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## Discipling

### 1 Thessalonians 2

"Make disciples of all nations." These were among Jesus' last words to the disciples. In like manner Paul, shortly before his death, exhorted Timothy to train faithful men who would in turn train others. This command is as critical today as it was for the church in the first century. But what does it mean to make disciples? Paul's own life provides a superb example.

In Acts 17:1-9 we learn that Paul, Silas and Timothy established the church at Thessalonica. However, they were forced to leave after only a few weeks due to persecution by the Jews. Because of Paul's concern for these new believers, he sent Timothy back to encourage them. After Timothy's return, Paul wrote the letter of 1 Thessalonians to them.

1. Think of a more mature Christian who influenced you toward godliness. What did you learn from his or her example?

2. Read 1 Thes. 2. What were Paul's motives in sharing the gospel with the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:1-6)?

3. How does this compare with your motivation for giving yourself to other people?

4. What metaphors does Paul use to describe his care for the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:7-12)?

How does each of these enhance our understanding of his relationship with them?

5. What was Paul's goal for them (1 Thes. 2:12; see also 1 Thes. 3:12-13)?

**6.** In what specific ways did it cost Paul to invest his life in the Thessalonians? How are the costs similar for us today?

**7.** What were the results of Paul's labors in the lives of the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:13-16)?

**8.** Why will the Thessalonian Christians be Paul's hope, joy and crown when the Lord Jesus returns (1 Thes. 2:17-20)?

**9.** How can Paul's example help us invest in the lives of other Christians?

**10.** What younger Christians has God placed around you?

In light of Paul's example, how can you influence them toward godliness?

**11.** Give thanks for those people who have had a godly influence on you. Pray for specific individuals in whom you can invest your life.