

Life Group Notes 4/21/2024
Pastor Mark Warren 1 Thessalonians Week 2

[No doctrine is a given unless it has been found in the Word given by the Holy Spirit and received by you. If you have observations or questions, feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net. Thank you for taking the time—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Remember: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP.** BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! **Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 4/7. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.** I include each of the passages mentioned in full, to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes. Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On not living congruently.](#)

*****Important:** At the very [end of these notes](#), I've included passages that were mentioned in this week's message for deeper study using SOAP journaling to help further your study during the week. ***

Pastor began by informing us that Pastor Richie was away with many other couples in the church at a Marriage Conference, because "...the enemy does not want healthy marriages." Why? Why not? Do you have a testimony?

Pastor reviews last week's message, and the three words he closed with:

1. Action—Because actions speak louder than word. (How much more loudly do actions speak? Explain.)
2. Influence—Your life is to be an influence on those around you. People draw from you for good or for bad. (Talk about peer pressure, and how this concept works at home, at school or on the job. Is it possible to lead your own life and have *no* influence on others?)
3. Perseverance—Mark says this precept was illustrated when Meghan, the worship leader shared that she was not feeling her best and she pushed through to where she could be on the stage that morning. (Do you have a testimony?)

Pastor Mark's part 1: Actions and Living Congruently: Mark's opening is a question: Have you ever been confused by someone whose actions do not measure up to their words?

1. Answer him... (avoiding gossip and all bitterness.)
2. Without being personal, describe the circumstances.
3. Describe the fruit.
4. Was the person a leader? Describe their leadership?
5. Can such a person lead successfully? Explain.

6. How is “Show and Tell” a powerful teaching tool?
7. If you are a parent, describe how your own actions impart wisdom and knowledge to your children.

1You yourselves know, brothers, that our visit to you was not in vain. **2**As you are aware, we had already endured suffering and shameful treatment in Philippi. But in the face of strong opposition, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God.

1. Describe again what happened to them in Philippi. (Acts 16)
2. Review what Paul told them last week, in chapter 1: **7**As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. **8**For not only did the message of the Lord ring out from you to Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone out to every place, so that we have no need to say anything more. **9**For they themselves report what kind of welcome you gave us, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God **10**and to await His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead—Jesus our deliverer from the coming wrath. To what degree are the principles of “Show and Tell” working on behalf of the gospel?
3. To what extent? (Review the geography clarified in last week’s notes.)

3For our appeal does not arise from deceit or ulterior motives or trickery. **4**Instead, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, not in order to please men but God, who examines our hearts. **5**As you know, we never used words of flattery or any pretext for greed. God is our witness! **6**Nor did we seek praise from you or from anyone else, although as apostles of Christ we had authority to demand it.

1. What does it mean to live “congruently” in integrity, to walk in integrity to the degree where our words measure up to our actions?
2. How was the principle portrayed by Paul among the Thessalonians?
3. Review again Acts 17: **4**Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few leading women. **5**The Jews, however, became jealous. So they brought in some troublemakers from the marketplace, formed a mob, and sent the city into an uproar. They raided Jason’s house in search of Paul and Silas, hoping to bring them out to the people. **6**But when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting, “These men who have turned the world upside down have now come here, **7**and Jason has welcomed them into his home. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, named Jesus!”... **10**As soon as night had fallen, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went into the Jewish synagogue. **11**Now the Bereans were more noble-minded than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if these teachings were true. **12**As a result, many of them believed, along with quite a few prominent Greek women and men. **13**But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God in Berea, they went there themselves to incite and agitate the crowds. **14**The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy remained in Berea. Pick out the principles of show and tell that you see here.
4. How did Paul respond to opposition? Did he exhibit any fear upon his arrival in Berea?
5. What does Paul’s behavior in Berea inspire?
6. To what degree did Paul’s words and his actions match?

7. What influences sought to oppose Paul's determination to "live congruently," where his words and his actions did match?
8. Because his words and his actions match...what do you suppose was reception when this epistle first came to Thessalonica? How important is the authority Paul's epistles have? What is the basis of that authority to the reader?
9. Why does authenticity matter? Why do people pleasers have difficulty on the level of authenticity?
10. Pastor Mark suggests that this issue is decided according to what is compelling you. What compels a "people pleaser?" What was Paul compelled by?
11. Look at the apostles in Acts 5: [26](#)*At that point, the captain went with the officers and brought the apostles—but not by force, for fear the people would stone them.* [27](#)*They brought them in and made them stand before the Sanhedrin, where the high priest interrogated them.* [28](#)*"We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us responsible for this man's blood."* [29](#)*But Peter and the other apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than men..."* What was compelling the apostles? Explain how this principle was established by example from the start of the church. Whom did the apostles seek to please?
12. The first martyr, Steven, died in chapter 7. What compelled him? Did the principle change when the danger became mortal? What did change? To what degree? (How did the gospel move from Jerusalem to Samaria and beyond?)
13. What writings, historic or personal, have you encountered that have like authority? Explain.
14. Look at [footnote 1](#) below, and talk about the Apostle Peter (Cephas). What happens when words and actions do not measure up?

Pastor Mark's part 2: Influence and The Compassionate Connection: [1 Thess 2:7](#)*On the contrary, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother caring for her children.* [8](#)*We cared so deeply that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our own lives as well. That is how beloved you have become to us.* [9](#)*Surely you recall, brothers, our labor and toil. We worked night and day so that we would not be a burden to anyone while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.* [10](#)*You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous, and blameless our conduct was among you who believed.* [11](#)*For you know that we treated each of you as a father treats his own children—* [12](#)*encouraging you, comforting you, and urging you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*

1. Describe the "compassionate connection" of which Pastor Mark speaks here.
2. At what point in the narrative, looking here and at Luke's account in Acts, did Paul's "compassionate connection" to the Thessalonians begin?
3. Did the connection end at any point? (Verse 8) What compelled Paul's actions?
4. What compels a father's actions toward his own children?
5. Describe how Paul's evident compassion became fundamental to his success in Thessalonica.
6. Pastor Mark said, "People don't really care to know what you know until they know that you care." Do you agree?
7. How did that principle work in Paul's presentation?

8. What does a “compassionate connection” look like today on social media? Do you have an example? Have you set an example?
9. Pastor says, “Until someone knows that you care, your words become noise.” Explain. Do you have an example? Do you set an example?
10. Where do superficial relationships thrive? For how long do they “thrive?”
11. What is the fruit of relationships that are real and rooted in compassion?
12. How do you get from the former to the latter?

Pastor Mark’s part 3: Transforming Grace *13* And we continually thank God because, when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as the true word of God—the word which is now at work in you who believe. *14* For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Judea that are in Christ Jesus. You suffered from your own countrymen the very things they suffered from the Jews, *15* who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove us out as well. They are displeasing to God and hostile to all men, *16* hindering us from telling the Gentiles how they may be saved. As a result, they continue to heap up their sins to full capacity; the utmost wrath has come upon them.

Pastor states that “The World does not need more religion...more holier than thou people...more self-righteous. They need people who have encountered Jesus and whose lives are being transformed.”

1. Do you agree?
2. What is your experience of the world’s needs?
3. Where is that need seen most clearly in your opinion?
4. Look above at Paul’s observations concerning his friends in Thessalonica: What was the impact of the gospel on them?
5. What is the difference between receiving a message as “...the true Word of God,” as opposed to the word of men?
6. How do you respond when you know you have heard the True Word of God? Do you have a testimony?
7. How was the impact of the gospel seen and confirmed in Thessalonica? What actions of the Thessalonians testified of their own receipt of the gospel?
8. What changed immediately when you received the gospel?
9. Looking again at Luke’s account, how did the Jews hinder the gospel in Thessalonica? In Berea?
10. How did violent opposition confirm the rich transformation experienced there? What is the fruit of transforming grace?
11. Pastor speaks of church appearing like “...a new club for you to be a part of.” Have you ever seen going to church in that light?
12. How does that happen? What do we do to avoid that appearance?
13. To what degree do the principles of show and tell return to this issue?
14. Revisit verse 12 above: — *12* encouraging you, comforting you, and urging you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. What does that manner look like? What is included in that walk?
15. What is excluded? How does the path become more narrow?
16. Who is watching?
17. How did Mark seeing his brother’s changed life influence him to receive the power of the Holy Spirit? Do you have a testimony?

18. Has your own changed life influenced another?

Review

17 Brothers, although we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in heart), our desire to see you face to face was even more intense. *18* For we wanted to come to you—indeed I, Paul, tried again and again—but Satan obstructed us. *19* After all, who is our hope, our joy, our crown of boasting, if it is not you yourselves in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? *20* You are indeed our glory and our joy.

1. Looking at Luke's account again in Acts 17, how was Paul "torn away" from the Thessalonians?
2. How was it only for a short time?
3. When have you "intensely longed" to see friends again face to face? Describe the circumstances.
4. To what degree is Satan able to obstruct our purposes?
5. Think again of Pastor Mark's and Audra's encounter with Pastors Phil and Kailyn Tuttle in Manchester. How did Satan obstruct the relationship?
6. How did Phil's actions buttress the work and the unity of the church?
7. Describe how this illustrates the principle of transforming grace?
8. How does washing the feet help? Do you have a testimony?
9. How did God cause this to work for the good of the church?
10. How do the principles of show and tell apply to this testimony?

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Measure your own walk and your talk this week. How are you doing?
3. Examine your interactions on social media? Is your "compassionate connection" apparent? Or are you a "spewer of information," as pastor characterized it?
4. What is God going to transform in your life? Where will He begin?

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Notes:

1. **On not living congruently**—Paul describes an incident that occurred in Antioch with the apostle Peter in Galatians 2: *11* When Cephas came to Antioch, however, I opposed him to his face, because he stood to be condemned. *12* For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself, for fear of those in the circumcision group. *13* The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. *14* When I saw that they were not walking in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" *15* We who are Jews by birth and not Gentile "sinners" *16* know that a man is not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have believed in Christ Jesus,

that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. [17](#)But if, while we seek to be justified in Christ, we ourselves are found to be sinners, does that make Christ a minister of sin? Certainly not! [18](#)If I rebuild what I have already torn down, I prove myself to be a lawbreaker. [19](#)For through the law I died to the law so that I might live to God. [20](#)I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. [21](#)I do not set aside the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the law, Christ died for nothing. Is Peter “living congruently,” his word measuring up to his actions? Explain. What is the danger Paul illustrates, when our words and our actions do not measure up? What danger did Peter’s hypocrisy present to the church and to the spread of the gospel?

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP**... (**S**cripture—Copy the scripture. / **O**bservation—Write what you see. / **A**pplication—What is God saying? / **P**ray—What is your response?) ...method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6
Tuesday: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12
Wednesday: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16
Thursday: Galatians 2: 11-14
Friday: Galatians 2:15-20
Saturday: 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20
Sunday: John 13:3-11

Once again, some passages suggested here have more than the usual number of verses. This is not to increase the burden but to provide clarity of context. Pick the verses that speak to you most clearly, and run these through the SOAP steps.