

**Outline of  
the Messages for the Full-time Training  
in the Spring Term of 2026**

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**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—  
FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS**

Message Seven

**The Pattern of the Apostle Paul**

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 2:1-12

**I. The best way to shepherd people, to cherish and nourish them, is to give them a proper pattern; we need to give ourselves to the Lord so that He has the full way to constitute us with Himself to make us patterns to the believers—2 Thes. 3:9:**

- A. The Lord Jesus was a pattern of enjoying the Father as the richest grace and the sweetest love to live because of the Father for the Father's glory—John 6:57; Isa. 7:14-15; John 5:19; 4:34; 17:4; 14:10, 24; 5:30; 7:18; Luke 22:27; Matt. 20:26-28.
- B. The Lord Jesus charged us to learn from Him, taking Him as our pattern in being constrained by the Father's will and abounding in the work of carrying out the Father's will—11:28-30; cf. Eph. 4:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:58.
- C. Peter said that Christ left Himself as a model so that we may follow in His steps to become His reproduction—1 Pet. 2:21.
- D. Peter charged his fellow elders not to exercise lordship over the believers but to be a pattern of the flock—5:1-3.
- E. John said that "even as He is, so also are we in this world"; this refers to Christ, who lived in this world a life of God as love and who is now our life so that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is—1 John 4:17; cf. 3:3, 7.
- F. Paul was a pattern to the believers of living Christ for His magnification by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ for the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:16; Phil. 1:19-21a; Gal. 6:17.
- G. Paul charged Timothy to be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity—1 Tim. 4:12.
- H. Paul charged Titus to present himself as a pattern of good works, speaking with healthy words the healthy teaching of God's economy as the supply of life to people—Titus 2:7-8; John 6:63; 1 John 5:16a.
- I. Paul said that we should be imitators of God, as beloved children—Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:48.
- J. Paul said that we should be imitators of him, as he was of Christ—1 Cor. 11:1; 4:16; 1 Thes. 1:5-6; 2 Thes. 3:9; Phil. 3:17.

**II. Paul said that he and the apostles with him were a pattern of the glad tidings that they spread—"you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake"—1 Thes. 1:5b:**

- A. In the church the most important thing is the person; the person is the way and the person is the Lord's work; what you are is what you do—John 5:19; 6:57; Phil. 1:19-26; Acts 20:18-35; Matt. 7:17-18; 12:33-37.
- B. We need to follow the pattern of the apostles to pay more attention to life than to work—John 12:24; 2 Cor. 4:12.

- III. Paul was a pattern to the believers of living and ministering Christ as the Spirit in his spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:16; 4:12; Rom. 8:16:**
- A. The Lord appeared to Paul to appoint him as a minister and a witness both of the things in which Paul had seen Him and of the things in which He would appear to Paul—Acts 26:16-19; cf. 1:8; 23:11; 20:20, 31.
  - B. Paul took Christ as everything—as his living, pattern, goal, and secret—Phil. 1:19-21a; 2:5-16; 3:7-14; 4:11-13.
  - C. Paul lived by the Spirit, walked by the Spirit, sowed unto the Spirit, and ministered the Spirit as a spiritual man who lived and served in his spirit—Gal. 5:16, 25; 6:8; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 2:15; 2 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 1:9; 8:16.
  - D. Paul did not base his confidence on himself but on God, who raises the dead (2 Cor. 1:9), which includes related matters such as conducting himself in the world not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God (v. 12) and being one with the unchanging Christ of the faithful God (vv. 18-20).
  - E. Paul was attached to Christ, anointed and sealed by His Spirit, and captured, subdued, and led by Christ to scatter His savor—vv. 21-22; 2:14-16.
  - F. Paul was filled with Christ so that he spontaneously ministered Christ to those whom he contacted, inscribing Christ in their hearts with the Spirit of the living God to make them living letters that conveyed Christ—3:3-6.
  - G. Paul was infused with Christ to shine forth Christ in the ministry of the new covenant, which is the ministry of the Spirit, the ministry of righteousness, and the ministry of reconciliation—vv. 7-11, 18; 4:1; 3:6; 5:18-20.
  - H. Paul was being transformed into the image of the Lord from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit, by beholding and reflecting like a mirror His glory with an unveiled face—3:16-18.
  - I. Paul lived and did everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:1-6, 15-16; Col. 2:19.
- IV. Paul was a proper pattern to the believers by feeding his spiritual children with his own living of Christ—1 Thes. 2:1-12; 2 Cor. 1:23—2:14; 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; Acts 20:28:**
- A. The apostles not only preached the gospel but also lived it; their ministering of the gospel was not only by word but also by a life that displayed the power of God, a life in the Holy Spirit and in the assurance of faith—1 Thes. 1:5.
  - B. The saints in Thessalonica became imitators of the apostles; this led them to follow the Lord, to take Him as their pattern, thus making them a pattern to all other believers and imitators of the churches of God—vv. 6-7; 2:14.
  - C. The apostle Paul stressed repeatedly the apostles' entrance toward the believers; this shows that their manner of life played a great role in infusing the gospel into the new converts—1:5, 9; 2:1:
    - 1. The apostles were struggling and speaking the gospel to the Thessalonians in the boldness of God—v. 2.
    - 2. The apostles were free from deception, uncleanness, and guile—v. 3.
    - 3. The apostles were first tested and approved by God and then were entrusted by Him with the gospel; hence, their speaking, the preaching of the gospel, was not of themselves to please men but of God to please Him; God proved, examined, and tested their hearts continually—v. 4; Psa. 26:2; 139:23-24; 2 Cor. 1:12; 6:6; 7:3.
    - 4. The apostles were never found with flattering speech nor with a pretext for covetousness—1 Thes. 2:5:

- a. To have any pretext for covetousness is to peddle or adulterate the word of God—2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2.
  - b. It is also to pretend to be godly for the sake of gain—1 Tim. 6:5; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:3.
5. The apostles did not seek glory from men—1 Thes. 2:6a; Gal. 1:10:
- a. To seek glory from men is a real temptation to every Christian worker; many have been devoured and spoiled by this matter—cf. 1 Sam. 15:12.
  - b. The fall of the archangel was due to the seeking of glory; he became God's adversary, Satan, because of his glory-seeking; anyone who seeks glory from men is a follower of Satan—Ezek. 28:13-17; Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 4:8-10.
  - c. How much we will be used by the Lord and how long our usefulness will last depend on whether we seek glory from men—cf. John 7:17-18; 5:39-44; 12:43; 2 Cor. 4:5.
6. The apostles did not stand on their own authority or dignity as apostles of Christ—1 Thes. 2:6b:
- a. To assert authority, dignity, or right in Christian work damages that work; the Lord Jesus, while on earth, gave up His dignity (John 13:4-5), and the apostle preferred not to use his right (1 Cor. 9:12).
  - b. If we follow this pattern, we will kill a deadly disease in the Body of Christ, the germ of assuming a position—Matt. 20:20-28.
7. The apostles cherished the believers and yearned over them as a nursing mother would cherish and yearn over her own children—1 Thes. 2:7-8; cf. Gal. 4:19; Isa. 49:14-15; 66:12-13:
- a. To cherish people is to make them happy, to comfort them, to make them feel that you are pleasant to them, easy to be contacted in everything and in every way.
  - b. To cherish people in our natural humanity is not genuine; we must cherish people with the Lord's presence as the charming factor, as the reality of resurrection.
  - c. Cherishing includes nourishing; to nourish people is to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ in His full ministry of three stages—Eph. 5:29.
8. The apostles not only imparted the gospel of God to the Thessalonians; they also imparted their own souls—1 Thes. 2:8:
- a. To live a clean and upright life (vv. 3-6, 10) and to love the new converts, even by giving our own souls to them (vv. 7-9, 11), are the prerequisites for infusing them with the gospel.
  - b. Paul was willing to spend not only what he had but also himself, his very being, on behalf of the saints—2 Cor. 12:15.
9. The apostles considered themselves as fathers in exhorting the believers to walk in a manner worthy of God, to have a walk that will enable them to enter into the kingdom of God and usher them into the glory of God—1 Thes. 2:11-12.