

All verses are copied from <https://biblehub.com/> in King James.

February 28, 2021

1 Thessalonians 2

1For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

Paul is not speaking just of their physical presence into their lives but more importantly the Spiritual presence into their lives. It was obviously not in vain due to the growth of the believers in Thessalonica and the area around it and Paul is encouraging them to see impact they are making. Unlike in Galatia, Paul did not have to undue false teaching but with these folks they wanted more knowledge, understanding and Truth.

2But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

I believe this is Paul's third Missionary journey he is writing of when he is beaten in Philippi. It was not until his third journey that he came to Thessalonica, so he is referring to his beating that took place at least a year if not two before this letter was written.

He also alludes to the contention by the non-believers in Thessalonica that they all endured.

This reference in Acts 16 was about Paul's treatment in Philippi.

Acts 16:37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

3For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: 4But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

All teaching must center on those things that are eternal and lift up Christ, giving full credit to the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost. To deny any of the Three in the God head is in my opinion a dangerous place to be. God knows the hearts of mankind whether they are His or not. No one is beyond His reach, but to a vast number God is beyond their reach by choice. So, anything we do if we do it through and for God, it will be out of obedience and walking in His Righteousness. If we do it through and for ourselves it will be burned up as chaff at the Bema Seat of Christ.

**5For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness:
6Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of**

others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

There is a sense even today that if you are doing the work of the Lord then you should be taken care of. Paul is stating this idea as being one that he never accepted; he was determined to not be a physical burden to anyone so that his service to Christ was pure and not for any personal gain. He also did not want to be a Spiritual burden to these new believers as holding himself up to a higher plain than those who were not Apostles or Disciples.

Paul speaks in the plural including Timothy and Silas, so the broadest sense of the word “apostles” is used here.

7But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: 8So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

The idea here is that a nurse; one given care of a child would provide all the necessary food and protection an infant requires. In this case Paul is alluding to that ideal that he, Timothy and Silas were willing to feed them with the milk of the Gospel and also protect them with their lives if needed just as one caring for an infant would do.

9For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

This term night and day does not indicate that Paul worked nights making tents as was his trade, to make up for Preaching during the day. The Jewish method of calculating a day is that it is preceded by night so until the hour strikes that would be counted as day if any work were done prior to that it would be counted as night work. So, say the day started at sunrise and that it was 7 AM sunrise and Paul had been working on a tent from 6 AM he would have worked that night and on into the following day. Paul did not want anything to inhibit his ability to preach when ever allowed, so he would carry out some of his work before and after the day of preaching was done.

10Ye are witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: 11As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children, 12That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Fathers should encourage their children in many things but chiefly among those things is walking in a worthy manner before the Lord.

A Biblical principal and responsibility of fathers is the training of children;

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Paul's statement and encouragement in vs 10-12 to the believers in Thessalonica as to how they as Spiritual Fathers taught those in Thessalonica and he uses their example how the Thessalonica Believers should spread the gospel.

13For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

A heart change (circumcision of the heart) is what occurred with these Thessalonica Believers. It is one thing to have people listen to the God's Word the Truth and absorb it, it is a far better thing to have that Truth circumcise the heart of those hearing and ask Jesus into their lives as Lord and Savior. At that point it becomes a choice of walking in obedience and pleasing the Lord or staying as children in the knowledge of Christ and not advancing in Spiritual knowledge, wisdom and Grace. Still saved but of little Heavenly value to share the gospel.

14For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews:

Just a further side note; no church name was given to these assemblies scattered throughout Judaea and on into Europe; they were churches of God, meaning belonging to God and no other identity was required. From time to time they would be referred to as the “church in” and the name of the village or town.

Paul makes a comparison about the suffering these Thessalonian’s endured much like the believers in Judaea did from the Jews. But the Thessalonians suffered at the hands of their own countrymen who were for the most part gentiles and heathens. The whole world is against its creator. Man wants to do what man wants to do and he does not want anyone telling him what he can and cannot do.

15Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: 16Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Paul points to the Jews as the nemesis of Christ and His Church as well as the prophets of the Old Testament whom the Jews killed. The Jews took it even further when they forbid Paul and

others from even speaking to gentiles about the Messiah and become saved.

God had warned the church.

1 Peter 4: [17](#)For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Matthew 11:20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

[\(Romans 1:8-15\)](#)

[17](#)But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

[18](#)Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Paul was cognizant of the hinderance from Satan to anyone who is trying to spread the gospel. Satan has many tools in his tool bag and obstruction of Believers is one of them. Paul wanted to personally return to Thessalonica but the threats to his life were real and ongoing. The believers would welcome him but those who hated the name of Christ would attack anyone who spoke of Salvation through Him.

[19](#)For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* [20](#)For ye are our glory and joy.

It is no wonder that people get confused by man-made Christianity. It began quite early in the progression of the church that Jesus called out. One of Satan's plans apparently was to cause division. Satan would put into the minds of new believers or non-believers all kinds of thoughts that called into question how things should function. Read the history of religions.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/christian-denominations-700530>

By

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Today in the U.S. alone, there are more than 1,000 different Christian branches professing many diverse and conflicting beliefs. It would be an understatement to say that Christianity is a severely divided faith.

What Is a Denomination in Christianity?

A denomination in Christianity is a religious organization (an association or fellowship) that unites local congregations in a single, legal and administrative body. Members of a denominational family share the same beliefs or [creed](#), participate in similar worship practices and cooperate together to develop and preserve shared enterprises.

The word denomination comes from the Latin *denominare* meaning "to name."

Initially, Christianity was considered a sect of [Judaism](#) (Acts 24:5). Denominations began to develop as the history of Christianity progressed and adapted to the differences of race, nationality, and theological interpretation.

As of 1980, British statistical researcher David B Barrett identified 20,800 Christian denominations in the world. He classified them into seven major alliances and 156 ecclesiastical traditions.

Examples of Christian Denominations

Some of the oldest denominations in church history are the Coptic Orthodox Church, [Eastern Orthodox Church](#), and the [Roman Catholic Church](#). A few newer denominations, by comparison, are the [Salvation Army](#), the [Assemblies of God Church](#), and the [Calvary Chapel Movement](#).

Many Denominations, One Body of Christ

There are many denominations, but [one body of Christ](#). Ideally, the church on earth — the body of Christ — would be universally united in [doctrine](#) and organization. However, departures from Scripture in doctrine, revivals, [reformations](#), and various spiritual movements have forced believers to form distinct and separate bodies.

Every believer today would benefit from reflecting on this sentiment found in *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*: "Denominations may have been God's way of preserving revival and missionary fervor. The members of denominational churches, however, must keep in mind that the Church which is the Body of Christ is composed of all true believers, and that true believers must be united in spirit to carry forward the Gospel of Christ in the world, for all will be caught up together at the Coming of the Lord. That local churches should band together for fellowship and missions is certainly a Bible truth."

The Evolution of Christianity

75 percent of all North Americans identify themselves as Christian, with the United States being one of the most religiously diverse countries in the world. Most of the Christians in America belong to either a mainline denomination or the Roman Catholic Church.

There are numerous ways to dissect the many [Christian faith](#) groups. They can be separated into fundamentalist or conservative, mainline and liberal groups. They can be characterized by

theological belief systems such as [Calvinism](#) and [Arminianism](#). And lastly, Christians can be categorized into a vast number of denominations.

Fundamentalist / Conservative / Evangelical Christian groups can generally be characterized as believing that salvation is a [free gift of God](#). It is received by repenting and asking for [forgiveness of sin](#) and trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. They define Christianity as a personal and living relationship with Jesus Christ. They believe [the Bible is God's inspired Word](#) and is the basis of all truth. Most conservative Christians believe that [hell](#) is a real place that awaits anyone who does not repent of their sins and trust Jesus as Lord.

Mainline Christian groups are more accepting of other beliefs and faiths. They usually define a Christian as anyone who follows the teachings of and about Jesus Christ. Most mainline Christians will consider the contributions of non-Christian religions and give value or merit to their teaching. For the most part, mainline Christians believe that salvation comes through faith in Jesus, however, they vary widely in their emphasis on good works and the effect of these good works on determining their eternal destination.

Liberal Christian groups agree with most mainline Christians and are even more accepting of other beliefs and faiths. Religious liberals generally interpret hell symbolically, not as an actual place. They reject the concept of a loving God who would create a place of eternal torment for unredeemed humans. Some liberal theologians have abandoned or completely reinterpreted most of the traditional Christian beliefs.

For a **general definition**, and to establish common ground, we will maintain that most members of Christian groups will agree on the following things:

- Christians follow the teachings of [Jesus Christ](#), the Jewish Messiah, who was born in Bethlehem and executed by [Roman crucifixion](#) (death on a cross).
- Most Christians regard Jesus as the [Son of God](#), and that He *is* God, the second person of the [Trinity](#).
- Most Christians believe the Trinity consists of the Father, Son and [Holy Spirit](#) - three separate persons, all eternal, all present, all powerful, all knowing. They form a single, unified deity.
- Most Christians believe that Jesus co-existed with God before the foundation of the world, that He was born to a virgin named [Mary](#), that he was [resurrected](#) in bodily form three days after his death, and that he later ascended into heaven.

Brief History of the Church

To try to understand why and how so many different denominations developed, let's take a very brief look at the history of the church.

After Jesus died, [Simon Peter](#), one of Jesus' disciples, became a strong leader in the Jewish Christian movement. Later, James, most likely Jesus' brother, took over leadership. These

followers of Christ viewed themselves as a reform movement within Judaism yet they continued to follow many of the Jewish laws.

At this time, Saul, originally one of the strongest persecutors of the early Jewish Christians, had a [blinding vision](#) of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus and became a Christian. Adopting the name Paul, he became the greatest evangelist of [the early Christian church](#). Paul's ministry, also called Pauline Christianity, was directed mainly to Gentiles rather than Jews. In subtle ways, the early church was already becoming divided.

Another belief system at this time was [Gnostic](#) Christianity, which believed they had received a "higher knowledge" and taught that Jesus was a spirit being, sent by God to impart knowledge to humans so that they could escape the miseries of life on earth.

In addition to Gnostic, Jewish, and Pauline Christianity, there were already many other versions of Christianity being taught. After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the Jewish Christian movement was scattered. Pauline and Gnostic Christianity were left as the dominant groups.

The Roman Empire recognized Pauline Christianity as a valid religion in 313 AD. Later in that century, it became the official religion of the Empire, and during the following 1,000 years, Catholics were the only people recognized as Christians.

In 1054 AD, a formal split occurred between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. This division remains in effect today. The 1054 split, also known as the Great East-West Schism marks an important date in the history of all Christian denominations because it designates the very first major division in Christianity and the beginning of "denominations." For more about the East-West division, visit [Eastern Orthodox History](#).

The next major division occurred in the 16th century with the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation was ignited in 1517 when [Martin Luther](#) posted his 95 Theses, but the Protestant movement did not officially begin until 1529. It was during this year that the "Protestation" was published by German princes who wanted the freedom to choose the faith of their territory. They called for an individual interpretation of Scripture and religious freedom.

[The Reformation](#) marked the beginning of denominationalism as we see it today. Those who remained faithful to Roman Catholicism believed that the central regulation of doctrine by church leaders was necessary to prevent confusion and division within the church and corruption of its beliefs. On the contrary, those who broke away from the church believed this central control was what led to the corruption of the true faith.

Protestants insisted that believers be allowed to read the [Word of God](#) for themselves. Up until this time [the Bible](#) was only made available in Latin.

This look back at history is possibly the best way to make sense of the incredible volume and variety of Christian denominations today.

Resources and Further Reading

- *ReligiousTolerance.org*
- *ReligionFacts.com*
- *AllRefer.com*
- *The Religious Movements Website of the University of Virginia*
- *Dictionary of Christianity in America, Reid, D. G., Linder, R. D., Shelley, B. L., & Stout, H. S., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press*
- *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology, Duffield, G. P., & Van Cleave, N. M., Los Angeles, CA: L.I.F.E. Bible College.*

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