

“There’s More...”

Acts 18:5

November 22, 2015

Intro: Today’s going to be a very special day...

Let me ask you a question to begin:

How is your relationship with Christ & His Church?

A **What are you *getting-out* of your relationship?**

B **What are you *giving-into* your relationships?**

Today... I pray... you will find...

BIG IDEA: “There’s MORE!”

ILLUSTRATION: Running down seminary hill.....

T/S: Think about it.... What more might God have for you?

VIDEO: **“There’s More!”**

CONTEXT:

Acts 18:1-5

1After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2And 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, 3and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. 4And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

God’s plans are ALL about God appointments!

TODAY’S TEXT:

***5 When Silas and Timothy
arrived...***

I Corinthians 2:1-5

*...brothers and sisters... When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2**For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. **3**I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. **4**My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, **5**so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.*

2 Corinthians 10:10

For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account / worthless / contemptible / despicable..."

VIDEO: **"That One Thing..."**

⁵ When Silas and Timothy arrived... from Macedonia,

1 Thessalonians 1-3 (N.L.T.)

Chapter 1:

1This letter is from Paul, Silas, and Timothy.

We are writing to the church in Thessalonica, to you who belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God give you grace and peace.

The Faith of the Thessalonian Believers

2We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. **3**As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people. **5**For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you. **6**So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. **7**As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia.

8And now the word of the Lord is ringing out from you to people everywhere, even beyond Macedonia and Achaia,

*for wherever we go we find people telling us about your faith in God. We don't need to tell them about it, **9**for they keep talking about the wonderful welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. **10**And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.*

Chapter 2:

Paul Remembers His Visit

***1**You yourselves know, dear brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not a failure. **2**You know how badly we had been treated at Philippi just before we came to you and how much we suffered there. Yet our God gave us the courage to declare his Good News to you boldly, in spite of great opposition. **3**So you can see we were not preaching with any deceit or impure motives or trickery.*

***4**For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts. **5**Never once did we try to win you with flattery, as you well know. And God is our witness that we were not pretending to be your friends just to get your money! **6**As for human praise, we have never sought it from you or anyone else.*

***7**As apostles of Christ we certainly had a right to make*

some demands of you, but instead we were like children among you. Or we were like a mother feeding and caring for her own children. **8**We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too.

9Don't you remember, dear brothers and sisters, how hard we worked among you? Night and day we toiled to earn a living so that we would not be a burden to any of you as we preached God's Good News to you. **10**You yourselves are our witnesses—and so is God—that we were devout and honest and faultless toward all of you believers. **11**And you know that we treated each of you as a father treats his own children. **12**We pleaded with you, encouraged you, and urged you to live your lives in a way that God would consider worthy. For he called you to share in his Kingdom and glory.

13Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.

14And then, dear brothers and sisters, you suffered persecution from your own countrymen. In this way, you imitated the believers in God's churches in Judea who, because of their belief in Christ Jesus, suffered from their own people, the Jews. **15**For some of the Jews killed the prophets, and some even killed the Lord Jesus. Now they have persecuted us, too. They fail to please God and work against all humanity **16**as they try to keep us from

preaching the Good News of salvation to the Gentiles. By doing this, they continue to pile up their sins. But the anger of God has caught up with them at last.

Timothy's Good Report about the Church

17Dear brothers and sisters, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. **18**We wanted very much to come to you, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us. **19**After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! **20**Yes, you are our pride and joy.

Chapter 3:

1Finally, when we could stand it no longer, we decided to stay alone in Athens, **2**and we sent Timothy to visit you. He is our brother and God's co-worker in proclaiming the Good News of Christ. We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, **3**and to keep you from being shaken by the troubles you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles. **4**Even while we were with you, we warned you that troubles would soon come—and they did, as you well know. **5**That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent Timothy to find out whether your faith was still strong. I was afraid that the tempter had gotten the best of you and that our work had been useless. **6**But now Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love. He

reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you.

VIDEO: **“Focus”**

7So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith.

Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews

Word Study:

“completely devoted”

“suffering with” / “afflicted by”

“gripped by”

“hemmed in”

8It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.

VIDEO: **“By Faith – Be Bold!”**

9How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God’s presence. 10Night and day we pray earnestly for you, asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.

that the Christ was Jesus.

11May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon. 12And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. 13May he, as a result, make your hearts strong, blameless, and holy as you stand before God our Father when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen.

VIDEO: **“Get Up & Go Try!”**

Translations of Acts 18:5

New International Version

When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

New Living Translation

And after Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul spent all his time preaching the word. He testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

English Standard Version

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.

Berean Study Bible

And when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself fully to the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

Berean Literal Bible

Now when both Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, earnestly testifying to the Jews Jesus to be the Christ.

New American Standard Bible

But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly

testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

King James Bible

*And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, **Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified** to the Jews *that* Jesus was Christ.*

Holman Christian Standard Bible

*When Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, **Paul was occupied with preaching the message and solemnly testified** to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah.*

International Standard Version

*But when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, **Paul devoted himself entirely to the word as he emphatically assured** the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah.*

NET Bible

*Now when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, **Paul became wholly absorbed with proclaiming the word, testifying** to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.*

Study:

Acts 18:4-5: Notwithstanding all the discouragements of his situation, he devoted the Sabbaths, and whatever portion of the week his manual labor would permit, to the great work.

(4) *“But he discoursed every Sabbath in the synagogue, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.*

(5) *And when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.”* **It will be recollected by the reader, that Silas and Timothy, whose arrival is here mentioned, had tarried in Berea, and that Paul had sent back word to them, by the brethren who conducted him to Athens, to rejoin him as soon as possible. He had also “waited for them in Athens,” before his speech in the Areopagus. We would suppose, from Luke's narrative, that they failed to overtake him there, and now first rejoined him in Corinth. But Paul supplies an incident in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which corrects this supposition. He says: “When we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left *alone* in Athens, and *sent Timothy* to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith.” This shows that Timothy, at least, had actually rejoined him in Athens, and had been sent back to learn the condition of the congregation in Thessalonica. His present arrival in Corinth, therefore, was not from his original stay in Berea; but from a recent visit to Thessalonica.** Probably Silas had remained till now in Berea.

The arrival of Silas and Timothy brings us to a new period in the life of Paul, the period of his letter-writing.

We have already made some use of his epistles to throw light upon the somewhat elliptical narrative before us; but we shall

henceforth have them as cotemporary documents, and will be able to fill up from them many blanks in Paul's personal history.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Corinth soon after the arrival of Timothy, as is proved by the concurrence of the two facts, that, on the return of Silas and Timothy, as seen in the text, just quoted, they found Paul in Corinth, and that, in the epistle itself, Paul speaks of their arrival as having just taken place at the time of writing.

Several statements in this epistle throw additional light upon the state of Paul's feelings during his first labors in Corinth. He was not only "pressed in spirit," as stated by Luke, "in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling," as he himself says to the Corinthians but he was racked with uncontrollable anxiety concerning the brethren in Thessalonica, for whom he would have been willing to sacrifice his own life, and who were now suffering the severest persecution.

The good report brought from them by Silas and Timothy gave him much joy, but it was joy in the midst of distress. He says: *"When Timothy came to us from you, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that you have remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you, therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord."*

It was, therefore, with a zeal newly kindled from almost utter despair, by their good report from

Thessalonica and the arrival of his fellow-laborers, that he now so “earnestly testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.”

- A Commentary on Acts of Apostles

Verse 5. *And when Silas and Timotheus, etc.* They came to Paul according to his request, which he had sent by the brethren who accompanied him from Thessalonica, [Acts 17:16](#).

Paul was pressed. Was urged; was borne away by an unusual impulse. It was deeply impressed on him as his duty.

In spirit. In his mind, in his feelings. His love to Christ was so great, and his conviction of the truth so strong, that he laboured to make known to them the truth that Jesus was the Messiah.

That Jesus was Christ. That Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Comp. [Acts 17:16](#). The presence of Silas and Timothy animated him; and the certainty of aid in his work urged him to zeal in making known the Saviour.

(*) "was Christ" "is the Christ"

- Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

Acts 18:5 The generous gifts from the Macedonians ([2 Cor. 11:9](#); [Phil. 4:15](#)) brought by Silas and Timothy allowed Paul to cease leather working and begin devoting himself completely to the word (cf. [Luke 24:27](#); [John 5:39, 46](#); **Acts 6:4**; [1 Cor. 9:6ff.](#)). Using the Old Testament, he was solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ (cf. [Acts 13:16-41](#)).

- **MacArthur N.T. Commentary**

18:5 Paul apparently had sent **Silas and Timothy** from Athens to visit the Macedonian churches (see note on [17:15](#)). When they again joined Paul in Corinth, they probably were the ones who brought a contribution for Paul's ministry from the Macedonian churches (see [2 Cor. 11:9](#)).

- **ESV Study Bible**

Acts 18:4-5 We have here Paul preaching to the Jews, and dealing with them to bring them to the faith of Christ, both the native Jews and the Greeks, that is, those that were more or less proselyted to the Jewish religion, and frequented their meetings.

1. He reasoned with them in the synagogue publicly every sabbath. **See in what way the apostles propagated the gospel, not by force and violence, by fire and sword, not by demanding an implicit consent, but by fair arguing; they drew with the cords of a man, gave a reason for**

what they said, and gave a liberty to object against it, having satisfactory answers ready. God invites us to come and reason with him ([Isaiah 1:18](#)), and challenges sinners to produce their cause, and bring forth their strong reasons, [Isaiah 41:21](#). **Paul was a rational as well as a scriptural preacher.**

2. **He persuaded them-*epeithe***. It denotes,

(1.) **The urgency of his preaching.** He did not only dispute argumentatively with them, but he followed his arguments with **affectionate persuasions, begging of them for God's sake, for their own soul's sake, for their children's sake, not to refuse the offer of salvation** made to them. Or,

(2.) **The good effect of his preaching.** He persuaded them, that is, **he prevailed with them;** so some understand it. In sententiam suam adducebat-He brought them over to his own opinion. **Some of them were convinced by his reasonings, and yielded to Christ.**

3. He was yet more earnest in this matter when his fellow-labourers, his seconds, came up with him (v. 5):

When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, and:

- A. ...brought him good tidings from the churches there,
- B. ...and were ready to assist him here,
- C. ...and strengthened his hands,
- D. ...then Paul was more than before pressed in spirit,

- E. ...which made him more than ever pressing in his preaching.
- F. ...He was grieved for the obstinacy and infidelity of his countrymen the Jews,
- G. ...was more intent than ever upon their conversion,
- H. ...and the love of Christ constrained him to it ([2 Corinthians 5:14](#)):
- I. ...it is the word that is used here,
- J. ...it pressed him in spirit to it.
- K. ...And, being thus pressed, he testified to the Jews
 - i. ...with all possible solemnity
 - ii. ...and seriousness,
 - iii. ...as that which he was perfectly well assured of himself,
 - iv. ...and attested to them as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah promised to the fathers and expected by them.

- Matthew Henry's Commentary

18:4 Whether he did so while at work during the week or on the Sabbath, Paul followed his customary pattern in Corinth. He went to the synagogue and sought to persuade both the Jews and God-fearers there that Christ is the Messiah (v. [4](#); cf. [17:2-4](#)).

THE WITNESS IN THE CITY ([18:5–8](#)). [18:5–6](#) One gets the impression that when Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth from Macedonia they brought a contribution for Paul's ministry. [Second Corinthians 11:8f.](#) speaks of the support of other churches while Paul ministered in Corinth, and [Phil 4:15f.](#) speaks of the generous support of that congregation in his continuing mission endeavor. Now Paul was freed to witness more continually, not just on Sabbaths.

The seemingly inevitable results followed, however, and Jewish opposition arose. (v. [6](#)).

- **New American Commentary**

While Paul was doing this work, his colleagues Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia with great news of how the church there was thriving under persecution ([v. 5a](#); [1 Thess. 3:6-10](#)). They probably brought gifts from Macedonia for support of his work ([2 Cor. 11:8-9](#); [Phil. 4:15-16](#)), and as a result he was able to devote "himself exclusively to preaching" ([v. 5b](#)). While this probably means that he gave up his tentmaking to go into full-time evangelism, the word translated "devoted" (*synecho*) can also be translated "began to be engrossed," which may suggest that the arrival of his colleagues with such good news acted as a shot in the arm to Paul and thus propelled him into more intense ministry. Robertson translates this word with the next phrase in the Greek (*to logo*: "in reference to the word") as "was constrained by the word" and adds the comment: "The coming of Silas with gifts from Macedonia ... set Paul free from tentmaking for a while so that he began to devote himself ... with fresh concentration to preaching."

Paul's proclamation is described as "testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ" ([v. 5c](#)). The word translated "testifying" (*diamartyromai*) appears fifteen times in the New Testament (nine in Acts); it is usually translated "warn" or "testify" and has been defined as "to make a serious declaration on the basis of presumed personal knowledge." It reminds us that while evangelism is a joyous privilege, it is also an awesome responsibility.

Bridging Contexts...

EVANGELISM IN PROFLIGATE places. It is significant that the church in the notoriously profligate city of Corinth was founded by Paul, whom we know as being forthright in his call for moral purity among Christians and strict about dealing with immorality in the church. He was obviously uneasy when he went to Corinth for more reasons than one ([1 Cor. 2:3](#)). But he persevered in ministry and was responsible for founding a church that still exists almost twenty centuries later. While Christians may be reluctant to work in such places, those living there also need the Savior and are not beyond redemption.

Of course the Corinthian church was a scandal-ridden church. Just as Isaiah had said that while living among a people of unclean lips, his lips too had become unclean ([Isa. 6:5](#)), the church in Corinth was not immune to influence by the sins of the culture around it. Some will succumb to temptations that come from the environment around them. But such an environment did not cause Paul to give up on this church. He wrote urgent letters to it, two of which made their way into the Bible, presenting remedies for their maladies. We too are challenged to have a burden for the evangelization of the Corinthians of today.

Evangelism as a serious responsibility. This passage clearly illustrates the seriousness of one's personal responsibility to evangelism. Our look at the word translated "testify" (*diamartyromai*; [v. 5](#)) pointed to the personal responsibility of those who have found the truth to testify to it. This serious responsibility is illustrated in the Old Testament story of the four lepers outside the starving city of Samaria. They discovered that not only had the besieging army left, but they had also left behind food and treasures. After a hearty meal and a plundering session they realized that their wonderful discovery also brought with it a great responsibility. So they said, "We're not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let's go at once and report this to the royal palace" ([2 Kings 7:9](#)).

This idea appears again in [Ezekiel 3:18-19](#), which presents the prophet as God's watchman who must warn the wicked of their sin and of impending judgment:

When I say to a wicked man, "You will surely die," and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself.

While we are responsible to share the message faithfully, we are not responsible for the response of our audience. In fact, if we face continued refusal to consider the claims we present, we may come to the stage where we can wash our hands of the responsibility and move to a more receptive group of people (cf. [v. 6](#)).

God's encouragement. Paul arrived in Corinth as a discouraged man. The reaction of the Jews to his message did not help improve this situation (cf. [v. 6](#)). But in this passage we have clear instances of God's encouragement, which did much to enable him to persevere with his ministry there for eighteen months. (1) Paul established a friendship with fellow tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla, who became his partners in ministry ([vv. 2-3](#)). Few things encourage a lonely traveler as much as welcoming him or her into a loving Christian family.

Contemporary Significance:

Paul's attitude: He urged the church in Corinth to take urgent action against sins in the church. "*And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ... God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked man from among you.'*" ([1 Cor. 5:2, 13](#)). The fact that the Corinthians lived in an immoral culture did not cause Paul to lower his moral standards. God calls us to go out into this immoral world as witnesses not only to his love but also to his holiness. The church must show the world that one can be morally pure and that this is the best, the happiest, way to live.

Implications of "evangelism as responsibility" thinking.

With almost embarrassing repetitiveness this commentary has been highlighting the priority of evangelism in a church's agenda. The focus in this study of the Corinthian ministry is on the personal responsibility of Christians to testify to God's truth. With today's aversion to guilt (possibly because our generation does not know the freedom of forgiveness), many are reluctant to push this aspect of personal responsibility in the church. We speak of how we should witness and the joy of doing it. But sometimes the anticipation of joy in witness is overcome by fear of rejection and failure or by spiritual lethargy, so that we do not fulfill our calling to witness for Christ. At such times a sense of responsibility can be a great help. We may not feel like doing it, but we know we should be doing it, and so we do it. And after doing it we are usually glad, for we have become channels through which the Spirit's love flows.

Yet we are sobered by the knowledge that, just as the master evangelist Paul experienced rejection, so will we. Our own people may reject the message. We may have to give them stern words of warning, as Paul did with the Jews. We may even move away from them because of their contempt for the truth. But, like Paul, we will not lose our yearning for them. We will mourn their rejection of the gospel ([Rom. 9:1-3](#)) and pray for their salvation ([10:1](#)). And may Paul's stern rebuke to the hardhearted Jews never be used as an excuse for anti-Semitism!

We must be careful about making absolute principles out of Paul's action of moving away from ministering to the Jews in Corinth ([v. 6](#)). Some people have a worldview so different to

ours that it may take a long time for them to understand the gospel or be receptive to it. God may be calling us to dedicate an entire career in ministry to serve among a resistant people and not see any visible fruit. Our calling may be to prepare unproductive ground for a harvest that comes after we die. But this passage does give us freedom to ask whether groups we are seeking to reach for Christ have hardened their hearts so much through their blasphemous attitude that we are released from our responsibility to them, so that we can concentrate on others.

- NIV Application Commentary

Paul lived and worked with Aquila and Priscilla, but on the Sabbath days witnessed boldly in the synagogue. After all, that was why he had come to Corinth. When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia ([Acts 17:14-15](#); [18:5](#)), they brought financial aid ([2 Cor. 11:9](#)), and this enabled Paul to devote his full time to the preaching of the Gospel. What a joy it must have been for Paul to see his friends and to hear from them the good news of the steadfastness of the Christians in the churches they had planted together ([1 Thes. 3](#)).

Everyone agrees that Paul was a great Christian and a great missionary evangelist, but how much would Paul have accomplished *alone*? Friends like Aquila and Priscilla, Silas and Timothy, and the generous believers in Macedonia, made it possible for Paul to serve the Lord effectively. His Christian friends, new and old, encouraged him at a time when he needed it the most.

Of course, this reminds us that we should encourage our friends in the work of the Lord. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "God evidently does not intend us all to be rich or powerful or great, but He does intend us all to be friends." "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" is the way Paul expressed it ([Gal. 6:2](#)). Humanly speaking, there would have been no church in Corinth were it not for the devotion and service of many different people.

- Bible Exposition Commentary

KEY Insights...

[Verse 5](#), And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia—that is, from Thessalonica, whither Silas had probably accompanied Timothy when sent back from Athens (see on [Ac 17:15](#)).

Paul was pressed in the spirit—rather (according to what is certainly the true reading) "was pressed with the word"; expressing not only his zeal and assiduity in preaching it, but some inward *pressure* which at this time he experienced in the work (to convey which more clearly was probably the origin of the common reading).

What that pressure was we happen to know, with singular minuteness and vividness of description, from the apostle himself, in his first Epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians (1Cor 2:1-5; 1Th 3:1-10). He had come away from Athens, as he remained there, in a depressed and anxious state of mind, having there met, for the first time, with unwilling Gentile ears. He continued, apparently for some time, laboring alone in the synagogue of Corinth, full of deep and anxious solicitude for his Thessalonian converts. His early ministry at Corinth was colored by these feelings. Himself deeply humbled, his power as a preacher was more than ever felt to lie in demonstration of the Spirit. At length Silas and Timotheus arrived with exhilarating tidings of the faith and love of his Thessalonian children, and of their earnest longing again to see their father in Christ; bringing with them also, in token of their love and duty, a pecuniary contribution for the supply of his wants. This seems to have so lifted him as to put new life and vigor into his ministry. *He now wrote his FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS*, in which the "pressure" which resulted from all this strikingly appears. (See Introduction to First Thessalonians). Such emotions are known only to the ministers of Christ, and, even of them, only to such as "travail in birth until Christ be formed in" their hearers.

- A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical

Key Word:

Greek Strong's Number: 4912

Greek Word: συνέχω

Transliteration: synechō

Phonetic Pronunciation: [soon-ekh'-o](#)

Root: from [<G4862>](#) and [<G2192>](#)

Cross Reference: TDNT - 7:877,1117

Part of Speech: v

Vine's Words: [Anguish](#), [Constrain](#), [Constraint](#), [Hold](#), [Held](#), [Holden](#), [Hold \(take\)](#), [Keep](#), [Keeping](#), [Press](#), [Sick](#), [Sickly](#), [Sickness](#), [Stop](#), [Strait \(be in a\)](#), [Straitened](#)

Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

be taken with 3

throng 1

straiten 1

keep in 1

hold 1

stop 1

press 1

lie sick of 1

constrain 1

be in a strait 1

[Total Count: 12]

from [<G4862>](#) (sun) and [<G2192>](#) (echo); to *hold together*, i.e. to *compress* (the ears, with a crowd or siege) or *arrest* (a prisoner); figurative to *compel*, *perplex*, *afflict*, *preoccupy* :- constrain, hold, keep in, press, lie sick of, stop, be in a strait, straiten, be taken with, throng.

- **Strong's Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.**

Strong's Number: [<G4912>](#)

Original Word: [συνέχω](#), *synechō*

Usage Notes: "to hold together, constrain," is translated "I am in a strait" in [Phil. 1:23](#) (Passive Voice), i.e., being restricted on both sides, under a pressure which prevents a definite choice; so in [Luke 12:50](#), "(how) am I straitened," i.e., pressed in. See [CONSTRAIN](#),

- **Vine's Expository Dictionary of O.T. & N.T. Words.**

Matthew 4:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those **suffering** with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.*

Luke 4:38 (NASB)

³⁸ *Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was **suffering** from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her.*

Luke 8:37 (NASB)

³⁷ *And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes and the surrounding district asked Him to leave them, for they were **gripped** with great fear; and He got into a boat and returned.*

Luke 8:45 (NASB)

⁴⁵ *And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are **crowding** and pressing in on You."*

Luke 12:50 (NASB)

⁵⁰ *"But I have a baptism to undergo, and how **distressed** I am until it is accomplished!*

Luke 19:43 (NASB)

⁴³ *"For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and **hem** you in on every side,*

Luke 22:63 (NASB)

⁶³ *Now the men who were **holding** Jesus **in custody** were mocking Him and beating Him,*

Acts 7:57 (NASB)

⁵⁷ *But they cried out with a loud voice, and **covered** their ears and rushed at him with one impulse.*

Acts 18:5 (NASB)

⁵ *But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began **devoting** himself **completely** to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.*

Acts 28:8 (NASB)

⁸ *And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed **afflicted** with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him.*

2 Corinthians 5:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *For the love of Christ **controls us**, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;*

Philippians 1:23 (NASB)

²³ *But I am **hard-pressed** from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;*

[I Thessalonians 2:9b – 3:10](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:9-20 (NASB)

⁹ *...we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

¹⁰ *You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;*

¹¹ *just as you know how **we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you** as a father would his own children,*

¹² ***so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.***

¹³ ***For this reason we also constantly thank God** that when **you received the word of God** which you heard from us, **you accepted it NOT as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God,** which also **performs its work in you who believe.***

¹⁴ *For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for **you also endured the same sufferings** at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews,*

¹⁵ *who both **killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, AND drove us out. They are not pleasing to God,** but **hostile** to all men,*

¹⁶ ***hindering us** from speaking to the **Gentiles so that they may be saved;** with the result that **they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them** to the utmost.*

¹⁷ ***But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while—in person, not in spirit—were all the more eager with great desire to see your face.***

¹⁸ *For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet **Satan hindered us.***

¹⁹ ***For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?***

²⁰ ***For you are our glory and joy.***

1 Thessalonians 3:1-13 (NASB)

¹ **Therefore** when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone,
² and **we sent Timothy**, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, **to strengthen and encourage you** as to your faith,
³ **so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions**; for **you yourselves know that we have been destined for this**.

⁴ **For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction; and so it came to pass, as you know**.

⁵ **For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain**.

⁶ **But now** that **Timothy has** come to us from you, and has **brought us good news of your faith and love**, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you,
⁷ **for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith**;

⁸ **for now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord**.

⁹ **For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account,**
¹⁰ as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹ *Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you;*

¹² *and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;*

¹³ *so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.*

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 Corinthians 2:1-7 (NASB)

¹ And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.

² For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

³ I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,

⁴ and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

⁵ so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

⁶ Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away;

⁷ but we speak God's wisdom...

The Plain Manner in Which the Apostle Preached Christ Crucified (2:1-5)

Christ, in his person, and offices, and sufferings, is the sum and substance of the gospel, and ought to be the great subject of a gospel minister's preaching, but not so as to leave out other parts of God's revealed truth and will. Paul preached the whole counsel of God. Few know the fear and trembling of faithful ministers, from a deep sense of their own weakness They know how insufficient they are, and are fearful for themselves. When nothing but Christ crucified is plainly preached, the success must be entirely from Divine power accompanying the word, and thus men are brought to believe, to the salvation of their souls.

- Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary.

Paul's Subject of Preaching, Christ Crucified, Not in Worldly, but in Heavenly, Wisdom Among the Perfect

Notes for Verse 1

Verse 1. And I— "So I" [CONYBEARE] as one of the "foolish, weak, and despised" instruments employed by God ([1Cor 1:27, 28](#)); "glorying in the Lord," not in man's wisdom ([1Cor 1:31](#)). Compare [1Cor 1:23](#), "We."

when I came—([Ac 18:1](#), &c.). **Paul might, had he pleased, have used an ornate style, having studied secular learning at Tarsus of Cilicia,** which STRABO preferred as a school of

learning to Athens or Alexandria; here, doubtless, he read the *Cilician Aratus'* poems (which he quotes, [Ac 17:28](#)), and Epimenides ([Titus 1:12](#)), and MENANDER ([1Cor 15:33](#)). Grecian intellectual development was an important element in preparing the way for the Gospel, but it failed to regenerate the world, showing that for this a superhuman power is needed. Hellenistic (Grecizing) Judaism at Tarsus and Alexandria was the connecting link between the schools of Athens and those of the Rabbis. No more fitting birthplace could there have been for the apostle of the Gentiles than Tarsus, free as it was from the warping influences of Rome, Alexandria, and Athens. He had at the same time *Roman citizenship*, which protected him from sudden violence. Again, he was reared in the *Hebrew divine law* at Jerusalem. Thus, as the three elements, Greek cultivation, Roman polity ([Lk 2:1](#)), and the divine law given to the Jews, combined just at Christ's time, to prepare the world for the Gospel, so the same three, by God's marvellous providence, met together in the apostle to the Gentiles [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

testimony of God— "the testimony *of Christ*" ([1Cor 1:6](#)); therefore Christ is God.

Notes for Verse 2

Verse 2. The Greek implies, "The only definite thing that I made it my business to know among you, was to know Jesus Christ (His person) and Him crucified (His office)"

[ALFORD], **not exalted on the earthly throne of David, but executed as the vilest malefactor**. The historical fact of Christ's crucifixion had probably been put less prominently forward by the seekers after human wisdom in the Corinthian church, to

avoid offending learned heathens and Jews. Christ's *person* and Christ's *office* constitute the sum of the Gospel.

Notes for Verse 3

Verse 3. I—the *preacher*: as [1Cor 2:2](#) describes the *subject*, "Christ crucified," and [1Cor 2:4](#) the *mode* of preaching: "my speech... not with enticing words," "but in demonstration of the Spirit."

weakness—personal and bodily ([2Cor 10:10](#); [2Cor 12:7, 9](#); [Gal 4:13](#)).

trembling—(compare [Php 2:12](#)). Not *personal fear*, but a *trembling anxiety to perform a duty*; anxious conscientiousness, as proved by the contrast to "eye service" ([Eph 6:5](#)) [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

Notes for Verse 4

Verse 4. my speech—in private.

preaching—in public [BENGEL]. ALFORD explains it, *My discourse* on doctrines, and *my preaching* or announcement of facts.

enticing—rather, "persuasive."

man's wisdom—*man's* is omitted in the oldest authorities. Still "wisdom" does refer to "man's" wisdom.

in demonstration of... Spirit, &c.—Persuasion is man's means of moving his fellow man. God's means is demonstration, leaving no doubt, and inspiring implicit faith, by the powerful working of the Spirit (then exhibited both outwardly by miracles, and inwardly by working on the heart, now in the latter and the more important way only, [Mt 7:29](#); [Ac 6:10](#); [Heb 4:12](#); compare also [Rom 15:19](#)). The same simple power accompanies divine truth now, producing certain persuasion and conversion, when the Spirit demonstrates by it.

Notes for Verse 5

[Verse 5](#). stand in... wisdom of men—rest on it, owe its origin and continuance to it.

- A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical

1 Corinthians Chapter 2

THE design of this chapter is the same as the concluding part of [1 Corinthians 1:17-31](#), to show that the gospel does not depend for its success on human wisdom, or the philosophy of men. This position the apostle further confirms,

(1.) [1 Corinthians 2:1-5](#), by a reference to his own example, as having been successful among them, and yet not endowed with the graces of elocution, or by a commanding address; yet,

(2.) lest it should be thought that the gospel was real folly, and should be contemned, he shows in the remainder of the chapter, [1 Corinthians 2:6-16](#), that it contained true wisdom; that it was a profound scheme-rejected, indeed, by the men of the world, but *see* to be wise by those who were made acquainted with its real nature and value, [1 Corinthians 2:5-16](#).

The first division of the chapter [1 Corinthians 2:1-5](#) is a continuation of the argument to show that the success of the gospel does not depend on human wisdom or philosophy. This he proves,

(1.) by the fact that when he was among them, though his preaching was attended with success, yet he did not come with the attractions of human eloquence, [1 Corinthians 2:1](#).

(2.) This was in accordance with his purpose, not designing to attempt anything like that, but having another object, [1 Corinthians 1:2](#).

(3.) In fact, he had not evinced that, but the contrary, [1 Corinthians 2:3,4](#).

(4.) His design was that their conversion should not appear to have been wrought by human wisdom or eloquence, but to have been manifestly the work of God, [1 Corinthians 2:5](#).

- Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

2:2 crucified. Though Paul expounded the whole counsel of God to the church ([Acts 20:27](#)) and taught the Corinthians the Word of God ([Acts 18:11](#)), the focus of his preaching and teaching to unbelievers was Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty for sin on the cross ([Acts 20:20](#); [2 Cor. 4:2](#); [2 Tim. 4:1, 2](#)). Until someone understands and believes the gospel, there is nothing more to say to them. The preaching of the Cross ([1:18](#)) was so dominant in the early church that believers were accused of worshipping a dead man.

2:3 weakness... fear... trembling. Paul came to Corinth after being beaten and imprisoned in Philippi, run out of Thessalonica and Berea, and scoffed at in Athens ([Acts 16:22-24](#); [17:10](#), [13](#), [14](#), [32](#)), so he may have been physically weak. But in that weakness, he was most powerful (see [vv. 4, 5](#); [2 Cor. 12:9, 10](#)). There were no theatrics or techniques to manipulate people's response. His fear and shaking were because of the seriousness of his mission.

God's Role in Salvation ([1 Cor. 1:30](#))

Who is responsible for individual salvation—God or the person? Put another way, “Did God sovereignly elect us and save us? Or did He act in accord with what He knew we would do?” In other words, “Who makes the first move?”

The following material summarizes what Scripture teaches about God's role in salvation. Look up each passage to sense the overwhelming nature of God being the ‘first cause’ or initiator of a believer's salvation.

God wills	John 1:12-13 ; Eph. 1:5, 11
God draws	John 6:44
God grants	John 6:65
God calls	1 Thess. 2:12 ; 2 Thess. 2:14 ; 2 Tim. 1:9 ; 1 Pet. 2:9
God appoints	Acts 13:48 ; 1 Thess. 5:9
God predestines	Rom. 8:29 ; Eph. 1:5, 11
God prepares	Rom. 9:23
God causes	1 Cor. 1:30
God chooses	1 Thess. 1:4 ; 2 Thess. 2:13 ; Eph. 1:4
God purposes	Eph. 1:11
God delivers and transfers	Col. 1:13
God saves	2 Tim. 1:9 ; Titus 3:5
God makes us alive	Eph. 2:5

God pours out His
Spirit

[Titus 3:6](#)

God brings us forth

[James 1:18](#)

God justifies

[Rom. 8:30](#); [Titus 3:7](#)

God sanctifies

[1 Thess. 5:23](#)

God glorifies

[Rom. 8:3](#)

- The MacArthur Bible Commentary.

1 Thessalonians 1-3 (N.L.T.)

Chapter 1:

Greetings from Paul

¹This letter is from Paul, Silas,^a and Timothy.

We are writing to the church in Thessalonica, to you who belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God give you grace and peace.

The Faith of the Thessalonian Believers

2We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. **3**As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4We know, dear brothers and sisters,^b that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people. **5**For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance^c that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you. **6**So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. **7**As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia.^d

8And now the word of the Lord is ringing out from you to people everywhere, even beyond Macedonia and Achaia, for wherever we go we find people telling us about your faith in God. We don't need to tell them about it, **9**for they keep talking about the wonderful welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. **10**And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

Chapter 2:

Paul Remembers His Visit

1You yourselves know, dear brothers and sisters,^a that our visit to you was not a failure. **2**You know how badly we had been treated at Philippi just before we came to you and how much we suffered there. Yet our God gave us the courage to declare his Good News to you boldly, in spite of great opposition. **3**So you can see we were not preaching with any deceit or impure motives or trickery.

4For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts. 5Never once did we try to win you with flattery, as you well know. And God is our witness that we were not pretending to be your friends just to get your money! 6As for human praise, we have never sought it from you or anyone else.

7As apostles of Christ we certainly had a right to make some demands of you, but instead we were like children^b among you. Or we were like a mother feeding and caring for her own children. 8We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too.

9Don't you remember, dear brothers and sisters, how hard we worked among you? Night and day we toiled to earn a living so that we would not be a burden to any of you as we preached God's Good News to you. 10You yourselves are our witnesses—and so is God—that we were devout and honest and faultless toward all of you believers. 11And you know that we treated each of you as a father treats his own children. 12We pleaded with you, encouraged you, and urged you to live your lives in a way that God would consider worthy. For he called you to share in his Kingdom and glory.

13Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.

14And then, dear brothers and sisters, you suffered persecution from your own countrymen. In this way, you imitated the believers in God's churches in Judea who, because of their belief in Christ Jesus, suffered from their own people, the Jews. 15For some of the Jews killed the prophets, and some even killed the Lord Jesus. Now they have persecuted us, too. They fail to please God and work against all humanity 16as they try to keep us from preaching the Good News of salvation to the Gentiles. By doing this, they continue to pile up their sins. But the anger of God has caught up with them at last.

Timothy's Good Report about the Church

17Dear brothers and sisters, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. **18**We wanted very much to come to you, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us. **19**After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! **20**Yes, you are our pride and joy.

Chapter 3:

1Finally, when we could stand it no longer, we decided to stay alone in Athens, **2**and we sent Timothy to visit you. He is our brother and God's co-worker^a in proclaiming the Good News of Christ. We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, **3**and to keep you from being shaken by the troubles you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles. **4**Even while we were with you, we warned you that troubles would soon come—and they did, as you well know. **5**That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent Timothy to find out whether your faith was still strong. I was afraid that the tempter had gotten the best of you and that our work had been useless.

6But now Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you. **7**So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters,^b because you have remained strong in your faith. **8**It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.

9How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence. **10**Night and day we pray earnestly for you, asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.

11May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon.

12And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people

grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. **13** May he, as a result, make your hearts strong, blameless, and holy as you stand before God our Father when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen.

I Corinthians 2:1-5

*...brothers and sisters... When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2** For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. **3** I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. **4** My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, **5** so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.*

2 Corinthians 10:10

For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account / worthless / contemptible / despicable..."