

1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

August 24, 2025

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker: What is one food item that you tried to make at home that was an utter failure?

What is one thing that you're thankful for?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

1. The Boldness of the Ministry

V2 — But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.

Question: How many times throughout the chapter does Paul reference his time with the Thessalonians with phrases like "as you know?" Why is this significant?

Discussion: Paul says that they had boldness in their ministry among the Thessalonians. When you hear the word "bold" what type of person comes to mind?

"Boldness/confidence is an expectation of a positive outcome. It's not so much a personality trait; it's an assessment" (Rosabeth Moss Kanter)

Question: How is being bold in God different from having a bold personality? What are some areas where you rely more on yourself than on God?

"No secret of Christian ministry can be any more important than its fundamental God-centeredness" (John Stott)

Question: The open secret to Paul's ministry is that he has the approval of God. What are some of the ways in which we can be most tempted to orient our lives around the approval of others?

Question: What was the "positive outcome" that Paul was working towards through his ministry?

- To see results. More conversions!
- To modify behavior. These people need to get with the program!
- To please God. To be faithful and leave the heavy lifting in His hands
- To avoiding persecution. Maybe we can get settled, get in a rhythm, get a church building and things will be peaceful for a while.

The Mechanics of Ministry

1. Ministry that's personal

"We were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."

Question: What were some of the ways that the missionaries did this with the Thessalonians?

Discussion: What does it look like to share not only the gospel, but also our lives? Why does this have the potential to be so impactful?

Discussion: Who has done this for you (can be big ways or small ways)? How has it impacted your faith?

Discussion: What are small, practical ways you could "share your life" with someone this week?

2. Ministry that's thankful

"And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers." (V13)

Question: How did the Thessalonians receive the word? What is it that the word is doing in their lives (see the end of v13; also 4:9)?

Discussion: Paul's thankfulness centers on the fact that the Thessalonians received God's Word and that the Lord was at work among them. What's the danger of treating our faith as something to "add on" to our life rather than our whole life?

In Closing: Take just a few minutes to thank God for His Word that is living, active, and still changing lives today. Pray that He would give us boldness, not in ourselves, but in Him. And ask Him to help us to share the gospel and also our lives.