



The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians

The Background of the Thessalonian Church

1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

- I. THEIR HISTORY WITH THE APOSTLES (1 Thessalonians 2:1-12)
 - A. How the Apostles Did Not Behave (1 Thessalonians 2:1-6)
 1. In vain (1 Thessalonians 2:1-2)
 - a. The brethren knew of Paul and Silas' entrance unto them (1 Thessalonians 2:1).
 - b. It was not in vain (1 Thessalonians 2:1).
 - (1) In other words, it was not futile or empty.
 - (2) Even though Paul and his helpers were chased out of town, there was fruit from the preaching of the gospel and that fruit made it worthwhile.
 - c. It was bold (1 Thessalonians 2:2).
 - (1) In spite of their treatment at Philippi (Acts 16:12-40)
 - a) Paul, Silas, and Timothy went to Philippi before going to Thessalonica.
 - b) While there, they were met by a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination (Acts 16:16).
 - c) This girl brought her masters much gain by soothsaying (Acts 16:16).
 - d) Paul commanded the spirit to depart from her (Acts 16:18).
 - e) Her masters drew them unto the marketplace because of their loss (Acts 16:19-21).
 - f) The magistrates commanded the apostles to be beaten (Acts 16:22).
 - g) After laying many stripes upon them, the magistrates cast the apostles into prison (Acts 16:23-24).
 - h) God freed the apostles and souls were saved (Acts 16:25-40).
 - (2) They were bold in God to speak the gospel of God with much contention (Acts 17:1-10).
 - a) Even after all the troubles in Philippi, the apostles were bold to preach the word in the cities coming thereafter.
 - b) In Thessalonica, unbelieving Jews threatened the apostles' safety once again (Acts 17:5-10).
 - (3) Paul lived by the words of Acts 20:24—"none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."



2. In deceit (1 Thessalonians 2:3)
 - a. The apostles' exhortation was not of deceit.
 - (1) Paul's exhortation was not motivated by a desire to deceive.
 - (2) Our motive should be to tell others the truth, even when it hurts.
 - b. It was not of uncleanness.
 - (1) Paul's exhortation was not motivated by some wicked desire.
 - (2) Our motive in ministry should be pure.
 - c. It was not in guile.
 - (1) Paul's motive was not covered up in deceit.
 - (2) Our motive should be obvious to all of those who serve alongside of us.
3. In man pleasing (1 Thessalonians 2:4)
 - a. The apostles were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel.
 - (1) The glorious gospel was committed to Paul's trust (1 Timothy 1:11).
 - (2) Paul was put into this ministry because he was counted faithful (1 Timothy 1:12-13).
 - (3) The ministry made Paul a steward (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). The very idea of a steward is one who is responsible for something belonging to another.
 - b. Therefore, they spoke.
 - (1) Not as pleasing men
 - a) Paul's speech was not with enticing words (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).
 - b) Paul believed a man could not simultaneously seek to please man and God (Galatians 1:10).
 - c) Men are not to serve God with eyeservice, as menpleasers (Ephesians 6:6; Colossians 3:22).
 - d) Good men in the Bible did not please men
 - i) Jesus (Matthew 23:13-26)
 - ii) Peter (Acts 5:3-9)
 - iii) Stephen (Acts 7:51-53)
 - (2) But God, which trieth the hearts (2 Timothy 2:4)
4. In flattery (1 Thessalonians 2:5)
 - a. The apostles did not use flattering words.
 - (1) Romans 3:13 quotes Psalm 5:9 with the variation in wording shedding light on the meaning of the word flattery.
 - a) The phrase from Psalms reads "they flatter with their tongue" (Psalm 5:9).
 - b) Romans modifies this Old Testament quotation by stating that "with their tongues they have used deceit" (Romans 3:13).
 - (2) This indicates that flattery involves the use of deceitful words; and according to 1 Thessalonians 2:5, the motive is often connected to covetousness.
 - (3) The wickedness of flattering words
 - a) No flattering titles given to men (Job 32:21-22)



- b) The wicked speak with a flattering tongue (Psalm 5:9).
 - c) Flattering lips are connected to a double heart (Psalm 12:2).
 - d) The Lord will cut them off (Psalm 12:3).
 - e) The flattering mouth worketh ruin (Proverbs 26:28).
 - f) Flattery spreads a net for your neighbour's feet (Proverbs 29:5).
- (4) The Devil works through flattery, but God works through truth. For this reason, the apostle Paul clearly articulated that he did not use words of flattery or operate with a motive of covetousness.
- (5) Using the pulpit to express flattery cheapens the authority of the preaching and clouds the minds of the hearers.
- b. They did not use a cloke of covetousness.
 - (1) The outward appearance—a cloke
 - (2) The inward truth--covetousness
 - c. God was their witness.
5. In glory seeking (1 Thessalonians 2:6)
- a. The apostles did not seek glory of men.
 - (1) Not of the Thessalonians
 - (2) Not of others
 - b. They could have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.
 - (1) As an apostle, it would not have been wrong of Paul to have been ministered to in carnal things (1 Corinthians 9:11).
 - (2) However, the apostle Paul was greatly concerned with being a burden to God's people (2 Corinthians 11:9; 2 Corinthians 12:14).
 - c. The glory of ministry comes later (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17).
6. In this section, we see five sins of the ministry. One would think that ministry would only be done by those who love God and seek to do everything according to God's will, but this is not so. The five sins of ministry above are outlined as:
- a. A wrong motive (1 Thessalonians 2:3)
 - b. A misplaced desire to please (1 Thessalonians 2:4)
 - c. A political approach (1 Thessalonians 2:5)
 - d. A double life (1 Thessalonians 2:5)
 - e. A desire for wrong glory (1 Thessalonians 2:6)
- B. How the Apostles Did Behave (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)
1. In care (1 Thessalonians 2:7-8)
- a. The likeness of their care (1 Thessalonians 2:7)
 - (1) They were gentle among the Thessalonians.
 - (2) As a nurse cherisheth her children.
 - b. The expression of their care (1 Thessalonians 2:8)
 - (1) The apostles were willing to have imparted unto the Thessalonians



- a) Not the gospel of God only
 - b) But also their own souls
 - (2) Because they were dear unto the apostles
- 2. In ease (1 Thessalonians 2:9)
 - a. The apostles laboured among the Thessalonians.
 - (1) Night
 - (2) Day
 - b. The apostles did not desire to be chargeable unto the people when preaching to them the gospel.
- 3. In righteousness (1 Thessalonians 2:10)
 - a. The apostles behaved
 - (1) Holily; the adjective for holy
 - (2) Justly; the adjective for just
 - (3) Unblameably; the adjective for unblameable
 - a) The word *blame* and its various forms appears twenty-four times in scripture. In a general sense, *blame* is the guilty responsibility concerning a matter.
 - b) In the presence of others, Paul carefully behaved himself in such a way to bring glory to God. For example, he was gentle, “*even as a nurse cherisheth her children.*” He laboured “*night and day*” because he “*would not be chargeable*” to the believers.
 - c) Paul conducted himself in such a godly way that he had no problem suggesting that the believers themselves were witnesses of “*how holily and justly and unblameably*” he had behaved among them.
 - b. Among those that believed
- 4. In admonition (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12)
 - a. The manner of the admonition (1 Thessalonians 2:11)
 - (1) The threefold admonition
 - a) Exhorted
 - b) Comforted
 - c) Charged
 - (2) The character of the admonition
 - a) Every one of you
 - b) As a father doth his children
 - b. The content of the admonition (1 Thessalonians 2:12)
 - (1) That the Thessalonians would walk worthy of God (see Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10)
 - a) No believer will ever be able to repay the Lord for all that He did on the cross of Calvary.
 - b) Nor will any believer ever be able to live in such a way to make the price of redemption a reasonable price.
 - c) Yet, the Bible admonishes believers to walk worthy of the Lord.
 - (2) Who called them unto His kingdom and glory