

The Loft

Sunday, July 5th, 2020

Today: 1 Thessalonians 2

FORMAT = 1: Short Study... 2: Deeper Study... 3: Questions... 4: Bonus... 5: Personal Study

1: Short Study:

Stewardship of the Gospel –

4: On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.

We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

Paul shares with us his life changing desire to share the message entrusted to him by God. Jesus Christ had taken this sinful man on the road to Damascus and transformed him into a passionate messenger of the Gospel. Paul not only helped the Thessalonians see the hope and truth of the Gospel, but he continues to teach us, as fellow stewards of this this amazing message, how to lovingly share God's plan of salvation to a world full of strong opposition.

2: Overview of Study:

2: 1 – 16 = Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica...

52: 2: 0 – 1.1 = Overview = Q: Faithfulness... Gentleness... Blamelessness... Eagerness... Hopefulness...

... *Faithfulness* (1 – 6) = Paul's sufferings in Philippi might have made him hesitate to minister in Thessalonica, but he was a steward who wanted to be faithful to the Lord. His message and motive were pure, and God blessed his ministry. It is better to be approved by God and suffer than to be applauded by men and prosper: When you feel like quitting, keep going (1 Cor 4: 2).

... *Gentleness* (7 – 9) = Young believers need a spiritual parent to lovingly nurture them in the Lord. Paul's ministry was motivated by love, not by pride or the desire for material gain.

... *Blamelessness* (10 – 12) = How important it is to be good examples before young believers! Children do what we do, not what we say. Does your example as a Christian make it easier for others to grow?

... *Eagerness* (13 – 16) = These people had an appetite for the Word of God, and that helped them to grow (Jer 15: 16; 1 Pet 2: 2). When they heard God's Word, they eagerly welcomed it and put it to work immediately.

2: 17 – 20 = Paul's Longing to See the Thessalonians...

... *Hopefulness* (17 – 20) = Paul hoped to visit his beloved friends again; but even if they did not meet on earth, he would meet them at the coming of the Lord. When Jesus comes, will you rejoice in His presence because of people you have influenced for Christ? (790, Wiersbe – CCB).

3: Questions to Consider:

1: What does it mean to you to be entrusted with God's message? What are you doing with it?

2: How do you respond when others try to 'train you up'?

3: Have you ever experienced opposition to the Gospel? How did you respond? What take-aways from Paul's letter can you use to respond in a way that helps God's message be received?

4: Bonus:

52: 2: 0 – 3 = Jews – Why were so many opposed to Christianity?

52: 2: 0 – 3.1 = Jews = Q: Why were so many Jews opposed to Christianity? (ca: 1 Thess 2: 15-16)

1: Although the Jewish religion had been declared legal by the Roman government, it still had a tenuous relationship with the government. At this time, Christianity was viewed as a sect of Judaism. The Jews were afraid that the reprisals leveled against the Christians might be expanded to include them.

2: The Jewish leaders thought Jesus was a false prophet, and they didn't want his teachings to spread.

3: They feared that if many Jews were drawn away, their own political position might be weakened.

4: They were proud of their special status as God's chosen people, and they resented the fact that Gentiles could be full members within the Christian church (2173, LAB).

5: Personal Study: LIFE-APPLICATIONS... Fill-in the Blanks/Diagrams...

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

1 Thessalonians 2

Chapter Summary...

2: 1 – 16 = Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica...

2: 17 – 20 = Paul's Longing to See the Thessalonians...

52: 2: 0 – 0 = Scripture Connections...

... Philippians 1: 12-14, 19-21 = (Paul in Chains) = Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly... 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

52: 2: 0 – 1 = Overview =

52: 2: 0 – 1.1 = Overview = Q: Faithfulness... Gentleness... Blamelessness... Eagerness... Hopefulness...

... *Faithfulness* (1 – 6) = Paul's sufferings in Philippi might have made him hesitate to minister in Thessalonica, but he was a steward who wanted to be faithful to the Lord. His message and motive were pure, and God blessed his ministry. It is better to be approved by God and suffer than to be applauded by men and prosper: When you feel like quitting, keep going (1 Cor 4: 2).

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... *Blamelessness* (10 – 12) = How important it is to be good examples before young believers! Children do what we do, not what we say. Does your example as a Christian make it easier for others to grow?

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... *Hopefulness* (17 – 20) = Paul hoped to visit his beloved friends again; but even if they did not meet on earth, he would meet them at the coming of the Lord. When Jesus comes, will you rejoice in His presence because of people you have influenced for Christ? (790, Wiersbe – CCB).

52: 2: 0 – 2 = Paul & Persecution / Suffering...

52: 2: 0 – 2.1 = Paul & Persecution / Suffering = Q: Prior to his visit to Thessalonica, Paul had encountered Jewish opposition in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13: 50), Iconium (Acts 14: 2), and Lystra, where he was stoned (Acts 14: 19). The Thessalonian Jews forced Paul not only to leave that city, but also chased him out of Beroea (Acts 17: 5, 13). In Corinth, where he was probably living when he wrote this letter, he likewise suffered at the hands of the Jewish opposition (Acts 18: 12) (1 Thess 2: 15-16) (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 0 – 3 = Jews – Why were so many opposed to Christianity?

52: 2: 0 – 3.1 = Jews = Q: Why were so many Jews opposed to Christianity? (ca: 1 Thess 2: 15-16)

1: Although the Jewish religion had been declared legal by the Roman government, it still had a tenuous relationship with the government. At this time, Christianity was viewed as a sect of Judaism. The Jews were afraid that the reprisals leveled against the Christians might be expanded to include them.

2: The Jewish leaders thought Jesus was a false prophet, and they didn't want his teachings to spread.

3: They feared that if many Jews were drawn away, their own political position might be weakened.

4: They were proud of their special status as God's chosen people, and they resented the fact that Gentiles could be full members within the Christian church (2173, LAB).

2: 1 – 16 = Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica...

1: You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results.

52: 2: 1 – 1 = "You know, brothers and sisters."

52: 2: 1 – 2 = "that our visit to you was not without results."

52: 2: 1 – 2.1, CS = T: Results do matter, and Paul is encouraged by the results / the fruit of this church & its people.

52: 2: 1 – 2.1 = Q: "Our visit to you" refers to Paul's first visit to Thessalonica (c: Acts 17: 1-9) (2172, LAB).

2: We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.

52: 2: 2 – 1 = "We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know,"...

... Acts 16: 22-24 = (16-40: Paul & Silas in Prison) = 22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

... Philippians 1: 12-14, 19-21 = (Paul in Chains) = Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more

courageously and fearlessly... 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

52: 2: 2 – 1.1 = Q: This was “more than the bodily suffering; it was the personal indignity that had been offered to him as a Roman citizen” (Milligan) (ca: Acts 16: 16-40). Paul shows that the memory still rankled in his bosom (508, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 2 – 1. = Q: Beneath the surface of this passage run the slanders which Paul’s opponents at Thessalonica attached to him:

... 1: (v. 2) refers to the imprisonment and abuse that he had received at Philippi (Acts 16: 16-40).

... 2: (v. 3) It was being said that Paul’s preaching came from sheer delusion... and from impure motives.

... 3: (v. 4) indicates that Paul was accused of seeking to please men rather than to please God.

... 4: (v. 5 & 9) both indicate that there were those who said the Paul was in the business of preaching the gospel for gain...

... 5: (v. 6) indicates the Paul was accused of seeking personal prestige.

... 6: (v. 7) indicates that Paul was charged with being something of a dictator (190, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 2 – 2 = “but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.”

52: 2: 2 – 2.1 = Q: Paul was susceptible to fear in difficult situations as anyone (Acts 18: 9-10; Phil 1: 20). His strength, as he continually declares is found in God (1169, FCA).

52: 2: 2 – 2.2 = Q: The Greek word is *parresiazomai*, old deponent verb from *parresia* (full story, *pan, resia*) (ca: Acts 26: 26). The insult in Philippi did not close Paul’s mouth, but had precisely done the opposite effect (508, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 2 – 2.3 = Q: Lit. “much struggle.” This figure is of the athletic games and may refer to outward conflict like Philippians 1: 30 or inward anxiety (Col 2: 1). He had both in Thessalonica (508, Robertson – WPNT).

3: For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.

52: 2: 3 – 1 = “For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives.”

... Phil 1: 15-18 = It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,

52: 2: 3 – 1.1 = Q: This pointed statement may be a response to accusations from the Jewish leaders who had stirred up the crowds (Acts 17: 5). Paul did not seek money, fame, or popularity by sharing the gospel. He demonstrated the sincerity of his motives by showing that he and Silas had suffered for sharing the gospel in Philippi. People become involved in ministry for a variety of reasons, not all of them good or pure. When their bad motives are exposed, all of Christ’s work suffers. When you get involved in ministry, do so out of love for Christ and others (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 3 – 1.2 = Q: “Nor in guile” The Greek word is *dolos* from *delo*, to catch with bait. Paul is keenly sensitive against charges against the correctness of his message and the purity of his life (508, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 3 – 2 = “nor are we trying to trick you.”

52: 2: 3 – 2.1 = Q: The Greek for “trick” was originally used of a lure for catching fish, but the term came to be used of any sort of cunning used for profit (1945, ASB).

4: On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.

We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

52: 2: 4 – 1 = “On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.”

... 2 Tim 2: 15 = Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

52: 2: 4 – 1.1 = Q: In trying to persuade people, we may be tempted to alter our position just enough to make our message more palatable or to use flattery or praise. Paul never changed his message to make it more acceptable, but he did tailor his methods to each audience. Although our presentation must be altered to be appropriate to the situation, the truth of the gospel must never be compromised (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 4 – 1.2 = Q: The Greek word is *dokimazo*, to put to the test, but here the tense for completed state means tested and proved and so approved by God (508, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 4 – 2 = “We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.”

52: 2: 4 – 2.1, CS = T: Paul’s challenge to us all in Christ, is to live in such a way that you impact the culture you live in yet do not let the culture cause you to compromise the message of Christ. Our goal is to please the One who made all the people, not to please the many people who like to be their own authority and play god vs. live under the authority of God.

52: 2: 4 – 2.1 = Q: Verse 4 indicates that Paul was accused of seeking to please men rather than to please God. No doubt that rose from the fact that he preached the liberty of the gospel and the freedom of grace as against the slavery of legalism. There are always people who do not think that they are being religious unless they are being unhappy; and any man who preaches a gospel of joy will find his slanderers, which is exactly what happened to Jesus (189, Barclay – PCT).

5: You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness.

52: 2: 5 – 1 = “You know we never used flattery”

52: 2: 5 – 1.1 = Q: It’s disgusting to hear a person “butter up” someone. Flattery is phony, and it is a false cover-up for a person’s real intentions. Christians should not be flatterers. Those who proclaim God’s truth have a special responsibility to be honest. Are you honest and straightforward in your words and actions? Or do you tell people what they want to hear in order to get what you want or to get ahead? (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 5 – 1.2 = Q: This was the selfish conduct (that is “flattery”) of too many of the rhetoricians of the day; such conduct extremely repugnant of Paul (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 5 – 2 = “nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed – God is our witness.”

52: 2: 5 – 2.1 = Q: Translate, “pretext of greediness.” This is the charge of self-interest rather than the mere desire to please people. Paul feels so strongly his innocence of this charge that he calls God as witness in a solemn oath (ca: 2 Cor 1: 23; Rom 9: 1; Phil 1: 8) (509, Robertson – WPNT).

6: We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority.

52: 2: 6 – 1 = “We were not looking for praise form people, not from you or anyone else.”

[Life-Scripture... Sequence = Galatians 1: 10... 2: 20... & John 3: 30]

... Gal 1: 10 = Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men?

If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

... Gal 2: 20 = I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

... John 3: 30 = He must become greater; I must become less.

... 1 Thess 2: 4b = We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

52: 2: 6 – 1.1 = Q: First greed is repudiated, now worldly ambition (ca: Acts 20: 19; 2 Cor 4: 5; Eph 4: 2). Paul and his associates had not tried to extract praise or glory out of men (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 6 – 1.2 = Q: Verse 6 indicates that Paul was accused of seeking personal prestige. It is the preacher’s constant danger that he should seek to display himself and not the message. In 1 Thess 1: 5 there is a suggestive thing. Paul does not say “I came to you.” He says, “Our gospel came to you.” The man was lost in his message (190, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 6 – 2 = “even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority.”

52: 2: 6 – 2.1 = Q: This clearly means as missionaries, whether in the technical sense or not (ca: Acts 14: 4, 14; 2 Cor 8: 23; 11: 13; rom 16: 7; Phil 2: 25; Rev 2: 2). They were entitled to pay, though they did not invoke it (509, Robertson – WPNT).

7: Instead, we were like young children among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children,

52: 2: 7 – 1 = “Instead, we were like young children among you.”

52: 2: 7 – 2 = “Just as a nursing mother cares for her children.”

52: 2: 7 – 2.1 = Q: Paul eloquently described his love for his spiritual children (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 7 – 2.2 = Q: (Gentleness) = Gentleness is often overlooked as a personal trait in our society. Power and assertiveness gain more respect, even though no one likes to be bullied. Gentleness is love in action – being considerate, meeting the needs of others, allowing time for the other person to talk, and being willing to learn. It is an essential trait for both men and women. Maintain a gentle attitude in your relationship with others (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 7 – 2.3 = Q: The picture here is...of Paul’s tender affection for the Thessalonians. *Thalpo* is an old word to keep warm, to cherish with tender love (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 7 – 2.4 = Q: Verse 7 indicates that Paul was charged with being something of a dictator. His gentleness was that of a wise father. His was the love which knew how to be firm. To him Christian love was no easy sentimental thing; he knew that men needed discipline, not for their punishment but for the good of their souls (190, Barclay – PCT).

8: so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

52: 2: 8 – 1 = “so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much.”

52: 2: 8 – 1.1 = Q: Lit. “to long for,” derived from the language of the nursery (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 8 – 2 = “we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.”

52: 2: 8 – 2.1 = Q: When Paul was with the Thessalonians, he didn’t flatter them, didn’t seek their praise, and didn’t become a burden to them. He and Silas completely focused their efforts on presenting God’s message of salvation to the Thessalonians. This was important! The Thessalonian believers had their lives changed by God, not Paul; it was Christ’s message they believed, not Paul’s. When we witness for Christ, our focus should not be on the impressions we make. As true ministers of Christ, we should point to him, not to ourselves (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 8 – 2.2 = Q: The Greek is *agapetos*, beloved and so dear. A beautiful picture of the growth of Paul’s affection for them (509, Robertson – WPNT).

9: Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

52: 2: 9 – 1 = “Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship.”

52: 2: 9 – 1.1 = Q: This is difficult labor, harder than mere toil (ca: 2 Thess 3; 8; 2 Cor 11: 27) (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 9 – 2 = “we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone”

52: 2: 9 – 2.1 = Q: Greeks despised manual labor and viewed it as fit only for slaves, but Paul was not ashamed of doing any sort of work that would help further the gospel (1945, ASB).

52: 2: 9 – 2.2 = Q: Although Paul had the right to receive financial support from the people he taught, he supported himself as a tentmaker (Acts 18: 3) so that he wouldn't be a burden to the New Testament believers (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 9 – 2.3 = Q: Translate, “both by day and by night,” perhaps beginning before dawn and working after dark (ca: 1 Thess 3: 10) (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 9 – 2.4 = Q: Lit. “not laying a burden on one” (ca: 2 Thess 3: 8; 2 Cor 2: 5). Paul boasted of his financial independence where he was misunderstood as in Thessalonica and Corinth (2 Cor 9 to 12), though he vindicated his right to remuneration (509, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 9 – 3 = “while we preached the gospel of God to you.”

10: You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.

52: 2: 10 – 1 = “You are witnesses, and so is God”...

52: 2: 10 – 2 = “of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.”

52: 2: 10 – 2.1 = Q: With three adverbs, Paul calls the Thessalonians and God as witnesses to his life toward you the believers. All this argues that Paul spent a considerable time in Thessalonica, more than the three Sabbaths mentioned by Luke (509, Robertson – WPNT).

11: For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children,

52: 2: 11 – 1 = “For you know that we dealt with each of you”...

52: 2: 11 – 2 = “as a father deals with his own children.”

52: 2: 11 – 2.1, CS = T: The role of a Dad in a family is of critical importance, in spite of the neglect this role plays in society today by many passive parenting approaches. The role of the “servant-leader” in the home is vital to the health of the home in all areas of life: spiritual, relational, financial, etc.. Paul was a “spiritual Dad” to many people in the various churches God used his life to start & disciple people into a Christ-honoring life. The sequence of how healthy “servant-leaders” do this is listed well in verse 12: “encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God”...

52: 2: 11 – 2.1 = Q: In some respects Paul was what a single parent must be – both mother (v. 7) and father. In the ancient world, the father's role was to see that his children learned how to live as responsible citizens (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 11 – 2.2 = Q: No loving father would neglect the safety of his children, allowing them to walk into circumstances that might be harmful or fatal. In the same way, we must take new believers under our wing until they are mature enough to stand firm in their faith. We must help new Christians become strong enough to influence others for the sake of the gospel (2172, LAB).

12: encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

52: 2: 12 – 1 = “encouraging”...

... 1 Thess 5: 9-11 = For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

52: 2: 12 – 2 = “comforting”...

... 1 Thess 5: 14-15 = And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.

52: 2: 12 – 3 = “and urging you to live lives worthy of God.”

... 1 Thess 4: 16-18 = Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

52: 2: 12 – 3.1 = Q: By his words and example, Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to live in such a way that would be worthy of God. Is there anything about your daily life that would embarrass God? What do people think of God from watching you? (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 12 – 3.2 = Q: These are the three phases of the minister's preaching, to the end that they will walk worthily (ca: Phil 1: 27; Eph 4: 1) (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 12 – 4 = “who calls you into his kingdom and glory.”

52: 2: 12 – 4.1 = Q: Here, the kingdom is the future consummation because of glory (ca: 2 Thess 1: 5; 1 Cor 6: 9; 15: 50; Gal 5: 21; 2 Tim 4: 1, 18), but Paul uses it for the present kingdom of grace also as in 1 Corin 4: 20; Rom 14: 17; Col 1: 13 (510, Robertson – WPNT).

13: And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

52: 2: 13 – 1 = “And we also thank God continually because.”

52: 2: 13 – 2 = “when you received the word of God, which you heard from us.”

52: 2: 13 – 3 = “you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, *the word of God*”...

52: 2: 13 – 3.1 = Q: In the New Testament, *the word of God* usually refers to the preaching of the gospel, the Old Testament, or Jesus Christ himself. Today we often apply it only to the Bible. Remember that Jesus Christ himself is the Word (John 1: 1, 14) (2172, LAB).

52: 2: 13 – 3.2 = Q: The idea is that the word of God is set in operation in you that believe (510, Robertson – WPNT).

14: For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God’s churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from the Jews

52: 2: 14 – 1 = “For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God’s churches in Judea.”

52: 2: 14 – 1.1 = Q: (ca: 1 Thess 1: 5) This passage implies Paul has admiration for the Jewish Churches, and so there is no feud existing between St. Paul and the Twelve, a distortion by extension of Galatians 2: 1 (Lightfoot) (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 14 – 2 = “which are in in Christ Jesus:”

52: 2: 14 – 3 = “You suffered from your own people”

52: 2: 14 – 3.1 = Q: Just as the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were persecuted by other Jews, so the Gentile Christians in Thessalonica were persecuted by their fellow Gentiles. Persecution is discouraging, especially when it comes from your own people. When you take a stand for Christ, you may face opposition, disapproval, and ridicule from your neighbors, friends, and even family members (2173, LAB).

52: 2: 14 – 4 = “the same things those churches suffered from the Jews”...

52: 2: 14 – 4.1 = Q: As in John’s Gospel, Paul often uses the term “Jews” when referring to the entrenched opposition of the Jewish religious leaders to Christianity. While the prime opposition to Jesus and the early church came from these leaders, it must be remembered that the first church was almost entirely Jewish in its makeup (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 14 – 4.2 = Q: At the time of Paul’s initial visit to Thessalonica, persecution instigated by the Jews was apparently being carried out against the church by unbelieving Gentiles (c: Acts 17: 5-9) (1945, ASB).

52: 2: 14 – 4.3 = Q: When Paul refers to the Jews, he is talking about certain Jews who opposed his preaching of the gospel. He does not mean all Jews. Many of Paul’s converts were Jewish. Paul himself was a Jew (2 Cor 11: 22) (2173, LAB).

15: who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out.

They displease God and are hostile to everyone

52: 2: 15 – 1 = “who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out”

52: 2: 15 – 1.1 = Q: The Jews killed the prophets before the Lord Jesus who reminded them of their guilt (Matt 23: 29). Paul, as Peter (Acts 2: 23), lays the guilt of the death of Christ on the Jewish leaders (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 15 – 2 = “They displease God and are hostile to everyone.”

52: 2: 15 – 2.1, CS = T: It is an interesting phrase, because people whose approach to life is to ignore God and therefore live in a disobedient way... as they get older, they start so feel the pressure of these decisions. They often become edgy, hostile to others and the fruit of displeasing God leads to destruction of the interior life of a person, as well as, the exterior life as seen in relationships.

52: 2: 15 – 2.1 = Q: Jews did have a reputation among Roman leadership as hostile. It seems like a bitter word about Paul’s countrymen whom he really loved (Rom 9: 1-5; 10: 1-6), but Paul knew only too well the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 15 – 2.2 = Q: In verses 15 & 16, Paul draws us a kind of catalogue of the errors and the sins of the Jews:

... 1: They killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets. When God’s messengers came to them they eliminated them.

... 2: They persecuted the Christians...

... 3: They did not try to please God.

... 4: They were up against all men.... (191, Barclay – PCT).

16: in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved.

In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

52: 2: 16 – 1 = “in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved”...

52: 2: 16 – 1.1 = Q: Why were so many Jews opposed to Christianity?

1: Although the Jewish religion had been declared legal by the Roman government, it still had a tenuous relationship with the government. At this time, Christianity was viewed as a sect of Judaism. The Jews were afraid that the reprisals leveled against the Christians might be expanded to include them.

2: The Jewish leaders thought Jesus was a false prophet, and they didn’t want his teachings to spread.

3: They feared that if many Jews were drawn away, their own political position might be weakened.

4: They were proud of their special status as God’s chosen people, and they resented the fact that Gentiles could be full members within the Christian church (2173, LAB).

52: 2: 16 – 1.2 = Q: They show their hostility to Paul at every turn. Right here in Corinth, where Paul is when he writes, they had already shown venomous hostility toward Paul as Luke makes plain (Acts 18: 6) (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 16 – 1.3 = Q: They wished to keep the offer of God’s love exclusively to themselves and did not wish the Gentiles to have any share in his grace (192, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 16 – 2 = “In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit.”

52: 2: 16 – 2.1 = Q: It may either be God’s conceived plan to allow the Jews to go on and fill up or it may be the natural result from the continual sins of the Jews (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 16 – 2.2 = Q: Their sin was the sin of arrogance. They regarded themselves as the Chosen People, as indeed they were. But they regarded themselves as chosen for *privilege* and never dreamed that they were chosen for *service*. Their aim was that someday the world should serve them, not that at all times they should serve the world.

The man who thinks only of his own rights and privileges will always be up against other men – and, what is more serious, he will be up against God (192, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 16 – 3 = “The wrath of God has come upon them at last.”

52: 2: 16 – 3.1 = Q: Paul vividly foresees and foretells the final outcome of this attitude of hate on the part of the Jews (510, Robertson – WPNT).

2: 17 – 20 = Paul’s Longing to See the Thessalonians...

17: But, brothers and sisters, when we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.

52: 2: 17 – 1 = “But, brothers and sisters, when we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time”...

52: 2: 17 – 1.1 = Q: Literally, this is “to be bereaved.” It describes the anguish of a parent being forcibly separated from his or her children (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 17 – 1.2 = Q: Lit. “being orphaned from you.” Paul changes the figure again from babies to nursing mothers, to fathers, now orphans referring to a period of separation from them (ca: 1 Thess 2: 7, 11) (510, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 17 – 1.3 = Q: First Thessalonians has been called “a classic of friendship,” and here is a passage where Paul’s deep affection for his friends breathes through his words (193, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 17 – 2 = “(in person, not in thought)”...

52: 2: 17 – 2.1 = Q: The Greek word is lit., “heart” *kardia*. This is the inner man, the seat of affections and purposes, not always in contrast with intellect. Paul was out of sight, though not “out of mind” (511, Robertson – WPNT).

18: For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way.

52: 2: 18 – 1 = “For we wanted to come to you – certainly I, Paul, did, again and again”

52: 2: 18 – 2 = “but Satan blocked our way.”

52: 2: 18 – 2.1 = Q: Whether Paul’s forced change of plans was due to sickness, inability to make travel arrangements, or some other factor is unknown, but ultimately, he attributes this frustration to Satan, God’s adversary. At other times, Paul sees roadblocks to his plans as the leading of the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16: 7). The difference may be that whereas one set of difficulties ends up in the spread of the gospel, at another time those difficulties would hinder that process and delay the mission that Paul was trying to accomplish (1170, FCA).

52: 2: 18 – 2.2 = Q: Satan is real. He is called “the god of this age” (2 Corin 4: 4) and “the ruler of the kingdom of the air” (Eph 2: 2). We don’t know exactly what hindered Paul from returning to Thessalonica – opposition, illness, travel complications, or a direct attack by Satan – but Satan worked in some way to keep him away. Many of the difficulties that prevent us from accomplishing God’s work can be attributed to Satan (ca: Eph 6: 12) (2173, LAB).

52: 2: 18 – 2.3 = Q: This Greek verb was used long before NT times to cut in a road, to make a road impassable. So Paul charges Satan with cutting in on his path (ca: Acts 24; 4; Gal 5: 7; also Rom 15: 22; 1 Pet 3: 7) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 18 – 2.4 = Q: He speaks of Satan *blocking his way* when he desired to come to Thessalonica. The word he uses (*egkoptein*) is the technical word for putting up a road-block calculated to stop an expedition on the march. It is Satan’s work to throw obstacles into the Christian’s way – and it is our work to surmount them (193, Barclay – PCT).

19: For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

52: 2: 19 – 1 = “For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown”...

52: 2: 19 – 1.1 = Q: When a king or conqueror came on a visit he was given a wreath of glorying. Paul is answering the insinuation that he did not really wish to come (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 19 – 1.2* = Q: He speaks of the Thessalonians being his *crown*. In Greek there are two words for *crown*. The one is *diadema* which is used almost exclusively for the royal crown. The other is *stephanos* which is used almost exclusively for the victor’s crown in some contest and especially for the athlete’s crown of victory in the games. It is *stephanos* that Paul uses here. The only prize in life that he really valued was to see his converts living well.

... 3 John 4 = I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

... The glory of any teacher lies in his students; and should the day come when they have left him far behind the glory is still greater.
A man's greatest glory lies in those whom he has set or helped on the path to Christ.

Nothing that we can do can bring us credit in the sight of God; but at the last the stars in a man's crown will be those whom he led nearer to Jesus Christ (193-194, Barclay – PCT).

52: 2: 19 – 2 = “in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes?”

52: 2: 19 – 2.1 = Q: The Thessalonians, Paul says, will be his crown, glory, joy when Jesus comes (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 2: 19 – 3 = “Is it not you?”...

... 2 Cor 1: 20 =

... 1 Thess 1: 3 = We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

20: Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

52: 2: 20 – 1 = “Indeed, you are our glory and joy.”

52: 2: 20 – 1.1 = Q: The ultimate reward for Paul's ministry was not money, prestige, or fame, but new believers whose lives had been changed by God through the preaching of the gospel. This was why he longed to see them. No matter what ministry God has given to you, your highest reward and greatest joy should be those who come to believe in Christ and are growing in him (2173, LAB).