

This example set by Paul, Silas and Timothy did not cease to have effect when they were absent. Indeed, their concern for one another continued.

Along life's road, we will meet people who may walk the journey with us for only a short time. Yet their impact will be profound.

It might be easy to think about the impact that someone has had on our lives, and to reflect on that time with great thanks and appreciation. Perhaps you could think through your journey and write to those who have had a significant impact, yet may have never known what their kind and timely words, or actions, meant to you.

What is also clear here, is that for Paul, Silas and Timothy there was also a real thankfulness for the opportunity to share their lives with the Thessalonians. And that is a little harder to think about... the impact that we have on others...

Just as your life has been impacted profoundly by someone whom you don't see regularly—you may have the capacity to change and influence someone else's life. Have you thought about what that impact might be? Will it be a positive outcome?

For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed you are our glory and joy!

May we all have occasion and cause to share this hope and joy—to feel this way about other believers... and to be prepared to follow in order to model...

NEXT WEEK

The results of being a good imitator...

Week 2: Brothers and Sisters; Mothers and Fathers

Were there points to discuss from last week?

Does anyone want to share about their personal reflection?

1. When you imagine Paul, Silas or Timothy, what pictures come to mind? Can you express, or describe, these pictures? How do you think they sound? What do they look like?

Read 1 Thess 2. If practical, have one person read, and the rest listen. As you're listening jot down, or underline, words or statements that match your description, and those that surprise you.

2. Does what you heard match your imagination? Share with one another your findings, and your surprises.
3. Last week, you reflected on the relationship between Paul, Silas, Timothy and the Thessalonians. How does chapter 2 expand on this? What else have you learnt about their relationship?
4. Consider 1 Thess 2:1; 7; 9 and 11. (Different translations would be helpful). How did Paul, Silas and Timothy define their relationships with the Thessalonians?

5. There is a distinct familial relationship between Paul, Silas, Timothy and the Thessalonians. We read several 'family' pictures—brothers and sisters; mothers (nurse); fathers—all family oriented words. How do you relate to these terms/descriptions of family relationships?

Read v 2:7-8

6. What differences do you think there are between a mother/nurse caring for someone else's children, compared to caring for her own? How might this change how we care for others?
7. In what ways did Paul, Silas and Timothy share the gospel, and share their lives? Is this reflected in our church community today?
8. Are there ways that you can think of to share the gospel, and our lives?

Read v 2:10-12

9. When you think of being Holy, righteous and blameless, what do you think of?
10. Here the writers relate being "holy, righteous and blameless" to the fatherly characteristics of being encouraging, comforting and urging. Had you ever thought of these as being related? Can you relate to these characteristics?
11. Are there practical ways in which you can encourage, comfort and urge each other to live a life worthy of God's calling?

Observations and Comments on Week 2

Chapter 2 really expands on the characteristics and the way in which Paul, Silas and Timothy set an example for the Thessalonian believers.

This picture demonstrates a strong alignment to living as family—relating both as brothers and sisters, as well as mother's and fathers. Sharing, working, nurturing, feeding, encouraging, comforting, and urging are all part of family life, and here, are clearly demonstrated as an example for church family life.