

1 THESSALONIANS

2:1-20 | STUDY GUIDE

Human vs God Word

1 THESSALONIANS 2:1, "For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain." (ESV)

- Remember: Paul had sent Timothy back to essentially check on and disciple the church in Thessalonica
 - They were intentional about what had begun there
 - Paul felt the need to assure them of their purpose

1 THESSALONIANS 2:2, "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." (ESV)

- Paul is referring to his first visit to Thessalonica
 - He had just come from Philippi where he and Silas had been arrested and beaten illegally
 - The beating, combined with him being denied his rights as a Roman citizen, left a mark on Paul
 - He mentions the experience also in letter to Corinth
 - (2 Corinthians 11:25)
- Paul has also suffered a reputation beating
 - He seeks to clarify these false accusations in the following verses: "...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."
 - They're not attempting to deceive, flatter, or inflate their egos

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1 THESSALONIANS 2:7, "But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children...like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God..." (ESV)

- Parental language speaks to the maturity of the Thessalonians
- Also speaks to their level of affection

1 THESSALONIANS 2:13, "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers."(ESV)

- This isn't a natural or "man-made" gospel—this is supernatural
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:14, "For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews."
- Paul equates the Gentile persecution with the persecution of the Jewish religious leaders

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- Ioudaioi = Jewish religious leaders and those under their influence
 - In verse 15, Paul directly attributes the crucifixion to these unbelievers, “who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out...”
 - These and Satan are who Paul blames for keeping him from the church in Thessalonica, “But since we were torn away from you...” (2:17-18)

1 THESSALONICA 2:20, “For you are our glory and joy.” (ESV)

- Paul makes a point of affirming the Thessalonians
- His letter will still feature correction and instruction, but he makes a point of clearly telling the church how much he cares

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Fant, Clyde E, and Mitchell G Reddish, *A Guide to Biblical Sites in Greece and Turkey*, Jung Unchan, *A Tale of Two Churches*