

The Body Leadership Model

1 Thessalonians 2:1 – 12

I. Intro

- A. In most churches (wish I could say all), certainly in our church, speak a lot about spreading the Gospel of Christ to those unsaved, who are dying without any hope
- B. **Question:** How is it the God spreads that Gospel? Through His people who are the church
- C. As the Gospel takes root in person's life, that person grows/matures spiritually in their walk/relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior
- D. **Question:** What are one of the ways the Lord, through the Holy Spirit, nurtures babes in Christ and helps them to grow/mature spiritually? Through His people who are the church
- E. Today – continue study of 1 Thessalonians focusing on people of God corporately which is His church – look at the leadership model according to scripture for the church, the body of Christ
- F. Everyone part of body of Christ (His church) should be a leader in some way; said before – all believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ are ministers, put more accurately – servants of the Gospel of Christ
- G. **Question:** How can we as believers be leaders and also be servants?
- H. Jesus came to earth, not as a totalitarian/dictorial leader but as a servant leader; as followers/disciples of Christ we're called to be the same – servant leaders, not just in the church but in our homes, workplaces, community, wherever we are; everyone part of the body of Christ is to be a servant leader in some way
- I. **Question:** How can everyone be a leader, doesn't there need to be some followers? Yes – but not talking about being a leader over everything, talking about leadership in just some areas, however God has gifted you
- J. Some may be leaders with children, some with youth, some in area of music, some over hospitality, some over missions/visitation, leading prayer group or Bible study group (Sunday School), etc.; many leading this week for VBS – so very timely message
- K. Not just speaking of church leaders as Pastors, other ministers, deacons but everyone that fills any leadership role within the church; my intent – leave the church with messages encouraging to this church throughout upcoming transition for however long that may take
- L. **READ 1 Thessalonians 2:1 – 6**
- M. First role of a model Christian leader within the church body ...

II. 1 – A faithful steward

- A. Many heard many messages on stewardship; not just about how much we tithe to the church – although that is part; stewardship is about being good managers of all the God blesses us with – money, talents/gifts, relationships He brings into our lives, families/children, careers, etc.
- B. Read in Bible reading this week: Mark 4:24 (ESV)
 - ²⁴And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you.
 - i. This case, Jesus is speaking about our responsibility when it comes to being a witness – had just spoken about not hiding a lamp under a bushel but letting our light shine
- C. The message of the Gospel is a treasure that God has entrusted to us; all us believers, as stewards, will one day have to give an account for our stewardship, especially our stewardship of the Gospel
- D. Faithfulness, the most important quality when it comes to stewardship; as we are faithful, we may not be popular in the eyes of men, but we must never be unfaithful in the eyes of God
- E. **REFER v. 2**
- F. Can see the faithful steward that Paul was, even when he certainly had every reason to quit; even after all they faced at Philippi, they still went on to Thessalonica (of course, things weren’t much better there as we’ve already seen)
- G. Message of Paul’s ministry – the Gospel and that believing in it was the only way a person could be saved
- H. Motive of Paul’s ministry – honor and please the Lord; **REFER v. 3, 4**
- I. Method of Paul’s ministry – be honest and compassionate; **REFER v. 5**
- J. **READ 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8** – leads to second role of a model Christian leader

III. **2** – A loving, nurturing mother

- A. This doesn’t just apply to women who serve as leaders, but it also applies to men; one difference in God’s design of men and women is that men, naturally are not very nurturing
- B. But as the emphasis of stewardship is faithfulness, the emphasis of the mother analogy Paul uses is gentleness
- C. Paul was a man given great authority by God, authority was respected by many people, yet he always exercised his authority in love
- D. Paul had patience with new Christians; Paul also disciplined, encouraged, nurtured new Christians; Paul protected these new Christians; he was indeed like a loving mother who would sacrifice/do anything no matter the cost for her children
- E. Children/young people/even adults this week who will certainly require patience, need encouraging, need kindness, treated with gentleness, need

love – that will be our God-given responsibility as VBS leaders/workers/helpers this week

F. **READ 1 Thessalonians 2:9 – 12**

G. Just like a role of a Christian model leader is to be a loving, nurturing mother – also another role Paul mentions ...

IV. **3 – A concerned father**

A. Paul, throughout his ministry, became a spiritual father to many – one example, Timothy

B. All of us ought to be spiritual parents to someone who may be a younger spiritual child (not speaking of literal age); I have had/have “spiritual fathers” in my life, even at times had some “spiritual moms”

C. Just as a father not only (an old word) “sires” children, he also has responsibility to care for those children

D. Paul given 3 of his duties as spiritual father:

i. **1** – to work; a father works to support his family; Paul worked to make tents to support himself, his ministry (spiritual family); no one could ever say that Paul was in it just for the money, he literally labored day and night to accomplish what he did

ii. **2** – his example; fathers are to be good examples for their children; several weeks ago talked about holy living – Paul certainly strived to live a holy life, a life that was blameless and righteous

iii. **3** – his words/conversation; a father’s words/counsel should be full of wisdom and received/respected by his family; Paul dealt with new believers not only as a group but also personally as individuals, he invested time with them one-on-one; when discouraged, he encouraged; when troubled, he comforted; when mistreated, he motivated

V. **Close**

A. If you’re one that will be serving in VBS this week, let’s be the Christian model leaders the Lord expects us to be – as faithful stewards, loving/nurturing spiritual moms, concerned/caring spiritual dads

B. But not just this week, continue to be the body of Christ model servant leaders that Apostle Paul was, and that our Savior was, for those in this church, in our homes, and in this community

C. **Matthew 5:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶... let your light [so] shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.