

Today we continue our series in the Book of 1 Thessalonians.

A little preview:

A) The Location of Thessalonica



B) The letter was written in and about 52 A.D. probably the first letter written by the Apostle.

C) It begins with an exhortation and blessing and mentions the faith that the Thessalonians had. A faith that had been spoken of throughout their region in Macedonia and Achai.

D) Then we ended the Chapter with the importance of being and having examples in our life. “We are not our own measuring stick.”

In other words, you cannot measure the way you live your faith by yourself. God has given us examples **in the Bible** and people in this world that will tell you whether you are walking in the right path. If you fail to measure yourself by the standards given in scripture you will find yourself disqualified. Paul rebukes those who do such by saying,

2 Corinthians 10:12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Our standard and measuring stick is the scriptures and the life of Christ and the Apostles. This is why God gave leaders in the Church to be examples and to teach us the principles of Christ,

Ephesians 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

We will begin our reading in Chapter 2

1 Thessalonians 2:1-16 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. (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. 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.

Let's dissect...

1 Thessalonians 2:1-16 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

A) Coming to you was not in vain... They had purpose and that is to preach the Gospel.

(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.

A) Prior to the Apostle coming to Thessalonica he was in Philippi where he and Silas were jailed. It is there where the jailer came to Christ and Paul and Silas were apologized to prior to leaving.



B) They fled Phillipi only to come to Thessalonica to be persecuted some more, but that did not hinder them to speak the truth, as a matter of fact it emboldened them...

“we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.”

Boldness is important. This is why the prayer for boldness is requested....

Ephesians 6:19-20 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may **open my mouth boldly** to make known the mystery of the gospel, (20) for which I am an ambassador in chains; **that in it I may speak boldly**, as I ought to speak.

When the Apostles were persecuted, they gathered and ask for boldness...

Acts 4:29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,.....Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.



When a Christian is faced with trials and tribulations, they do not shrink from the faith but rather dig deeper into it and become more grounded and in many cases ask for and become bolder.

Ignatius - "I can endure all things if he enables me. I am God's wheat. May I be ground by the

teeth of the wild beasts until I become the fine white bread that belongs to Christ.”

Polycarp of Smyrna – “Lord God Almighty, Father of your beloved and blessed Child Jesus Christ. I bless you that you have thought me worthy of this day and this hour, that I may be able to share in the number of the martyrs, to drink from the cup of your Christ, that I may rise and live forever, body and soul, in the incorruption of the Holy Spirit. May I be admitted with those martyrs to your presence this day, as a welcomed and acceptable sacrifice. You have made my life a preparation for this; you let me see that this was to happen, and now you have brought it to pass, for you are the true and faithful God.”

Justin Martyr – “I ask nothing more than to suffer for the cause of my Lord Jesus Christ. If I can do this, then I can stand in confidence and quiet before the judgment seat of my God and Savior, when in accordance with his will, this world passes away.”

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

A) Our comfort in persecution was not based in error, physically, or by trickery.

(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.

A) Our comfort came by that fact that we have been trusted by God to carry the Gospel.

(5) For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness.

A) Paul points out that his intentions for the Church are pure and not clothed in deceit or self-gain. This is very hard to find these days. Many Pastors and teachers in Churches these days desire something other than salvation and the growth of the believer or love for God's Church. Even Pastoring has become a vocation for many rather than a calling.

The selection of Pastors has become more of a talent search and personality contest versus finding those within who are counted worthy.

We have exchanged those who truly have love and concern for people with those who are religious “know it all's” using flattering words and theology. The message should be simple.

They also may look for the “hippest and coolest.” who look for gain and worldly acceptance. It is sad.



Paul did not care about worldly acceptance or being sophisticated using flattering words, or being hip. What the Apostle Paul had was love the Lord and he understood that loving God was loving the Church. The time effort and persecutions he faced for preaching the Gospel for no earthly gain showed that.

He understood the unbreakable connection between Christ and His Church. He was not the only one either. He had men like Titus, Silas, and Timothy who also cared dearly for the Christian brothers and sisters in Christ. An example that we should follow:

Philippians 2:20-22 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. (21) For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. (22) But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

He continues to his point...

(6) Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

The Apostle Paul being an Apostle had certain rights and authority given to him by God and

could have made demands, yet he chose to point everything and everyone to Christ.

He lived sacrificially as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Paul even indicated that he did not care or seek the glory of men but being a servant of Christ, he served as Christ served.

This is different than what many think being a Pastor or leader is today.

Mark 10:42-45 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. (43) Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. (44) And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. (45) For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."



As we read the next verses let us consider the analogies and emotions in his writing.

Instead of puffing our chest and demanding what is rightfully ours...

(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.

A) Gentle among you, as a mother to a child, longing for you, even giving our own life, becoming dear to us.

B) While all of us are not Apostles and Shepherds, we should have this same love for the brethren.

1 John 4:11-12 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

Contrary to many people's beliefs...this is not all about you. We do not come in here, eat of the table, partake in selfish worship and praise, selfish prayer, and reserve ourselves for ourselves. If our society teaches us anything today, it is isolation and self-worth.

In·tro·vert noun

a person who is predominantly focused on internal thoughts and feelings rather than on external things or social interaction, often characterized as being quiet or withdrawn.

If you are an introvert, this is not the time. We come in here to worship Christ and to love His people.



Paul states, his love for the Church was not out of selfish ambition or vain glory.

The Apostle lived the example of his writing to the Philippians:

Philippians 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

(4) Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Referring back to his conduct in Thessalonica he writes...

(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.

A) This is not the first or only Church where the Apostle Paul expressed his work and love for

the Church by putting his own sweat, blood, and labor, so to not burden the Church, but to be a provider.

2 Thessalonians 3:7-8 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; (8) nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you,

2 Corinthians 11:7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge?

1 Corinthians 9:14-15 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

(15) But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void.

He continues,

(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.

A) I want to conclude with the three ways of how the Apostle walked and how we are encouraged to do the same,

1. Devoutly - hosiōs hos-ee'-oce Adverb from G3741; piously = Religiously Sacred.

2. Justly – dikaiōs dik-ah'-yoce Adverb from G1342; equitably: - Living and being righteous.

3. Blamelessly - amemptōs am-emp'-toce Adverb from G273; faultlessly: - blameless. Without blame.

As the Apostle laid out an example for the Christians in Thessalonica to walk, so should we walk in that same manner.

Ultimately while this Chapter so far is the Apostle Paul proving that he was genuine, it lays out an example for us as Christians to

follow likewise. To be sacrificial in our love and devotion for Christ and His Church even in the midst of external and even internal trials and tribulations.