



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLAMELESS?

Week #9; July 19, 2026, 11AM

Taught at: Ridgeview Classical Schools
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Review:

- In our Sunday morning study series on “**1 & 2 Thessalonians**,” we’ve worked our way through **Ch. 2, vs. 9**.
- In the last three lessons, we’ve examined those things which Paul outlines as being the marks of a **true** ministry.
- It’s not the criteria by which we normally evaluate a ministry - - be that a church, a Bible study, a music career, missions, or any other sort of outreach.
- In the end, they will all display certain common qualities if they are measured and found **true by God’s standards**.
- A **true** ministry should never be evaluated by its programs, budgets, buildings, mailing lists, dollars, fans, subscribers, or other cultural and institutional things.
- Paul had NONE of that. What Paul DID have was a strict devotion to Biblical truth. That was his top priority, and this showed his **true** ministry calling.
- But as a result, what Paul ALSO had was strong oppression, tough labor, and long hours. What he received was constant suffering, misunderstanding, and accusations of wrong motives.
- But Paul exerted a tenacious personal discipline to please God rather than to please men. He ran the race to win the prize (**Cf. Philippians 3:12**).
- (And so) in all the things he received FROM others – and in the things he did FOR others – he showed the marks of **true** ministry.
- That ties into the fact we also learned a **true** ministry is known by **true** service. This type of service requires ongoing integrity, humility, gentleness, love, and focus.
- Paul knew he was being watched. He said he “**knew**” others could see what was happening. He knew others could see the results and the changed lives. That’s something to think about....
- (And so) we learned the bottom line is Satan is always attacking that which conforms to **God’s standards** rather than to man’s systems.
- It’s why Satan tries new ways to erode and bring down ministries and people which effectively introduce people to the life-changing truth of God’s Word.
- We’ve learned a lot in these past three lessons. It comes down to a different way of evaluating a **true** ministry. It is the **right** way, and the Bible makes this clear.

NOTE: Now we transition into **vss. 10-12 of 1 Thessalonians Ch. 2** where Paul presents his ‘blameless’ behavior (**READ**).

NOTE: Most of our English translations use the word ‘blameless,’ or some derivative like ‘blamelessly.’

- Paul’s point is he conducted himself in a ‘faultless’ or ‘irreproachable’ manner as he engaged in ministry among the new Thessalonian believers.
- It was a way of life for Paul. It was a standard he set for himself, and he was confident in it. His decisions reflected his moral purity, and they honored his faith and God.
- It doesn’t mean Paul was perfect, because he was not. He himself wrote in **Romans 3:23** that “*all have sinned*,” and that includes Paul.
- What blameless means is Paul ‘took the high road’ in his conduct and choices - - even when he was exhausted and discouraged. Even when it was the hardest thing for him to do.

NOTE: It’s not easy to live ‘blameless.’ Most of us have become too comfortable with ‘rounding the corners,’ ‘taking the shortcut,’ ‘turning a blind eye,’ and ‘going halfway.’ We live in a culture where mediocrity and compromise are not only tolerated - - but they’re even celebrated.

To help us understand this term “blameless,” let’s quickly look at a few examples of people from God’s Word that were called that. Let’s see what the word “blameless” implies - - and what it does **not** imply.

1. **Noah:** He is described in **Genesis 6:9** as a righteous man who was “*blameless among the people of his time*,” or “*blameless in his generations*.”
 - This verse has traditionally been interpreted to see Noah as much more spiritually and morally upright than those around him.
 - Those that see this passage this way also tend to see God as becoming so angry and frustrated with sin that He opted to drown everybody in the world like a bunch of rats.
 - There are a couple of **big** problems with these views: **FIRST**, Noah was cursed by sin just as all those after Adam are. **SECOND**, God’s character never changes, so He didn’t have a brash moment when He sent The Great Flood.
 - A careful examination of **Genesis 6:9** shows the Hebrew word under “*blameless*” is **tamim** (טָמִים), and it means “complete, whole, without physical blemish.”
 - The same word is used throughout **Leviticus** to describe an acceptable animal sacrifice. It had to be “without physical blemish.”
 - When Noah was called “*blameless among the people of his time*,” it is a statement of his physical purity. The world around him at that time was comprehensively corrupted by fallen angelic ‘seed.’

- But Noah was an exception to everyone else. So were his wife and his sons. So, God saved them in the ark to preserve the Messianic lineage and the plan of our salvation.
- So here – with this example of Noah – it seems our English translations have misguided us. It's an easy fix. We can look at the original Hebrew in **Gen. 6:9** to know what is really being stated.

2. **Job:** Here, we have another man most of us are quite familiar with. **Job 1:1** introduces Job as a man who was *"blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil"*.

- Again, this does not mean Job was perfect. He was a sinner, just like you, just like I, just like Noah, and just like Paul. **Romans 5:12** is clear about this:

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—"

- In **Job 1:1**, *"blameless"* means to have integrity. It means Job was ethically sound. It means he always **tried** to do the right thing. This gets really close to what Paul is saying about himself.
- The Bible elaborates on this quality of Job in **vss. 4 and 5** of that same chapter:

"His sons used to hold feasts in their homes on their birthdays, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, 'Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' This was Job's regular custom."

- What is clear in this passage is Job went 'above and beyond' in his efforts to stay upright before God. He even personally advocated for his children (maybe without their knowledge) - - and he did this on a regular basis.
- His habits were to do what was right and proper. He was most concerned about pleasing God.
- This is integrity. He *'shunned evil'* to the best of his abilities. This is why Job is called *'blameless.'*

3. **Zechariah and Elizabeth:** These were the parents of John the Baptist. They are described in **Luke 1:6** as being *"righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly."*

- The Greek term here for *'blamelessly'* means Zechariah and Elizabeth were "faultless," or "irreproachable".
- It was difficult to find any behavioral defect in them. It was tough to pin any accusation of wrongdoing on them. They were upstanding in every way, and they checked all the right boxes.

- But – again – this does not mean Zechariah or Elizabeth were perfect. They were still human. In **vss. 18-20 of Luke Ch. 1**, we see this in Zechariah.
- Gabriel, the angel is speaking to Zechariah and announcing to him that he and his wife would bear a son who would *“make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*
- Zechariah responds pretty much the same way Abraham did when it was announced to him that he and Sarah would bear a son in their old age:

“Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.” The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

- Zechariah may have been *“blameless,”* but he still doubted God’s Word. He may have been *“blameless,”* but he still endured the consequences of his fallen nature.
 - The story goes on to show that Zechariah was - from that point - not able to speak at all till the baby was born and was named “John.”
 - Zechariah had nine months to think about the results of his choices. He had made some wrong ones, but he was still regarded as *‘blameless.’*
4. **David:** Now, it’s hard to think of David as ‘blameless.’ After all, he was an adulterer, a murderer, and a proud king who looked at the numbers.
- But David is called ‘blameless’ in several passages (**Cf. Psalms 18:23; 26:1; Et al**).
 - God even described David as a *“man after my own heart”* (**Cf. Acts 13:22**). I imagine we’d all want God to say that about us.
 - David was seen as *‘blameless’* because he saw himself properly in the eyes of God. That kept him humble and grateful. In **Psalms 32:1-2** David writes:

“Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit.”

- If you study the life of David, you will be reminded again and again that God values honesty and repentance over perfection.
- David was a guy that ‘wore his heart on his sleeve.’ When he fell, he fell hard, and even openly. But when he was right with God, that was public too.
- In **2 Samuel 6:14**, we read that David *‘danced before the Lord with all his might.’* The context shows he danced before everyone else with *‘all his might’* too. Why? He was praising God and he didn’t care what others thought of him.
- David was always rekindling his greatest passion to pursue God’s heart. He got up every time he fell down - - and as I said, he faceplanted a lot!

- But in spite of everything he went through, David showed an unwavering trust in God. He displayed a childlike faith. He trusted God completely with every chapter of his life.
- Whether he was facing enemies or challenging circumstances, David always sought God's guidance, he always listened to God's counsel, he always accepted God's discipline, and he always believed in God's faithfulness.
- Again – David was not perfect. Far from it! But for his consistent pursuit of God, and for 'getting up every time he fell down,' he is called '*blameless*.'

NOTE: OK – that's a glance at some examples of people in God's Word that are called '*blameless*.' I hope we've clarified a bit more about what this concept of being '*blameless*' means. Now, let's go back to Paul in **1 Thessalonians 2:10-12**.

A. There are two points in Paul's life that he refers to himself as '*blameless*.'

NOTE: The first time is **before** he was saved, and the second time is **after** he was saved. **How can that be?**

1. BEFORE HE WAS SAVED – In **Philippians 3:6**, Paul reflects on his life as a Pharisee of the highest order and performance, and he says of that time and about himself:

*"...as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, **blameless**."*

- Here we see Paul – who was then 'Saul' – commenting on his behavior by the standards of his religious order of that time.
 - He said he was '*blameless*.' It's not a commentary on his spiritual nature in that point in time, because he had not yet come to true salvation.
 - Rather, Paul is saying he had lived his life in such a manner that nobody could find a cause for censure or doubt.
 - In his life as a Pharisee, he'd checked every single box. He had not **omitted** anything that was proper, and he had not **committed** anything that was not proper - - insofar as **that** religious order had required these things of him.
 - Paul was not celebrating his past, but he was admitting that he had made all the choices that he thought he needed to during that chapter of his life.
 - He performed very well to the highest degree and accreditations. He was pedigreed. He was without fault with **those** standards being what they were. He was '*blameless*.'
2. AFTER HE WAS SAVED – this is the passage we are looking at now in **1 Thess. Chapter 2**. Paul says he was '*blameless*' in **vs. 10**, and now we're looking at a whole new perspective on that matter. It's not the same set of issues as it was BEFORE he was saved.
 - Again, Paul reminds his readers that they – and God – are witnesses to his claim of being '*blameless*.'

- Paul provides a direct appeal to the memories and testimonies of the Thessalonian believers concerning his past conduct.
- He is confident enough in his actions to even appeal to God as his witness. Paul's conscience is 100% clean.

NOTE: Paul pairs his claim of being '*blameless*' with two other descriptors about himself which add something important.

- He says he was '*holy*' (or '*devout*') and '*righteous*' (or '*upright*'). It depends on your translation.
 - When Paul says he was '*holy*,' he means he was marked by a conscientious regard for divine laws in a way that was pleasing to God. **He had right attitudes about God.**
 - When Paul says he was '*righteous*,' he means he was acting in accordance with what God requires. His behaviors complied with God's standards. **He had right actions towards God.**

B. Now we get into some specifics of Paul's behaviors as he acted '*blameless*.'

NOTE: There are THREE attributes Paul lists as he elaborates on his '*blameless*' character. These are THREE takeaways for us to model as we seek to be '*blameless*' the very same way:

1. Each of these THREE attributes are put under the umbrella of Paul's statement, **"we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children."**
 - I recognize that many of us – me included – did not grow up in the best of families. We have a lot of suppressed pain – and maybe some resentments as we look back on **how** we were raised.
 - We have regrets about our parents, we see glaring faults in our parents - and for some of us, the best choices we can make going forward is to learn from our past and not be **LIKE** our parents.
 - But here, Paul appeals to the right **kind of parent**, specifically a '*father*.' Paul is a man, and so he uses this analogy.
 - And Paul is thinking of a **good** father here. He's painting a picture of a father who has done the right things in rearing his children.
 - Paul says there are THREE things a **good** father does which contribute to having a '*blameless*' character.
 - There are more than these, but for Paul's purpose of expanding on his '*blameless*' character, he lists these THREE. They are:
2. **"...encouraging"** (some translations say '*exhorting*')
 - This is about coming alongside your child and helping them to act a certain way – especially in matters that involve an ethical or moral decision.

- Always, at the root of ‘*encouraging*,’ there is the inherent idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence.
- It’s like helping a child to learn to ride a bike. You lightly hold them – you run alongside them – you prop them up when they start tipping over – and you build in them the confidence and ability to ride a bike without your support.
- The Greek term under this word ‘*encouraging*’ was used in a historical account of a military regiment which had lost heart in the battle and was utterly dejected.
- The general sent a leader to talk to the troops, and courage was reborn. These dispirited men once again became fit for bravery and heroic action. This is what Paul means by ‘*encouraging*.’
- There is a persuasion element that is part of the ‘*encouraging*’ process, and Paul’s ‘*blameless*’ character rests in part on his devotion to being an encourager.
- He thought of others first, and he considered all the ways he could build them up, give them confidence, and develop them in their faith.

3. “...*comforting*”

- This is similar to ‘*encouraging*,’ but it’s different in that it leans more towards consoling or giving hope.
- Generally, in the NT, this term of ‘*comforting*’ means to be relatable, to be near, to address someone’s disappointment, loss, sadness, or concerns.
- It is the same word that is used in **John 11:19** when “...*many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother*” (this is about Lazarus).
- There is a restorative and compassionate element at play here. That is not possible without taking the time and energy to insert yourself into someone else’s life, and to focus on them and their needs instead of yourself and yours.
- Again – like the idea of a father being ‘*encouraging*,’ it’s not possible to wholly ‘*comfort*’ another without first having deep love and care.
- Honestly, this kind of ‘*comforting*’ is a real investment. You are giving up something with yourself to be there for someone else, and that’s not easy to do.
- It’s why Paul says, later in **1 Thess. 5:14**:

*“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, **comfort** the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”*

- It’s the same word used in this passage, and you can see the commitment required. It necessitates personal strength, awareness, and patience.
- None of these things are an easy path, but they are part of showing a ‘*blameless*’ character as a **good** father would show.

4. **“....urging you to live lives worthy of God....”** (some translations say ‘*imploring*’).

NOTE: I had many goals for my children as I was raising them - - but this one was my chief priority. I wanted to ‘*urge them to live their lives worthy of God.*’

- The idea of ‘*urging*’ or ‘*imploring*’ here is to beg earnestly or even to appeal desperately.
- The Latin Vulgate translation means to “invoke with tears.” This communicates that this ‘*urging*’ or ‘*imploring*’ carries a tone of greater urgency or anguish than we might realize on the surface.
- Paul is saying in **vs. 12** here that these new believers had ONE greatest priority above ALL else: they needed to live their lives in a way that grasps the seriousness, solemnness, and sacredness of following Jesus Christ.
- Because Paul recognized this priority - - he himself **URGED** these new believers onward. He **IMPLORED** them to stay ‘on the straight and narrow.’
- He used language that communicated his sense of desperation and anguish because he **knew** this matter of living ‘*worthy of God*’ was – **by far** – their greatest need.
- **NOTE:** Dr. J. Vernon McGee comments on this issue of urgency from this particular passage (as only he can!). He writes:

*“I’m afraid that we find a lot of sissy preaching in our pulpits today. The popular thing is to have a little **sermonette** given by a **preacherette** to **Christianettes**. There is **so little urgency**. Someone has defined the average church service in a liberal church as when a mild-mannered man gets up before a group of mild-mannered people and urges them to be more mild-mannered. Oh, that is sickening, my friend!”*

- Paul elaborates on his ‘*blameless*’ character by showing his seriousness. Part of being ‘*blameless*’ is choosing to do what is right – and doing what is right is all about zeroing in on what is most important.

CONCLUSION: Let me start wrapping up. What have we learned?

- a. Living a blameless life does not mean living a perfect life. Nobody has ever met that standard.
 - But it **DOES** mean consciously making the right choices whenever we can.
 - If we fail in that, then it means picking ourselves up, repenting properly, and moving on with a renewed commitment (just like David did).
- b. Living a blameless life means having integrity and going ‘above and beyond.’ It means doing whatever it takes.
 - It means not ceasing in that discipline no matter how tough things can get in our lives (just like Job did).

- c. Living a blameless life means living in such a way that it becomes difficult for others to find fault in us.
- We may doubt, and we may even bear the consequences of our attitudes and choices when we slip up – but we never forget to praise God through the trials we’ve endured (just like Zechariah did).
- d. Living a blameless life means we need to act towards others like a loving parent would act towards their children. We need to always be this way.
- We are called to encourage other believers to meet their difficult situations with confidence.
 - We must comfort one another in their disappointments, griefs, and concerns. That takes a personal investment of our time and energy.
 - (And) we must urge and implore fellow believers to live in a manner ‘*worthy of Christ*’ (just as Paul did).

NOTE: Much more could be said about what it means to live a ‘*blameless*’ life, but my trust is this lesson has given us some key points from God’s Word to enable us in those pursuits.



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Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God’s Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don’t teach what is NOT there. Don’t force a passage to mean something it really doesn’t.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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