

Anticipation: 1 Thessalonians

Powerful Ministry: 2:1-13

But the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city... "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here... They are defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." (Acts 17:5, 6-7)

Paul begins with a picture of powerful ministry from the inside...

- ***Spiritual courage: Whom do I obey?*** – “You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. 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.” (vv. 1-2)
- ***Spiritual integrity: Whom do I serve?*** – “For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.” (vv. 3-4a)
- ***Spiritual identity: Whom do I please?*** – “We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. You know that we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed – God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from ne, not from you or anyone else.” (vv. 4b-6a)

He concludes with a picture of powerful ministry from the outside...

- ***Tender care motivated by love*** – “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. We loved you so much...” (vv. 6b-8a)
- ***An open Bible and an open life*** – “...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.” (v. 8b)
- ***Hard work and selfless service*** – “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.” (v. 9)
- ***An example of godly character*** – “You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.” (v. 10)
- ***Wise leadership in discipleship*** – “For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.” (vv. 11-12)

The fruit of powerful ministry from the inside-out...

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (v. 13)