

“Pushing Back with Spiritual Confidence”

“¹For you yourselves know, brothers, our visit to you wasn’t in vain, ²but having suffered before and been shamefully treated, as you know, at Philippi, we grew bold in our God to tell you the Good News of God in much conflict.” (1 Thess. 2:1-2, WEB)

It is easy for us to make it all about us. When we endeavor to help others we sort of have a certain expectation that everything will go well. After all, if we are doing this for God then it should have that certain *divine flow* to it. Right? However, this is often not the case. Generally there is resistance of various sorts. “Things going along without problems” is not the sign of divine approval. Often, we will meet with resistance as we try to help others in the gospel way. There is always that crowd on the side-line saying, “If this is of God it wouldn’t have any opposition.” That is simply not the truth.

Paul and his company, however, did not let the problems they endured in Philippi sour their ministry in Thessalonica. Rather, they used it as a source to embolden their testimony. They persevered against the

opposition. Paul refused to allow resistance and opposition to define the truth he proclaimed or the ministry he presented. We also must learn not to allow resistance and opposition to define who we are in God and what we have to say about Jesus. Our ministry is in vain if we allow opposition to define it. We must leave the results with God. My friend, Dr. Terry Downin, has often reminded me that the Lord’s words still are, “You proclaim, I’ll persuade.” Let’s do our part and leave the rest with God.

CLOSING WORD: “I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33, WEB)

PRAYER: “Our Father, help me today to not view difficulties as proof that Your Word is not going forward into the places You have sent me to proclaim it. I submit my life and work to You. Give me confidence that my work for You is not in vain. Give me boldness to continue every good work You have called me to do and to expect fruit. In Jesus’ name! Amen”