

Title = Making Room, Inside Out 19.8.18

Key Verse - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10. Background: Paul in Thessalonica - Capital Macedonia (Roman Province) - 2nd Missionary Journey - 200k pop. Apostle Paul preaching, many came to faith and intense persecution followed. Paul had to flee to Berea. Paul was updated by Timothy with a letter on the subsequent Thessalonian believers' situation. The letters of 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians are Paul's response.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 (reading from verse 2)

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Faith - Love - Hope had risen in them to such a degree whereby it is productive, apparent and known everywhere. The inner reality of substance (F/H/L) evident or absent

- Faith - we are called to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12) God is moved by faith
- Love - never fails (1 Cor 13:8) Gods never fails us. We experience the love of God and draw on his amazing love to minister and care for all people in all places.
- Hope - anchor for our soul based on the promises of God (Hebrews 6:19)

For the life we are called to live we need the power of God generating on the inside of us daily. The Thessalonians became a model to all believers. How was this cultivated? **THE THESSALONIAN BELIEVERS MADE ROOM IN THEIR HEARTS AND LIVES FOR THE GOSPEL, THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH DEEP CONVICTION GREW IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE. SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES DO NOT CHANGE US - THEY ONLY MAKE ROOM FOR ENGAGING WITH GOD = WHO DOES CHANGE, GROW AND TRANSFORMS US FOR HIS DIVINE PURPOSES. We are called to a partnership between us and God** - Christian life journey must have the power of God (HS) generating on the inside of us. Jesus said apart from me you can do nothing. Jesus said (John 16:7) But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Salvation is found in Christ. We need to be born of God (John 3:3) and receive the Gospel, If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

The Gospel was received with deep conviction (where the word convinced comes from) are you convinced here today? Paul in Romans 8 declared 'for I am convinced' Read Romans chapter 8 - be assured, be convinced of the amazing truth of Jesus Christ. The believers became model believers and witnessed to Macedonia, Achaia and people everywhere. This was from the heart of the believers out to the world and fulfilling the Great Commission. The starting point is our heart - **WE MAKE SPACE IN OUR HEARTS AND LIVES FOR GOD TO MOVE AND ENGAGE US FOR HIS DIVINE PURPOSE AND GLORY.**

We do this by growing in **Faith, Hope and Love** through **Prayer, Word and Fellowship** by the power of the **Holy Spirit**.

God has made known to us what is required. The possible accomplishes the impossible when we partner with God and offer our lives to him. Hudson Taylor (Missionary) Yorkshireman from England established Inland China Mission (still

running 150 years on stated "I have found that there are three stages in every great work of God; first, it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done."

Eternal Perspective Christian Life Apostle Paul described as a Race (Marathon not a Sprint)

Eric Liddell (Chariots of Fire) Olympic Athlete, Minister, Missionary:- "It has been a wonderful experience to compete in the Olympic Games and to bring home a gold medal. But since I have been a young lad, I have had my eyes on a different prize. You see, each one of us is in a greater race than any I have run in Paris, and this race ends when God gives out the medals." Eric Liddell

1 Corinthians 9:24-25 (Paul) *'Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.'*

RUN IN SUCH A WAY as to get the prize - a crown that lasts. Paul to the Greek church in Corinth - drawing parallel with the ancient Greek Olympic Games. Disciplined life powered by God through Holy Spirit (resurrection life in Christ). Disciples - different kinds (Effective living - Ally Cawthorn Chart) can you identify where you fit? We often move between different quadrants if we are honest - but we seek to move into the top right quadrant (partnership - how)

CAN LEAD TO:

TOP LEFT:	UNFRUITFUL/UNPRODUCTIVE (INERTIA)
BOTTOM LEFT:	HIDING/SHAME/FEAR
BOTTOM RIGHT:	PERFORMING/LEGALISM
TOP RIGHT:	FRUITFUL/PRODUCTIVE (GOAL)

TRUTH - WE MAY FEATURE IN EACH QUADRANT AT TIMES = GOAL TO BE TOP RIGHT

Disciples are disciplined - intentional and follow God 3 legged race

Meaning - Purpose - Destiny (we drop our plans and allow God to give us his dream for our lives)

We have all kinds of personal plans for life. God has a better plan for your life - a radical divine eternal plan

It does not mean an easy plan - but an eternal plan of significance for all, God, you, family, all people you know and don't know – generational. It takes patience/diligence for things of lasting significance to grow and flourish - but they can start in God now here today. Ecclesiastes 3:11 He (God) has set eternity in the human heart, yet no-one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. Point - God has set eternity in hearts - yet we try to fathom what God has and will do from our limited perspective (we need to trust him but accept at a deep level - our heart) that as we choose him - he has a magnificent plan unfolding for us as we put him first, believe his word and are empowered by him through our relationship with him (Holy Spirit).

Colossians 3:2 (KJV) 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.' Set= fixed (constancy of source, direction, focus and effort)

1 Chronicles 29:3 (KJV): 'Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.' Affection for what is precious to God - Christ died for the Church and gave us the command to go and make disciples. How do we express this affection? (Matthew 28:18-20)

1 Chronicles 29:9 (KJV): 'Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.'

Proverbs 3:5-6 (Trust the Lord with ALL your heart... lean NOT on your own understanding)

We need to leave the details with God and daily take up our cross and follow him...

Key - Heart Access (the inner world) How? We administer our hearts and yield to Holy Spirit, humble, open in prayer, forgiving, repent of heart attitudes that are contrary to the fruit of the Spirit. We need the Power for this life - of God - to love our enemies, forgive the trivial/horrific and more. David - (Psalm 51:10) Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. The dashboard of a car shows red lights to warn of internal problems developing- how are the lights on the dashboard of your heart? and relationship with God?

Heart of Matter (central issue) God looks at the heart - people look at the outward appearance.

1 Samuel 16:7: 'But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."'

Be assured, God is interested in all people and bringing them to restored relationship with Him through Jesus Christ His Son. Peter - Acts 10:34-35: 'Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.'

David (Acts 13:22) David - Man after God's own heart - will do everything I want him to do.

John 14:23-24 Jesus affirms the direct connection between love and obedience, we must take note of this and respond appropriately.

Psalm 62: 5-8 (David) 'Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God - he is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.'

Pour out your hearts to him.... All people have a view of the world and this is referred to a Worldview in philosophy and theology. It is a heart held belief and lens we view and understand the world through.

Alpha - successful because the course provides people with opportunity to examine their own worldview and consider the Christian worldview and faith.

Not a Fan - fan or follower (asks the question that gets to the heart of the matter)

As believers we may give support to Christian beliefs but make decisions that are discordant with this professed faith if we do not fully hold the belief in our hearts (being convinced).

Proverbs 4:23: 'Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.'

We live from the inside - out and must administer our hearts with all diligence. What we can learn from scripture regarding the heart:

- Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God
- Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be
- Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Primacy of God (we must give God 1st place) Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge

Hebrews 11:6 'And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Do you believe/seek?

Matthew 6:33 Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Just seek him, be led and provided for and DO WHAT IS REQUIRED OF US - key point

We want the details and do the risk/benefit calculation - but the gospel is clear Jesus said take up your cross daily and follow me = trusting God for the outcomes. Foundations go in first - then we build. Matthew 7:24-27 wise and foolish builders. Foundations – Rock: The foundations needed are dependant on the house being built. The future plans God has for you will always require huge foundations for His plan and purposes. We can be assured that we often underestimate the need for greater strength and foundations in all aspects of our life of faith.

Peacehaven Foundations - Old Well (unknown) found in new foundation path and needed to be filled in (12 yr old) important foundations

The foundations cannot be re-done in construction. But in God they can be!

Faith - Hope - Love = Cultivated by God

IMPORTANT POINT - SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES **DO NOT CHANGE US** BUT THEY ONLY MAKE SPACE FOR ENGAGING WITH GOD! Vitally important we understand this. Partnership with God. We make room = God can then move in us!

HOW MUCH ACTUAL DEDICATED QUALITY TIME DAILY DO WE GIVE GOD TO ENGAGE WITH US? WE OFTEN ARE MEANING TO GET ROUND TO QUALITY TIME WITH GOD, OUR SPOUSE, FRIENDS BUT SO OFTEN IT REMAINS AN INTENTION. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FORGED BY ACTION, COMMITMENT AND QUALITY CONNECTION

Word (MAKE ROOM + PRIORITY) Hebrews 4:12-13

'For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.'

2 Timothy 3:16-17 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.'

The word reads us - we are to be faithful, available and teachable.

Fellowship (MAKE ROOM + PRIORITY) Worship - Encouragement - Community - Prophecy - Connection - Service

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Prayer (MAKE ROOM + PRIORITY) MAKE ROOM IN YOUR LIFE = FOR GOD TO ENGAGE US - Pray continually

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Intentional prayer - connection (we must make a daily commitment - diary) otherwise it just wont happen in any significant form over the year - if we are honest.. 30 minute prayer/word devotion minimum helpful

"Anyone who, neglecting that fixed time of prayer, will say he can pray at all times but will probably end in praying at no time." Eric Liddell

Jesus is our example, in prayer (regularly withdrew) - prayer preceded key events (discipline). Jesus in Gethsemane because this was a regular gathering place for prayer. Jesus in agony his soul overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of

death Jesus asked 3 times, take this cup from me but not my will but yours be done. This means - In our times of difficulty, challenge and pain - how much more compassion has Jesus for us when we come to him in our times of need, pressure and struggle. We find out what is really inside us when we are squeezed.

"Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays." - Soren Kierkegaard

We have a mission and we are more than able to fulfill - but must be in partnership with God

We must have the generating power of HS at work in us for life, purpose and destiny we are called to fulfill

1 John 4:4 (KJV) Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Romans 8:31 If God is for us, who can be against us?

We need not fear adversity or challenges. Growth through adversity: we grow not despite adversity but in the very presence of it. The very design of life provides insights into this process: the design of our muscle fibres that respond to progressive overload and respond with growth. Momentum for the life we are called to is found in God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The decision, discipline, perspective, endurance comes from giving God 1st place in our hearts (God access to our heart). The perspective is eternal and full of faith, hope and love. The outcomes are beyond what we could comprehend. We offer the gifts, talents and resources to God and use them for his Glory.

It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it. AW Tozer

We experience momentum through constancy of application in the small things. Zechariah 4:10 - small beginnings (pay attention to the small things) 'Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?'

Choose what is best

- Philippians 1:9-11 'And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.'
- Acts 2:17-21 In the last days I will pour out my Spirit ON ALL PEOPLE... and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord WILL BE SAVED!

We are in exciting times with the HS being poured out on people. The Church in Iran is one of the fastest growing churches in the world (Open Doors)

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

"We are all missionaries. Wherever we go we either bring people nearer to Christ or we repel them from Christ."
- Eric Liddell

The purpose of our lives is to Glorify God.