

Title: What Can a Church Member Reasonably Expect from the Leadership?

Text: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Date: Sept 24, 2017

Background. In this section, Paul elaborates on two points he raised in the first chapter of the letter. 1) The Thessalonians witnessed the kind of behavior Paul modeled while he was in Thessalonica and 2) The true nature/character of Paul's visit to Thessalonica.

The Issue: Undoubtedly Paul was sensing that angry Jews would sweep into the city and accuse Paul (behind his back) of being a charlatan, a greedy preacher just in it for the money, or a false prophet of some kind.

Main Idea: In 1 Thess 2:1-12, Paul is stating that authentic Christian leaders will reflect a genuine love for and commitment to the people they have been called to lead.

2:1-2 We didn't let our past affliction stop us from ministering to you.

2:3-6 We didn't try to deceive you, flatter you, or profit off of you. We simply arrived in Thessalonica to fulfill God's call on our lives → to share the Gospel with you.

2:7-8, 11 Like family, we shared with you our personal lives. We hid nothing from you.

2:9-10, 12 Our ministry was never designed to burden you, but to instead bless you and motivate you to go the distance for God.

Questions:

- 1) Why are some church members naturally suspicious of their pastors/leaders?
- 2) Do ministers often let past disappointments keep them from being "all in" their present ministry situation? Does the past affect the pastor-church member dynamic?
- 3) Do people in your small group see you as a leader who is willing to go the distance for Christ? How does your life reflect this kind of commitment?
- 4) Is your spiritual motivation based more in a desire to please people, or to please God?
- 5) Do you share your life with people in your church? What can you do to let others get to know you better? (Testimony could be done here.)
- 6) What are some ways pastors can be "real" in the presence of their people? What are some ways people can be supportive of pastoral authenticity?
- 7) Reflect on this statement: *If it's not the passion of the church leader, it probably won't be the passion of the church member.* Is this also true in your small group? In your family? In your workplace?
- 8) What are you doing to reach the lost around you? What is stopping you from doing more?