



More Than Words

Sermon Series on 1 Thessalonians

September - November 2009

This Book Belongs to _____

“Modeling Ministry”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10 • Luke 2:52

Introduction

Reputation is a big deal. When someone comments, “Your reputation precedes you,” it’s a way of saying that your history walks into the room before you do. It doesn’t matter if you have a good one or a bad one your reputation impacts the way people think about you.

Every person has a reputation and, guess what, every church has a reputation. Every Christian shapes the impression people have of the church (locally, regionally and globally). We shape the church’s reputation. The church in Thessalonica had a great reputation. They were known as, “...a model to all believers.” Their faith had become known everywhere according to Paul.

A church can have a reputation based on a number of things like worship, youth programs, facilities, etc. But a church should strive to have a reputation based on faith. From faith flows health. When this happens, you become – as a church – a model for ministry.



Sermon Notes

Paul and his co-workers were prayerfully thankful for three characteristics displayed and modeled by the Christians in Thessalonica:

- Work _____ from faith
- Labor and _____ prompted by love
- _____ endurance inspired by hope

To model ministry to others you need...

- The ability to be _____
- Examples who _____ what they

- _____ beyond _____
- A message that _____
and _____
- An _____ to receive the _____

We are here to _____ and _____.

Your Own Thoughts

Small Talk

1. When I was a young boy, I loved working on models. Opening a box with a new model in it was exciting. Why do you think building a model would be “fun” and “exciting” for someone?

2. One aspect of building models I didn't necessarily enjoy was following the instructions. The instructions are important. Why? In what ways are the instructions themselves a "model"?

3. On the box of every model was a picture of the finished product. I found myself constantly looking at the picture while I worked on building. Why do you think people do this?

Text Talk

1. Who is writing this letter and who is receiving it?

2. Why is Paul so grateful for the Thessalonians?

3. In what way(s) did they serve as a model or example for other Christians? What is the significance of the Macedonian and Achaian Christians being influenced by the Thessalonians?

Life Talk

1. Why should a church desire to be a model for other communities of faith? Should a church desire to influence other churches in this fashion?

2. Paul suggests that becoming a model of ministry requires the ability to follow and lead. Why is it a basic truth of life that good leaders have to be good followers?

3. Who do you look to as a personal example of Christian living? Who do you try to imitate when it comes to faith?

4. If people were to imitate one of your stronger qualities, what would you recommend they imitate?

5. If churches were to look at the Northwest Church as a model or example, what qualities would you encourage them to embrace? What weaknesses need to be strengthened?

Beyond Talk

Paul encouraged Christians through writing. A written note is a powerful tool. Before leaving your group session, write a note of appreciation and encouragement to someone you love in the Lord.

**15555 15th Avenue NE
Shoreline, WA 98155
www.nwchurch.net
206.364.2275**