

1 Thes. 2:1-12

Description of Paul ministry in Thessalonica – a model for ministry

Intro:

Notice how Paul appeals to their knowledge/testimony and God's testimony to the facts of what Paul says
Notice the introductory formulas – “you know...,” “you remember...,” “God is witness that...,” etc.
Notice the series of neg./pos. contrasts – “we didn't act in this way, but rather we acted this way” etc.
This is a very good model of ministry
Success in ministry when you can honestly say to people – “you know these things are true, God is my witness”

- I. Paul was empowered to speak the Gospel freely in the midst of persecution (1-8)
 - A. Intro Formula: You yourselves, brothers, know our coming to you (1a)
 - See Acts ch. 17 for the narrative of Paul's time in Thessalonica
 - B. Specifically, what it was not, and what it was (1b-8)
 - 1. Our coming to you was powerful by God (1b-2)
 - a Neg: our coming to you was NOT in vain (1b)
 - b Pos: BUT We were emboldened to speak the Gospel of God (2)
 - 1) Even though we suffered in Philippi (2a-c)
 - a) Even though we were suffering and being mistreated in Philippi (2a-b)
 - (1) We were suffering (2a)
 - (2) We were being treated insolently (2b)
 - See Acts ch. 16 for the narrative of Paul's time in Philippi
 - b) like you already know (2c)
 - 2) we were bold/emboldened in/by our God to speak the Gospel of God to you in much opposition/struggle (2d)
 - 2. Reason: God entrusted us with this Gospel task (3-8)
 - a Our exhortation comes from God's call (3-4)
 - 1) Neg: Our exhortation does not come from error or from impure motive or from deceit (3)
 - Paul is defending himself in order to defend the gospel and encourage the Thessalonians
 - This is a good safety check for our own ministries - don't be underhanded/scheming
 - 2) Pos: BUT by contrast, we speak from God (4)
 - a) We speak in this way: (4a-b)
 - (1) Just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel (4a)
 - (2) We speak in the way appropriate to that calling (4b)
 - The weight of our calling should have a strong impact on the way we approach any type of ministry, especially proclamation types of ministry
 - b) The manner in which we speak (4c-d)
 - (1) Neg: Not as attempting to please men (4c)
 - (2) Pos: BUT attempting to please God who is testing our hearts (4d)
 - same word as "approved" earlier
 - but present tense - continually testing here, tested and approved there

- b The Reason/Evidence: We displayed God's character and ways (5-8)
 - 1) Neg. - We were not seeking to take from you (5-7a)
 - a) Our methods were not bad (5)
 - (1) We did not flatter (5a-b)
 - (a) We did not act with a word of flattery nor in a pretense for greed (5a)
 - (b) Just like you Know! (5b)
 - (2) God is witness (5c)
 - b) Our motivations were not bad (6-7b)
 - (1) We did not seek praise/glory from men, either from you or from others (6)
 - (2) Even though, as apostles of Christ, we were able to be a burden to you (7a-b)
 - (a) We were able to be a burden to you (7a)
 - (b) Because we are apostles of Christ (7b)
 - 2) Pos. - But rather we were seeking to give to you (7c-8)
 - a) But we were innocent in your midst (7c)
 - Our methods were good
 - We were childlike/innocent
 - Textual issue, reading $\nu\eta\pi\iota\omicron\iota$, "children" instead of $\eta\pi\iota\omicron\iota$, "gentle"
 - b) Specifically: We gave ourselves because we cherish you (7d-8)
 - Our motives were good
 - (1) We gave ourselves for you (7d-8b)
 - (a) Just like a nursing mother cherishes her own children (7d)
 - (b) So also we gave ourselves for you (8a-b)
 - (i) having a similar strong yearning/desire for you (8a)
 - (ii) We gave you the Gospel and ourselves (8b)
 - ((a)) We were pleased to give you not only the Gospel of God
 - ((b)) But also ourselves as well
 - (2) Because we cherished you (8c)

II. Paul worked hard to preach the Gospel without being a burden (9)

A. Intro Formula: You, brothers, remember our work and labor (hardship) (9a)

B. Specifically: how I worked and preached (9b-d)

1. The manner in which we lived while preaching (9b-c)

working night and day (9b)

- cf. 3:10, 2Th 3:8 on "night and day"

Purpose: so that we would not be a burden to you (9c)

2. We preached to you the Gospel of God (9d)

III. Paul was blameless and holy in their midst (10)

A. Intro Formula: You and God are witnesses (10a)

Notice how Paul calls God as his witness

But he also calls on the Thessalonians to acknowledge the truth for themselves

B. Specifically: We were holy, righteous, and blameless to you who believed (10b)

"holy" = morally upright, devout, pure

"righteous" = upright, just, correct

"blameless" = innocent, without fault

- IV. Paul encouraged and urged them to walk worthy of God (11-12)
 - A. Intro Formula: You know (11a)
 - B. Specifically: How we dealt with you (11b-12)
 - 1. I dealt with you as a Father (11b-c)
 - I dealt with each one of you (11b)
 - As a father deals with his own children (11c)
 - 2. Manner that he dealt with them (12)
 - a What he did (12a-c)
 - urging/encouraging you (12a)
 - Consoling/comforting you (12b)
 - testifying/witnessing (12c)
 - b Purpose for all this: (12d)
 - so that you may walk worthily
 - worthy of the God who called you into His Own Kingdom and Glory