

## **1 Thessalonians 2:9-16**

**Wednesday, July 15, 2020**

**Good evening everyone. It is so good to be back home after a week away.** And getting back into the swing of things. Tonight, we're going to pick right back up where we left off several weeks ago in 1 Thessalonians. We've been going through this short little book, verse by verse, in this series that I'm calling "The Gospel & The Church". How the Gospel forms the church and how the Gospel sends the church.

See, the church at Thessalonica was new and young, and growing, Paul had planted it about 6 months prior to writing 1 Thessalonians (one of his earlier books), and he writes to encourage them, to challenge them, but ultimately, to point them to the Gospel.

And, last time we were together on a Wednesday night, we had kind of part 1 of a 2 part analysis of Paul's ministry to the church at Thessalonica – and really most of Chapter 2 in this book deals with Paul's ministry – a Gospel centered ministry – and a Gospel Centered Pastor.

So, part 1 of The Gospel Centered Pastor looked at:

- Boldness
- Motives

- Gently nurturing
- Love in word and ACTION

That was kind of the primer on Gospel Centered pastoring. Tonight we'll look at a more characteristics of Gospel-Centered pastors → all under the idea, the same idea as last time in this book that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus must be at the center of the pastor's ministry, and specifically at the core of his identity.

### **READ 1 Thessalonians 2:9-16**

<sup>9</sup> For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup> You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. <sup>11</sup> For you know how, like a father with his children, <sup>12</sup> we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

<sup>13</sup> And we also thank God constantly<sup>[d]</sup> for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men<sup>[e]</sup> but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. <sup>14</sup> For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in

Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews,<sup>[f] 15</sup> who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind<sup>16</sup> by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!<sup>[g]</sup>

## **PRAY**

**So, depending on which English translation you're using, most or all of this text falls under the heading of something like "Paul's Conduct" or "Paul's Ministry".** Just as a side note, it's ok if our headings are different. Those are added in by editors and translators to make the books of the Bible more readable.

At any rate, the first thing we see here tonight, continuing on this theme of Gospel Centered pastors is a WORKER.

### **I. WORKER**

Worked night and day so that they wouldn't be a burden to them. This isn't saying that pastors should have two or three jobs, but it is pointing to a diligent work ethic. Some pastors are called to bi-vocational ministry, or co-vocational ministry. Others, based on

their churches, are able to give themselves entirely to the work of preaching and teaching. Paul says in V6 that he could have made demands of them, but he didn't want to. Scripture affirms paying pastors, especially those that labor in teaching and preaching – I've always considered this a contextual thing. Some are able to, others not.

But here's the deal, there's never an excuse for a lazy pastor. A gospel centered pastor is a worker. But here's the deal, his work is to proclaim/preach/share the message as a MESSENGER – A Proclaimer

## II. MESSENGER

**V9B – while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.**

**As a pastor,** you have a message to proclaim. Not opinion. Not news. Not speculation. Facts to report. What the newspaper and the 6 O'clock evening news used to be, maybe 20 years ago. Fact based reporting.

Gospel centered pastors – have a gospel to proclaim. We have a story to tell. There's this hymn that I grew up singing, called "I Love to Tell The Story"

I love to tell the story  
Of unseen things above,

Of Jesus and His glory,  
Of Jesus and His love.  
I love to tell the story,  
Because I know 'tis true;  
It satisfies my longings  
As nothing else can do.

I love to tell the story,  
'Twill be my theme in glory  
To tell the old, old story  
of Jesus and His love.

2

I love to tell the story;  
More wonderful it seems  
Than all the golden fancies  
Of all my golden dreams,  
I love to tell the story,  
It did so much for me;  
And that is just the reason  
I tell it now to thee.

3

I love to tell the story;  
'Tis pleasant to repeat  
What seems each time I tell it,

More wonderfully sweet.  
I love to tell the story;  
For some have never heard  
The message of salvation  
From God's own holy Word.

I love to tell the story;  
For those who know it best  
Seem hungering and thirsting  
To hear it like the rest.  
And when, in scenes of glory,  
I sing the new, new song,  
'Twill be the old, old story,  
That I have loved so long.

**He will realize, that he's simply the messenger of the greatest news in the history of the world. And he will live in a way that gives credibility to his message. Gospel centered pastors are marked by a certain Lifestyle**

### **III. LIFESTYLE**

**V10** – you are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.

All throughout Paul's writing we see the call of pastors and church leaders, a certain lifestyle. Things that are non-negotiable in his life. The 3 words Paul gives us are holy, righteous, blameless. Not perfect, but a lifestyle that reflects the gospel of Jesus Christ. A life that has been changed, will lead to a lifestyle that demands an explanation, a lifestyle that is different from the world.

In my personal study this morning, I was in Deuteronomy, the early chapters in Deut. And I was struck by Moses's constant calling the people to remember, be careful, to not forget the faithfulness of God – and to live their lives in humble obedience to God as a result.

That's the same here. Paul points to how he lived, and I believe sets an example for all Christians, especially pastors, in lifestyle – as a result of the grace, mercy and faithfulness of God.

#### **IV. TEACHING AS A FATHER**

**V11 – 12: For you know...like a father encouraging and exhorting...to walk in a manner worthy of God.**

As a father, my desire for my kids is that they live in a way that brings glory to God. That they use their unique gifts and makeup to glorify Jesus. This is going to require me to teach & correct, but to also encourage.

Paul's desire was that they would walk in a manner worthy of God.

From Pope Piper:

So think this way. NOT: I must have faith and love so as to be worth God's favor; BUT RATHER: God's favor is free and it is infinitely worth trusting. Walking worthy of that favor means walking by faith, because faith is the one thing that agrees with our bankruptcy and God's infinite "worth." Looking to God's infinite worth for our help and satisfaction is "walking worthy of God."

## **V. PRODUCING RESULTS**

**And here's where I want to be really careful.** Any time, as an American church pastor, any time we think about results it's almost always the 3B's. We all kind of joke about the 3B's of Baptist life: butts, budgets, baptisms.

The results I'm talking about, the results Paul points us to, is the display of the work of the Word of God in the lives of the people in the church.



They imitated the church in Judea, and suffered for their faith. The Gospel was productive in them. Every pastor worth his salt wants the word of God to be productive in the lives of the people he's leading. How do you and I know that the Gospel is at work

- Desires
- Obedience
- Affections
- FRUIT – love, joy peace patience kindness gentleness self-control

So, 2 studies in a row about the importance of the Gospel being at the center of the pastor. But...that should be the case for all of us. Every single one of us, to maintain our identity in CHRIST at the core and center of all that we are.

**PRAY.**