

INTRODUCTION

- Throughout the history of the world, we as human beings have shown that we have an almost irresistible inclination to be followers of other people, particularly of teachers of great ideas. These include political leaders, philosophers, psychotherapists, and theologians.
- What is also seen is that there is significance put not only on what these people teach, but also the way that they have lived. This is particularly seen when their teaching (whatever it may be) contradicts their actual way of living.
- There have been those who have evidently attempted to truly embody what they teach (practicing what they preach), and there have also been blatant charlatans and hypocrites who in the end only use their influence for personal gain.
- These things are true not only of people who would be called religious or spiritual, but also of those who attempt to live completely without an idea of the supernatural or of God.
- Christianity has not been without its own charlatans, and Jesus warned early in His ministry about them – Mt7:15-20. The assumption that He makes is that not everyone who comes as a religious teacher is to be trusted.
- We have begun to study together 1 Thessalonians, and we begin this morning to consider ch.2 in which Paul defends himself against the accusations of being one of these false teachers.
- Because of the influence that his teaching had had on the Christian converts, he and his companions were being accused of being false teachers who had ulterior motives – including money, personal glory, and sexual impurity.

EXPOSITION

- v.1 "you know...as you know (vv.1, 2, 5) calling attention to their own experience
- Not in vain (Gk. kenos) = empty, to no purpose, futile; seen in three ways:

I. WHAT THEY WERE WILLING TO SUFFER – v.2

- 2nd missionary journey previously in Philippi; moved down the coast of the Aegean Sea to Thessalonica
- They had already suffered (Gk. propasko) = already having suffered
- Had been spitefully treated (Gk. hubridzo) = verbally assaulted, treat in a rough or cruel way
 - Verbal accusations (Act16:20-22), physical abuse (vv.23-24) and bad treatment as a citizen of Rome (v.37)
- They didn't change their message or methods to relieve the suffering they had experienced
- They didn't respond by questioning God, getting angry, wondering why things weren't going better – rather prayer and singing (Acts 16:25).
- They realized and taught others that they were called to suffer – 1Thes3:4 Acts14:22 2Tim3:12

II. HOW THEY WERE COMMITTED TO TEACH – v.3

- Their exhortation (Gk. parakaleo) = an urgent and persistent appeal (v.11); their message did not come
 - 1.) Not from error (Gk. planay) = delusion, deception; twisted thinking that leads to sinful living
 - 2.) Not from uncleanness (Gk. akatharsia) = moral uncleanness, typically sexual immorality and impurity - 2Tim3:6
 - 3.) Not from deceit (Gk. dolos) = lit. "bait for a fish", so trickery and fraud
- If you traced out where their teaching was leading, it wasn't toward blind deception in error, sexual immorality, or financial gain. Rather, it was from truth, purity, integrity and righteousness.
- Sadly, the popular Christianity of the last couple of decades are confirmation that there are many who fail this test.

III. WHO THEY WERE COMMITTED TO PLEASE – v.4-6

- Their basic commitment as to who they were going to please was rooted in their sense of stewardship
- Approved by God (Gk. dokimadzo) = being tested and shown as genuine, qualified, approved
- Entrusted with the Gospel (Gk. pisteuo) = placed into the care of someone
 - A. Not Pleasing Men**
 - Not as pleasing men (Gk. aresko) = striving to find acceptance; flattery (Gk. kolakeia) = exaggerated praise
 - B. Not Pleasing Themselves**
 - A cloak for covetousness – covering up through words their real desire for financial gain
 - Seeking glory from men (either you or others) – not about reputation and a popular name
 - Though we might have made demands as apostles; bypassed their "rights" for their good
 - C. Pleasing God**
 - Who tests the hearts; not mere externals, but God who knows motives and desire
 - "God is witness", not only the Thessalonians

APPLICATION

- 1.) These marks (and the ones that follow) are to be evident in those we accept as our teachers. [relevance to upcoming re-examination and polling for eldership]. For those who desire the office of a pastor/teacher...
- 2.) These are things for which we should ask ourselves: "Why am I a Christian?" What am I willing to suffer for Christ? Do I accept the Gospel so that I can excuse my sin ("living by grace")? Who am I fundamentally committed to please?