

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Wednesday Sermon

Date: February 05, 2020

Text: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

Subject: The LORD's servant and his reward

This letter was written from Corinth, in AD 54, shortly after Paul's departure from Thessalonica (Acts 16,17) and is the earliest of his letters.

As we mentioned in the lesson from the 1st chapter, the theme of the Epistle is threefold:

(1) To confirm a young church in the foundational truths already taught them.

(2) to exhort those in the church at Thessalonica to go on to holiness.

(3) to comfort them concerning those who had fallen asleep. The second coming of Christ is prominent throughout. The Epistle is incidentally most interesting as showing the richness in doctrine of the Apostle Paul with a very newly founded church. During a mission of about one month the apostle had taught this church all the great doctrines of the Christian faith.

Let us now consider the word of God from chapter 2 of 1st Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 2:1 (KJV) *For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:* -- Every one of you know that our coming in unto you was not vain and empty, or deceitful and treacherous. Our preaching was not vain and idle speculations about useless niceties and foolish questions, but sound and solid truth. It was the very word of God which is most likely to profit you who heard us.

1 Thessalonians 2:2 (KJV) *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.*

But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, -- Do you remember? Silas and I had been shamefully taken – our clothes ripped off and beaten with many stripes. Then we were taken to the dungeon where our feet were made fast in the stocks. And why was that? It was because I, being grieved that the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination followed us many days crying, “These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.” I was grieved about this after many days, so I turned and said to the spirit, “I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And he came out the same hour.

Acts 16:19-21 (KJV) *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, **20** And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, **21** And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.*

These men were not grieved because we, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city. No, it was not that. We had touched their manner of getting base gain and they were upset. Therefore, the magistrates commanded us to be beaten and imprisoned. But...Thank God, as Silas and I prayed and sang praises to God about midnight, there was suddenly a great earthquake so that the

foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s band were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awakened out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. It was then that I cried with a loud voice, saying, “Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Silas and I, and brought us out, and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” We said to him, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” We spoke to him the word of the Lord and to all who were in his house! The LORD, in spite of our maltreatment, had opened a door to the gospel and we preached boldly. The jailor took us the same hour of the night, and washed our stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought us into his house, he set food before us, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. What a blessing that was!

we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention. – The apostles were not discouraged at the afflictions they met with, or the opposition that was made against them. They had met with ill treatment at Philippi, as these Thessalonians well knew. There it was that he and Silas were shamefully treated, being put in the stocks; yet no sooner were they set at liberty than they went to Thessalonica, and preached the gospel with as much boldness as ever. Suffering in a good cause should rather sharpen rather than blunt the edge of holy resolution.

1 Thessalonians 2:3 (KJV) *For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:*

Brethren, our words of exhortation to believe the gospel was not of deceit – no, there was nothing deceitful about it; it was plain and

simple. There was nothing unclean about it, nor was there guile. There was deception and no hidden agenda – we were not trying to create “a following just for us,” no – but we exhorted you to believe and follow the LORD.

1 Thessalonians 2:4 (KJV) *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.*

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, -- They were stewards, *put in trust* with the gospel: and it is required of a steward that he be faithful. The gospel which Paul preached was not his own, but the gospel of God. What a privilege to be put in trust with the gospel of God!

Even so we speak; -- We spoke that gospel plainly and exactly as it was delivered us!

not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. – We did not, nor do we now seek to be honored by men. Our words which come from God surely are not designed to please men, but, as we preach it in truth, we please God, who tries our hearts. He knows our thoughts, our purpose, and our design in preaching.

1 Thessalonians 2:5 (KJV) *For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:*

For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, -- Flattering is to try and please or win the favor of a person or persons with disgraceful submissive speech and actions. We used no such words, as you know. We spoke the truth.

Nor a cloke of covetousness; -- We had no hidden motive or agenda – especially that of covetousness. We did not want “**yours,**” – no, we wanted to see **you** come to Jesus Christ with

repentance of your sins and faith in Him as Lord and Savior. We are not trying to make money from this!

God is witness: -- We know – but more importantly, God is witness. He knows our hearts and our words!

1 Thessalonians 2:6 (KJV) *Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.*

Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, -- We expected neither your purses nor your positions in life, neither to be enriched by you nor caressed, and adored, and called Rabbi by you. This apostle exhorted the Galatians ([Ga 5:26](#)) *not to be desirous of vain glory*; his ambition was to obtain *that honour which comes from God*, [Joh 5:44](#). It was the same at Thessalonica.

When we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. -- He tells the church they (the apostles) might have used greater authority, and expected greater esteem, and demanded maintenance, which is meant by the phrase of *being burdensome*. It is true that God has ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 Thessalonians 2:7 (KJV) *But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:*

But we were gentle among you, -- We were meek, mild and moderate; we did not use severity, nor were we haughty; we didn't assume power and dominion. We did not act as Lords over you, the LORD's heritage. We did not command you to do homage and honor to us. We didn't force ourselves upon you, nor did we oblige you to pay for our necessities of life.

even as a nurse cherisheth her children: -- We were even as (in the very same way) as one whose the children are, has bore them as well as nursed them, and therefore has the most tender concern for them; a mother who bears children lays them in her bosom, and hugs them in her arms, warms and cherishes them. We cared for you – and were your spiritual parents earnestly desiring that Christ be formed in you – that is, that they might be settled and grounded in the faith of God’s elect.

1 Thessalonians 2:8 (KJV) *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.*

Being affectionately desirous of you – Paul and his companions had a most affectionate love to their persons, and sought them, not theirs; themselves, not their goods; and to gain them, not to be a gainer by them, or to make a merchandise of them: it was their spiritual and eternal welfare and salvation that he and his companions were earnestly desirous of.

We were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear to us

– The preachers of the gospel to the Thessalonians were willing to not only preach the gospel of God only, but also their own souls (their own lives) because the Thessalonians were dear to them.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).

1 Thessalonians 2:9 (KJV) *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.*

You remember our labour and travail; -- for, labouring night and day, &c. – The preachers denied themselves the liberty they had of taking wages from the churches. To the labour of the ministry Paul added that of his calling, as a tent-maker. He worked with his hands that he might get his own bread and bread for others as we read from other passages. We are not to suppose that the apostles spent the whole night and day in bodily labour, or work, to supply the necessities of their bodies; for then they would have had no time for the work of the ministry. But they spent part of the night, as well as the day, in this work; and were willing to forego their rest in the night, that they might have an opportunity to do good to the souls of men in the day time. Why did they do that?

because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. – Good advice for any man of God anywhere, anytime! Do whatever you have to do in order to preach the gospel and care for the saints of God.

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

The Thessalonians certainly observed their outward manner of life in public before men, and God was witness not only of their behavior in secret, but of the inward principles from which they acted. Their behavior was holy towards God, just towards all men, and unblameable, without giving cause of scandal or offence.

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (KJV) *As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, 12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called*

you unto his kingdom and glory.

It appears from this 11th verse that the apostles not only exhorted and comforted the Thessalonians, but apparently did as they did at Ephesus in teaching and exhorting them publicly and from house to house. A real father cares for his children. He cares about how they will do as life goes on and how they will be faithful to serve the LORD. He charged them as a father, with a father's affection rather than a father's authority. What was the substance of this exhortation and charge?

That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. -- That is our great gospel privilege--that God has called us to his kingdom and glory. The gospel calls us into the kingdom and state of grace here and unto the kingdom and state of glory hereafter, to glory and happiness as our end and to holiness as the way to that end.

What is our great gospel duty--that we walk worthy of God, that the temper of our minds and the manner of our lives be answerable to this call and suitable to this privilege. We should accommodate ourselves to the intention and purpose of the gospel, and live suitably to our profession and privileges, our hopes and expectations, as becomes those who are called with such a high and holy calling.

[Stopped here Wednesday, February 5, 2020]

1 Thessalonians 2:13 (KJV) *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.*

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, -
- What a blessed reason for giving thanks to God!

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, -- the word which they received is called the word of God, because God is the author of it; it comes from him, and is ministered by his authority, and is the written word which is given by his inspiration.

which effectually worketh also in you that believe (are believing) -- and when it does come with power, it effectually works to the quickening of dead sinners, the enlightening of dark minds, the unstopping of deaf ears, the softening of hard hearts, producing faith which works by love, encouraging hope, delivering from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, and comforting and establishing the hearts of the saints under all afflictions, trials, and persecutions.

1 Thessalonians 2:14 (KJV) *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:*

For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: -- The Thessalonian church came into being after the founding of the Jerusalem church, the church in Samaria, the church at the house of Cornelius, and the myriad of other churches which sprang up at the persecution of the church at Jerusalem.

for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: -- In the same way that the Jews persecuted the church at Jerusalem and the

churches of Judaea, the church of the Thessalonians had already suffered the same kinds of things from their own countrymen. But, praise be to God, all who live godly in this life shall suffer persecution.

1 Thessalonians 2:15 (KJV) *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:*

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; -- Speaking of the Jews by whose hands the Lord Jesus Christ was delivered to be crucified; the same ones who had killed the prophets sent unto them; and by whose wicked hands Paul had suffered persecution while he was in that land.

And they please not God, and are contrary to all men: -- Though they considered themselves to be the chosen ones of God and his covenant nation, they did not please him. The wicked men were not only contrary to Christians, but to all kinds of men. In their religious and civil principles, they had an aversion to all men.

1 Thessalonians 2:16 (KJV) *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.*

Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, -- The means of salvation had long been confined to the Jews. *Salvation is of the Jews,* says our Saviour. And they were envious against the Gentiles, and angry that they should be allowed to share in the means of salvation. Nothing provoked them more than our Saviour speaking to them at any time concerning this matter; this enraged the Jews at Jerusalem, when, in his defence, Paul told them, *he was sent unto the Gentiles,* (Acts 20:21). They

had heard him patiently till he uttered these words, but then could endure no longer, but lifted up their voices, and said, *Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live.*

to fill up their sins alway: -- the measure of their own and their fathers' iniquities; see **Mt.** 23:32 a phrase expressive of the abounding of their sins, and of their being under a divine appointment, and of their being limited and restrained by a divine power, and overruled by infinite wisdom, to answer some ends and purposes of God's glory.

Matthew 23:32 (KJV) *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.*

for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. – This speaks of the temporal ruin and destruction, which was now near at hand, and hung over their heads. This letter was written about the year 54 AD, so in about sixteen more years, the wrath of God would fall on the Jews, Therefore is said to be come to them, and which in a little time fell upon their nation and city, and temple, even to the uttermost, to the last degree when Titus besieged Jerusalem, killed them and scattered them to the nations of the earth, and laid Jerusalem in heaps.

1 Thessalonians 2:17 (KJV) ***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.***

We were taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart – This is in passive voice. Paul and his companions were taken away first to Berea, thence to Athens, and finally to Corinth. Because of the persecution of the Jews, they were forced to leave both Thessalonica and Berea.

The Thessalonians were never out of his heart – his thinking and feelings for them.

endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. -- It made them but the more desirous of seeing them face to face again, undoubtedly causing a more abundant earnestness and diligence to come and see them.

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

There was a will and purpose to come to Thessalonica to see the church more than one time, but Satan hindered us. – Satan hindered the apostle from doing what he willed and purposed, but he did not hinder the will of God, which was that Paul should be employed in other work elsewhere. No matter what – and in spite of the devil’s opposition, the work of God goes on. He cannot effectively resist and oppose it so as to stop it. Remember, brethren, in spite of all his opposition, let us labor and hold fast our profession so that we have a sure reward.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 (KJV) *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?*

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? -- These are expressions of great and endeared affection, and high estimation. And it is happy when ministers and people have such mutual affection and esteem of each other, and especially if they shall thus rejoice, if those that sow and those that reap shall rejoice together, *in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.*

1 Thessalonians 2:20 (KJV) *For ye are our glory and joy.*

Ministers and the saints in the churches must all appear before the LORD, and faithful people will be the glory and joy of faithful ministers in that great and glorious day.