

Authentic Ministry > 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

2:1-4 *It was pleasing to God, not pointless.* Genuine, Christ-honoring ministry is not about worldly success. It isn't measured by how accepted (or not!) we are. Paul shows that even in the midst of opposition, God was still at work. His goal wasn't to please people, but instead was God's honor.

2:5-8 *It was personal, not just a duty.* That said, Paul isn't simply just doing a duty. Rather, his goal was to be obedient to the Lord who had called him in taking the Gospel to those in need. He did this not simply through his words, but also through his personal, caring, gracious presence.

Background: Paul's visit to Thessalonica is recorded in Acts 17. The visit starts well, but ends with a riot and social unrest, leading to Paul and Silas quickly moving on. Paul also refers to the events just before (Acts 16), where he had both seen God at work and also been treated horribly in the process.

The Point: Authentically serving Jesus means that we serve in the midst of opposition, even when the Good News isn't well-received. We do this not out of duty, but out of love – love for the Lord who has saved us and love for those whom we want to introduce to our Lord.

Head: Know that success in God's eyes is not measured by how the world thinks (numbers, approval, fame, etc.).

Heart: Believe that hardship and opposition are not abnormal and shouldn't discourage us from following Jesus.

Hands: How can you encourage somebody else to seek God's approval rather than the world's this week?

Here is how I will apply these truths: _____
