

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**I THESSALONIANS 2*****I Thessalonians 2***

The Apostle Paul continues in chapter 2 by saying that the time he spent with them was not in vain or ineffective, even though he had suffered before. The Greek, Προπάσχω, propascho (prop-as'-kho), means to be mistreated and maligned. The word **"spitefully treated"** ὑβρίζω, *hubrizó*, (**hoo-brid'-zoe**), the root of which is *hybrízō* ("deliberately, spitefully injure"), refers to mistreating people, using unfair tactics to inflict undeserved harm. This expresses the work of "one whose insolence and contempt of others breaks forth in wanton and outrageous acts" (K. Wuest, *Word Studies, Vol 2, Pastoral Epistles, 1 Timothy, 34*). This mistreatment had happened at Philippi, but this did not keep them from proclaiming boldly without fear the message of the gospel.

The team had been **"approved,"** that is, they had been tested and passed the test before God. Paul and his companions refused to water down and weaken the gospel to please men, but rather, before God, whom they would rise or fall, they would speak truth. They had made up their minds they were not going to come with enticing words or try to win the Thessalonians over with **"flattering words"** *κολακεία*, *kolakeia*, (**kol-ak-i'-ah**). This is the only occurrence of this word in the entire New Testament. The word "Flatterer" speaks of someone who will tell you what you want to hear so that you will like them, and then they will take advantage of you. Paul reminded the Thessalonian

believers that they, Paul, and those with him, had treated them as their own children, carefully and lovingly telling them the truth. The reason was that the Thessalonians had **"become dear to them."** Paul goes on to say that he had worked day and night so they would not have to be a **burden**, that is, a financial drain, to them. He loved them so much that he said, **"he would have given his very life for them."**

There is an amazing principle here that I do not want to skip over that is related to each one of us, individually and to each particular church or group of churches. There are people in our lives who are **"beloved,"** not just loved like everyone else, but **"especially loved."** One might love all children, but there is a difference in your own children; your own children are **"beloved."** This is the way God loves us, and this is the love that He gives us for others who are special in our lives. Each church has people or people groups that, for some reason, they are special to that church or group of churches. It does not mean that they love others less; they just love some more. In my life, and in churches I have served over the decades, Israel and the Jewish people have had a special place in my heart. This is not true of everyone. Because that was true in my life, it became true to the church I served. God does this. It is a gift from God to a person, a church, or a group of churches. Think about it. Paul said this of the church at Thessalonica.

Prayer and Action Steps

Lord, please help me to stand the test as You bring suffering my way. Help me to be faithful to proclaim the gospel whether people like me or not, whether I am popular or not. Lord, also help me to be sensitive to Your Holy Spirit to love all people, but if You put a special love in my heart for a people, to serve You by serving them. Amen