

FIRST AND SECOND

THESSALONIANS

Living in Light of Christ's Return

GROWING UP

BIG IDEA: As our faith matures, we are called to patiently nurture new believers.

DATE: Wednesday, October 7 and Sunday, October 11, 2026

SCRIPTURE: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever had your motives questioned? How did it feel? Why do people suspect our motives as Christians sometimes?

SETTING THE STAGE

Chapter 1 of 1 Thessalonians introduced us to Paul the evangelist. This chapter introduces us to Paul, the pastor, for it explains how the great apostle cared for the new believers in the churches he founded. Paul considered the care of all the churches a greater burden than all the sufferings and difficulties he experienced in his ministry. Just as God uses people to bring the gospel to the lost, so He uses people to nurture the babes in Christ and lead them to maturity. The church at Thessalonica was born through the faithful preaching of the apostle and his helpers, and the church was nurtured through the faithful pastoring that Paul and his friends gave to the infant church. This helped them stand strong in the midst of persecution.

SCRIPTURE READING

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (CSB)

For you yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our visit with you was not without result. ²On the contrary, after we had previously suffered and 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. ³For our exhortation didn't come from error or impurity or an intent to deceive. ⁴Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please people, but rather God, who examines our hearts. ⁵For we never used flattering speech, as you know, or had greedy motives—God is our witness— ⁶and we didn't seek glory from people, either from you or from others. ⁷Although we could have been a burden as Christ's apostles, instead we were gentle among you, as a nurse nurtures her own children. ⁸We cared so much for you that we were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹For you remember our labor and hardship, brothers and sisters. Working night and day so that we would not burden any of you, we preached God's gospel to you. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, of how devoutly, righteously, and blamelessly we conducted ourselves with you believers. ¹¹As you

know, like a father with his own children, ¹² we encouraged, comforted, and implored each one of you to walk worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

DISCUSSION

READ: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

Where have you seen people try to do God's work for the wrong reasons or motives?

What is a "young" church today? How are a young church's needs different from the needs of a more established church?

In verse 5 we see that Paul was against flattering speech. What's wrong with flattery? In what ways is a flatterer someone who manipulates rather than communicates?

READ: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

Why is patience such an important character trait for Christians, especially leaders? What happens when we're impatient with other believers? What are the long-term benefits of being patient?

What does a nourishing faith look like in practical terms? What was the "mother's milk" that Paul fed to others? What are the kinds of "food" that can taint someone's spiritual nourishment of another?

READ: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12

Paul talked about three duties: his work (v. 9); his walk (v. 10); his words (vv. 11-12). Describe what each duty was and what its purpose was. Why is work important? Why is walk important? Why are words important? How do they together make up our witness?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION TIME:

- Do you fall prey to flattering speech? Do you ever find yourself serving God or the church for the wrong reasons? Are you seeking to build up your name or His Name?
- What are some ways you have practiced patience when discipling another believer? What frustrations did you experience? What joys?
- Describe one of the ways other believers have nourished your faith. What can you take from this experience to better prepare you to nourish others' faith?
- Who in your life needs discipling? Encouragement? Comfort? Who needs to be urged to follow God and obey Him? How can you come alongside them to help them mature in their faith?

GOING FORWARD

Think about your work, your walk and your words. All those together create your witness. Would others call you a mature, patient, nourishing Christian? Why or why not? In which area do you need to grow up?