

Love Reaches Out

October 2, 2011

Vol. 1 Num.21

1 THESSALONIANS 3

Week's Core Competency:

Faithfulness- I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Never let loyalty and faithfulness leave you. Tie them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will find favor and high regard in the sight of God and man.

(Proverbs 3:3-4)

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.

Introduction

Barnabas was known as the son of encouragement. It was a nickname that he had earned. He was a person who was inspiring to be around. A well-known believer, he accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey. He was a good balance for the hard-hitting Paul. Joining them was John Mark who is simply described as a helper. During this first trip, John Mark, for reasons that are not fully explained, decided to return home. When it was time for the second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, but Paul thought it unwise. In Paul's estimation, John Mark had proved himself to be undependable.

Acts 15:36 - 39 (NASB) 36 After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are." 37Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. 38But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

John Mark could have quietly faded away if it not for Barnabas being willing to reach out to him. Barnabas was willing to come alongside John Mark and encourage him. John Mark, or as we more commonly know him, Mark, is the writer of the second Gospel. Think of what might have happened if not for God working through Barnabas.

This Week

How can you make it a priority to be a Barnabas, or an encourager? As you study Thessalonians 3, consider to whom God is calling you to reach out? Ask God to give you his eyes to see, his ears to hear, and his heart to respond.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

1 Thessalonians 3

1 Therefore, when we could no longer stand it, we thought it was better to be left alone in Athens.

2 And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you concerning your faith,

3 so that no one will be shaken by these persecutions. For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.

4 In fact, when we were with you, we told you previously that we were going to suffer persecution, and as you know, it happened.

5 For this reason, when I could no longer stand it, I also sent him to find out about your faith, fearing that the tempter had tempted you and that our labor might be for nothing.

6 But now Timothy has come to us from you and brought us good news about your faith and love and reported that you always have good memories of us, wanting to see us, as we also want

to see you.

7 Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution, we were encouraged about you through your faith.

8 For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord.

9 How can we thank God for you in return for all the joy we experience before our God because of you,

10 as we pray very earnestly night and day to see you face to face and to complete what is lacking in your faith?

11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you.

12 And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone, just as we also do for you.

13 May He make your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints. Amen.

②EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN?

1. a) Describe the circumstances and concerns that caused Paul to twice say, "...when we could no longer stand it." (See also 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20)

b) Why might it have been easier to give up on getting back to see the Thessalonians?
2. In verse 2, Paul says Timothy was sent to "strengthen and encourage" the believers in Thessalonica. What are some practical ways for one believer to encourage or strengthen another believer? (List as many ways as you can).
3. What role does persistence have in encouraging and strengthening a brother or sister in Christ?

4. a) This week's core competency is Proverbs 3:3-4. From the dictionary, write down the definition for the word "faithful."

- b) Rewrite these verses in your own words.

- c) Describe how this relates to 1 Thessalonians 3.

5. The root for the word "encourage" comes from the same word Jesus uses when speaking of the Holy Spirit. Look up John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, and 16:7. How is the Holy Spirit described and how might that influence the way you encourage others?

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:6-9. Next, list several phrases from chapter 3:6-9 that describe the effect that Timothy's report had on Paul. How are these two passages linked? Is this a pattern upon which we can depend?

7. Paul mentions frequent prayers throughout Thessalonians and ends this chapter with a prayer. What difference does it make whether or not you pray for someone?

8. What specific action will you take to encourage a brother or sister this week? Will you also faithfully remember them in prayer?

9. To whom have you stopped (or never started) reaching out because it was difficult in some way? How might God be calling you to persist?

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does this MATTER to me?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW...

Write about how God wants you to FEEL...

Write about what God wants you to DO...

Sermon Notes

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ