

Modeling Ministry!

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

In these verses we get a sense of Paul's deep concern for the spiritual development of these believers.

A) Great passage on the heart that is need for ministry!

B) This paragraph provides a wonderful model for ministry – **What ministry is to look like !**

C) Here in this section Paul gives us 3 Characteristics of the Faithful Minister!

1) **Courage** 2) **Tenderness** 3) **Integrity**

D) Now You might say, “but I’m not in ministry – what does this have to say to me ?

1) Let me remind you of something that we have talked a lot about here at CCV and that is:

Every Christian is in the ministry!

E) In fact - Here at CCV We are not looking for more **members** here in our church, we are looking for more **ministers!** (servants)

“You don’t judge an army’s strength by how many people sit in the mess hall. You judge an army on the basis of how many people are trained & active on the front line.”

We all have pastoral responsibilities.

A) If you are a parent you have a little flock at home to whom you should minister.

This passage will help you minister effectively.

B) Some of you have friends with whom you meet at breakfast or lunch, people you are ministering to.

1) Some of you have a Bible studies in your home or you are a home group leader

C) This passage teaches how to be effective in any ministry, how to touch and change people.

Start with Courage

A) **Courage is essential for leadership — courage to make Changes Courage to stand up for what is right**

B) **Courage to take risk**

1) Where ever Paul went to minister he was RISKING his life!

C) In v.1-2 Paul uses 3 words to describe what happened to him in Philippi

1) **Suffered [Physical] Spitefully mistreated**

Luke recorded that episode in Acts 16

D) **While in Philippi Paul & Silas came across this slave girl who was Demon possessed**

1) She had special powers – and worked as a Fortune teller for her masters

E) Thru Paul's ministry she was delivered from her Demons & Set free from Satan's strangle hold that was on her life.

1) Well her masters were to pleased about this – MEAL TICKET WAS GONE

So they started a riot – against Paul & Silas – Beaten and imprisoned

A) The Lord that night miraculously set them Free the Jailer and his Family were saved

B) Paul and Silas moved on!

Now you might be prone to think that after an episode like that – Paul would have been a little reluctant to go at it again

A) He heads to Thessalonica – where he shares with the same amount of boldness and Conviction !

B) He didn't lighten up his message { He didn't shrink back in his sharing

1) We are told here v. 2 - He preached the gospel with **boldness** in the face of MUCH CONFLICT

C) Result: MINISTRY WASN'T IN VAIN !

1) Vain means "empty or without purpose, effect, or importance.

D) On the contrary, it had a powerful impact: It produced deep & far-reaching effects in the lives of the Thessalonians

1) They ended up impacting the whole region around them !

So Paul was Courageous in Ministry! He was a man of tremendous Courage

A) **Q:** Was this natural to Paul?...**NO!**

1 Cor. 2:3 "I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling." Corinth intimidated him.

B) Some of you want to reach out to your fellow-workers but you feel intimidated at times by the pagan atmosphere of your work-place.

Paul felt that very strongly

2 Cor.7:5 "For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears."

C) I can relate to that – Many times I have been fearful

Q: What produced this courage in Paul?

A) 3 Key ingredients **Right Means / Right Message / Right Motives**

B) The Right Means? We were bold in our God

1) Paul knew who was with him

C) Basketball in High school- I knew we were going to be in every game – not my ability – T Neal

D) Paul knew that God was with him – He had called and commissioned him for this very thing

You as a parent – Are we ever ready ?

A) Teens ? – empty nest ? Single Parent ?

B) God choose us for that calling –

C) Your ministry: Don't feel ready – If it is God's calling – His grace is sufficient

2 Cor 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

D) So first of all Paul was Courageous – Right Means

2nd Right Message:

V.3 For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit. 4 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel,

A) Paul Knew that He had been entrusted by God to preach a message that had power

Heb 4:12-13 *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

“The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me.” - Martin Luther

C) Paul knew that about God's word – He knew that it was powerful – He knew that in it was the power to transform a persons life

So Paul knew the issue wasn't his oratory abilities – his Charisma –

A) If he could just get out the message and people heard it – It could change their lives

B) Same is true for us – Not in our Ability Charisma etc

C) Some people like to be up in front of others – like to be the life of the party –

1) get together they are the loudest – center of attention

D) I am not one of those people – uncomfortable with that-

1) Someone thru a surprise party for me once – focus in on you – opening your gifts – **OVER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE**

E) How do you get up in front of so many people and preach? – The Message –

1) Power in the message – I know who I am talking about –

Two college students – rooming together – one was a Christian, the other a Muslim – Ever read the Bible ? Koran

The believer responded, "No, I haven't, but I'm sure it would be interesting. Why don't we read both together, once a week, alternating books?"

The young man accepted the challenge, their friendship deepened, and during the second term he became a believer in Jesus.

One evening, late in the term, he burst into the room and shouted at the long-time believer, "You deceived me!"

"What are you talking about?" the believer asked.

The new believer opened his Bible and said, "I've been reading it through, like you told me, and just read that the Word is living and active!"

He grinned. "You knew all along that the Bible contained God's power and that the Koran is a book like any other. I never had a chance!"

So are you going to hate me for life?" [smiling]

"No," he answered, "but it was an unfair contest."

CHS – Gospel doesn't need to be defended – gospel is like a lion – just let it out of his cage and watch it work – watch how powerful it is !

Right means / Right Message

Reason #3– He had the Right Motives! Rd v.3-6

A) When it came to his ministry Paul wasn't trying to trick people or to take advantage of them. *For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit*

B) Deceit translates dolos, literally, a fishhook, trap, or trick (forms of deception).

C) He wasn't trying to pull one over on people

1) In Paul's day like today there were Charlatans who used the ministry to rip people off – or to seduce women sexually.

D) That was not Paul's motive at all –

Nor was He interested in Pleasing Men – Glory of Men!

A) Paul wasn't looking for Popularity - He wasn't looking to be a man pleaser –

B) It didn't matter to him – What people thought of Him! Preach the truth

C) Pastor Brian who told me once – Going to be in ministry – you have to have thick skin

D) What an example he was of that – Always preached the unadulterated truth –

1) Sometimes people left the Church because of it

E) That still happens – People too conservative – Go to a place that makes me feel good about myself –

1) So Paul was Courageous in Ministry: Right Means Right message / Right Motives !

2ND MARK OF PAUL'S MINISTRY WAS TENDERNESS RD v.7-9

A) Young believers need spiritual **parents** to lovingly nurture them in the Lord.

B) Paul paints an interesting picture here of himself as a mother – nursing her Children

1) That happens to be one of the most tender pictures –

C) Mother holding an caressing her right there close to her heart – as that child nurses from her breast

1) Child being made warm – by the heat of the mothers body !

Think for a minute about – a mom – Her care for a Child during those stages –

A) Babies Crib is usually in the bed room – so that it is close by

B) Cries in the middle of the night – Denise is a sound sleeper – Not during that time

C) She responds – lovingly – affectionately

1) Dads are different - *Dad drink of water no – spanking*

Moms are not like that – Soft / tender /

A) Denise is way more compassionate with our kids than I am –

B) Much more prone to spoil or to give into their needs

1) Moms are Patient with their kids – especially during that time –

C) Moms have a certain Gentleness about them -

1) **Kids are sick** – who do they want – Mom !

The father is the head of the house; the mother is the heart of the house.

Let France have good mothers, and she will have good sons. Napoleon Bonaparte

Mothers Labor constantly - *labouring night and day*

“Man’s work is from sun to sun, but a mother’s work is never done.”

A) Have you ever heard of a mothers’ union which insisted a mother would work only for 8 hours of the day?

B) Have you known any mothers who punch the clock and then turn away from their crying babies because they refuse to work anymore?

C) Moms are always at work – word Laboring here in v.8 Travailing - Hard work – **Labor of Love**

Because it is a Labor of Love it doesn’t seem so Hard.

A)Such a vivid metaphor perfectly illustrates the kind of personal care the Thessalonians received.

B) Often that is what is needed – Tender gentle compassion – caring – patience –

C) Paul described his love for them as this longing affection that led him to not only give them the word – **but his life !**

D) Ministry would be great if it wasn't for the people

1) I hate that Phrase: **all about People – Privilege**

So busy – Busy Pastor is an Oxy Moron {**Michael Pratt** }

SACRIFICIAL LOVE

Years ago, a young mother was making her way across the hills of South Wales, carrying her tiny baby in her arms, when she was overtaken by a blinding blizzard. She never reached her destination and when the blizzard had subsided her body was found by searchers beneath a mound of snow.

But they discovered that before her death, she had taken off all her outer clothing and wrapped it about her baby. When they unwrapped the child, to their great surprise and joy, they found he was alive and well.

She had mounded her body over his and given her life for her child, proving the depths of her mother love.

Years later that child, David Lloyd George, grown to manhood, became prime minister of Great Britain, and, without a doubt, one of England's greatest statesmen.

That is the Picture that Paul is painting here of that kind of Love that says –

I will lovingly tenderly give of myself – my time – my life – to help someone else grow

Not in the ministry for what it does for me – My Satisfaction – But to see others advance !

A) See them grow into the man or woman God wants them to be

B) Love that sees the potential in others and wants to help them reach that potential

C) Protect them – from Pride / Protect them from Distraction –

D) 2nd Mark – Tenderness

Now in v. 10 Paul shifts from the picture of the Nursing mother – to the picture of a spiritual Father

A) Interesting to me that the two analogies give us some insight into what should be happening in the home !

B) Dominant Characteristics in a Mom & Dad

1) Single parents challenge of being both.

C) Moms need to be Gentle caring – laboring in Love

D) Dads need a life that is marked by INTEGRITY!

Do as I say not as I do doesn't cut it

1 Thess 2:10-12

10 You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; 11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of

you, as a father does his own children,12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Devoutly = Purity

Justly = Fairness in Character

Blamelessly = Without Fault - No accusation – nothing of any merit

We might sum up these 3 descriptions- by saying that Paul was a Man of Integrity

Jim D's Funeral – Lela Voss

Because Paul walked in Integrity as a Father – He was able to have a voice in the eyes the people in 3 Areas:

1) He exhorted-

A) “Exhorted.” The Greek word is *parakaleo*, called to one's side to help

B) Which means that Paul came to the side of them to help, to entreat, and to convict them.

C) Coach trying to get the best out of his team – Trying to get each player to play to his/her potential of above it

D) Exhorting – Pushing – Stir up / Light a fire – Kelly - Focused – 10 pts

1) Ministry/ Parenting / coaching – teaching - There is a time to push – time to Challenge

2) **Comforted Console and encourage :**

A) This beautiful expression of natural fatherly kindness also fits the spiritual father.

B) It is the picture of the Coach / Pastor/ teacher / Parent friend – what their role is to be when there has been a failure

C) How do you handle that – Child has failed

1) Friend – pupil – has failed – Not Crush their spirit

D) There is that need to come along side – Comfort

3) Paul “charged” them.

A) This has a note of severity in it—

B) There is an Urgency – to it involves discipline.

1) You are able to Discern – that this is a pivotal time & how the person responds – determine – make it

C) Or Crash and burn!

D) You need to deal w/ it swiftly & sternly

Why the urgency to exhort comfort and charge – He wanted them to walk worthy of the Lord

A) The word worthy carries w/ it the idea of Weight – And the balancing of scales—

- B) what is on one side of the scale should be equal in weight to what is on the other side.
- C) the word came to be applied to anything that was expected to correspond to something else.
- D) A person worthy of his pay was one whose day's work corresponded to his day's wages.

SO the believer who walks Worthy of the Lord is one whose daily living corresponds to his high position

- A) His practical living matches his spiritual position.
- B) That is our goal – Ministers / Parents / teachers / Coaches –
- C) I hate that mentality – that excuses carnality by saying -
 - 1) *Boys will be boys – They will grow out of it – I was that way and I didn't turn out so bad*
- D) Courageously - Make it our aim in the Church in our homes / in our spheres of influence –
 - 1) Lovingly tenderly – but also with a sense of urgency – Exhort comfort – and Charge- walk worthy

Starts with our own Lives:

- A) All on the same page!
- B) Ministers – parents – need all these traits –
 - 1) stronger in some than others – need all – Seek God's grace – sufficient
- C) Before we go – Best example:

Jesus Courage:

He left heaven voluntarily – Ridiculed Rejected – Killed
 Stood up against the religious establishment

Tender : The Lord Jesus said of Jerusalem: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,

Children

Lepers – touched –

Sinners felt welcome – **Full of Grace**

Continues today – Mercies are no every morning – Understands our struggles

- A) Grace for our times of weakness

Integrity - Full of truth

Pilate – No fault in this man