

## LESSON 2 – REINFORCING THE PERSECUTED

### *I Thessalonians 2:1-20*

#### Summary

Paul continues to reinforce the Thessalonian's conviction by reminding them of the blameless manner in which he and his fellow workers came to them with the gospel. They spoke boldly, even though they had been persecuted and were facing more persecution. They did not seek glory or compensation from the Thessalonians, even though that was their right. Instead, they demonstrated selfless concern and love for the Thessalonians. As a consequence, in part, the Thessalonians realized and accepted Paul's message as being from God, and it provided great strength to them, as they endured persecution from their own countrymen, much like the Judean Christians, who suffered persecution from their Jewish brethren. However, the wickedness of the Jews has not gone unnoticed or forgotten, while Paul expresses the Thessalonians' persistence and ultimate salvation as his "*crown of rejoicing*".

#### Bible Reading With Questions

##### *Blameless Exhortation – I Thessalonians 2:1-12*

1. How could Paul's preaching to the Thessalonians have been "*in vain*" (see **3:5**; **Galatians 4:11**)?
2. Provide at least 2 lessons or applications to be gleaned from the Thessalonians remembering Paul's boldness in preaching the gospel to them "*in much conflict*"?
3. What false judgments against Paul does he attempt to prevent here?
4. What evidence does Paul call to their remembrance to demonstrate his concern for God's approval and not man's?
5. How did Paul and his companions show their personal love and concern for the Thessalonians?
6. How does Paul summarize his behavior and manner of teaching among the Thessalonians? What lessons can we learn from this text to help us better reach and persuade the lost?
7. What important exhortation did Paul deliver to the Thessalonians, which was worthy of their recollection?

***Blessed Imitation and Avenged Persecution – I Thessalonians 2:13-20***

8. Based on Paul's previous observations, why might the Thessalonians have received their message "*not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God*"?
9. How is that the Word of God "*effectively works*" in us? What is required from us?
10. In what way did the Thessalonians become "*imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus*"? Does this mean we should today imitate the Judean churches?
11. For the Jews, how was it that "*wrath has come upon them to the uttermost*" (notice the past tense)? Keep in mind that this letter was written almost 20 years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
12. Why was Paul unable to personally visit the Thessalonians according to his desire? Explain.
13. How were the Thessalonians Paul's hope, joy, glory, and crown of rejoicing? What does that say about Paul's priorities? How does this reflect upon our own priorities?