

“A Model For Ministry”
1 Thessalonians 2:1-12
6/29/25
Message 3

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “A Model For Ministry”

- **Running Start – Review**

- **1st Beginning**

- **Church Started on Paul’s 2nd Missionary Journey (Acts 16-17)**

- Paul was only there for 3 weeks – (Some say a few more)

- **Paul Left in Hurry = Persecution**

- SO - He sent Timothy and Silas back to minister to them and report back

- When They reported back to Paul

- The church was thriving

- Although they had a few questions and Issues that needed to help

- **Paul Wrote from Corinth - Around the year 50-52 AD (48AD)**

- Paul sits down and pens a letter to the church he knew only briefly, but loved ever so deeply
 - 1 Thessalonians or Galatians were the FIRST N.T. books to be written

- **2nd Reason For Writing Them**

- **1st To ASSURE this young church of his Love & Concern**

- Left in hurry – Make they know how much I care
 - Paul was being slandered – Set the record straight

- **2nd ENCOURAGE them to Live Holy Lives / Plus Correction**

- We will see as we move through

- **3rd GROUNDED In Doctrine – Christ's Return**

- We talk about the confusion today
 - Gave a list of what the world would look like

- **3rd Review Chapter 1**

- **Chapter 1:1-5**

- **Church**

- Greek: Ekklḗsia
 - Means: Called OUT Ones

- **Grace to you and peace**

- Always in that Order
 - Can't Have Peace with God Until you have GRACE

- **Paul Gave Thanks – Prays**

- He was so encouraged to see the church doing well

- **Thankful - 3 Things Mentioned**
 - Work Of Faith
 - Labor Of Love
 - Patience of Hope
- **Salvation**
 - Chosen but have a Choice
 - POWER in the Gospel – Not in man
 - Much Assurance
- **Reassured Them of his character**
 - People attempted to rip apart Paul
- **Chapter 1:6-10 - Became A Great Example**
 - **In Their Decision To Follow The Lord v. 6**
 - Follow = Mimic
 - Much Affliction
 - Joy Of the Holy Spirit
 - **In Their Display Of Character vv. 6b-8**
 - Your Faith SOUNDED FORTH
 - **In Their Decision To Turn To God / From Idolatry v. 9**
 - Repentance
 - **In Their Desire To See Jesus v. 10**
 - Saved from the WRATH of God

- Rapture – For sure BEFORE Tribulation

- **Now this Morning 4 POWERFUL TRUTHS To Modeling Ministry**

- A Minister Is Confident That God Will Do The Work vv. 1-2
- A Minister Is Committed To Integrity vv. 3-6
- A Minister Will Be Concerned With Growth & Wellbeing vv. 7-9
- A Minister Will Challenge You, In Your Walk With The Lord vv. 10-12

A Minister Is Confident That God Will Do The Work vv. 1-2

- **First: He Recognized The Blessing Of God v. 1**

- 1st For you yourselves know v. 1a

1 Thessalonians 2:1 (NKJV)

1 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

- **Paul is Now DEFENDING his own character and ministry**

- He will say – “You Know” many times in this letter
 - A Way of reminding them how he was when he was with them

- **The Reason he had to do it**

- He had many enemies in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5-6 & 17:13)
- They discredited him in his Absence
- Especially because of his hurried departure from Thessalonica.
- Paul’s enemies said he left town quickly because he was a self-serving coward.

▪ **From the text today we see the Attacks from his Enemies & His Defense**

- Paul Suffered – The attack he **has been in prison**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:2)
- Paul is Delusional - **ERROR**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:3)
- Paul's ministry was based on Impure Motives – **Uncleanness**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:3)
- Paul Deliberately Deceives others – **Deceit**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:3)
- Paul Preaches to Please Others, NOT God – **Man Pleaser**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:4)
- Paul is in the ministry to get what he can - **Nor a cloak for covetousness**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:5, 2:9)
- Paul only wants personal glory – **Nor did we seek glory from men**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:6)
- Paul was Hard / Dictator – **You know how gentle**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:7)
- **2nd Our coming to you was not in vain v. 1b**

1 Thessalonians 2:1 (NKJV)

1 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

▪ **The Word Vain**

- Vain: Greek - kenós
- Means: Empty, hollow, meaninglessness, aimlessness
- Was not in VAIN
 - 1st Paul's Character –
 - The person was not in Vain
 - 2nd Paul's Labor –
 - Was not in Vain - it wasn't a failure; it wasn't an empty effort
 - God worked tremendously in a short time
 - Paul recognized what God had done and what God was going to do

▪ **Application**

- **Doing God's Work is never in VAIN!!! / His Word NEVER comes back void**
 - Many time's we can't see Tangible Results
 - You minister to someone and feel like you get nothing
 - Don't get discouraged
 - Remember

- Any time we share the Word of God
- Any time we share God's love
- Any time we share the Gospel
- We can be sure that it won't be in vain
- Leave the results to Him

- **The Discouragement is REAL**

- I know so many in the ministry that just get beat up everyday
 - Then they look around and don't see the results they had hope for...
- They wonder...
 - I am I doing it right?
 - Is anyone really listening?
 - Nothing seems to be working?
 - They are tempted to quite?
 - A recent study found that 42% of pastors have seriously considered quitting ministry in the past year.
 - If pastors feel this way –
 - Most people will too
- Hang in there
 - Wiersbe; "It's Always too Soon to Quite"

- **Second: He Refused To Be Discouraged By Persecution v. 2**

- 1st Even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi

1 Thessalonians 2:2 (NKJV)

2 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.

- **Paul Suffered**

- Paul reminds them of his sufferings in the ministry!
 - When Paul arrived in Thessalonica
 - The wounds on his back from Philippi were still fresh.
- His Point
 - Why would he carry on in the face of beatings and conflict if he were in it only for himself.
 - If Paul was in it for himself
 - He wasn't very smart about serving his own self-interest
- In MUCH Conflict
 - Preaching the Gospel will bring much conflict
 - We have already been warned so many times
- Application
 - No-one LIKE Conflict
 - BUT God's Servants BEST be ready for it
 - THEY must also not shy away from it

- To PREACH the Truth means = CONFLICT

- **Paul's view of Persecution & Suffering**

- 1st Jesus had revealed to Paul that he would suffer
 - In speaking to Ananias (not high priest) about Paul (Saul), Jesus said:

Acts 9:15–16 (NKJV)

15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

- 2nd Paul Suffered just as promised

2 Corinthians 11:24–28 (NKJV)

24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—

28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

- 3rd How did Paul respond to all this
 - LORD...
 - I Am BURNED out
 - I need a SELF CARE DAY
 - I AM DONE
 - Illustration - Modern Church

- CM conference years ago – Burn out and its signs
 - Thank God – This generation did not have the same responsibilities as the first church... Or do we?...
- What Paul KNOW – Reflected How he responded

Luke 9:23 (NKJV)

23 Then He said to them all, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Romans 8:18 (NKJV)

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- Knowing his future and future reward...it only gave him boldness
 - This was characteristic of the early church
 - He counted everything loss for Jesus' sake.
- **2nd BOLD in our God to speak to you the gospel of God v. 2b**

1 Thessalonians 2:2 (NKJV)

2 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.**

- **Speak BOLDLY**
 - Even in much Conflict

- He preached the message fearlessly despite great opposition, a direct result of the Spirit's filling.

▪ **We Must be BOLD –**

- Knowing Conflict will follow
- Why to PLEASE GOD and also WIN Souls
 - NO ONE WINS when we water down the message – NO ONE

A Minister Is Committed To Integrity vv. 3-6

• **First: Their Message v. 3**

- 1st Did not come from Error v. 3a

1 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV)

3 For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit.

▪ **Context**

- At this time in Thessalonica
 - The City sat on the Egnatian Way
 - The famous highway that went east to west through Macedonia.
 - It was also an important port and a melting pot city with cultures from all over the world.
 - There were a staggering variety of religions and religious professionals in Thessalonica.
 - You would find the worship of the gods of the
 - Olympian pantheon

- Especially Apollo, Athena, and Hercules.
- There were the native Greek mystery religions, celebrating
 - Dionysis and the sex and drinking cult.
- The Greek intellectual and philosophical traditions were also represented.
- Many shrines to many Egyptian gods
 - Isis, Sarapis, Anubis.
- **So Paul it did not come from ERROR**
 - Means - To wander
 - They didn't look at what God's Word says and come up with their own opinions or spin
 - They had SOUND DOCTRINE – HE TAUGHT THEM TRUTH
 - YES there is TRUTH
- **2nd Or Uncleaness v. 3b**

1 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV)

3 *For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleaness, nor was it in deceit.*

- **Uncleaness**
 - The NIV says, “Impure Motives”
 - They weren't out for personal gain
 - They didn't take advantage of anyone

- **Today:**

- We see celebrity preachers and evangelists all over the nation filling stadiums and arenas
- Their touring is a BIG business.
- There's the travel... the red-carpet treatment... the lavish honorariums...
- Sad how many use the "Gospel" for Impure Motives

- **3rd Nor was it in Deceit v. 3c**

1 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV)

3 For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit.

- **Deceit**

- Greek: dólos
- Means: to bait. Bait, metaphorically and generally fraud, guile, deceit
- AKA = They weren't trying to be tricky or sneaky or deceptive or manipulative in any way

- **Application**

- As I have talked about many times
 - Too many churches WATER DOWN the Gospel to appeal to the latest cultural trends!!!
 - A Lot of pastors sermons are just motivational speeches

- Church is driven more by entertainment than the WORD of God
- Some have as their main goal – A social not the Gospel
- Are people being told the whole story?
 - With faith comes repentance
 - Coming to Jesus involves turning from idols...
 - Paul was upfront about God's requirements...
- Paul had PURE motives

2 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV)

2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Ephesians 4:14–15 (NKJV)

*14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,
15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—*

• Second: Their Motive vv. 4-6

- 1st They Were Approved By God v. 4a

1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV)

4 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.

▪ **Approved**

- Greek: Dokimázō

- Means: Tested, approved. To try, prove, discern, distinguish, approve. It has the notion of proving a thing whether it is worthy or not
- God's Spokesmen

○ **2nd They Were Accountable To God vv. 4b-5a**

1 Thessalonians 2:4–5 (NKJV)

4 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.
5 For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness.

▪ **They weren't into pleasing men**

- Paul knew his Gospel wouldn't always please men
 - But he knew that it was pleasing to God
 - They preached the message God called them to preach
- Illustration
 - A Sports Illustrated did an article on "home field advantage." It's not a myth.
 - It's proven.
 - The home team is more likely to win the game.
 - The article examined all team sports from around the world.
 - And none of the factors you might assumed, accounted for the phenomena – not the stress of travel, nor the familiarity of the surroundings, or even the players' reaction to the cheers and jeers of the crowd.

- The one cause of home field advantage was the referee's bias.
- It seems that the refs or umps feel the pressure of the crowd.
- Nobody likes to get booed.
- And they respond – often unconsciously – by trying to please the people who are watching them.
- When the game is on the line they end up calling more fouls, or penalties, or strikes for the home team.
- Paul was NOT into pleasing men
 - An umpire is a trained professional. He prides himself on objectivity.
 - But the desire to please people can be so strong it takes over under pressure.
 - Speak the truth in love, but speak the truth.

▪ **Application**

- None of us likes to handle controversial issues and say unpopular things
- But rubbing people the wrong way is going to happen if we dare to speak God's Word.
- We live in a fallen world.
- That's why truth will challenge us to change, and change is always painful.
- When People are challenged
 - They will strike back – be ready

- The bottom line for us is who do we intend to please...
 - Men? Or God?
- **3rd They weren't into promoting an agenda for selfish gain v. 5b**

1 Thessalonians 2:5 (NKJV)

5 For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness.

▪ **In other words - Paul wasn't after anybody's MONEY.**

- Sadly, today I think there are a lot who are just in for the money...
- There're pastors who cater to the big tithers.
- They preach to manipulate their congregation to give
- VERY SAD

▪ **Illustration - FOR ME I am so glad when I came here there was not a big salary...**

- Whenever we serve for Jesus' sake there should be no ulterior motive.
- We lose our integrity and possible chance to be heard when people sense they're just a means to an end.

○ **4th They weren't into parading their authority v. 6**

▪ **Nor did we seek glory from men v. 6a**

1 Thessalonians 2:6 (NKJV)

6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

- He was unconcerned for his Personal Glory

- He didn't need fancy introductions or lavish praise
- His satisfaction came from his relationship with Jesus
 - Not from the praise of people.
- **When we might have made demands as apostles of Christ v. 6b**

1 Thessalonians 2:6 (NKJV)

6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

- As an Apostle Paul could have asked for PAY and other benefits
 - BUT he did not because he did not want to be a burden on them BUT a help
 - Paul was, Not a hireling – someone only in for the money
 - Paul was a servant of God all in for the glory of God
 - Paul's motive was pure.
- Application
 - A Pastor MUST be willing to do the ministry without pay – Make sacrifices

A Minister Will Be Concerned With Growth & Wellbeing vv. 7-9

• First: In Their Care For Others vv. 7-9

- 1st But we were gentle among you v. 7
 - 1st The term “Gentle” is at the heart of this verse v. 7a

1 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

- Gentle - It means
 - To be kind to someone
 - Acceptance
 - Respect
 - Compassion
 - Tolerance of imperfections
 - Patience
 - Tenderheartedness
 - Loyalty
- Paul came to serve among them with kindness.
- **2nd A Nursing Mother v. 7b**

1 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

- A VERY Tender Picture
- NOTHING SAY LOVE – Like a Nursing Mom
- **2nd We were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God v. 8**

1 Thessalonians 2:8 (NKJV)

8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

- Affectionately longing
 - Paul had the RIGHT towards People
- But also our own lives:
 - Paul laid his life down for so many
- **3rd For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil v. 9**

1 Thessalonians 2:9 (NKJV)

9 For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

- **Paul denied his rights and took a higher standard upon himself**
 - To work HARD
 - The ministry is no place for a lazy servant

A Minister Will Challenge You, In Your Walk With The Lord vv. 10-12

• First: Remember Our Example vs. 10-11

- **1st You are witnesses, and God also v. 10**

1 Thessalonians 2:10 (NKJV)

10 You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe;

- **You Are Witness**
 - Again – Paul tells remember when I was with you what character did I show
- **2nd How we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you v. 11**

- **1st He Exhorted**

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

- Exhorted
 - Greek: Parakaleo
 - Means: Called to one's side to help
 - Exhorting – Pushing – Stir up / Light a fire
 - Which means that Paul came to the side of them to help, to entreat, and to convict them.
 - Described as:
 - Coach trying to get the best out of his team – Trying to get each player to play to his / her potential of above it
 - There is a time to push – time to Challenge

- **2nd Comforted / Console and Encourage**

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

- A Time to Exhort – PUSH
 - A Time to Comfort

- **3rd Paul “Charged” them.**

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

- This has a note of severity in it
 - There is an Urgency – to it / it involves discipline.
- As a leader
 - We at times can Discern if someone is about to fail
- **4th As a “Father”**

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 *as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,*

- Characteristics in a Mom & Dad
 - Moms - need to be Gentle caring – laboring in Love
 - Dads – Toughness
 - Need a life that is marked by INTEGRITY!

• Second: Respond By Living For The Lord v. 12

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (NKJV)

12 *that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*

- **1st Walk worthy of the Lord**
 - The word worthy carries with it the idea of Weight
 - The balancing of scales
 - Just did a series on this – VERY HARD – you guys did well!

Closing

- Paul Lays out a Model For Pastors – Ministers – Let ALL be Faithful
 - A Minister Is Confident That God Will Do The Work vv. 1-2

- A Minister Is Committed To Integrity vv. 3-6
- A Minister Will Be Concerned With Growth & Wellbeing vv. 7-9
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