

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study for August 6, 2020

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Title: "A Sincere Heart Genuinely Motived by Love"

Scripture Reference: 1 Thessalonians 2:8

"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." (1 Thess. 2:8) (KJV)

I. Introduction

A. I have said on many occasions that "love is what it does."

Perhaps the phrase "I love you" is sometimes said so casually that it loses its true meaning. How about when you do something for someone; what's your motive?

B. Perhaps there are different reasons and motives that drive people to say I love you and do things. We often recite the phrase, "*If you love Jesus, you ought to show some sign.*" What motivates you to say that you love the Lord or that you love others? What's really behind that statement when **you** say it and the actions you take?

C. Our lesson for this study session will explore the motivation or the motive behind the Apostle Paul's expression to the Thessalonians concerning his love for them.

D. An examination of Paul's epistles will reveal that he was not motivated by money or glory in his efforts to serve God and spread the gospel throughout the Roman Empire.

E. However, since he was not interested in fame or fortune, what exactly was his motive for ministry? Why did he so sacrificially devote time and energy to preach the Gospel and disciple believers? This study session will examine and answer these important questions.

F. Additionally, let us examine our own motives for serving the Lord and also why we might tell others that we love them.

II. Exposition [Part I]

A. Pleasing the Lord was Paul's highest aim, and the primary focus of his ministry was relationship.

B. Paul genuinely cared about the people he was ministering to, and in 1 Thessalonians 2:6-7, he described his feelings for them. The last thing he wanted to do was to abuse them; rather, he wanted to see them grow. So he said, **"Not of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."**

C. In these two verses, Paul drew a comparison between what he wasn't and what he was in terms of his attitude and conduct toward the believers in the Thessalonian Church.

D. Instead of being "burdensome" he was gentle. Like a mother feeding her children, Paul drew them close to his heart to feed them the Word of God and nurture them. All he wanted to do was love the Church (i.e., the people).

Comment: This passage of Scripture paints a very beautiful bond of love and trust - one that should exist between every minister of the Gospel and those whom God has placed under his charge.

III. Exposition [Part II]

A. In 1 Thessalonians 2:8, Paul continued, "**So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.**"

B. What did Paul mean when he said he was "**affectionately desirous**" of the believers in Thessalonica? This phrase is taken from the Greek word **homeiromai**, and this word is extremely important because it tells us a lot about the heart of the Apostle Paul.

C. The word **homeiromai** was primarily found on the grave markers of children that had died, and it describes what the parents felt for their child. It indicates **a deep longing or an affectionate, fervent desire** to see the child one more time.

D. By using this word, Paul was conveying his deep desire to see these Thessalonian believers just one more time. Everything within the apostle longed to be able to visit these people and minister to them again, face-to-face. This was his earnest desire because he held them so close to his heart.

E. Because Paul was so affectionate in his attitude toward these believers, he further expressed, "... **we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.**" (1 Thess. 2:8)

Consider this: When someone is dear to you, you are probably willing to go to great lengths to be a blessing to them.

F. So, what Paul was saying is this: his desire for the Thessalonian believer's spiritual welfare was so great that he had a "willingness" in his heart to impart to them as much of himself as he could.

G. The word "**willing**" in this verse is from the Greek word *endokeo*, which means **to seek something that is pleasurable**. This word carries the idea of something that is **delightful and wonderful**.

H. Because Paul loved this Church so much, he was pleased to do anything and everything he could for them, to help them grow and develop as believers in Christ.

Comment: This was not something that Paul was forced to do; it was something that flowed from his heart and brought him a great sense of joy.

Solid Rock - believers in Christ, this is how I feel.

IV. Exposition [Part III]

A. What did Paul want to impart to this Church? Verse 8 says: "... to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls ..."

B. The word "imparted" is the Greek word **Metadidomi**, which carries the idea of **exchange**. By using this word, Paul was saying that he was willing to give a part of himself to them, but he wanted something in exchange.

C. He wanted these believers to give a part of themselves to **him**. In other words, Paul wanted to have a **relationship** with the believers to whom God had called him to minister to.

D. Please don't miss or overlook what I believe is a very vital and crucial lesson for us to learn from Paul's ministry to the Thessalonians - one that will help us to remain focused and effective in our priorities and motives, as we fulfill our divine calling.

E. Please listen carefully - Paul was not in the ministry to get rich or to become famous. Rather, he sincerely wanted to please the Lord with his whole heart.

F. As a result, he was focused on the needs of the people to whom he ministered. The one thing he desired was an **authentic** relationship with people so that he could minister to them more effectively.

Point: Paul gave his whole heart to God and to the Church (i.e., the people).

V. For Your Deeper Consideration

A. Every one of us should reflect from time-to-time on our motives and priorities in serving others. Using First Thessalonians, Chapter 2 as a guide in examining ourselves, will help us to maintain steadfastness of character, and a deep devotion to God and His people that we need to carry on effectively and with power.

B. Here are a couple of parting thoughts to ponder as you interact with others:

1. When God's love for others is burning in your heart, you will welcome the opportunity to help others grow and develop into all they can be in Christ, *because of your love for Him*.
2. Your desire to please the Lord by daily walking in His ways will help you see people as He sees them.

Questions to Consider:

- 1) Do you really care for people? Even more important, what would God say about the way you demonstrate care for people?
- 2) The Holy Spirit has shed the love of God abroad in your heart but it has to be released to effectively minister to other people. Are you allowing that God-deposited love to function and flow through you to others?

3) What are you doing to help others in their relationship with Christ?

It's interactive time. Please complete the biblical passages below by filling in the blank spaces. All Scriptures are taken from the KJV. However, if you are using a different Bible version, please rewrite each passage in its entirety. I'm sure you will be blessed.

"_____ love hath no man than this, that a man _____
_____ his _____ for his friends." (John 15:13)

"Moreover it is _____ in stewards, that a man be _____
faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2)

"I am the _____, and my Father is the _____.
Every _____ in me that _____ not fruit he _____
away: and every _____ that beareth fruit, he
_____ it, that it may bring forth more _____"
(John 15: 1-2)

"Therefore, my _____ brethren, be ye _____,
_____, always _____ in the work of the
Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your _____ is not in
_____ in the Lord." (1 Cor., 15:58)

I pray that this study session has been a blessing to you and as you serve the Lord and others, it will come from a **sincere heart motivated by Love.**

Please feel free to share this lesson with others.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin