

D3 – Ministry: The Example of Paul (1 Thessalonians 1:5-10)

The Wellspring Purpose and Disciplines:

Background:

- Acts 17:1-2

5 Ministry Statements to help us understand Discipline 3:

1. Ministry's message must include _____, 1:5.

Ro 1:15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Ro 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel...

1Co 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1Co 15:1-2a Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved...

1Co 15:3-4 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

Col 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

The New Testament teaches that Christians ought to hear the gospel as much as non-Christians do. In fact, in the first chapter of Romans the Apostle Paul tells the believers in the church that he was anxious “to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome.”¹ Of course he was anxious to preach the gospel to the non-Christians at Rome, yet he specifically states that he was eager to preach it to the believers as well.

To the Corinthian Christians who had already believed and been saved by the gospel, Paul says, “I make known to you the gospel, which you have believed...”² He then restates the historical facts of the gospel before showing them how those gospel facts apply to their beliefs about the afterlife. This is actually Paul’s approach to various other issues throughout the book of 1 Corinthians.

In most of Paul’s letters to churches, sizeable portions of them are given over to rehearsing gospel truths. For example, Ephesians 1-3 is all gospel, Colossians 1-2 is gospel, and Romans 1-11 is gospel.

The remainder of such books shows specifically how to bring those gospel truths to bear on life. Re-preaching the gospel and then showing how it applied to life was Paul’s **choice method** for ministering to believers, thereby providing a divinely inspired pattern for me to follow when ministering to myself and to other believers.

¹Romans 1:15

²1 Corinthians 15:1-4

(Milton Vincent, *A Gospel Primer for Christians* p. 13)

- The gospel must be preached to _____ with the hope that they will believe.
- The gospel must be preached to those who are _____.
- Paul’s use of the gospel in 1 Thessalonians:
1 Th 2:2, 4, 8, 9

2. Ministry requires an _____, 1:5.

- 1 Th 2:6-8

3. Ministry involves _____, 1:6.

- 1 Corinthians 11:1

More than anything else I could ever do, the gospel enables me to embrace my tribulations and thereby position myself to gain full benefit from them. For the gospel is the one great permanent circumstance in which I live and move; and every hardship in my life is allowed by God only because it serves His gospel purposes in me. When I view my circumstances in this light, I realize that the gospel is not just one piece of good news that fits into my life somewhere among all the bad. I realize instead that the gospel makes genuinely good news out of every other aspect of my life, including my severest trials.⁶⁹ The good news about my trials is that God is forcing them to bow to His gospel purposes and do good unto me by improving my character and making me more conformed to the image of Christ.⁷⁰

Preaching the gospel to myself each day provides a lens through which I can view my trials in this way and see the true cause for rejoicing that exists in them. I can then embrace trials as friends and allow them to do God's good work in me.

⁶⁹Romans 5:1-5

⁷⁰Romans 8:28-29; James 1:2-4; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

(Milton Vincent, *A Gospel Primer for Christians* pp. 31-32)

- To get started learning biblical sources of joy: Ps 30:4-5; Ps 73:28; Ps 103:1-5; Ps 106:1; Ps 149:4; Mt 13:44; 28:8; Lk 2:10; 10:20; 15:10; Ro 15:13; Ph 4:4; Js 1:2-4; 2 Co 12:9-10

4. Ministry must produce not only exemplary lives, but _____ lives, 1:7-8.

5. Ministry labors for nothing less than _____, 1:9-10.

- 2 Ti 2:24-26
- Ro 2:4