

FINISH STRONG

A Strong Finish Requires a Focused Race
1 Thessalonians 2:1-19

Three indicators of focused church leadership

1. Look at our MOTIVES vs. 1-6
 - Our **message** was accurate vs. 1-4
 - Our teaching **content** was truth
 - Our **philosophical** foundations were pure
 - Our **rhetoric** did not include trickery
 - Our **methods** were wholesome vs. 5-6
 - We disdain **flattery** as a means of persuasion
 - We weren't hiding behind a **mask** of greed
 - We don't demand **glory** or **honor** from you
2. Look at our LOVE vs. 7-12
 - We were gentle and not '**Lording**' it over you vs. 7
 - We were **emotionally** connected to you vs. 8
 - We were **financially** independent from you vs. 9
 - We **lived out** what we taught vs. 10
 - We were **strong** with you when needed vs. 11
 - We want for you what **Jesus** wants for you vs. 12
3. Look at the RESULTS vs. 13-19
 - You still **accept** the message of Jesus vs. 13
 - You continue to **reflect** the true church vs. 14
 - You persist at **overcoming** opposition vs. 14-16
 - You remain our **joy** and **crown** vs. 17-19

Auburn Grace Community Church – August 30, 2020

Life Group Discussion Questions – August 30, 2020

1 Thessalonians 2:4 “...but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.”

DISCOVER (Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-19)

1 In v. 2, Paul says that he and his companions had faced some opposition in Philippi. What had happened there? (see Acts 16:11-40) How did the experience in Philippi embolden them? Where do you see Paul's confidence in this passage to the Thessalonian church?

2. According to verse 3, what does Paul suggest this willingness to declare the gospel in the midst of conflict proves about the nature of their message?

3. What are three evidences that Paul and his companions conducted their ministry in order to please God, and not man?

EXPLORE

1. Have you ever been tested by God to make sure you were “qualified” and trusted in proclaiming His Word? Can you think of a time when you asserted God's Word with mixed motives or a hidden agenda?

2. As Paul continues to answer the accusations of his Jewish detractors in Thessalonica, he assures the church that his ministry did not feature error, impurity, deception, flattery, or greed. Why do you think it is important for those sharing the gospel with others to be blameless in these areas?

EXPERIENCE

1. In this passage, we find that Paul was undeterred and boldly proclaimed the gospel message. Are there areas in your own life where you have lost a boldness in proclaiming your faith for fear of disagreement, conflict, or persecution? Have you allowed our culture to pressure you into keeping your faith quiet and private?

2. Re-read vv. 7-8. Paul uses very affectionate language towards this church. His desire for their spiritual growth led him to love and care for them like a parent. Do you possess this type of tenderness towards others? Do you have this type of desire for the spiritual well-being of others? What are some stumbling blocks that can cause you to harden your heart towards others?

PRAY

1. Through Paul's ministry of sharing the gospel message, God has shown that boldness and confidence should be tempered by tenderness and love. How can you grow in similar ways? Identify some benchmarks along the way that you are making good progress. Spend time with your group praying for these attributes in each other.