

letters to Thessalonica

#2, not *as* the word of men, I Thess 2:1-6

At Thessalonica, as with almost every place Paul gave out the gospel, he was heavily roughed up. In this lesson Paul reminds the brethren there how, in the midst of this persecution, they were brought the word of God.

1 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain,

2 but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.

[1.] v:1, not in vain, Acts 17:1-4 gives a result of this ministry. Write down the three groups mentioned.

[2.] Acts 17:4, some of them, Studying the context of Acts 17:1-9, who would you suspect these were?

[3.] I Thess 2:1, Recalling Acts 10:44, what else happened to the converts in Thessalonica that proved Paul's ministry was not in vain?

[4.] v:2, in Philippi, From memory, jot down an instance of mistreatment that happened to the missionary team at Philippi.

[5.] v:2 again, much opposition, Acts 17:5-9 gives the account of this opposition. Write down the salient points of the opposition.

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[6.] v:2 again, as you know, It seems the citizens of Thessalonica heard of the ministry and physical abuse that the team suffered at Philippi. How would this information affect their respect for the team as well as their interest in the message?

[7.] v:2 again, already suffered and been mistreated, In reading this verse, one almost can't help but see a boxer picking himself off of the canvas and charging back in! In our ministries, what setbacks could keep us down and not want to get back up to do battle?

[8.] Something to think about. We have considered this subject in other lessons but, here it is again. Christ commanded the gospel to be given to the ends of the earth. Why then did God allow such hard circumstances for those who were obedient to His command?

In the next ten verses, Paul contrasts the word of men with the word of God. V:3-6 are examples of the word of men which, is not how he, Silas and Timothy labored in Thessalonica. In v:7-12, he describes how they did labor

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3 For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit;

v:3, **error, impurity . . . deceit.** Paul used 3 distinctly different words to affirm the truthfulness of his ministry, each expressing a contrast with what was characteristic of false teachers. He first asserted that “his message” was true and not erroneously false. His manner of life was pure, not sexually wicked. His method of ministry was authentic, not deceptive.

The John MacArthur Study Bible

[9.] v:3, *error*, In Acts 17:3, Luke documented the subject of Paul’s teaching at Thessalonica. What did Paul teach about Christ?

[10.] v:3 again, *error*, What would a false teacher probably say about Christ?

[11.] v:3 again, *impurity*, Why would being “just one of the boys” using an occasional obscenity or profanity be useful to a false teacher?

[12.] v:3 again, *deceit*, Yes, this still happens during our time. Give some reasons why a message of deceit escapes the notice of many professing Christians?

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4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.

[13.] v:4, God approved Paul as an apostle to spread the gospel, which he did. Since we all have received a gift of the Spirit, how would you expect that we also can gain God's approval?

[14.] v:4 again, entrusted with the gospel, In your own words, what does this phrase mean to you?

[15.] v:4 again, not as pleasing men, In order to build a big, mega congregation, why is it effective to teach that which pleases men?

The market parking lot was quiet while I waited for my wife to pick up a few things. Being engrossed in my reading I hadn't noticed a young fellow standing at the side of my chariot.

He commented on the great text to which my scroll was open. It was one of his favorites and, just today had been pondering on a few verses as he prayed. He went on to say he had been waiting for a friend to bring him some silver as he was a little short. By the way, could you spare a few coins so that he could buy a meal etc.

5 For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed – God is witness –

[16.] v:5, flattering speech, From the above example, pick out the flattering part. How might it help the guy to use flattery?

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6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

[17.] v:5, From the above example pick out the process that was a pretext to greed.

[18.] v:6, glory from men, Acts 14:8-18 provides a good example of how humans want to put men into a position of prominence. Describe how this could be a really good gig for those who are looking for these opportunities?

[19.] v:6 again, asserted our authority, Jot down the pros and cons of using a lot of assertion in evangelism?

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