

Paul's Life And Ministry Among Them

Lesson 2a

2:1-10

1TH 2:1 For you yourselves know [be sure], brethren [brothers and sisters], that our coming to you was not in vain [useless and unproductive],

1. "For you yourselves know, brethren" - He refers to these believers again generically as "brothers."
 - a. They had become a part of the great brotherhood of God. See "brotherhood" - 1 Peter 2:17.
 - b. They were members of the family of God - the church. (1 Tim. 3:15).
2. "that our coming to you was not in vain" - Lit. "the entrance of us to you"
 - a. Their trip had not been fruitless or failed in purpose, but was very successful (Acts 17:4; 1 Thess. 1:9).

Acts 17:4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with **a large number** of the God-fearing Greeks and **a number** of the leading women.

1 Thess. 1:9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

- b. Converts were made in Thessalonica, but we do not know how many were originally converted on the second missionary journey or how many were later converted.
- c. We do know that a good sized and faithful congregation existed in Thessalonica.
- d. This is evident by reading the epistles of 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
 - 1) Acts 17:4 indicates it was not a small church. Note "a large number" and "number."
 - 2) 1 Thess. 1:9 reveals converts from among the idolaters in addition to those listed in Acts.

1TH 2:2 but after we had already suffered and been mistreated [beaten and imprisoned] in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in [the strength of] our God to speak to you the gospel [good news] of God amid [in spite] much opposition.

1. "but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi"
 - a. Paul and Silas had been beaten and cast into prison and were placed in stocks. (Acts 16:22-24; Phi. 1:30).
 - b. They certainly had not come to trick or exploit these people.
 - c. They had come to proclaim the good news of salvation in Christ, and obey the instructions of Jesus to flee to the next city or village. (Matt. 10:23a).

2. “as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition”

- “opposition” is from “agon” [ah **gohn**] meaning “strife, contention, peril, toil”
 - a. Though strongly opposed and physically persecuted, they had boldly preached the “gospel of God” there.
 - b. They had not compromised the pure “gospel of God,” but had lived faithfully and faithfully proclaimed the gospel under extremely adverse circumstances.
 - c. They had not come for selfish reasons and they certainly did not come to exploit the people of Thessalonica.
 - d. “The gospel of God” is also called:

(1) the gospel - 1 Thess. 2:4	(4) our gospel - 1 Thess. 1:4	(7) eternal gospel - Rev. 14:6
(2) the gospel of Christ -1 Thess. 3:2; Gal. 1:7	(5) word of God’s message - 1 Thess. 2:13	(8) glorious gospel - 1 Tim. 1:11
(3) the gospel of peace - Eph. 6:15	(6) my gospel - Rom 2:16	(9) law of liberty - Jas. 1:25; 2:12.

Opponents Charges

1TH 2:3 For our exhortation [encouragement, appeal, entreaty] **does not come** [spring, originate] **from error or impurity or by way of deceit;**

1. “For our exhortation” - “paraklesis” [pah **rah** klay sis] means “exhortation, entreaty, appeal.”
 - a. This refers to their bold preaching of the gospel.
 - b. Their “exhortation” was motivated by love, a desire to see them saved.
2. “does not come [spring, originate] from error or impurity [uncleanness] or by way of deceit”
 - a. “error” - They did not advocate false doctrines nor were they deceptive in any way.
 - b. “impurity” is from “akatharsia” [ah kah thar **see** ah] meaning “impurity, uncleanness”
 - 1) Their motives were not impure, but were absolutely pure!
 - 2) They had not been immoral in regard to the female or male converts. (Acts 17:4).
 - 3) They were not motivated by greed - a love of money. (1 Thess. 2:5).
 - 4) Paul most often worked to support himself as a tentmaker.(Acts 18:3).
 - 5) Their doctrine was the pure doctrine [teaching] of God.
 - c. “deceit” - There was no attempt or intention to mislead them, and they did not mislead them.
3. Again some had slandered Paul, Silas and Timothy and were seeking to discredit them by charging they

were for selfish reasons seeking to exploit the people.

4. This was an absolutely false charge and was based on their hatred of these men and others like them.

1TH 2:4 but just as we have been approved [appointed, commissioned] by God to be entrusted with the gospel [good news], so we speak, not as pleasing men but [to please] God, who examines [tests, proves] our hearts.

1. “but just as we [Paul, Silas, Timothy] have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel”

- a. They had passed God’s scrutiny who knows the hearts and minds of all.
- b. God had entrusted them with the gospel - the message of salvation. (Rom. 1:16).
- c. They were obligated to bring the message of salvation - not for personal gain, but because the Lord required it.
- d. They faithfully fulfilled this charge out of duty and out of love.

2. “so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts” - See Gal. 1:10

Gal. 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ

a. They were in the business of pleasing God who examines and knows hearts.

1) “Examines” comes from “dokimazo” [dah kee **mah** zoh] meaning “test, prove” and can have the meaning of “examine.”

2) God knows and examines even the secrets of the heart. (Rom. 2:16).

ROM 2:16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

3) Nothing is hidden from the all-knowing and all-seeing God. (Heb. 4:13).

b. God knows what is in man and cannot be fooled or mocked. (Gal. 6:7,8).

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Gal 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

1TH 2:5 For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed [to get your money]-- God is witness.

1. “For we never came with flattering speech, as you know.”

- a. They never resulted to flattery, but spoke “the truth in love. (Eph. 4:15).
- b. “Flattering speech” means praising them and preaching what they wanted to hear.

2. “nor with a pretext for greed-- God is witness” - Paul calls God as his “witness” to his motives and faithfulness.

- a. They had no motive of greed [covetousness].
- b. God who “examines and knows our hearts” is called upon to bear witness of their pure motives.
- c. Paul frequently called upon God as his witness. (Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23; Phil. 1:8; 1 Thess. 2:10).

1TH 2:6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles [messengers] of Christ we might have asserted [exercised] our authority.

1. “nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others”
 - a. They never sought praise or glory from men.
 - b. Their aim was to please God by proclaiming the gospel to lost souls and strengthening those in the faith.
2. “even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority”
 - a. As apostles they could have made demands.
 - b. They had the authority to do so. (Lk. 10:16).

Luke 10:16 "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

- c. They did not assert their authority.
- d. “apostles” is not completely clear here. If it includes Timothy and Silas, it is not used in the official sense of the office of an apostle. (Eph. 4:11).

EPH 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

- e. The word “apostle” literally means “messenger” and may be used here in the sense of messengers, representatives of the churches. (2 Cor. 8:23).

2 Cor 8:23 As for Titus, {he is} my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, {they are} **messengers** [lit. apostles] of the churches, a glory to Christ.

1TH 2:7 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children.

1. “But we proved to be gentle among you”
 - a. They behaved gently among them as he explains in verses 8, 9 and 11.
 - b. “Gentle” is from “epios” [ay pee ahs] meaning “mild, gentle, kind.”
2. “as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children” - They were as gentle as a nursing mother caring for her baby.
 - Lit. the Greek has “as if a nurse should cherish the children of herself.”

- The Greek has “trophos” [trah **fahs**] meaning “nurse” understood to refer to a “nursing mother.”

- a. This indicates they were exceptionally gentle.
- b. This does not mean they did not expose and rebuke sin.

1) Paul preached the same way he instructed Timothy to preach. (2 Tim. 4:1-2).

2 Tim 4:1 I solemnly charge {you} in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

2 Tim 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season {and} out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

2) From the reading of his epistles we find Paul did not hesitate to expose and rebuke sin.

- c. Both Jesus and the apostles called upon men to repent - turn from sin. (Matt. 4:17; Lk. 13:3,5; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

1TH 2:8 Having thus a fond affection [a love] for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel [good news] of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear [precious] to us.

1. “a fond affection for you” - We loved you very much.
 - a. Lit. “so longing for you”
 - b. We loved you dearly and were willing to make sacrifices for you.
2. “we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God” - They were willing and eager to share the gospel with them.
3. “but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us”
 - a. They were not only willing to preach the gospel, but to lay down their lives for them.
 - b. No cost or sacrifice was too great that the gospel might be proclaimed among them.

1TH 2:9 For you recall [remember], brethren [brothers], our labor and hardship [wearisome toil, hard work], how working night and day so as not to be a [financial] burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel [good news] of God.

- “Our labor” is from “kopos” [**kah** pahs] meaning “labor, toil”
 - “Hardship” is from “mockthos” [**mahk** thahs] meaning “hardship, toil, wearisome” - 2 Cor. 11:27; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8.
1. “For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you”
 - a. They put in long hours and suffered hardships that they might not burden the brethren financially.
 - b. They wanted to preach the gospel without charge.

c. This would keep them from being a burden to the brethren and would also prevent the charge that they were preaching for money.

d. He did receive wages and gifts from the church at Philippi. (Phil. 4:15, 16).

PHI 4:15 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

PHI 4:16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

e. He did, at times, “take wages” from established churches. (2 Cor. 11:8).

2 Cor 11:8 I robbed other churches by taking wages {from} {them} to serve you;

1) “sulao” [soo lah oh] means “to rob, to strip, to encroach upon.”

2) Paul did not literally “rob” churches, but at times did “take wages” from established churches who were motivated to support him.

3) Most of these congregations were not wealthy, but many or most of the members were poor and helped them out of their poverty.

f. They had the right to receive remuneration. (1 Cor. 9:6-15).

1 Cor 9:6 Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working?

1 Cor 9:7 Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock?

1 Cor 9:8 I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things?

1 Cor 9:9 For it is written in the Law of Moses, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING." God is not concerned about oxen, is He?

1 Cor 9:10 Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher {to thresh} in hope of sharing {the crops.}

1 Cor 9:11 If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

1 Cor 9:12 If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.

1 Cor 9:13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the {food} of the temple, {and} those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar?

1 Cor 9:14 So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

1 Cor 9:15 But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast [inner joy, inner happiness] an empty one.

g. Paul most often, not always, worked and supported himself a tentmaker. (Acts 18:3).

Acts 18:3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

2. “we proclaimed to you the gospel of God” - They proclaimed the good news of God’s salvation to them.

- a. The gospel is not good news until a person becomes convinced he or she is lost without hope.
- b. It is not good news until a person believes and obeys it.

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