

- c) “But sermons today are not the very words of God.”

Ken Ramey: “What could possibly be more relevant than knowing that both those who preach and those who listen must give an account to Christ when He returns?” (Expository Listening, pg. 104.)

- ii. Imitation of the persecuted churches in Judea (2: 14– 16)
  - a) When we receive the preached Word as we ought, it brings about a change of life that is consistent with the Christian community through the ages.
  - b) Jesus said our lives depend upon whether or not we put into practice what we hear. (Matt. 7:21, 24-27)
    - Hearing comes with the responsibility of doing.

*The gospel is a counter-cultural message and those who proclaim it must have counter-cultural methods and lives. Likewise, the church that receives it is called to embody the counter-cultural message of the cross.*

### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Do you think Paul's message in the text is important for the church today? What spoke to you in particular?
- How do we see that both the preacher and the people hearing the message had responsibilities when the Gospel went to Thessalonica?
- How does 2:13 speak to the fact that God's grace meets us when we set out to obey His Word which we have heard?
- Discuss the quote by Ken Ramey above. What do you think about what he says about relevance?
- What are some of the evidences that Paul put forward, and the Thessalonians themselves knew, that revealed the integrity of Paul and Silas?
- What are the evidences Paul had that reveal the authenticity of the Thessalonian believers?

## Dissident Disciples (Part 4) The Two Sides of Gospel Preaching Jerry Cisar — July 8, 2018

**Text: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16**

### Introduction

### I. The Counter-cultural Methods of Paul's Ministry (2:1-12)

- A. Paul's Thanksgiving Prayer is a preview of coming attractions.
  - i. 1 Thessalonians 1:5
  - ii. “Instead of being slick-talking, people-pleasing, glory-seeking charlatans driven by greed and gain, theirs was a sincere, sacrificial ministry in Thessalonica.”<sup>1</sup>
- B. Six Evidences of Authenticity in Paul's Apostolic Ministry
  - i. Courageous preaching in the face of persecution (2:1–2)
  - ii. No Slick Talk (2:3–4)

Soren Kierkegaard: “It is a risk to preach, for as I stand up ... I have one listener more than can be seen, an invisible listener, God. ... This listener pays close attention to whether what I am saying is true, whether it is true in me. ... He looks to see whether my life expresses what I am saying. ... Truly it is a risk to preach!”

<sup>1</sup> Longenecker & Still, Thinking Through Paul, p. 65.

iii. Without Greed or Guile (2:5–7a)

- a) Philosophers went from city to city in that day and there is no doubt that many of them were more than happy to do whatever it took to make a buck. Not Paul.

- b) “We were like young children among you.” (2:7 NIV)

- 1 Corinthians 14:20

iv. With the Affection of a Nursing Mother (2:7b–8)

- a) Paul was not too important to care for the people!
- b) Richard Baxter: *“The tenderest love of a mother should not surpass ours [for our people].”*

v. With Hard Work (2:9)

- a) Acts 18:1-5
- b) 2 Timothy 2:15

vi. With the Instruction of a Father (2:10–12)

- a) Not only does biblical care require the nurturing care like a nursing mother, it also requires the strong leadership care of a Father.

Weima: “As John Chrysostom... and others in the early church recognized, Paul compares himself to a nurse or mother when he wants to highlight the love and affection he has for his readers, but he likens himself to a father when he wants to focus on his role in teaching and training converts. In the ancient world this nurturing aspect of the metaphor is supported by the role of the father, who was normally responsible for the education and training of his children.”

- b) Paul calls God as his witness.

- 2 Corinthians 1:23

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## **II. The Counter-cultural Reception by the Thessalonians (2:13-16)**

A. Are you on the hook?

- i. Richard Baxter said that when you hear a sermon, “you must answer for all that you have heard, whether you heard it ... with diligent attention or with carelessness...”.
- ii. “Be careful how you hear.”

B. There are two specific things that highlight how they heard.

- i. They accepted the word of Paul as the word of God (2:13)
  - a) *What* they received.
  - b) *How* they received it.
    - How should it effect our listening if something is the very words of God?

David Clarkson: “At the day of judgment, an account of every sermon will be required, and of every truth in each sermon.... The books will be opened, all the sermons mentioned which you have heard, and a particular account required. ... Oh what a fearful account!”