

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Face to Face: Minister to People

Pastor Marcus Lane

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What have you been up to in quarantine?

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Outline:

- I. The "why" of Paul's ministry (v1-6)
 - a. Paul ministers out of faithfulness, not a desire for success or glory.
 - b. This "why" is important for the church today, as temptation arises to compromise faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus for the sake of cultural relevance.

Q: Why is it notable that Paul and Silas "had boldness"? (see Acts 17:1-9)
- II. The "how" of Paul's ministry (v7-8)
 - a. Paul doesn't seek conflict, but looks to share the gospel with gentleness and humility.
 - b. When we encounter the gentleness, kindness and humility of our God, we cannot help but reflect that in the way we share His message.

Q: Why did Paul and Silas care for the Thessalonians so much?
- III. The "what" of Paul's ministry (v9-12)
 - a. Paul's hope for the Thessalonians is that they reach maturity by walking in a manner worthy of God. He wants to draw them into his "why": Jesus.
 - b. When our "what" is forced to change, our "why" becomes even more important. Even as ministry changes in a time of isolation, the gospel of Jesus moves us forward.

Q: How does Paul's attitude in verse 11 reflect God's attitude towards us?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Does our "why" in ministry change in light of isolation?
- 2) How does one be gentle when sharing the gospel?
- 3) Are you tempted to defend Jesus?
- 4) Has the way you walk with Jesus (your "what") changed recently?
- 5) What's your reaction to hearing that the gospel is still for you?

Suggestions for further study:

- Acts 16:11-17:9 **Q: What is remarkable about the first people in Philippi who come to believe in the gospel?**
- Ephesians 4:1-16 **Q: What qualities does the author say should mark our walk?**
- 1 Peter 3:15-17 **Q: What is the reason for the hope in you?**

Closing Prayer: "God, we ask that you would remind us once again why we exist, why this church exists, and why our lives have been set apart. Lord, remind us once again that our "why" is Jesus: his life, that He has given over and taken up again for the life of the world. God, we ask that that "why" would shape us, that it would send us to go and love others with gentleness and self-sacrificing love. Lord, we ask that this "why" would shape us, that our lives would be so wrapped up in it that we would reflect more and more the gift of Jesus, given for the world. We pray this all in His name. Amen."