



I THESSALONIANS

a future for now

1 Thessalonians 2:17-20 – The Heart of a Good Pastor

Part 1

March 24, 2024

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

What is the heart of a good pastor?

1. A good pastor loves his people.

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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

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

we endeavored the more eagerly... to see you face to face,...

with great desire to see you face to face,...

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

2. 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)

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

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)

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)

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)

...Satan hindered us.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7 (ESV)

3. 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? 1 Thessalonians 2:19 (ESV)

Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. Revelation 22:12 (ESV)

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

Applications

- A good pastor loves the people. He loves them not because they have the same hobbies but because God gave him the privilege of leading them to Christ and maturing them in Christ.
- A good pastor knows the enemy. He knows Satan is hard at work trying to hinder the church. Satan is also trying to destroy the leaders of a church.
- A good pastor knows that his joy in eternity will be the people he had a role in leading to and maturing in Jesus.
- This doesn't just apply to pastors. It applies to the heart of all Christian leaders, such as youth groups, AWANA, BSF, Life Groups, and more.

Life Group Questions

1. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-18.** Why is it essential to love people if you want to be an effective Christian leader? (See also 2 Corinthians 2:4, Acts 20:36-38.)
2. What are the most effective ways for Christian leaders to love others in the church? In what practical ways can I better love people in the church?
3. In 1 Thessalonians 2:17, Paul said the pain of his separation from the Thessalonians was like that of an orphaned child torn from his/her parents' arms. What does this teach us about the importance of church participation? What was it about this separation that made it so painful?
4. Satan tries to hinder the progress of the church and work against its leaders. How does Satan try to destroy the church? What are some common schemes against church leaders that the devil uses?
5. What is the best way to resist the devil's schemes? (See James 4:7) Why should we not lose heart when the devil is allowed by God to shake up our life as he did for Job, Peter, and Paul? (See 2 Corinthians 12:9)
6. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20.** Pastor Kurt shared that he kept a copy of this verse taped to his computer monitor for years. What makes this verse important to remember?
7. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:20.** What is your glory and joy before Jesus?