

A Biblical Model for "Spiritual Parenting" (Personal Discipleship) - Biblical Discussion

The apostle Paul describes his heart attitude towards those he disciple. **1 Thessalonians 2:3-13 (from Paul, with Silas and Timothy)**

1. THEY WERE SINGLE-MINDED IN PURPOSE -- 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6

...we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed - God is witness - nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

2. THEY CARED FOR THE BELIEVERS AS A MOTHER CARES FOR HER CHILDREN -- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing MOTHER tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

3. THEY BECAME "ROLE MODELS" TO THE NEW BELIEVERS -- 1 Thessalonians 2:9-10

you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;

4. THEY GAVE INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION AND INSTRUCTION AS A FATHER -- 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring EACH ONE of you as a FATHER would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

5. THE WORD OF GOD WAS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF DISCIPLESHIP -- 1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

6. Paul's concern for the believers went beyond that of just a "teacher". He was committed to their spiritual welfare and growth.

Tim. 2:10 **I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen,...**

1 Cor. 11:1 **Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.**

Phil. 3:17 (Paul to the Philippians) Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

Phil. 4:9 **The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things,** and the God of peace will be with you

1 Thess. 1:6-7 (Paul to the Thessalonian believers) **You also became imitators of us and of the Lord,** having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

2 Thess. 3:7-9 **For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example,** because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.

1 Tim. 4:12 (Paul to Timothy) **in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.**

2 Tim. 3:10-11 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings,

Titus 2:7-8 (Paul to Titus) **in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds,** with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Paul recognized that each believer is unique and needs individual attention.

Acts 20:31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

Col. 1:28-29 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete (mature) in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15-18 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

A goal of the discipler should be to help the disciple (apprentice) to mature, function, be fruitful, and to spiritually reproduce.

