

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. **2** But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. **3** For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, **4** but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. **5** For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. **6** Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. **7** But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. **8** So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

1. Read **Acts 16:16-24**. What happened to Paul and his companions in Philippi that could have robbed them of strength and hope?

Read **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8**.

2. Why was Paul's coming to the Thessalonians not in vain?

3. What phrase indicates that the preaching of the Gospel in Thessalonica was not easy either?

4. Paul faced terrible opposition in Philippi that continued into Thessalonica. What kept him going and gave him the strength he needed? (**v.2 & v.4**)

5. When in hardship, we can be susceptible to looking for strength and success outside of Christ. What things in **v. 3-6** did Paul not rely on when ministering to the Thessalonians?

- How can we be deceived into looking for other replacements to ensure our success in serving Christ?

6. Paul's aim was to please God, not people. How can a person who is inclined to be a people- pleaser become a God-pleaser?

7. What metaphor does Paul use in this passage to describe his conduct among the Thessalonians?

- What does this metaphor convey?

8. At a quick glance, it might seem like Paul is too focused on himself and his ministry. However, even while defending his genuineness as an apostle, Paul's perspective was relentlessly God-centered...what about yours?

- When recounting your experiences, sharing your testimony, or explaining your actions, who is the main character in your story? Why?

9. Share a time when you found hope in Christ...what was that hope, and how did it help motivate you or give you strength in your journey?

GOSPEL FOCUS:

1 Thessalonians 2:8 is a beautiful statement on the importance of loving those to whom we witness. Paul points out that his ministry in Thessalonica was not a hit-and-run Gospel invitation. Instead, he was happy to stay, form relationships, and invest in their lives. How does this challenge you in your Gospel efforts?

- What are the benefits of so-called "relational" or "friendship" evangelism?

- Are there any dangers?