

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. Because our gospel came to you not simply with words but with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. We were not looking for praise from

people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. Instead, we were like young children among you, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom

and glorify. May he strengthen you and holy in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his holy ones. It is God's will that you should avoid sexual immorality. And to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and your hands, you. Brothers do not want

informed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still

alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will

be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words. Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. For God did not appoint us

*Objectives: We want to discover Paul's motives and approach in shepherding the Thessalonians. We want to apply this by figuring out how to imitate Paul as he imitated Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:9).*

**Launch:**

What are right motives that people have in leading others spiritually? What are wrong motives...? What motivates you?

**Explore:**

Read 1 Thess. 2:1-12

- What is the Big Idea that Paul is trying to communicate in this passage? (*That pleasing God is his motive for ministry.*)

An important technique in interpreting scripture is looking for things that are compared or contrasted.

In this passage what are the major contrasting thoughts that Paul presents (look for the buts)?

- *1&2 He contrasts the idea of their visit being in vain with them sharing the gospel of God in boldness.*
- *3&4 Contrasts impure motives with living to please God as their true motive.*
- *5/6&7-12 Contrasts what they did not do in ministry with what they did do.*

Verses 1&2

- How would you rephrase verses 1&2 in your own words? What is he contrasting?
- What happened in Philippi?
- Is boldness something you would like more of in your life? Why or why not?
- In light of their reality, why were they able to boldly declare the gospel? In other words, where did the boldness come

*from? (in our God or in the presence of God. Paul lists 2 different spheres that he was living in: in God and in the midst of conflict. Which one will dictate your life? If it is in God, you will be bold)*

Verses 3&4

- What is the contrast Paul is making in 3 and 4?
- Verse 3 starts with "For" or "Because" which shows us that he is answering a question. What is the question Paul is answering? (*Why he was able to be bold in much conflict.*)
- Why were they able to be bold in the midst of much conflict? (*He was living to please God and not please man*)
- In what ways do you seek to please man as you minister to others?
- Why could Paul live life seeking to please God and not man? *He knew he was approved (past tense) by God to be entrusted with the gospel and he knew that God continually was testing (present tense) his heart.*
- What pleases God from this passage?
- What needs to change in your life so that you are able to live to please God and not man?

**Apply:**

Take some time to confess areas where you live to please man instead of God. Pray for one another, that we would be people who live to please God...

**Homework:** Homework #4