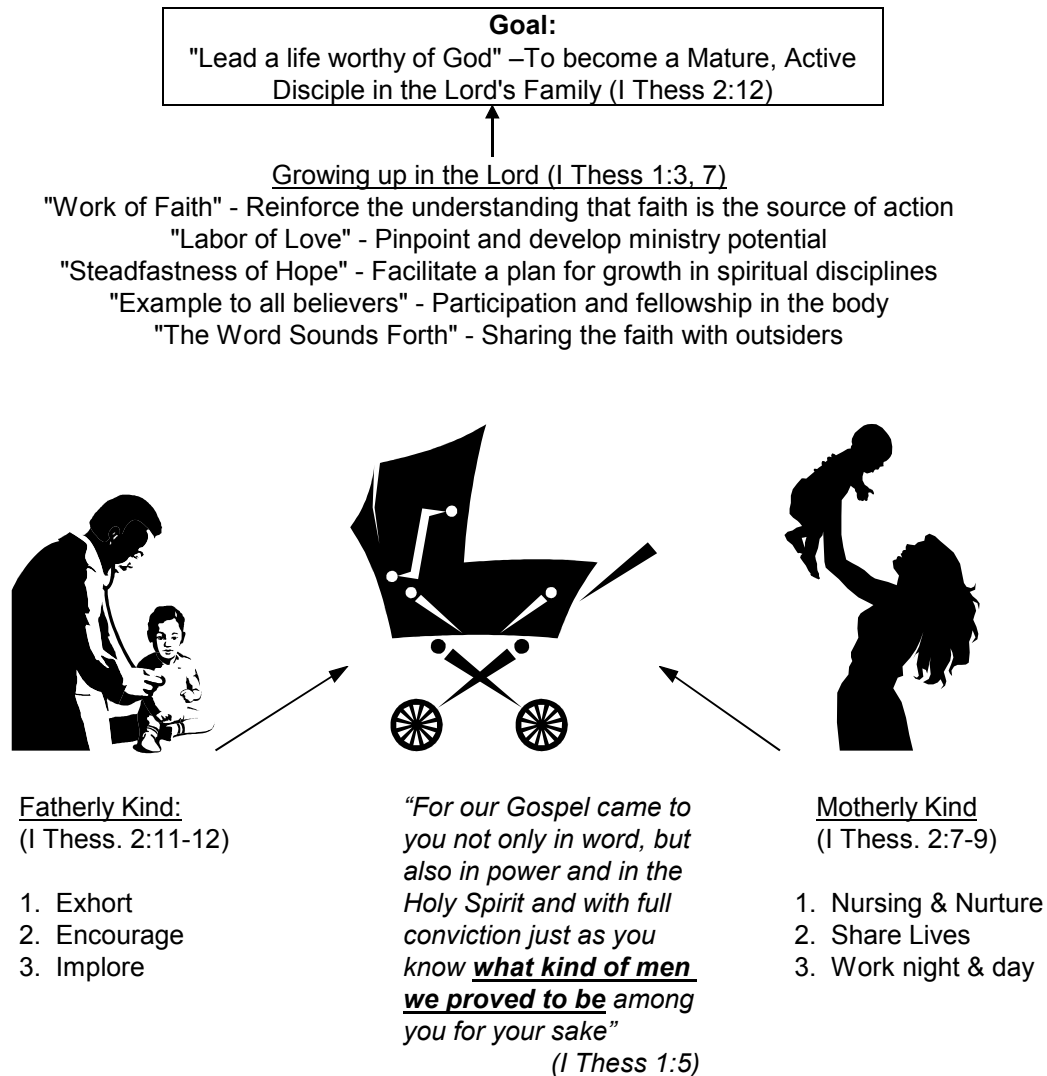


LESSON 4: Discipleship In the Ministry of Paul. Thessalonica

I. Background

- A. In I Thessalonians 1:1-2:16, Paul provides a good model for ministry when he recounts his ministry among the Thessalonians.
- B. Acts 17:1-9 provides the backdrop
 1. Didn't seem to be a huge success on the surface
 2. 1 Thess 2:1; 1:6-8 indicates it was a success
- C. This has something to do with the manner of ministry Paul had among them that enabled them to continue after he was gone.



II. GOAL: (1 Thess 2:12) There was a goal in mind

- A. "Lead a life worthy of God"
- B. Goal - To become a Mature, Active Disciple in the Lord's Family
- C. (1 Thess 1:3, 7) Growing Up in the Lord involves:
 - 1. "Work of Faith" - Reinforce a proper understanding of faith
 - 2. "Labor of Love" - Pinpoint and develop ministry potential
 - 3. "Steadfastness of Hope" - Facilitate a plan for spiritual growth
 - 4. "Example to all believers" - Participation/fellowship in the body and progress in transformation
 - 5. "The Word Sounds Forth" - Sharing the faith with outsiders

III. Ministry involved being the Motherly kind (2:7-9)

- A. A nursing mother - Recognized they were babes
 - 1. At physical birth
 - a. Celebration, attention, gifts, etc.
 - b. Care does not stop - feed, exercise, check ups
 - 2. For new Christians often the attention is all at the birth and stops
 - a. Hair is barely dry and then they on their own
 - b. Emphasis on birth, none on development
 - 3. Need to recognize developmental needs
 - a. Can't discern what is poison, what will burn, or walk
 - b. Takes more than just getting into water
 - c. New Christians may not know the jargon
example: Take my LES to the NCIOC at the CBPO past the CQ desk.
 - 4. Learn how to eat, walk, check up, and socialize
- B. Shared their lives as well as the Gospel (v.8)
 - 1. Shared the Gospel not only by mouth, but also by deeds
 - 2. "People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after."
 - 3. Like telling a child how to tie his shoes
 - a. You don't give them a book on how to do it
 - b. You don't just tell them
 - c. You show them
 - 4. (2:14) How did they learn to face persecution?
 - a. 1:6 - Became imitators of Paul
 - b. They had lived alongside Paul and learned how
- C. Worked night and day not to be a burden (2:9)
 - 1. Does a mother work night and day?

2. (2:3-6) - Paul defends against accusations
 - a. His motives were pure
 - b. Even gave up right to financial support for their sake
3. What does a mother give up for their kids?
 - a. Their figure, sleep, time, freedom, money
 - b. But they do it gladly.

D. Ministry is successful when it involves being motherly

IV. Ministry involved being the Fatherly Kind (2:10-11)

A. Exhorting

1. Synonyms: Urge, encourage, comfort, summon, further support, allure, motivate, inspire, stimulate
2. Positive urging
3. Example: Jeannie Sutherland wanted to have seminar using mandelas and new age stuff
 - a. She was a brand new Christian
 - b. She wanted to contribute
 - c. Leaders jumped all over her, acted as though she was some sort of saboteur
 - d. She got discouraged and never volunteered to get involved again
4. Another example: Warren Beaty wanted to get piano with bingo
 - a. This was during a business meeting
 - b. He was also a brand new Christian
 - c. Thanked him for his discussions, said we would talk about it later
 - d. Later explained why we don't use them, he was encouraged and continued to come
5. How do we exhort, inspire and stimulate?
 - a. Praise them, let them know they did well
 - 1) Example: When your son hits a home run, you cheer and say, "that's my boy"
 - 2) (2:19-20) - Paul in effect is saying, "that's my boy"
 - b. Don't order them, model the behavior
Paul was a model of one who endured persecution

B. Encouraging

1. Antonyms: Restrain, Caution, Intimidate, Unnerve, Dampen, Demoralize
2. When someone ready to take the community to Christ, we sit back and say its naive optimism. (Dampens them)
3. Put people down in hopes that they will be motivated to

improve (Demoralizes them)

4. What can you do
 - a. Don't expect too much OR too little
 - b. Help them find a meaningful job (ministry)
5. Key to encouragement: PROXIMITY

C. Implore (Literally: "Bear witness", "Testify")

1. This is the teaching element, testifying to them
2. Fathers are the ones ultimately responsible for training
3. "It is unreasonable to expect a child to listen to your advice and ignore your example"
4. There are things a person must KNOW and DO as a Christian
 - a. Much of this comes from questions that come up in everyday life
 - b. A lot also comes from formal teaching plans
 - c. New Christian must be grounded

V. Purpose: (2:12) To graduate

- A. It is not about perpetually "caring" for children
- B. It is about them growing up to be a self-initiating, reproducing, contributing, and transforming disciple of Christ.

VI. Visualizing the Growing Stages:

Using the birth and growth to adulthood analogy, the model of discipleship in the ministry of Christ can be laid out as

Stage	Parental Role	Learner Role	Goal
Stage One: Infanthood	Nurturer (1 Thess 2:7-9)	Observe & Learn (1 Thess 1:5; 2:10)	Learning the very basics of life by watching the parent
Stage Two: Childhood	Model (Phil 3:17)	Imitators (1 Cor 4:15-16; 11:1)	Identification with parent figure and learning from him through imitation
Stage Three: Adolescence	Coach (1 Thess 2:10-11)	Apprentice (Acts 16:1)	Increased freedom and preparation for the absence of the parent
Stage Four: Adulthood	Peer (Rom 16:21; 2 Cor 8:23; Phil 2:25; 4:2-3)	Adulthood (2 Tim 2:1-2, 4:1-5)	Responsible, transformational, reproducing

VII. Principles for Passing the Baton

- A. Begin with Strong Disciples
 - 1. (2 Tim 2:2) - Begins with "faithful" men
 - 2. Strong disciples can lead others to be strong disciples
- B. Must have a passion for it
 - 1. There is a commitment involved in discipleship relationships
 - 2. Prov 16:26 - Must help people develop an "appetite"
 - a. Begin with the "pure milk" and move from there
 - b. Motivation must be internal not just external
 - c. External motivation, forcing people to discipleship is inferior to internal motivation, helping them develop at appetite
 - 1) The response will only be superficial
 - 2) Example: Which army would you rather fight, paid mercenaries or an all volunteer army?
 - a) Paid Mercenaries will not risk their life
 - b) All voluntary army will fight to the death
 - d. Examples of tapping internal motivations (from Paul's last letter ever written to Timothy)
 - 1) Natural incentives
 - a) A sense of accomplishment - pleasing the commander (2 Tim 2:3-4)
 - b) Knowing that we are being the best we can be (2 Tim 2:5; 4:6-8)
 - c) A desire to benefit from the result of our efforts (2 Tim 2:6)
 - 2) Spiritual incentives
 - a) Moved by the Love of Christ (2 Tim 2:8-9)
 - b) Compassion for the lost (2 Tim 2:10)
 - c) Moved by the faithful character of God (2 Tim 2:11-13)
- C. Must be sensitive to where people are in the process
 - 1. We see in the ministry of Jesus that he adjusted his leadership style depending on where his disciples were at in their growth process
 - 2. Paul also adjusted his leadership style depending on where his students were at
 - 3. It is unreasonable to expect an infant with no teeth to eat a steak
- D. Discipleship involves life investment
 - 1. The relational component is key
 - 2. Church programs inherently lack this
 - 3. Strength of Relationship based discipleship vs. program based

discipling methods:

Relationship Based:	Program Based:
Greater intimacy, invests in people	Less intimacy, informs people
Full, Mutual Responsibility of participants	One or a few who prepares on behalf of the many
Customized to the unique growth process of individual	Emphasizes synchronization and regimentation
Focuses accountability around life change	Focuses accountability around content

E. Disciples are not made quickly

1. Discipleship takes place in accountable relationships over a period of time
2. The focus should be on quality, not quantity
3. As history has shown, quality begets quantity

F. Discipleship multiplies

1. Jesus focused on a few
2. The few multiplied exponentially
3. Reproducing discipleship multiplies rather than merely add

G. The process should be simple

1. There was not a complicated process of discipleship in either the ministries of Jesus or of Paul
 - a. Example: Mt 11:28-30 - Jesus "simplified" the law
 - b. Imagine in a relay race the baton being a huge, complex, heavy thing made of lead instead of aluminum?
2. Simplicity can be passed on, complexity is much harder