

**WALKING OUT HIS WORD EACH DAY**  
**THE 1 THESSALONIANS SERIES**

**COMMENTARY**  
**ON MESSAGE #5**

February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

*“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory  
in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes?  
Is it not you? Indeed you are our glory and joy.”*  
I Thessalonians 2:19-20

**Q1:** Have you helped or influenced someone else to know Jesus, trust in Him or follow Him more closely?

**Q2:** In what way were you able to be this kind of influence?

How well do you think you understand the above text? It is the passage we studied as #5 in the I Thessalonian series. It gives us tremendous insight into the mind and the motives of Paul and the purpose of his life and ministry. A good way to understand what is being described is to think of Paul as being a **spiritual matchmaker**. You know what is normally meant by the term matchmaker. Such a person finds delight in bringing two people together who might not have otherwise found each other, or, if they did know each other, would not have gotten together as a couple without help.

Now, take the metaphor of a matchmaker a little further. You have worked hard to get a couple together. You already cared about them individually, but you knew that if they got together as a couple they would find much greater happiness together. And so, you make an investment of time. You talk to each of them about the other. Then they finally meet and get to know each other and become a couple. Then they get married and you are able to attend the wedding. As you see the joy upon their faces, how can their joy not become yours as well?

Sometime after the wedding they move away and you lose contact with them. Still, you never forget them and whenever you think about them you automatically wonder how they are and you hope they are doing well. Then one day, perhaps years later, your paths cross and to your delight you learn they are prospering as a couple and now they have children of their own who are greatly blessed to live with a mom and a dad who love each other. At that moment you think back to the role you played in bringing them together. Obviously they are the ones who did the real work in building a relationship that led to marriage and a family. You certainly don't want any credit for what they did! Still, they tell

you how glad they are that many years earlier you had played the role of matchmaker, and as you humbly consider all that has happened, a great sense of happiness and thankfulness fills your heart.

**Q3:** Based on this illustration, what do you think is meant by the term **spiritual matchmaker**?

It is hard to imagine accomplishing anything in this life that can honestly compare with the joy and satisfaction of knowing that something you said or did helped someone else come to know the Lord or grow to know Him better and serve, love and enjoy Him to a greater degree. Still, it is easy to get distracted by this world and become so invested in this world that we lose sight of eternal things.

The Christian who is overly involved in the things  
of this temporary world will not have a passion  
to influence and encourage other people  
with the things of eternity.

It wasn't just Paul who spent his life investing in others so that they might be encouraged to grow in the things of God.

*"To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.  
Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that  
all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.  
It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell me about  
your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth.  
I have no greater joy than to hear that my children **are walking in the truth.**"*  
III John 1:1-4

**Q4:** In this passage, which was a personal letter from John to his friend Gaius, what did John say gave him his greatest joy?

Okay, let's be honest. Is there some part of your thinking about this that says: "Well of course Paul and John lived this way. They were apostles and they were supposed to spend their lives investing in the lives that Christ had entrusted to them. But I am just a normal every day Christian. There's nothing special about me that would put me on their level."

Christian, you don't have to be an apostle or a pastor or a missionary to live the kind of life Paul lived and described in I Thessalonians 2:19-20. As a matter of fact, what Paul said to the Thessalonians about investing in their lives so much that they had become his hope, his joy and his crown is something that every Christian is called to.

Based on Scripture, I believe that part of our initial experience in Heaven will be spent thanking those who invested in our spiritual lives, and being thanked by those in whom we invested ... all to the glory of God.

**KEY:** Please read Romans 15:14!!!

**Q4:** What did Paul tell the average, typical, every day Christians in Rome they were competent or able to do for each other?

Now this is getting interesting. The word translated *instruct* in Romans 15:14 (some translations say *admonish* or *teach*) is the Greek word *nouthetein*. Have you heard the word **nouthetic**? Here at Grace Community Church we have a counseling ministry called Hope Ministries. Dozens of our people have gone to training seminars to learn how to apply the Bible to life's issues in counseling settings. A few of our people have completed the full training and are now certified nouthetic counselors.

**NOTE:** The parent organization used to be called the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (NANC)

The word *nouthetein* (instruct/admonish/teach) that Paul used in Romans 15:14 is a very rich term, full of meaning. It means to teach others in a way that is encouraging, and, when needed, correcting. For the Christian, it means to invest in the lives of other Christians in order to encourage, instruct, motivate, correct and help them grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (see II Peter 3:18). Notice that in Romans 15:14, all Christians are to be involved in this process. First, someone invests in my spiritual life to help me grow, and then I in turn can now invest in others.

By the way, the leadership of NANC finally, reluctantly, admitted that as much as they love the word "nouthetic" (and it is a beautiful word), it is unfamiliar to most people. They discovered that most of the time when they said they do nouthetic counseling and train other Christians to also do nouthetic counseling, people would get a confused expression on their faces and ask, "Nouthetic? What is that?" Here is their new name; "The Association of Certified Biblical Counselors" (ACBC). I guess that is easier than always having to explain what the word nouthetic means!

Does this mean that the only Christians at Grace Community Church who can invest and build into other Christians' spiritual lives are those who have attended an ACBC conference? NO! There is a very practical way to **WALK OUT HIS WORD EVERY DAY** in such a way that your life will be lived similarly to how Paul described his own life in I Thessalonians 2:19-20. All you have to do is put into practice the "one another's" of the New Testament.

1. According to I Peter 1:22 and I John 3:11, 4:11, we are to \_\_\_\_\_ one another. What should this look like in your daily walk?
2. According to Hebrews 3:13 and I Thessalonians 4:18 we are to \_\_\_\_\_ one another. How can you do this each day?
3. According to James 5:16 we should \_\_\_\_\_ for one another.

**NOTE:** Prayer is huge! Nothing you ever do for someone else will surpass the importance of praying for them. In I Thessalonians 3:11-13 (read it now) we find the perfect prayer to pray for others. If you pray this sincerely for others, someday in Heaven they will thank you for it.

4. According to Ephesians 4:32 we are to \_\_\_\_\_ . As we do these things for others, it will help them grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. According to Galatians 5:13, we are to \_\_\_\_\_ one another. What are some specific ways you can serve others that will help them grow in Christ? Are you currently doing these things?
6. According to Hebrews 10:24, we are to \_\_\_\_\_ on to what? If we put this command into practice in our daily lives it will make an eternal difference in our lives and in the lives of other Christians.

If you put these things into practice as a means of honestly helping other Christians walk with the Lord, imagine how it will be when together with them you see the Lord!!!