



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V25 N4 January 22, 2023

NOT HOME YET

“Pattern of Life”

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Disciple-Making

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”

2 Timothy 2:2



What does disciple-making look like?

The best disciple-makers are more than *instructors*. Disciple-making no doubt involves instruction, both formal and informal, but the best disciple-makers are whole persons with personalities and relationships who *instruct, model, encourage, and motivate* their disciples. Their disciple-making is informed and shaped by who they are and what they have learned from their experiences. In a nutshell, the best disciple-makers cannot be reduced to merely the *task* they perform.

While Paul was unquestionably a disciple-maker—about whom we know much—he was no doubt surrounded by other disciple-makers—about whom we know little. One of the lesser known but best disciple-makers in the New Testament is Barnabas, whose name appears twenty-eight times in the book of Acts—first in chapter 4 in connection with the sale of a piece of land he owned and last in chapter 15 in connection with a “sharp disagreement” he had with Paul over whether to take John Mark on their second missionary journey.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (c. A.D. 33) resulted in the conversion of 3,000 Jews. About them, Luke writes: “All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need” (Ac 2:42-45). Joseph, whom the apostles nicknamed Barnabas, meaning “son of encouragement,” was one of those who ensured that there were “no needy persons” among the community of believers (4:34) by selling a real estate investment and bringing the money to the apostles (v. 37).

Paul was converted about two years after Pentecost (c. A.D. 35). Three years or so after his conversion (Ac 9:1-7) and subsequent stay in Damascus and Arabia, the apostle came to Jerusalem and tried to join the disciples there (vv. 26-29; cf. Gal 1:18-20), but they refused to accept him because they feared him. Fortunately, Barnabas vouched for him, verifying that Paul had in fact seen the Lord on the road to Syria and that after the Lord had spoken to him, he had in fact “preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus” in Damascus (Ac 9:27). His endorsement made

it possible for Paul to “move about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord” (v. 28).

About three years later, following Peter’s ministry to the Gentiles (Ac 10:1-11:18), the gospel spread to Antioch (11:19-21). The church in Jerusalem wasn’t sure what to make of the reports they were hearing from Antioch, so they sent trusted Barnabas to investigate (v. 22), and when he arrived (c. A.D. 41), he did what Barnabas always did—he “*encouraged* them all” (v. 23). What’s more, he went to Tarsus to look for Paul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch to minister there (c. A.D. 43). “So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch” (Ac 11:26).

It was from the great city of Antioch that Paul and Barnabas set out on their first missionary journey (c. A.D. 48-49; cf. Ac 13-14), and from it that they later decided to go on a second journey. They wanted to return to the towns where they had previously preached to see how those who had responded to their message were doing. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark who had previously “deserted them in Pamphylia” (Ac 13:13), but Paul refused. Their sharp disagreement was resolved by Paul taking Silas on his second missionary journey (c. A.D. 50-52; cf. Ac 15:35-18:22) and Barnabas taking Mark to Cyprus. Nearly two decades later, Paul finds himself nearing the end of his life in prison in Rome (c. A.D. 67). He writes to Timothy, telling him, “Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry” (2Ti 4:11). When Paul abandoned John Mark like John Mark had abandoned him, Barnabas stepped in to invest in the young man’s life; over time he instructed, modeled, encouraged, and motivated him. And clearly his disciple-making paid off. Not only did John Mark turn out to be valuable to Paul, but he also turned out to be the author of the Second Gospel, the Gospel of Mark. (for dates see Harold Hoehner, “A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age,” in *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament* by H. Wayne House, 129-32; cf. *The NIV Study Bible*, 1844-45).



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

2 We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. 3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4 For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. 6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 7 And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, 9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Read in another translation

2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, 3 remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. 9 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (ESV)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- In the margin next to v. 5b, write, "Cf. 2:3-12."
- Circle "imitators" in v. 6.
- Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 6.
- Circle "joy" in v. 6.
- Box "and so" indicating *result* in v. 7.
- Circle "model" in v. 7.
- Underline "rang out" in v. 8a.
- Highlight v. 8a.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Paul writes, “You know *how we lived* among you” (v. 5). Why did that matter?
2. Of *whom* exactly did the Thessalonians become imitators?
3. Of *what* exactly did the Thessalonians become imitators?
4. From *whom* did the Thessalonians experience severe suffering? Explain.
5. *What* exactly did the Thessalonians welcome with joy?
6. The Thessalonians experienced joy within. Why so?
7. In verse 7, “a model” is singular. What does that suggest to you?
8. In verse 7, “and so” indicates *result*. As a result of *what* did the Thessalonians become a model to other believers?
9. Identify *what* “rang out” from Thessalonica and suggest *why*.
10. **Discussion:** Disciple-Making is the Central Practice associated with this text. Talk about how this text illustrates that Central Practice.

Commentary On The Text

Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians begins with his customary *opening* – identifying the sender and the recipients of the epistle, followed by the greeting “grace and peace to you” – in verse 1. This customary opening is followed by an expression of thanksgiving – also a customary feature of Paul's letters – for the Thessalonians' response to the gospel, offered in verses 2-10 by the apostle and his two co-workers. Based on the structure of the thanksgiving, it can be divided into two parts. The first part is found in verses 2-5a, which describe the response of the Thessalonians to the gospel Paul preached (see Ac 17:1-9), and in verses 8b-10, which allude to that response to the gospel as reported by others everywhere “the Lord's message rang out” (v. 8). The second part is found in verses 5b-8a, which describe how they became imitators of Paul and then models for others throughout Macedonia and Achaia to imitate. The second part of the thanksgiving will be examined in this issue of *The Scrolls*.

In the middle of verse 5, Paul writes: “You know how we lived among you for your sake.” The way of life with which the Thessalonians are familiar with is described in 2:1-16, where Paul details the nature of his ministry among them (vv. 1-12; cf. Ac 17:1-10) and the nature of their response to the gospel (vv. 13-16). His passing allusion to “we” behavior in verse 5 is meant to emphasize the integrity of their gospel ministers, who preached the message of Jesus to them – that is, “Paul and his companions” (Ac 17:1), namely, Silas and Timothy, who presented the gospel not only through their words but also through their actions. One commentator explains: “A message designed to change its hearers' lives would lack all effectiveness if the preachers' conduct was manifestly inconsistent with it. It was important, when the gospel was brought to people who had never heard it before that those people should see Christianity in action – and where would they see it, if not in the conduct of those who brought it?” (F. F. Bruce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 45, 1 and 2 *Thessalonians*, 15). Clearly, had the Thessalonians been oblivious to the lifestyle of Paul and his companions, they could not have, as Paul says in verse 6, “become imitators of us and of the Lord.”

Verses 6-8 describe the sequential stages in the process of making disciple-makers – *imitators* become *models* that others *imitate*; put differently, *followers* become *examples* that others *follow*. After responding to the gospel, the Thessalonians became *imitators* of

Paul, Silas, and Timothy, making them imitators of the Lord, since Paul and his companions were imitating Christ. The apostle writes elsewhere: “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1Co 11:1). Just as members of the churches in Judea had welcomed the message of the gospel and had suffered from the Jews, so also had the Thessalonians welcomed the message of the gospel with joy in spite of the severe suffering that accompanied it (2:14-15). As another commentator observes: “The Jews among them must have felt the hatred of their unbelieving brothers in the flesh who, as has been pointed out, were especially antagonistic to the gospel in that city. The Gentile converts must have had to swim against the swift current of paganism that flowed like a torrent through the conduit of commercial Thessalonica. And the city's chief men's wives, who had become Christians, had to go home to unbelieving husbands who would not have appreciated their newly sensitized consciences” (Thomas L. Constable, “1 Thessalonians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 692).

As a result of becoming imitators of Paul and his companions, the Thessalonians became “a model” to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia (v. 7). Notice that “a model” is singular, suggesting that Paul is speaking about the Thessalonian church *corporately* rather than Thessalonian believers *individually*. In this way, the *church* at Thessalonica became a “model” church, that is, a church for other churches to imitate. For example, on a later occasion, Paul boasted to the Corinthian church about the churches of Macedonia, which included Thessalonica, with special reference to their generous giving (2Co 8:1-5). The example of the Thessalonian church was observed not only in its own province of Macedonia but also in the province of Achaia (comprising central and southern Greece), which adjoined it on the south. According to the apostle, “The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia – your faith in God has become known everywhere” (v. 8). A third commentator writes: “Having received the gospel, the Thessalonian Christians had no thought of keeping it to themselves; by word and life they make it know to others. From the beginning they functioned as a missionary church” (F. F. Bruce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 45, 1 and 2 *Thessalonians*, 16).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 6 *imitators* “The genuine character of the religious experience of the Thessalonians is portrayed here. They had become imitators (*mimētai*, our word *mimickers* is from the same root), not merely talkers” (William Hendriksen, *Exposition of 1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Testament Commentary, 53). “The order in Christian imitation: (1) Believers in Macedonia and Achaia imitated the Thessalonians (v. 7), just as the Thessalonians imitated the churches in Judea (2:14); (2) the Thessalonians imitated Paul, just as the Corinthians did (1Co 4:6; 11:1) and just as all believers were to imitate their leaders (2Th 3:7,9; 1Ti 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Pe 5:3); (3) Paul imitated Christ (1Co 11:1), as did the Thessalonians (here); (4) all were to imitate God (Eph 5:1).” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on 1Th 1:6).

v. 6 *joy* The Thessalonians “welcomed the message” – not the “severe suffering” – “with joy.” Cf. “and you became imitators of us and of the Lord when, in spite of severe persecution, you welcomed the message with joy from the Holy Spirit” (NET). “They had welcomed the gospel message, even though it had meant much suffering for them because of the persecution that had come from unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. Most of the New Testament writers took for granted that tribulation is the normal experience of Christians (cf. John 16:33; Acts 14:22). Nevertheless with affliction joy had also come to them, *the joy of sins forgiven*. This is one of the oxymorons (apparent contradictions) of the Christian life” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Thessalonians,” 2022 ed., 16, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1thessalonians.pdf).

v. 7 *a model* Or “an example” (ESV, NET). The majority of Gk. manuscripts have the plural *tupous* (cf. “examples” NKJV), while a few important manuscripts have the singular *tupos*. “Scribes would be expected to change the singular to the plural here. Although the external evidence for the singular reading is not overwhelming, the internal evidence for it is compelling” (*The NET Bible*, 15tc on 1Th 1:7). The singular pronoun suggests the referent is the whole congregation rather than the members of it viewed individually (cf. 2Co 8:1-8). “His word for ‘example’ is *tupos*, from which we get our word ‘type.’ Originally it denoted the mark left by a blow. There is an example of this in John 20:25, where it is translated ‘print.’ Then it came to be used of a figure stamped by a blow, like the design stamped on a

coin. From that it came to denote any image, whether stamped or not (as in Acts 7:43), and then a pattern (Acts 7:44, Heb. 8:5). Next we find the ethical sense of a pattern of conduct, occasionally of a pattern to be avoided (1 Cor. 10:6), but more usually, as here, of an example to be followed (Titus 2:7, 1 Pet. 5:3, etc.)” (Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, NICNT, 60). “One who is not an imitator cannot become an *example*” (Hendriksen, 53).

v. 8 *rang out* Cf. “sounded forth” (ESV); “echoed forth” (NET). “The word *exēchētai*, translated **rang out**, could be rendered ‘reverberated.’ Paul saw the Thessalonians as amplifiers or relay stations that not only received the gospel message but sent it farther on its way with increased power and scope” (Thomas L. Constable, “1 Thessalonians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 692).

v. 8 *everywhere* Cf. “not only in Macedonia and Achaia but also in every place” (NKJV; cf. NET, HCSB). “*alla* has the force of *alla kai* (‘but also’): ‘not only in Macedonia and Achaia’ but even farther afield the news of their faith and witness had penetrated” (Bruce, 17). “This reflects something of the strategic situation of Thessalonica, on the great highway, the Via Egnatia, and with a harbor giving ready access to many places by sea” (Morris, 61). The Via Egnatia, built c. 130 B.C., served as the main road from Rome to the east, linking Rome to Constantinople.

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

The church at Thessalonica was a disciple-making church that continues to set an example for other churches to follow.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

My daughter had a little dirt bike, wheelie, ditch incident the other day and fractured her elbow. One trip to urgent care later, she's in a splint from armpit to fingertips. Though there are six other family members around to help, she insists on doing everything by herself. Opening a pickle jar, she's got it. Washing her own hair, she'll handle it, thank you very much. I had a little flashback to when I broke my wrist several years ago and insisted on doing everything by myself because I was fully capable. I suppose she comes by this stubborn quality naturally. I learned this lovely headstrong determination from my father. As they say, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Our kids are always watching us. They see our actions, hear our words and pick up on our attitudes. While I would prefer my kids take the best of my qualities and throw away the less than desirable aspects, it looks like they're picking up on it all. What are you modeling for your kids? When they accidentally spill milk, do they witness great patience or intense frustration? When you come home from work, are you cranky about your day or happy to see all their new tricks? During trials, do your kids hear you complaining or faithfully trusting God? None of us are perfect, but thankfully we serve a perfect God. With His help, we can right this ship and model godly behavior for our kids. Pick one or two things to change this month and prayerfully ask for God's help. He is able to more than we could ever ask or imagine!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

1. How was the gospel revealed to the Thessalonians?
2. How were Paul and his friends a model of the gospel?
3. How were the Thessalonians a model for other believers?

What Do You Think?

How can a person be joyful in times of suffering?

What Do You Do?

Model your parents' activities this week. Follow their lead and do what they do (eat when they eat, exercise when they exercise, read the Bible at the table with them).

CORE COMPETENCY: Disciple-Making

I multiply godly beliefs, qualities and behaviors in others to encourage them to grow in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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