

## Daily Bible Study

### *“Spiritual Leadership – Family Style”*

*1 Thessalonians 2:7-12*

*April 29 – May 5, 2012*

**THE LORD'S DAY** – This week we want to look back to a study we did in 2008 from the second chapter of **1 Thessalonians**. We are looking specifically at **verses 7-12** where Paul describes his work among the believers in Thessalonica by using the metaphors of a mother and father. We can learn a great deal about Spiritual leadership from this Scripture and also by seeing the examples of the men of God displayed in the text. These truths which we will study are absolutely necessary for a healthy church, and we all need to learn from and apply them as needed. Read our text: **1 Thessalonians 2:7 - 12** *“But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing 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 dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”*

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Ask the Lord to teach you from His Word this week.*

**MONDAY** – The first family picture of leadership that Paul uses in our text is that of a “*mother*”; and the first character trait drawn from that picture of the mother is gentleness. Paul describes the gentle way that he and his companions led among the Thessalonians by using the imagery and illustration of a “*nursing mother*”. All this is in complete contrast to the deceitfulness of the false teachers that Paul defended himself against in the previous verses. These true men of God were “*gentle*” among these believers as a mother is who is nursing her young ones in that she visibly demonstrates her love by sacrifice. Paul was one who sacrificed for those he was serving in the Lord. A mother is concerned for the well being, health, and nourishment of her children and a good spiritual leader is concerned as well for the spiritual health of those under his care. Gentleness doesn't mean there is no firmness demonstrated; rather that there is no harsh, unloving, or indifferent treatment. Read **Numbers 11:12, 2 Corinthians 12:14-15, Galatians 4:19-20**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Thank You God for Your gentleness. Help me to understand that truth can be firm and even hurt my sinful, selfish pride and yet still be gracious and gentle. You give me mercy and grace, not what I deserve. Thank You.*

**TUESDAY** – In **verse 8** Paul again lists the “motherly” aspects of true Spiritual leadership when he describes affection and a sacrificial love.

“*Affectionately longing*” is translated from a Greek word which means “to desire, long for, the longing of love”. John MacArthur, in his commentary on this passage says, “Ancient inscriptions on the tombs of dead babies sometimes contained this term when parents wanted to describe their sad longing for a too-soon departed child.” This motherly type of affection is the type of love that true spiritual leaders are to have for their people. Paul goes on to demonstrate that he had this type of love in the remainder of **verse 8**. The text says, “...*we were well pleased to impart to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own lives...*” These men of God, like all true called men of God today, gave up their lives for the work God called them to. Just like the unselfish mother gives up her own desires and wants for the sake of her children; so Godly Pastors “*impart*” (give) their own lives and spend themselves for God’s people and work. Read **Acts 20:22-24, 1 John 3:16**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Pray for your pastors as well as all true Elders in Christ’s church that God would help them have this type of love and lifestyle. And remember, He also commands this of you if you are His child (1 John 3:16).*

**WEDNESDAY** –**Verse 9** offers a great summary of “Parental” or “Family Style” spiritual leadership. It speaks to the unselfish work and toil involved in being a true Spiritual leader and also a Godly parent. Paul asks the Thessalonians to “*remember, brethren, our labor and toil...night and day...*” Paul didn’t want his motives for ministry questioned and doubted so he went out of his way to “*labor and toil*” and he lived anything but lavishly to verify his true heart for God’s work and these people to whom he ministered. Unlike the false teachers, Paul didn’t always seek money. The Greek words “*kopos*” (“a beating of the breast, sorrow, trouble, intense labor united with trouble and toil”), and “*mochthos*” (“a hard and difficult labor, toil, travail, hardship”) are two words which every true servant of Christ called by God to leadership know very well. This is sadly the dividing line for so many who “say” they want to be used by God but quit frankly are not willing to pay the price. Paul and his men were willing and notice in the Scripture reading they said the people themselves were to follow this example. Read **2 Thessalonians 3:7-9**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *God, help me to spend myself for You and to live unselfishly and sacrificially for others. Forgive my lazy, selfish, self-centeredness.*

**THURSDAY** –We have seen some beautiful things relating to the work of leadership from examples of a Godly mother, but now in the last three verses of our text we see Paul define the work of true Spiritual leadership from the position of a “*Father*”. Manliness is not “in” today and it is not politically correct to speak out about being a strong man in today’s culture. The subversion of masculinity and the feminization of both society and the church do not for one minute silence The Almighty God from speaking to this vital truth. God sums up the need for strong men in Spiritual

leadership in **1 Corinthians 16:13**. To be a man of God, you must have courage and strength. And contrary to popular reasoning that strength is first and foremost seen not in screaming and hollering, but in a life of discipline and example. This is precisely what Paul says in **verse 10** when he says their “*behavior*” was “*devout (holy), just, and blameless*” before the eyes of the Thessalonians. These men and all of us who would lead God’s people are to live lives such as this. May our prayer be as the Psalmist: **Psalm 18:20-27**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Thank You Father for being the ultimate “role model”. Help our Elders, fathers, brothers, and all men I know to be Godly men of Yours.*

**FRIDAY** –In **verse 11** we find that not only are “*fathers*” to live and model a Godly example before their children but they are also to “*exhort, comfort, and charge...*” These three words describe a Godly father and a Godly leader in their relationship to their “children”. “*Exhorted*”—“to call alongside, to address, speak to”. “*Comforted*”—“to speak by way of admonition and incentive or to calm, encourage, and console”. “*Charged (implored)*”—“to bear witness, to give testimony (and not hold back), to implore”. This is what Godly fathers do and what Paul, his men, and men of God in leadership today as well do. They come alongside and attempt to teach, instruct, and motivate all the time reminding their children of the consequences of disobedience. Read **1 Corinthians 4:14-21**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Ask God to help you be an obedient child of His.*

**SATURDAY** –The final goal of every true father and spiritual leader is found in **verse 12**. Paul says his desire was that these Thessalonians, his children in the Lord, would “*walk worthy*”. Paul reminds them of God’s Sovereign, electing, saving grace when he says, “*...of God who calls you into His Kingdom...*” Paul is clear that if they are truly born again, converted by The Holy Spirit of God, saved by God’s effectual call to salvation, their lives will bear that out in the manner of their “*walk*”. Saved people grow, they progress and mature and continue to be sanctified and conformed more and more into the image of Christ. Are you changing and maturing? Is your “*walk*” (lifestyle and actions) “*worthy*” of the God who called you? These **6 verses** have given us a great description of how leaders in God’s church are to behave as “*mothers*” and “*fathers*” leading their children to lives that honor God and end up in His eternal Kingdom. Read **1 Peter 1:13-21**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *God, help me walk worthy of You, who called me by grace!*