

# The Vine

## Intro:

October 5-11, 2008

What motivates you? Motivation is a strong word. It is a buzz-word these days, used in commercials to convince you to buy a product. It is often used in political speeches to convince you of one thing or another. The root of the word is motive. Motive is something that causes you to act. Take a moment and ponder what causes you to act? What would cause you to buy their product or vote for them? What motivates you at work? What inspires you at church? Even at this moment, what has motivated you to read this?

As you work through The Vine this week, stay sensitive to the idea of motivation both in the passage and in your own mind and heart.

## Day One

### Background

Paul begins this passage by mentioning having “previously suffered.” If you want to take a look at Paul’s time in Philippi, look at Acts 16:6-40. It’s story that could be made into an action movie.

Skim quickly over 1 Thessalonians 1 and then slowly read through 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6. Write down any major themes or repeated ideas that show up.

Again consider any main idea or verse that may have popped out to you. Spend some time in prayer and ask God why this might have been brought to mind.

# Day Two

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

List what Paul, Silas and Timothy actually did among them in verses 1 to 7. (List the verbs.)

Now list what it says they did not do in verses 1 to 7?

What would qualify someone to credibly share the Gospel?

What qualifies Paul?

How would you define greed? What does Paul say about greed here? How can a teacher or leader abuse their position? What assurance is Paul giving the Thessalonians?

What was their motivation?



**Prayer Reflection:** Pray about your motivations. Who are you trying to please? At work. In your family. As you serve at church. Be in the Lord's presence fully. Allow his love to fill you. Let your motivations be adjusted by your time with Jesus.

## Day Three

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

Do you think verse 7 goes with verses 1 to 6? Or with verse 8 to 12? How does it connect the two paragraphs?

### What is an Epistle?

Epistle is a Greek word from which we derive the English word epistle meaning "written message" or "letter". The 21 New Testament books were not written as books but as letters and are known as Epistles. The Apostle Paul wrote 13 of those letters including 1st Thessalonians.

Paul's epistles are classified as Pastoral (1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus) and Prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon). Other writings are known as General epistles including those authored by John, Peter, James and Jude.

How were they like mothers?

How were they like fathers?

Verse 8 is between the mother and father analogy. In this verse, what does it say they shared with them? What would have happened if they only shared one of those two things?

How do the mother and father analogies contribute to your understanding of effective ministry?

**Prayer Refelction:** Spend some time in prayer and ponder these questions as you pray. Is God able to gently guide me? Am I open to His gentle nurturing? Or do I require a firm hand from Him in order to be disciplined and guided? Is my heart surrendered and moldable or is it resistant to being taught?

## Day Four

There is a shift in verse 13. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16 and see if you can notice the shift. What changes there?

What are possible responses to the Gospel?

What was the response of the Thessalonians?

What is your response?

There is much suffering referenced in this passage both with Paul and the Thessalonians, yet the tone of the passage is very positive and encouraging. How can that be? Why does Paul seem happy that they suffered?





What are the consequences for opposition to the Gospel?


**Prayer Refelction:** Pray about what you have heard from the Lord this week. How have you been able to receive it and accept it?

## *Day Five*

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16 and pay attention to the joy and the suffering.

What does it look like for the Word of God to be at work? In a group of believers or in an individual?

Spend some time praying over the entire week. What have you learned and how have you been able to apply it? Pray for yourself and for the teaching team as you prepare your heart to join the entire church in corporate worship and teaching this weekend.



# Conclusion

If you wish to get The Vine electronically, go to [www.kentwoodcommunitychurch.org/thevine](http://www.kentwoodcommunitychurch.org/thevine). You can download The Vine there or you can subscribe to have The Vine sent to you by e-mail each week.

## Views on suffering

The view that suffering is good can be found in several passages of scripture. According to Acts 5:41 the apostles considered "suffering disgrace for the Name" as a badge of honor and rejoiced about it.

We know that the apostle Paul also rejoiced in suffering from Romans 5:3 where he wrote, "Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance". In fact, Paul invited others into suffering writing, "So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God" 2 Timothy 1:8.

Finally, John included suffering with other grand blessings in Revelation 1:9 writing "I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus".

Epistles are passionate, inspired commentaries unfolding the Divine Truth out of history and the Gospels. Epistles are vital writings as they detail the nature and process of the redemptive Christian experience.

Written by The Vine Team.  
Send an e-mail to [thevine@kcconline.org](mailto:thevine@kcconline.org) with comments or questions. We would love to hear what you think about it. If you have a heart to help create The Vine, let us know that you are interested in joining the team.

