

THE SHEPHERD'S HEART – PART 1

--1ST THESSALONIANS 3:1-10--

INTRODUCTION:

In the first two chapters of 1st Thessalonians Paul expressed the concerns of a shepherd for his flock. Paul's words convey to us the true concerns of a pastor, and through Paul's words we see some of his pastoral attitudes which he had for the church that he had to leave abruptly and prematurely.

As we enter into chapter three this morning Paul writes about matters concerning himself and Timothy and their relationship to the church in Thessalonica, and Paul in an even more specific way relates his concerns for the church which he has as their shepherd. As we begin to go through this chapter this morning, we will begin to see seven features that make up the model shepherd's heart for his people.

- I. THE SHEPHERD'S LOVE FOR HIS FLOCK (1st Thess. 3:1a)
 - a. This passage opens with the word "_____," which connects this verse to the previous chapter.
 - b. Even though Paul was facing his own _____, he was more concerned about the Thessalonian believers.
 - c. The _____ that Paul had for the believers in Thessalonica was not some sentimental affection for social fellowship with these believers.
 - d. We see in Paul's concern the _____ of a true shepherd.
- II. THE SHEPHERD'S SACRIFICE FOR HIS FLOCK (1st Thessalonians 3:1b-2a)
 - a. The second feature of a shepherd's heart is seen in his _____ for his flock.
 - b. When Paul first came to _____, he came by himself, he left Silas and Timothy in Berea and then they joined him later. (Acts 17-18)
 - c. This sacrifice that Paul made shows us again the strength of his concern as a _____ for the Thessalonians.

- d. Paul, in sending _____ to the Thessalonians, commended him to them.

III. THE SHEPHERD'S LOVINGKINDNESS FOR HIS FLOCK (1st Thessalonians 3:2b-4)

- a. The third feature of a shepherd's heart concerning his flock is the _____ he showers on them.
- b. Timothy was sent to them to _____ them and to _____ them.
- c. Paul also knew that the Thessalonian believers could be disturbed by certain _____. (2 Timothy 3:12; Matthew 5:11-12)

IV. THE SHEPHERD'S WATCHFULNESS OVER HIS FLOCK (1st Thessalonians 3:5)

- a. The fourth feature of a shepherd's heart for his flock is his _____ over his flock, his desire to keep them safe and out of harm's way. (Acts 20:29-30)
- b. If Satan had succeeded in causing these new believers to reject the gospel or to abandon their faith, Paul would then know that his labor among them was in _____. (Galatians 2:1-2; Philippians 2:15-16)

CONCLUSION:

We are looking at seven features of a shepherd's heart toward the flock that God has put under his care. The first four Paul has modeled for us in this third chapter. Paul showed us his love for the believers in Thessalonica in the fact that he chose to be left alone so that he might know their spiritual condition. Paul was willing to sacrifice his own comfort and joy of having Timothy with him for the sake of the Thessalonian believers who would receive an eternal return from Timothy being with them. Finally, we saw Paul's concern that his labor was in vain because he was not there to watch over the flock in the midst of their trials and persecutions and he was concerned that Satan had used those afflictions to get them to reject the gospel or abandon their faith.

