

1 Thessalonians 2:1-20 **Paul's example Bringing Gospel message – Thessalonian Receptiveness**

Gospel preached under severe opposition and persecution

¹ For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. 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. ³ For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit. 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. 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. 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.

Giving thanks for Thessalonian believers receptiveness and endurance

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. ¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus.

Suffering of the Thessalonians

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.

Longing to see the Thessalonians – Hindered by Satan

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.

You are our Hope, Joy, Crown of Rejoicing, Glory, and Joy

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.

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Gospel preached under severe opposition and persecution [1 Thessalonians 2:1-12]

✚ Paul and Silas were beaten by rods and imprisoned in Philippi before coming to Thessalonica. [Acts 16:9-40]

- ✚ In Thessalonica Paul and company also encountered much opposition such that the opposing Thessalonians even followed them to Berea and drove them out to Athens. [Acts 17:1-16]
- ✧ The believing Thessalonians were aware of the abuse at Philippi, and were witnesses of the abuse at Thessalonica. [1 Thessalonians 2:1-2]
- ✧ Therefore in his epistle, Paul reminded them of the boldness he had demonstrated in bringing them the Gospel message under such severe opposition. [1 Thessalonians 2:1-2]
- ✧ Bringing the Gospel message to the Thessalonians was not in vain because of the impact it had on those who believed as evidenced by their reputation that has spread throughout Macedonia and Greece. [1 Thessalonians 1:6-10, 2:1]

Purity of message and faithfulness of delivery – Call for holiness of living [1 Thessalonians 2:3-12]

- ✚ Paul describes his message as being free of error, uncleanness or deceit, being faithfully delivered as by ones approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel. [1 Thessalonians 2:3-4]
- ✧ The message had not been delivered as pleasing to men, but honestly before God Who tests our hearts.
- ✧ God is witness that Paul and company had not used flattering words, nor presented the Gospel as a cloak for covetousness and personal gain.
- ✧ Their motive was not to seek glory from men, from you or others.
- ✧ As Apostles of Christ, they might have made demands, for Jesus said, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." [1 Thessalonians 2:6, Matthew 10:9-10, Luke 10:7]
- ✧ Out of love and affection, we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children, so affectionately longing for you we were pleased to impart to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.
- ✧ Paul reminded the Thessalonians how he and his company had labored day and night so they would not become a burden to the Thessalonians as they preached to them the Gospel of God.
- ✧ Paul calls the Thessalonians and God as witnesses of their behavior, how devoutly, justly, and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you.
- ✧ Paul reminds the Thessalonians how Paul and company had "exhorted, comforted, and charged every one of you as a father does his own children, **that you would walk worthy of God Who calls you into His own Kingdom and glory.** [1 Thessalonians 2:11-12]
- ✧ **The worthy walk**, is a life of righteousness in keeping with the teachings and commandments of Jesus and the Apostles as stressed throughout the New Testament as expressed by John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles, and the writers of the Epistles.

Giving thanks for Thessalonian believers receptiveness and endurance [1 Thessalonians 2:13]

- ✚ Reason for continual thanksgiving to God.
- ✧ The Thessalonians had received the Word of God preached by Paul and company as it is in truth the Word of God, not as the word of men.
- ✧ The Word of God works effectively in those who believe.

Suffering of the Thessalonians [1 Thessalonians 2:14-16]

- ✚ Persecution of believers provides a bond of brotherhood between Jewish and Gentile believers.
- ✧ The Church in Thessalonica is suffering persecution at the hands of their countrymen just as the Church in Judea suffers persecution at the hands of the Judeans.
- ✧ The Judaizers killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and they persecuted Paul and his company.
- ✧ The Judaizers do not please God and are contrary to all men.
- ✧ The Judaizers forbid Paul and the Jews with him to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved.

- ✧ The unbelievers always fill up the measure of their sins, but Wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Longing to see the Thessalonians – Hindered by Satan

- ✧ Paul assures the Thessalonians that even though he and his company had been taken away from the Thessalonians in presence, they had not been taken away in heart, but they endeavored more eagerly with great desire to return and see the Thessalonians face to face.
- ✧ We wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us.

You are our Hope, Joy, Crown of Rejoicing, Glory, and Joy [1 Thessalonians 2:19-20]

- ✧ Looking forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - ✧ When standing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming, Paul's hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing will be those he has drawn to the Lord through his ministry of the Gospel message.
 - ✧ For you are our glory and joy.
 - ✧ Believers who live the life of righteousness keeping the faith to the end through all the trials that test their commitment to the Gospel message are the joy of those who brought the message to them at the first.
 - ✧ The greatest joy to a godly parent is to see their children keeping the faith throughout their lives, and influencing their families and others to do the same.