

- 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**?