

1 THESSALONIANS

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

A Glorious Ambition

1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

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1 Thessalonians 2:17-20 describes the glorious, forward-looking ambition that encouraged Paul (and by application, should encourage us) to persevere in ministry even when it was painful, and to love and serve people deeply even when Satan was actively working to hinder Paul's service.

The Overarching Principle: The Glorious Ambition that should drive us in ministry is the certainty we have as believers in Jesus Christ that we will stand before Jesus and will have great delight in having fulfilled (by His grace and strength) the work He called us to do in this life (2:19-20).

Those we serve are our hope, our joy, and our crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus.

We are pursuing a glorious ambition that will be fully realized when Jesus returns. In this life, that pursuit should be causing us to love others with a deep and sacrificial commitment that longs to serve them (2:17).

We are pursuing a glorious ambition that will be fully realized when Jesus returns. In this life, that pursuit should be causing us to persist in loving and serving others even when Satan is actively working to hinder our ministry (2:18).

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways are people (those you evangelize, disciple, or serve in other Christlike ways) your hope, your joy, and your crown before the Lord?
2. In 2:17 how did Paul describe what it felt like when he and Silas were forced out of Thessalonica?
3. What earthly relationships and circumstances have given you a comparable experience to what Paul described in verse 17 regarding his forced separation from the Thessalonians? In what ways have you experienced similar feelings in ministry?
4. Your ambition to stand before Christ having served Him faithfully should be motivating you toward deep and sacrificial love and devotion for serving people. Is that happening in your life? With whom? If not, why not?
5. What does it mean that Satan hindered Paul's efforts to return to Thessalonica? What does this indicate about the reality of Satan's efforts to hinder Christian ministry? It may be difficult to know if we are being hindered by Satan, but when it seems like our service to others is being hindered, how should we respond?
6. What is the highest ambition in your life? How are you seeking to pursue it each day? What might need to change in terms of priorities and actions?