

## 1 THESSALONIANS 2:1–12, GOD'S FAMILY VALUES

<sup>1</sup>For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, <sup>4</sup>but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed— God is witness. <sup>6</sup>Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. <sup>7</sup>But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. <sup>8</sup>So, being affectionately desirous of you, 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.

<sup>9</sup>For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup>You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. <sup>11</sup>For you know how, like a father with his children, <sup>12</sup>we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

### Discussion Questions (Choose a manageable number to discuss)

1. How (vv. 3 and 5) were the Apostle Paul's detractors in Thessalonica attempting to discredit the gospel message he had preached?
2. What did Paul cite (vv. 4 and 6) as evidence that their charges were baseless?
3. What—besides courageous boldness (v. 3)—authenticated the gospel message Paul preached? See verse 10.
4. What aspects of a mother's care (vv. 7–9) illustrate God's nature?
5. What aspects of a father's child-raising (vv. 11–12) illustrate God's nature?
6. How do these characteristics of positive parenting build a solid nuclear family?
7. How could these characteristics be replicated in the larger church family?
8. How does the other-centered commitment described in verse 8 become woven into the fabric of a local Church?  
Are you actively committed to this deeply relational lifestyle?  
For whom are you caring?
9. Dr. David Jackman stated that what an unbelieving world needs to see of the gospel "product" is not more sales pitches but more free samples, and not more special Christian events but more reality. Do you agree with him that godliness is more essential than giftedness? . . . That authenticity is more essential than activity?  
How might priorities altered along these lines reshape congregational life?