



I THESSALONIANS

a future for now

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 – How Can I Be A Good Spiritual Leader?

March 10, 2024

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain.

1 Thessalonians 2:1 (ESV)

1. What is the heart of a good spiritual leader?

A. A good spiritual leader is confident in God's power.

But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. 1 Thessalonians 2:2 (ESV)

For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive,... 1 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV)

B. A good spiritual leader will teach the truth.

...our appeal does not spring from error...

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing... 1 Timothy 6:3-4 (ESV)

C. A good spiritual leader pursues sexual purity.

...our appeal does not spring from... impurity...

D. A good spiritual leader is honest.

...our appeal does not spring from... any attempt to deceive...

*Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing...
2 Peter 2:15 (ESV)*

E. A good spiritual leader is commissioned by God.

but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak... 1 Thessalonians 2:4a (ESV)

To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ... Ephesians 3:8 (ESV)

in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. 1 Timothy 1:11 (ESV)

F. A good spiritual leader is controlled by God's omniscience.

*...so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.
1 Thessalonians 2:4b (ESV)*

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. 1 Corinthians 4:3-4 (ESV)

*Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.
1 Corinthians 4:5 (ESV)*

*...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought...
1 Chronicles 28:9 (ESV)*

*...I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you
according to your works. Revelation 2:23 (ESV)*

G. A good spiritual leader refuses to manipulate with flattery.

*For we never came with words of flattery, as you know...
1 Thessalonians 2:5 (ESV)*

H. A good spiritual leader isn't in the ministry for money.

...nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. 1 Thessalonians 2:5 (ESV)

I. A good spiritual leader doesn't want to be the center of attention.

*Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though
we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. 1 Thessalonians 2:6 (ESV)*

2. How is a good spiritual leader like a mother?

A. A good mother is gentle and cares for her children.

*But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own
children. 1 Thessalonians 2:7 (ESV)*

B. A good mother sacrifices her life for her children.

*So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not
only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very
dear to us. 1 Thessalonians 2:8 (ESV)*

*For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that
we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the
gospel of God. 1 Thessalonians 2:9 (ESV)*

3. How is a good spiritual leader like a father?

For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:11–12 (ESV)

A. A good father offers correction in love.

B. A good father constantly encourages.

C. A good father pleads with his children to honor God.

Conclusion

- A good leader has a heart committed to integrity, the power of God, and the gospel. A good leader also gently cares like a nursing mother and leads like a strong, loving father.

Life Group Questions

1. Who are some of the most dynamic and influential leaders you have had the privilege of knowing? What qualities have made them influential in your life?
2. Why did Paul need to defend his time with the Thessalonians instead of ignoring the false accusations made against him? What does this teach us about when we should ignore accusations and when we should defend our integrity?
3. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:3.** Why is it important for church leaders to be men and women of integrity? What does this verse teach us are some of the common ways people lack integrity?
4. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:2 and Acts 16:16-40.** After Paul was treated poorly in Philippi, why didn't he diminish his boldness or change his message when he came to Thessalonica? What does this teach us about boldly speaking about Jesus and the opposition we will face?
5. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:4, 1 Corinthians 4:3-5, and Revelation 2:23.** How should God's omniscience influence our daily lives?
6. How does a mother's love differ from a father's love, and why is it important for Christian leaders to possess both?
7. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9.** In what ways should a spiritual leader be like a good father?
8. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12.** In what ways should a spiritual leader be like a good father?