

SLIDE 1

1 Thessalonians 2

“Paul the Pastor”

Calvary Chapel Pahrump Valley

June 4, 2023

INTRODUCTION

- Paul the pastor, and the Thessalonian believers as the disciples. The chapter divides into two sections:

The first 12 verses describe Paul as a pastor, a shepherd. (In chapter 1 they were described as evangelists).

Verses 13-20 mostly describes the Thessalonian believers, the church. What kind of believers were they?

TEACHING

¹ For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

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1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which* was with me.

² But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.

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- What happened to them in Philippi? Paul here writes that they'd been “spitefully treated” there- hubrizo- they'd experienced violence, physical abuse.

See Acts 16:22-24:

Here's what happened to them: the multitude of people rose up together against them; the magistrates tore off Paul and Silas' clothes and commanded *them* to be beaten with rods. Many stripes were laid on them, they were thrown into prison, and their feet were fastened in the stocks.

When they were released the next day, the disciples sent Paul and Silas away to Berea.

- So, having experienced all of that, isn't it amazing that they boldly came into Thessalonica, preached the gospel, even in the midst of conflict?
- How can their boldness be explained?

Answer: the power and boldness of the Holy Spirit! It was supernatural. They'd put themselves into the jet stream of what the Spirit wanted to do, and He gave them power!

³ *For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit.*

- They were spot-on with regard to their message. It was the true gospel of grace, received by faith!

Also, they were pure in their motives and actions, and were not using deceitful, manipulative tactics to become successful.

⁴ *But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.*

- This was the perfect recipe for going on and persevering in ministry ... they knew that God had approved them for ministry (*dokimazo*), so they went with it. They weren't focused on pleasing men, but God!

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- Each of us should seek the Lord about what the Lord wants to entrust us with!

Because, as Paul wrote, "*you are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" Ephesians 2:10

⁵ *For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness. ⁶ Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. ⁷ But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. ⁸ So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹ For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.*

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In their ministry, they did not:

- *Flatter anyone to gain their approval, to receive something from them.*

Covetousness = greed, a strong desire to obtain something ... especially wealth or possessions. They didn't want to make money the issue, so he worked so as not to burden them financially or materially.

- *Seek glory from men.*

Matthew 6:1-4 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³ But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."

e.g. like the young preacher who came in haughtily, went out humiliated; the older woman said, "If this young man would have come in like he went out, he would have gone out like he came in!"

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In their ministry, this is what they did do:

- They were gentle; like a nursing mother with her children.
- They affectionately longed for them.
- Were well pleased to give them the gospel, and also their own lives.

What they did was to labor hard, night and day, to earn their own way. They didn't want to be a burden upon anyone in the church.

Why? Because the Thessalonians had become dear to them.

¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

- Devoutly ... justly ... blamelessly- that's how they'd behaved among them.

They were devout: reverent and dedicated in a life of worship. *It was obvious they had been living in the presence of God.*

They behaved justly: they treated people and situations very fairly.

They walked blamelessly: their lives were beyond reproach. Nothing that could be known about them was a disqualifier.

- Paul treated them as a father treats his children... that they would walk worthy of God- Christian behavior fitting for our King (Ephesians 4:1-5:17)

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

- They were open to the truth, wanted it, and received it eagerly ... believing it to be the very word of God, of Divine origin.

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Wiersbe:

- They appreciated the Word. It's God's Word, to be treated respectfully.
- They appropriated the Word. They *welcomed* it. They took it to heart. Like the little Pentecostal church in Bali.
- They applied the Word. They put it to use in their lives.
- There were those who were not like this in Thessalonica ... those unbelieving Jews who would not be persuaded by the truth.
- The ultimate issue was: what is true? What is real?

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- Once we see that it's true, it's game over. We ain't going nowhere else.

John 6:66-69 From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, ¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

- Even though Paul the apostle loved the Jews, and longed for them to be saved, he still called it like it was. A scathing denouncement.

Romans 9:2-4a- I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites...

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

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- Eight sins of the unbelieving Jews.
 - They caused much suffering.
 - They killed the Lord Jesus.
 - They killed their own prophets.
 - They persecuted the apostles.
 - They did not please God.
 - They were contrary to everyone.
 - They forbade evangelism to the Gentiles that they might be saved.
 - Their sins were multiplied against them.

¹⁷ But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. ¹⁸ Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

- Satan had hindered them from coming to them.

Satan is always interested in keeping us from God's purposes, that we would not go forward, serving Him.

On one occasion, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit in Asia (Acts 16:6). Then they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not allow it (Acts 16:7). Finally, they ended up in Troas, where they received word that they should go into the region of Macedonia and preach there.

Whether it was spiritual warfare or the Divine will, they didn't just *totally* stop. They kept on it, waiting for the Lord to complete it. Philippians 1:6.

- The apostles greatest joy was the blessing of God upon the church.

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- The heart of the pastor is connected to the ultimate result of his ministry: seeing the congregants in heaven, in the presence of Jesus. People, not things, are the glory and joy of the pastor.

e.g. in Monterey, we were a portable church for 17 years. Then the Lord opened amazing doors for us to be able to build a church building. I refused to refer to the building as the church. I always called it the church facility. It was a facility. Why call it that? Because a facility facilitates things. And the church building was facilitating corporate worship of God, corporate study of the word of God, and corporate fellowship for the people of God. So, when the newspaper reporter interviewed me, she asked, “So, how does it feel to finally have your dream fulfilled?”

CONCLUSION

COMMUNION