

Sermon Title: The Picture of a Consistent Concern, Part 1

Sermon Text: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to appreciate the concern that the Pastor and member have for one another.

Sermon Proposition: There are 4 major reflections of Pastoral and membership concern.

- I. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the affection for his spiritual children. V.1a**
- II. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the sacrifice for his spiritual children. V.1b-2a**
- III. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the compassion for his spiritual children. V.2b-4**
- IV. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the protection for his spiritual children. V.5**

I. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the affection for his spiritual children. V.1a

There is a concern about a real danger concerning their continuation in the faith! Paul's or the Pastor's strong affection for his spiritual children results in intense emotional pain during a forced separation.

The desire is to see them stay loyal to the truth and experience spiritual maturity. (**Acts 17:4; 18:1, 5**)

2 Corinthians 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

2 Corinthians 3:2-4 You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; **3** clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart. **4** And we have such trust through Christ toward God.

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, **13** I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.

II. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the sacrifice for his spiritual children. V.1b-2a

Love always gives itself away, love sacrifices for the greater good and need of others. Paul initially came to Athens alone (Acts 17:4) but Timothy and Silas eventually joined him (v.15). After some time Paul sent Timothy.

Paul saw Timothy as his brother in Christ, his warm and positive affection for Timothy demonstrates the close trusting relationship. But his love for the Thessalonian Christians, mandated he sacrifice his time with Timothy to send him away to determine their spiritual and physical welfare.

1 Corinthians 4:17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

1 Corinthians 16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*.

Philippians 2:19-24 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. **20** For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. **21** For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. **22** But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. **23** Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. **24** But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

III. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the compassion for his spiritual children. V.2b-4

A. The concern wants to see them strengthen in the faith.

Paul mentions this phrase 5 times in this section (vv. 2, 5, 6, 7, 10). Strengthen means to support or buttress something with the intent of establishing it. Strong faith is a result of knowing all that God has revealed, and has a firm foundation in sound doctrine.

B. The concern wants to see them encouraged in the faith. Encouragement pictures someone coming alongside and motivating people to live out that sound doctrine. Timothy's task was to make the foundation of their spiritual children faith solid and unwavering so they could have confidence to apply the truth.
(Ephesians 1:18-19; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 3:3)
Acts 14:21-22 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, **22** strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."
Acts 15:32 Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.
Romans 1:11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—

C. The concern wants to see them steadfast in the faith. V.3
(Matthew 5:11-12; 10:24-25)
2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."
James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
1 Peter 5:10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

IV. The Pastor's concern is reflected in the protection for his spiritual children. V.5

This was Paul's concern for all the churches and Christians everywhere.

2 Corinthians 11:28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Acts 20:29-30 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. **30** "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

Three basic ways Satan tempts as a strategy:

1. His first assault is to prevent people from believing. (**2 Corinthians 4:4**)
2. His second assault is to destroy someone's initial interest in the gospel. (**Matthew 13:20-21**)
3. His third assault is to strive to weaken the faith of those who believe. (**James 1:12-18**)
2 Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.
Galatians 2:1-2 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. **2** And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.
Philippians 2:15-16 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **16** holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.