

Sermon Text Discussion 9/18/2016

I Thessalonians 2:17-3:13 – ‘The Heart of a Discipling Church’ by Drew Hunter

Overview

Every disciple is called to make more disciples. Every follower of Jesus is called to help other people follow Jesus. Every Christian is called to help other Christians grow. We are called to help others to better follow Christ. This highly emotional section of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians shows his heart for these believers and, in doing so, outlines the heart of a discipling church filled with Christians helping one another follow Christ. Paul's progression through this text is:

1. Affection
2. Concern
3. Joy
4. Confidence

Understanding & Application

- 1) Describe the story of the church in Thessalonica (Acts 17). Why did Paul have such deep affection for these believers?
- 2) Deep affection is at the heart of a culture of discipleship. What impact does that statement have regarding our connection to our local church? What practical implications does it have?
- 3) Read II Corinthians 11:24-29. What does this passage say about Paul's deep concern for those he was discipling? What experience do you have of feeling deep concern for someone you are discipling? Give an example.
- 4) Describe Paul's joy in hearing of the Thessalonians perseverance in the faith. How do you picture yourself standing before King Jesus? Do you picture being joyful for those you have helped become better followers of Him?
- 5) Being a church with a culture of discipleship is reflected in our ZF purpose statement: "Our purpose is to glorify God by being and making disciples of Jesus Christ who are a community of worshipers on mission." What practical steps can we each take to fulfill our purpose?
- 6) The following four suggestions were made as a way to grow in our commitment to discipling others:
 - a. Take the initiative to meet with someone.
 - b. Open the Bible together.
 - c. Talk about your spiritual growth.
 - d. Never let Christ's heart out of your sight.

Which of the above are you practicing and to which do you commit to take/improve?