Faithful Ministry

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.! Good to see you back tonight. We're excited to be able to kick off all of our choirs tonight. We've got our Kinder Praise Choir starting, Kids Praise Choir starting, our Passion Student Choir.

While we're in here, those are all going on, and so we're excited for them. Probably close to about 200 people that are in those choirs, and so we're excited for them.
Next week, our youth choir will be in here leading us in music, and so they usually come in here the last Sunday evening of the month, and so we'll look forward to having them with us tomorrow.
So, I told Jeremy, I said, hey, when you're doing the welcome, let's just go old school, just tell them to go ahead and go around and shake hands. He said, like, would they walk around and talk? And I said, yeah, like, yeah, like the good old days. So, that was good. That was good.
What did you say before the world was danger or something like that? Where did Jeremy go? Is he here? Okay, there you are. He's way, way up there. He's washing his hands, yeah. He's got Germ-X out right now.
[1:13] He's washing his hands. Yeah. Next week's Lord's Supper, we're going to try the one cup method. We'll see if that works out.

It's good to be with you, always good, as Jeremy said, to just begin and end our day in the Lord's house with God's people. So, we are on Sunday mornings walking through 1 Thessalonians, and so if you would open with me there.
My mind is pretty full. I've got Mark 14 in my mind. I've got 1 Thessalonians in my mind. For our read through the Bible, we're finishing up today 2 Corinthians, so I was working on that just a little bit ago.
And it's just amazing to me how the more you read of God's Word, the more hungry you are to know it. When I was, I do a Q&A with our children for Awana in the spring.
I go up there in the fall for a couple of weeks and teach. In the spring, I go back and do a Bible Q&A. And one of the kids last year came up to me after it was over, and she said, I didn't want to ask this in front of everybody, she said, but how long have you been preaching?
[2:28] And so I told her, you know, 30 years or whatever. And she said, well, do you know all of the Bible? And I said, no. And she said, why not? Fair question.

But it is one of the great things. Hebrews 4.12 tells us the Word of God is living and active. And the more that we learn of the Lord, the more we want to learn of the Lord. And the more we read and understand His Word, at the same time, the more we understand how much more there always is to know of the Lord.
And so we want to remain hungry. When you read your Bible for yourself during the day, if you're a teacher, as you prepare to teach, we always want to come to God's Word first and foremost as worshipers, recognizing our need to know the Lord, recognizing the sweet gift that the Lord has given us, that we would have a Bible that we can hold, that we can read, that we can know what the Lord's heart and mind is.
It's always a danger for those of us who teach that we would reduce the Bible simply to a book from which to get sermons or a book from which to get studies.
That's not the way we want to approach it. We want to remind ourselves that we first, individually, we are needy. We are people that need to be convicted and taught and encouraged and led by the Spirit of God, that we want to approach the Bible to know who God is.
[4:01] Then, those of us who teach, we take what we've studied and learned and try to organize that in a way that would be helpful to people, and then you get as much in, and then when the timer

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goes off, which is either the clock on the wall or when people get up and leave or whatever it may be, then you end it.

But there's never, in one sense, there's never an end to what the passage says. That's never over. The students I get to work with from the seminary sometimes will say something to me like, I'll ask them about their study habits, and they'll say something like, you know, I finished studying for that sermon on Wednesday and preached it on Sunday, to which my question is always, what did you do Thursday through Saturday?
There's more. There's more. You sometimes have to just go to the pulpit and preach, but not because you've exhausted everything. I never like to hear a student I'm working with tell me they got finished on Wednesday.
There's so much more to learn and so much more we want to wrestle with. All of that to say, when we come to 1 Thessalonians, we want to always approach this as Christians who are aware that the Lord has a word for us.
There's something for us. There's something that we can learn, something that we can confess, something from which we can benefit. It's never just about data and information.
[5:32] It's about a relationship with Christ. It's very important because we don't want to make the Bible a textbook, and we don't want to make our Bible study simply an intellectual pursuit.

This is about the God of the universe revealing himself so that we can know him better. We can know his heart. We can know his mind. And we can understand how we relate to him and understand what he would want us to do in the world.
And we see that, I think, very clearly in this letter, because as we looked at last week by way of introduction, this is a place where Paul had traveled, he preached, established the church, was there for a short season, forced to leave, sends Timothy back to get a report.
Timothy meets back up with Paul to give him a report. Based on that, he's going to write this letter. But as Paul writes this, we can learn quite a bit about what the Lord wants from his churches.
That there is a way that we should behave. There is a knowledge we should possess. There is a character that we should exhibit. That all of that is to be true of God's people.
[6:47] We don't want to be a church that is simply known for knowledge. Knowledge is good, but knowledge without obedience just leads to a bunch of arrogant people.

So we don't want to be a church known for knowledge, simply. You don't want to be a church known simply for love and compassion. That's good. That's right.
But love and compassion without knowledge and truth will let you be led by your heart, and that's where people get led astray. So we want to have knowledge. We want to have love and compassion, but not either or.
Then there's a third pillar of that, and that is that we want to be obedient. That's also very important. There are some people who love to learn and study, but they love the knowledge, but they don't love people.
That's a disconnect. There's others who love and want to serve people, but they don't want to grow in their knowledge. That's dangerous. But then you have some who are willing to learn, and they even love people, but that third pillar, they're not willing to obey all that they are taught in God's Word.
[7:57] And that's where you get people who become professional sermon writers or professional Bible study leaders, and they can study and they can teach, but they don't live.

They don't live out their faith. And one of the things I love about this brief letter is you will see, as we go through this letter this semester, you will see all three of these things.
You will see the appeal to doctrine and knowledge and truth, and you will see an appeal to how we treat people and the kinds of people we should be toward others, and that third pillar of a call to obedience, you see all of them put together.
In fact, we'll look at that even in our text this evening. So last week we looked here at chapter 1 around the theme of living as the people of God.
We did not get all the way through chapter 1, so let me just start with what we did not get to, and we'll see if we can make up some ground. So by way of just review from last week, verses 1, 2, and 3, we called an expression of Christian love.
[9:07] And in that expression of Christian love, we looked at gratitude and prayer and memories. We look back at how God has blessed us by bringing people into our life that challenge us, that help

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us, that encourage us, memories of God's faithfulness.

This morning we sang that hymn, Great is Thy Faithfulness, as a reminder of the things the Lord has done. In fact, one of the things I love about the hymn, Great is Thy Faithfulness, you know, a lot of hymns, when you study them, they're born out of times of great adversity.
Most of you are probably familiar with the story made behind It Is Well, with Horatio Spafford, and some of the great hymns of our faith were born out of days where there was great trial. Not so are the greats of faithfulness.
I think the author, I think his name is Thomas Chisholm, if I remember correct. And the hymn, which comes straight from the Old Testament, Limitations 3, 22 and 23, is not a hymn about a day of terrible tragedy.
It's not about a time when he was experiencing all kinds of persecution. It's just an expression of the daily love and grace and faithfulness of God.
[10:31] And I think that's important because we know that we can turn to God in our days of tragedy. Absolutely. But if you live 60, 70, 80, 90 years, you will have some days of tragedy, but most of your days are going to be pretty common days.

And if God is only faithful and only good and only strong, only in the tragedy, then that means most of your life you have no real relationship with the Lord, but it's only in the hard days.
Of course we trust him in the hard days. Of course we need to know that he's there in the hard days. But the promise that the Lord's faithfulness is great, the hymn comes out of an author just meditating on Lamentations 3.
Now, Lamentations 3 itself comes from the darkest days of the people of God in the Old Testament history. Both are true. God's faithfulness is great in your darkest day, and God's faithfulness is great in your most routine day.
And so when we think about the memories of God's faithfulness, yes, let's be reminded of the hardest seasons of our life where God brought us through, but don't neglect the normal days where you're doing normal things and our God is faithful.
[11:53] Amen? That's so important. That's so important. In a church, in a church calendar, there's not a lot of things that you can bank on, but there's a few things you can bank on in our church.

Easter is going to be really full. Promotion Sunday is going to be really full. We know that. Those are exciting.
Christmas is going to be really full. Well, April, August, and December, that's three triangles where we know we're going to have really big, special, big, full days.
But if God's only faithful on those big, high days, we've got 49 other Sundays when we're gathering here. That would be really disappointing if the other 49 Sundays didn't really count for anything.
But the reality of it is that the Lord is here with us and the Lord is faithful to us every single Sunday, every single day.
[12:57] And one of the things we learn from the beginning of 1 Thessalonians is as we are people with the memory of God's faithfulness in our life, it helps give purpose even to the routine, mundane days of our life because He's good.

And so the expression of our Christian love is that we're people of prayer, that we are people of gratitude, and we're people that take time to remember and think about the goodness of God's faithfulness.
We looked secondly last week in verses 4-10 at the evidence of converting grace. How do we know that we are really the people of God? Let me just give a quick review and we'll pick up where we left off.
Number one, he says, the gospel message and the power of the Holy Spirit were working together. It's a great thing when you know and you sense that the Holy Spirit is working through the proclamation of the Word.
The second way they knew is that they lived like Christ. The way that their lives were being conducted gave evidence that they were truly in the faith.
[14:08] Third, there is a Christ-exalting joy. It says in chapter 1 that you receive the Word in much affliction with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

Affliction does not eliminate our joy. This actually, I think, is one of the greatest tests to see if you're truly in the faith. If circumstances can rob you of your joy, then your joy is misplaced.

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A fourth thing he gave us to consider as a faithful example, verse 7, that you became an example to other believers. We talked about how as a church, we want to be a faithful example to other churches.
Not that we're above them, not that we're better than them, and as we look at this morning, certainly not that we're competing with them. But we do want to be a faithful example to them. A fifth thing he says is that the evidence that you're in the faith is the trumpeting of the gospel.
It comes from verse 8. Not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you, but your faith has gone forth everywhere. Sounded forth, it means to be trumpeted. It's a word that was used to describe a trumpet or described an echo.
[15:27] It described rolling thunder. Your lives consistently trumpet the gospel. We'll pick up here in verse 9 of chapter 1.

Here's a sixth evidence, and that is that they were abandoning idols. Verse 9. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.
They were turning away from idols. This is one of the ways that we give evidence that we belong to Christ. That things that used to grip our heart no longer grips our heart.
Things that used to determine our attitude no longer determines our attitude. Things that used to rob us of our joy no longer rob us of our joy.
They abandoned themselves from idols. And then a seventh evidence as they were longing for the return of Christ. Verse 10. To wait for his son from heaven whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
[16:43] They were longing for the return of Christ. That gets us to chapter 2. And in chapter 2, we're looking under the heading of faithful ministry.

We're going to look verses 1 to 12. We'll see if we get through all of it. Verses 1 to 12. Under the theme of faithful ministry.
Verse 1 says, For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain, 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.
For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, 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.
If ever there is a word that the church needs to hear, it's that we as God's people are to live and speak and conduct ourselves not to please man, but to please God.
[18:03] So let's look at what faithful ministry is. Number one, his method was to simply proclaim the gospel of God.

His method was to simply proclaim the gospel of God. Go back to verse 1. You yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. We weren't empty of purpose.
The work was not pointless. He says in verse 2, though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, in other words, he's saying, if I was selling my message for money, if my goal in the Christian ministry, he says, was simply for fame or prestige or glory, then what he does is a failure.
But his task is to proclaim the gospel regardless of the result. That was his method. Simply proclaim the gospel.
When I was very young in ministry, it was very fashionable for churches to talk about reinventing themselves quite often.
[19:27] And this is at the height of the church growth movement when everything was just about being seeker sensitive and what does the unchurched person want from the church.

And that movement, though perhaps in motive, was okay. the movement is just doctrinally empty. Because if there's one thing an unconverted person would never desire, it's the glory of God. Yet the church exists to bring him glory.
glory. So when the church seeks the world's approval of what do you want from a church, the one thing you'll never hear from an unbeliever is I want a group of people that are holy and humble and dedicated to the glory of Christ.
It would be impossible for an unconverted person to want that. And what Paul reminds us here is that the method of the church is not to be obsessed with what the world thinks about us, but to be

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utterly consumed with what God thinks of us.
[20:49] That of course is not to say that we shouldn't care about the unchurched. Of course we should. But we don't look to the world to say what do you want from a church?

Here's why. The world did not die for the church. Christ did. The world did not invent the church. It's God's creation.
So we look to the one who blood bought the church and establish the church and say what do you God want from a church?
And the answer from heaven is to proclaim the gospel of God. That's what the church must do. Proclaim the gospel of God.
He goes on in verse 2 as you know we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. Boldness and conflict.
[21:56] Those two words are there for a reason. If you're going to be in conflict you better be bold. But if you're consumed with what the world thinks about you then you're fighting the wrong battle.

Don't think that boldness means being abrasive. Boldness doesn't mean being angry. Boldness doesn't mean being unkind. In fact chapter 2 look down at verse 7 but we were gentle among you like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.
Boldness does not do away with gentleness. Boldness simply means this that we know what our message is we know who has given it to us and we proclaim it without compromise.
That's Christian boldness. We know our message we know who gave it to us and we proclaim it without compromise. sometimes people think that being bold means being ugly or that being bold has to mean being loud or that being bold has to mean you're always arguing with somebody. Being bold just says this we know our message it's the gospel we know who gave it to us it came from God himself and we're going to share that message without compromise and we can do that gently and we can do that with compassion but we do it with boldness.
[23:42] That was the method proclaim the gospel of God. Verse 3 and 4 we see that his message and motives were pure his message was pure and his motives were pure.

Look at verse 3 for our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive so their gospel appeal he says was pure there is no error there is no impurity the word here for it's not an error the word is planos it's the word we get our English word for planet speaking of something that that's wondering wondering around he says our message is not wondering around it's not aimless our message was right there are some people who have the right motives but their doctrine is wrong and that's of no value we have to know the truth theological precision matters but it's not just the message that was pure he says the motives were pure verse 4 just as we have been approved by
God to be entrusted with the gospel so we speak not to please man here's the motive but to please God who tests our hearts his aim is not popularity his aim is not fame his motive is to be pleasing to God he's a servant of God and just like some people have the right motive but the wrong message there are other people who may have the right message with the wrong motive we want to make sure that we're in alignment that what we teach and what we believe is true and that our motive is to bring glory to Christ and Christ alone his message and his motives were pure 1st Timothy 1 11 Paul refers to the gospel of God with which I have been and the word he uses here is entrusted this is an important word for our church to think about we've been entrusted with something we've been entrusted with the gospel we've been entrusted with this opportunity we've been entrusted with this season and time
I was talking earlier a moment ago about the idea of churches trying to reinvent themselves all the time I'll tell you I don't want to be a part of a church reinventing itself all the time because the Lord's already told us what to do he's given us a message he's given us a mission we don't need to reinvent that I mean yes along the way let's update our microphones let's update our screens let's update the carpet let's change light bulbs when they go out I'm good with that but the work we do as a church doesn't need updated churches would be much stronger if they would simply say what does God call us to do there's a lot of there's a lot of people that are devoting a lot of time a lot of money to things to try to win favor with the world and they may in some sense for some season they may get it but it's like the old saying goes you get to the top of the ladder only to find you've put your ladder against the wrong building and you made it to the top but you didn't get where you need to be so

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Paul reminds us here that we've been entrusted with the gospel and our method and our message our motives! All of it must!
[27:47] be pure! The Bible tells us that we are to live our life with one consuming question what does God think about this?

What does God think about your marriage? What does God think about your parenting? What does God think about your ministry? What does God think about our church? What does God think about your life?
At the end of it all that's what it all comes down to. Verses 5-8 let me show you a third thing. His ministry was based on love and deep affection.
This is one of the beauties of just letting the Bible speak for itself because he starts by saying his method is to proclaim the gospel. That's the truth. That's the truth pillar.
We've got to be people who are devoted to the truth, studying the truth, learning the truth. He says his message and motives have to be pure. You've got to do the right thing.
[28:58] You don't just know the right thing. You've got to do the right thing. But then thirdly verses 5-8 his ministry is based on love and deep affection. That's the other pillar.

It's what do we know, it's what do we do, and it's how do we love. All three of these pillars must be a part of everything that we do.
Verse 5, for we never came with words of flattery as you know. I think if you're familiar with Paul's writings you can see that.
Paul wasn't one who was trying to gain popularity through flattery. We didn't come to you with flattery he says, by the way, I don't know where I heard this, I've heard this somewhere and read this somewhere, I say this all the time, if I could tell you who said this, I would happily give them the credit for it.
I don't know who said this, but whoever it is, he can get my eternal reward for this year, okay?
Flattery is the opposite side of the same coin as gossip.
[30:08] Gossip is when you say behind somebody's back what you would never say to their face. Flattery is just the opposite.

It's where you say to somebody's face what you would never say behind their back. Gossip is saying, you know what that person over there did?
You wouldn't say it to them. You just kind of stir up the gossip to get people to turn against them.
Flattery is where when you're talking to somebody, you lie and exaggerate to make them think you're on their side, but you would never praise them that way behind their back because it might make somebody else esteem them more.
That's not what you're really after. Flattery and gossip go hand in hand. Both are just using your words based on the occasion to achieve a sinful purpose.
Paul says, I didn't come to you with flattery. I didn't come to you exaggerating or saying things that weren't true. I wasn't trying to just get on your good side.
[31:22] He goes on in verse 5, nor with a pretext for greed for God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from people whether from you or from others though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ.

Verse 7, but we were gentle. We were gentle among you like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.
children. People, they think of the apostle Paul, think of being bold, being courageous, being unrelenting.
It's all true. but don't miss the gentleness. He says, we came to you not making demands. We came to you like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.
Not harsh, but gentle. Not selfish, but selfless. like a nursing mom taking care of her children.
[32:39] Patient, compassionate, gracious, tender, giving.

That's how you take care of a baby. You don't debate a baby. You're not going to win anyway if you try.
You just ate. You're not hungry. Wah! You just lost the debate. No, you've got to be gentle. You've got to be caring.
You've got to be compassionate. There's a way that we live our Christian lives. Bold, yes, but not abrasive.
Bold, yes, but gentle. Compassionate. If you teach your Sunday school class, be bold with the truth.

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[33:49] But you better be compassionate with the people. If you lead a ministry team, be bold in the truth, but you better remember that every servant in this church that's coming here on a Wednesday night to teach Awana, they just left a job where they worked all day.

They just left the house where they worked all day, and they're coming here to teach Awana, and they're not getting paid a dime. Let's be bold with the truth, but let's be compassionate with the servants.
Let's love them. Let's care for them. And I want us to be bold as a lion with the truth, but we could do well to watch a mother with a young baby to learn what it's like to be compassionate and gracious and patient and tender hearted.
This is how God's people are to live in ministry, love, and deep affection. Verse 8, so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God, I love this, but also our own lives.
In other words, we were willing to give you doctrine, but not just doctrine, we were willing to give you our own lives. We were giving you truth, and we were giving ourselves to you.
[35:14] This is the reminder that as leaders, as teachers, yes, it's about truth, but it's not just about truth. It's also about loving people.

The thing I say to the seminary students I work with more than anything else probably, is that as preachers, we're not preaching the Bible. That's not what we do. We preach the Bible to people, and there's a difference.
Preaching the Bible just says, hey, I got it right, I did the exegesis, I did all the homework, I got the truth out there, I'm done. That's if you're just preaching the Bible.
That's not what you're doing, though, as a pastor. You're preaching the Bible to people, meaning all the work that you did to get it right, and to cut it straight, and to rightly divide it, you did that, but now that you've taught the truth, you give your lives to those people you taught, and you're there to care for them, and comfort them, and walk with them, and help them as they try to learn and apply.
It's not just that I get it right, it's get it right, and love the people. It's a big difference. He says, we were affectionately desirous of you, and we wanted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also ourselves.
[36:40] Why? Look at the very end of the verse, verse 8, because you had become very dear to us. He loved the truth, but he loved the church.

Can I just say to every one of you tonight, a faithful church must have people who love the truth and love each other.
This must be present. If we love each other and don't love the truth, then we're going to love each other as we lead each other into a ditch.
If we love the truth and don't love each other, we're just going to be a lot of smart people making a wreck of our life. But when you love the truth and you love people, now Christian ministry flourishes.
And in case you don't know this, let me just let you in on a little secret here. Sometimes people are frustrating. That may be breaking news to some of you. Sometimes ministry is exhausting.
[38:00] But I suspect everyone in this sanctuary knows that to be true. But there's no other way to do it. we're not going to become people who love the truth and just don't love people.

We're not going down the old, tired, hell-sent lie of I would love ministry if it wasn't for people.
If it weren't for people, there is no ministry. Sometimes we have to remind ourselves as leaders in a church for all of us and if you're here on a Sunday night, you're a leader of our church.
We have to remind ourselves that this is what we do until God calls us home. This is it. We study, we teach, we serve, we grieve, we study, we teach, we serve, we grieve.
And you say, does that pattern ever end? yes, when you add one more part to it and then you die. That's when it ends. That's when it ends. If you're a parent, when do you stop praying for your kids?
[39:21] You don't. And at least my experience has been, I pray far more for my kids, who are adults, not kids, today than I did when they were at my home for one main reason.

I can't really do anything else. I can't ground them anymore. I tried that, didn't respond very well. I can't take their car keys. They can outrun me, I can't catch them.
I can't take their allowance from them. I don't have free labor at the house like I used to have. Like, I'm down to just prayer.
That's all I got. And I find myself praying for my grown kids and their wives and my grandchildren more than I ever have before in my life.

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And I suspect I'm just beginning to learn the true value of praying for your family because when that's all you can do, prayer comes alive to you.
[40:31] prayer comes and one of the things we learn about Christian ministry is we absolutely want to get the truth right, but we get the truth right because we love God and we love his people.

people. Let me give you one last one. Number four, his means of service was to labor in integrity and encouragement.
His means of service, the way he did it, was to labor in integrity and encouragement. Verse nine, 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 proclaim to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.
He says we lived with integrity. We didn't just simply teach things that are true, we taught things that were true in us.
[41:44] Verse 11, for you know how like a father with his children 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.

Paul says we were compassionate like a mother with her baby and like a father with his children.
We exhorted you, we encouraged you, we charged you.
He says we viewed you as young believers, we viewed you as a church, as our spiritual children and spiritual family.
And there were times we had to be like a mother and be gentle. and be kind and compassionate.
And there were times like a father with his children, we had to exhort you, we had to encourage you, we had to charge you to walk in a manner worthy of God who has called you in his kingdom and his glory.
[43:04] There was a time to just comfort and a time to teach. There's a time to be compassionate and a time to exhort. This is true in the family.

If your only card you have to play is just I'll take your car keys away, if that's the only card you have to play, you can keep taking your teenager's car keys away.
You can do that. But you'll never reach their heart. And if the only card you have to play is to sit down and say, talk to me about how you're feeling, that's okay.
But if that's the only card you have to play, you're going to run out because sometimes you've got to look someone in the eye and say, it's time to grow up and do right. It's both of these.
There's a time to be gentle. There's a time to exhort. There's a time to be tender and compassionate. And there's a time to charge and say, it's time.
[44:12] It's time. It's time to learn. It's time to grow. It's time to obey. It's time to have a backbone. It's time to be strong. And there's other times where you've got to sit down and say, let me just be here.

Let me just minister to you as my son, as my daughter, by just being present, by just being here.
And I think sometimes we've got to remind ourselves within the church and the body of Christ that, I mean, he tells us right here in this letter, sometimes with the church, it's like a mother with her children.
And sometimes it's like a father teaching and exhorting and training. It's learning to say we want to get the truth right, but we care about the people we're teaching and the people we're discipling because they are our joy and our crown.
And he ends there in verse 12, to walk worthy in a manner worthy of God. We're to live our lives in a manner worthy of God.
God, now if you're going to be a father, metaphorically, exhorting your children how to live, then you better live the life you demand of them.
[45:38] families quickly disintegrate, where you have fathers quick to exhort and slow to live.

Where you have fathers quick with a lecture, but no life as an example. What Paul is reminding us here is as we do the work he's given us to do, we are to comfort them when they're hurting, exhort them when they need that, that we are to teach them, but our lives are to be faithfully living out what we call our children to do.
Children don't have the right to expect that their parents are perfect, it's impossible, but they should expect their parents are faithful.

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As a church, you don't have the right to expect that your pastors are perfect, it's impossible, but you do have the right to expect that your pastors are faithful.
people. You shouldn't be surprised to find out that your pastors are imperfect or your parents are imperfect, but if you have a parent or a pastor who says, I'm ready for a lecture to give to you, but don't expect me to back it up with my life, then you've taken that family, whether you're in a house or in a church, and you've just cut the legs off from under it.
[47:36] Faithful ministry is when you say, I'm going to get the truth right, there's things we've got to know, and there's things over here, we know these things, and we love you, there's knowledge, there's love, and then over here, there's obedience.

And where you have a church or a family whose leaders say, I'm going to teach you faithfully because I love you, and you can follow me as I follow Christ, I'm imperfect, but I'm faithful, where you have leaders that can say that, moms who can say that, dads who can say that, leaders in the church who can say that, now you understand the heart behind 1 Thessalonians, that we want to take those who are young in the faith and show them there's things you know, there's people you love, and there's lives that are faithful.
And when those three pillars are all present, now we are ready to impact people, not to be man-pleasers, but to please the only one that matters, the one who laid down his life for his church. Lord, your word surely is living and active. We know that, we experience that, we're thankful for that. I pray that as we seek to understand that which we have studied, that we would leave this place committed to know the truth, to live the truth, and to love the people that we serve and that we teach.
When we need to be patient and gentle like a mother, help us to do that. When we need to be exhorting and teaching and correcting like a father, help us to do that.
[49:38] And through it all, may we never seek to be man-pleasers, but simply living and serving to be found faithful to you and you alone.

We ask it in Christ's name and for his glory. Amen. God bless you. You're dismissed. God bless you.
God bless you. fathers you. God bless you.

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