

## I Thessalonians Lesson 02

### I Thessalonians Chapter 2

*Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies*

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Memory verses for this week: *Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:*

**Introduction:** We continue our study this week on the book of I Thessalonians. Last week in Chapter 1, Paul told the church there in Thessalonica that their faith was known through out the region. We don't know how we affect others, but our desire should be that others see Christ in our lives. We should desire that our church be known as one that follows the teachings of the bible and is led by the Holy Spirit.

This week in chapter 2, we will study about the work and determination put forth by true missionaries. My family has had the opportunity to share our home with a large number of missionary families through the years, and I can say that I've been greatly blessed by these men and women who are devoted totally and wholly to God's work.

#### **I. The Missionaries Walk**

*1 Th 2:1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:*

*1 Th 2:2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.*

Paul said that the work he and the other missionaries had done was not work done in vain. Despite suffering reproach for Christ, they were still bold to speak the Gospel and to put forth the words of life. The Greek word for "contention" is *agoni*, which means "conflict" or "agony." There was a great deal of conflict and much inward agony when Paul came to them. Paul says that he had been shamefully treated in Philippi. We know about that from the account in Acts 16. But when he came to Thessalonica, he came in boldness. In other words, he didn't slow down because of his previous experience.

He didn't play down the gospel. God has given the church the keys to heaven, and whether we put forth the gospel truly makes the difference in men and women's eternal destination. Paul was unique in that he wanted to know Christ so well that he desired to have fellowship in His sufferings. It is easy to want to be in on the blessings of the Lord, but not so many desire to suffer for Christ. If that be God's

Will for our lives, we should accept that and pray for Grace to deal with each situation that comes up.

*Phil 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.  
Phil 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,  
Phil 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:  
Phil 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;  
Phil 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

*Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.  
Mat 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

*1 Th 2:3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:  
1 Th 2:4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*

When these missionaries preached and taught, their words were not confusing nor was there any deceit or uncleanness in them. God was their master, and they put forth the true Gospel which teaches that salvation is wholly of the Lord through faith and grace. These men didn't worry about pleasing men, but rather sought to find praise from the Lord. The content of Paul's exhortation was not adulterated. Paul did not water down the gospel. He never changed it to suit different groups. God and God alone tries our hearts, and he knows every thing about us.

Many today want to hear praise from man, and they preach accordingly, trying to not offend anyone. None of us should seek to offend, but the cross is an offence to the world, and when we declare the whole word of the Lord, there will be some offended. Some will be offended and turn from Christ, but praise the Lord, some will seek Christ and find forgiveness for their sins. Someone has to pay for our sins, and Christ was willing to come and die for us. His desire is that all come to repentance and find Christ for salvation.

*1 Th 2:5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness:  
1 Th 2:6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.  
1 Th 2:7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:*

People who are disciples of the Lord will always desire to seek Glory for God, not for themselves. Paul and his companions did not come with great flowing words to impress men. This happened in Paul's day, and it still goes on today. Some preach a message with an indirect message that is a cover for covetousness. But Paul's group neither sought glory for themselves, nor were they a burden to the brethren. They came as apostles of Christ and were gentle and loving to the church. His chosen words were 'as a nurse cherisheth her children.'" We know that a dedicated nurse will do everything in her power to seek the best for the children she is watching over.

Matthew Henry said this about Paul.

The gospel of Christ is designed for mortifying corrupt affections, and that men may be brought under the power of faith. This is the great motive to sincerity, to consider that God not only sees all we do, but knows our thoughts afar off, and searches the heart. And it is from this God who trieth our hearts, that we must receive our reward. The evidences of the apostle's sincerity were, that he avoided flattery and covetousness. He avoided ambition and vain-glory.

*1 Th 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*

*1 Th 2:9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*

Paul explains how much these brethren meant to him and the others... how they were affectionately desirous of them and how they had even dedicated even their own souls to these in Thessalonica. He says they laboured night and day that they would not be chargeable unto any of them. If we warn the wicked of their evil ways, their blood will not be on our hands. But if we ignore to do this, God will hold us guilty. These men were stating that they had declared the whole counsel of God to them.

*Ezek 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

*Ezek 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*

*1 Th 2:10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:*

*1 Th 2:11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,*

This is highly commendable. These men ask them to remember how they lived before them justly, and without blame. Our behavior should be exemplary, and when it is, that brings glory to God. He reminds them how they exhorted and comforted the brethren as a father does his children. We read those verses a few weeks ago, but we should always be about exhorting and encouraging one another in the work of the Lord. Satan wants to defeat us and to keep us quiet. But we have the joyous words of the Gospel, and we need to proclaim them.

*Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

*Heb 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

## II. The Church's Walk

*1 Th 2:12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.*

*1 Th 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

Each of us has a requirement to take up our cross daily and to put the old man of sin to death. When we do this, we walk worthy of our calling. I am proud to be associated with so many good people as we have in our church. This speaks well of the church, and like Paul did, we should thank God without ceasing for the faithfulness of our members.

*Ephesians 4:1-3 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*

*2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

## J. Vernon McGee spoke of walking worthy of God in his commentary.

How do you receive the Word of God? Do you receive it as the Word of *God*? Or do you get angry? Does the hair stand up on the back of your neck? Twice in all my years of ministry I was approached by a man after a sermon and asked if I had him in mind when I preached the sermon that morning. My friend, I didn't even know those men were there! They were giving themselves an added sense of importance that wasn't justified. But the real issue is that they weren't receiving the Word of God as the Word of *God*.

The Word should go out as the Word of God and it should be received as the Word of God. And, my friend, if you will receive it that way, then it will be able to work in you, and there's blessing there for you. Otherwise, you are wasting your time in church.

We have seen how Paul has been giving out the Word of God. It irritated some people because God's Word is salt, and salt stings when it gets into a fresh wound of sin in the life of an individual. The Word of God is also a light, but there are a lot of people who love darkness because their deeds are evil.

The church should be a *revelation* of God to the community just as a family should be. The relationships of husband, wife, and child in the home should reveal the threefold aspect of the love of God and Christ for the world. Paul has already spoken of the *mother* side of the local church. He was willing to work day and night to nurture them as a little bird is nurtured by its mother. He didn't work an eight-hour day, but he was on the job for them all the time.

Then Paul says he was like a *father* to that church. A child in a home needs to experience both mother-love and father-love. It is a tragedy for children in our day when the parents are separated or divorced. The child very often fails to receive the love of the father. That father-love is expressed in discipline. Paul says he was like a father to the Thessalonian church.

There are some very fine Bible teachers who never preach anything but comfort. They are always comforting the saints. People love it, because everyone likes to be comforted. I like to have my back rubbed and my head also. That is physically comforting, and it is a joy. But we are not to have comfort alone; we also need discipline. I'm afraid that the father-side, the discipline-side, is woefully lacking, not only in our homes and in the state, but also in the church.

The church is coming "unglued" in some areas of the world, and the reason for this is the same thing that was said of Israel in Deuteronomy 32:15: "Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked." That is, they entered a period of affluence, and they became critical. The church in America lives in affluence. But, frankly, I think that persecution may be just around the corner.

*1 Th 2:14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:*

*1 Th 2:15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:*

*1 Th 2:16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.*

Paul reminds the Thessalonians how the Jews had persecuted the church there in Jerusalem, but they had stood their ground. This church was standing against persecution from the gentiles and not giving up. That glorifies God when we are steadfast. Jesus didn't give up on us at the cross, and you and I certainly should NEVER give up on the work God has given us to do in the church. This church has enemies, and we have enemies in the world today. Always remember the verse in I John... *1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Those that forbid that Christ be preached have the wrath of God coming upon them one day. We should be strong and not fear what man might do against us.

### III. The Opposition

*1 Th 2:17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.*

*1 Th 2:18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.*

We many times have great things we want to accomplish, but we don't always see those things done. Why is that? The main reason is our ultimate enemy Satan. He will either keep us so busy we never start a work for the Lord or will put up one roadblock after another in our way. Satan is the ultimate deceiver and a liar from the beginning. We have to weary of our adversary.

*1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

### IV. Glory and Joy

*1 Th 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*

*1 Th 2:20 For ye are our glory and joy.*

There is a great joy in reaching souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. But if we are going to reap souls, someone has to plant some seeds, some have to water, and then someone will reap. There will be glory given for those who reach souls for the Lord.

*Psalm 126:5-6 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

*Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*

*1 Cor 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.*

*1 Cor 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

*1 Cor 3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.*

*1 Cor 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.*

What can we conclude from this chapter?

The Devil is very subtle and can trick us if we are not careful.

*Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

The Devil will always challenge God's Word.

*Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

It was Satan who started false idol worship.

*Genesis 3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

The Devil will even argue with God.

*Job 1:8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Satan is a devourer and seeks to destroy all that he can.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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