

## 1 Thessalonians 2 – Part 4

We left off last week with the encouragement left to us by the Thessalonians. They were those who believed the words and gospel was not just mere words of men but of God.

The difference between effective believers versus those who are not is how they perceive the scriptures. Are they the word of God?

This is evidenced by the way they live. Those who take the scriptures as the Word of God are fruitful. They remain in His words, they become Christ's disciples, and they produce much fruit.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Paul then indicated that this type of faith does not come without cost. Sometimes it is surrounded with persecution.

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We continue...

1 Thessalonians 2: (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.

A) It is very clear what the Apostle and the scriptures say of some of the Jews and others that persecuted them.

1. They kill the messengers of God.

Matthew 23:37-38 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

The world and many try to kill the prophets by killing their message. They try to discredit it and try to make God's word more of a suggestion than a command.

2. These people do not please God.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

They claim themselves spiritual and enlightened but in actuality, they walk in darkness and are blind.

3. They are truly against people.

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

These false prophets make themselves as allies for peace and prosperity but since they teach things and ideas contrary to God's word they direct people to destruction.

And

4. They do not want people to know the truth and be saved. They are storing up for themselves wrath.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

....Romans 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Being tolerant and accepting idolatry and false worship for the sake of false religion does nothing but store up the judgement to come.

They do not understand that tolerance is acceptance and in turn partakers of their evil deeds.

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(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.

A) While Paul was separated for a short time, he desired to go back to encourage the Church. He did indicate that Satan hindered us. This hindering could have been due to the need found in other places. The Apostles were continually combating and dealing with not only Jews but false prophets and Judaizers in the Church.

There are a lot of things in this world that can prevent you from being productive. We need to be careful to make sure these things are removed.

Sower...

Matthew 13:20-22 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; (21) yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. (22) Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

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IN CONCLUSION,

(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.

Paul's goal was to see the believers in Thessalonica saved and in the arms of Christ. Just as it should be a concern for us to all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

To encourage them to seek the Lord, to grow, and to love. This is what all Pastors seek for those under their leadership.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.