

Chapter 2 – The Review of the Church (Pt.1)

A. Paul's Calling Was on Display

1For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:¹ 2But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi,² we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God³ with much contention.⁴ 3For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: 4But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel,⁵ even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. 5For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness: 6Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.⁶

B. Paul's Compassion Was Like a Mother

7But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: 8So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our

own souls, because ye were dear unto us. 9For ye remember, brethren, our labour⁷ and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. 10Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

C. Paul's Charge Was Like a Father

11As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children, 12That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. 13For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.⁸

D. Paul's Concern Was About the Opposition

14For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea⁹ are in Christ Jesus:¹⁰ for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the

¹ The Thessalonians “knew” this because they had *witnessed* it firsthand (v.10 – “ye are witnesses”). It was “not in vain” because it had born fruit (v. 13).

² See Acts 16:19-40 and the events surrounding the conversion of the Philippian jailer.

³ Notice “the gospel of God.” This occurs 3 times in the chapter (vs. 2, 8, & 9). This makes one mention for each person in the Triune Godhead. Compare with Rom. 1:16, where we see “the gospel of Christ.” Modern versions omit “Christ.” This is dangerous because there is “another gospel” (2 Cor. 11:4, Gal. 1:6-7). It is the gospel of Christ, *who is God*.

⁴ See Acts 17:1-9. The “contention” was due to the opposition of the unbelieving Jews who lived in Thessalonica.

⁵ The preaching of the gospel is a sacred trust that should not be taken lightly. There are many noble callings in this life, but none of them is as high a calling as preaching the gospel. Lester Roloff said that he were offered the presidency, he would turn it down quipping, “I just can’t take the demotion!”

⁶ Neither Paul nor his associates abused their power by taking advantage of believers or local churches.

Unfortunately, in the 21st Century, there are many teachers, preachers, evangelists, etc. who do not follow this godly example. Note Phil. 3:17-21, 1 Pet. 5:1-4,

⁷ This “labour” had nothing to do with the gospel – it was the labour with his own hands that he was describing so that he would not be a burden to the church. By occupation, he was a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3), so this “labor” may have involved him working to support himself. While there is nothing wrong with a church supporting its pastor (in fact, it is encouraged – 1 Cor. 1:14, 1 Tim. 5:17-18), this ought not to be his motive (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

⁸ When the word of God is *believed*, it is put into practice. When it is put into practice, *it works*.

⁹ Notice “in Judea” – manifesting geographical location. This shows that the local church is a literal, visible, physical *organization*.

¹⁰ Notice “in Christ Jesus” – manifesting spiritual position and standing. This shows that the church (the body of Christ) is an invisible, universal, spiritual *organism*.

Jews: ¹⁵Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:¹¹ ¹⁶Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

E. Paul's Consolation in the Second Coming

¹⁷But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. ¹⁸Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.¹² ¹⁹For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?¹³ *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? ²⁰For ye are our glory and joy.¹⁴

**All Commentary is by Pastor John David Howe, Th.D. unless otherwise cited.*

¹¹ Paul clearly lays the responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ at the feet of the Jews. He also states that they are "enemies for the gospel's sake" in Rom. 11. However, he also points out that they are still beloved for the father's sake (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.). Therefore, *replacement theology* is a dangerous heresy since it ignores the fact that God is not done with Israel yet and that the Jews have a future restoration awaiting them (Isa. 2:1-6, Zech. 14).

¹² Compare with Daniel, where the "prince of Persia" withstood Gabriel for 21 days. Only when Michael showed up was Gabriel able to obtain the victory. If this demonic being could withstand a holy angel of God in such a way, imagine what Satan can do! See also Eph. 6:12.

^{13,14} There are five "crowns" spoken of in the New Testament that a believer can earn as rewards. These crowns are **1. The Incorruptible Crown** (1 Cor. 9:24-27) for the believer who runs his racer well; **2. The Crown of Rejoicing** (1 Thes. 2:29) for the soulwinner;

Practical Applications:

- 1. The conduct of our lives ought to demonstrate of the calling that we profess to have.**
- 2. The care that spiritual leaders have for their flocks ought to mirror the affections of a mother and the accountability of a father.**
- 3. Our consolation for all of life's turmoil, tribulation, testing, and trials is to see the face of the Lord Jesus Christ and be with him forever.**

Recommended Resources

www.BibleHub.com – for translation variations and easy to research Greek & Hebrew help.

www.BibleSupport.com – e-Sword Application for computers, smartphones, and tablets.

Ruckman, Peter S. *The Bible Believer's Commentary Series: 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon*. ©2002, Bible Baptist Bookstore. Pensacola, Florida.

3. The Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8) for those who are looking for His coming when He returns; **4. The Crown of Life** (Jam. 1:12, Rev. 2:10) for the Martyrs of Jesus (Rev. 6:9-11, 20:4-6), and **5. The Crown of Rejoicing** (1 Peter 5:1-4) for the elders that rule well. Salvation is a gift that cannot be earned (Rom. 6:23, Eph. 2:8-9), but faithful service merits rewards (1 Cor. 3). Because such rewards are earned, they can also be *lost* (2 John 8). This has direct impact on how we reign with Him (*or if we reign*) during the Millennium as far as our *inheritance* (1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:21, 2 Tim. 2:11-13, Titus 1:16).

¹⁴ It's been said that you came into this life with nothing, and you will go out the same way. Generally speaking, this is true. However, for the believer, there is something that you *can* take with you – *the soul of anyone that you lead to the Lord Jesus Christ*. Hence the old hymn asks, "must I go and empty handed? Must I meet my Saviour so! Not one soul with which to greet him! Must I empty handed go?"