

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2022-23 (1Thessalonians 2:9-20)
Session #3: Continuing the Discussion of the
Relationships Between the Apostles and 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

A	<p><u>Working Night and Day to Proclaim the Gospel to You</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul worked as a tentmaker, toiling day and night to make a living. Though those who preach the gospel should receive a living as commanded by Jesus, Paul willingly bears hardships, poverty, and hunger, drifting without a place called home, “in order not to burden any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God”. The Clergies, filled with a zeal for their mission, devote their entire life to ministry. Paul describes his relationship with the Thessalonians “as a father treats his children”. Paul tends to use paternal language to portray his relationship with members of the Church; brothers, infants, mother/nursing mother, father, children, being orphaned, and so on. The Church is God’s family and we all become God’s children in the Holy Spirit. Paul’s use of “father” represents authority and affection. “... exhorting and encouraging you and insisting that you conduct yourselves as worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and glory” – God’s children must strive for holiness and absolute purity so that we may be worthy to enter into God’s kingdom and glory. This seems impossible but everything will be fulfilled in Christ through the grace of His salvation. 	<p>2:9-12</p> <p>2:9 CCSS, Acts 18:3, 1Cor 9:14; 4:11-12</p> <p>2:11 CCSS, CSB, 1:4, 2:7,17 Rm 8:14-17 1Cor 4:14-15 Eph 1:9-10</p> <p>2:12 CCSS, CSB, 4:3,7; 5:23 1Peter 1:15-16 Mt 5:48</p>
B	<p><u>The Living Word of God</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Apostles have been “judged worthy by God to be entrusted with the gospel” and to bring the Gospel to everyone. The Word of God is living and effective; “the Word was with God, the Word was God”. As the Thessalonians received the Word of God, they have also received God. This Word works within them, transforming them to become more like God. The dialogue between God’s Word and humanity is integral to our transformation. 	<p>2:13</p> <p>CCSS, 2:4, Heb 4:12 Is 55:10-11, Jn 1:1.</p> <p>CCSS, SN1</p>
C	<p><u>Did Paul Regard The Jews As Full of Sins?</u></p>	<p>2:14-16</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Semitism has permeated Western cultural, especially under the terror of Nazi Germany. There are many complicated reasons behind such hateful sentiments; unfortunately, the misinterpretation of scripture is one of the reasons. • “the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us; they do not please God, and are opposed to everyone ...” – seems like a harsh criticism from Paul; however, the term “hoi loudaioi” used in Paul’s original manuscript does not refer to “the Jews” but the Judeans who inhabited Judea during Jesus’ time. In verse 14, Paul refers to “the churches of God that are in Judea”, therefore, what follows logically refers to the inhabitants of Judea. Paul can never be opposed to all Jews because he himself as well as the Apostles and the churches in Judea are all Jews. According to scriptural traditions, while Paul is critical of the Jews’ lacking in faith, he is also full of hope that God will never abandon His Covenant with His people. 	<p>2:15 CCSS, CSB</p> <p>Jer 2:30-31, 31:1-40 SN2, 3</p>
<p>D</p>	<p><u>Eager to Return to Thessalonica</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When we were bereft of you for a short time” – “bereft” could be interpreted as “made orphans from you”; it’s forced and temporary, “ in person, not in heart”. He is, “eager in our great desire to see you in person”, yet “Satan thwarted us”. • When Jesus returns, the Church Thessalonica will be Paul’s hope and joy, a “crown to boast of”. Paul has the conviction that God has given him a mission, “because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable” on the Last Day. Why is Paul “proud”? In fact, he insists that we may not “ever boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”. In other words, the work of evangelization is the reason for his confidence and joy. 	<p>2:17-20</p> <p>2:17-18</p> <p>2:19-20 CCSS</p> <p>Rm 15:15-16 1Cor 4:7</p> <p>Gal 6:14</p>

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Special Notes:

1. Word of God, a Word who calls, who invites, who personally summons as happened to the apostles. When a person is touched by the Word, obedience is born, that is, the listening which changes life (St. JP II, *Oriental Lumen*, Churches of the East, n.10.)

I know no other book so destructive of pride, so potent a weapon to crush your enemies (St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 13.15.)

[This dialogue] is not a matter of a meeting of two peers ... Every man and woman appears as someone to whom the word speaks, challenges and calls to enter this dialogue of love through a free response...We are indeed called by grace to be conformed to Christ and, in him, to be transformed." (*Verbum Domini* #22)

2. The Church's Relationship to the Jewish People, ***Nostra Aetate 4***, Vat II (NABRE)
The Church keeps ever in mind the words of the Apostle about his kinsmen: "theirs is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the law and the worshiped the promises; theirs are the fathers and from them is the Christ according to the flesh" (Rm 9:4-5), the Son of the Virgin Mary. She also recalls that the Apostles, the Church's main-stay and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed Christ's Gospel to the world, sprang from the Jewish people God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues – such is the witness of the Apostle. In company with the prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder" (Zeph 3:9).
3. Through Christ and in Christ we are the spiritual descendants of Abraham. No, it is not possible for Christians to take part in antisemitism... antisemitism is inadmissible. Spiritually, we are Semites. (Pope Pius XI, Reflection offered to a group of Belgian pilgrims, Sept 6, 1938)