
I. SPIRITUAL LEADERS

I.1: How do I go about building *spiritual parenting*?

[I Thessalonians 2:7-11]

A STORY

Recently in a church staff meeting the whole team came to the conclusion that to take care of the 600 folks that attend our church we are going to need about 100 shepherds or spiritual parents to help in the ongoing growth of the hungry believers in our fellowship. How do you develop spiritual parents? A number of years ago, I attended a workshop on the qualities of a spiritual parent. The workshop centered our attention on the qualities of that person in the book of I Thessalonians.

DIGGING INTO THE BIBLE

I Thessalonians 2:1-11:

You know, brothers and sisters that our visit to you was not without results. ² We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. ³ For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. ⁴ On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. ⁶ We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. ⁷ Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸ so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ⁹ Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children,

DISCUSSION AND DISCOVERY

1. What qualities did you discover about the apostle Paul as he wrote to these believers in Thessalonica?

2. What qualities stand out to you?

3. What does it mean to be a nursing mother?

4. What does it mean to be spiritual father?

5. How did verse 8 impress you?

APPLICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6. Which of these qualities would you like to work on in your life?

7. What step would be good to build that quality in your life?

8. Who would help you with modeling and accountability?

9. When will you get started on this action step?

DIGGING IN DEEPER

1. What is the most important part of this lesson to you? Explain.

2. How do you see applying aspects of this lesson to your life?

3. When do you feel would be the best time to make that application?

4. What do you hear the Lord speaking to you about this right now?

SIMILAR VERSES IN THE BIBLE
