



1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

Lesson 3

The new believers were experiencing not only the joy of their new life in Christ but also the tribulations provoked by that new life. Paul takes the opportunity to encourage them by reminding them of God's word within them, God's people around them, and God's glory before them. May these words also be an encouragement to you.

OBSERVATION: Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit*.
Key Words: *God/Father, Jesus, glory, hope, the word, joy/rejoicing, believe, Satan, coming, any words that refer to suffering and any words that refer to work*
3. The contrasting word *but* is used four times in 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20. Mark each time the word is used. Choose one of those times and record what is being contrasted.
4. Choose one of the key words provided in question #2 and record what is revealed/stated about that word or person.
5. Share one thing this chapter reveals about:

God, the Father

Jesus

The believers in Thessalonica

Paul (and those with him)

1 THESSALONIANS 2:13

1. What had these new believers in Thessalonica *received* that provoked Paul to *thank* God?
2. The *word of God* is mentioned several times in this verse. If you only had the information in this verse to describe it, what would you say?
3. Many people receive *the word of God* as *the word of men*. They have been persuaded, not by the Holy Spirit, but by persuasive words spoken by persuasive men without the power of the Holy Spirit. What does 1 Thessalonians 1:5 say about this?
 - a. Describe what you perceive to be the difference between hearing the *word* given persuasively without the power of the Holy Spirit and given with the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Many believe the word of God is just another book. Record the words of Hebrews 4:12.
 - 1.) In what ways have you personally experienced this truth?
4. Notice the phrase in the middle of 1 Thessalonians 2:13, *it is in truth, the word of God*. Bask in the glorious truth and record your reflections.
 - a. Peter penned the words of these two letters knowing he was at the end of his life. Look up 1 Peter 1:25 and 2 Peter 1:16-21 and record what was important to him that we understand about God's word. Challenge: list other Scriptures which record the wonder or power of the word of God.
 - b. If you were writing about the word of God, what would you say?

5. Record the last phrase of 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

a. Define the word *effectively*.

1.) In whom does the word of God work *effectively*?

a.) Why doesn't the word of God work the same way in an unbeliever?

6. What do you think Job meant when he said, *I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food?* Job 23:12b

1 THESSALONIANS 2:14-16

1. Although the church in Thessalonica was primarily Gentile, Paul reminded them that they were suffering the same persecution as the Jewish Christians. How might this have encouraged them?

2. Using 1 Thessalonians 2:15, describe those who were persecuting the Christians.

a. Record Haman's proclamation against the Jews in Esther 3:8.

1.) Christian beliefs are becoming more and more *contrary* to those of the world. What are some of them?

3. Consider 1 Thessalonians 2:16. The Greek word translated as *forbidding* in this verse was translated as *hindered* in Luke 11:52. What did Jesus say to the *lawyers* in this verse?

a. How did they respond to Jesus' statement?

4. What was the consequence of *forbidding to speak* so that someone *may be saved*?
 - a. The phrase *fill up the measure of their sins* is believed to indicate that God has a limit to what He will tolerate before He executes judgment. Each sin, unrepented of by an unbeliever, is a drop in the bucket. God keeps track of the sins of an unbeliever. Record the last phrase of verse 16.
 - 1.) What has come upon them to the *uttermost*?
 - 2.) According of Hebrews 7:25, what has come upon the believer to the *uttermost*?
 - a.) Record a few words of praise for this glorious truth.
 - b. What does it mean to be *saved*?

1 THESSALONIANS 2:17-18

1. Paul had *been taken away from* them for a short time physically, but *not in heart*. What did Paul want to do?
 - a. Why was he not able to *come to* them?
2. Using synonyms, define the word *hindered*.
3. How can opposition discourage us?
 - a. What lies do we tend to believe?
4. The great apostle Paul could be *hindered by Satan*. Although Paul could not physically come to the believers in Thessalonica, what did he do?
 - a. How is Paul's example of doing what he could an inspiration to you?
5. Record the first phrase of John 8:44.
 - a. List a few ways that Satan can use men for his purposes.

6. Acts 16:6,7 recounts the Holy Spirit hindering Paul. What are some indications that help to determine whether a hindrance is of the Holy Spirit or of Satan?

1 THESSALONIANS 2:19-20

1. Fill in the blanks to complete the endearing words of 1 Thessalonians 2:19,20.

For what is our _____, _____, or crown of _____? Is it not even _____ in the _____ of our _____ at _____? For _____ are our _____ and _____.

2. How would the words of verses 19 and 20 minister to you in times of facing tribulation for your faith?

3. Paul told these new believers that they were his *crown of rejoicing*. Perhaps he was telling them that he didn't desire any other rewards; that just seeing them in heaven was reward enough. What do you think it will be like to see believers in heaven upon whom you have had a spiritual influence?

4. Why do you think these two verses are great to succeed verses 17,18?

5. According to Jude 1:24 and Ephesians 1:4, what will we be like when we stand *before Him*?

- a. Dwell on that. How does this address our utter inability to make those kinds of changes through our own works or efforts?

6. What two words did Paul use to describe who these new believers were to Paul?

- a. In what ways do you think they were Paul's *glory and joy*?

REVIEW:

1. What was it like for you when you first discovered that the Bible is God's word?

2. What did you learn from this lesson about:

suffering

hindrances

encouraging others

3. How have you been challenged to be a spiritual influence in the lives of others?

a. What are some actions you might take (soon)?

*Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren,
my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.
- Philippians 4:1*

Observation Worksheet

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. ¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, ¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. **17** But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. ¹⁸ Therefore we wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.