



## 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

Often the best way to attack someone's message is to attack the messenger. Paul had faced severe opposition while starting the church in Thessalonica. From what he writes in ch 2, it seems he was still being attacked in his absence. In defending his ministry (and therefore his message), Paul gives us an insight into the kind of ministry we are to exercise.

### **A genuine ministry**

A genuine ministry is one that has been tested. Paul's ministry had been tested by opposition. God had helped them in spite of attacks against them to preach the gospel. They worked conscious that God saw all that they did, even their motives. Genuine ministry can invite scrutiny from God (2:5). It is not just WHAT you do, but WHY you do it that is important. Be genuine!

### **A gentle ministry**

Paul calls God as his witness to the kind of ministry they exercised, but also the Christians. He says "you know" or "you remember". As an apostle, Paul had unique position and could have used that to his advantage.

His ministry was gentle, like mother or father. This is what Jesus taught (Matt 20:25-28). It arises out of love (1 Cor 13:4-7) and is a ministry like Christ's (Matt 12:18-21). Don't demand your rights, be gentle!

### **A blameless ministry**

It was not only Paul's gospel preaching that he defends, but his pastoral care. He calls the Christians to witness (2:10) how he had behaved, holy (devoted to God), righteous (free from injustice) and blameless (above reproach).

Blameless ministry is one in which your life does not contradict your preaching. It is one that calls others to live lives worthy of God.

Don't contradict the message by your life, be blameless!

### **An effective ministry**

Paul reminds the church (again) of how they received the preaching of the gospel (2:13), as the word of God. Genuine, gentle and blameless ministry is effective, it produces results. Some followed Christ, others persecuted the church. It was the same for the prophets, same for Jesus.

Effective ministry is one that God honours, not one that compromises to get results. Trust God to bless ministry that is genuine, gentle and blameless.

Don't be discouraged by opposition because you are in good company (Paul, the prophets, Jesus and the whole church of Christ).



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