

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN THESSALONICA (VV. 1-12)

Verses 1-9, see session 3

1 THESSALONIANS 2:10-12 – BLACK**10. HOLY, JUST, AND UNBLAMEABLE BEHAVIOR**

- Paul appeals to both human and divine witnesses of his conduct.
- His behavior was marked by holiness (spiritual integrity), justice (ethical conduct), and blamelessness (public credibility).
- His life matched his message.

11. EXHORTING AS A FATHER

- Paul used a fatherly model—exhorting, comforting, and charging each one personally.
- Ministry was relational and direct, not impersonal or distant.
- He didn't rely on position but on pastoral engagement.

12. WALK WORTHY OF GOD

- The goal of Paul's ministry was that they would live lives worthy of God's calling.
- That calling was into God's kingdom and glory.
- The kingdom is to be understood literally: the future, physical, fraternal kingdom of Israel.
- Given the early date of this letter (likely the first NT epistle), Paul is speaking from the framework of Old Testament expectation.

RECEPTION OF THE WORD AND ITS EFFECT (VV. 13-16)**1 THESSALONIANS 2:13 – GREEN****13. RECEIVED AS THE WORD OF GOD**

- The Thessalonians received Paul's preaching not as man's word but as God's Word.
- This divine reception is what allowed the Word to work effectually in them.
- The verse is green-coded: not written directly to the Body of Christ today, but universally true in its principle.
- Theological maturity begins with answering: Whose word is it?
 - If it's man's word, it holds no authority.
 - If it's God's word, it demands trust and obedience.
- Once that issue is settled, others must follow:
 - How was it received?
 - How was it preserved?
 - Where is it found today?

1 THESSALONIANS 2:14 – BLACK**14. SUFFERED LIKE THE CHURCHES IN JUDEA**

- The Thessalonians became followers of the churches of God in Judaea.
- This is a direct identification, not a loose comparison.
- The Judean churches were Jewish believers under the Law, awaiting the kingdom, under Peter’s leadership.
- Paul was unknown by face to them (Galatians 1:22).
- The Thessalonians, though geographically distant, were walking the same path.
- They suffered at the hands of their own countrymen:
 - Likely Gentile Greeks in Thessalonica, possibly also unbelieving Jews (Acts 17:5).
- This shows a shared identity and pattern with Jewish kingdom believers—not a distinct Pauline church.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:15 – BLACK

15. DESCRIPTION OF JEWISH PERSECUTION

- The Jewish leadership:
 - Killed the Lord Jesus.
 - Killed their own prophets.
 - Persecuted Paul and his companions.
- They are described as not pleasing God and being contrary to all men.
- This is not a statement of ethnic hatred but a factual recounting of resistance to truth.
- Paul’s deep love for Israel (Romans 9:3) coexists with this honest indictment.
- The opposition came from those defending religious power and silencing dissent.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:16 – BLACK

16. PREVENTING PAUL FROM SPEAKING TO THE GENTILES

- Their opposition was focused on keeping Gentiles from hearing the gospel.
- Scriptural examples of this opposition:
 - Acts 13:50; 14:4, 19; 17:5, 13; 18:12; 19:33; 22:21–22
- Paul says they were “filling up their sins always”—a Hebraism:
 - See Genesis 15:16; 2 Maccabees 6:14; Matthew 23:32.
- God’s wrath was already coming upon them “to the uttermost”:
 - Paul likely sees this as the foreshadowing of national judgment (e.g., 70 AD).
 - Compare Luke 21:5–24 and 2 Corinthians 5:1–11 (read with Israel in view).
- The pattern is complete:
 - The Thessalonians suffer like the Judean churches.
 - The opponents resist the truth and accumulate judgment.
 - Paul sees this judgment as imminent and deserved.