

In this reading Paul recalls his first visit to the Thessalonians, the troubles he endured, and the straightforward and gentle way in which he presented the gospel. The opposition that Paul had earlier experienced in Philippi continued in Thessalonica, but, with God's help, Paul preached fearlessly. Unlike certain of the insincere traveling missionaries of the pagan world, Paul acted with integrity and sought in no way to take advantage of his new friends. He and his companions shared not only the gospel but their own selves.

And now the reading from First Thessalonians

You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. 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. For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 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. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed - God is our witness. 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. Instead, we were like young children among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, 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.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Matthew 22:34-36

In the gospel Jesus presents the double commandment of love for God and neighbor, and then asks a question concerning whose son the Christ is. The context of this passage is the effort by certain Jewish officials to test Jesus, hoping to force him to make an unwise or unpopular comment. Jesus first responds by teaching that all the law and the prophetic words depend for their understanding on commandments of love. He then asks his own question. Using an argumentative style of the time, Jesus shows how King David (considered to be the author of the Psalms) called the Christ his Lord. Thus, at the very least, the Christ must be more than the son of David. Christians believe this Christ to be Jesus and trust that through him disciples may learn to love both God and neighbor.

Hear now these words from the gospel of Matthew

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?”

“The son of David,” they replied.

He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, “‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”’”

If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Liturgist: This is the gospel message of our Lord and Savior

All: May the reading and the hearing of Your word inform our minds, comfort our souls, and guide our feet.

