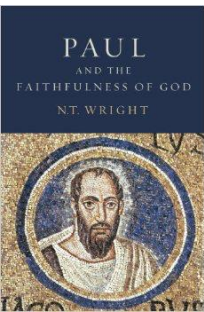


# Our Hardships

Mastering the Scriptures

Paul's Early Epistles

1 and 2 Corinthians

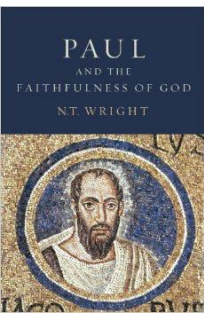


# Our Hardships

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.”

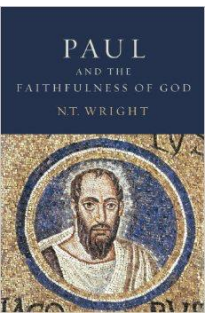
2 C. 1:3-7

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# Our Hardships

1. Persecution
2. Sacrifice
3. Rejection by unbelievers
4. Rejection by believers
5. Low stature
6. Personal weakness, immaturity
7. Dealing with one another



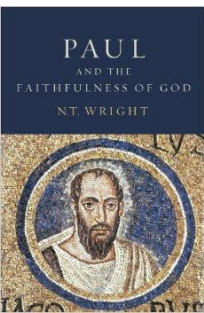
# 1. Persecution

“. . . And they took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat.” Acts 18:17

“Paul, called as an apostles of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth . . .” 1 C. 1:1

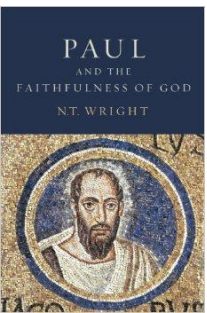
The church at Corinth was built on its experience of persecution.

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# 1. Persecution

Much of the false teaching in the early church was about a false gospel that allows them to avoid suffering and hardship, such as just acting like ordinary Jews in order to avoid persecution.

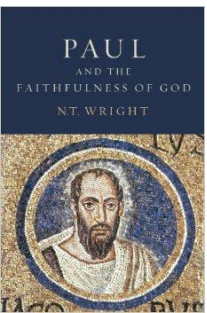


# 1. Persecution

Severe attacks merely because of our faith in Christ and obedience to the teaching of Christ.

Not as common for us, though very common in other parts of the world.

Not the same as bringing on hardship by flaunting our faith.

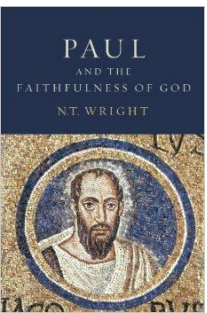


## 2. Sacrifice

“Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother who has also been a mother to me.” Romans 16:13.

“And they pressed into service a passerby coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus) that he might bear His cross.” Mark 15:21

What was it like to be a “mother” to Paul?

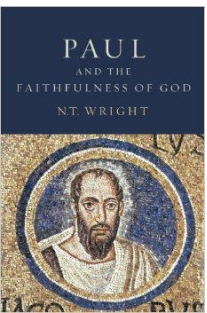


## 2. Sacrifice

“Now concerning the collection for the saints . . .” 1 C 16:1

“ . . . With the church that is in their house.” 1 C 16:19

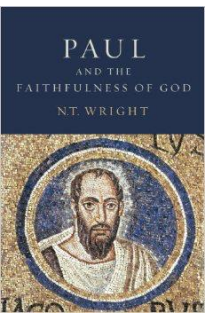
“In a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.” 2 C. 8:2





## 2. Sacrifice

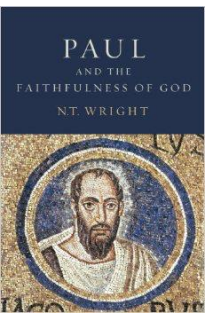
Time, resources, money, emotion, care.



# 3. Rejection by Unbelievers

“The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see.” 2 C. 4:4

Hardship of seeing Gospel proclamation (in word and deed), not bear fruit in those who have not yet believed.



# 4. Rejection by Believers

Division in the church implies rejection (or at least diminishing) of some by others.

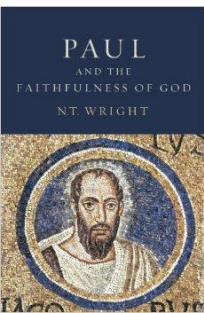
“When you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper.”

1 C. 11:18

“But some will say, ‘How are the dead raised? And with what kind of a body do they come?’ You fool!” 1 C. 15:36

“If Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid . . . let no one despise him.” 1 C 16:10

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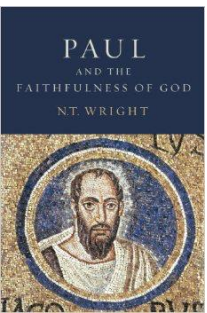
# 4. Rejection by Believers

Many don't want to take seriously Bible study that relies on the author's intention.

Some family and friends prefer “normal church” to our attempts to be better aligned with the Way of Christ and His Apostles.

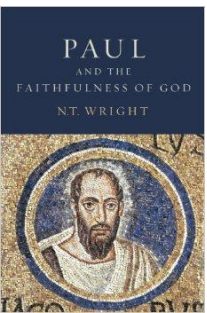
Others just can't seem to understand our priority of partnership with indigenous apostolic leaders of church planting movements.

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# Our Hardships

1. Persecution
2. Sacrifice
3. Rejection by unbelievers
4. Rejection by believers



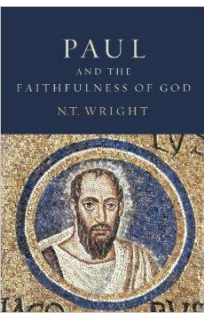
# 5. Low Stature

“Not many mighty, not many noble.” 1 C. 1:26

“Members of the body which we deem less honorable.”

1 C. 12:23

Hardship of not being someone else (or doing something else) and accepting who you are.



# 6. Personal Weakness, Immaturity

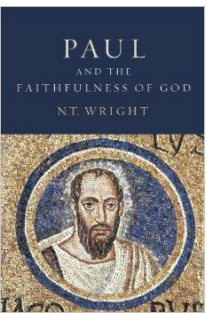
Infants in Christ. 1 C. 3:1

“Let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.”

1 C. 10:6

“For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.” 2 C. 2:4, 7:9

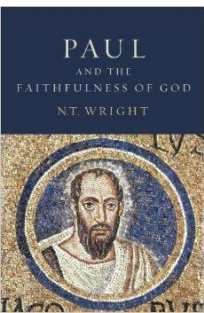
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# 6. Personal Weakness, Immaturity

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.” 2 C. 5:7

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 C. 7:1





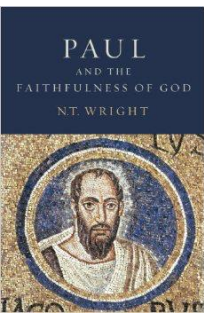
# 6. Personal Weakness, Immaturity

Taking seriously the need to “observe all that Christ commanded you.”

Taking seriously that even our strengths often have a dark side.

Taking seriously that many of us hold on to traditions about Biblical teaching and church practice that may not be as binding as we tend to treat them.

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# 7. Dealing with One Another

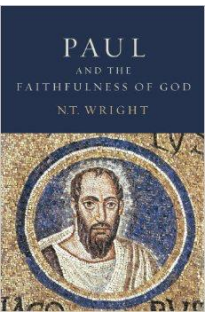
“Judge those who are within the church.” 1 C 5:1, 12

“Is there not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren?”

“Take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.” 1 C. 8:9

“Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous . . .”  
1 C 13:4

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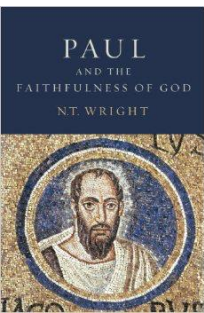


# 7. Dealing with One Another

Difficulty of “bearing one another’s burdens” (Gal 6:2).

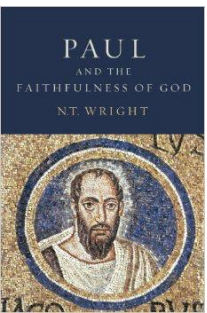
Necessity of keeping it in the context of “examining yourself” (Gal 6:4).

Priority of commitment to community (1 C. 13).



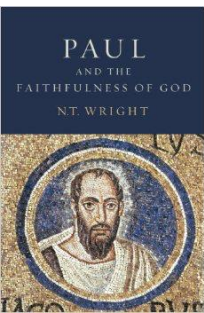
# Our Hardships

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# What to Do?

1. Recognize that it is normal to endure hardship.  
“And after they had preached the Gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.’ And when they had appointed elders for them in every church . . .” Acts 14:21-22
  2. Build a foundation of biblical understanding. Don’t merely rely on your tradition or the simple fact of “believing in God.” Engage in our ordered learning process.
  3. Build foundation of historical understanding (The Story, Your Story, Our Story).
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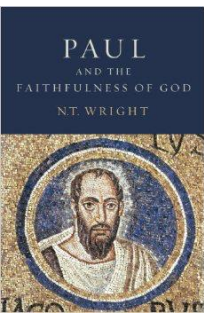


# What to Do?

## 4. Endure hardship together.

“Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 C. 15:58

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 C. 16:13-14.



# What to Do?

## 4. Endure hardship together.

“Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.”

2 C. 13:11-14

