining the importance of self-care and professional counseling support¹¹.

The clergy face a lot of challenges that include the impact of technology, societal challenges, and increasing demands on their time. He therefore discusses how these challenges can exacerbate stress and affect the well-being of the clergy. Harris, in this case, argues that understanding and adapting to these challenges is crucial for the clergy to maintain their effectiveness and well-being in the modern context.¹² Therefore, the clergy in Soroti are encouraged to embrace technology to make their work simpler and easier, but also be in a position to adopt the changes.

Last but not least, the writer of one of the articles urged that scriptures provide both the motivation and the method for ensuring the well-being of clergy. He integrates scriptural insights, particularly from the New Testament, with practical recommendations advocating for a balanced approach to pastoral care and considers both spiritual and practical needs.¹³ Williams stresses the importance of the congregational support, as well as the clergy's responsibility to maintain his/ her well-being as an essential component of biblically grounded ministry.

Lastly, the critical issues of work-life balance for clergy, recognizing that the demanding nature of pastoral work often leads to neglect of personal and family life. Lee examines various strategies that the clergy can use to achieve a healthier work balance, such as time management, delegation, and periodization. She therefore highlights the benefits of maintaining a balanced life, including improved mental health, better relationships, and more sustainable ministry. This has been adopted by many clergies in the Soroti Archdeaconry, as encouraged by their pastoral leader, Rt. Rev. Capt. Kosea Odongo, the Bishop of the Diocese.

⁹ Hargrove, J. (2005: 47, 769:786). The impact of the Clergy well-being on ministry effectiveness.

¹⁰ Hedge, D. (2011: 65, 223-236). Resilience and Copying in Clergy.

¹¹ Clinebell, H. (2004: 6-11). Pastoral Care and Counselling.

¹² Harris, G. W. (2012: 91-111). Challenges facing Modern Pastors.

¹³ Williams, D.M. (2015: 50-67). The well-being of Pastors.

1.3 Research Design and Methodology

Under this, I used a qualitative in nature approach with a library-based approach, mainly of Bishop Tucker library in Uganda Christian University, Mukono, to access the relevant information based on the exegesis of the text (Acts 18:1-4). Here, I approached the historical documents by which I used the historical approach to find the context of the book of Acts. Still on that, I contacted different tools such as the Bible, commentaries, newspapers, journals, and also other non-biblical books, which helped me get the information pertaining to my area of study. My major source was the Bible because it's both history and literature. The best approach in interpreting the text was by contacting both the Old and the New Testament parts of the Bible, which was in line with the topic of study; for easier understanding and review, I used the Greek lexicon for the original meaning of the words.

1.3.1 Biblical Analysis

The Acts of the Apostles were mainly to account for the birth and growth of the church. It is also to give the general overview of what the apostles saw, heard about the ministry of the servants of God like those of Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila's in Acts 18:1-4 who used themselves as role models in "tent-making" σκηνοποιοι (skēnopoíós) for self-supporting. Church ministers should be in position to learn from that example and work for their sustainability, but not be a burden their Christians (be tent-maker/ do something that can generate income for earn a living) in other words work (ἔργον (*ergon*) using their own hands.

As Paul and Aquila gave themselves as an example who diligently worked and committedly sustained their lives by using their hands in tent-making and everywhere they went for ministry, they moved with their stock. This passage serves as an encouragement to church ministers to learn to do something outside ministry in terms of doing business, agriculture, rearing, and other things that they can do to generate income for their families. Be self-sufficient, have integrity, and be a responsible financial steward in ministry. It also encourages the clergy to consider sustainable ministry practices, maintain financial integrity, and learn to balance their rights in compensation with the responsibility of setting a positive example to their congregation.

1.3.2 The scope of the study

I focused on the parish priests, retired clergy, lay readers, and other heads of departments within Soroti archdeaconry that helped me to establish the welfare for the clergy using Paul and Aquila, the tent makers, as an example, as stated in the book of Acts 18:1-4.

1.3.3 Purpose of the study

The primary goal of this research is to look a tent-making in Acts 18: 1-4 as a model for the well-being of the clergy in Soroti archdeaconry, focusing on the sustainability of the clergy in the parish (something other than ministry), some key areas such as financial stability, mental and physical health, social support, and job satisfaction. By

identifying the current state of the clergy and integrating the biblical perspectives of work into the understanding of pastoral welfare, and ensuring that the proposed solutions align with the scriptural teachings.

1.3.4 Theoretical/conceptual framework

This served as a roadmap for the study, helping to explain the theoretical basis and interpret the results. In this study, the independent variable of the study was “Tent-making found in Acts 18:1-4, a model for the well-being of the clergy”. The conceptual framework considered the research design that I used to carry out the topic.

1.3.5 The Area of the Study

This study was based in Soroti archdeaconry, which is constituted of 15 parishes: Asuret, Aukot, Gweri, Amoroto, Arabaka, Odudui, Adamasiko, Tubur, Katine, Kamuda, Omodoi, Nakatunya, Moruapesur, Cathedral parish, and Soroti parish. All these parishes have a priest, some of whom stay within, and others operate from their homes, but all are under the Soroti Diocese, within the District of Soroti.

1.3.6 The source of information

In this project, I used both primary and secondary sources, which included text books, journals, newspapers, and other sources.

1.3.7 Data Analysis

I collected data from all sources; Journals, newspapers, non-biblical books, the Bible, and others. The data was analyzed and presented through the qualitative approach, where the validity of the data will be checked by the use of external and eternal yard sticks. The reliability of the secondary data was based on the time frame of the project.

1.3.8 Ethical Considerations

In this section, I adhered to the ethical guidelines and the protocols to ensure the well-being and the confidentiality of my participants. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants, and their identities were kept confidential in all my research outputs. Participants were also allowed to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

1.3.9. Outline of the chapters

Here is the layout of my work;

Chapter One: Introduction.

Under this, I was focusing on the general outlook of the report, which consists of the background of the study, justification of the study, the problem statement and its objectives, the literature review, the methodology being used, the purpose of the study, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Two: The exegesis of the text Acts 18:1-4.

In this, I was trying to dig deeper into the text of my study, trying to know what the bible was speaking basing on my topic. In it, I had to know the historical background, the audience, the place in which the message was written, and its purpose. Still under it, I had to look at the historical and the literal meaning of the text of study and conclude.

Chapter Three: The context of Acts 18:1-4, to the clergy of Soroti.

In this stage, I had to apply the models I got in the exegesis concerning the topic of my study to the current state of the clergy's well-being.

Chapter Four: Conclusion and Recommendations.

This will now consist of the final findings from my research topic and what I will recommend the clergy of Soroti should be doing in order to model their well-being in the places of their ministry. It will consist of the dos and the don'ts of the clergy as far as their well-being is concerned.

CHAPTER TWO: EXEGESIS OF ACTS 18:1-4

2.0 Introduction.

In this chapter, I have interpreted Acts of the Apostles (Acts 18: 1-4), the text is fully historical, and its literature is narrative. In this, I have interpreted the text, given out the meaning historically and literally. I have identified the authorship, date when written, audience, and the place where the writer was based, and lastly, it is about the purpose of the book. I moved as far as translating the passage in Acts literally, but also analyzed the text. The purpose of all this was to bring out the meaning of the passage and the study into consideration, and to know the author's intention in writing.

2.1. The Historical Background

The text of the study is found in the book of Acts, known as the Acts of the Apostles, which is located in the New Testament of the Bible, right after the Gospels, and is believed to be unique among the books of the Bible. This book serves as a crucial narrative of the history of the early church and of the expansion of the Christian church following the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The authorship of both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts is attributed to Luke the Evangelist and the physician who wrote a two-volume work (Luke 1:1-4) and related the story of Christ in his Gospel and the story of the apostles' witness to Christ in Acts. Luke is the most prolific writer in the New Testament. He is identified as a companion of the Apostle Paul during Paul's second and third missionary journeys (Acts 16:10-17; 15:36-18:22; 20: 5-21: 18) and a physician by profession (Col 1:14)¹⁴.

The books of Luke and Acts are also believed to be anonymous, but Luke identified himself in either work. From an early age, tradition held that Luke was the author of the two writings (the book of Acts and the gospel according to Luke). He wrote a very natural and literate style of Greek. The name Luke is Greek, and he was almost certainly a Gentile. Therefore, the understanding of the authorship in Acts is paramount because it gives insights into the historical context, theological perspectives, and literal interpretation.

Date.

The determination of when the book of Acts was exactly written tends to be the hard thing, but some writers say, since Luke's account ended with Paul under house arrest in Rome around AD 62, and Paul died in AD 64-67, therefore, Luke-Acts could have been written between AD 62 and 67¹⁵. Many scholars have mentioned different dates when the book of Acts was written, basing their arguments on different events that took place at that time.

Audience and place.

¹⁴ David S. Dockery (2010: pg. 493): Concise Bible Commentary.

¹⁵ Concise Study Bible (2021.Pg. 1205: English Standard Version

Some of the researchers stated that the audience is closely mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, which is Theophilus, who was described as the most excellent (Luke 1:3), meaning he was a person of high social status or the official rank; he could also have been a God-fearing person who was interested in Christianity. The other audiences were the Gentile Christians, who were included in the message (Acts 10, 15), but also the Hellenistic audience (Greek speakers)¹⁶.

In Acts 18:1-4, Paul is depicted as a missionary traveling from Athens to Corinth. Upon arriving in Corinth, he encounters Aquila and Priscilla, a Jewish couple who had recently relocated from Italy due to an edict by Emperor Claudius expelling all Jews from Rome. Paul, sharing the same profession as a tentmaker, stays with them and works alongside them. Every Sabbath, he engages in discussions at the synagogue, aiming to persuade both Jews and Greeks about the message of Jesus.¹⁷

Some of the authors argued about where the book of Acts was written.¹⁸ But suggest that it was from Irenaeus, who is in Rome. It was not only in Rome.¹⁹ but the Luke's second volume, which is known as the book of Acts (Acts 1:1-ff), stated that there are other places where the book of Acts was written, based on the ministry journey.

The first place mentioned was Rome (Acts 28), where the author was familiar with or was writing from. The other place was in Antioch (Syria). Antioch was the early Christian center that was strategically located for Luke's composition.²⁰ There are some places where this book was written; that is to say, Jerusalem, Palestine, Gentiles, the Roman province of Asia, and Europe. It also reached the Capital city of Rome and the highest level of society. Therefore, from these places, it reached all nations.²¹

Purpose of the book.

Many suggestions have been made about the purpose of the book of Acts, such as community development. The Acts give an account of the early church after Christ's Resurrection. Dedicating the volumes of Theophilus, where Luke was reassuring him on the instructions given to him (Luke 1:1-4). Also, book of Acts 1:1-5 is in line with the ministry of Jesus in teaching the gospel. Bruce, in his book, suggests that the book of Acts of Apostle would be better if called "The Acts of the Risen Jesus" or "The Acts of the Holy Spirit."

Therefore, there are key features in the book of Acts, about the constant appeal, especially in the early speeches, to the scriptures of Israel, where all the prophets declared that these days, "*and all the prophets who have spoken from*

¹⁶ C.K. Barrett: 1994-1998. A critical and exegetical commentary on the Acts of the apostle.

¹⁷ Acts 18:1-4

¹⁸ Schneider (1980: 121).

¹⁹ Darrell L. Bock: Acts. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.

²⁰ Howard Marshall (1980).

²¹ English Standard version on line bible on its introduction.

Samuel and those who came after him also proclaimed these days” (Acts 3:24)²². The theme of Acts is “Salvation is for all” because Jesus is the Lord of all.

2.2 The Historical and the Literal Meaning of the Text of Study

2.2.1. The Grammatical meaning of Acts 18:1-4.

According to Luke, a physician and the companion of Paul, who is believed to be the writer of the book of Acts of the Apostles, he wrote the text (Acts 18:1-4), which is the passage of my study, informing the people of how to live a better life, including the clergy of Soroti. The literal finding of this passage is as follows;

The book of Acts of the Apostles (Acts 18:1-4) shows how Paul moved from Athens to Corinth, and met Aquila and Priscilla, a couple that moved from Rome when Claudia’s expelled all the Jewish community from there. Because they shared the same trade, Paul lived and worked with them as a tentmaker, but he used to preach in the synagogue every Sabbath.²³ This passage, therefore, reveals Paul’s integration of spiritual ministry alongside manual labor for his sustainability. Meaning that full-time ministry does not necessarily exclude the clergy from secular work, but it should be the kind of work that goes hand in hand with the scripture, because a clergyman cannot preach what he/ she does not exercise or practice. The bible in 2 Thessalonians 3:10b supports work: “*If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat (ESV)*”. Work, therefore, is encouraged, and laziness is prohibited. In this, Paul’s lifestyle demonstrates a practical theology of work that should become a role model to the clergy of Soroti.

According to verse 1, “*After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth*” (Acts 18:1ESV). This shows that Paul “Παύλος” in Greek had a mission in Corinth, so he had to move from Athens to Corinth. Some authors stated that Paul was alone on his journey, though others argue that he went with Silas and Timothy. Corinth is one of the greatest cities in the Roman Empire.²⁴ It is one of the four prominent centers in the New Testament account of the early church, the others being Jerusalem, Antioch of Syria, and Ephesus. Corinth was the first place in Paul’s ministry where he remained for a bout eighteen months (18)²⁵. It was forty-six miles (78 kilometers) west of Ethen’s²⁶. The opening statement of the author, “After this,” signifies that there was something great or important that Paul was doing or involved in, and once it was accomplished, he had to move to another place of appointment. For the clergy of Soroti, there is always a transfer after every year; in it, you will get that the priest in parish “B” will be moved to Parish “X”. Just as Paul moved from Athens to Corinth.

²² Schneider (1999: Pg. 51). Con

²³ Holy Bible ESV, (2014).

²⁴ Jimmy S. ministries: The expositors study bible: King James Version.

²⁵ Ultimate Bible Dictionary (2019: Pg. 83-84).

²⁶Dockery S. David: Concise study Bible (2021: Pg. 1231).

In verse 2-3, *“And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudia had commanded all the Jews to live in Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.”* (Acts 18:2-3). The term “tentmaking” σκηνοποιία (*skēnopoíā*) in Greek, applies to “leather working” in general.²⁷ Tentmakers are literary craftsmen who do handwork for getting money to earn a living, just as Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla did. It is believed that the tents that Paul and his colleagues used to make were strong and of good quality; people used to like them. Thus, promoting handwork.

In those days, there was a decree that Claudia’s official announced of expelling all the Jewish community from Rome around 49AD, where Aquila and Priscilla were the victims. This expulsion is also mentioned and recorded by the Roman historians; it's believed to be due to the result of riots in the Jewish population of Rome due to the message of Christ. It is in this whereby Paul found Aquila and Priscilla. *“And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.”* Acts 18:3 (ESV). Literally, Paul could have inquired where his occupation men (tentmakers) could be located, since in ancient times, people of the same trade (business) usually lived together in one area, and formed a trade guild.

Basing on this, Paul also gave an example of how he, and his other fellow worked following the insight in 2 Thessalonian 3:7-9 which says, *“For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor, we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.”* (ESV). Through this statement, Paul was encouraging the church workers or the clergy, also to do something besides ministry, so as not to be a burden to the people that they are shepherding. They should also think outside the ministry for earning a living. Regarding work, there should be teamwork for the effective ministry, for example, Paul in Romans 16:3-4 *“Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus who risked their necks for my Life.”* (ESV). Therefore, this encourages unity no matter the outcomes, like danger, just as Priscilla and Aquila did when they welcomed Paul into their family when he left Athens.

Regarding Acts 18:4, *“And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.”* (ESV). Paul’s custom was that he could do ministry, then after he sat and made his tents. When he finishes any, he sells.²⁸ The clergy of Soroti should also borrow a leaf from Apostle Paul by adopting micro enterprises that are income-generating activities to enable them to support themselves and their families, for example, opening of shops, agriculture, agribusiness, farming, crafting, and others. They should afterwards spread the ideas of business to the Christians, who are expected to learn from them. Tent making to the clergy of Soroti can be of great value to enable them continue serving the Lord without having high economic challenges that will lead to ineffectiveness.

²⁷ Craig S. Keener: The IVP. Bible Background Commentary. (2014: Pg. 379).

²⁸ New Bible commentary 21st century Edition (1954).

In summary, the book of Acts 18:1-4, depicting Paul's tent making alongside Aquila and Priscilla, offers a model for clergy emphasizing both financial independence and the holistic nature of ministry, where work and witness are intertwined, rather than seen as separate spheres. Paul earned money by making tents to support himself in his real ministry of witnessing to Christ. Paul is a witness when he preaches and when he makes tents and uses his earnings to benefit the broader community. The clergy in Soroti should then use the money obtained from the enterprise they engage in for personal gain and charity. It is certainly true that the clergy ought to support themselves and the ministry so as not to be a burden to parishioners. They should also empower the Christians with the income-generating activity skills for self-reliance and growth of the church. The tent-making role should not overtake ministry roles; they should be subsidiaries of the ministry.

2.2.3 Models introduced Acts 18:1-4.

Mission: According to the author of the book of Acts, known to be Luke the physician, he stated in Acts 18:1 that Paul moved from Athens, which is in the Western Part of Corinth, to the missionary movement. Corinth was in another Province where he found Aquila and Priscilla. Corinth was so strategic with the handwork project that they were doing.²⁹

Teamwork. Looking at verse 2 of the book of Acts 18, it states that Paul joined Aquila and Priscilla, and they worked hand in hand as a team, regardless of Paul being a foreigner, but doing the same project. The sign of hospitality that Aquila's family showed to Paul is an example to everyone.³⁰

Integrity. In Acts 18:1-4, the Apostle Paul exemplifies integrity through his actions in Corinth. After leaving Athens, Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, Jewish tentmakers who had been expelled from Rome. Sharing the same trade, Paul stays with them, working diligently to support himself and his ministry. Every Sabbath, he reasons in the synagogue, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks about Jesus.

Work. Paul, in his example, encouraged the people to work (tent makers) to help themselves to avoid being a burden to those whom they are shepherding or evangelizing, according to Acts 20:33-35: *"I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that those hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things, I have shown you that by working hard in this way, we must help the weak and remember that the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, it's more blessed to give than to receive."* (ESV). In 2Thessalonians 3:7-9, he also encourages ministers to work to avoid being a burden but to learn to support themselves rather than expecting financial support from those whom they evangelize³¹.

²⁹ The IVP. Bible Background commentary (2014).

³⁰ The IVP. Bible Background commentary (2014: Pg. 379).

³¹ The Reformation Study Bible notes on Acts 18:1-4

In conclusion, under this chapter, I was mainly looking at the text of my study. Under it, I had to look at the background of the book and the text, which consists of the authorship of the book, the date at which it was written, the audience to which it was addressed, and where it was written from, and the purpose for which it was addressed. Finally, I also had to look at the models of the text (main points in the text).

CHAPTER THREE:

CONTEXTUALIZATION OF ACTS 18:1-4, TO THE CLERGY OF SOROTI.

3.0 Introduction.

This chapter talks about the author's narrative on the early church and the apostolic ministry based in the life of Paul, Aquila, and Priscila according to the Acts of the apostles in Acts 18:1-4, and I therefore, drew some of the insights from them basing on the lives, roles, and some of challenges and struggles that the clergy of Soroti are faced with. Acts 18:1-4 is significant to Paul's ministry because it demonstrates his practical and self-sufficient approach in ministry, emphasizing both his tent-making activity as an added advantage for his livelihood. Paul's consistency in teaching and preaching in the synagogue or temple and tent making highlights the importance of both work and witness in spreading the Gospel.

The practice of biblical contextualization involves interpreting and applying scriptural truth in a way that resonates with contemporary life. Acts 18:1-4 presents the available narrative that illustrates the apostolic ministry of Paul departing from Athens and arriving in Corinth, where he met with Aquila and Priscilla, the Jewish couple whom Claudia expelled from Rome. Since Paul shared the occupation with this couple, he lived with them and worked together as tentmakers by trade when he reached Corinth. On every Sabbath in the synagogue, the bible says Paul reasoned with the Jews and the Greeks, trying to persuade them (Acts 18:4 ESV). This, therefore, reflects that Paul did ministry and other business responsibilities that helped him earn a living. Therefore, I have come to realize that this passage is still applicable to the clergy in Soroti because it brings good insight into their ministry model through the implication of like Vocational leadership, collaborative ministry, cultural engagement, and servant leadership. These subtopics (Vocational leadership, collaborative ministry, cultural engagement, and servant leadership), therefore, help provide a general picture of the clergy's sustainability for effective ministry in Soroti.

3.1 Application of well-being models to the clergy in Soroti.

Work.

In Acts 18:1-4 talks of working in both aspects, that is to say, secular engagement and ministry participation, which all provide opportunities for ministry and evangelism (missionary implication). In verse 4, "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sunday, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. Meaning even after the ministry, Paul could sit and do his trade activities. I have come to realize that many clergies even within the Soroti archdeaconry, are facing a lot of economic challenges due to insufficient financial support. Cultivating the idea of the tent-making model, as Paul did, can be of great help to both the clergy and their families, but also will enable them to be effective in their

ministry. Tent making also aligns with local understandings of hard work and dignity in labor, thus enabling clergy to remain in contact with their communities while ministering effectively.

The clergy of Soroti, therefore, are also expected to participate in doing something outside ministry that will enable them to get money for earn a living and maintain their well-being in the parishes where they are being posted. Some of the projects that the clergy can do for earning a living can be farming. The clergy in Soroti have the advantage that there is church land, and so they have the opportunity and the right to cultivate on that land the food that can sustain them and even sell some for educating their children and other uses. They can also do piggery keeping. This is also one of the other projects that the clergy can do because he/ she can sell the pigs and they get money that can sustain their lives. Some of them can also do tailoring projects that can enable them to get money, for example, I have personally done this, and it has benefited me and my ministry. Therefore, others can also do the same.

Mission.

According to Acts 18:1-4, Paul is believed to have move Athens, which is in the western part of Corinth, where he found Aquila and Priscila the, natives from Pontus, currently known as Italy. The Bible says that they moved and preached the word, and in every place, they went for ministry, they moved with their product for sale and could entrust it with some people they knew to sell, and went back later to collect the dews. This also encourages the clergy of Soroti archdeaconry to do mission and evangelism, but not to send Christians alone or delegate, and they remain behind in the name of being busy, and yet this is part of their ministry. Sometimes they attempt to go only to places they feel like, for example, places where they feel that there is transport refund, yet Jesus said to his disciples, *“Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19 ESV)*.

Ministers or clergy in Soroti, too, should be in a position to practice mission in their locality. It’s through such practice that the clergy will be in a position to draw people to hear the word of God, and also be in a position to market what they are doing to earn a living. The same people whom they are preaching to and doing mission to can be in a position to buy their products. For example, when I was in St. Peter’s Cathedral Parish, I used to sell Masai sheets and also make handmade clothes from them. So, on Sunday after ministry, I could assign one of the youths to help me sell the products as I could market the idea to people, and they could support me by buying the products, and give me the money that helped me sustain my life and ministry. As time went on, they testified that the items were very strong compared to others, which caused a market for the products, and it has become a demand because they are strong and perfect clothes that promote tradition, and everyone needs them for their functions. But also, the sheets are good to be used in covering. Therefore, any clergy can do even better than that as long as it generates income to clergy to avoid begging and becoming burdensome to other people.

Integrity and independence.

Another important model is picked from Acts 18: 1-4 is about integrity. Paul's idea at the back of his mind to start trade activity (tent making) was to refuse to depend on church funds and support. For example, 1 Thessalonians 2:9, "*For you remember, brothers, our labour and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the Gospel of God,*" (ESV) and 2 Thessalonians 3:8, "*nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labour we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you*" (ESV). These, therefore, show self-reliance and integrity, and it should be even for the clergy in Soroti. On many occasions, church leaders are increasingly suspected of financial mismanagement. This is the reason that people feel that clergy have nowhere to get resources from other than their finances; that is why Paul gave them the example of himself that every church worker should emulate, and by so doing, they will be showing a sense of transparency and independence. Through these actions, Paul recommends the act of integrity in ministry by emphasizing honesty in working relations, self-sufficiency, and unwavering commitment to the gospel activities.

Tent-making, as Paul did, challenges most clergy in Soroti to embrace stewardship and have a clear accountability in their financial management system, but then also teaches them to learn to do something with their own hands, so that they may not be mistaken as thieves, Beggars and other categories that they may be named/called. If the clergy learn to be independent and show integrity, they may continue to earn trust and respect from the people that they are shepherding and leading.

Teamwork/ Partnership (collaborative ministry).

When Paul decided to live and work with both Aquila and Priscilla, it reflects the importance of communal living and relational ministry. These relationships were not only meant for the economic but also the spiritual aspect. Both Aquila and Priscilla later became prominent leaders who helped other disciples like Apollos, as stated in the book of Acts of the Apostles, the book of *Acts 18:26*: "*He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately*". Paul's relationship with Aquila's family helped to nurture them, whereby they could also nurture Apollos. This, therefore, suggests that the clergy in Soroti should also focus not only on preaching the gospel or evangelizing but also emulate from Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla's examples by nurturing others within their faith community or locality, thus promoting mutual growth and discipleship. This can be in terms of partnering with other sectors.

The clergy in Soroti should also emulate the spirit of teamwork or partnership because, looking at the nature of the clergy's work, it is hectic and tiresome in the way that most of them do not have time even for themselves, thus resulting in burnouts, but when they are working as a team, they will have time for rest. In so doing, they will be effective in their ministry.

In conclusion, Acts 18:1-4 presents a model of how the clergy should live life that integrates work, which includes building teams (teamwork) for the effectiveness of ministry, doing missions, being a person of integrity, and that the clergy should be a person who can be creative and do something that will earn them money for survival and also support ministry. Paul, therefore, a tent-maker, provides a framework for the clergy of Soroti to engage in vocational ministry, exercise financial integrity, community building, and practice ethical leadership.

CHAPTER FOUR:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

4.1 Conclusion.

This study examined *tent-making as presented in Acts 18:1–4* and evaluated its relevance as a model for enhancing the well-being of the clergy in Soroti Archdeaconry. Drawing from the biblical example of the Apostle Paul, together with Aquila and Priscilla, the study demonstrated that ministry and productive works are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary aspects of faithful Christian service. Paul's engagement in tent-making while actively preaching the Gospel presents a holistic model of ministry that integrates spiritual commitment with economic responsibility.

The findings of this research show that the well-being of clergy is multidimensional, encompassing financial stability, mental and physical health, emotional resilience, social support, and vocational satisfaction. Many clergy within the Soroti Archdeaconry face challenges such as inadequate stipends, rising living costs, increased workload, emotional strain, and limited support systems. These challenges, if not well addressed, can negatively affect their effectiveness in the ministry and their overall well-being. The study affirms that whenever the clergy experiences stress, burnout, and financial insecurity, the spiritual growth and stability of the congregation are also compromised and affected.

Through the exegetical analysis of Acts 18:1–4, the study established that Paul deliberately chose self-support through labor in order to preserve his integrity, avoid being a financial burden to believers, and strengthen his witness. His tent-making was not a distraction from ministry, rather a means of sustaining it. This biblical perspective challenges the assumption that clergy should depend purely/solely on church support and instead promotes responsible stewardship, diligence, and self-reliance. The Greek concept of *σκηνωποι* (tent-maker) and *ἔργον* (work) further reinforces the theological value of labor as honorable and God-ordained.

The contextualization of this passage to the situation of clergy in Soroti Archdeaconry shows that tent-making remains a valuable and relevant approach today. Engaging in income-generating activities such as agriculture, small businesses, crafts, or other lawful enterprises can enhance the clergy's sustainability without undermining their spiritual calling. Such practices also position clergy as role models of hard work, integrity, and resilience within their communities or the places of their ministry.

In conclusion, the study affirms that adopting the idea of tent-making contributes positively to the well-being of the clergy or anybody by promoting financial independence, reducing stress, strengthening family life, and enhancing ministry effectiveness. When properly balanced, tent-making supports rather than competes with pastoral responsibilities. Therefore, the integration of faith, work, and mission as demonstrated by Paul provides a biblically sound and contextually appropriate framework for sustainable clergy ministry in Soroti Archdeaconry.

4.2. Recommendation.

Tent-making, therefore, as demonstrated in Acts 18:1–4, is not merely an economic strategy but a theological expression of faithful stewardship, humility, and service. When applied wisely, it has the potential to transform the lives of clergy, strengthen the church, and advance God’s mission in Soroti Archdeaconry and beyond.

I do therefore suggest the following recommendations for both the clergy, church leadership, and theological institutions to enhance clergy well-being and promote sustainable ministry:

First, I recommend that the clergy in Soroti Archdeaconry adopt and embrace the idea of Tent-Making as a Ministry Model, because it is a legitimate and biblical approach to their ministry. The clergy in this way should be in a position to engage in the appropriate income-generating activities, such as agriculture, domestic keeping, investing in small enterprises, farming, and other activities, provided they do not go against Christian values and do not hinder pastoral responsibilities. This is done so as to supplement the church stipends and reduce financial dependency, thereby improving personal dignity, confidence, and integrity.

Secondly, I do recommend that the Archdeaconry of Soroti, together with the Diocese as a whole helps their clergy in Capacity Building and Skills Development. This can be done in collaboration with church institutions and development partners, in a way that they organize training programs that aim at equipping the clergy with practical skills like entrepreneurship, financial management, agribusiness, and project planning. These skills will enable clergy to manage their resources wisely and establish sustainable ventures that support them both in family life and ministry. Clergy through in that way should model ethical leadership through transparency, humility, and responsible stewardship of resources. Tent-making can help minimize financial temptation and enhance trust between clergy and congregations. Church leadership with the knowledge acquired will be in a position to establish accountability structures that encourage integrity and mutual respect.

Thirdly, regarding the life of the clergy, I do recommend and encourage the clergy to be mindful of their health and have some times of rest as they balance between ministry duties, work, rest, and family life. Most of the clergy do not have time even on their own because of the tight schedules that at times come their way and the unavoidable circumstances, but they should try their best. Meaning the Church leadership should have some time of rest, this can be done if they have a structured schedule, like resting periods, and sabbaticals, to prevent burnout. Therefore, tent-making activities should function as supportive tools rather than burdensome obligations, but they should not cut them off from their duties/ call.

Lastly, I recommend that Pastoral Welfare Structures should be put in place and strengthened. These welfare systems help in providing counseling services, peer-support networks, and health awareness programs, as the clergy will be doing some other duty. Pastoral Welfare Structures are a holistic approach to clergy care that stands to

address the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial needs of the church leader. Therefore, foster long-term effectiveness in ministry. There are several recommendations that I could make, but these are the major ones, and for the minister of God and his/ her ministry.

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APPENDICES.

The related photos to the topic of my study.

APPENDIX 1: Tailoring project



Appendix 2: finished product for sell



Appendix 3: hand making



APPENDIX 4: crochting and knitting



RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES

These questions are for the people believed to know the lifestyle and the ministry of the Clergy.

Dear Respondents,

I am Ameri Hellen Magret, a student of Uganda Christian University pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Divinity at Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology. This research is part of the requirements of this award. My study is about tent-making as stated in Acts 18:1-4, a model for the well-being of clergy within the Soroti archdeaconry.

I'm requesting your participation and support in this study. Your information will be treated with the utmost secrecy and used solely for research purposes. Your co-operation and involvement will be much valued.

Thank you.

BIO DATA OF THE RESPONDENT

Please respond according to the question and tick where necessary. Name (optional).....

- a. Occupation/ position in the church.....
- b. Age: Please tick as applicable 18-29 30-49 50- Above
- c. Sex: Female Male
- d. Status: Single Married

1. How have you been perceiving the clergy's well-being?

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.....
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2. What does the bible talk about tent-making in Acts 18:1-4, then?

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3.How do we see what the bible speaks in Acts 18:1-4, in the life of the clergy today?

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4. What lessons do we learn from Acts 18:1-4?

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.....
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5. Is Acts 18:1-4 important for church ministers, and if so, why?

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Thank you for your cooperation. May God bless you!

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CLERGY FOLLOWING ON MY TOPIC OF STUDY ABOUT TENT-MAKING AS A MODEL IN THE ACTS18:1-4.

Dear Respondents,

I am Ameri Hellen Magret, a student of Uganda Christian University pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Divinity at Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology. This research is part of the requirements of this award. My study is about tent-making, as in Acts 18:1-4, a model for the well-being of clergy within the Soroti archdeaconry.

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Thank you.

BIO DATA OF THE RESPONDENT

Please respond according to the question and tick where necessary

A. Name (optional).....

B. Occupation/ position in the church.....

C. Age: Please tick as applicable 18-29 30-49 50- Above

D. Sex: Female Male

E. Status: Single Married

1.How have you been perceiving the clergy's well-being?

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2. What does the bible talk about tent-making in Acts 18:1-4, then?

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3. How do we see what the bible speaks in Acts 18:1-4, in the life of the clergy today?

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4. What lessons do we learn from Acts 18:1-4?

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5. Is Acts 18:1-4 important for church ministers, and if so, why?

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Thank You for Your Time and Co-Operation, May God Bless You!

Ameri Hellen Magret

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