

PARENTAL EXAMPLES
--1ST THESSALONIANS 2:7-12--

INTRODUCTION:

Paul begins chapter two of 1st Thessalonians by defending his ministry that was under attack by those who opposed the gospel. In Paul's defense we saw five virtues of a true spiritual leader, The five virtues we saw displayed in their lives were tenacity or persistence, integrity, authority, accountability, and humility. But truly effective spiritual leadership requires more than just a virtuous life, it also requires action. In our passage this morning Paul outlines the outward functions or actions of the godly spiritual leader. Instead of talking about his and his companions preaching, discipling, protecting, and overseeing this new church, Paul instead uses a metaphor to show these very actions. Paul could have chosen any number of metaphors to show this, but he chose to use the metaphor of a mother and a father with which he illustrates the primary kinds of spiritual care a leader must provide for his people. Paul's use here of a mother and father emphasizes the care and affection of shared life that he had with those to whom he brought the gospel.

I. A MOTHER'S GENTLENESS (1st Thessalonians 2:7)

- a. Paul begins verse seven with the word "_____" which again contrasts Paul, Silas, and Timothy's conduct with the sinful behavior of the false teachers of the day.
- b. This word "_____" is the main point that Paul wants us to see in this verse.
- c. Paul writes that the gentleness that he showed to the Thessalonians was comparable to a nursing _____ who tenderly cares for her own children.
- d. This metaphor is a beautiful picture of the kind of _____ the Thessalonian believers received from Paul and his companions.

II. A MOTHER'S AFFECTION (1st Thessalonians 2:8a)

- a. Paul builds on his metaphor of a nursing mother and he does so by giving us the mother's motive for such nurturing gentleness, the motive is _____.
- b. God naturally made mothers with this intimate or fond _____ in their hearts for their children.

III. A MOTHER'S SACRIFICIAL LOVE (1st Thess. 2:8b)

- a. The fond affection that Paul and his companions had for their readers was not out of a sense of _____.
- b. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were imparting to the Thessalonians the _____ of God and yet in doing so they retained those truths.
- c. But more than just imparting the gospel of God to these believers, Paul writes that he and his companions also shared their own _____ with them.
- d. Paul ministered with the same attitude of all-out commitment because the Thessalonian believers had become very _____ to him.

IV. A MOTHER'S SELFLESS LABOR (1st Thessalonians 2:9)

- a. Paul continues using the metaphor of a mother and in verse nine calls on the Thessalonian believers to _____, to recall the time that Paul, Silas, and Timothy were among them, ministering to them. (2nd Thessalonians 3:7-9)
- b. Paul received gifts from the church in Philippi which he and his companions lived on as well as what Paul could _____ in his trade as a tentmaker.
- c. In these first three verses Paul uses the metaphor of a mother to describe the ministry of _____ provided by Silas, Timothy, and himself.

V. A FATHER'S EXAMPLE (1st Thessalonians 2:10)

- a. Paul begins these last three verses in our passage by using the metaphor of a _____ to picture the actions of godly spiritual leaders.

- b. Paul pointed both to the firsthand knowledge of these believers and to the perfect insight of God into how _____ and uprightly and _____ Paul, Silas, and Timothy had behaved toward these believers.

VI. A FATHER'S INSTRUCTION (1st Thessalonians 2:11)

- a. Paul in stating, "as a _____ would his own children" at the end of verse 11, he is telling us the natural, normal function of a father concerned for the well-being of his own children.
- b. The first verb that he used to describe a father's instruction was "_____."
- c. The verb translated "_____" is a word that means to encourage in the sense of giving comfort and consolation to the person being encouraged. (John 11:19, 31)
- d. The third verb Paul uses describing a father's instruction to his children is the verb "_____."

VII. A FATHER'S DESIRE (1st Thessalonians 2:12)

- a. Paul in this final verse of this passage voices his desire, his goal in conducting himself as he has described himself in this passage, his desire is the spiritual _____ of his spiritual children in the faith.
- b. Paul says that he conducted himself as he did so that the believers in Thessalonica would walk in a manner _____ of the God who calls them into His own kingdom and glory.
- c. Paul finishes by telling the believers what they are called to by God, they are _____ to God's own kingdom and glory.

CONCLUSION:

In this passage Paul used a mother and father as a parental example of spiritual leadership. This clearly demonstrates that leadership in the church must be balanced. It is not enough for spiritual leaders to just be compassionate, tender, and caring, as spiritual mothers. Their lives must also be uncompromising in their convictions, pure and upright in their conduct. Their lives must, in their motives and actions, set a standard for all to follow. On top of their example, they

need to teach the truth faithfully, building up the saints in spiritual wisdom and displaying the courage of conviction to come along side and exhort and call their people to obedience. They must comfort and console those who are discouraged and always implore each one to walk worthy of God's call to them into His own kingdom and glory. Spiritual leaders must be both spiritual mothers and fathers to those God has placed under their care. Peter said it this way to the spiritual leaders who were the readers of his epistle, he wrote in 1st Peter 5:1-4, "*Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*" (1 Peter 5:1-4, NASB95)