

## **An Effective Ministry**

*Paul's ministry in 1Thessalonians 2*

**2:1** – Paul taught his entrance among the Thessalonians was a positive thing.

*What qualified the ministry to be counted as positive?*

**13-16** – *“Ye received it [the word preached] not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God”*. Therefore the Word effectually changed their hearts. They became followers, not of Jewish religion and its legal practices, but of the other churches of God in Christ Jesus. And they suffered for this culturally and religiously but kept going on.

*Why were the results effective? Following are 8 things that characterized his ministry.*

#1. **2:2 - The Right Mentality** (mental toughness)

Paul was jailed and shamed in Philippi. Yet he and the others did not quit. They then went on to Thessalonica and *“were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention”*. They had the heart of a lamb but the hide of a rhinoceros.

*Negative happenings did not change their faithfulness.*

#2. **2:3-4 - The Right Message**

Their message was not religious law, political reform, financial prosperity, a better health-diet or a self-help program but *“the gospel of God”*. Their *“exhortation was not of deceit”* with twisted error or trickery. It was a message that did not try to please men but only God. He opened God's Scriptures and proved the gospel – that Christ suffered fully for our sins to save from our due judgment. And that this Jesus rose from the dead showing He is that Christ (God's anointed Lord and Savior), Acts 17:1-3.

*Many speakers dynamically motivate but with the wrong message.*

#3. **2:5-6 - The Right Motive**

Paul did not wear a *“cloke of covetousness”*, i.e. pretending on the outside to care and represent God which would mask from them his real reason – being after their money through guilt, greed and gimmicks. He did not make *“merchandise of you”* (2Pet. 2:3).

Neither did he flatter their egos to make them feel ok and special the way they were so they would like him. *“Nor of men sought we glory”* that would make him a spiritual hero to them thus making it easy for him to take advantage of them. They, as saved souls, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ were his only glory and joy, **2:19, 20**.

*He was not in it for self but for God – Who tries the heart, and is a witness of it.*

#4. **2:7, 11 - The Right Match** (balance)

When Paul was among them he was neither a tyrant nor a wimp. He had both father and mother qualities to him. He was “*gentle among you*” (not harsh) as a nursing mother is with her dear children. But he also “*exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father*” does his to children. He was kind but firm in the things of God.

*He had grace and truth like his Lord.*

#5. **2:8, 17-20 - The Right Moving** (what moved his heart was love, not self)

He had heart affection for the people themselves. He just didn't give them the gospel and 'hit and run'. “*Ye were dear unto us*”. With desire he tried to return – then wrote them.

*He loved the Lord and His people also. He knew a head has a body – both are cherished.*

#6. **2:9 - The Right Method**

It was more than just bringing the saving gospel word to them but he used methods that were strategically meant to reveal God's character and ways – thus aiding their knowledge of God. Because they needed the example to work for a living, he, rather than depend on them for financial help (which was his due, 1Cor. 9), “*labouring night and day*” with his own hands in hardship to help meet his needs. (Acts 18:3, 20:34). Thus they would learn not to covet. Later he could compellingly and un-hypocritically charge from God to the idle busy bodies; “*if any would not work, neither should he eat*”, (2Thess. 3:10).

*The method in telling the message of God should compliment the God of the message,*  
(1Cor. 2:1-5).

#7. **2:10 - The Right Manner of Life**

Paul not only told them what was right, he lived what was right. “*How holily, and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe.*” *Holy* is piety toward God. *Justly* is righteous fairness toward man. *Blameless* is public reputation. Paul was a living example of his message – written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God.

*Paul not only talked the walk but he also walked the talk.*

#8. **2:12 - The Right Mark** (aim of ministry to hit - goal)

Paul was not after money or fame. He was not after stunning numbers but after their walk – “*That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*”. As he would further write in 4:1; “*ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more*”.

*“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth”, 3John: 4.*

May we seek these 8 qualities by His grace in our ministries for the Lord Jesus.