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THESSALONIANS

sermon series 2020

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

PARRAMATTA BAPTIST CHURCH

1 THESSALONIANS

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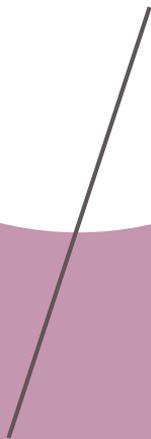
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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: Walking with Others

01



C H A P T E R



01

We thank God for you



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1.

REFLECT:

"We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers"
(1:2)

Hearing about the flourishing faith of someone you passed your faith onto is a cause for deep and thankful rejoicing. Is there any nobler desire than for someone to know, experience and love our God for themselves?

Today, think back on those you have shared the Gospel with, prayed with, walked alongside, or were an example for. Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit as you do.

TAKE ACTION:

Spend time today thanking God for and praying by name for the people whose faith you have invested in.

Deeper action: reach out and let them know you were praying for them today.

56 by faith, love and hope



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1.

REFLECT:

"your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope" (1:3)

Faith, love and hope. For the believers in Thessalonica these were not mere sentiments, but life-changing influences that led to action. These *produced*, *prompted* and *inspired* how they lived.

As followers of Jesus we live a life that overflows. One that overflows from our faith in God, our experience of His love and our hope in His certain return.

TAKE ACTION:

If Christian faith, love and hope were the greatest influences in your life... how would you live today differently?

Deeper action: Is there a particular decision or action your faith is calling for that you need to step into?

56 loved & chosen by God



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1.

REFLECT:

"For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you" (1:4)

Central to the Gospel message is the truth that God has chosen to place his affection on us. He has purposed to lavish his love on us in calling us his children (see also 1 John 3:1).

We are secure in this love, in His love, and His love changes us.

TAKE ACTION:

Meditate on the transforming truth that you are eternally loved and chosen by God.

Deeper action: revisit and write a version of your testimony themed around what it means to you to be loved by God.

“you became a model to all”

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1.

REFLECT:

"You became imitators of us and of the Lord...And so you became a model to all the believers." (1:6-7)

As we welcome the Gospel message into our lives, we begin the life-long process of learning to live and love like Jesus.

As personal and unseen this can feel at times, the reality is that our faith and its impact on the way we live *is* visible and observable to those around us.

TAKE ACTION:

Identify who is looking to you to learn what it means to be a person of faith.

Deeper action: If there are things you would not want them to learn from your life and faith currently, take steps today to start addressing those.

56 *the message rang out from you*”

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1.

REFLECT:

"The Lord's message rang out from you... your faith in God has become known everywhere." (1:8)

Many of us owe our faith (in part) to one or two key people who shared their faith with us. It is rightly observed that the church is only ever one generation from dying out.

Each of us have the joyful responsibility to pass the Gospel message on through our life and words.

TAKE ACTION:

Pray Colossians 4:3-4 over yourself, and look for the conversational doors God will open in your week.

Deeper action: Ask God to open your eyes to the people of peace already in your life. Pray that God would bring other people of peace into your life.

02



C H A P T E R



02

we dared to tell you



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-16.

REFLECT:

"with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition." (2:2)

Boldness, courage, endurance. These gave a potency to the witness of the early church, even in the face of strong opposition. We could easily become intimidated by their example, but remember that (in their words) it was only '*with the help of our God*' (v2) that they were able to dare to tell of '*His Gospel*'.

TAKE ACTION:

Name any fears that keep you from sharing the Gospel. Now name some of the characteristics of our God, who is with us always. Pray as you feel led.

Deeper action: Is there someone that fear keeps you from sharing your faith with? Choose to act in faith not fear.

we speak as those approved

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-16.

REFLECT:

"we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God" (2:4)

For Paul and his companions, every interaction and Gospel appeal came from a desire to please God. They did not witness in order to impress other Christians, to build their own sense of self-worth nor to win arguments.

May our motives always be pure in our relationships with those yet to believe.

TAKE ACTION:

Pray Colossians 4:3-4 over yourself, and look for the conversational doors God opens in your week.

Deeper action: Ask God to open your eyes to the people of peace already in your life. Pray that God would bring more people of peace into your life.

we loved you so much



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-16.

REFLECT:

"Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well" (2:8)

It was love that led Paul and his companions to share the Gospel, and it was love that led them to share their lives with the Thessalonians.

When we have genuine love for others, we don't hold them at arms length. Nor do we settle for the superficial with them.

TAKE ACTION:

Take a moment to check in on your own heart. How is your energy, passion and commitment for genuinely loving others going?

Deeper action: If you realize that your energy for loving others has become low, do something today that refills that tank.

56 holy, righteous and blameless

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-16.

REFLECT:

"You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed." (2:10)

It is hard to overstate the importance of integrity, especially in the context of leadership and discipleship. Who we are often speaks louder than what we say.

TAKE ACTION:

Renew your commitment before the Lord to 'live lives worthy of God' (v12).

Deeper action: Read and reflect on verse 11-12. Consider how you might encourage, comfort and urge another believer this week to join you in living lives worthy of God.

56 you became imitators



READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-16.

REFLECT:

"For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus" (2:14)

There is such power in having a good role model, someone who is worthy of imitation to learn from. Who our heroes are often reveal much about who we want to become.

TAKE ACTION:

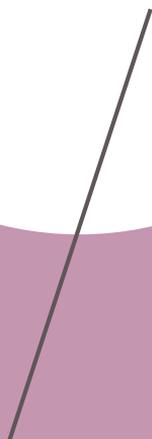
Thank God for those who've gone before you, that you were able to look up to and learn from.

Deeper action: Consider who in your life is the kind of believer you are seeking to increasingly become like. Be intentional in seeking to learn from them. Pray about whether asking them to be a mentor in your life might be a next step.

03



C H A P T E R



03

56 to strengthen and encourage

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-13.

REFLECT:

"We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith" (3:2)

There are many days where some extra faith strengthening and encouraging is very welcome! Paul and his companions didn't just hope that the Thessalonian believers were doing okay, they took action. Sending Timothy was a proactive choice meant to strengthen and encourage their faith.

TAKE ACTION:

Take time today and reach out to someone with the goal of helping to strengthen and encourage their faith.

Personal action: Consider what you could do today that would strengthen and encourage your own faith.

so no one would be unsettled

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-13.

REFLECT:

"so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them." (3:3)

Paul wrote (and sent Timothy) to assure the Thessalonians that the trials they experienced were to be expected, and to not allow their circumstances to unsettle them in their faith. Following Jesus does not make us immune to hardship. However, our faith in Him can make all the difference when we are in the midst of hardship.

TAKE ACTION:

Pray for someone you know who is having to count the cost of following Jesus at the moment.

Personal action: If you are feeling a little unsettled in your faith yourself right now, reach out to another believer who can help carry your burden.

we also long to see you

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-13.

REFLECT:

"He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you" (3:6)

It has been 6 months now since we were able to physically gather together as a church community. One thing we have missed so much is the blessing of being together in person with each other.

For Paul and the Thessalonian believers, the very thought of each other brought up pleasant memories, and increased their desire to be together again.

TAKE ACTION:

Recall to mind the great people of our church family and thank God for each other. Then phone, send a text message, or organize a catch up with those you haven't seen for far too long.

56 encouraged about you

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-13.

REFLECT:

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith." (3:7)

Have you ever looked to the faith of another and drawn strength for your own faith and faithfulness?

For Paul and his companions, the vibrancy of the Thessalonians' faith brought them encouragement. It no doubt also served to strengthen their resolve to live for Jesus.

TAKE ACTION:

Take a moment today to simply thank those whose examples encourage your own faith in Christ.

Further action: Follow the link to read the following blog from Open Doors - <https://tinyurl.com/yy4bxx9n>

56 may your love increase

READ:

1 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-13.

REFLECT:

"May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you." (3:12)

What a beautiful desire and prayer to bless the Thessalonian believers with! A community characterized by love. A community where each person's actions and interactions overflow from love.

This is Jesus' vision for his church: that we would be known as his disciples by the love we have for each other.

TAKE ACTION:

Pray that God would increase your love for his people (there's a prayer God loves to answer!).

Deeper action: Act on any promptings the Holy Spirit leads you to in response.