

9/5/99

Only The Facts
1Thess. 2:9-12

Paul and Silas as their custom was arrived at Thessalonica and went straight to the synagogue and for three weeks reason from the Scriptures and explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and risen again from the dead, declaring that Jesus whom they preached was the Christ.

Consequently some Jews became envious and gathered some evil men from the market place and attacked the house of Jason attempting to bring Paul and Silas out.

Failing to find them, they dragged Jason and others out before the rulers of the city crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too".

They accused Jason of harboring Paul and Silas who were acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar by saying that there was another king--Jesus. Acts 17:5-7

The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea and as their custom, they went into the synagogue to preach the word but when the Jews at Thessalonica heard that Paul was

preaching at Berea, they went and stirred up people against Paul, so he was once again escorted out by brethren, to Athens. Acts 17:13, 15
 The unplanned and sudden departure gave the Jews a good platform to accuse Paul and Silas of being religious charlatans and hucksters, who were in it for themselves and not for the benefit of the Thessalonians.

When Paul arrived to Athens, he requested the brethren to tell Silas and Timothy to come to him from Berea and sent Timothy back to Thessalonica. Acts 17:14, 1Thess. 3:1-2

Timothy and Silas return to Corinth and gave Paul good news about the Thessalonians well being, as well as the report of many false and slanderous allegations.

Paul in writing to the Thessalonians dealt with the accusations, with the facts.

Paul as an attorney begins his general defense of the accusations against his ministry at

Thessalonica by calling three witnesses. 2:1-4

1. The witness of the Thessalonians. vs. 1-2
2. The witness of the Apostles. vs. 3
3. The witness of God. vs. 4

Then Paul defended their ministry with detailed evidence in two areas. 2:5-8

1. Evidence based on character, focusing on integrity. vs. 5-6
2. Evidence based on care, focusing on involvement. vs. 7-8

Paul's final defense deals with evidence based on their conduct, focusing on being instruments of example.

Paul asks the Thessalonians to remember three things regarding their conduct, that would refute the false accusations. vs. 9-12

- I. Their willingness to work as they preached the gospel. vs. 9
 - II. Their willingness to live out the gospel. vs. 10
 - III. Their willingness to teach the gospel. vs. 11-12
- I. Their willingness to work as they preached the gospel. vs. 9**
- A. Paul called their attention, remembering how they worked. vs. 9a-d
 1. The manner of work is described as labor and toil.
 - a. The word labor "kopos" means primarily it denotes a striking, beating, idea is labor resulting in weariness.

- 1) The word is used of the widow who wearied the judge to avenge her of her adversaries. Lk. 18:5
 - 2) The word is used of labor motivated by love. 1:3, 3:5
- b.** The word toil "mochthos" means labor involving powerful effort, the idea is hardship and difficulty.
- 1) Paul's trade was that of a tent maker as Aquila and Priscilla. Acts 18: 2-3
 - 2) Paul in writing to the Corinthians said, "We labor, working with our own hands." 1Cor. 4:12a-b
- 2.** The measure of work is defined as night and day.
- a. It doesn't mean they worked night and day continuously.
 - b. It means they worked whenever they could to meet their needs and minister when they did not work.
 - c. The Talmud required that every Jewish father must circumcise his son, instruct him in the Law and teach him a trade. A Rabbinical saying stated, "He who teaches not his son a trade, does the same as if he taught him to be a thief".
- B.** Paul calls their attention, remembering why they worked. vs. 9e-f

1. The motive for working was that they might not be a burden to any of them.
 - a. The word burden “epibareo” means to be heavy upon or a load.
 - b. Paul refused to burden people by taking money from them, in order to minister the gospel.
 - c. Paul was always very careful to not have the gospel discredited due to money. 1Cor. 9:12, 15, 2Cor 11:9, 12:13, Phil. 4:16
 - d. Paul set himself as an example of those who would minister the gospel to others.
 - 1) He declared it to the Epheisians elders. Acts 20:33-35
 - 2) He declared it to the Thessalonians. 2Thes 3:6-12
2. The mission was to preach to them the gospel of God never abandoned,. 2:2, 3:1, 6-7
 - a. The word preached “keerusso” means to herald or proclaim.
 - 1) The message was not theirs.
 - 2) The authority was not their.
 - b. They were God's ambassadors sent out to proclaim salvation to all, the good news of God. 2Cor. 5:20
 - c. The mission was never abandoned because God sent them and opened the doors and provided the means.

- 1) They worked with their own hands.
- 2) They received two offerings from the Philippians. Phil. 4:15-16

Illustration

* One day a young man came in trying to tell me how the church had an obligation to support him because God had called him. So when I told him that whenever God lead He provide and that sometime He provides through working, he got upset.

Application

1. The believer is to work and provide for his own house, here is the proving ground.
 - a. He who doesn't provide for his own house denies the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1Tim 5:8
 - b. He who refuses to work should not eat. 2Thess. 3:10
 - * This doesn't refer to being unemployed temporarily or disabled. (Proverbs)
2. The believer is to work to help others and be an example of godly generosity.
 - * 1Thess. 4:11-12, 5:14, 2Thess. 3:12-13, Eph 4:28
 - a. If you are not a good worker at work, do not deceive yourself, thinking you would be a good worker in the work of God.

- b. Some people have the concept that, since they have failed in everything, they might as well try the ministry, how tragic!
- 3. The believer who is called has the right to live of the gospel, if God supplies it. Lk. 10:7, 1Cor. 9:14, 1Tim. 5:8
 - a. God many times has a person work first.
 - b. At other times God has a “tent ministry” for some.
 - c. Then God sovereignty calls others to abandon their work to be in ministry.

They were willing to work as they preached the gospel!

II. Their willingness to live out the gospel. vs. 10

- A. Paul declared that they and God were witnesses of how they had behaved among those who believed.
 - 1. The word devoutly “hosios” describes their conduct towards God, pure from evil, literally “holily” in obedience to be Christ like.
 - * This is the only time the word appears in the New Testament.
 - 2. Man can appear to be devout towards God but only God can know the heart.
 - a. Jeremiah says, that man’s heart is deceitful and desperately wicked and

- that God is the one who searches the heart. Jer. 17:9-10
 - b. God alone can see and detect the intent and the motive of a person’s heart and will reward accordingly. 1Cor. 4:5
 - c. God is the one who was testing their hearts and continued to do so. vs. 4
- B.** Paul declared that they and God were witnesses of how they had behaved themselves among them, towards man.
- 1. The word justly “dikaios” describes their conduct towards man.
 - 2. The act which is right and equitable to another man or woman.
 - 3. The act that is just, was in the sight of God.
 - a. They didn't try to have authority over them. vs. 6
 - b. They loved them as fragile infants. vs. 7
 - c. They didn't burden them financially. vs. 9
- C.** Paul declared that they and God were witnesses of how they had behaved themselves without reproach, among those who believed.

1. The word blamelessly “amemptos” means faultless in the sense that there is no cause for censure.
 - a. The word is appears two time in the letter. 5:23
 - b. This is God’s will for all believers.
 - c. The believer can accomplish it by depending on Jesus for the sufficiency.
3. It doesn't mean perfection or sinlessness but constant state of being right before God and man by ongoing confessing and repenting as the Holy Spirit showed them their failures.
 - a. The law called for two witnesses to confirm a testimony. Deut. 17:6, 19:15
 - b. God and man were the two in this case.

Illustration

Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the Kings meat in the midst of a corrupt culture and chose to stand out to God not man.

Dan 1:8

* Theodore Roosevelt went off to school at Harvard, his father a godly minister of the gospel, gave him the following council, “Take care of your morals, your health second and your studies third”. His commitment to this benefited our country!

Application

1. A willingness to live out the gospel is based on love for God supremely.
 - a. Shema of Israel declared, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”. Deut. 6:4
 - b. Jesus told the lawyer it was the greatest commandment. Matt. 22:35-38
2. A willingness to live out the gospel towards man will be sourced in our love for God and will be manifested towards man.
 - a. Jesus said the second is like the first, love your neighbor as yourself. Matt. 22:39
 - b. Paul's prayer was that the Ephesians might come to know the width, length, depth and height of God's love. Eph 3:14-21
 - c. Love is the purest and most powerful incentive and the potential of God’s love is described by Paul. 1Cor. 13:4-8a

They were willing to live out the gospel!

III. Their willingness to teach the gospel. vs. 11-12

- A. Paul told them that they knew how they had instructed them. vs. 11a-c
 1. The method is described as three-fold.
 - a. They exhorted the Thessalonians.

- 1) The word exhorted “para kaleo” means to call to ones side and entreat, encourage.
- 2) The idea is being a positive help in pressing someone forward.
- b. They comforted the Thessalonians.
 - 1) The word comforted “paromutheomai” means to console under difficulties, this is the idea.
 - 2) The word is used of Jesus comforting Mary and Martha at the loss of their brother. Jn. 11:19,31
- c. They charged the Thessalonians as individuals.
 - 1) The word charge “martureo” means to be a witness, testify or bear record.
 - 2) Paul held them responsible and accountable for what they had heard.
 - 3) In this three-fold instruction we see a healthy dealing with God's people that is neither cold hard theology, legalism nor an indifferent care-free life, but rather a diligent, loving expectation of life in the Spirit.
2. The manner of instruction is likened to that of a Father. vs. 11d

- a. The metaphor of a mother depicts loving gentleness in care. vs. 7
 - b. The metaphor of a father depicts loving firmness because of care.
 - c. Paul had preached and they had been born again. 2:2,13
* Paul calls the Corinthians his beloved children. 1Cor. 4:14
- B.** Paul told them that they knew why they had instructed them. vs. 12
1. The purpose was that they would have a walk worthy of God.
 - a. The word walk “peripateo” simply means to order ones behavior.
 - b. The quality of their walk, was to be worthy “axios” meaning appropriate, suitably, fitting.
 - c. They wanted the Thessalonians to be instructed on the potential of the new man, so as to live a life evident of their relation to God.
 - d. It doesn't speak of a personal worth to be accepted but resemblance of a relationship. 4:1,9-12
 2. The perspective was in view that God had called them into His own Kingdom and glory.
 - a. The Kingdom of God is present having penetrated the kingdom of darkness and is presently seen as it is

lived out by the people of God ruling over their evil hearts.

- 1) The call of God had come to them at one point in time but it is continuous to live in the sphere of God's rule.
 - 2) God has delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. Col. 1:13
- b. The Kingdom of God is yet future.
- 1) Jesus at His appearing will bring in the Kingdom of God. 2Tim. 4:1
 - 2) The church is not the Kingdom nor will it establish the Kingdom as taught by "Kingdom Theology" or "Reconstruction Theology".
 - 3) Jesus taught us to pray “Your Kingdom come”, at the Millennial reign.
 - 4) The word glory “doxa” means an opinion or estimate resulting in honor or fame. 2:6,12, 20
 - 5) The believer is called to live in the sphere of God's Kingdom that will manifest God's glory and honor not our own.

Illustration

A father is willing to teach his son out of love and therefore observes the best method while always presenting the goal.

* Romans had a coin, an ox faced an alter and a plow, under it was written, “Ready for either”.

Application

1. Our willingness to teach others the gospel is evidence of love for God and them. Jn. 21:15-17
 - a. Peter do you love Me? Feed My lambs.
 - b. Peter do you love Me? Feed My sheep.
 - c. Pastor them, tend to them!
 - d. Proclaim the full counsel of God. Acts 20:27
2. Our willingness to learn will result in our transformation, evident of the Kingdom and God's glory.
 - a. Walking in lowliness and gentleness with longsuffering, bearing one another. Eph.4:1-2
 - b. Walking with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. Phil. 1:27
 - c. Walking fully pleasing the Lord. Col. 1:10
3. The purpose of the church is to perfect the saints. Eph. 4:11-16
 - a. To do the work of ministry.
 - b. To keep them from being deceived.
 - c. To edify the body in love.

They were willing to teach the gospel!

Conclusion

In a real court case, the prosecution attorney questioned one of the doctors who preformed the autopsy.

Q. Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A. No.

Q. Did you check for blood pressure?

A. No.

Q. Did you check for breathing?

A. No.

Q. So, then it was possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy!

A. No.

Q. How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A. Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q. But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

A. It is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere!

*** NOTHING but the FACTS!**

Paul defended his ministry at Thessalonica regarding their conduct by these three facts.

- I. Their willingness to work as they preached the gospel!

- II. Their willingness to live out the gospel!
- III. Their willingness to teach the gospel!