

DISCIPLING AT IT'S FINEST

1 Thess. 2:1-12

I. THE MANNER OF HIS PREACHING

A. WITH BOLDNESS...

1. Paul preached with boldness - **1 Thess 2:1-2** For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.
 - a. Despite his previous persecution at Philippi
 - b. Despite the persecution at Thessalonica
2. Such boldness was not natural for Paul, or for others
 - a. Paul often experienced fear and trembling - **1 Cor 2:3** I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,
 - b. Timothy needed encouragement to be bold - 2 Tim. 1:6-8
3. But he found boldness "in our God"
 - a. For which reason he asked others to pray for him, that God would grant him boldness - **Eph 6:19** and *pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,*
 - b. Others also looked to God when in need of boldness - **Act 4:31** And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and *began to speak the word of God with boldness.*

B. WITH TRUTH AND HONESTY...

1. Paul preached the truth, not error - **1 Thess 2:3** For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit;
2. He did so with honesty, not through impure motives or trickery - **2 Cor 4:2** but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God
3. Note the need for both truth and honesty:
 - a. It is not enough to speak the truth, we must do so honestly
 - b. It is not enough to be honest, we must speak the truth. 1 Cor. 14:3 (build-up, hold-up, cheer-up)

C. PLEASING GOD, NOT MEN...

1. Paul was aware that God had trusted him with the gospel - **1 Thess 2:4** but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.
 - a. As an expression of grace - **Eph 3:8** To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,
 - b. As an example of mercy and longsuffering - 1 Tim. 1:11-16
2. Therefore it was God he sought to please, not man - 1 Thess. 2:4
 - a. Knowing that it is God who tries the heart - **Heb 4:13** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
 - b. Knowing that this is what made him a true servant of Christ - **Gal 1:10** For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

D. WITHOUT FLATTERY OR COVETOUSNESS...

1. Paul did not resort to flattering words to gain an audience - **1 Thess 2:5** For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed-- God is witness--
 - a. He undoubtedly knew that using flattery was dangerous - **Pro 29:5** A man who flatters his neighbor Is spreading a net for his steps.
 - b. Flattery is a tool used by false teachers - **2 Pet 2:18** For speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error,
2. Nor did Paul resort to using covetousness, either to persuade or for his own personal gain - 1 Thess. 2:5
 - a. Covetousness is another tool of false teachers - 1 Pet. 2:1-3
 - b. Paul was careful not to take advantage of his brethren, becoming wealthy off of them - Acts 20:33; 2 Cor. 11:9; 12:17 **Acts 20:33** "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes.

E. WITHOUT SEEKING FOR GLORY FROM MEN...

1. Paul was careful not to seek glory from them or from others - **1 Thess 2:6** nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.
 - a. As an apostle of Christ it would have been easy to do
 - b. He could have easily abused his authority, but he was careful not to
2. Any such glory would have been vain glory - **Pro 25:27** It is not good to eat much honey, Nor is it glory to search out one's own glory.

F. WITH GENTLENESS AND AFFECTION...

1. He was gentle, like a nursing mother with her children - **1 Thess 2:7** But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children.
 - a. As he counseled Timothy to be towards those in error - **2 Tim 2:24-25** The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,
 - b. As he instructed the spiritual to be toward those overtaken in a fault - **Gal 6:1** Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.
2. He had affection for them, which prompted him to share not just the gospel, but his own life - **1 Thess 2:8** Having so fond an affection 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 very dear to us.
 - a. Paul was a preacher who loved his brethren - cf. **Phil 1:8** For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
 - b. For which he joyfully sacrificed his life as necessary - cf. **Phil 2:17** But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.

II. THE MANNER OF HIS LIFE

A. LABORING NIGHT AND DAY...

1. Paul did not desire to be a burden, and so worked to support himself - **1 Thess 2:9** For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.
 - a. Not that it is inappropriate for preachers to be supported - 1 Cor. 9:7-14
 - b. Paul chose to preach the gospel without charge as a way of demonstrating his willingness to accept his calling as a steward - cf. 1 Cor. 9:6, 15-18
 - c. So Paul often worked as a tent maker while preaching - e.g., Acts 18:1-4
2. His example should remind us of the sacrificial nature of our service
 - a. Some may choose to support themselves like Paul did
 - b. All should be available and accessible both night and day - **Acts 20:31** "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.
 - c. Note also that we can serve by praying "night and day" - **1 Thess 3:10** as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?

B. DEVOUT, JUST, AND BLAMELESS...

1. "Devoutly" depicts the nature of his service - **1 Thess 2:10** You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;
 - a. It was "holy" (NIV)
 - b. It was "pure" (NRSV)
2. "Justly" describes his dealings with his fellow man
 - a. It was "upright" (NRSV)
 - b. It was "righteous" (NIV)
3. "Blamelessly" reflects his carefulness to be above reproach
 - a. Something he was always careful about - **2 Cor 6:3** giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the ministry will not be discredited,
 - b. Even before he became a Christian - **Phil 3:6** as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

C. FATHERLY...

1. Paul was like a father to them - **1 Thess 2:11** just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children,
 - a. Exhorting and comforting them (encouraging them) - e.g., **1 Thess 4:1** Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.
 - b. Charging them as necessary (commanding them) - e.g., **2 Thess 3:6** Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.
2. For he was concerned about their walk (life) as a Christian - **1 Thess 2:12** so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
 - a. He wanted their walk to be worthy of God
 - b. For God had called them into His kingdom and glory