

EFFECTIVE DISCIPLE MAKING

1 Thessalonians 2

I. PREACH THE WORD IN PURITY (v. 1-6)

- 1) It is not in vain. When Paul came to town he preached the word. The word advanced and disciples who received his word as the word of God (2:13) became Christians thus proving his toil not to be in vain in the Lord. Paul's visiting without preaching or disciple making would have been in vain.
- 2) With boldness. With confidence, courage, to speak freely, fearlessly, frankly. This characterized the preaching of the church (Acts 4:31, 9:27-28, 13:46, 14:3, 18:26, 19:8, 2 Corinthians 3:12, Ephesians 6:19-20) and even some of Paul's writings (Romans 15:15, 2 Corinthians 10:1). Paul knew who saved him and he knew the truth and this gave him great confidence in his life and preaching.
- 3) Amid much opposition. Acts 17 records some of the persecution that the church in Thessalonica faced which was after the persecution he faced in Philippi (Acts 16).
- 4) Exhortation from a pure heart.
 - a. Exhortation – Gr. *PARAKLESIS*. It is a persuasive discourse to call one to another's side. It involves admonition, encouraging, and comforting. Given Blakely says it is not in the tone or attitude of the preacher but in the nature of the message. The gospel after all is "good news" or "glad tidings".
 - b. Not in error – incorrectly because of ignorance or even knowing his preaching to be faulty.
 - c. Not in impurity – with ulterior motives or in order to gain an upper hand, to use the gospel so that "my will be done"
 - d. Not deceitfully – this in my opinion is the most frequently used mode of false teaching. Trickery or to use bait. The drawing power of the gospel has always been the cross (John 12:32). Paul did not bait anyone with food or song and dance or false hope and false assurance. He preached Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23, 2:2). And as Deitrich Bonhoeffer says "when Christ calls, he bids you come and die."
 - e. Not as pleasing men – this indeed is a vain motive. Men are pleased one day and upset the next. However, it is certainly to be guarded against (2 Timothy 4:3-4) because hearers will seek "men pleasers" in order to be pleased. This takes shape in seeking approval and also avoiding disapproval.
 - f. Not with flattery of speech – False preachers are flatterers (Psalm 12:2-3, 2 Peter 3:18-19). Flattery causes men to think more highly of themselves than they ought (Romans 12:3) and to put confidence in the flesh so as to lessen the need of the Lord. It delays and usually prevents the Lordship of Jesus. After all, the preacher says "It's all okay."
 - g. Not with greed – nor peddling the word (2 Corinthians 2:17). Christianity is not a religion to get for oneself but rather to give oneself. Pick up your cross and let's go!
 - h. Not seeking glory – he preached not to be glorified but to glorify God. The manner in which the gospel is presented seems to be important or at least instrumental in the conversion of the church in Thessalonica.
 - i. But with God examining their hearts or God is witness. God will confirm what Paul is saying.

II. IMPART YOUR VERY OWN LIFE (v. 7-12)

- 1) As a nursing mother
 - a. Gentle – Not lording it over but being considerate and cherishing the flock. Noticing that they are sensitive and tender and in need of a gentle “mother to feed them”
 - b. Caring – Feeding the infants in Christ. That they might be nourished on the word of God (1 Peter 2:2) and protecting them from savage wolves. It is the comforting mother to whom the child runs when he falls or is in need of comfort.
- 2) As a father
 - a. Exhorting – urging, to move into action, to awaken people into doing Kingdom things.
 - b. Encouraging – comforting or strengthening, “a pick me up” to the fatigued.
 - c. Imploring – to plead with or strongly appeal to with the scriptures.

III. PRODUCE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS (v. 13-20)

- 1) Devoted to the word of God
 - a. Received it in much tribulation (1:6)
 - b. Received it as word of God not men – it is powerful, spiritual, and produces life change when it is recognized and believed as the word of God.
 - c. Which performs its work in believers. The word is continually causing transformation and re-creation in the life of the believer. The Holy Spirit is not being quenched but is regenerating the man completely. Colossians 3:16-17 teaches that abundant living comes from richly abiding in the word.
- 2) Imitators of Jesus and His church
 - a. Of us and the Lord (1:6)
 - b. Participated in suffering for Christ – as did the church in Judea. Whether a Jew converted at the beginning of the church or a Thessalonian gentile converted many years later, faith produces the same characteristics and in this case the same perseverance under similar persecution.
 - c. Became Christ-like (2:12) – called into the glory of God and walking according to that calling.
- 3) Faithful to the end
 - a. The hope and joy and crown of disciplers.
 1. The hope is in the disciple made, that when Jesus appears they will be welcomed into eternity with Him. This is not the hope manifested in the Lord Jesus, which anchors our soul, but it is hope.
 2. The joy also is secondary to the joy we have from Jesus. But there is great joy not only in one who is lost being reconciled to God but more so in that one converted sinner pressing on to attain likeness of Christ and in fact make more disciples.
 3. The crown of exultation is those faithful ones who when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ will receive no condemnation. His work and labor and toil will be made known and will not be in vain.
 4. The disciples made are the discipler's “glory and joy”
 - b. Romans 15:14-16 “And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. (15) But I have written boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God. (16) to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so

that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”