

1THESSALONIANS 1-3

How Paul Helped People Grow

STUDY AHEAD

We will take a break from our Letters Series on the post-Thanksgiving weekend. Then, on December 7/8 we will dive into the letters of 1 & 2 Thessalonians for 2 weeks. Both of these letters have a major emphasis on the *2nd Coming of Christ*. We will cover that teaching on December 14/15. On Dec.7/8 we will focus on 1Thess.1-3 where Paul gives more information on *how he disciplined people* than anywhere else in his letters. This section is a highly personal page out of Paul's personal diary, describing his methods, motives and emotions in the process of helping people grow in their faith in Christ.

1:2-10 Notice how Paul *prayed for people*, but also how he strongly *encouraged people* by commenting profusely on *what they were doing right*. Note: They were not doing *everything right* (see *ch.4:1-8*). But they were doing *many things right!*

Can you make a list of all the things he encourages them for?

2:1-12 This section is *the textbook* on how Paul went about the process of ministering to, caring for, and developing people. Ponder this section carefully. What kinds of attitudes and actions do you see in Paul, in terms of the way he shepherded people?

2:13-16 What had happened to the Thessalonian people after they accepted the gospel and became followers of Jesus? Why do you think this was such a big deal to Paul?

2:17-20 How did Paul really feel about these new believers?

3:1-5 What practical steps did Paul take to care for these new believers, when he was worried about them?

3:6-10 What impact did it have on Paul when Timothy returned from Thessalonica with news of the condition of the hearts of the believers there?

3:8 Study this verse. What made Paul feel *fully alive*?

3:11-13 This is a sort of benediction/prayer before Paul moves on to practical issues. What was his hope/prayer for these people?