

Lighthouse Bible Church
June 17th, 2012 Father's Day
1st Thessalonians 2: 1 – 12
‘As a Father to his own children’

Stand – Read – Pray

Many times when Paul is writing to a church that he is overseeing, he uses **comparisons**, or **analogies** or **pictures** or **events** to communicate an important truth or to describe his love for them. For instance; in 2nd Timothy 2: 3 – 6 he tells Timothy to endure the ministry **as a good soldier... as an athlete... and as a farmer.**

He uses the analogy in 1st Corinthians 3: 7 in the sharing of the gospel as **one planting the seed and one watering the seed**, talking about sharing the gospel.

He uses an example of a judge's seat, a buildings foundation, and husband to his wife, a runner in a race, a soldiers armor, a thief in the night, an ox treading out grain, vessels of gold and silver, wood and clay and Paul travailing in birth like a mother, until Christ is formed in you and on and on...

Several times he uses an example of a love of a mother for her children like he does in our passage here in 1st Thessalonians 2: 7 **‘as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.** That is one way he loves the people of the church.

Then he changes to one final example in our passage of his relationship to the church and that is like **a father to his own children** in Verse 11.

Because this is father's day, I wanted to look at this comparison of a father to his own children by looking at Paul's relationship to the Thessalonian church.

From Verse 7 - 9 he uses the word **you** 7 times, in referring to the people in the church at Thessalonica. And he does so comparing his relationship with them to that of a nursing mother for her children. Then in verses 10 – 12 he changes the analogy to that of a father to his own children, and I trust it will be encouraging to you fathers.

Brief review of Verses 1 – 9.

Paul said his coming to Thessalonica was not in vain as 1 – 10 show
He said he came battered and bruised from what happened at Philippi
Paul said they were entrusted with the gospel and were sharing it in truth not to please men but to please God. They didn't flatter, they didn't use pretense and they didn't seek the glory from men.

He said they were gentle among them as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

As a mother longs for her children so Paul longed for the people of Thessalonica because he wanted to impart the gospel and his life to them and he was willing to work hard so as to not burden anyone.

Then he comes to Verses 10 – 12 and he shares what they are doing for the ministry of the people at the church of Thessalonica that compares to what a father does, or should do, for his own children.

And by the way, verses 8 – 9 can also be applied to the responsibility of a father to his children as well. His responsibility is to **impart the gospel** of Jesus Christ to his own children as **Proverbs 22: 6** and **Ephesians 6: 4** and **Deuteronomy 6: 6 – 9** says to do.

The father is also to impart **his own life** to his children. That word impart means to share with or to give and in this case it is the father sharing and giving himself to his kids.

We live in a day, don't we, when some fathers are too busy giving themselves to their **jobs** or to their **activities** and **interests** or **sports** or their **hobbies** or their **recreation** and not to their children.

The father is also to be one who is a hard worker, one who **labors and toils**, as the provider and example to his children as Paul was to the church at Thessalonica as 2nd Thessalonians 3: 8 – 9 says.

Now Paul, in Verses 10 – 12 deals specifically with his ministry to the Thessalonian church as compared to that of a father to his own children. Look at Verse 10

Verse 10: you are witnesses, and God also how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe.

Paul starts out by saying that one thing a father is to be to his own children is AN EXAMPLE in his **behavior**. Paul says there were 3 things that marked their behavior toward the people of the church that ought to mark every father's behavior to his own children by way of example.

He said you are our witnesses and God also how **devoutly**, how **justly** and how **blamelessly** we **behaved ourselves among you..** Those are 3 characteristics that should mark every father as it should every church leader.

The first one is behaving DEVOUTLY or living in a holy manner. The second is to behave JUSTLY or righteously and the third is to behave BLAMELESSLY or to have a good reputation with others.

That is a high standard and a high calling for men who are fathers or who will be fathers. It is a lifestyle of holy, righteous, blameless living that becomes a great example for his own children to see and follow.

Paul said in **Philippians 3: 17**: what all fathers should be able to say to their children. He said **join in following my example and not those who so walk as you have us for a pattern.**

Fathers, do your children have you as a pattern, as an example, to follow in holiness and righteousness and blamelessly? Paul says there are 3 more things that you as a father can do for your children and it is found in Verse 11.

Verse 11: as you know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father does his own children...

Paul says there are three more things that every father should do for his children and they are to **Exhort** them, **Comfort** them and **Charge** them. That word to exhort is *parakaleo* in the Greek language and it means to come alongside someone for the purpose of entreating, instructing, strengthening, admonishing or comforting.

By the way, it is the same work that the Holy Spirit does in the life of every believer according to **John 14: 16 – 17** and other places. It is a father coming alongside his children to aid and direct and instruct them in godly, holy, righteous living as the Holy Spirit does with us.

He also says that they COMFORTED them as a father does his own children. That word Comforted means to console through encouragement for the purpose of bringing comfort to someone.

That is a father's responsibility also, to encourage his children, to console them not to berate them or discourage them or to provoke them. By the way, all of these mean that a father has to invest in the lives of his children, not passively, but intentionally and consistently and often.

Paul says a father is not only to exhort and comfort but they are to CHARGE their children. The word for charge is *marturo* and it is where we get our English word Martyr from. It has the idea of testifying about something observed, to bear witness to something or to appeal on behalf of something.

It is the father who wants to tell his children, to testify to his children, about something he knows about or has observed. In verse 10 it says **you are WITNESSES**, it is the same root word. He says you have just observed how we have behaved ourselves, you witnessed that, you observed that and you can tell others about that as a witness.

Paul says to fathers, you have the obligation to testify, to witness, to bear witness to your children about what you have observed and that is what God has done in your life and how the word of God has affected your life.

Also, that witness and testimony are not only in what a father says to his children but by how he lives out, as a testimony of what he has observed and believed, for his children to bear witness of.

So fathers, it becomes a lifestyle for you to be that example for them to follow in how you behave yourself for an example for them to follow and what you say and do as an example for them to follow.

Do you want to know why that is so important fathers and why you want to be that example in everything you do and say? Verse 12 gives us the reason why it is so important.

Verse 12: that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

The whole purpose for fathers to live as a godly example and influence for their children is so that those children would **walk worthy of God**. Every Christian father and mother's greatest desire should be to see their children walking worthy of God in the maturity of their faith.

I think of what John wrote in **3rd John 1: 4** when he said **I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth**. He said in **2nd John 1: 4** **I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in the truth, as we received commandment from the Father**.

The desire of every Christian father is for their children to become born again believers that grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ to eternal life in heave, because they know the alternative is separation and eternal death. The father's desire for their children is:

Romans 6: 4 to walk in newness of life

2nd Corinthians 5: 7 to walk by faith and not by sight

Galatians 5: 16 to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh

Ephesians 2: 10 to walk in good works that God prepared beforehand for us to walk in

Ephesians 4: 1 to walk worthy of the calling with which we were called

Ephesians 5: 8 to walk as children of light

1st John 2: 6 says we are to walk as Jesus walked. Father's the call to you is to walk as Jesus walked so that your children will have an example, a pattern to follow. Have you ever noticed how many times your children try to do the very same things you do, or follow the very same way you walk?

You as fathers and mothers have the greatest influence and impact on your children by the way you behave in holiness, righteousness and uprightness and by what you say to them by way of exhortation and encouragement and what you know of God.

By the way, no child is left out of this parental, fatherly influence. Paul said in Verse 11 **every one of you**. His life and example impacted and influenced every one of the people in that congregation. Father's, your life and example can and should and will influence every one of your children.

What kind of legacy and example are you leaving for them to follow **as a father does his own children?** I will leave you with what **1st Corinthians 16: 13** says that would be a great example for all fathers and men to follow. **Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, (*androdzomai = act like men*) be strong, let all that you do be done with love.**

We need father's like that today don't we. Be that father to your children.

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2nd Timothy 2: 3 – 6, 1st Corinthians 3: 7

Verses 1 – 9: Setting the Context

Proverbs 22: 6, Ephesians 6: 4
Deuteronomy 6: 6 – 9, 2nd Thessalonians 3: 8 – 9

Verse 10: An Example in Behavior

Devoutly, Justly & Blamelessly
Philippians 3: 17

Verse 11: An Example in Speech

Exhort, Comfort & Charge
John 14: 16 – 17

Verse 12: The Purpose of a Fathers Example

3rd John 1: 4, 2nd John 1: 4, Romans 6: 4
2nd Corinthians 5: 7, Galatians 5: 16
Ephesians 2: 10, 4: 1, 5: 8
1st John 2: 6, 1st Corinthians 16: 13

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