

Saturday, January 7, 2023 • Read Acts 18:1–18a

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Paul do, when the incident at the Areopagus is over (v1)? Whom does he find there (v2)? With whom? Where had they come from, and why? What does he do with them, while waiting for Silas and Timothy (v3)? But with whom does he dialogue, when, and where (v4)? Who arrive in v5? What does the Spirit now constrain him to do in a more public manner (v5)? How do they respond (v6)? Against Whom do they blaspheme? With what action does he respond? What does he say about them? What does he say about himself (cf. 20:26)? Where does he say he is going? Where is the church plant's new base of operations (v7)? Who comes to faith at this point (v8)? Whom else does the Lord save? And many of whom? Who now appears to Paul (v9)? What does He tell him not to be? What does He tell him to do? What does He tell him not to do? Why—Who is with him, and what will no one be able to do (v10)? Why not? How long did Paul stay there (v11)? Doing what? But then what happened (v12)? Who said what and where (v13)? How does Gallio answer (v14–15)? What does he do (v16)? Who then do what to whom (v17)? What does Paul do (v18a)?

What happens when the Lord wants to sustain a ministry? Acts 18:1–18a looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these seventeen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that the Lord may sustain ministries through rousing ministers' spirits, reinforcing ministers' doctrine, and restraining ministers' opponents.

Paul has been driven from one place to another throughout this entire missionary journey. Now, his evangelistic zeal brought him to the Areopagus, where he was laughed off the stage with just two named saints and a couple unnamed males (cf. 17:34). He decides to continue his wait for Silas and Timothy in Corinth, leaving Macedonia and going to Achaia.

There's something Peter-like (cf. Jn 21:3) in his taking up tentmaking full-time while he waits (v3), even though we have good evidence that even while pastoring he sometimes did enough of it to at least pay for his own food (cf. 20:34; 1Cor 4:12; 2Thess 3:8). During this time, he still attends synagogue every week, dialoguing (more literal than "persuaded" in v4) with both Jews and Greeks there, but it isn't until Silas and Timothy arrive from Macedonia that he picks back up his public ministry (v5). As the Spirit tells us about this, He highlights three main components: the Lord sustains this ministry by rousing Paul's spirit, by reinforcing Paul's doctrine, and by restraining Paul's opponents.

Rousing a minister's spirit, v5. Silas's and Timothy's arrival does not seem to be incidental to the "pressing together" of the Paul's spirit. (Here, it is the work of the Holy Spirit in Paul's own soul, so either 's' or 'S' is appropriate). Moving from "dialogue" in v4 to "solemnly testifying" in v5 is produced by that beneficial, holy pressure that the Spirit brings by the encouragement of his ministry companions. Ministers are weak and grow weary. But when the Lord is about to sustain a ministry, here He uses brethren to rouse the minister's spirit.

Reinforcing the minister's doctrine, v6–11. This rousing was not merely emotional but theological:

- Jesus being the Son of David ("Jesus is the Christ," v5) and Son of God ("blasphemed," v6)
- The eternal and ultimate stakes involved ("Your blood be upon your own heads," v6)
- The binding obligation of a ministerial call ("I am clean," v6)
- The covenantal progression and expansion of the gospel age ("From now on I will go to the Gentiles," v7)
- The presence of the Lord with the minister (v9a, 10a)
- The necessity of courage and boldness (v9b)
- The fact of sovereign providence (v7–8 and the timing of Crispus's conversion; v10b)
- The fact of sovereign election (v10c).

The Lord brings all of these doctrines flooding in to bear upon his ministry with the extraordinarily ordinary result: "he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them" (v11).

Restraining the minister's opponents, v12–18a. We're not sure how far into the year and six months this event takes place. It is presented as an example of that sovereign providential restraint that Jesus had promised in v10. The Jews drag Paul before the proconsul (v12) and present the sort of argument that has worked before in Macedonia (v13, reasoning that Christianity should not have the same protected status as Judaism, cf. 17:6–7), and the reader thinks "hear we go again." But the Lord has raised up a proconsul who refuses to be manipulated such that Paul doesn't even get a chance to make his own defense (v14). Gallio denounces the Jews and drives them away, with the rodbearers laying the stripes on the Jews' leader all the way (v15–17). In this way, the Lord sovereignly restrained Paul's opponents so that v18a might be fulfilled, "and Paul remained for many days."

How are you seeking for the Lord to rouse your elders' spirits? Of which of the doctrines in vv6–11 do you and your congregation most need to be reminded? How has the Lord been restraining opposition to the work of the gospel in your area/ministry? What further restraint are you praying for?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You and praise You that You rule and overrule all things for gathering to Yourself those who are Yours by election and redemption. Grant the ongoing work of Your Spirit to sustain a renewed gospel work in our own day we pray, in Jesus's Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP46 "God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength" or TPH400 "Gracious Spirit, Dwell with Me"

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Acts chapter, 18, verses 1. Through 18a. These are God's words. After these things pulled departed from Athens, and went to Corinth. And he found a certain jew named Aquila born in Pontus. Good recently come from Italy with his wife, prisilla? Because claudius had commanded all the jews to depart from Rome.

And he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them. And worked. For my occupation, they were tent makers. Any reasons and the synagogue every sabbath and persuaded. Both jews and greeks. Who in silos and Timothy had come from Macedonia, paul was compelled by the spirit.

And testified to the jews that jesus as the christ. 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. And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named justice one, who worshiped god.

Whose house was next door to the synagogue. Then christmas the ruler of this synagogue believed on the lord with all his household. And many of the corinthians hearing believed, And we're baptized. Now, the lord spoke to paul in the night by a vision. To not be afraid but speak.

And do not keep silent. Fry them with you. And no one will attack you to hurt you. For, i have many people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months. Teaching the word of god among them. When gallio was pro-consul of ikea, The jews with one accord.

Rose up against Paul. And brought him to the judgment seat saying. This fellow persuades men to worship. God, contrary to the law.

Sorry.

And when Paul was about to open his mouth Gallio said to the Jews, If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked, crimes of Jews. There would be reason why I should bear with you. 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. And he drove them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes is the ruler of the synagogue and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things. So Paul still remained a good while.

So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent worked.

So, Paul has been driven. From one place to another. Pretty much this entire. Missionary journey. He had. Difficulty. Getting to preach anywhere. He gets to fill up high. And he's imprisoned. And, The Lord's marvelously gloriously starts a church basically with one woman from the riverside. The jailer's family. And those who heard and were converted in the prison.

But, He? Still has to leave the city. He's driven. From Thessalonica. Is driven. From Berea. And when he's driven from Berea Silos and Timothy stay back in Berea, And he's waiting for them. In Athens. And yet, the idolatry in Athens. Is so great that he's provoked and his spirit Then he starts evangelizing.

And as a result, he's brought to the Ariopagus And he preaches. Uh, the gospel there. And, Uh, he's basically laughed off the stage. Uh, When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, So verse 32. Paul's not necessarily. Uh done. But At that point. Some mocked others say? We'll hear you again.

Meaning your turn is over, but we'll stick in the rotation. And Paul departs from them, having been left off the stage and A few join him. That brings us to this passage. He departs from Athens. I and he goes to Corinth. He leaves the region of Macedonia. Corinth is in.

Uh, the region of a Cha. He's still waiting for Silos and Timothy Who aren't going to appear until verse 5. And he goes back into waiting mode. You remember, he was in waiting mode in Athens. Before the site of the idols. Provoked him in his spirit. And he goes back to his old trade.

And he attends the synagogue on Sabbath. And he, Reasons and dialogues with both Jews and Greeks. I know. Um, our text translates that word Persuades. Really, it's Dialogues. But what he's doing every day is he's gone back to his old tent making trade. Finds a true named Aquila. Born in Pontus.

And his wife Priscilla. They'd been expelled from Rome by Claudius. And, Their tent makers and his tent maker so they make tents together all day. They must have got a good education. In Christ. Because they are going to be. Helping a palace out later. But he's Making tents all day and just attending synagogue.

Not having. Um, congregational Christian worship not planting a church. Uh, just dialoging with Whoever's there. Something happens. When Silos and Timothy come from Macedonia. And we see the Uh, revival of The ministers. Zeal for evangelists evangelism. Um, It's A little bit like when Peter is in. Kind of waiting mode, not sure what to do with himself.

And he wasn't a tent maker. What had he been? He'd been a fisherman. So you remember Towards the end of the gospel. John John, chapter 21. Peter says, I'm going fishing. And everybody goes with it. And they fish all night and they catch nothing. Which,

And reminds us. Then certainly would have reminded them. Of when they had done. So, The last time they went fishing, And they had fished all night and caught nothing and to remember the Lord Jesus. Uh, And gave them instruction. And, They call it many fish and He said he would make them fishers at men.

Uh, well, they fish all night. They catch nothing. And then someone from the shore. Yeah, yes, at them to cast their nets. Over the other side of the boat. And they do. And the boats are sinking. And John tells Peter, it's the Lord. And Peter, no longer needs boats or fish, or net or anything.

He lets everyone else, the deal with the Sinking boats anytime into the water. Uh, with all his clothes on and swims to the shore. And The Lord Jesus. Has his very patient restoration of Peter redirection. Of Peter's faith to himself. And as a marvelous passage, Uh, well here we don't have any real indication that.

That Paul is down, spiritually or feeling dejected or He's just been waiting mode. But we do have indication that there is significant renewal. Of his. Evangelistic zeal. And sustaining of his ministry. And the Lord gives us. Three particular ways in which he did that. In verse 5. Here roused.

The minister's spirit. Rouse the apostle spirit. In verses 6 through 11, he reinforced Um, the minister's doctrine. And in verses 12 through 18, he restrained The ministers, opponents. Some verses. And verse 5 here, is he rouses administered spirit when Silos and Timothy had come From Macedonia, Paul was compelled.

By the spirit. And testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. His spirit was pressed together. Uh, by the Holy Spirit, he is Uh, constrain push, squeeze. He could no longer. Um, hold back from testifying to the Jews. That Jesus is the Christ. So this dialoging in verse 4.

Is replaced in verse 5 by this solemn testimony before it had been in conversation. Just kind of Yeah, explaining to them that. Uh, the Christ couldn't just be the son of David. He had to be the son of God. That the Lord. You all weigh himself. Had knocked. Um, Uh, Paul down and revealed himself in.

Uh, On the way to Damascus and that when Uh, Paul cried out to the Lord, who was appearing to him in this vision. Uh, the way Uh, you know, similarly to how he had appeared to God's people at different times and different ways. In visions. And various theophanies or Christophanies in the Old Testament.

That Paul had asked him, who are you? Lord And the answer was I am Jesus. That I am can be. I am that. I am. And I am can be, I am Jesus and so Jesus is the Christ. That Christ is not just the son of David, he is Yahai.

As. They sang themselves. In Psalm. Uh, 110. Yahweh said to my Lord. And Jesus, when he is, proclaiming his divinity to the Jews, refused to accept his divinity. Ask them how come David call him his Lord. Who is his son? When Jesus, of course, saying before Abraham was I am.

So there's all sorts of Truth about God himself. God, the son. Uh, being Uh, the one who had to be the Christ. And, He had been reasoning. He's been dialoguing with Jews and Greeks up through the end of verse 4.

In the Synagogue every sabbath, but now His solemnly testifying.

Paul compelled by the spirit testifies. To the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. So the spirit compels him, constrains him, presses on him. Ministers are weak and they can grow weary. But when the Lord is about to sustain a ministry, He rises the minister's spirit. And there's probably, an instrumentality to Silas and Timothy here.

That the arrival of these brethren in the providence of God and their encouragement to Him in the faith. Our instrumental means in this particular case, by which He, the Lord, rises. Paul's spirit. Um, We too. Uh, need our Ourselves roused, compelled, pressed by the Holy Spirit to do with joy and zeal.

What is our calling in this life? Huh, when there's much that belongs to our calling for each of you, a calling as a child, a calling as a human calling, as a member of the church. Calling as one who has bound to. To God through Christ. So much of what you do every day is, Um, is determined by those callings.

You know your private worship. Is determined by being a creature made in God's image. And One who is joined to God, through Jesus Christ. Um, You know, when you honor and obey your mom, when you learn and seek to grow in wisdom. Uh, when you eat and drink, hopefully, healthily and when you exercise seeking to grow in stature, Because God has made you.

In such a way as to grow and wisdom and in stature. And then in these worship times and the private worship times, and the Lord's day, Growing in favor with God. And also that your progress has evident even to men, And favor with men. Um, we can grow weary.

And all of these things. But God sustains us in our callings. In part, by applying pressure to our spirits. Now, He does that first and foremost through fellowship within. And so, those worship times, Are not just things that we ought to do, but they ought to be things. The Lord uses to reinvigorate us for all the rest of our callings.

In our life. But another instrument that God uses, is of course. Our brothers and sisters. When we were able to gather together, He had not had. Uh, congregation to gather with. For some time, like you do. And so it was a great help to Him when Silas and Timothy came. You are to help the rest of the congregation and be helped by them.

You have a divinely appointed Christian reunion. Every Lord's day. In which we stir one another up. To love and good works. And the look to the Lords to bless. Are especially the fellowship of worship, especially the fellowship of the Hebrews 10:19 to 25 assembly. Uh, to make us useful to what another in applying pressure to one another's.

Spirits. So that's rousing, administer's spirit arising, the apostle's spirit. Um, the Lord also reinforced the apostles doctrine versus six. Through 11. They oppose Him and blaspheme. So He's saying Jesus is the Christ. And their response again is to oppose. And blaspheme. Uh, I didn't put the cross reference. It'll be in the notes for the sermon on the Lord's day.

But this is the second time when He's Uh, that we've been given where He's telling Jews. That Jesus is the Christ. And, Uh, we understand and compressed form. He is reasoning with them. That Jesus is God. Who is the Christ that the son of David turned out to be the son of God?

He's Declared to be with power when He takes His own life up again. As He says He will in the gospel of John or when He is raised from the dead by the Spirit. As the scriptures say in Romans chapter 1 or when He's raised from the dead, By the Father.

As Romans chapter 10 says, and of course you say well, which one raised Him from the dead? Was it Himself? Or was it the Father or was it the Spirit? And the answer of course says yes because it's God. God is triune. And so, Um, As Paul. Uh, is telling them that Jesus is the Christ.

The son of David verse 5. Their response and opposing is blasphemy. Well, why is it blasphemy? Well, it's because in His preaching of Jesus, as the Christ, He's preaching, Jesus, as God, And so, Uh, so the Jews response. Uh, is Um, not just opposition then which is bad enough.

Uh, but Blasphemy. So this part of His doctrine, the reminder, Of how necessary it is. That everyone know God who has revealed Himself ultimately finally in Jesus. As Hebrews chapter 1. Uh, says Um, Now, this should be a help to ministers. We? Sadly. Are so weak and weary and foolish and so much remaining flesh.

That sometimes when we are opposed. It discourages us. That is not the effect that it has on the apostle Paul here. When they opposed Him in blasphemed. He shook His garments and said to them your blood to be upon your own heads. I am clean. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles.

Okay, so He remembers. That the announcement of Jesus Christ is one to which the response. Is. One of life and death. Uh, the eternal and ultimate stakes that are involved. Um, that souls are perishing without the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. Uh, and so there's an urgency. There that the Lord uses to reinvigorate to sustain His His ministry.

Uh, but not just the urgency of their blood. Uh, which has now upon Their own heads but also the urgency of His calling. When He says, I am clean. You, you remember that? Uh, when the Lord addresses Ezekiel, as the watchman He says you have to tell them. If you fail to tell them and they don't repent, I will demand their blood at your hands.

But if you tell them and they still don't repent. They will be guilty of their own blood but your hands will be clean. And certainly the apostle has this on his mind when He we see Him in a couple chapters talking Uh to the Ephesian elders in chapter 20, He's going to say I am innocent of the blood of all of you.

For, I have not withheld. From you anything profitable I have declared to you. The whole council of God in public and to house to help from house to house. Uh so His reminded of the great doctrine of Jesus as God, the savior and He's reminded of the eternal and ultimate stakes that are involved and He's a reminder of the obligation that God has placed upon Him.

And the guilt that He would incur, if He did not preach the gospel in His calling, He's reminded of the covenantal progression. And expansion that is taking place in the gospel age. When He says, from now on, I will go to the Gentiles. This is one of the features of the gospel even in that kind of thesis statement that we had in Romans 1, the in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith and for faith, first for the Jew.

And then for the Gentile, That the Jews were meant to be a people through whom the Christ came, the oracles of God were preserved. Uh and then the gospel which saved among the Jews would save among the nations. And there is an obligation. Now to take that gospel to the nation's and an expectation that God who planned to gather into his church, from all the nations is now going to do that.

And so, there is Uh, there's not so much a frustration with them, as As a solemn testifying against them. Uh, but there is also, in addition to that There's not only that grief over them, maybe a better term. Um, About them perishing in their own blood. But there is an expectation that there are those who whom the Lord will say And then there is the doctrine of the presence of the Lord, with the minister.

He departs, he enters the house of Of justice. Or Eustis is right next to the door to the synagogue. Um, Probably should have added the providence of God there. Uh, maybe we'll Uh, We'll do that over the next couple of days as The round out, the sermon. He goes next door to the singer.

He'd been reasoning in the synagogue, even before Silas. And Timothy came He had been preaching. Solemnly testifying Since I was in Timothy came. And it hadn't. Produced any fruit apparently. There's no indication that he had a single convert from the synagogue while he was in the synagogue. And so, He got he enters the house of Eustis.

Who's a God-fearer. And, Perhaps this indicates that Eustis was converted. But it's at that point. God saves. Not just somebody from this synagogue. He saves the ruler of the synagogue. Uh, who apparently gets displaced to synagogue ruler because His successor. Uh, ends up. Uh, being part of this delegation that accuses him and gets himself beaten away from Yeah, in front of the judgment seat.

So, there's the providence of God, the reminder that God is saving. That Jesus Christ is God. Who has manifested in the flesh? Seen by angels or messengers. Uh, Paul is one of those messengers. Proclaimed among the nations. Here he is. Proclaiming among the nations, believe, justified by the, by the Spirit.

So when the Spirit raises him from the dead, he testifies vindicates. Him with power. As the son of God proclaimed. Seen by messengers. Proclaimed among the nations believed on in the world. And that this, Uh, being proclaimed and believed on, as a reminder, that Jesus is on the throne.

He's been received up into glory. That wonderful confession. Uh, first Timothy 3:16 And so this providential saving would be a reminder. Jesus is sitting on the throne of glory. And many of the Corinthians now are hearing and believing and being baptized and with every one of those baptisms. A baptize you in the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Ghost?

Why? Because Jesus who said he would be with them, always in the authority that he has both on heaven to pour out the Spirit and on earth by his Spirit whom he pours. Is the one who is making disciples. Through their preaching and through their baptizing and through their teaching.

And so he has this wonderful repeated experience of knowing that Christ is sitting on the throne. And then verse 9. The Christ who sets on the throne himself appears to him again. Now, the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision. Do not be afraid but speak.

And do not keep silent. So, he gives him. The three commands. Not to be afraid. Something not to do with his heart. But speak something that he must do with a smell. Do not keep silent something that he mustn't do. With his mouth. And he gives him the three reasons.

His presence for I am with you. His providence. No one will attack you to hurt you. And his purpose. For, I have many people. In this city. And that. By itself. It is an entire sermon just Um, Just our memory verse versus nine to 10. And this is the heart of his reinforcement of the minister's doctor.

He is reinforced. Paul's doctrine that he is sitting on the throne. He has reinforced, Paul's doctrine. That he is present with him. His reinforced Paul's doctrine that parked. Of. The. Christians calling is to be courageous. That. You know, as revelation as the Lord reveals to John and through John, in the revelation of John.

Christians can be summarized one way by calling them, him who endorses to him, who endorsed to him, who endorsed. I will give the crown of life. And that when he is casting, Uh, the wicked into the lake of fire. The very first. Way that they are described as the cowardly.

So it says do not be afraid. There's an obligation of courage. There's an obligation of boldness. Speak to not keep silent. Then there's the fact. Oh, I did have providence in the list. It was just Out of order. Uh, there's the fact. Also. Uh, not just of the, the presence of Christ with him.

That it is Christ who has accomplishing the ministry through him. But that. Attacks or non-attacks come in. In the providence of God, no one will attack you to hurt you. Sometimes the Lord is with us and people attack us, it's not ultimately for our hurt. Although we do get hurt in the process, but it's always ultimately for our good.

But then there's also the fact of Um, sovereign election for, I have many people in this city. Uh, there are many. That Paul doesn't even know of yet. So he's had this wonderful experience that we read about the end of verse 8. And, Uh, Jesus. The beards to him and says, There's a whole lot more where that came from.

Because God is saving specific people. They're already his By election by saving purpose, before they get saved. Before they hear the gospel. They hear the gospel because they are his and it's in his providence that they hear it. And they hear the gospel with faith because they are his and he gives his Spirit to those who is That as they hear, they will hear with life and they will believe On the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, the doctrine of sovereign election, Is one of the most strengthening things. For any ministry. Whether? Your encouraging one another in the Lord. Um, every day in this house and then Especially on the Lord's day, in the household of God, you're participating in something that can't fail, but must succeed, because God decided to do it before the world began, and he is with you in it doing the work to complete it.

If ever if there's any word. That a weary. Christian or a weary minister needs to hear. It's this wonderful. Word. The Lord Jesus both. In general, revelation through his providence and special revelation. Even through the things he has to say to the Jews. Which is special revelation because it's Uh, well, because it's being said by an apostle, to some extent, but especially, because it is according to the word of God.

And then the special revelation of Jesus appearing to him. All of those things. Um, Reinforcements of the doctrines that sustain. Has ministry. And, The Lord brings them all flooding in. Uh, with this extraordinary result, To verse.

Wherever 11. And he continued there a year. And six months. Teaching the word of God among them, and what's the implication? That the many that Jesus was

talking about in verse 10. Were being saved throughout that time. And that the many of verse 8 and the many of verse 10 who were saved were growing.

Throughout that time. And so, he Reinforces the ministry by rising the minister spirit by reinforcing the minister's doctrine. And then, Uh, The end of a year and a half. Paul. Uh,

When? Gallios pro-consolivation, rather. And the the remaining juice. Unite against paul.

And, Uh, the Jews are a Permitted religion. And they want to make sure that gallio knows. That christianity is an unpermitted religion that they're not actually Jews. So they're hoping that they can use the roman. Law pressure. Uh, to exterminate The christians. But god rules and overrules in all things.

And he restrains. Uh, his opponents. Uh, we're not actually sure how far into the year and six months. Um, Verse 12 is. It seems like verse 12. 3 17 is something that happens during the year in six months. Uh, in verse 11. Um, so the good while at the

The good while in the beginning of verse 18. Um, Is whatever part of the year in six months continues. After this example, but here's an example. Of what jesus meant. When he said i am with you. And no one will attack you to hurt you. That he is the same god as the god of joseph.

Who intends good and does good, even when men intend evil? And do evil, your rules and overrules. The free choices of men that there are two wills that are operate operative. At any one time. And so the jews think that they have found the legal footing on, which they're going to get roamed to do their dirty work their gallio.

Uh, but gallio Uh, decides. That they're bothering him with unimportant. Things drives them from the judgment seat and the greeks. Taking their cue from their pro console. Beat the synagogue ruler, who has replaced crispus, this man named sauthony's. And beat him in front of the judgment seat. Right there, where galio is and He completely overlooks, the beating.

Of the synagogue. Ruler. Um, so it's a reminder that Whatever restraining of the opponents of the gospel is necessary for the saving of the elect god will do. And when we pray to be delivered, And when we pray for persecution to end, And when we pray for the The degradation of our culture to end.

Or the progression of tyranny by our government to it. We can know with absolute certainty. That whatever. Restraining. Of the enemies of his servants is necessary. For the saving of the elect. God. Is. Doing. His salvation is never in danger. Their salvation. Is never in doubt. He is restraining the ministers opponents.

And so, we know that if we are Led a sheep to the slaughter and are killed all day long. As Paul says, the end of Romans 8, then it is for his sake that we are killed all day long. And if we are loving not our lives, even unto death, We are overcoming by the word of his power.

There's by the word of his testimony and the blood of the lamb. As revelation, 12 describes. And isn't that the point? Of so much of the book of revelation. That as not only nations, rage and kings and rulers plot. But even as all of hell, rages, and plots, That can't do anything to stop.

The saving of the elect now. Just as it certainly won't be able to do anything to stop. The victory of the lamb upon his return. And so, This i am with you. That he gives. Paul is true for every question. At every time. You may not know how many elector around you.

Jesus has not appeared to us to tell us how many he has in the city. But you know, that he is with you. And you know that it's his hand. That is restraining the evil. And part because the world's still exists. If he wasn't restraining evil, We would have destroyed ourselves a long time ago.

And, How encouraging that must have been whatever. Time it takes place in the year at six months. Um, When paul doesn't even have to make his own defense, right? Verse 14. Paul has Thought about how he's going to respond to these charges. He's probably got his speech planned. He may even want to evangelize gallio probably does.

That's the way he works. But he doesn't get to say anything. Because the lord's providence is running ahead of him to do. Whatever is necessary. For the salvation of the elect. Oh, how encouraged we should be. By who our savior is. And may he, Bless us to sustain our spirits each of us in our own callings.

By applying pressure to our spirits, especially through the help of our brethren. By reinforcing all of these truths. Uh, that we know about jesus. And about what god is doing, what jesus is doing. In the world at this time. And especially, Uh, the fact that we keep seeing it, We don't just know them as abstractions.

But we know that he is restraining. All of his and our enemies. Praise god. Let's pray. Our father in heaven, would pray that your holy spirit would bless to us your word. That even this devotional. As time together as a house in your word. Would stir up our spirits towards you.

And that we would be. Strengthened and sustained each of us in our callings. Lord to pray. For myself and my Uh, particular calling that you had not allow me to grow weary. Or discouraged. Thank you for. The reminder, even of How much is involved in and declared act? A christian baptism.

Of all of these things. And i pray that you would. Um, Help me to. Improve and apply. My own baptism. For the sake of my strengthening, and sustaining in the ministry. Pray for my dear wife. As you have given her such A significant hand in the discipling. And training of these.

Children. And you have set apart from the world as yours. And many of whom we have already seen the fruit. Of. Your working faith in them. Uh, we pray, lord. To see that fruit and sophia. We thank you for the good. Hope that you are already working. Upon her heart.

And her mind. And we, Ask that we might see that. Devotion to you with the life and hear that profession of faith in christ. From her. Before much longer. Pray lord for the children. As the things that are there calling in life. Often seem Distasteful, as their interactions. Often.

Reveal. Greater interest in entertainment. Or in rivalry. Then in stirring, one another up, To know you and love you. Together to enjoy your world as your world. And to serve you in it. Help them. Oh, lord. View their learning in school, they're serving under mom in the home. And, Ministry to one another.

As primary callings from you increase their commitment to what you have called them to do. In the various ways that we have heard about you. Renewing our zeal and sustaining our zeal. In this passage. And lord, we pray for our entire congregation. And your church more, broadly. How very much we?

We as churches as your church. Visible church. Need the restoration of zeal and the sustaining of ministry. And so, help us. Oh lord by your spirit as you help the apostle. And correct. We ask in jesus name. Amen.