

Faith Has a Motive

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1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-6

This Week's Core

Competency:

Single-mindedness -I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. (Matthew 6:33)

Using This Study

🕒 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.

🕒 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.

🕒 EXPAND His Word

How does this FIT? Studying cross references can help expand your understanding of a passage and discover the unity in God's word.

🕒 EMBRACE His Word

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

Motivation Makes a Difference

Some years ago, an article in *Readers Digest* told the following story. Colonel Harland Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, was seated in first class on a flight to San Francisco. He was polite and agreeable with the staff and fellow passengers. Shortly after making himself comfortable, he settled in to his seat, dropped his chin to his narrow black tie and closed his eyes. Somewhere in the back of the plane a child had been shrieking for some time. One stewardess told another helplessly, "I've tried candy, books and games, but nothing seems to make any difference."

"I've got to speak to that child," said the colonel. He rose to his feet and, with the aid of his cane, made his way back. The staff watched and shrugged, as if to say, "What can he do?"

When the colonel came back, his charm, it seemed, had produced a minor miracle. The cabin was quiet save for the sound of chatter, newspapers and preparation of food trays. The stewardess came up to him and said, "Thank you for helping us, Colonel."

He smiled. "I didn't do it for you," he replied. "I did it for the child." His eyes twinkled for a moment before he closed them again and relaxed.

This story is notable, in part, because Colonel Sander's motivation is unexpected. It is interesting to consider what motivates people when faced with a challenge. As believers, we face the challenge that Jesus issued in the great commission of Matthew 28:19-20. Like Paul, we have been entrusted with the gospel, and we are instructed to make disciples. However, if you are anything like me, when it comes to sharing the gospel, I often hesitate. I have to ask myself, who am I trying to please? Am I more worried about what people think of me than I am of what my heavenly father thinks of me?

This week

As you study this passage, ask the Lord to help you to spend time with him, to love him more completely, and to give you an overwhelming desire to please him.

① EXAMINE His Word

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

1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

1 For you yourselves know, **brothers**, that our visit with you was not without result.

2 On the contrary, after we had **previously suffered**, and we were treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, we were emboldened by our God to speak the gospel of God to you in spite of great opposition.

3 For our exhortation didn't come from error

or impurity or an intent to deceive.

4 Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but rather God, who examines our hearts.

5 For we never used flattering speech, as you know, or had greedy motives —God is our witness

6 and we didn't seek glory from people, either from you or from others.



EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN?

1. Why did Paul say that their ministry was not a failure in verses 1-2?
2. In verse 2, Paul refers to previous suffering. Please read Acts 16: 22-24. What did they suffer?
3. Why do you suppose they were emboldened by this when they came to Thessalonica?
4. In I Thessalonians 2:4, what does Paul identify as his motivation?

③ EXPAND His Word

How does this FIT?

5. What is the common theme in the following passages that explains the boldness with which one shares the good news?
 - a) Hebrews 12:1-2
 - b) Acts 4:13, 20
 - c) 1 Peter 3:14-15
 - d) 2 Timothy 1:8-12
 - e) Acts 18:9-1

④ EMBRACE His Word

Why does this MATTER to me?

6. It is easy to say that we want to please God, but the reality is that often we are more eager to please ourselves or other people. Please fill in the chart by looking at the category on the left and indicating the type of response or behavior you might expect to see from someone who is a God-pleaser and someone who is a man-pleaser or self-pleaser. When you are finished, consider where you might fall on this chart.

| Category | Man-pleaser or Self-pleaser | God-pleaser |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Speaking Truth | <i>Speaks the truth when it will be met with approval or when it is sure not to give offense</i> | <i>Speaks the truth in love</i> |
| Serving others | | |
| Loving others | | |
| Obeying God's Word | | |
| Enduring in difficult times | | |
| Being generous | | |
| Experiencing Anxiety | | |

7. Consider your answer of question 1 and compare this with how you determine whether you are "successful" in sharing your faith with unbelievers.
8. How do you let your past experiences or your fears affect your willingness to share the gospel?

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...

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