

The Hope of Heaven

1Thessalonians 2:10-20

- We left with Paul demonstrating what an effective Godly ministry should look like, as he didn't use guile or trickery to win converts, he wasn't looking to trap people into serving the Lord like a clever salesman baiting the hook until he has the person trapped into buying his product. Paul talked about the gospel being pure so our job was not to corrupt the message > we do that by staying away from **flattery** > which is another form of lying to influence and sway people, and **Uncleanness** > an impure life, **Deceit** > where our motives are flesh driven not Christ driven. These are things that plague the minister but he must diligently guard himself from its lure.

V10-20

- **V10** now after talking about what to stay away from Paul lists for us the character traits we should be moving toward in order to properly spread the gospel > **1ST Devout**- they were not hypocrites in their speech nor their actions, **2nd Just**- they were fair in their dealings with people, **3rd Blameless**- they lived in such a way that accusations and false charges could not truthfully stick, one point I must make that this is not sinless, all of us are prone to that, but blameless we can be, as we do that by not using worldly methods but Godly methods to serve-bless others.
- **V11-12** just as they were witnesses to Paul and his companions Godly behavior they also enjoyed their loving encouragement and comfort. Earlier Paul had said that they were like **loving mother's** nursing their young ones, then he said they were like **working brothers** laboring day and night so not to be a burden but a blessing on the young believers, here he says they also were like **concerned fathers**, who encouraged and comforted their children with exhortations that despite the affliction they must endure and the dangers they must face they could carry on.
- **V11** has been described as an Oreo cookie, Exhortation and charge is the cookie, and the comfort is the cream in the middle. **V12** Paul mentions this several times throughout his letters to the churches > **Eph 4:1, Col 1:10. V13** in **Ch 1:6** Paul said that the church had been founded on the Word of God, and so for that Paul is most thankful, but then he goes a little further as to why he was so grateful and it has to do with how they received the Word of God.
- He says when they heard it they didn't welcome it as any message that came from man and it agreed with their philosophies of how they think things should go, or their appetites in what appealed to their senses. Instead they embraced it for what it was the Holy Word of God coming directly from the Spirit of God. In the **KJV** the word received is used twice in this verse, the first "**received**" simply means to welcome the word, but the second "**receive**" means to not only welcome the word but to embrace both intellectually and emotionally into your heart. It's what Jesus said in **Lk 8:18** > about being careful not only to what you hear but also how you hear it.

- **V14-16** this allowed the Thessalonians to endure persecution the two things that Satan uses all the time to try and silence the gospel > **1. Intimidation 2. Interrogation**. Because when people reject the truth they then develop a hardened heart against those who've embraced it, and afterward persecution, affliction soon follows, and it has different faces but it's all wrapped inside the same agenda (which is to silence the gospel) it's just in a different package.
- **V17-18** Paul understood that this persecution although very real in the flesh has its origin in the spiritual > **Eph 6:12**, that ultimately the hindrances that he was experiencing was coming from Satan attempting to block him from helping the young believers grow in their faith. People once you've received Jesus as your Lord and Savior this becomes his goal to stop us from growing in our faith and therefore the gospel from taking root in the lives that we can personally affect for Christ. But notice that didn't stop Paul from impacting their growth it simply started him down another path, as this is what sparked the letter that so many of us enjoy until this very day.
- **V19-20** Paul said although he was unable to be there physically they still was in his heart as he prayed for them and thought about them without ceasing. He even calls them his joy, a crown to present to Jesus Christ on that day of rejoicing of how God used all of us, so what Satan meant for defeat God had turned it around for victory as Evangelism and joy go hand in hand > **Heb 12:2, Philip 1;12-14**- everything they were going through was worth it as people continued to grow bolder in their faith, resulting in more people coming to know the Lord.