

SHARING YOUR LIFE

April 23, 2017

Our greatest impact happens when we share not only the gospel, but our lives as well.

Thessalonica – largely Gentile church founded by Paul

- 1 Thessalonians is a testimony to the Christian character of these new believers.
- When Paul and his team went to Thessalonica to preach the gospel, the Jews were jealous so they formed a mob and started a riot.
- The Gentiles and some of the Jews received the word in the midst of much affliction and gave their lives to Jesus because of the affliction.
- The report of their conversion spread.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 (NIV) – **“Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.”**

- *Share* means “impart” or “to give a portion of you to something or someone”.
- Our ministry is not only the message of salvation, but bringing the kingdom of God into each other as we share our lives together.

Danny Silk says, “Every relationship has one of two goals: connection or disconnection. These goals are revealed by the skill sets people adopt to achieve them.”

- If your goal is disconnection, you spend the day measuring how much distance you need to feel safe.
- Is our current goal outside of CCC connection or disconnection?
- What about our relationships within CCC?

CONNECTING AT CCC

- We want you to come and receive—don’t stop there!! Connect!
- Disconnection robs you of the full experience you’re meant to have.

CONNECTING OUTSIDE OF CCC

- People everywhere are waiting to be ministered to—waiting for you to share more than the gospel, but your life as well.

HOW DID PAUL SHARE HIS LIFE?

Paul, Silas and Timothy were able to see the people, discern what they needed and connect with them on that level.

- They didn’t use flattery, trickery, impure motives or scolding.
- *Mother* (Verse 7) – he nurtured them with gentleness.

- *Brother* (Verse 9-10) – he identified with them in work and conduct.
- *Father* (Verse 11-12) - he encouraged them in Godly living.
- Their ability to connect in these ways brought salvation and changed lives.
- They could have just gone in and preached the gospel, but change happened when they opened their hearts and shared their lives.

1Thessalonians 1:5-6 (NIV) – **“We lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord.”**

Here’s the fruit of Paul and his team sharing their lives:

- They received the gospel while others were offended and turned away.
- They stopped worshiping idols and worshiped the Lord with joy.
- They became imitators of the Lord.
- They learned how to be faithful in their work.
- Love became the motivation for their labor.
- Hope became the inspiration to endure hardship.

Paul gave away what he had gained.

- Paul was once far away from God, even persecuting believers, so he knew how to draw them toward Jesus and away from their idols.
- He was able to minister to the Thessalonians in their persecution because he personally dealt with it and knew how to encourage them (1 Thessalonians 1).
- He took his victories—what he had overcome—and used it to minister to others.

What do you have to give away—what are your victories?

- Steven Furtick said, “What happens on the mountain can’t stay on the mountain. What happens here has to get there.”—give away what you encounter.
- Psalm 23 says God walks with us through the valleys—He feeds us...He adds to us...He strengthens us...He gives us new life...He brings us to places of rest.
- What happens in the valley can’t stay in the valley—we have to give it away.

How do we purposefully share our lives?

- Making CONNECTION your goal.
- Pray and actively look.
- What pain have you turned into victory—use that to minister.
- Be purposeful about building relationships in CCC and outside.
- Open your home.
- What skills, gifts and anointing do you have—use that to minister.