

1 THESSALONIANS

**STANDING FIRM & PRESSING ON,
UNITED TO JESUS.**

What Ministry is Not **1 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

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1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 instructs on the nature of Christian ministry, especially what ministry should NOT look like or be based on. By way of a series of five contrasts, Paul gives us marks to evaluate how we are serving the body of Christ.

Two clues for understanding 2:1-12:

1. The phrases "You know" / "You remember"
2. The word "Not"

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 is intended for protection and instruction.

1. Christian ministry is not powerless or meaningless, but is bold in the power of God (2:1-2).
2. Christian ministry should never rely on words or deeds that are false, impure, or deceptive, but we must be as those who have been tested and approved by God (2:3-4).

3. Christian ministry should not be aimed at pleasing man through flattery or winning man's favor in order to satisfy greed, but should strive to always please God (2:4-5).
4. Christian ministry should not be haughty or demanding, but should be marked by sacrificial love, like that of a mother caring for her children (2:6-8).
5. Christian ministry should not be selfish, self-focused, or self-protective, but should be focused on living in a way that glorifies God and urging others to do the same (2:9-12).

Questions to Consider

1. It's important for believers to learn sound doctrine, as well as the application of that sound doctrine to the Christian life. What are some of the chief means God uses to teach you how to live out sound doctrine?
2. Why might Paul have spent time defending the manner of his ministry to the Thessalonians?
3. What should give you boldness in gospel ministry, even when you might be in circumstances that would tempt you to shrink back or be afraid?
4. What does it mean to be "approved by God"? In what ways are you open to God's examination of your heart and motives?
5. Using the example of "a nursing mother taking care of her own children," what are some ways you can grow in affection and sacrifice as you minister to others?
6. Using the example of "a father with his children," what are some ways in which you can grow in exhorting others toward godliness?