

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:10 — The Heart Of A Good Pastor — Part 1

March 24, 2024

Good morning, CrossWinds! Welcome to a unique Sunday. This morning, the first service is the only message on 1 Thessalonians. The second service will be the live feed of Pastor Jordan's ordination service on the Spencer campus. I will be part of it. After I teach, I will need to leave and get in the car to head south to get there on time. In addition, the worship service this morning is backward. We will sing more songs after the sermon than before to give me a little extra time to make it to Spencer. Let's dive in.

Recently, my father has been limping. It is hard for him to walk. He is 90 years old. He has taken a few falls. We were concerned he had broken something, so we took him to the doctor. The doctor took an X-ray of his hips. The good news is the X-ray told us nothing was broken. The bad is that he has severe arthritis in his hips. But on the positive side, the doctor pointed out that if you are 91 years old and still walking without a cane, you are doing well for your age.

X-rays are a great way to see what is happening inside someone. This morning, in our study of 1 Thessalonians, we will look at an X-ray. That is not an X-ray of my father's hip but of the apostle Paul's heart. The text that gives us this X-ray is 1 Thessalonians 2:17 to 3:10. This morning, we will look at 1 Thessalonians 2:17 to 20. Next week, we will celebrate Easter. The following week, we will finish looking at this X-ray of the apostle Paul's heart as we look at 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10.

Background

As you will remember from our previous studies, Paul, Silas, and Timothy were in the city of Thessalonica only four or five weeks before the Jews had them run out of town. They hired hooligans from the city market to create a riot in the city, a riot against Paul, Silas, and Timothy. The troublemakers claimed Paul and his friends were treasonous because they encouraged people to worship a man named Jesus instead of Caesar. They hoped to unleash the fury of the Roman government against the church.

The reality was that the Jews were jealous of Paul and the new church. People left the synagogue to join the church, and when the synagogue lost money and members, they played dirty politics to throw Paul under the bus.

Paul was never given a chance to defend himself. He was run out of town. In the first half of the letter to the Thessalonians, Paul defended his reputation from the Jews who were trying to ruin his reputation and destroy the gospel message.

In previous weeks, we looked at some of the accusations they made against Paul. They claimed he was a false teacher in it for the money. He was a false teacher trying to gather people around him to get money from them. This wasn't true because Paul refused to take a penny from anyone when he was in Thessalonica. He worked in the market making and selling tents to pay his own way. He wasn't teaching the gospel to get rich.

They also claimed he was in it for the women and sexual favors. Many traveling religious teachers in the day tried to gather weak-willed women around

them, ultimately to get sexual favors from them. Paul says that was absolutely not his gig. That is preposterous.

Today, Paul is answering another accusation they made against him. The Jews claimed Paul did not care about them. All he wanted to do was get whatever he could from them, get out of town, and forget about them.

The Jews claimed the proof he doesn't care about you is that he is never coming back to see you. He may have said he loved you. He may have claimed to care about you, but we know the truth. He is never coming back. He will never show himself again. He deserted you.

So Paul writes 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:10 to counter those claims. In these verses, Paul gives us and the Thessalonians an X-ray of his heart as he shows us how he really feels about them.

As he does, he gives us a wonderful picture of a good pastor's heart. As I studied, I found these verses personally challenging and humbling. They don't just apply to me as your pastor. They apply to everyone who serves as an elder, a deacon, a youth group leader, an AWANA leader, and a BSF leader. They apply to anyone in a position of spiritual leadership over others. Let's read them together.

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy. 1 Thessalonians 2:17–20 (ESV)

The English hides much of the vividness of the original Greek. One commentator says this about these verses.

At this point Paul's style becomes intensely emotional. His very words seem to tremble. - Hendrickson

This is because, in these verses, he speaks from his heart. He opens up his emotional world to describe how he feels about the Thessalonians. Yes, he had only been in Thessalonica a matter of weeks. Yes, he had only been gone a few months. Yes, he didn't know them long, but his heart was not indifferent toward them. He had deep feelings for them.

We will develop our study under the question, "What is the heart of a good pastor?"

A good pastor loves his people.

If any pastor is going to have an effective ministry in a church, it must begin with loving the people of the church. Paul speaks of his great love for people in the church of Thessalonica and other churches. Let me show you how Paul spoke of his love for the people in the church of Corinth.

For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. 2 Corinthians 2:4 (ESV)

Between 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Bible, there was another letter Paul wrote to the church of Corinth. It is not in our Bible. It was not inspired by God. Theologians call it the harsh letter because, in the letter, Paul sternly addressed some of the sins in the church's life that he talked about in 1 Corinthians. Look how he says he wrote that harsh letter. It was with affliction in his heart. It was with anguish in his heart and with many tears. He didn't write this harsh letter to the Corinthians to cause them pain, but because he loved them so much, he had to say something to correct them, even though it was hard for him.

Isn't it true? When we see people making foolish, unwise, or sinful choices, we simply avoid them. We don't say anything to them because we don't want the pain of conflict with them. We don't say anything to them because we don't care about them. But... if we love someone, we are willing to risk the pain of the harsh conversation. We will say something to a person who is making a foolish, unwise, or sinful choice if we love them. Yes, the conversation will be painful. Yes, the relationship may become difficult, but our love for someone compels us to speak to them because we care about them.

Teenagers, your parents have tough conversations with you not because they hate you. It is because they love you. People who don't care about you will not correct you. They will let you make a bad choice and suffer the consequences. Mom and Dad are different. Their love for you will keep them in your face all the time, as they have hard conversations with you out of love.

That was Paul with the Corinthians, loving them enough to correct them and cause pain in his relationship with them. Let's look at Paul's love for the Phillipian church.

[I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, Philippians 1:3–4 \(ESV\)](#)

Paul loved the people in the church of Philippi. The evidence of that is he prayed for them all the time. Whenever he put his head down to pray, he couldn't help but think about them and pray for them. That is because he loved them so much.

If you are old enough to have children, you will understand Paul. Every time parents pray, they can't help but pray for their kids. That is what it means to

be a parent. It is easy to forget to pray about our country, our senators, and our leaders. But we can't stop praying for our spouse or our children because we love them. Every time we close our eyes, we think of them and pray for them. That is what it was like for Paul when it came to the church in Philippi. He loved them so much that he prayed for them all the time.

Let's look at Paul's love for the people in the church of Ephesus.

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship. Acts 20:36–38 (ESV)

This was Paul's last time with the elders and leaders in the church of Ephesus. When he left, there was not a dry eye in the crowd. Paul cried because he wouldn't see them again, and they cried because they wouldn't see Paul again. Everyone hugged and kissed. Why was there so much affection from the people in the church of Ephesus toward Paul? Why do you think they loved him so much? I will give you the answer. They loved him so much because he loved them so much.

My mother used to say it this way. If you want to have great friend, be a great friend.

There is some good application for us in this. If we were leaving town, would the people of CrossWinds weep, hug, and kiss as we departed because they loved us so much? What would make people love us so much that they would miss us so much? The more we love people, the more people will love us. The more we go out of our way for people, the more people will go out of their way for us.

The picture we get of Paul's heart is that he loved people, and people knew it. They felt it. I suspect that he looked people in the eyes when they talked to them. He asked questions. He had genuine concern, and in response, people couldn't help but love him back. That is the heart of a good pastor.

Now we come to 1 Thessalonians. Let's see what these verses reveal about Paul's love for the people in that church.

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face,... 1 Thessalonians 2:17 (ESV)

Paul says to the Thessalonians, "We were torn away from you." This is very vivid in Greek. It is a unique word that is only here in the New Testament. We know the meaning of the word from other uses. It means to be orphaned. It means for a child to be torn away from a parent or a parent to be torn away from their child. It is all the emotions a mother experiences when her infant child is torn from her arms, in the way Paul feels about the Thessalonians.

Remember that Paul was forced to leave town. The Jews drove him out of town. Paul stayed three years in Ephesus. He stayed 18 months in Corinth. He didn't plan to stay only four or five weeks in Thessalonica. He was forced out of the town, and he felt the pain of a mother having her infant child torn out of her arms and taken who knows where.

You have seen this on the news in a flood or natural disaster where a mother was protecting her child and had the child torn out of her arms in the flood waters. Rescuers saved the mother, but they had no idea if the child was dead or alive downstream. At that moment, when the mother has no idea what happened to her defenseless child, she is an absolute basket case. She is in complete

panic. That is the emotion Paul has in his heart toward the Christians in Thessalonica. He deeply loves them and has terrible pain when he was torn apart from them, especially when they were young and vulnerable in Christ.

When my sons were young, as a family, we would go to wrestling tournaments where my sons would wrestle. Some of the meets were in big cities, in big gymnasiums packed with people. As we wove our way through the crowds, there was the possibility we would get separated. We always told our children if that happened, they were to go to the announcers' table and have them make an announcement asking for us. We would come to the table and get them. I think we were wrestling in Detroit once, and Daniel ended up separated from us in a big crowd. Cindy and I came to the other side of the crowd and realized we were missing a child. We went into a panic. Cindy went up in the stands and, like an eagle, was scanning the crowds looking for her son. I was the commando on the ground. I wove my way through the crowds looking for Daniel. I couldn't find him. The panic feeling was settling in my heart. Was my son abducted? What should we do? Finally, after what seemed like far too long, I heard the announcement over the loudspeaker, "Would the parents of Daniel Trucksess come to the announcer booth."

This was Paul's feeling for the Thessalonians. He felt like a mother who unexpectedly had her young child ripped out of her arms and taken who knows where. He has no idea how to get his child back. Folks, Paul loved them.

Let's look at this more. Why did Paul have such anxiety about them now that he was apart from them? Was it because he just missed them socially? Was

it because he liked playing Settlers of Catan and missed their late-night games together? No. The reason he had such anxiety about them is that he cared about their faith in Jesus and was concerned about that.

Remember the new Christians in this church were only one, two, or three weeks old in Christ. Like a newborn child, they were vulnerable and defenseless. They were easy prey for Satan and his schemes.

Later we see that Paul was able to send Timothy to check on them. Look how Paul had Timothy check on the solidness of their faith.

But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— 1 Thessalonians 3:6 (ESV)

Paul was concerned about their spiritual welfare. He deeply loved them, but that love was focused on their knowing Jesus and being established in Jesus.

Many pastors measure the health of their church in two ways. It is called butts and bucks. How many people are in the seats? How much money is in the offering? If both of those are good, it is easy to think the church is healthy. That isn't the way Paul measured church health. He measured it by checking on people's faith. Were they growing to become more like Christ? Were they becoming established in Christ? If that wasn't happening, it doesn't matter how much money is in the bank and how many butts are in the seats.

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart,...

Paul says, you may be out of my sight, but you are not out of my mind. Though they were physically separated, they were still in his thoughts. Paul didn't

just think about the Thessalonians all the time. He thought all the time about the Christians in other churches he planted.

And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. 2 Corinthians 11:28 (ESV)

Paul says there was great weight in his emotional world as he loved, cared, and thought about the Christians he knew in churches around the ancient world. He was deeply concerned about the health of their faith in Christ. If they weren't spiritually healthy. If they were drifting from Jesus, it caused him great heartache.

We know how this feeling in our personal worlds. If you have children, you love your children. If one of our children is sick, not with a sniffle, but with serious sickness, it tears up a parent on the inside. If one of our children is sick, we would do anything to trade places with them because we love them so much.

Years ago, Cindy and I were on vacation in a remote part of Florida when Daniel came down with the roto virus. He threw everything up for days. We took him to a country doctor who had no idea what to do. After a few days of him throwing everything up and being dehydrated, I remember picking him up and being shocked he was so thin and had lost so much weight as he hung limp in my arms. As I held him, I just started crying over him. There was nothing I could do. It hurt so bad to see him limp and weak. If I could have traded places with him, I gladly would have traded places with him.

This was the apostle Paul with the churches. When they were not doing well, he was like a father or mother agonizing over a child's health. That is how

much he loved them. He didn't ignore them or have a lack of interest in them. He genuinely cared about them like a father or mother would for their own sick child.

we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face,

This phrase is an emotional stack. It is terrible English, but it is great Greek. He uses two descriptors to describe how much he wants to come back.

He endeavored the more eagerly... to see them face to face. —

Endeavor in Greek means to have a keen interest or desire for something. It means to be so interested in something that you do your absolute best in it. Paul says, he wants to see them face to face. He is trying. He is very interested in returning and has tried all possible ways to return to them, but he has not been able to get his ban from the city lifted. Today we would say, he has spent all kinds of money on lawyers, legal fees, and various efforts. He is giving it his best shot, but nothing has worked. He doesn't leave it there. It says he made every effort to see them face to face, and that effort was made the more eagerly. In Greek, this is comparative. It means superabundantly. It means going above and beyond your efforts compared to something else.

The Jews claim Paul hasn't returned because he forgot about them, he moved on from them. That is absolutely not true. Paul longs to see them in person. He is making every effort to have his ban from the city lifted. The effort he has put into this is above and beyond the effort he has put into other things. Why is he trying so hard to see them? He loves them!

This reminds me of the movie, Home Alone. In the movie, Kevin McCallister's mother realizes she left Kevin home alone. She makes every

possible effort to get back home to her son, including riding in the back of a truck with a Polka band. That was Paul trying to return to the Thessalonians.

With great desire to see you face to face — Paul moves from the effort he has put into trying to return to how he feels in his heart about wanting to return. Here he uses another unusual word. He says, “I have a great desire to see you face to face.” The word *desire* in Greek is the word *epithumia*. This word is usually used to describe sexual passion or a burning sexual desire where someone is consumed with desire for someone of the opposite sex. In this case, Paul was not using this word to describe a burning sexual desire to see the Thessalonians again, but the desire in his heart to be with them is on that kind of level. In fact, he calls his desire to return to them a mega desire.

Paul wants to return to them. He has made every possible effort for that return to be possible, even working at it harder than he works on other things. Paul hasn't forgotten about the Thessalonians, but his heart has mega desire to be with them again. Far from forgetting about them and not caring about them, like the Jews claimed, he was the exact opposite.

[...because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again... 1 Thessalonians 2:18 \(ESV\)](#)

Paul reiterates what he just said. We want to come to you. I, Paul, have tried to come to you again and again. As we will see next week, Paul sent Timothy in his place to check on the Thessalonians, but that was not because he didn't want to make the trip to see them. It was because he couldn't make the trip to see them.

Folks, there is a lesson in this. You can't delegate compassion. You can't delegate genuine concern. Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to help establish them in the faith, but his desire was not to delegate that. His desire was to do this personally because he cared about them. He only delegated this because he couldn't accomplish this.

The same is true in the church. A good pastor will not delegate compassion to other people. A good pastor will want to personally extend love and compassion to other people. Since they can not do everything, there are some acts of compassion they must delegate to the deacons, but they must not delegate all acts of compassion to the deacons, because a good pastor loves his people.

I ran across a statistic that claimed 90 percent of people who fail at their jobs don't fail because they lack the skills for the job. They fail because they lack the patience and interpersonal skills to work with people at their jobs.

If that is true in industry, it is even more true in the church. The heart of a good pastor must love the people. He must love and work with all the people. He must be unselfish. He must be understanding and caring. A good pastor will not delegate all love and compassion to others.

A good pastor understands the enemy.

because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. 1 Thessalonians 2:18 (ESV)

If you are going to be a good pastor or spiritual leader, you must plan on Satanic attack. Expect that Satan will get in the way of effective ministry.

Paul was separated from these young Christians. He deeply loved them. He had gone above and beyond in the way of effort and made every possible effort to return to them, but Satan thwarted him.

Sometimes, it is easy for people in the church to forget that we are in a spiritual battle. We can make great effort for something to happen in the church, but either the Holy Spirit closes a door on a ministry, or Satan can thwart a ministry. Whenever there is a church making a spiritual difference or a man or woman making a difference for Jesus, you can be sure Satan will be at work.

How does Satan ruin things? The Bible gives us a variety of examples. He encourages people to lie. He is known as the father of lies. He tempts us to sin. That is what he did with Adam and Eve. In Matthew 13, we see he snatches away the word before it has a chance to take root. He may be behind that distracting thought during the sermon that keeps you from concentrating. The Bible says he disguises himself as an angel of light. He comes across as looking like a God thing, but he in reality it is a demon thing. He can sift us like wheat. He did this to Peter. That means God may allow Satan to shake up our lives and bring suffering into our lives.

Look at some of the ways Satan shows up to work against the church.

I know... those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Revelation 2:9 (ESV)

Here are people who claim to be a group of people following God, but the truth is they are a group of people in league with Satan, not Jesus. Has anybody seen that happen in the liberal churches? They claim to be following Jesus while

they promote homosexuality and lesbianism to children all in the name of Jesus.

That is Satan's work.

I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. Revelation 2:13 (ESV)

This church was in a bad neighborhood. They were in a place where Satan kept his throne. Satan had a great influence on the city leaders and people in positions of power, leading to church persecution. One person even lost their life.

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching... And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." Mark 1:21–24 (ESV)

I remember teaching this passage when we were studying the Gospel of Mark. This passage stopped me in my tracks. There was a demon-possessed guy in the synagogue. Apparently, people were used to him being there. They just didn't realize he was demon-possessed. He worked in the synagogue in an undercover way, causing bickering, disunity, and division. Jesus blew his cover. This is another example of Satan working against the people of God. If Satan has demonically possessed or demonically influenced people planted into a synagogue to cause unrest in it, why wouldn't he try and plant demonically influenced or demonically possessed people in a church to cause chaos, division, and disunity within it?

Satan doesn't just love to attack churches, but he loves to attack Christian leaders. This is why there are so many scandals of pastors with money, sex, and terrible character issues. One pastoral gathering, I used to attend each year,

involved pastors from around the nation. They started closing the gathering with a talk about an empty chair. Would you be the empty chair next year? Don't let your chair be empty next year because you flamed out in ministry because of sexual impropriety, a financial, or a character issue. For a while, in that group of about 50 pastors, they were disqualifying themselves for ministry at the rate of one person a year. It was scary. Satan targeted these gifted men.

This is why when Paul speaks about choosing elders, he says this.

Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. 1 Timothy 3:7 (ESV)

The devil wants to snare leaders.

In the New Testament, Peter was the leading apostle. According to Luke 22:31, Satan came to stop God saying, "I want Peter." Jesus told Peter that Satan had asked for him. He wanted to sift you like wheat. He wanted to throw Peter's life around and mess with him. Why did Satan want to mess up Peter's life? He was the head apostle.

Satan came to God asking if he could mess up another guy's life. His name was Job. First, he ruined Job's business. Next, he destroyed Job's family. Finally, he was allowed to destroy Job's health. Why did Satan want to mess Job's life up? The Bible tells us. It was because Job was the most righteous man on the earth, so Satan went after him.

Satan came to God and asked for another guy to mess with. His name was Paul. 2 Corinthians 2:12 talks about Paul being given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, to make life hard for him. We don't know what that thorn in his flesh was. Paul never tells us. We do know where it came from in

his life. Satan put it there hoping to destroy him. Thankfully, he couldn't do that. Paul prayed three times that God would remove his thorn in the flesh, but God did not remove it. God said, "My grace is sufficient for you because my power is made perfect in your weakness." The weaker Paul's thorn in the flesh made him, the more powerfully the Holy Spirit worked through him.

So Satan will come after the church. Satan especially goes after leaders in churches, like Job, Peter, and Paul.

What else does Satan do? Let's see what Paul did to Paul that kept him from returning to the Thessalonians.

...[Satan hindered us.](#)

This is another interesting word. It is a military word. It means to dig a trench across a road. If you have an army and the enemy is following you, to keep them from catching you, at strategic points, you have your soldiers dig a trench across the road so the enemy can't follow you.

Paul tells the Thessalonians that he tried really hard to return. He tried repeatedly to return. He desperately wanted to return, but Satan blocked the road, making it impossible for him to return, at least for now.

There is something else we should talk about when thinking about Satan and his ability to be a hindrance to Christians and the church. Though Satan opposes us, he can only do what God allows him to do to us. Satan had to ask permission to go after Job. God set limits on what he could do to shake up Job's life. The same was true with Peter and Paul.

Why did God allow Satan to shake up the lives of these guys? In times of suffering and difficulty, those with fake faith fall away from Christ, but those with

genuine faith draw closer to Christ. God allows Satan to shake up the lives of genuine believers because it draws them close to Jesus, and as battle-tested Christians, they become more useful for the kingdom of Jesus. That is as true for us as it was for Peter, Job, and Paul.

A good pastor remembers Jesus' return.

For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy. 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20 (ESV)

The great motivation of the apostle Paul was that Jesus was coming back. When Jesus came back, who was he looking forward to seeing? Of course, he was looking forward to seeing Jesus and being with Jesus, but he was looking forward to more than Jesus. He was looking forward to being with the Thessalonians! On that day, their presence before Jesus as those saved by Jesus through their faith in Jesus would be his great joy, his great hope, his great boasting that made all the suffering in his life worth it.

When he talks about a crown of boasting, this is a victor's crown. On the day he stands before Jesus, his crown will not be gold and gems. It will be people—people he had the privilege of leading to Christ and maturing in Christ. Seeing Christians around the throne of Jesus, whom God gave him the privilege of playing a role in their salvation, would bring him joy beyond anything in this life.

Folks, what do you want to give your life to? Do you want to make lots of money so you can purchase yourself a \$300 million dollar yacht for a birthday present, like Mark Zuckerberg? Folks, on that day in eternity, you will not have your yacht with you. The only thing going with you before the throne of Jesus is

people. The great joy on that day will be the people you had a chance to lead to Christ and mature in Christ that will be with you on that day. My friends, nothing will be better than that moment.

Years ago, I printed out this verse and taped it to my computer monitor, so I would be reminded about it as I typed, researched, wrote, and taught. The size of an IRA doesn't matter. Our financial or personal success doesn't matter. All that matters is the day we stand before Jesus and the people we have had the privilege of leading to Jesus. Keep that as the north star in your life and you will not go wrong. You will live life well and spend your time right.

Look what Paul says as he closes.

[For you are our glory and joy. 1 Thessalonians 2:20 \(ESV\)](#)

In Greek, the *you* is emphatic. He is underlining it. He is emphasizing it. You guys are it. Introducing you to Christ and establishing you in Christ is what we live for. Seeing you before the throne of God saved by Jesus will be my glory and joy for all eternity.

Application

In these verses, Paul gives us an X-ray into his heart for the Thessalonians. He tells them why he hasn't returned to them. It is not because he doesn't love them or because he forgot about them. He has made and is still making every possible effort to return. He loves them. Along the way, he shows us three things essential to every good pastor's heart.

1. **A good pastor genuinely loves the people of the church.** He loves them not just as friends, but God has given him a heart that wants to see their faith in Jesus become established and strong.

2. **A good pastor knows the enemy.** He recognizes that Satan is at work in the church, hindering him from sharing the good news. Satan is at work trying to destroy pastors and church leaders. He knows we do not just wrestle against flesh and blood, but spiritual forces of darkness.
3. **A good pastor remembers Jesus' return.** He knows that for all of eternity, his joy and glory in heaven will be the people he had the privilege of leading to Christ and maturing in Christ. As Christians, there is nothing better than giving your life to grow the kingdom of Jesus, as Paul did.

Everything we looked at this morning doesn't only apply to pastors, but they are also true for elders, deacons, youth leaders, AWANA leaders, and any other leadership position in the church.

Next week is Easter. We will celebrate the resurrection. The week after that, we will return to 1 Thessalonians and study 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10. In those verses Paul continues to give us an X-ray of his heart so we can learn more about what the heart of a good pastor looks like.



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