

*But we were gentle among you like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. (1 Thess. 2:7)*

#### **I. The Impact of a Bold and Humble Witness**

- a. What we see on display in this chapter is the pastoral care of the Thessalonians. It serves an example of how church leaders should care and what believers should expect from their leaders.
- b. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were successful in proclamation in the face of many obstacles.
  1. They had to overcome past rejection. They were spitefully treated in Philippi. (v.2a)
  2. They suffered present rejection in Thessalonica. They were bold in much conflict. (v.2b)
- c. The Word of God was proclaimed truthfully and purely. (v.3)
  1. A minister must believe the Word they are teaching/preaching.
  2. A *flatterer* manipulates rather than communicates. Flattery is another form of lying.
  3. When you know and believe the word it is easier to live it out. (Pathos – Logos – Ethos)
- d. Paul, Silas, and Timothy went to Thessalonica in humility, but in the power of God.
  1. *Not as pleasing men* (v.4); *Nor did we seek glory from men* (v.6a); *Not as word of men* (v.13)
  2. They did not emphasize their positions or titles. (v.6b) We are used by God and we should never seek to put ourselves above God and
- e. True ministry of the Gospel deals honestly with sin, grace and judgement.

#### **II. The Impact of Character, Caring, and a Nurturing Witness**

- a. Two key themes in this text are a *steward's faithfulness* and a *mother's gentleness*.
- b. Discipleship requires transparency and effort. It requires having a *long view* into the lives of others.
  1. Transformation does not occur overnight, nor does it come at the same pace.
- c. Paul sought to rid himself of any example that would stunt the growth of those around him.
- d. The gentle nurturing of a loving mother. (v.7)
- e. The witness of an encouraging father. (v.11)
- f. The example good or bad that we set for discipleship will have an impact on many lives. (III. Good churches, not-so-good churches, good pastors, not-so-good churches)

#### **III. The Proof of Their Witness**

1. *Our coming to you was not in vain*. There was measurable, identifiable, and spiritual proof that Paul, Silas, Timothy, and the Gospel were *there*.
- b. The evidence of a changed life can be seen and should remain. *You are witnesses*. (v.10)
  1. The Thessalonians believed the truth of God's Word and its effective change. (v.13)
- c. The level of our Christian influence will vary but make no mistake there should be some evidence of our witness in this world.

#### **IV. Practical Lessons**

- a. Lesson #1 – Christians are called to be people of influence. People should know we were there.
- b. Lesson #2 – We present the Gospel in the power of the Spirit, and we must trust God to work. It needs nothing extra.
- c. Lesson #3 – Ministry is not easy. It requires spiritual energy and a personal desire to follow the will of God in the face of opposition.