



I THESSALONIANS

a future for now

1 Thessalonians 3:1-10 – The Heart of a Good Pastor – Part 2

April 7, 2024

What is the heart of a good pastor — Part 1?

1. The heart of a good pastor loves his people.
2. The heart of a good pastor understands the enemy.
3. The heart of a good pastor remembers Jesus' return.

What is the heart of a good pastor — Part 2?

1. The heart of a good pastor cares about his people.

Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith,... 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2 (ESV)

And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?
2 Corinthians 11:28-29 (ESV)

I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? 2 Corinthians 12:15 (ESV)

2. The heart of a good pastor is unselfish and sacrifices for his people.

Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2 (ESV)

That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. 1 Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

Philippians 2:19–20 (ESV)

3. The heart of a good pastor is committed to spiritual maturity in his people.

...and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith,...

1 Thessalonians 3:2 (ESV)

And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words. Acts 15:32 (ESV)

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Acts 15:41 (ESV)

After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Acts 18:23 (ESV)

...that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. 1 Thessalonians 3:3 (ESV)

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,... 2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV)

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,... James 1:2 (ESV)

...In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. John 16:33b (ESV)

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Matthew 5:11 (ESV)

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 1 Peter 2:19 (ESV)

4. The heart of a good pastor is protective of his people.

For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. 1 Thessalonians 3:5 (ESV)

How does the devil try to destroy faith?

- A. He tries to snatch away the gospel seed before it can take root. — Matthew 13:19
- B. If it takes root, he tries to destroy it through persecution and suffering. — Matthew 13:20-21
- C. If the gospel establishes itself in a life, he tries to choke it out and make it unfruitful. - Matthew 13:22
- D. At the opportune time, he tempts us to sin.

Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 1 Corinthians 7:5 (ESV)

- E. He disguises himself as an angel of light to lead us astray.

And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:14 (ESV)

I began to wonder if I could receive messages during my times of communing with God... I know that God communicated with me through the Bible, but I yearned for more. I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day. — Sarah Young, author of Jesus Calling

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV)

...I want to share some of the messages I have received. ...Christians seem to be searching for a deeper experience of Jesus' Presence and Peace. The messages that follow address that felt need. — Sarah Young, author of Jesus Calling

5. The heart of a good pastor delights in the progress of his people.

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— for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. 1 Thessalonians 3:6–7 (ESV)

For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 3:8 (ESV)

6. The heart of a good pastor is filled with gratitude to God.

For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God,... 1 Thessalonians 3:9 (ESV)

7. The heart of a good pastor prays for his people.

...as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? 1 Thessalonians 3:10 (ESV)

Applications

1. The heart of a good pastor cares about his people.
2. The heart of a good pastor is unselfish and sacrifices for his people.
3. The heart of a good pastor is committed to spiritual maturity in his people.
4. The heart of a good pastor is protective of his people.
5. The heart of a good pastor delights in the progress of his people.
6. The heart of a good pastor is filled with gratitude to God.
7. The heart of a good pastor prays for his people.

Life Group Questions

1. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2.** A good pastor's heart cares more about people's relationship with Jesus than their own reputation, salary, and notoriety. What happens when someone in a position of spiritual leadership begins to care more about their position than the people they are serving?
2. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2.** Paul was willing to be left alone and send Timothy to the Thessalonians. In what ways should a pastor, youth leader, elder, or AWANA leader expect to be unselfish?
3. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:2.** Why is it important for young Christians to develop spiritual maturity? Watch Keegan O'Toole's interview after losing to David Carr in the NCAA semi-finals. How did his maturity in Christ help him handle the loss?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCWr-dF1jis>
4. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:3.** What is wrong with the prosperity gospel? Why should we expect suffering in the Christian life? **See 2 Timothy 3:12, John 16:33, Matthew 5:11. 1 Peter 2:19.**
5. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:5.** In the outline under point 4, review how Satan tries to turn us away from Christ. How have you seen Satan use these strategies against you and others?
6. **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:6-7.** Why is passing the gospel baton refreshing to a good pastor's heart? Why is it easy for a Christian leadership to lose sight of that goal?