Don’t Waste Your Breath July 7, 2019

*1 Thessalonians 2:1-16 Series: Living Life in Light of the End*

“I have wasted my hours.” – Leonardo da Vinci

Intro: Even with talent and diligence you can undermine your impact.

1. Don’t waste your breath: find your acceptance in God not people.
2. Opposition can make you gun-shy.

v. 2 *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.*

1. Living to please people keeps you from speaking for God.

v. 3 *For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive …*

v. 5 *For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed …*

1. God’s commissioning can make us bold.

v. 4 *we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel*

v. 4 *so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts*

v. 5 *God is witness.*

v. 6 *Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others …*

* Where do you most hope to avoid having your impact undermined?
* Where has opposition made you gun-shy as a Christian?
* In vv. 4-5, what most encourages your boldness?
1. Don’t waste your breath: give more than you require.
2. Throwing your weight around denies God’s grace.

v. 6 *though we could have made demands as apostles*

v. 7 *But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.*

1. Give your life not just a verse.

v. 8 *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.*

1. Sacrificing for others displays the grace we share.

v. 9 *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.*

* Why does a demanding attitude undermine a Christian’s impact?
* What are some ways that parents can undermine their impact on their children by throwing their weight around?
* How does v. 8 affect how we should do evangelism?
* Why did Paul go to such lengths to avoid burdening the Thessalonians as he preached the gospel to them?
1. Don’t waste your breath: be the book that you teach.
2. Our lives are on trial not just our words.

v. 10 *You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.*

1. Our message must be delivered in relationship.

v. 11 *For you know how, like a father with his children*

1. Our lives support our message; they don’t replace it.

v. 12 *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*

* Why is the witness of our lives more important than ever in today’s society?
* What are the character qualities that unbelievers most need to see in us in order for us to have a credible witness?
* Why can’t we just testify to our faith by the way we live? Why do we need words?
* Where do you most need prayer in applying this passage?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5.

Notes