



Week #3 Group Guide:

...To Find Real Hope In Jesus With

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Leader Notes:

- This week's message centered on Paul's example of bold gospel ministry in Philippi and Thessalonica. Despite persecution, Paul reminded the church that the gospel is not about manipulation or greed but about God's reign through Jesus Christ, who reconciles us to Himself. Encourage your group to wrestle with both the personal reconciliation and kingdom hope dimensions of the gospel while also encouraging them to consider how they are helping others to find real hope in Jesus.

Opening Questions:

- What's something in your life that you would risk a lot for? Paul risked his life to share the gospel. Are you risking in any ways to help others find hope?
- Think of a time when you encountered someone who was authentic in their faith. What stood out about their manner of life and their manner of blessing/sharing it with others?
- What do you think most people today associate with the word "gospel"?

Bible & Context: (refer to study notes on back)

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1–8 together.
2. Paul says his visit was "not without results" (v.1). What results was he speaking of? What results or fruit of the gospel do you see in your own life or in others?
3. In verse 2, Paul speaks of suffering in Philippi yet daring to tell the gospel "in the face of strong opposition." What does this teach us about boldness in our faith?
4. Pastor Mark defined "the gospel" this way:

"The gospel is **the good news**, that **our God reigns** (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)! He is **Savior and King**, and because of Jesus' work on the cross, **we can be reconciled** to God and **live in relationship** with him both **today and forevermore**."

 - ⇒ How do you see the kingdom nature of this gospel (God's reign breaking into the world and setting things right)?
 - ⇒ How do you see the personal nature of this gospel (your own reconciliation with God)?
 - ⇒ Do you tend to elevate one aspect of the gospel over the other? Why? How can we hold them together the way Paul does?
5. Verses 3–6 list ignoble ways of appealing to people (deception, impurity, flattery, greed, seeking praise). Which of these are still temptations for leaders and churches today?
6. In verses 7–8, Paul describes himself as a nurturing parent who shares not only the gospel but his own life. How does this shape the way we should approach sharing the good news of Jesus with people?

Getting Practical About Sharing Real Hope:

Paul reminds us in 1 Thessalonians 2:1–8 that authentic gospel ministry is not marked by manipulation or greed, but by boldness, integrity, and love. Below are five practices of 'Friendship Evangelism' that draw from Paul's example and research on effective church outreach today.

1) Practice a weekly “open table”

- Why it works: Hospitality lowers anxiety and builds trust; many non-Christians say their biggest hurdle is not knowing anyone at church.
- Paul-shaped posture: Gentleness, sharing life (1 Thess 2:7–8).
- Try this week: Pick one night to always leave an extra seat. Text a neighbor: “We do pasta on Wednesdays—want to join? No agenda.”

2) Lead with questions, not pitches

- Why it works: People are spiritually open but want conversation, not pressure. Listening first builds trust.
- Paul-shaped posture: “Not to please people, but God... God tests our hearts” (2:4)—no flattery, no spin.
- Try this week: Ask, “What’s your spiritual backstory?” Listen fully before sharing your own hope in Jesus.

3) Make invitation relational and low-pressure

- Why it works: Most attend something new only if they go with a friend. A no-pressure invite communicates hospitality.
- Paul-shaped posture: Bold truth without coercion (2:2).
- Try this week: Invite a friend to come with you to church or Alpha. Offer a ride, sit together, debrief after.

4) Open the Bible together—simply

- Why it works: Studies show reading the Bible is a leading pathway to faith. Let God’s word speak directly.
- Paul-shaped posture: Integrity in message, not rhetoric (2:3–5).
- Try this week: Suggest 4 coffees reading one short Gospel story each time (Mark 1:40–45; 2:1–12; 4:35–41; 5:21–43). Ask: “What stands out?”

5) Serve with friends in the city

- Why it works: Serving embodies the gospel and makes faith credible. Shared experiences open spiritual conversations.
- Paul-shaped posture: “Sharing not only the gospel but our own selves” (2:8).

Prayers Inspired by This Scripture

1. **Boldness** – Lord, give us courage to share the gospel even when it is uncomfortable or opposed.
2. **Integrity** – Lord, guard our hearts from selfish motives; help us seek only Your approval.
3. **Authenticity** – Lord, let our lives back up our words, so that we share not only the gospel but ourselves with others.
4. **Hope** – Lord, remind us that the gospel is both personal reconciliation and kingdom restoration. Root us in real hope in Jesus.
5. **Witness** – Lord, use our church to shine as a counter-cultural witness, declaring Jesus as Savior and King above all rivals.