

# ***Spiritual Integrity***

## ***I Thess 2:1-6***

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. <sup>2</sup> But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. <sup>3</sup> For our exhortation *did not come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit.

<sup>4</sup> But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup> For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness— God *is* witness. <sup>6</sup> Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

### **Introduction**

It then dawned on me that more leaders than not find themselves doing ministry for all the WRONG reasons. Here are just a few of those WRONG reasons:

**1. Driven by SURVIVAL** – we've all been in situations where we made decisions based on the best chance of creating the least resistance.

**2. Driven by CONFLICT AVOIDANCE** – Similar to survival, these leaders have a strong aversion to conflict. Consequently, this is reflected in the decisions they make.

**3. Driven by SELF-PROMOTION** – these leaders only do that which will bring them recognition. When at bat they only swing for the stands not realizing what the team really needs to win is a sacrifice fly.

**4. Driven by TRADITION** – the dreaded “T” word in Adventism... these leaders refuse to do anything outside of what they’ve always done and are comfortable with.

**5. Driven by FEAR** – Fear affects us all, but leaders who are DRIVEN by fear make decisions that take the least amount of faith.

David Wells in his book, *No Place for Truth* [Eerdmans], and its sequel, *God in the Wasteland* [Eerdmans], shows how the American church has on a wide scale abandoned biblical truth and embraced whatever works and whatever makes us feel good. We’re being encouraged to magnify “love” and de-emphasize doctrine because it only divides. So when popular Christian authors come out with stuff that is heretical and anyone dares to challenge them on it, the critic is called unloving. The false teacher is a poor, misunderstood victim of heresy hunting. If we’re men-pleasers, we’ll be tempted to bend the truth to please people. Frankly, there are some hard teachings in God’s Word, and it’s always tempting to water them down so as not to offend anyone. That’s even true in presenting the gospel. The doctrine of eternal punishment in hell isn’t exactly popular or heartwarming (no pun intended!). But it’s God’s truth and we can’t waffle on truth and be men of integrity. We please God through pure doctrine.

## **Review**

# Lesson

## I. Our Boldness

1 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. <sup>2</sup> But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.

### **you yourselves —emphatic,**

An appeal again to the Thessalonians own experience (cf. [1Thessalonians 1:5-note](#)), as distinguished from the report of others, and strengthened in the present instance by the repetition of the significant word **brethren**. **You** is emphatic in the Greek emphasizing that the Thessalonians knew personally how Paul's team came into Thessalonica with the gospel (see notes [1Thessalonians 1:5](#); [2:1](#), [2:2](#), [2:5](#), [2:11](#); [4:2](#)).

The missionary martyr **Jim Elliot** wrote in his journal:

In spiritual work, if nowhere else, the character of the worker decides the quality of his work. Shelley and Byron may be moral free-lancers and still write good poetry. Wagner may be lecherous and still produce fine music, but it cannot be so in any work for God. Paul could refer to his own character and manner of living for proof of what he was saying to the Thessalonians. Nine times

over in this first epistle he says, “You know,” referring to the Thessalonians’ firsthand observation of Paul’s private as well as public life. Paul went to Thessalonica and lived a life that more than illustrated what he preached; it went beyond illustration to convincing proof. No wonder so much work in the Kingdom is shoddy; look at the moral character of the worker. (MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson or Logos)

## our Coming

**eisodos: an entrance, a means or place of entering**

**Original Word:** εἴσοδος, ου, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** eisodos

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ice'-od-os)

**Short Definition:** entering, entrance, entry

**Definition:** (act of) entering, an entrance, entry.

### **NAS Exhaustive Concordance**

#### **Word Origin**

from eis and hodos

#### **Definition**

an entrance, a means or place of entering

**εἴσοδος**, εἰσόδου, ἡ (ὁδός) (from Homer on), an entrance, i. e. both the place or way leading into a place (as, a gate), and the act of entering;

## **vain**

**kenos: empty**

**Original Word:** ΚΕΝÓΣ, ἦ, ÓΝ

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** kenos

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ken-os')

**Short Definition:** empty, vain, hollow

**Definition:** (a) empty, (b) met: empty (in moral content), vain, ineffective, foolish, worthless, (c) false, unreal, pretentious, hollow.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**2756** *kenós* – properly, *empty, void*; hence, *worthless* ("null"), *amounting to zero* (of no value, profit).

### **I Thess 3:5**

<sup>5</sup> For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

### **I Thess 2:13**

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

### **2 Thess 3:1**

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you,

I Cor 15:58

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Gal. 2:2

<sup>2</sup> And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.

Gal 4:11

<sup>11</sup> I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

Phil 2:16

<sup>16</sup> holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

**<sup>2</sup> But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.**

More than being **not in vain** to the contrary, their preaching had been in **boldness** which is all the more dramatic when we recall the context of what had happened to them just before coming to Thessalonica

were spitefully treated

**hubrizó: to run riot, to outrage, insult**

**Original Word:** ὑβρίζω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** hubrizó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (hoo-brid'-zo)

**Short Definition:** I insult

**Definition:** I insult, treat with insolence.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**5195** *hybrízō* (from 5196 /*hýbris*, "an injury, reproach") – properly, to seize (steal); (figuratively) to injure, bring loss, especially to damage someone's reputation (good name, honor); to rob a person of what rightfully belongs to them (seizing it away from them and for one's own).

5195 /*hybrízō* ("deliberately, spitefully injure") refers to mistreating people, using unfair tactics to inflict undeserved harm. This expresses the work of "one whose insolence and contempt of others breaks forth in wanton and outrageous acts" (K. Wuest, *Word Studies, Vol 2, Pastoral Epistles, 1 Timothy*, 34).

we were bold

**parrésiazomai: to speak freely or boldly**

**Original Word:** παρρησιάζομαι

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** parrésiazomai

**Phonetic Spelling:** (par-hray-see-ad'-zom-ahee)

**Short Definition:** I speak freely, boldly

**Definition:** I speak freely, boldly; I am confident.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**Cognate:** **3955** *parrhēsiázomai* – speaking boldly, "derived from *pan* (3956/ *pás* and *rhēsis* (4483/*rhéō* hence, *bold* 'speaking out, of every word' " (*WS*, 933). See 3954 (*parrēsia*).

**Had the Boldness** (**parrhesiazomai** from **parrhesia** = freedom or frankness in speaking or confident in spirit and demeanor <> **pas** = all + **rhesis** = speech) means literally speaking out of every word and conveys the idea idea of freedom to say all and thus means to speak freely, openly, boldly, fearlessly, without constraint. The Greeks used this word for speaking in a democratic assembly.

**in our God**

## **in much conflict.**

**agón: a gathering, contest, struggle**

**Original Word:** ἀγών, ὄνος, ὄ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Masculine

**Transliteration:** agón

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ag-one')

**Short Definition:** a contest

**Definition:** an (athletic) contest; hence, a struggle (in the soul).

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**73 agón**(a masculine noun, and the root of the English words, "agony," "agonize") – properly, a *contest (struggle)*, a grueling *conflict (fight)*; (figuratively) *positive struggle* that goes with "*fighting the good fight of faith*" (1 Tim 6:12) – which literally states, "*Struggle (75 /agōnízomai) the good struggle (73 /agón) of the (life of) faith.*"

[73 (*agón*) refers to "an (athletic) *contest*; hence, a *struggle* (in the soul)" (Souter).

**Calvin** notes that...

We know that indignity and persecution weaken and indeed completely break men's minds. It was, therefore, a work of God that, although Paul had suffered various misfortunes and indignity, he appeared unaffected, and did not hesitate to launch an assault on a large and wealthy city for the purpose of leading its people captive to Christ.

Here are the 9 uses of **parrhesiazomai** in the NT. Note the concentration in Acts in Luke's description of Spirit filled men proclaiming the gospel.

**Acts 9:27** But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and



how at Damascus he had **spoken out boldly** in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord.

**Acts 13:46** And Paul and Barnabas **spoke out boldly** and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

**Acts 14:3** Therefore they spent a long time there **speaking boldly** with reliance upon the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

**Acts 18:26** and he (Apollos) began **to speak out boldly** in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

**Acts 19:8** And he entered the synagogue and continued **speaking out boldly** for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.

**Acts 26:26** "For the king knows about these matters, and I (Paul) **speak** to him also with **confidence**, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

**Ephesians 6:20** (see note) (pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel) for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I **may speak boldly**, as I ought to speak. (**Comment:** Always a good prayer request).

**1 Thessalonians 2:2** 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.

**John MacArthur** who himself has experienced **much opposition** reminds us that...

In the ministry, there is always pressure to mitigate the message, to be inoffensive to sinners, to make the gospel acceptable to them. But such a compromise had no place in Paul's strategy. Instead, he had full confidence in God's power to overcome all opposition and achieve His redemptive purpose. The servant of God preaches the true, unmitigated message God has laid out in His Word, not some other message. He does so for the sake of truth, not for personal popularity. And when **opposition** comes, he trusts in the power of God and stays obedient to his calling. All that was true of Paul and his companions. As with all dedicated preachers of the gospel, they counted the cost of faithfully confronting sinners with the truth and rested boldly in the sovereign, supreme power of God. (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

**The Fear of Man Bringeth a Snare** - The pioneer evangelist Peter Cartwright spent 70 years in the work of the Lord and always preached the Word of God without fear or favor. One Sunday he was asked to speak at a Methodist church in the southern part of the United States. During the song just before the message, the pastor whispered to him that Andrew Jackson had just entered the sanctuary. He cautioned Cartwright to be very careful of what he said lest he offend their famous guest. The evangelist, however, knowing that "the fear of man bringeth a

snare” ([Pr 29:25](#)), was determined not to compromise the truth. He also knew that great leaders need the Lord as much as anyone, so he boldly proclaimed the gospel. In fact, halfway through his sermon he said, “I understand that Andrew Jackson is present in the congregation today. If he does not repent of his sins and accept Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he will be just as lost as anyone else who has never asked God for His forgiveness.”

Instead of becoming angry, Jackson admired the preacher for his courage. He listened with keen interest to the message and felt such deep conviction that after the service Cartwright was able to lead him to the Lord. From that moment on, the two became the best of friends.

## II. Our Purity

<sup>3</sup> For our exhortation *did* not *come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit.

### Exhortation

(**paraklesis** from **pará** = side of, beside + **kaléo** = call) literally means a calling to one's side for admonition, encouragement, exhortation, consolation or comfort.

**MacArthur** says that in the present context it means an urgent cry, appeal, or call, with an emphasis on judgment. Such usage stressed for Paul's readers the urgency and directness of his preaching. (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

## error

### plané: a wandering

**Original Word:** πλάνη, ης, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** plané

**Phonetic Spelling:** (plan'-ay)

**Short Definition:** a wandering, error

**Definition:** a wandering; fig: deceit, delusion, error, sin.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**Cognate:** 4106 *plánē* (a feminine noun derived from 4105 /*planáō*) – deviant behavior; a *departure* from what God says is true; an error (deception) which results in *wandering* (roaming into sin). See 4105 (*planaō*).

## uncleanness

### akatharsia: uncleanness

**Original Word:** ἀκαθαρσία, ας, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** akatharsia

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ak-ath-ar-see'-ah)

**Short Definition:** uncleanness, impurity

**Definition:** uncleanness, impurity.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**Cognate:** 167 *akatharsía* (from 1 /A "not" and 2513 /*katharós*, "clean because unmixed, pure") – ritual *impurity*, caused by leprosy, open infection, child birth, touching a corpse, etc. See 169 (*akathartos*).

**ἀκαθαρσία**, (ας, ἡ (ἀκάθαρτος) (from Hippocrates down),  
**uncleanness;**

**a.** physical: Matthew 23:27.

**b. in a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living:**

Romans 1:24; Romans 6:19; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19;

Ephesians 4:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; used of impure motives in 1 Thessalonians 2:3.

**Impurity** - is literally "**absolutely never out of impurity**". Although the Greek word **akatharsia** often refers to sexual misconduct as discussed below and this could be the primary meaning, the context refers primarily to their message and motives -- their preaching is not from **impure motives** such as ambition, pride, greed, popularity. Their message was not that which characterized the traveling charlatans of Paul's day.

### **deceit**

**dolos: a bait, fig. craft, deceit**

**Original Word:** δόλος, ου, ὁ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Masculine

**Transliteration:** dolos

**Phonetic Spelling:** (dol'-os)

**Short Definition:** deceit, guile, treachery

**Definition:** deceit, guile, treachery.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**1388** *dólos* – properly, bait; (figuratively) deceit (trickery) using *bait* to *alure* ("hook") people, especially those *already festering* in *excessive, emotional pain* (brought on by themselves).

**1388** /*dólos* ("deceit motivated by *guile*") uses *decoys* to snare (deceive) people which implies *treachery* to exploit the naive (undiscerning) – *baiting* them through (with) their *own greed*.

**Wiersbe** explains that...

The word translated "**guile**" (deceit) carries the idea of "baiting a hook." In other words, Paul did not trap people into being saved, the way a clever salesman traps people into buying his product. Spiritual witnessing and "Christian salesmanship" are different. Salvation does not lie at the end of a clever argument or a subtle presentation. Often we hear, "I don't care what your method is, just so long as your message is right." But some methods are unworthy of the Gospel. They are cheap, whereas the Gospel is a costly message that

required the death of God's only Son. They are worldly and man centered, whereas the Gospel is a divine message centered in God's glory. (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor or Logos)

**MacDonald** nicely summarizes this verse commenting that... The apostle's exhortation to believe the gospel was true in its source, pure in its motive, and dependable in its method. As to its source, it did not spring from false doctrine but from the truth of God. As to its motive, the apostle looked on the Thessalonians unselfishly, with their good in view, and not with any ulterior, impure desire. As to its method, there was no clever plot to deceive them. Apparently his jealous enemies were accusing him of heresy, lustful desire, and craftiness. (MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson or Logos)

### **ACTS 20** <sup>33</sup>

I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. <sup>34</sup> Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.

### **2 Cor 2:17**

<sup>17</sup> For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

### **2 Cor 4:2**

<sup>2</sup> But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

agree with **Richison** that...

A plethora of people peddle their own viewpoints in the church today. Paul did not come with his own viewpoint; he came with the Word of God. We must set forth truth as it is rather than the way we want it to be. We should not manipulate Scripture for the sake of elegance in preaching. We simply set forth truth as it is. Our preaching should be as accurate as the multiplication table. We must never alter or water down the Word or the gospel. Inaccurately stating of God's Word will ruin its message. (Ref)

### **III. Our Trustworthiness**

<sup>4</sup> But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

#### **Approved**

**(dokimazo [word study]** from **dokimos** = tested, proved or approved, tried as metals by fire and thus purified from **dechomai** = to accept, receive) means to assay, to test, to prove, to put to the test, to make a trial of, to verify, to discern to approve.

**Dokimazo** involves not only testing but determining the genuineness or value of an event or object. That which has been tested is demonstrated to be genuine and trustworthy. **Dokimazo** is never used of Satan, as he never tests that he may approve but only to cause the one tested to fail.

In this verse **dokimazo** is in the **perfect tense** which signifies that Paul and Silas and Timothy were tested and found valid by God and that His approval had lasting effect. God had validated and continued to approve Paul's ministry. God demands that those whom He commissions for His service first prove themselves before being assigned to a responsible sphere of activity. The **perfect tense** also implies that there was a time of testing prior to their being entrusted with the gospel.

### **Entrusted**

(**pisteuo** from **pístis** = faith) in this context refers to having confidence in a person, giving credence to them. This is explanatory serving to define more nearly that to which the approval was directed - **entrusted with the Gospel**.

A similar sentiment of God's trusting the Gospel to Paul other **vessels of honor** is expressed in several NT passages...

**Ephesians 3:8** (note) To me, the very least of all saints, **this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles** the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things

**1Ti 1:11** according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted. (**pisteuo**) 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because **He considered me faithful** (**pistos** = trustworthy, dependable, reliable), putting me into service; 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. And yet I was



shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.

**1 Cor 9:17** For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, **I have a stewardship entrusted to me.**

**Gal 2:7** But on the contrary, **seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel** to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised

**1 Tim 6:20** O Timothy, **guard what has been entrusted to you**, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"--

**2 Timothy 1:14** (note) Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, **the treasure which has been entrusted** to you.

**2 Timothy 2:2** (note) And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these **entrust** to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

**Titus 1:3** (note) but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in **the proclamation** with which I was **entrusted** according to the commandment of God our Savior

**even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.**

It is because we know this solemn fear of the Lord that we work so hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too. (NLT, [2Cor 5:11](#))

As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the favor of men (by toning down his message) or of God (by speaking the truth without compromise)? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. ([Gal 1:9-10](#))

The Gospel has been entrusted to every believer, not just the preacher and teacher and Scripture provides **strong motivation** for all believers to speak so as to please God and not men... And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' ([Luke 16:2](#))

So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God. ([Ro 14:12](#)-note)

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. ([2Cor 5:10-11](#))

**Examines** - see discussion of meaning of dokimazo above. God is the one Who continually examined and approved them, and they were responsible to Him, not to the audience whom they addressed. And the same principle holds today for every preacher

and teacher of God's holy Word, which should be spoken forth with a sense of reverence and awe that God would be willing to trust us with this precious, eternal, life changing truth that the world desperately needs to hear ([2Ti 2:15](#)-note)

**MacArthur** adds that...

The apostle Paul was consumed with pleasing God because he knew that only God truly examines the hearts of those who serve Him. Here **hearts** refers to the inner self, the real person, where thought, feeling, will, and motive converge. God scrutinizes all those factors and knows with certainty whether His servants are seeking to please Him or people. Paul's recognition of that omniscience was what motivated his service. (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

**Spurgeon** wrote...

A minister said to me, "If I were to preach in your bold style, I would lose some of my richest people and offend the rest." And if he did, would he not have an easy conscience, and is not that worth more than money? The minister who cares for any man's opinion when he is doing his duty is unworthy of his office. (Ed note: Amen!)

## IV. Our Motivation

<sup>5</sup> For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness.

### **Flattering**

(**kolakeia** from **kolax** = a fawner) refers to cajolery which is an attempt to persuade by use of insincere speech or exaggerated praise. **Kolakeia** was a well-known secular Greek term for a practice despised as much as "boldness" was valued, and which is occasionally connected with financial gain. Flattery was a well-known, much despised practice in Paul's day.

**Kolakeia** contains the idea of deception for selfish ends. It is flattery not merely for the sake of giving pleasure to others but for the sake of self interest. It is deception by "slick" eloquence (sounds like many politicians we know doesn't it?) with the idea of winning over the listener's heart in order to exploit not edify.

**Hiebert** writes that...

Flattery does not simply mean complimentary words intended to tickle the ears of the hearers pleasurably. It is rather the smooth-tongued discourse of the orator aimed at making a favorable impression that would gain influence over others for selfish advantage...Paul denies that he and his fellow workers had used the preaching of the gospel as a foil for securing selfish advantage.

**Flattery** is like soft soap...90 percent lye.

Only two groups of people fall for **flattery**—men and women.

A man's body is remarkably sensitive. Pat him on the back and his head swells.

We do not hate **flattery**, any one of us – we all like it. —C. H. Spurgeon

There is nothing reliable in what they say. Their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; They **flatter** with their tongue. ([Psalm 5:9](#))

They speak falsehood to one another; With **flattering** lips and with a double heart they speak. May the LORD cut off all **flattering** lips, The tongue that speaks great things ([Psalm 12:2-3](#))

A man who flatters his neighbor Is spreading a net for his steps. ([Proverbs 29:5](#))

**Pretext for greed** - They did not use a "false front" nor "put on a mask to cover up greed". The KJV rendering of **a cloak of covetousness** paints a vivid picture. Paul declares that they did not preach among the Thessalonians in order to shake out whatever financial gain they could from them, trying all the while to hide this motive. He emphasizes that he never misused his apostolic office in order to disguise, conceal or to hide avaricious designs. Instead, he reminded them that the missionaries had worked with their own hands while among the Thessalonians so as not to be a burden on any of them ([1Th 2:9-note](#)).

### **Cloak**

**Pretext** (4392) (**prophasis** from **prophaino** = to cause to shine before, to appear before, be apparent <> **pró** = before, + **phaino** = to appear, to shine before. Vincent gives the origin as **pro** = before, in front of + **phemi** = to say, affirm) is that which is alleged as the cause, an allegation, plea. In other words it denotes something put forward for appearance to conceal what lies behind it.

There are 7 uses of **prophasis** in the NT...

**Matthew 23:14** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, even while for a **pretense** you make long prayers; therefore you shall receive greater condemnation.

**Mark 12:40** who (referring to the Scribes) devour widows' houses, and **for appearance's sake** offer long prayers;

these will receive greater condemnation. (**Comment:** The hypocritical scribes looked good outwardly but this was only a sham and a cover for their internal greed and selfishness)

**Luke 20:47** who devour widows' houses, and **for appearance's** sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation. (**Comment:** Exactly how they would **devour widows' houses** is not clear but could refer to foreclosing on mortgages, to excessive charges for services rendered, to eating with widows as a forced hospitality, or to insisting that widows make generous contributions to the religious causes advocated by the scribes.)

**John 15:22** "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have **no excuse** for their sin.

**Acts 27:30** And as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship, and had let down the ship's boat into the sea, on the **pretense** of intending to lay out anchors from the bow,

**Philippians 1:18** (note) What then? Only that in every way, whether in **pretense** or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.

**Calvin** rightly observes that...

Where greed and ambition hold sway, innumerable corruptions follow, and the whole man turns to vanity. These are the two sources from which stems the corruption of the whole of the ministry.

**Adam Clarke** warns...

Hear this, ye that preach the Gospel! Can ye call God to witness that in preaching it ye have no end in view by your ministry but his glory in the salvation of souls? Or do ye enter into the priesthood for a morsel of bread, or for what is ominously and impiously called a living, a benefice?...Is God witness that, in all these things, ye have no cloak of covetousness? . . . But woe to that man who enters into the labour for the sake of the hire! he knows not Christ; and how can he preach him?"

## V. Our Glory

<sup>6</sup> Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

Paul is not saying he never received honor from men or that he had no right to receive it, but he does deny that he required such a reaction from those to whom he preached the gospel. In short, not only were they not motivated by money, neither were they motivated by a desire for praise from men. As noted in the last two verses of this chapter, Paul's focus was not on present glory but future glory of the converts in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming. ([1Th 2:19](#), [20](#)-notes)

**Hiebert** rightly notes that...

There is the constant possibility that the preacher may use his preaching ministry as a means of building up public esteem for himself rather than conveying God's message to men. (Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996)

**Glory** (1391) (**doxa** from **dokeo** = to think or have an opinion, especially a favorable one) is the condition of being bright or

shining can refer to the greatness or splendor of man (as in this verse) which is based on human opinion which is shifty, uncertain and often based on error. On the other hand, there is a glory of God which is absolutely true and changeless.

We are reminded of **Nebuchadnezzar's** desire for glory in Daniel 4...

The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the **glory** of my majesty?' While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you' ([Dan 4:30-31](#))

The **Psalmist** gives good advice...

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Thy name give glory because of Thy lovingkindness, because of Thy truth. ([Ps 115:1](#))

## **when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.**

**Bruce** goes on to comment that this passage refers to the right which preachers of the gospel had, according to Paul, to be maintained by their converts and others to whose spiritual welfare they ministered a right which Paul chose not to exercise (cf. [2Thes 3:7, 8, 9](#); [1Cor 9:3-18](#); [2Cor 11:7, 8, 9, 10, 11](#)). This right (as



Paul points out in [1Cor 9:14](#)) was conferred by Jesus on those whom he sent out on a preaching and healing mission in his name in the course of his Galilean ministry ([Mk 6:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13](#); [Mt 10:5-15](#); [Lk 9:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6](#); [10:1-12](#)): the laborer, he said to them, deserves his pay ([Lk 10:7](#)) or his food [Mt 10:10](#)). Paul took the Lord's instructions to mean that his servants were entitled to their maintenance but not compelled to require it (Bruce, F F: 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, Incorporated. 1982 or Logos)

The **Disciple's Study Bible** has an interesting comment noting that...

Paul outlined his method of evangelism and gave us an example to follow:

- he ministered despite hardship and persecution;
- he ministered with pure motives;
- he ministered the true gospel of Christ;
- he ministered for God's glory;
- he ministered selflessly;
- he ministered in humility;
- he ministered with care and sacrificial love;
- and he ministered long and laboriously.