

The Ministry of Struggle

1 Cor. 16:5-9

Intro: Paul began with an unbelievable Sermon-1 Cor.15:58

Paul led to an undeniable stewardship-ch. 16:1-4

Paul now illustrates the unthinkable of struggle

This TEXT IS A TEXT OF PAUL ILLUSTRATING WHAT WAS SAID IN 15:58

I. His Desire to Seize the Opportunity

A. He Plans on **Seeing** them-v.5

B. He Plans on **Staying** with them-v.6...remain or stay the winter with you

Paul was at Ephesus when he wrote this letter. His plan was to travel to Macedonia for a time of ministry (*pass through* in 1 Cor. 16:5 means "travel in a systematic ministry"), winter at Corinth, and then go to Judea with the collection. From November to February, it was impossible to travel by ship; so it would have been convenient for Paul to stay at Corinth and be with his friends. There were some problems to solve in the church and Paul had promised to come to help the leaders (1 Cor. 11:34).

2 Cor. 1:15 we see that this plan was changed and Paul visited twice: going through to Macedonia and returning back

2 Corinthians 1:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And in this confidence I intended to come to you before, that you might have a second benefit--

¹⁶ to pass by way of you to Macedonia, to come again from Macedonia to you, and be helped by you on my way to Judea.

C. He Plans on them **Sending** Him-v.6..that you may send me..

- Join in the work-1 Cor. 15:58...**always abounding in the work..Paul is going to redeem the time-Eph. 5:16**
- Will not waist treasures or time

II. His Dedication to Stand in Opposition-v.9

1 Cor. 15:58...be steadfast and immovable

A. He Had a Rival and he Stayed-many adversaries

Acts 18:1-18 (NKJV)

¹ After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.

² And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.

³ So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is the Christ*.

⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook *his* garments and said to them, "Your blood *be* upon your *own* heads; I *am* clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

⁷ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain *man* named Justus, *one* who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.

⁸ Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;

¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

¹¹ And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹² When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat,

¹³ saying, "This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

¹⁴ And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you.

¹⁵ But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look to *it* yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such *matters*."

¹⁶ And he drove them from the judgment seat.

¹⁷ Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

¹⁸ So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

G. Campbell Morgan: "Do not forget that is one reason to stay where you are. If you have no adversaries, you had better move out and find the places where you get them. There is not much in Christian service if we do not know the power of opposition beating against us"

B. He was in Revival so he Stayed-a great and effective door has opened

C. He had a Reason to Stay

- **He will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost-v.8**
- **He had made a vow-Acts 18:18...Nazarite vow**
 - **Acts 18:21...keep the feast**

Cenchraea was the seaport for Corinth, and there was a Christian congregation there (Rom. 16:1). Here Paul had his head shaved, "for he had a vow." This probably refers to the Nazarite vow described in Numbers 6.

The vow was not a matter of salvation but of personal devotion to the Lord. He allowed his hair to grow for a specific length of time and then cut it when the vow was completed. He also abstained from using the fruit of the vine in any form.

We are not told why Paul took this vow. Perhaps it was a part of his special dedication to God during the difficult days of the early ministry in Corinth. Or perhaps the vow was an expression of gratitude to God for all that He had done for him and his associates. According to Jewish law, the Nazarite vow had to be completed in Jerusalem with the offering of the proper sacrifices. The hair was shaved at the completion of the vow, not at the beginning; and it was not necessary for one to be in Jerusalem to make the vow.

Paul taught clearly that the observing of religious feasts was neither a means of salvation nor an essential for sanctification (Gal. 4:1-11).
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III. His Dependence to the Savior's Omniscience-v.7...if the Lord Permits ...He is trusting in the sovereignty of God in ministry

A. His Adaptation to the Timing of God

Sail boat, Kayaks, and Motor boats

B. His Anticipation to the Guiding of God-Acts 18:21; Acts 21:14

To be steadfast, immovable, abounding must be done only IN THE LORD....Struggles have a specific ministry to the believer so let's embrace the dependence on the Savior to stand in opposition to desire seizing the opportunity...