

The readings today bring together two things that always go together:

being led by Christ — and being opposed for it.

In the first reading, Paul is moving from place to place.

He is not wandering.

He is being guided.

The Spirit closes one path.

Closes another.

He tries to go forward—he is prevented.

He turns elsewhere—again, stopped.

And then, in the night, a vision comes: “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

And immediately, they go.

That is the Christian life.

Not choosing freely among many paths.

But being led.

Sometimes by open doors.

Sometimes by closed ones.

Sometimes by clarity.

Sometimes by being stopped.

But always under the guidance of God.

Now hold that.

Because in the Gospel, Jesus says something that must be faced clearly:

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.”

That is not softened.

It is not explained away.

It is stated.

To belong to Christ will bring opposition.

Not always dramatic.

But real.

Because He continues:

“You are not of the world... therefore the world hates you.”

That is the reason.

Not because Christians seek conflict.

But because they belong elsewhere.

Their measure is different.

Their priorities are different.

Their truth is different.

And that difference is not always welcomed.

Now bring the two readings together.

Paul follows where he is led.

And what happens when he arrives?

Opposition.

Always.

So the path guided by God
does not remove difficulty.

It often leads into it.

That must be understood clearly.

Because there is a common expectation:

If I follow God, things will go smoothly.

But Scripture does not show that.

It shows something deeper.

If you follow God,
you will be where you are meant to be—even when it is difficult.

So what does this look like in a real life?

It means learning to recognise how God leads.

Not always by strong feelings.

Often by circumstances.

A door opens.
You step through.

A door closes.
You do not force it.

Something does not settle.
You wait.

Something becomes clear.
You move.

Like Paul.

Attentive.
Responsive.
Not controlling everything.

And at the same time—not surprised when difficulty comes.

When faith is misunderstood.
When choices are questioned.
When living truthfully costs something.

Because Christ has already said: This will happen.

But He also gives the reason.

“If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own.”

So the tension itself is a sign of belonging.

Not something to fear. But something to understand.

This does not mean seeking conflict.

It means not avoiding truth.

It means not adjusting everything to be accepted.

It means remaining steady when it would be easier to step back.

And this returns us to Paul.

He does not choose comfort.

He follows.

Even when it leads into uncertainty.

Even when it leads into difficulty.

Because he trusts that the one who guides is faithful.

So the Christian life holds these two things together:

being led and being opposed.

Not because something has gone wrong—

but because everything is aligned with Christ.

So the question today is very simple.

Am I willing to be led?

Not just when it suits me.

Not just when it is clear.

But when the path is uncertain.

When doors close.

When things do not go as planned.

And also—am I willing to remain faithful when it costs something?

Even quietly. Even in small ways.

Because the truth is this:

If you follow Christ, you will not always be comfortable.

But you will be where you are meant to be.

And that is the only place where real life is found.

So stay attentive.

Do not force your own path.

Do not be surprised by difficulty.

Remain steady.

Because the one who calls
is the one who leads.

And even when the way is not easy—
it is true.

And it leads
where you are meant to go.