

PREACHING CURRICULUM

A Little Encouragement Goes a Long Way

2 Thessalonians 1

We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.

1 REVIEW THE SERMON

LEADER NOTES: Encourage your members to pull out their notes and review the main points of the sermon. (9-12 mins)

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4. Why was Paul so thankful for the Thessalonian Christians? What virtues did he commend them for? What were these Christians experiencing when Paul wrote to them?

See verse 4. Why was Paul boasting about the Thessalonians to the other churches? Isn't boasting supposed to be wrong? Is there a difference between "good" boasting and "bad" boasting?

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10. What encouragement and hope does Paul give to the suffering Thessalonian believers? What is this hope based on? How does this hope differ from the "hope" that is typically offered by today's culture?

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12. What is Paul's prayer for the Thessalonian Christians? What does he mean when he prays that God "may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power"? What is he asking God to do?

2 ASSESS YOUR LIFE

LEADER NOTES: Evaluate the condition of your lives in relation to the truth from God's Word. Encourage heart examination. (12-15 mins)

When have you been discouraged in your Christian life? Are you discouraged right now? If so, why? What encouragement have you received from others during times of discouragement?

Think about the ways Paul encouraged the Thessalonian Christians in this passage. How does his approach to encouragement compare and contrast with the ways people typically encourage one another today? Is there a difference between specifically "Christian" encouragement and "worldly" encouragement?

3 APPLY THE TRUTH

LEADER NOTES: Create a list of ways to close the gap between your lives and the truth of the Bible. Be practical and intentional. (12-15 mins)

Review and summarize all the ways Paul encouraged and strengthened the Thessalonians in this passage. How might we encourage each other in these same ways? Why are we so often oblivious when other people are discouraged? How might we become more aware of others' needs for encouragement?

What are some wrong ways to encourage others? What mistakes do people typically make when they attempt to encourage others? How might we avoid these same mistakes?

4 COMMIT THIS WEEK

LEADER NOTES: Call your small group members to make a commitment and get the group working together to follow-up with each other. (9-12)

Is there anyone in your life who is in need of encouragement? If so, how might you encourage them this week?