

Introduction

One of the many issues that many church plants face is people coming with hidden agendas and motives. It seems that young churches are the targets of these people. It may be that they are not well established and appear to be more vulnerable. Over the years Karen and I have had many of them come to the churches we were planting. One year a couple of families started coming, and they immediately volunteered to start serving. They specifically asked if they could be greeters, and we welcomed them to greet and serve. Several of our members came to me and asked about a certain woman in their group that said she was preaching next week. I knew nothing about it, so I approached the woman and she told me that she had a word from the Lord and she was preaching at our church next week. I stopped her and told her that she was not preaching next week, and that I was in charge of the preaching schedule. If she had a word from the Lord, she was welcome to come discuss it with me, and I would prayerfully consider it. I let her know that next week she would not be preaching to our congregation. This lady considered herself an apostle, and since she decided to come to our congregation, she was now in charge, and I was to submit to her. This is just one of many examples that I could share. We have to be very careful about people that come because some of them do have hidden agendas, as this woman did.

In our text, Paul, Silas, and Timothy came to Thessalonica, and they share about three characteristics of their planting of that church. They did not come in vain, but they had a clear purpose, which was to preach the gospel. They came with purity. They had pure motives. They had pure doctrine; they did not come deceitfully, with error, or impurity, but they came as approved servants of God, who were there to please and glorify God. They also came with pure conduct. They were genuine, devout, upright, and blameless in their conduct, and were great examples to these new believers in this new church plant. Third, they came with parental care. They tenderly cared for the Thessalonians like a nursing mother tenderly cares for her baby. They also came as a loving father, exhorted, encouraged, and implored the Thessalonians like a father would do for his own children. They were loving parents to this new church family. Every new church would be blessed to have this kind of group come and plant the church.

How Paul's Team Came to Thessalonica

1. With Purpose
2. With Purity
3. With Parental Care

(1 Th 2:1–12) “For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, {2} but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. {3} For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit; {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. {5} For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— {6} nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. {7} But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children. {8} Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. {9} For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. {10} You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; {11} just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his

own children, {12} so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

1. **With Purpose** (1 Th 2:1-2)

One of the many things that I admire about Paul was how he lived his life with purpose. He did not want to come to the end of his life, having worked hard day and night, and it to be all in vain. Therefore, he boxed with aim, and he ran his race to win. He lived his life with purpose. When he wrote the Galatians, he said that he feared that he had run in vain. Then again, in chapter four, he said, “I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.” That was obviously a concern that Paul had; he did not want to labor in vain. He wanted his life and work to count, and to produce eternal fruit. Therefore, he lived his life with purpose.

(1 Co 9:26) “Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;”

(Ga 2:2) “It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.”

(Ga 4:11) “I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.”

He had a different message to share with the Thessalonians. He said, “For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.” Paul, Silas, and Timothy knew their work at Thessalonica was not in vain, and the Thessalonians also knew that their lives had been changed, and that their work was not in vain. There was good fruit in Thessalonica.

(1 Th 2:1) “For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain,”

The Thessalonians had turned away from idols to serve a living and true God, and they had become an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. Paul, Silas, and Timothy knew that their labors and hard work had been productive and accomplished much; it was not in vain.

(1 Th 1:7–9) “so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. {8} For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. {9} For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,”

Different things will strike us differently. Having our faith in vain speaks loudly to me. Like Paul, I want my life to count. I do not want my life and my work to be in vain. In Psalms 127, Solomon wrote that unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain. He spoke about the vanity of rising up early and retiring late, and eating the bread of painful labors, and I identify with that. I get up early and work hard for the kingdom of God. I want to give my life and energy to what the Lord is building. I do not want to labor in vain.

(Ps 127:1–2) “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. {2} It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; for He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.”

At the conclusion of this 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote a verse that has been very meaningful and motivating for me. He exhorted them to “be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.” When I don’t see the fruit and results that I want, I examine what I am doing to see if I am building what the Lord wants to build. Then, I endeavor to be steadfast, immovable and always abounding in the work of the Lord. I am encouraged by this verse that my toil is not in vain in the Lord.

(1 Cor 15:58) “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord.”

Jesus spoke about vain worship. He said that the Jewish leaders, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes were worshiping in vain, because they were teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. Vain worship comes from serving idols. Vain worship comes from teaching the doctrines of men, rather than the word of God. Vain worship comes from investing our lives in things that the Lord is not doing. We want to build the house of God, the church, because Jesus said He was building His church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Jesus was not building a building or a denomination; He was building His church, which is people. We are not laboring in vain when we invest our lives in other people, helping them to know, follow, and love God with all their heart. Paul’s ministry to the Thessalonians was not in vain; they had turned to Christ and were growing in their faith. They had become examples to believers everywhere.

(Mt 15:9) “But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.”

(Mt 16:18) “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

Paul told the Philippians that they had suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, and had come to Thessalonica and spoken with boldness, even though there was much opposition. When Paul, Silas, and Timothy followed the Macedonian vision and went to Philippi, they encountered much resistance. They wrote that they had suffered and been mistreated, and that is putting it very mildly. Even though they suffered and were mistreated, that did not stop them from preaching the gospel. They went to Thessalonica and preached the gospel, and once again found much opposition. When you have clear purpose in your life, you endure hardships and pains so that you can run and win the race. Paul and his team did not want their labors and hard work to be in vain, so they lived with purpose, and they spoke with boldness the gospel of God.

(1 Th 2:2) “but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.”

How did they suffer in Philippi? We find the account in Acts 16. Paul came across a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination, and her masters were profiting from her fortune-telling. Paul was greatly annoyed by the demonic spirit, and he commanded it in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and it came out that very moment. Her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, and they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities. The chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. After striking them with many blows, they threw them into prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

(Ac 16:16–24) “It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

{17} Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, “These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.” {18} She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out at that very moment. {19} But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities, {20} and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, “These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, {21} and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.” {22} The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods. {23} When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; {24} and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.”

What kind of opposition did they face when they preached with boldness in Thessalonica? We find that account in Acts 17. After preaching to the Jews for three Sabbaths, reasoning, explaining, and giving evidence about Christ, some Jews joined Paul, along with a large number of God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. However, there were some Jews who became jealous and took some wicked men from the market place and formed a mob. They set the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, who had welcomed Paul and his team into his house. They dragged Jason before the city authorities. After receiving a pledge from Jason and the others, they released Jason and the other brethren. There was much opposition in Thessalonica, but that did not keep Paul and his team from boldly proclaiming the gospel. They knew they were doing God's work and it was not in vain. When you know your purpose, it is much easier to have boldness in what you say and do.

(Ac 17:1–9) “Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. {2} And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, {3} explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, “This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.” {4} And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. {5} But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. {6} When they did not find them, they *began* dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have upset the world have come here also; {7} and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.” {8} They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. {9} And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.”

2. **With Purity** (1 Th 2:3-6, 10)

Paul, Silas, and Timothy came to Thessalonica with a clear sense of purpose, knowing their labor was not in vain. They boldly proclaimed the gospel. Second, they came to Thessalonica with purity. They had purity in their doctrine, hearts, speech, and behavior. They said, “For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit.” There were no errors or impurities or deceit in their exhortations and preaching. They preached a pure gospel. They had

been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. They had God's stamp of approval on what they were preaching, teaching, and exhorting.

(1 Th 2:3–4) “For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit; {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.”

Not only was their doctrine pure, they came with pure hearts. They had been approved by God, who examined their hearts. Paul wrote to Timothy, who was in Ephesus, and he told Timothy to instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines. Then, he said, “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” Paul and his team kept their hearts pure. One of the keys to sound doctrine is a pure heart. When teaching comes from an impure heart, many impurities can accompany the teaching. There can be deceit and strange doctrines come out when a heart is not pure. A leader should strive to keep his heart pure before the Lord.

(1 Ti 1:5) “But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

Years ago, there was a Vineyard song named, Refiner's Fire. The lyrics went like this:

(V1) Purify my heart.
Let me be as gold and precious silver.
Purify my heart. Let me be as gold, pure gold.

(Ch) Refiner's fire, my heart's one desire, is to be holy, set apart for You, Lord.
I choose to be holy, set apart for You, my Master, ready to do Your will.

(V2) Purify my heart. Cleanse me from within and make me holy.
Purify my heart. Cleanse me from my sin, deep within.

That song needs to be the song of every believer. We are to minister to others with a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith. Pure doctrine comes out of a pure heart. Not only does pure doctrine come from a pure heart, pure words and conduct come from a pure heart. Jesus said, “the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.” The key to coming in purity of doctrine, speech, and conduct is to have a pure heart. The things that come out of our mouths and lives originate in the heart. Paul, Silas, and Timothy went with pure hearts to the Thessalonians.

(Mt 15:18–19) “But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. {19} “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.”

They did not come with flattering speech, trying to deceive the Thessalonians. They had no pretext for greed. They did not seek the glory from men. They called on God as their witness. Even though they were apostles of Christ, and had authority, they did not assert their authority. They came as humble servants of God.

(1 Th 2:5-6) “For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— {6} nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.”

In verse ten, Paul said that the Thessalonians were witnesses, along with God, as to how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly they had behaved. The Greek word for devoutly is *hosios* (Strong's G3743), and it means holy or holiness, without any impurity. The Greek word for uprightly is *dikaios* (Strong's G1346), and it means justly or righteously. The Greek word for blamelessly is *amempto* (Strong's G274), and it means unblameable blameless, or faultless. Paul, Silas, and Timothy came in purity. They were holy, righteous, and blameless in their conduct. They came in purity in their hearts, doctrines, speech, and conduct, and the Thessalonians were witnesses of it.

(1 Th 2:10) “You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly (*hosios*) and uprightly (*dikaios*) and blamelessly (*amempto*) we behaved toward you believers;”

3. With Parental Care (1 Th 2:6-12)

Paul and his team came with a clear purpose and their labor was not in vain. They came in purity of heart and conduct. Third, they came as loving parents. Paul uses two parental word pictures in his description of how they came. First, he paints a picture of a nursing mother tenderly caring for her children. Second, he describes the action of a loving father who would exhort, encourage, and implore his children.

Paul's team proved to be gentle among them. How gentle? They were as gentle as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her children. A child that is being nursed is very young, a baby that is most likely under the age of two. This is a tender baby, and a mother would certainly be very gentle with her baby. Even though Paul and his team members were all apostles, they did not assert their authority; they came gently as a nursing mother. The Greek word for tenderly cares is *thalpo* (Strong's G2282), and it comes from the root word, *thallo*, which means to warm. This is a nursing mother who warms, cherishes, or cares for her baby. Paul and his team were gentle and had a warm affection and care for the Thessalonians, who were babes in Christ.

(1 Th 2:6–7) “nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. {7} But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children.”

There are many scholars and theologians that believe that there were only twelve apostles, and that Matthias was incorrectly chosen, and Paul was the twelfth apostle. There are many others that do not deny Matthias being chosen, but say that Paul's vision of the Lord was a legitimate satisfaction of the requirements for apostles in Acts 1. So, they would say that there are thirteen apostles. Unfortunately, these are incorrect doctrines. The requirements in Acts 1 were for apostles of the Lamb. They had to have with Jesus from His baptism, accompanied Him during His earthly ministry, and must have witnessed His resurrection. There are twelve apostles of the Lamb and their names are on the twelve gates in the new Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas are called apostles, or sent ones, in Acts 14, having been sent out in Acts 13 by the Holy Spirit. They were not apostles of the Lamb, but they were apostles. There are about twenty-six people mentioned in the New Testament that were apostles. In our text today, Paul, Silas, and Timothy are all called apostles. The letter was from all three of them, and “we” is used throughout the letter to describe the three of them. In verse six, those three are all called apostles. Apostles are

given authority by God to preach the gospel, plant churches, train and ordain pastors, and to equip the saints for the work of service. Paul, Silas, and Timothy had apostolic authority, but they did not assert their authority, but came with gentleness, as a nursing mother would tenderly care for her children.

They did not just come as a gentle, nursing mother; they came as a loving father. They did not just impart a gospel message to them, they also gave their own lives. They had such a fond affection for the Thessalonians that they were well-pleased to impart to them their own lives. They said the Thessalonians had become very dear to them. The Greek word for very dear is *agapetos* (Strong's G27), which means beloved. The root word is *agapao* (Strong's G25), which means love. There were many Greek words for love, and three of them are found in the New Testament. *Phileo* (Strong's G5368) describes a friend's love. *Storge* refers to a familial love. The third word is *agape*, which speaks of God's love, a perfect love. Paul and his team had this perfect love, the love of God, for the Thessalonians. The Thessalonians were not just very dear to Paul and his team; they were very loved by them.

(1 Th 2:8) "Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us."

They said that they imparted their lives for them. That encompasses many things. Many fathers go to work early in the morning, and work hard all day. They work hard to provide for their family. They are imparting their lives to their children. When they get home and they speak with their children, and encourage them, or caution them, they are imparting their lives to them. When they share the scriptures with them, and how they have applied those scriptures in their lives, they are imparting to their children. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were well-pleased to impart to their spiritual children, because they loved them. They worked day and night so that they would not be a burden to the Thessalonians. Even though it is proper for one who sows spiritual to receive monetarily from those they minister to, they did not use that right. They worked hard day and night so that they would not be a burden to them. Loving fathers impart to their children, not just the gospel, but their lives.

(1 Th 2:9) "For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God."

One of the best ways that fathers can impart to their children is through their example. We can never underestimate the importance of being an example. When Peter exhorted elders in how to shepherd their flocks, he told them not to lord over those who had been allotted to their care, but to prove to be examples. Good leaders set good examples for others to follow. The word for example in the Greek is *tupos* (Strong's G5179), which literally means a die that is struck. It leaves an impression on whatever it is struck upon. The die must be the exact representation of the intended imprint. In the same way, leaders need to be a great representation of Christ so that they leave the impression of Christ on their followers.

(1 Th 2:10-12) "You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;"

(1 Pe 5:3) "nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples (*tupos*) to the flock."

Paul, Silas, and Timothy were great examples to the Thessalonians. They behaved devoutly, uprightly, and blamelessly. The Thessalonians witnessed the way that they lived, so their example was noticed by all. Jesus said that we are to be the light of the world, and that our lights are to be on a lampstand so that it gives light to all who are in the house. The light in Paul and his team were on a lampstand for the household in Thessalonians to see. They witnessed it and glorified God.

(Mt 5:14–16) “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; {15} nor does *any*one light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. {16} “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Paul, Silas, and Timothy were not just examples to the flock to see, they were giving fatherly encouragement to their spiritual children. They did three things; they exhorted, encouraged, and implored the Thessalonians like a father would his own children.

To exhort (parakaleo, Strong's G3870) means to urge, advise, or caution earnestly. An exhortation is a call to urgently take action. Children must be exhorted to do things, like make their bed, clean up their room, do their homework, read their Bibles. Until things become a habit, exhorting is helpful. James wrote that we are to be doers of the word, not merely hearers, who delude themselves. The Christian life is to be a life of obedience to God's word. It is not just hearing and learning; it is applying the word of God in our lives. Exhorters are great for getting people off of the bench and into the game. Exhorters are great at getting things out of the “to do” list and into the “completed” tasks. Paul and his team exhorted the Thessalonians like a father would do for his own children.

(1 Th 2:11-12) “just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, {12} so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

(Jas 1:22–25) “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; {24} for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. {25} But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.”

To encourage (paramytheomai, Strong's G3888) means to comfort, console, or encourage. The most common Greek word is oikodome (Strong's G3619), which means to build up, but that is not used here. The KJV translates this as comfort, but both the NASB and ESV translate it as encourage. Children need to be encouraged and comforted. People need encouragement and comfort. Good leaders need to encourage their flock. People get lots of disappointments and discouragement in everyday living, so they need lots of encouragement and comfort. The Scriptures tell us to encourage one another daily. We all need regular encouragement. Paul and his team gave the Thessalonians lots of encouragement.

To implore means to beg urgently. The Greek word used is martyromai (Strong's G3143), which is where we get our English word, martyr from. It is normally translated as witness or testify. The NASB translates it as imploring, while the KJV and ESV translate it as charging. Paul and his team were charging or imploring the Thessalonians to live for Christ. They were exhorting,

encouraging, imploring, and charging the Thessalonians to walk in a manner worthy of God, who had called them into His kingdom and glory. Good leaders encourage people to walk in a manner worthy of God.

(1 Th 2:11-12) “just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, {12} so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

Conclusion and Applications

The passage today is a wonderful example of godly leadership. Paul and his team wrote a letter to the Thessalonians about how they came and brought the gospel to them. They came with purpose, preaching boldly and their work was not in vain. Even though they faced opposition, they did not veer off course. They were steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that their toil was not in vain in the Lord.

(1 Co 15:58) “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord.”

Paul and his team came with purity. They were pure in their hearts. They did not have any deceit, impurity, or greed. They were approved by God, and lived to please God, who examined their hearts. They were pure in their doctrine, and their exhortation did not come from error. They were pure in their speech, and pure in their conduct. They behaved devoutly, uprightly, and blamelessly. They were great models for the Thessalonians.

Paul and his team came with parental care. They were gentle, like a nursing mother tenderly caring for her children. They were like a loving father, who labored day and night. They exhorted, encouraged, and implored the Thessalonians to walk in a manner worthy of God. They not only proclaimed the gospel, but were role models for their spiritual children to learn from.

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank You for this letter to the Thessalonians. It was a reminder to the Thessalonians, but it is instructive for the rest of us. Thank You for Paul and Silas and Timothy, and the example that they set for us. Lord, help us to live our lives with purpose, so that our work is not in vain. Help us to be bold, and to be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing our toil is not in vain in the Lord. When things get difficult, help us to be persistent and immovable. Help us to maintain a pure heart before You. May our teaching and ministry come out of a pure heart. May our doctrine, words, and conduct all be pure before you and others. Lord, You say that people will know we are Christians by our love. Help us to show loving care for others. Help us to be gentle with people, like a nursing mother tenderly caring for her children. Help us to be like a loving father, who works hard and provides, and who exhorts, encourages and implores his children to walk in a manner worthy of You. Help us to learn from these great examples. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Introduction (1 Th 2:1–12)

1. **With Purpose** (1 Th 2:1-2, 1 Co 9:26, Ga 2:2, 4:11, 1 Th 1:7–9, Ps 127:1-2, 1 Cor 15:58, Mt 15:9, 16:18, Ac 16:16–24, 17:1-9)
2. **With Purity** (1 Th 2:3-6, 10, 1 Ti 1:5, Mt 15:18–19)
3. **With Parental Care** (1 Th 2:6-12, 1 Pe 5:3, Mt 5:14-16, Jas 1:22–25)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Co 15:58)