

## Enduring Hope in Jesus' Coming 1Thessalonians 2

*\*\*\*Before you start, please spend time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you dig deeply in the passage. You **many not get some of the questions which is just fine**. Also, feel free to ask your own questions. Sometimes, we need to live with "I don't know" and move on. Being in a group of other believers can help the process. After the group study, find a trusted commentary and/or a trusted pastor (John MacArthur and Alistair Begg, etc) to listen to the sermons on the passage. However, do what you can first and trust the Lord to guide you in the process.*

**Icebreaker: What fictional character would you like to meet in real life? Why?**

Questions: **Ob**= observation questions **Int**= interpretive questions **App**= application questions  
(*application questions can be very personal so please only share as you feel comfortable*)

*\*\*Before beginning do a quick review of the background information and chapter 1 to prepare. Read through 1 Thessalonians 2. Note all the repeated words and phrases in the chapter.*

**V1. Ob** - Who are the brothers (and sisters; see ESV footnote)? What did they know?

Int - How did they know this? See 2 Thessalonians 1:10

**V2. Ob**- Read Acts 16:16-40. What happened in Phillippi? Why would this cause Paul and his companions to need boldness to preach in Thessalonica? What were they preaching?

Int - What was the source of Paul's boldness?

**V3-4. Ob** - Define appeal. What three things didn't motivate Paul's appeal? What was his motivation? What contrast is put forth in the second half of v4?

**V4. Int** - Note the **just...so**. What gives Paul the confidence to share the gospel?

**V2-4. App** - Are you able to share the gospel with boldness? What barriers hold you back from sharing the gospel? What aspects of God's character could you learn more about and focus on to give you more boldness? How can a right understanding of God break down your barriers?

Read vv5-8 in the NIV and NLT. These translations make different word and punctuation choices to the ESV. That said, all the translations will lead us to the same interpretation of the text. Try not to get distracted and use the different translations to aid your understanding of what Paul is saying. Also remember that the verse (and chapter) numbers are **not** inspired and were added much later to aid in finding places in the text. If you want more information about the translation of this passage see the footnotes from the NET translation in the YouVersion bible app or on biblegateway.com. Both the commentaries I used as primary sources (Shogren and Beele) preferred the NIV translation for this passage.

**V5. Ob** - Define pretext. What other motives for sharing the gospel is Paul denying?

Ob - To whose witness is Paul appealing?

**V6. Ob** - What is another motive Paul didn't have?

Int - Read 1 Corinthians 9:3-14. What demands is Paul not making?

**V7-8. Int** - We've noted all the things that aren't motivating Paul to share the gospel in vv 3-6. What is his motivation?

**V8. Ob** - What two things did Paul want to share with the Thessalonians? Why?

**V 3-8. App** - What should be our motivation to share the gospel? Why is sharing from the right motive so important? How can the wrong motives Paul denies earlier in the chapter lead us to share an altered gospel?

**V9. Ob** - What is Paul calling on the brothers in Thessalonica to remember?

Ob - Why did Paul and his companions work so hard?

Int - Why didn't Paul want to burden the Thessalonians? (See 1 Corinthians 9:12)

**V10.** Ob - What three things characterized Paul and his companion's behaviour towards the Thessalonians?

Int - Why was it important for them to behave this way?

Int - Paul appeals again (see v 5) to God as witness. Why is the witness of the Thessalonians not sufficient?

App - How can recognizing that God is witness, not just to our outward actions but also to our inward thoughts and motivations, not some of the time but all of the time, help us to live in a way that glorifies him?

**V11-12.** Ob - What metaphor is Paul using for himself and his coworkers in relation to the Thessalonians? What three fatherly actions did they take?

Ob - What was the exhortation, encouragement, and call put to the Thessalonians?

Int - What does it mean to walk in a manner worthy of God? See Colossians 1:10, Eph 4:1-3.

Ob - Into where is God calling the Thessalonians?

Int - Why might Paul have added the reminder of where God has called the Thessalonians?

App - How can the knowledge that you are called into God's kingdom and glory fuel your obedience?

**V13.** Ob - For what are Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy thanking God? What mistake did the Thessalonians avoid?

Int - What is the word of God? See vv 3-8. What work is it doing in the believers at Thessalonica? See Romans 10:17, Hebrews 4:12.

**V 14.** Ob - Of whom have the Thessalonians become imitators? How?

Int - Read 2 Thessalonians 1:4. How did the Thessalonians walk in this suffering? Of what is their walking in this way evidence (see v 13)?

App - How do you respond to suffering in your life? How can the gospel empower you to walk through suffering faithfully? What aspects of God's character bring you comfort and strength in suffering? See Psalm 5.

**V 15-16.** Ob - Who is the "who" in this verse? What four things have they done?

Ob - In what way do they oppose all mankind?

Int - Review Acts 17:1-15. In what ways did the Jews hinder Paul and the other missionaries?

Int - How did the Jews hindering the Christian missionaries from preaching the gospel to the Gentiles oppose all mankind?

Int - See Romans 11:25. What might Paul mean by the Jews "fil(ling) up the measure of their sins"?

Int - What has stirred up God's wrath towards the Jews?

App - What aspect of God's character do we see most clearly in these verses? How do you feel about this aspect of God's character? How can meditating on this aspect of his character help you to love him more?

For more on God's justice - <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/god-is-just>

For more on God's wrath - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-truths-about-the-wrath-of-god>

For more on vv14-16 here's a short but good article: <https://www.frpc.org/blog/2020/5/19/first-thessalonians-214-16-wrath-has-come-upon-them-at-last>

**V17.** Ob - In what way were Paul and his companions torn away from the Thessalonians? What effect did this have on them?

Int - The Greek word translated "torn away" in this verse literally means orphaned, and can be used for both parents and children who have been separated. What does this tell us about Paul's feelings towards the Thessalonian church?

**V18.** Ob - What did Paul want? Why could he not do what he wanted?

Int - How might Satan have hindered Paul? (hint - look back in the chapter)

**V19-20.** Ob - What are Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's hope, joy, and crown of boasting?

Int - To what is Paul referring when he says "before the Lord Jesus at his coming"?

App - What will be your hope and joy at the second coming of Christ? Do you look forward to that day with joy and expectation or do you feel unprepared? How could you feel better prepared for his return?