

Motives for Ministry
1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

Introduction

Our God is good, and when that is coupled with His many other attributes such as loving, kind, patient, longsuffering, merciful, gracious, holy, righteous, just and infinite with respect to time (eternal), knowledge (omniscient) and power (omnipotent) and therefore the sovereign Creator, we find comfort and hope in all circumstances. I do not have to understand what He is doing at the present time or what news reports indicate could happen in the near future as long as I know that all of these characteristics of God mean that He has a plan and that He includes me in those plans to work in and through me to accomplish His will. Or as Paul succinctly puts it in Romans 8:28, *“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

It has been brought to my attention by several different sources that people are struggling with anxiety as they consider the daily news feeds of a country - a world - in sharp decline on it seems every front. Immorality increases as advocates for sexual exploitation of children - the next level of depravity downward in a sexually perverse society - gain traction with California recently lowering or dropping penalties against those in their twenties who sexually exploit those up to ten years younger than themselves. That is on top of news of sex trafficking becoming rampant in our nation. Social breakdown continues as marriage rates drop, divorce goes up, and “mostly peaceful” protests occur nearly every day going into its fifth month. But not to worry, I read that AP has changed their style guide so that riot will no longer be used to describe reports of groups breaking into stores to loot, pillage, destroy, assault and even murder others. These will instead be labeled as “unrest” since it is *“a vaguer, milder and less emotional term for a condition of angry discontent and protest verging on revolt.”* The terms “protest” and “demonstration” can also be used. It’s as if describing violence with terms of non-violence will make the riots go away.

Then there is the increase in incivility as the political gaps widen with the latest debate between the two men vying for the office of President becoming a melee between an alpha male dog and a beta cat with a pesky crow for a moderator. On top of all this there is the irrational fear generated by media and government over-reaction to a virus that is proving to be quite third rate. In England, where the threat is being made to shut everything down again, COVID-19 ranks somewhere near the 24th leading cause of recent deaths. I am sure it would be about the same here. We don’t even mention the things that used to be the headlines that caused fear such as economic meltdown from deficits caused by extreme overspending or rouge nations seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Have terrorists taken a holiday, or are they minor compared to damage we do to ourselves?

If you did not have twinges of anxiety before, perhaps you do now, and I admit there are times I wake up in the middle of the night with a sense of foreboding as I consider what may occur in the next few months and years. Yet, I am here to tell you that as Christians, we have every reason to look confidently to our God for the future and know His peace in our lives because He is both good and He is sovereign. We have hope because God is at work in and through us to accomplish His will. That is the example we have been seeing in Paul and his companions as we have worked our way through the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians, and it will become even more clear today as we begin our study of 1 Thessalonians 2.

God does not promise us a future on this earth free of pain and affliction. In fact, Jesus warned us that we will most likely have quite the opposite because the world will hate us as it hated Him then and

continues to hate Him now. We can expect to be persecuted and have all manner of evil said against us falsely for the sake of righteousness (Matthew 5:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:12). Yet, we are not to fear or be dismayed because though we will have tribulation in this world, our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world and He grants us His peace (John 16:33). God keeps those who are steadfast of mind in perfect peace because they trust Him (Isaiah 26:3). That is part of the reason for us to pray with thanksgiving and make our supplications and request to God (Philippians 4:6-7).

Turn to 1 Thessalonians 2 as we will see in greater detail the reaction of Paul and his missionary companions to the things they had suffered and the reasons they could respond as they did.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

¹ For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, ² but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. ³ For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; ⁴ but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. ⁵ For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— ⁶ nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. ⁷ But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. ⁸ Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. ⁹ For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; ¹¹ just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, ¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Before I begin our study of this passage in detail I want to point out first that throughout this passage Paul is making a defense against accusations that have been made against him. In a previous sermon I already pointed out from Acts 17:7 that their enemies were already accusing them of treason. From this passage we learn from Paul's defense some of the other things they were accusing Paul and his companions of doing. The attack on the missionaries is based on lies, but the effort is to discredit the message of the gospel that was radically changing lives in Thessalonica and beyond by attacking the credibility and motives of the messengers.

Let me remind you that this is still a very common way for people to try to defend their own weak positions that are without substance. They personally attack those arguing against them instead of dealing with the points of argument that are being made. That will include name calling, false categorization, claims of guilt by association no matter how remote, innuendo, gossip, slander and outright lying. Those who cannot handle the message will attack the messenger. Both Diane and I have had this happen to us many times over the years, and most people we know who are serious about ministry and proclaiming the gospel and the truth of God's word have had it happen to them. But we take heart because Jesus said we should expect it, and the Scriptures direct us on how to deal with it including Paul's example here in 1 Thessalonians.

Paul's defense here, as in other places such as 2 Corinthians 10-12, is not done in any sense of self promotion or pride. It is done because his message is so important that He will engage in what he even describes as foolishness to protect the gospel he was preaching. The attacks on the reputation of Paul and his companions were done to sway people away from the truth of the gospel they were preaching. Their defense is done in order to validate their message.

The Arrival of the Missionaries - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2

Paul begins by citing that what he is about to say concerns things they already know. In fact, in this

passage Paul specifically states four times that what he writes is “as you know” from οἶδατε / oidate. Three times in just the first five verses. Paul is reminding them of things they knew about from either personal experience or from those that had been present when Paul and his companions were with them in Thessalonica. They are witnesses to the fact that what Paul is writing is true. Paul is even emphatic on this stating, “*For you yourselves know.*”

Paul again refers to them as “*brethren*” as he did in 1:4. It is a term of endearment and statement of fact concerning their relationship to one another. He is not referring to fellow Jews because the larger portion of the church there were Gentiles. By God’s mercy and grace they have also been adopted into God’s family by faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. They are siblings, brothers and sisters, to each other.

Paul then refers to their “*coming*” to Thessalonica. This is εἶσοδος / eisodos which Paul also used in 1:9. He is not referring to their physical arrival (which would be ἐρχομαι / erchomai), but rather the figurative sense of their entering among them when they first came, their reception. And he then specifically states it was not in vain. This is κενός / kenos which means “empty,” “without content” and hence “lacking results” or “without effect.” The context of joining this with entering among them puts the emphasis on the character of the work they did among them when they arrived. It is a negative statement of what is said positively in the next verse. The missionaries did not come void of content and power, they instead came with boldness to speak the gospel. The perfect tense verb used here indicating that what had happened then had a lasting effect on them to the present time.

The sense then is this. They knew that Paul and his companions did not begin their work among them with an empty message and being hollow themselves. Their coming had a lasting effect on them.

Paul begins verse 2 with a strong adversative (ἀλλά / alla - but) to contrast this idea of being void of content and power with his reminder about what they already knew the missionaries had experienced in Philippi and yet nevertheless they were bold in proclaiming the gospel to them.

Acts 16 describes the suffering and mistreatment that Paul and Silas had experienced when they were in Philippi. It is not recorded what Timothy may have suffered during his time there. If you will recall, Paul became greatly annoyed by a slave girl who had “*a spirit of divination*” that had been following him around proclaiming, “*These men are bondservants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.*” What she said was true, but Paul did not find it helpful to have a demon possessed girl announcing it. He cast the demon out which ended the ability of the girl to do divination and therefore there was an immediate monetary loss to her master who became upset, had Paul and Silas arrested and dragged before the magistrates. It is bad enough to be falsely arrested and accused, which verse 21 records as they were “*throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.*” Acts 16:22-24 records the suffering and mistreatment they then received.

²² “*The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.* ²³ *When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;* ²⁴ *and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.*”

The suffering, προπάσχω / propaschō, refers to the physical pain they experienced. At minimum, they would have been severely bruised if not also bleeding from the many blows with rods. Their physical misery was then aggravated by being thrown with some force (βάλλω / ballō) into prison and having their feet fastened in the stocks (ξύλον / xulon) which were heavy blocks of wood in which the legs were placed and then securely fastened. You would not be able to move around in them like you might if you were only chained. You become stiff and cannot move around to find relief.

The mistreatment, ὑβρίζω / hubrizō, is the shameful manner of treatment in A) being falsely arrested and accused, B) not given a trial to be able to give a defense, C) publically having their clothes torn off and beaten, and d) then being thrown into the inner part of the prison. All of this was completely illegal

since Paul and Silas were both Roman citizens. Paul would later use this fact to rebuke the magistrates and enabling them to encourage the church there before leaving Philippi to continue their missionary endeavors (Acts 16:37-40).

Such suffering and mistreatment, all done illegally, would cause most people to be at least hesitant in what they would do in the next place in order to avoid it happening again. As we have seen in our own nation, agitators can get a mob to form quickly and cause much harm before any consideration of the law is made. They can even intimidate the authorities to act illegally as has also happened a lot in our major cities over the last four months. Paul reminds them of what they already knew. Paul and his companions were bold, not hesitant, and they were bold even though they faced much opposition in bringing them the gospel.

Note carefully here that Paul attributes that boldness directly to their relationship and trust in God. He was not boasting about his own courage. He was boasting in the God in whom we can find the same courage and boldness to tell others His message regardless of any opposition. Paul had already pointed out in 1:5 that their gospel came in word, in power and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction. The tendency is to think of Paul as a naturally bold individual charging in to do whatever it took. In Acts 9, only a few days after being saved and baptized, Paul is in the synagogues arguing that Jesus is the son of God eventually provoking a plot to murder him. That same kind of boldness is seen throughout Acts, with perhaps one of the most audacious acts recorded in Acts 15:19-20 when Paul was in Lystra. After being stoned and left for dead, Paul got back up and went back into the city! However, the truth about Paul's boldness comes out in 1 Corinthians 2:3 in which he comments that he was with them "*in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,*" and in Ephesians 6:19-20 in which he asks them to pray for him that he might speak boldly as he out to speak. Paul was not naturally bold, but he was bold in God because he trusted Him. That is an encouragement to us that we can overcome our own fears in the same way. We can be bold in the Lord.

The opposition here, ἀγών / agōn, from which we get our word "agony," is also translated as conflict, contention and earnest striving. The word is a metaphor arising from usage in describing athletic contests and then later a race, a struggle or a battle. Whatever the particular opponent, external or internal, it "*involves intense exertion and strenuous, persistent effort to overcome*" (Hiebert). From the account in Acts 17, it would appear this refers primarily to the Jews that had rejected the gospel and had quickly become antagonistic toward it and those proclaiming it. This outward opposition would result in strenuous exertion and inward deep concern which are the other connotations of the verb.

No wonder Paul's boldness had to be set in God. These are not things you can generate and sustain by sheer self will over a long time, but Paul learned to live in this state and be content. We can and must do the same ourselves. God never meant for the Christian life to be a cake walk. We can expect outward opposition which will provoke inward anxiety and which is overcome only by learning to trust the Lord with intense exertion. Walking in faith is an upward climb, not a downward stroll. It requires you to step out in the direction of what you fear and trust the Lord for the results even when you don't like them. And as Paul points out in the next section, that cannot be done unless your motives for life are correct.

Purity of Motives - 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6

In verses 3-6 Paul gives a defense demonstrating the purity of their message, their passion and their coming.

The Purity of their Message. Paul begins by contrasting their message to those of the religious hucksters which were common at that time. This makes it apparent that one of the accusations against them was that they were like the charlatans that abounded then because the ignorance and superstition of the pagans could be easily exploited for personal gain. Ignorant people, those who simply do not know because they either do not yet have the training to make informed evaluations and decisions or have been indoctrinated in things that are not true, can easily be led to believe things that are not true and act upon

them. Our own society has become much like that with our schools failing to teach the broad spectrum of knowledge and skills necessary to be discerning as well as indoctrinating in false philosophies which are then reinforced by media and government. No wonder people are so easily fleeced by salesmen and led astray by false teacher and by politicians that make promises that are contrary to reality. Socialism works only until you run out of other people's wealth, and judging people by the color of their skin is still racism regardless of which skin hue you are favoring.

Paul makes it clear that their exhortation, (παράκλησις / paraklāsis), their earnest appeals to them concerning the gospel, were the opposite of the religious marketers of their time. First, it was without error, πλάνης / planās, its content would not mislead or deceive. The gospel is true for the word of God is true (John 17:17) arising from the God of truth (Psalm 31:5), Jesus who is the truth, the way and the life (John 14:6) and the Spirit of truth (John 16:13). The charlatans were deceivers.

Second, it was without impurity, ἀκαθαρσίας / akatharsias, a word when used in the moral sense referred to "*the defilement of the soul by all kinds of wrongdoing*" such as lustful, luxurious or profligate living. Paul counters the accusation that they had impure motives seeking to exploit their followers. The religious hucksters of that time would exploit people both sexually and financially as warned about in 2 Peter 2. The context here indicates this was probably an accusation against them of monetary greed instead of sexual exploitation, though Paul's defense here would cover both.

Third, it did not come in deceit, δόλος / dolos, which refers to deception by using trickery. The word itself refers to catching a fish with bait. There were plenty of fakers and swindlers around then as well as sorcerers and philosophers. We have them still in our own time including fortune tellers, false religions, faith healers, prosperity preachers, bait and switch evangelists, and psychologists who peddle worldly wisdom at an expensive price.

None of these things were true about Paul and his companions, for in contrast to the accusations made against them, they and their message had their origin in God. First note that they had been approved by God. The word here, δοκιμάζω / dokimazō, means to be regarded as genuine on the basis of testing, and in the perfect tense used here, it means God had tested them in the past and they remained qualified. It is on the basis of that testing that they were entrusted with the good news of salvation by God's grace through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We know a lot about the testing that Paul went through and God's entrusting him to be a missionary since it is recorded in Acts 9, 13, etc. We know from Acts 15 that Silas had demonstrated enough character to be considered a leading man in the church in Jerusalem and was sent by them to accompany Paul back to Antioch with their letter and that Paul choose him a co-laborer for the second missionary journey. Acts 15:32 also states that Silas was a prophet. Acts 16 recounts Paul choosing Timothy, who was well spoken of by the brethren in Lystra and Iconium, to also go on the second missionary journey. 1 Timothy 3:6, 10; 5:22 all make it clear that it is proper and necessary for church leaders to be first tested before being recognized with those roles and responsibilities. 1 John 4:1 adds that because many false prophets have gone out into the world, every spirit needs to be tested whether they are from God or not.

B) The Purity of their Passion. Having been tested and approved by God and entrusted with God's message of Good news, their appeal to the Thessalonians was without error, impurity or deceit. On this basis Paul now directly states the purity of their passion, "*so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.*"

The word speak here, λαλέω / laleō, is broad in meaning covering everything from talking to a gathered audience formally or informally to speaking personally to an individual. The record in Acts is that they spoke about the gospel in every kind of setting. But notice immediately that Paul now speaks directly to their motives both negatively and positively. They do not speak to please men, but they do speak to please God. Why? Because God is the one that examines or tests their hearts - same word as at the beginning of the verse. The Christian life is a walk in which your faith is constantly tested by the encounters of life whether you will trust God and mature or not.

Paul sought to persuade men to the truth of his message by reasoning from the Scriptures (Acts 18:4; 2 Corinthians 5:11), but he did not seek in anyway to give them pleasure or be agreeable to them by his speech. Paul would not be able to consider himself a slave of Christ if he sought to please men (Galatians 1:10). He did not conform to Greek ideas of oratory - "*cleverness of speech*" or "*persuasive words of wisdom*" (1 Cor. 1:17; 2:4). In fact, his opponents accused him of being contemptible in his speech (2 Corinthians 10:10). As Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, "*the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*" But Paul proclaimed it because "*God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.*" The cross and the foolishness of the gospel are the wisdom of God by which He removes any possibility of boasting by man except in the Lord Himself who saves sinners by His own gracious choice.

There is always a temptation to try to make the gospel message more palatable to men, but that is never good. Most often it is done to try to please people or at least avoid their displeasure, but even if done with the motive of trying to make it easier to get people saved, it is still wrong, for it is God that saves, not your manipulation of people's emotions or your less demanding method of salvation. Any offer of a different gospel, a distorted gospel, one that is contrary to what Jesus and the apostles preached is false and brings a curse (Galatians 1:6-9). Your motive must be to seek to please God in all things and not men. If you please God, you will also please the godly, and you will be used by God to bring Him glory. If you seek to please people, your immediate circumstances may be more pleasurable or at least tolerant, but the long term consequences will not be good for either you or them.

C) The Purity of Their Coming. Paul concludes by proving his point by citing what they did and did not do. This week we will look at what they did not do since that is tied directly to their motivations, and we will look at what they did in my next sermon since that gives us a pattern for proper ministry. What did they not do? ⁵ "*For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness—* ⁶ *nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.*"

First, they did not use words of flattery at anytime they were with them. Flattery is praise given as a means of gratifying someone's vanity. There are many warnings about flattery in the scriptures such as Proverbs 26:28 that "*a flattering mouth works ruin,*" but the point here is to back up what Paul has already said. Flattery is used to please men, and they sought to please God, not men. In addition, flattery is used to deceive, as in Proverbs 29:5, "*a man who flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for his steps,*" and it is used to seduce as in the warning in Proverbs 7:21, "*with her many persuasions she entices him; with her flattering lips she seduces him.*" Paul made it clear in back in verse 3 that their exhortation was "*not from error or impurity or by way of deceit.*"

Paul again stresses that this was something they already knew. They were witnesses of how Paul and his companions had conducted themselves, and the message and the manner in which they had brought it.

Second, all that they did and said was never from "*a pretext for greed.*" They never had any pretense or pretended action or motive by which they would satisfy their own greed. As Paul makes clear later in the letter, they had no desire to acquire any kind of material wealth from the Thessalonians, in fact, they worked with their own hands to provide their own support so that they would not be a financial burden on them. Their motive was to please God, not men including themselves. The exhortations of their speech was without any kind of deceit.

Paul calls on God as his witness because only God knows the actual motives of the heart. It is as proclaimed in Jeremiah 17:9-10, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked: Who can now it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.*" Paul appeals to God for the Lord knows their motivations.

Third, Paul makes it clear that they did not seek glory from any human. They did not try to obtain honor or praise from them or any others. There was nothing impure in their speech, their actions or their motives. Their motive was to please God, not men, including themselves.

Paul then strengthens this claim by pointing out that they could have done that properly if they wanted because of their position as apostles of Christ. Paul was an apostle in the full sense of that word as one who had seen the resurrected Christ and had been sent out by Him (Acts 9). Silas and Timothy were apostles in the more general sense of a messenger or envoy as in its usage for Titus in 2 Corinthians 8:23 and Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25. Their positions gave them standing as men with authority or power and having importance. The idea here is that they could have made demands or been a burden on those to whom they were ministering. Paul makes the point in 1 Corinthians 9:1-18 that as an apostle he had the proper right to receive compensation for the work he was doing among them even referring to the fact that the Lord taught that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel (Matthew 10:10). However, Paul and his companions did not exercise that right. Their strategy was to preach the gospel of Christ without charge, and the wisdom of it was proved out in being able to use that to refute the false accusations that they were charlatan hucksters seeking to exploit other people.

Conclusions

Paul and his companions had suffered and been mistreated not only in Philippi, but eventually in most places they went as is recorded in the book of Acts. Despite the hardships they experienced, they remained bold in their own faith and ministry because they trusted God and were motivated by the desire to please Him in all things. They did not desire to gain the things the world strives for such as pleasure, material goods or fame - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes or the boastful pride of life (1 John 2:16). Because of that, they were free from error in their message and any hint of either impure motives or actions and anything deceitful.

It is easy to become discouraged and disheartened in a society increasingly marked by the things the Lord hates listed in Proverbs 6:16-19, yet as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have a purpose in life that transcends all of these things including any evil that may eventually befall us. We represent Jesus Christ on this earth and have the message of the gospel that can change our worst enemy into a fellow brother or sister in Christ. We can walk with the Lord proclaiming Him and the gospel the same way Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 using weapons that are *“divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”*

Do not be disheartened. Do not be discouraged. Our God is powerful and He has entrusted to us that believe a purpose in life that transcends every circumstance so that even if you suffer and are mistreated and illegally thrown into prison, you can sing hymns of praise to God and see God at work. Their purpose transcended their circumstances and they eventually found out that God’s plan for them being thrown in prison was so that the jailer and his household could be set free from sin.

What will God do in and through your life if your motive for living is like theirs? Seek to please the Lord, not men. Live your life for His glory, not for anyone else, including yourself.

Sermon Notes - 10/4/2020
MOTIVES FOR MINISTRY - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

INTRODUCTION

Comfort in God

Worry in a world of turmoil

Peace & Confidence in God

Peace in tribulation

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

A defense against false accusations

Discrediting the message by attacking the messenger

Paul's self defense to protect the message

The Arrival of the Missionaries - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2

Reminder of what they knew

Their coming / entrance was not in vain

Acts 16 - Suffering and Mistreatment in Philippi

Suffering, προπάσχω / propaschō,

Mistreatment, ὑβρίζω / hubrizō

Their boldness in God

Their opposition / contention / earnest striving, ἀγών / agōn

Purity of Motives - 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6

A) The Purity of their Message - a contrast to religious hucksters

Exhortation without error

Exhortation without impurity

Exhortation without deceit

Approved & tested by God

B) The Purity of their Passion

Their speaking, λαλέω / laleō

Persuasion vs worldly wisdom

Pleasing God, not men

C) The Purity of Their Coming

Without flattery

Without pretext for greed

The witness of God

Without seeking glory from men

Without exercising the authority of apostles

Conclusions

Overcoming discouragement by proper motive and walk

Example of Paul & Silas in jail

KIDS KORNER – Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – Do one or more of the following: 1) Count how many times the word “motive” is used. 2) Talk with your parents about the motivation necessary to live a proper life.

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. How do God’s attributes bring comfort and hope to you? Why can Christians be confident and hopeful in the midst of a declining society? What are God’s promises to a Christian related to trouble, pain and affliction? How does Paul’s defense reveal the accusations made against them? Why do people with weak arguments make personal attacks against their opponent? Why is Paul reminding them of what they know? What does Paul mean that their “*coming was not in vain*”? What happened in Philippi that Paul and Silas “suffered” and were “mistreated”? Explain. Why does that make their boldness in Thessalonica all the more remarkable? What is the relationship between Paul’s boldness and his trust in God? In what ways did Paul have much opposition / contention / striving (ἀγών / agōn) in Thessalonica? Why and in what ways are hucksters able to take advantage of ignorant people? In what ways has American society become more ignorant? Explain. Paul’s exhortation was without error, without impurity & without deceit. Explain the importance of each claim. How were Paul & Silas tested and approved by God? In what ways do charlatans speak to please men? How was Paul’s speech different from that? What is the danger of trying to simplify the gospel? What are some ways people use flattering speech? What are some ways that false teachers hide their greedy motives? What are some examples in Paul’s life that demonstrate he did not seek glory from men? What authority did apostles have in the church? Why didn’t Paul seek financial support from the churches in which he ministered? Summarize this passage and explain how it helps you to stand firm and hopeful in the midst of a negatively changing society? What motivates you in the activities you do in daily life?