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# Words of Truth

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## I Thessalonians 2:1-2

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As we enter into chapter two of this epistle, the context is not changing. The focus continues from the point that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus knew the congregation in Thessalonica was a fruitful work. Here is what we will consider in this article: *“For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention”* (I Thessalonians 2:1-2).

In our previous study, we considered how that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus knew that their labor was not in vain. The word of God had “free course” among the saints in Thessalonica (II Thessalonians 3:1). So, we will not repeat that in this study. What is interesting about the start of this chapter is that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus are pointing out to the Thessalonians that their (Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus) entrance in unto them was not in vain. These were words of reassurance. The brethren in Thessalonica had no need to be concerned that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus would think they were a waste of effort. The fact is, their continued faithfulness was a lifeline for Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus. Consider what was written later in this epistle: *“But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord”* (I Thessalonians 3:6-8).

Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus refer to what happened in Philippi prior to the Gospel being taught in Thessalonica. Go back and read the account of these events (Acts 16:11-17:15). After reading that account, you saw Timotheus mentioned by name once (Acts 17:14). You do not read Silvanus directly mentioned at all. What should you make of that? The answer is, nothing. If you read that account you read words like “we” and “us” (Acts 16:12; 16:13; 16:16, etc.). Acts is the second letter written to Theophilus (Acts 1:1). The first letter is the book of Luke (Luke 1:1-4). So, “we” and “us” in Acts chapters sixteen and seventeen include Luke, though you do not read Luke’s name in the book of Acts at all. The fact is, Luke is only mentioned in Colossians 4:14 and II Timothy 4:11. From that we can and should learn that when Paul was out preaching there were often others with him that are not mentioned by name in the text. In our study we learn that Silvanus and Timotheus were with him in Philippi and Thessalonica even though Silvanus is not directly mentioned.

The phrase “shamefully entreated” is translated from the Greek word “ὕβριζω” which means this: “to exercise violence, that is, abuse: - use spitefully, reproach, entreat shamefully (spitefully)” (Strong’s # 5195). You can find that Greek word in four other Scriptures (Matthew 22:6, Luke 11:45, Luke 18:32, and Acts 14:5) translated in the KJV as “entreated them spitefully”, “reproachest”, “spitefully entreated”, and “to use them spitefully.” Those who are faithful to our Lord’s will have long faced such treatment for the faith (Matthew 5:10-12, Matthew 10:34-39, Luke 6:22-23, John 15:18-23, John 17:9-17, Romans 3:8, Romans 8:17, Philippians 1:28-30, II Thessalonians 1:4-8, II Timothy 2:10-12, Titus 2:7-8, Hebrews 11:32-38, I Peter 2:9-12, I Peter 3:14-18, and I Peter 4:13-19).

Paul certainly knew a lot about suffering for the cause of Christ (II Corinthians 4:8-10). He wrote about suffering “persecutions” (II Timothy 3:11-12). He said he took pleasure in persecutions (II Corinthians 12:10). Paul was essentially a magnet for persecution and for suffering (II Corinthians 11:21-33). Most people who study the Scriptures know this about Paul. In a short period of time men such as Silvanus and Timotheus would see that being with Paul was dangerous (physically speaking). Consider this, what does that say about those who continued to choose to be close companions with Paul? The Scriptures teach us that we know brethren by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-20). Those who continued to do the Lord’s work as companions of Paul show us their faithfulness through their fruit.

We should not take it lightly that men continued to work alongside Paul. Not all men chose to do so. Notice: *“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge”* (II Timothy 4:10-16).

Not only did Silvanus and Timotheus continue with Paul, but they were “bold” in speaking the Gospel. Those that teach the truth must be bold (Ephesians 6:18-20). The fact that they preached boldly speaks to their faithfulness. When Barnabas sought to give credibility to Saul [Paul] early after his conversion, one of the points he used was that Paul spoke the Gospel boldly (Acts 9:27). Solomon wrote: *“The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion”* (Proverbs 28:1). Paul wrote this to the saints in Philippi: *“According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death”* (Philippians 1:20). They were not bold because it was easy. Remember, we have read that they were bold with much contention. We read what they faced in Thessalonica. It was not an easy road. These men proved their faithfulness by their actions.