

1st Thessalonians

Spring 2025

Week 4 – 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

Key Verse - 1 Thessalonians 5:9

God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Review

- ❖ Paul letters to Thessalonians were written around 52-53 AD.
- ❖ 1st Thessalonians is one of the earliest letters that Paul wrote. (Galatians is the first letter Paul wrote.
- ❖ The city of Thessalonica
 - Location is modern Greece (NW Corner of the Aegean Sea)
- ❖ The Church of Thessalonica was founded around 51/52 AD after only a 3 week visit from Paul.
- ❖ In Acts 17 Luke tells us Paul had just come from Philippi to Thessalonica.
- ❖ **Main Theme of the Letter: The Second Coming of Christ.**
- ❖ Not a matter of “If Christ is coming back” it a matter of “When.”
- ❖ At the end of each chapter there is a reference to the second coming of Christ
- ❖ **The purpose of the book of Thessalonians is that people are to be prepared and ready for Christ’s return.**

1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

We are entrusted with the Gospel

¹ You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. ² We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. ³ For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. ⁴ On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. ⁶ We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ, we could have been a burden to you, ⁷ but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

Paul’s love for the Thessalonians

⁸ We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. ⁹ Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹² encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

The inherent Word of God

¹³ And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. ¹⁴ For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men ¹⁶ in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

We will Glory in your presence

¹⁷ But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. ¹⁸ For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? ²⁰ Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

Question 1 – *Why is Paul sharing his “credentials” with the Thessalonians in verses 1-5?*

Question 2 – *How might knowing that others have also suffered persecution comfort you when sharing God's Word?*

Question 3 – *What did NOT characterize Paul's conduct while he was at Thessalonica?*

Question 4 – *Does our pride make us believe that success in spreading the Gospel is our own doing? What does Paul tell us in the opening verses that dispel this idea?*

- ❖ Paul's defense of the Ministry (2:1-6)
 - No doctrinal error
 - No impure motives
 - No deception
 - No attempt to please man, but only God
 - No flattery
 - No greed
 - No attempt to get praise from people

Question 5 – *What are three reason's God tests our hearts? (vs 4)*

- (Deut 8:2)
- (Psalm 66:10)
- (James 1:2-4)

- ❖ Paul lived a life worthy of his calling. As an ambassador, Paul carries God's message to all people because their salvation is at stake.
- ❖ If our words and actions are not consistent, an unbeliever may be confused and walk away from God entirely.
- ❖ Although some itinerant philosophers of Paul's day took advantage of the people and demanded that they provide for them, Paul did not. Paul worked to support himself while at the same time delivering God's message of salvation to the people of Thessalonica. What Paul preached, Paul practiced.
- ❖ The custom of his day was for philosophers to impose on others, Paul never did (v. 6)

Question 6 – *How is Paul's ministry to the church in Thessalonica "caring like a mom (2:7) and motivating like a father? (vs 2:11-12)*

- ❖ Paul didn't have the New Testament, so he preached the message of Christ using the Old Testament

Question 7 – *How does Paul define the "Word of God" (2:13) (See 2 Tim 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21)*

- ❖ Paul commends the Church in Thessalonica for receiving the Word of God and accepting it.
- ❖ Paul is literally "torn away from the church in Thessalonica. The Greek word used means "orphan."

Question 8 – *Who tore Paul apart from the church in Thessalonica? (2:18)*

Final thoughts

- ❖ As Christians when we die and go to Heaven and our loved ones know Christ as their Savior and go to heaven, there will be this glorious reunion in the presence of the Lord, otherwise Paul wouldn't write verses 19&20

Outline of 1st Thessalonians

- ❖ Three Main points of 1st Thessalonians
 - Trials will Come (Ch. 1-3)
 - Temptations will come (Ch.4)
 - Jesus will come! (Ch. 4-5)

References

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