

W @ K L J P r a J @ r J O U r n a l

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

"The Biblical Defense of a Man of God"

1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

January 6 - 12, 2008

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITTAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)	Lord's Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

THE LORD'S DAY –After several weeks away from 1 Thessalonians we get back to our study and pick up the text in **1 Thessalonians 2**. As Paul begins this section of his Epistle he focuses on defending the integrity of his ministry among the Thessalonians. There had been no doubt false allegations raised by various individuals to discredit both the work being done through The Word and Holy Spirit among the Thessalonians as well as false allegations against The Apostle himself. It is very apparent as you read this section that Paul goes about defending the integrity of his work among these people. There is much to learn about how “ministry” is to be done within this text of Holy Scripture. Read **1 Thessalonians 2:1-6**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Ask the Lord to teach you from His Word this week.*

MONDAY –Immediately out of the gate Paul draws on the memory of his readers when he says, “*For you yourselves know, brethren...*” He continues by telling them that by their recollection of what had taken place among them it was obvious to see that the work done among them was not “*in vain*” (empty, vain, devoid of truth). They could look back on their own experience and see the fruit of the labors of these Godly men who ministered among them (see—**1:1-10**). There have always been, and always will be opponents to the Lord’s work and thus was the case back then so Paul now goes on to lay out a defense of the work done in Thessalonica by those Godly shepherds who ministered to them. Paul’s life, as well as the men who ministered with him was not perfect or sinless but was a life of a man of God that all preachers and Christians should emulate. Read **Philippians 3:17-19**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank God for Godly examples that He has placed in our lives and pray that He would help you to learn from them as they / we follow Christ.*

TUESDAY –Verse 2 lays before us a very uncomfortable but true scenario; namely that boldly preaching and living the truth will draw spiteful mistreatment from many people. When Paul refers to being mistreated in “*Philippi*” he is no doubt referring to the episode recorded by Luke found in **Acts 16:16-24**. Paul mentions two forms

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of abuse these men received when he uses the words “*suffered*” and “*spitefully treated*”. Not only were these men physically harmed but they were disgraced, slandered, and spoken evil of in an attempt to humiliate and shame them. A mark of a true man of God is found in the fact that even “*after*” they were treated this way they “were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict”. True men of God remain bold through Christ’s strength even amidst the attacks and abuse from a non-receptive and mistreating audience. Read **2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Ephesians 6:10, 2 Timothy 4:16-18**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Dear God, help me to be bold in the proclamation of Your truth even when it costs me personally and help me be strong and rely on Jesus.*

WEDNESDAY –Paul shows us a very important attitude necessary in preaching and living for Jesus; confidence in God’s power and God’s message, preached from a life of obedience and integrity. He says in **verse 3** that their exhortation “*did not come from error or uncleanness...*” The message of truth that contains judgment to come for sin is one that is not accepted by many people both back then and today. The Apostle reminds them that the message he spoke, popular or not, was simply God’s truth and not “*error*”. He also explains by the words “*uncleanness*” and “*deceit*” that his life backed up this truth and there were no impure motives for his ministry. It was common back then as well as today for false teachers to get “converts” in order for sexual relations with them. The practice of the pagan religions even had temple prostitutes where people participated in sexual acts in the name of worship and by doing so they taught that they experienced some sort of union with the gods. Paul apparently was accused of these things and strongly defends his character and the truth of his message and life. Read **2 Peter 2:2-3, 12-15, Revelation 2:20, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *God, help my life to be lived in obedience and integrity and may I do this with the pure motive of pleasing You. Thank You also for the truth of Your gospel which provides forgiveness of all my sin through Christ.*

THURSDAY –In **verse 4** we find the true motive of a man of God involved in the Lord’s work. Paul explains in this verse that he and his fellow laborers in the gospel have been called by God to do this work. He says, “*...we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel...*” The word in the Greek language means that one has been “scrutinized, tested, examined, and recognized as genuine after examination”. Paul and every other called servant of God has been examined and found worthy and approved by God to carry His message and serve Him. It is an incredible privilege to be “*entrusted*” with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is no cheesy self-appointment here but rather a Divine appointment and commission to carry and preach the good news of salvation from sin found in

faith in Jesus Christ. Paul finishes by saying that those truly called by God speak to please God and not man for it is God who “*tests our hearts*”. Men, both inside and outside the church will often be critical of God’s message as well as His messenger but God approves His men and He will vindicate both the message and the man of God. Read **1 Corinthians 15:10, 1 Timothy 1:11-12, Titus 1:3**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank You Father for using sinful but faithful men. Help me to be obedient and to be used by You for Your glory and purpose.*

FRIDAY –Paul says in **verse 5** that God is his witness that he and his fellow servants of Christ did not use “*flattering words*” nor a “*cloak for covetousness*” (pretext for greed). A true man of God is not a smooth talking salesman who tries to flatter people with words in order to gain their favor or some sort of selfish influence. It is not about the messenger; rather it is all about God, His message, and His glory. These are the things found in the ministry of Godly men and Paul was calling on God Himself to witness between him and the Thessalonians concerning this matter. Unfortunately, and actually tragically this is what is done by many today who claim to be ministers of Jesus Christ. They in subtle and not so subtle ways are in the ministry for themselves and not for God. Many “ministers” today are in this work for greed, self-satisfaction, money, and personal gain. Read **2 Corinthians 1:12, Psalm 12:3, Proverbs 28:23, Acts 20:33-34**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Pray for Your pastor and leaders to be free from wrong motives in their work among you and ask God to keep them from falling away and being allured away from truth for man’s approval and personal gain.*

SATURDAY –Paul explains in **verse 6** that the true man of God seeks eternal reward and the glory of God not the temporal and often false glory from men. Paul also says that he and the other Apostles, because of their incredible and unique position “*might have made demands...*” They were in a place of great authority and yet true to all he has said in the previous verses the Apostles of Christ (the 12) and the Apostles of the Churches (Silas & Timothy) lived with great humility, never taking their eyes off the mandate from God to be faithful to Him alone and give Him all the glory for the work done. We must all be careful to realize that God knows the motives of our hearts and we must strive to honor Him out of a genuine, sincere heart. Read **Romans 11:36, Ephesians 3:20-21**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Dear God, help me by Your grace to be humble and to seek Your glory above all things. Eternal thanks and praise be to You Almighty God!*