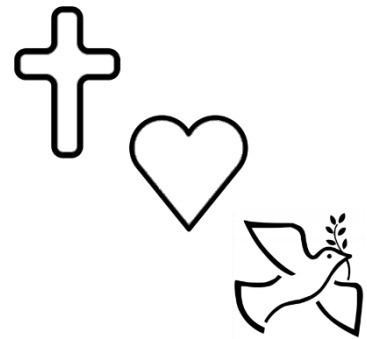


**October 11, 2020**  
**Willerup United Methodist Church**  
**Sermon Notes**  
**Pastor Marvin Singh**  
**1 & 2 Thessalonians, Lesson 3**  
**Approved By God**



This is the third lesson in a series of meditations based on the books of First and Second Thessalonians.

The Letters to the Thessalonians were written by Paul to confirm the truths he had taught while he was with them and to dispel any false teachings that had spread among them. He commended them for their faith, encouraged them to press on in faith and love, and showed why they could always have hope in Christ.

**Approved By God**

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. <sup>2</sup>We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. <sup>3</sup>For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. <sup>4</sup>On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed-God is our witness. <sup>6</sup>We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.

<sup>7</sup>As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. <sup>8</sup>We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had

become so dear to us. <sup>9</sup>Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

<sup>10</sup>You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. <sup>11</sup>For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, <sup>12</sup>encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Paul's model for ministry:

Men approved by God are entrusted with the gospel and will not please men but God, who tests our hearts/motives.

We have the example of our Master.

“Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved (accredited, attested) by God to you.” (Acts 2:22)

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

### **Vs. 1-2**

#### **a. We are entrusted with the gospel.**

Preaching boldly as Paul did to the Thessalonians, in spite of opposition and suffering, which he experienced at Philippi. He and Silas, in spite of being Roman citizens, faced humiliation and insults, and were beaten and jailed (Acts 17:5-9; Col 2:11; Acts 4:13; Romans 1:16-17; Phil 1:12-20).

Acts 20:24, “However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord has given me - the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.”

### **Vs. 3 & 10**

**b. We are called to be honest, holy and humble.** (Acts 20:26, 1 Tim. 4:12; 2 Cor. 6:3; Eph. 1:4; 1 Tim. 3:2.10; Titus 1:6-7)

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 – “Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

Ephesians 1:4 – “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

2 Peter 3:14 – “So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found, spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”

### **Vs. 4**

**c. We will be pleasing God, rather than men.**

Galatians 1:10 – “Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

When Peter and John faced the Sanhedrin who commanded them not to speak further in the name of Christ:

Acts 4:19-20 - “But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

If a preacher pleases men, then he cannot be a servant of God.

The secret of pleasing God - Hebrews 11:6; Romans 12:1-2

### **Vs. 3, 5-6**

**d. We will use simplicity of speech and be unselfish.**

1 Cor. 2:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:7-9; Acts 20:33-35

They never used flattery, nor did they put on a “mask” to cover up greed or work with impure motives. Paul had integrity of motives not a bag of tricks. The Greek for tricks is *dolos* which means guile, cunning. The original meaning was a bit of a trap, and later understood and took the

meaning of craft and trickery, such as magicians, rhetorics, charlatans. We speak with the fear of God. (1 Cor. 9:12; Psalms 139:23; Jeremiah 17:10)

God sees and tests the heart. God is called *kardiognostes*, the one who examines the secret crevices of a person's life (Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:4).

### **Vs. 6, 9**

**e. We will not be a burden on the recipients.** Acts 20:33-35

Though preachers have a right to be supported by their converts, however Paul chose not to use it. 1 Cor. 9:3-18

Paul was a tent maker and he earned his income from this business. Acts 18:3

### **Vs. 7, 8, 11-12**

**f. We will act like parents to them.**

“We were gentle among you like a mother caring for her little children.”

“For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children - encouraging, comforting, and urging to live lives worthy of God.”

References used in preparing sermons in this series:

Barlow, George. *The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary: I & II Thessalonians*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1896.

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