

## 1Thessalonians, Chapter Two, Lesson One

BOLD IN CHRIST 1Thessalonians 2:1-4

### STIMULATE

\*\* Last week we concluded our study together of the first chapter of 1Thessalonians. As that time in the Word of God was coming to an end, we reflected upon the proper threefold response to hearing the gospel. Do you recall what that was?

1. Repent - "turn from idols". (V.9)
2. Live your life by "Serving God". (V.9)
3. Live in the light of His glorious return. (V.10)

\*\* How have you done in any or all of those areas of your walk with the Lord?

With the ever evolving circumstances in our nation and world, along with the specific instruction we have received from God's Word, the Lord has reaffirmed to my own heart how important all three responses are in the life of every believer. cf. John 16:1-3

### MOTIVATE

\*\* As we approach our study of chapter two, here in 1Thessalonians, we stand together at the threshold of God's rich blessings which come to us as we learn, understand and apply the truths that come from Paul's teaching and lifestyle example. Over the next four weeks we have the privilege to see Paul as he is:

*BOLD IN CHRIST* - 1Thessalonians 2:1-4

*BOUND IN CHRIST* - 1Thessalonians 2:5-8

*BURDENED IN CHRIST* - 1Thessalonians 2:9-12

and realizes his...

*BOUNTY IN CHRIST* - 1Thessalonians 2:13-20

The concept of a Christian being "**Bold in Christ**" is not new to Scripture or to our understanding, but why are we bold? What resource is behind our boldness, how do we develop it if we are naturally shy? For the wonderful answer, please open your Bibles to 1Thessalonians 2:1-4 and let's observe the beloved apostle as he is "**Bold in Christ**".

Read passage (V.1-2) (V.3-4)

Opening Prayer

***Bold in Christ***

### INVESTIGATE

**V. 1** \*\* In verse five of this 2nd chapter, we will see Paul call on God Himself to be a witness to the type of testimony he had before the Thessalonians. For today, upon whom does Paul call to verify the effectiveness of his evangelism?

The Thessalonians - "...**you yourselves know**..."

The word used here for "know" is oida and means "to have seen or perceived" - hence to know.

\*\* With that definition established in our thinking, how did the Thessalonians know about Paul's effective evangelism?

These believers had first hand knowledge of Paul's life and ministry in the gospel. They saw it!

\*\* According to verse one, how effective was Paul's impact upon those who lived in Thessalonica?

It "...was not in vain..." The Thessalonians had believed the gospel message and been miraculously saved by the word of God's grace.

cf. Acts 14:3, Acts 20:32, 1Thessalonians 1:7-8

**V. 2** \*\* Paul will often use contrasts to make his point. Having established the joy of his effective evangelism in the minds of the Thessalonians, what does he now contrast it with in verse two?

Suffering - the price which must be paid, if we hope to be effective for the Lord.

cf. 2Timothy 3:12

\*\* Is Paul referring to just a little suffering?

No - They experienced "much opposition" there in Thessalonica, and even more when back in Philippi. All see - Acts 16:11-14, 16-19, 22-24, 25-31 and compare Acts 17:1

\*\* Did all of that suffering in Philippi take the wind out of Paul's sail? Did he start to water down the message of God's saving gospel?

No - on both counts. Paul says, "we had the **boldness** in our God to speak to you the gospel..."

\*\* If he was not discouraged by his suffering, what impact did it have on his desire to witness for God's truth?

It proved his faith to be genuine and strengthened his resolve to live for the gospel message.

cf. 2Corinthians 4:6-11, Galatians 6:17

\*\* Still here in verse two, from where does Paul's boldness come?

From God Himself! cf. 2Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 3:16, Philippians 4:13

\*\* For what is that boldness to be used, according to this verse?

For speaking "the gospel of God..."

\*\* Is that only when it is easy and widely accepted?

No - but specifically when there is "much opposition". Our boldness is most effective when confronted by the test of worldly opposition!

**V. 3** \*\* As we move into verse three, Paul refers to his "exhortation" of the Thessalonians. What does that word mean?

"paraklesis" - lit. "a calling to one's aid", it speaks of encouragement or comfort.

\*\* What was the content of Paul's exhortation?

The gospel of God from verse two!

\*\* If we were to understand the source of Paul's exhortation, where would we know that it was not from? What three sources are ruled out by Paul?

**1) error** - Paul was approved by God! (V.4) cf. 1Timothy 1:6-7 and Galatians 1:1, 11

**2) impurity** - lit."uncleanness", can denote a moral impurity. cf.V.5-6 and Matthew 23:25-27

**3) deceit** - this is speaking of evil motives! cf. V.8 (fond affection) with Acts 13:4-12

**V. 4** \*\* As we have just seen, what was Paul's great seal of approval?

He was approved by God Almighty! cf. 2Corinthians 2:17, James 1:12 and 2Timothy 2:15

\*\* For what had Paul been approved?

Being "**entrusted with the gospel**". Talk about an awesome responsibility! Paul was to preserve, protect and proclaim God's gospel unto the salvation of men's souls.  
cf. Galatians 2:7-9, 1Timothy 1:11

\*\* Who else has been entrusted with this precious gospel of God?

All Christians - that means us! cf. 2Timothy 2:1-2

Christ to Paul

Paul to Timothy

Timothy to faithful men

Faithful men to others

\*\* Has this pattern of passing on the truth of the gospel been entrusted just to pastors or "men"?

No- everyone who has been saved. cf. Matthew 10:32-33

\*\* Just as it is a fact that all Christians are approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, what else is a fact according to verse four?

"...so we speak..." You should not be able to keep us quiet. The truth of God's word and the gospel has been given to us, if you poke us in our sleep, the truth should come out!

\*\* Let's try to answer our first thought from the beginning of today's study. Why are we bold?

Because God Himself has chosen us and approved us for this holy calling! cf. Acts 9:15-16

\*\* For our second thought - how do we develop boldness if we are naturally shy? What is the key motivator that compels a Christian to speak up for Christ, according to verse four?

"...not as pleasing men but God..." We are driven by the desire to please our God who gave up so much to purchase our souls for an eternity with Him.

cf. 2Corinthians 5:9, Colossians 1:10, Ephesians 5:10

\*\* As our study draws to a close, can you find a good reason for maintaining a pure heart motive in all that you do for the Lord?

God examines our hearts not our deeds! Our deeds are only acceptable when they are produced by a pure heart before a holy God! This should be very compelling when we consider how we speak, how we think and how we act. cf. 1Corinthians 4:5, Luke 6:45, Matthew 12:34-37

\*\* If we hope to be "**Bold in Christ**", what must we leave open to God's inspection at all times?

The motive of our hearts - that we might speak the true gospel which has been entrusted to us. That is exactly why we spend so much time in the word of God, so that He can show us our hearts when we miss the mark. cf. Hebrews 4:12

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* What element of the Christian life did Paul introduce to us in our passage for today, that is not a very popular theme in today's form of Christianity?

The calling to suffer for the sake of the gospel. cf. 1Peter 2:21

\*\* What were some very wrong motives portrayed for us by Paul - ones we would do well to avoid?

- 1) error
- 2) impurity
- 3) deceit
- 4) men pleasing (Acts 4:19, 5:29)

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* Why are Christians bold?

They have been "**approved by God** to be entrusted with the gospel"!

\*\* How can we develop or increase our boldness? What is to be our motivation?

To please our gracious God, rather than men!

(Another way to view this is to avoid peer pressure by following the Spirit's prompting.)

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* Are there areas of my life which amount to common practice for me, and yet I know they are not pleasing to my Savior?

Of course there are, we have not arrived at perfection yet. cf. Philippians 3:12-14

\*\* If I were to look close at my motives, those things that drive my thoughts and actions (because God does) would I see a heartfelt desire to please my God and boldly speak His gospel to the lost?

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* We ought to leave this study committed to being "**Bold in Christ**", welcoming God's examination of our hearts. May we each be willing to honor the Lord we love by living boldly for His name sake.

Closing prayer