

- Communion

## Giving and Receiving

- *For kids...*
- Have an empty box wrapped (and giving/receiving slide on screen)
  - show it...
  - who'd like to come and help me?
  - get that person to present it to someone else in the congregation!
- Do we like giving or receiving?
  - actually important we do both well!
  - explain what mean
- Paul talking about giving and receiving what God says:
  - his point is that it is important we do both well
  - telling others the truth about God
  - and listening and acting on what we hear when someone explains to us more about God

## Introduction

- Success or failure?
  - God's word coming to the Thessalonians...
- Judging fake notes - by handling the real thing! (picture!)
- Paul is describing what happened when he visited the Thessalonians:
  - but it is like a case study of what should happen when someone speaks of God and others hear and receive
  - implicit in his description are some important lessons about how we should pass on, or give, God's word, and how we should receive or hear God's word

## How was the word given?

- Paul isn't bragging here, but he is reminding the Thessalonians of how he came to them
  - he is building up towards words of challenge and teaching - see chapter 4, for instance
  - and on the way there, whether consciously or not, he is preparing them to respond now as they did when they first heard him speak God's word
- He touches on a number of key issues in vs.1-12
  - (largely by drawing contrasts...)
- **First**, the message he brings is truth, as opposed to error
  - ...the appeal we make to you does not spring from error (v.3)
  - it matters that the gospel message is actually true, as opposed to just "true for us"
  - it matters that we speak it truly, and not in error
- **Second**, Paul brings this message from pure motives, as opposed to impure
  - he is not doing it to exert power or influence over them; he is not doing it out of greed (v.5); it is simply because it is true, and being true requiring that others be told!
  - he knows he has been saved, and so his desire is that others too be saved
  - he has been infected by the love of Christ, and it is this love overflowing to the Thessalonians that motivates him (v.8)
  - his attitude is that of the best parent, nurturing their children

- **Thirdly**, and in particular, Paul brings this message to **please God** as opposed to **men**
  - see **v.4** and **v.6**
- **Fourth**, the result of these proper motives is proper method:
  - for instance, Paul does not, and doesn't need to, resort to flattery (**v.5**)
  - or how they worked hard to support themselves and not be a burden to the Thessalonians (**v.9**)
- They are all witnesses that all that Paul, Silas and Timothy did amongst them was of the highest standard
  - with integrity, in a righteous way, blameless...
  - notice how Paul is less concerned with **the method** that he uses to communicate, and more concerned with **the character** with which he communicates
- Two questions for each of us:
  - do we **"give"** God's saving word of life to those we come across, whether Christian or not?
  - do we give that word with **integrity**, truthfully, from pure motives, to please God and not using any deceitful or underhand methods?

### **How was it received?**

- It was actually received!
- Received as from God
- Had results - imitators of other churches
- Suffered - prepared, willing, ready, saw purpose
- Didn't resist God's word
  
- Are we receiving God's word in the same way?

### **Conclusion**

- Do we **give** and **receive well**?