

Katamares: Acts: 18:9-21.

18:9 *Do Not Be Afraid*

Strengthening for Witness.

Didymus the Blind: In Corinth, God appeared in a vision to the apostle and urged him not to be afraid to teach, and he made clear to him the reason why he should speak and not be silent, namely that, in that town, there were many that God knew would receive the proclamation of the gospel. For since it was natural that Paul, being human, was afraid of some attack against himself, seeing that then nearly everyone there was still pagan, God encourages and rouses the teacher to be brave by saying, "I am with you and will prevent anybody from attempting to harm you, so that nobody lays a hand on you." ³ Catena on the Acts of the Apostles 18.9–11.4

18:10 *I Am with You*

Allaying Apprehension.

Chrysostom: "Do not be afraid," he says. This was enough to rouse him, either because he was reprovved as being afraid or because he was not reprovved but encouraged that he would not suffer this. (For he did not always allow them to suffer terribly, so that they might not become too weak.) For nothing pained Paul so much as those who disbelieved and gave opposition. This was more difficult for him to bear than dangers. "And do not be silent," he says, "for I have many people in this city." It was probably for this reason that Christ appeared to him. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles 39.5

18:14 *No Wrongdoing*

The Implications of Gallio's Actions.

Chrysostom: He condemns Pilate, who did not find any proven accusation against Jesus, the Word of God, yet had him flogged and handed him over to death, saying, "I find no pretext for the death of this man." Catena on the Acts of the Apostles 18.14.1

18:17 Gallio Paid No Attention

Shame Leading to Violence.

Chrysostom: He taught them that such matters do not demand a judicial sentence, but they were doing everything out of order. And he does not say, “It is not my duty,” but “I do not choose,” so that they may not trouble him again. Thus Pilate said in the case of Christ, “Take him, and judge him according to your law.”² But they were just like drunkards and madmen. “And he drove them from the judgment seat”—he effectively closed the tribunal against them. “Then all seized Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things.” This thing, of all others, set them on to this violence: their persuasion that the governor would not even let himself become aware of it. It was a splendid victory. O the shame they were put to! For it is one thing to have come off victorious from a controversy and another for those to learn that he cared nothing for the affair. Homilies on Acts of the Apostles 39.³

Sosthenes.

Chrysostom: “Crispus the ruler of the synagogue believed in the Lord, with his whole house: and many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized.”⁴ “With his whole house”: observe the converts in those times doing this with their entire household. [Paul] refers to this Crispus where he writes, “I baptized none save Crispus and Gaius.”⁵ This [same] I take to be called Sosthenes—evidently a believer, insomuch that he is beaten and is always present with Paul. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles 39.⁶

Imitating Sosthenes.

Chrysostom: This man let us also imitate: to them that beat us, let us return blow for blow, by meekness, by silence, by long-suffering. More grievous these wounds, greater this blow and more heavy.... You, a human being, insult your fellow man? You, a servant, your fellow servant? But why do I wonder at this, when many even insult God? Let this be a consolation to you when suffering insult. Are you insulted? God also is insulted. Are you reviled? God also was reviled. Are you treated with scorn? Why, so was our Master also. In these things he shares with us but not so in the contrary things. For he never insulted another unjustly: God forbid! He never reviled, never did a wrong. So that we are those who share with him, not you.⁷ For to endure when insulted is God’s part; to be merely abusive is the part of the devil. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles 39.⁸

18:18 Paul Cut His Hair

Paul Had a Vow.

Jerome: Granted that there he did what he did not wish to do, through the compelled fear of the Jews: why did he let his hair grow in consequence of a vow and afterward cut it at Cenchrea in obedience to the law. Because the Nazarites who vowed themselves to God were accustomed to do this according to the commands of Moses? ¹ Letter 75.²

A Jew to Jews.

Didymus the Blind: After his resurrection the Savior said to his disciples, "Go and make disciples of all nations." ⁶ They to whom the command had been given knew that "God wants all people to be saved and to attain knowledge of the truth." ⁷ Since the human race had been divided into two religious groups, Jews and pagans, a division of the heralds of the gospel was also made so that some were assigned to teach the Jews, while others to be apostles of the nations. But since all the teachers had the single aim of leading all to the knowledge of the one God and to the teaching of the gospel, Paul, though an apostle of the nations, if he happened to be able to benefit the Jews would, without a doubt, become a Jew to the Jews ⁸ so that they might not be estranged from him as if he had departed from the law, although he had already crossed over and beyond the Jewish shadow. In this way, therefore, according to the customs of his homeland, he shaved his head at Cenchrea, since he was under a vow according to the prescription of the old law. Catena on the Acts of the Apostles 18.18.⁹

18:19 Paul Went into the Synagogue

No Hindrance to Teaching the Gospel.

Chrysostom: [Paul] left them in Ephesus so that they might teach. Indeed those who had stayed with him for such a long time had learned many things; he had not, however, completely detached them from the Jewish customs. Catena on the Acts of the Apostles 18.19.¹⁰