

Worksheet #3: 1 Thessalonians 2:1–16 (NKJV)

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.² 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.³ For our exhortation *did* not *come* from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit.

⁴ 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.⁵ For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness.⁶ Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.⁷ But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children.⁸ So, affectionately longing 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 dear to us.⁹ For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe;¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children,¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

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.¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans,¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men,¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Interpretation: *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. In v. 2, Paul refers to his suffering in Philippi (Acts 16:11–40). Why is this background significant to establish Paul’s pure motives for his subsequent ministry among the Thessalonians?

2. How can Paul claim to have been “approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel” (v. 4), and what test does he propose in context to support such an assertion?

3. How does Paul’s abstention from his apostolic rights while with the Thessalonians (v. 6–7) actually confirm his legitimacy as an apostle?

4. In what way could Paul claim to have given the Thessalonians “our own lives” in addition to the message of the gospel (v. 8)?

5. What does Paul describe as his consistent message while among the Thessalonian believers (vv. 10–12)? Why is it important that the Thessalonians themselves could attest to his conduct (and that God would concur)?

6. How could Paul be certain that his message was “effectively work[ing] in you who believe” (v. 13)? How could he be certain that his message truly was “the word of God” as opposed to the “word of men”?

7. What was it about the Thessalonians’ experience that confirmed their faith to Paul (v. 14–16)? What does this tell us about the effect of persecution upon genuine faith?

8. What does Paul mean by “so ... fill[ing] up the measure of their sins” with reference to the Jews (v. 16)?

Application: *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?
