

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2022-23 (1Thessalonians 1:1-10)
Session #2: Paul’s Relationship with the Thessalonians

CSB – Ignatius Catholic Study Bible
CCSS – Cath Commentary on Sacred Scriptures
SN = Special Notes
NAB = New American Bible
SK = Chinese Bible
CCC = Catholic Catechism

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Preaching the Gospel Amid Opposition</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul’s relationship with the Thessalonians began with much struggle. Before Paul arrived in Thessalonica, he suffered and was insolently treated in nearby Philippi; stripped, beaten, flogged, and thrown into prison by the chief magistrates. After arriving at Thessalonica, Paul was forced to flee to Berea due to the jealousy of the Jews. • “We drew courage through our God to speak with you the gospel of God with much struggle” – Paul’s point is not that they were unusually brave but that God was working in them to enable them to speak the gospel despite the difficulties they encountered. • “Our reception among you was not without effect” – Paul believed that the fruits he saw in Thessalonica is the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, “ For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth ... my chosen ... shall not labour in vain”. In other words, Paul believed that this new creation had already broken into this world through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the efficacy of his preaching was due to the power of Christ. 	<p>2:1-2</p> <p>CCSS, CSB Acts 16:20-24, 17:5-10</p> <p>CCSS, CSB</p> <p>CCSS Is 65: 17-25 1Cor 15:57-58, 1Th 1:5</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>Those Who Evangelize Should Not Seek Personal Gain Nor Praise From Others</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this section, Paul’s criticisms against the work of evangelization include “delusion”, “impure motives”, “deception”, “trying to please human beings”, “flattering speech”, “greed”, “praise from human beings”, and so on. Perhaps Paul uses himself as an example to model the work of evangelization. • “Our exhortation was not from delusion or impure motives, nor did it work through deception” – Paul cautions against falling victim to deception as well as deceiving others. “Impure motives” refer to sexual immorality. • Those who work for evangelizing the Gospel need to be clear about their own motives, “not as trying to please human beings, but rather God, who judges our hearts ... nor did we seek praise from human beings, either from you or others”. 	<p>2:3-6</p> <p>CCSS</p> <p>2:3 CCSS</p> <p>Note 1</p> <p>2:4, 6, CCSS Note 2</p>

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
 Bible Sharing Program 2022-23 (1Thessalonians 1:1-10)
 Session #2: Paul’s Relationship with the Thessalonians

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nor, indeed, did we ever appear with flattering speech ... or with a pretext for greed, God is witness” – Paul expresses confidence that God knows the truth, even if others do not. Even when everyone is blinded by deception, God knows the truth. 	2:5 CCSS
C	<p><u>Preach With Humility & Affection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning of “Apostle”. • “... as apostles of Christ” – Did Paul regard Timothy and Silvanus as apostles like himself? It’s highly unlikely for Timothy; uncertain for Silvanus. Paul may be using the term broadly. • Apostles are “able to impose [their] weight as apostles of Christ”: This is based on a command of Jesus. Paul, rather endures all sorts of inconveniences, avoids exercising this privilege, so that the Gospel will not be questioned. • “... we were gentle among you” – some ancient manuscripts have “we were infants among you”; “a nursing mother cares for her children” – ancient manuscripts use “nursing mother”. One possible original meaning: “we were able to <u>impose our weight</u> as apostles of Christ. Rather, we became <u>small</u> infants among you. Like a <u>nursing mother</u> cares for her children, you have become <u>beloved</u> to us.” 	<p>2:7-8</p> <p>CCSS, CSB, Note 3</p> <p>CCSS, 2Cor 1:1</p> <p>CCSS, 2Cor 9:1-18 Mt 10:10</p> <p>CCSS</p>

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2022-23 (1Thessalonians 1:1-10)
Session #2: Paul's Relationship with the Thessalonians

Special Notes:

1. "There is no greater proof of charity in Christ's church than when the very honor which seems so important on a human level is despised" (St. Augustine, CCSS p.59).
2. Greek philosopher Do Chrysostom (AD 40-115) contrasts the reliable teacher to those who seek their own gain:
"To find a man who speaks courageously with purity and sincerity, who does not pretend for the sake of praise or money, but out of goodwill and concern for others is ready, if necessary, to be mocked and to bear the disorder and confusion of the multitude – to find such a man is not easy but rather the good fortune of a city, so great is the scarcity of noble and free men, and such the abundance of flatterers, impostors, and sophists.
3. Can Paul be considered an apostle?
 - In the Pauline letters, the term "apostles" does not mean the twelve apostles. He regards himself as an apostle for 3 reasons: a. has met the Lord, is called by "the command of God" and not self-appointed (1Cor 9:1, Gal 1:15-16); b. is sent to spread the messages (CCC 858, Jn 20:21 Rm 10:15); proclaims the gospel and establishes the foundation of the Church through evangelization (1Cor 9:1, 2Cor 3:3).
 - Paul clearly distinguishes between "the apostles" and the 12 Apostles (1Cor 15:5-9).
 - 12 Apostles + 12 Tribes => the Church, God's people, the bride of the Lamb, "the holy Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God", God's Kingdom (CCC 865, Rev 21:9-12).
 - "The sole Church of Christ ... is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him" – the authority of the Twelve Apostles rests in the office of the bishop (CCC 870).
(Ref: *BXM, General Audience, Sept 10, 2008; J. Ratzinger, Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith, 189-191*)