Introduction

Today we begin a new study in I Thessalonians. Two themes stand out.

- The second coming of Christ.
- The emphasis on discipleship.

Acts 17:1-9


“These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here.”

Paul and Silas had been to 5 cities and started 4 new churches, in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Corinth, and all were on shaky ground.

It is from Corinth that Paul will write these letters to the Thessalonians to encourage and instruct them in their faith.

What can we learn from Paul’s example of discipleship and church planting?

I. A Team Based Ministry. I Thessalonians 1:1

Paul always traveled with others on his missionary journeys.

- Silas was a Jew by birth and a leader in the Jerusalem church.
- Timothy was a young disciple whom Paul had met in Lystra.

Paul worked with a team and instructed others to do the same.

“The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders (plural) in every town, as I directed you.” Titus 1:5

Why is it important to have a team based approach to ministry?

No one person has all the gifts to start a church or lead a ministry?

II. A God-centered Ministry. I Thessalonians 1:1b

This is God’s church, not mine or yours.

It is his mission that we follow.
“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
Matthew 28:18-20

“Our mission is to glorify God by making healthy multiplying disciples who will work together to reach the world for Jesus Christ.”

Why is it important to have a God-centered ministry?

Keeping that focus can be a challenge because we live in a world that is very self-centered.

“What stands out in Paul’s vision of the church is its God-centeredness.”

III. A Life Changing Ministry. I Thessalonians 1:2-3

Paul thanked God for the change that had taken place in their lives.

Three things stood out to him.

- Their work produced by faith.
- Their labor prompted by love.
- Their endurance inspired by hope.

Real faith produces action.

Real love labors on behalf of others.

Real hope inspires endurance.

Why is it important to have a life changing ministry?

“This is to my Father’s glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”
John 15:8

Conclusion

These are the qualities God wants to build into us.

- A faith that works.
- A love that labors.
- A hope that endures.

These are the qualities he wants to build into our church.

- A Team Based Ministry
- A God-centered Ministry
- A Life Changing Ministry.