

Paul's *Letters to the* ***Thessalonians***



Lesson 2-Faithful and Desiring to See a Faithful Group **Focus: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20**

- **Paul's example of laboring to please God, despite whatever may come (v.1-4)**
 - "...suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi" (v.2). This verse is talking about the time when Paul and Silas were condemned for casting out the evil spirits from a fortune-telling woman. Her owners got angry and caused the city to go into an uproar against Paul and Silas. So, they were beaten and thrown into prison. Later that night, as they sang, God sent an earthquake, opened the prison and set them free. The Philippian jailor was then convicted and converted by their sincere example and conduct in Christ. (See Acts 16:12, 18-24).
 - Paul and his fellow laborers did not come in an empty or vain way. No, instead they came in sincerity and with God's powerful message and with hearts firmly purposed to proclaim that message at all costs. They came boldly and even faced "much conflict" (v.2). They did not preach a corrupt or worthless message, but rather God's pure message (v.3). There was nothing in it for themselves. Their words were not the words of some deceitful con artist, but rather, they were the words of "sincerity and truth."
 - Paul and the other gospel laborers stood as men who were to be evaluated by God. They did not aim to please man, but to please God himself. Such should be the aim of all true servants of God. We ought to obey God rather than man, whatever the cost may be (See Acts 5:29). God tests the hearts, and even our hearts should be pure before such a perfect and infallible judge. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).
- **An unquestionable example of integrity was set forth by Paul and his fellow laborers (v.5-12)**
 - (v.5-8) The servants of God have to always strive not to be misunderstood by those they are meeting and working with to share the gospel. This is especially true when they are a new face in town and the people do not have very much time to fully observe and to understand their character by the longer test of time. Paul and his fellow workers made every effort to share the gospel with those in Thessalonica, while being very careful to set forth an example of love, sincerity, truth, pureness of purpose or motive, and integrity!! They fervently shared the gospel of Jesus Christ and gave it affectionately—with love and sincere interest in the dear people for whom they labored. Such should be the heart of all God's sincere and faithful laborers. They did not demand things from those for whom they labored, though they might have, by their authority. Instead, they did not allow the enemy of souls to have any room for planting character doubts in the minds of those who were receiving the gospel.
 - As a loving father or mother—a loving parent in the faith—Paul shared the gospel with them. Giving selflessly to minister to the needs and for the good of those who were

newly believing in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior! (v.7,11). (compares to 2 Cor. 12:13,14 as well).

- (v.9) Paul was a tentmaker by practical trade (See Acts 18:1-3). He had been trained as a Pharisee and a Jewish minister, but it was also the common practice for these people to learn a practical trade if ever it was needed as useful labor for income. Paul labored “night and day” to faithfully share the gospel with these people and to not take from them any means. Therefore, he would have been working at his trade to make some extra money for needs, while also sharing the gospel. Paul was a hard worker!
- **Wonderful and great cause for rejoicing!! (v.13-16)**
 - Wonderful and great cause for rejoicing is when people choose to receive the wonderful, powerful, and transforming word of God into their hearts! Paul was rejoicing for this!!
 - **(v.13)** The word of God is living and active! It is powerful to transform our souls and to bring repentance from sin, and holiness to our lives! God’s word is pure and holy! It sanctifies [or, “makes holy”] the soul, as the Holy Spirit impresses it upon our hearts and minds, and then we willingly receive it’s great and powerful truths into our lives! (For example, we can see Hebrews 4:12; John 17:17; Psalm 119:9-11; Isaiah 55:7-11; Romans 10:17). **The word of God “works in those who believe.”** We should have faith, and trust in God! The word that Paul shared was not merely the fancy words of men, but rather, it was the word of the Living God! To this fact, all the apostles also testified (2 Peter 3:15,16). We must be those who receive the word of God—those who “tremble at His word” (Isaiah 66:5).
 - We cannot be as those who sit around and hear God’s word as if it were a lovely song, and then just cast it aside without listening to it or obeying it. Such is a terribly sinful course and will have hell to pay (Ezekiel 33:31,32).
 - (v.14-16) Many of the Jews had a terrible history of rejecting the word of God and even of trying to kill God’s faithful prophets who spoke the truth! This was a well-known fact. Many also did the same thing to Jesus, for which they were condemned by God and lost eternal life (Matthew 23:31-33; Acts 13:46). One king in ancient times even dared so much as to cut up the word of God and throw it into a fire, rather than to obey it, but judgment was soon to come upon him (Jeremiah 36:23,24). What the unbelieving Jews did to their faithful brethren throughout history, the godless gentiles also did to some of their brethren who were beginning to believe in Christ in Paul’s day, and even throughout history.
- **Desiring to come to them, but hindered (v.17-20)**
 - Paul greatly wanted to come to the brothers and sisters in Thessalonica to visit them, but he was hindered by the wickedness and evils of Satan. Satan had caused some bad issues to come up, which had hindered Paul. Nevertheless, Paul was thankful for their steadfast faithfulness in Christ Jesus! His greatest joy and reward would be to see them standing faithful before the Lord Jesus Christ, at His Coming! Such should be our joy as well to see others who we’ve labored for, standing faithfully before the Lord of Heaven and Earth, at His coming!

Question (s) for the Heart:

Would you like to live by the blessed word of God and to stand faithful before Him at His coming?
