

What Pleases God: Faithful, Accurate, Complete Proclamation of the Word

Ponder: Does this apply to you?

Scripture: “But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts” (1 Thess. 2:4, NKJV).

What would you do? You went to a city and preached Christ. Several obeyed the gospel. You helped a poor slave girl whom her captors were exploiting as a fortune-teller. For your trouble you got the living daylights beaten out of you, then were tossed into a dungeon and your feet put in stocks. The next day city officials “invited” you to leave town; so you moved on to the next place. Now what?

Lesser men might have “dialed it down a notch” (or several notches). Don’t make waves! Paul and Silas, however, sought to please God despite the pain. “But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict” (1 Thess. 2:2).

What did they hope to gain? As it turns out, they were run out of town at Thessalonica too! Maybe the locals would have approved of them if they had preached what people wanted to hear. However, “our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit” (v. 3). Their loyalty to truth was unshakable!

At the very least, shouldn’t Paul and Silas have buttered up the influential elites of the community? Let Paul answer: “For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know . . .” (v. 5). Sincere compliments are one thing; but flattery is sinful!

Paul further emphasized his pure motives in 2:6 – “Nor did we seek glory from men, either from your or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.”

We are not apostles like Paul was, but we share the obligation to please God by faithfully, accurately, and completely proclaiming His word. If people are pleased when we do so, that’s icing on the cake. Regardless, let us strive first and foremost to please God!

Song: “Are You Sowing The Seed Of The Kingdom?”

Prayer: Glorious Father, we seldom suffer for the gospel like others have; may their example make us determined to be faithful come what may. In Jesus’ name, Amen.