



# More Than Words

## Sermon Series on 1 Thessalonians

September - November 2009

This Book Belongs to \_\_\_\_\_



OCTOBER 25

## ***“Ambitious Agenda”***

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 • Ecclesiastes 7:16 • John 13:34-35

### **Introduction**

Loud Christians are annoying Christians. I’m not suggesting that prophetic voices don’t have their place in the expansion of the Kingdom, but I haven’t observed many conversions through bumper sticker or loudspeaker Christianity. Solomon encourages us to avoid being over-righteous. That’s a lesson many need to learn.

Paul states the same idea when he writes, “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands...” The entire goal of this approach is to be an effective witness to non-believers.

## Sermon Notes

\_\_\_\_\_ have amazing power. One of these for the Apostles was \_\_\_\_\_...something we know you just can't assume.

Love can be assumed when \_\_\_\_\_ is the center of your theology.

There are several regions of love we need to consider:

Loving the people at \_\_\_\_\_.

Loving the \_\_\_\_\_ in and around \_\_\_\_\_.

Loving our \_\_\_\_\_ (this flows from a love for \_\_\_\_\_).

Loving our \_\_\_\_\_ & fellow \_\_\_\_\_

Effective, evangelistic love is, " \_\_\_\_\_ your own \_\_\_\_\_" living.

Our daily lives are not designed to win \_\_\_\_\_ but to win \_\_\_\_\_. This is really a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ issue.

Paul is calling a \_\_\_\_\_ people to strive for \_\_\_\_\_ in relationship to the world.

## Your Own Thoughts

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## Small Talk

When I grew up, going to college was never a choice -- it was an assumption. This was a positive assumption that really helped shape my life. Share with your life group one positive assumption in your life that is really beneficial.

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## Text Talk

1. Paul says he doesn't need to write them about brotherly love or brotherly kindness. The word used here is *philadelphias* (Greek) and is the same word for Philadelphia, "The City of Brotherly Love." Why wouldn't Paul need to write about brotherly love? According to verses 9 & 10, why isn't this an issue for the Thessalonians?

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2. The language used by Paul in verse 12 indicates that our dealings with those who are "outside" of the Christian community must be done with decency and honesty. By doing this, we don't become financially dependent on those who are not Christians. Why would this instruction be important for Christians both then and now?

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## Life Talk

1. Many churches aren't known for their love. They have a history of being divisive and destructive. And yet, Jesus said, "By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35) Why is loving each other so important to reaching unbelievers? Why is loving each other so difficult?

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2. How do we maintain a healthy level of independence ("...so that you will not be dependent on anybody.") while also demonstrating the vulnerability that makes us real and authentic to people? How does our money play into this? How does our "mouth" affect this? How does our interaction with the world shape this?

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3. When you think about Christians who are pushy with their faith or over-righteousness (Ecclesiastes 7:16) around non-believers, doesn't Paul seem to make a lot of sense?

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Why is a quiet, focused life more powerful than a loud, pushy life?

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## **Beyond Talk**

We all want to be like Jesus. When you think of the simplicity of His life and the love that came through His life, what do you want to change to be more in line with His example?

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**15555 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Shoreline, WA 98155  
[www.nwchurch.net](http://www.nwchurch.net)  
206.364.2275**