

New Morning Magical – for 8-01-20

How to tell the real from the false

Verses 5-13 of 1 Thessalonians 2, is a great description of how Paul came to the Thessalonians and how he and his colleagues operated among the ecclesia. It's also an excellent description of how you can tell whether someone is truly commissioned by God to shepherd people rightly.

5 For neither did we at any time become **flattering in expression**, according as you are aware; neither with a **pretense for greed**, God is witness;

6 neither **seeking glory from men**, neither from you, nor from others, when we could be a burden as Christ's apostles.

7 But we became **gentle in your midst**, as a nurse should be cherishing her own children.

8 Thus being ardently attached to you, we are **delighting to share with you** not only the evangel of God, but our own souls also, because you came to be **beloved by us**.

9 For you remember, brethren, our toil and labor: working night and day so as **not to be burdensome** to any of you, we herald to you the evangel of God.

10 You are witnesses, and God, how **benignly and justly and blamelessly** we became to you who are believing,

11 even as you are aware how we were to each one of you, **as a father to his own children, consoling and comforting** you and attesting unto you

12 to **be walking worthily of God**, Who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

13 And therefore we also are thanking God unintermittingly that, in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is **operating also in you** who are believing.

WOW! There is a lot in there, so let's get as much as we can out of it. First, here's the lists of characteristics to watch out for in anyone purporting to be called into the ministry by the Father:

- Is he or she **flattering in expression**?
- Do they display a **pretense for greed**?
- Are they **seeking glory from men**?
- Are they **burdensome**

OR

- Are they **gentle in your midst**?
- **delighting to share with you**?
- Do they work **so as not to be burdensome**?
- Do they behave **benignly and justly and blamelessly**?

- Are they **consoling and comforting**?
- Do they teach you how **to be walking worthily of God**?
- Is the word of God they bring **operating also in you**?

The last two items in the second list are hugely important. Let's start with the last one: Is the word of God they bring **operating also in you**? If you are not changed profoundly by whomever you're listening to as a minister of God, something is wrong. That goes for Morning Magicals too! If you find that what we share each day does not operate in you, to perceive the Father and His word differently; if Yeshua is not more real to you today than He was two weeks ago, you ought to listen to someone else who CAN communicate the word of God effectively, because His word is truth; it IS living and operative, which we learn in Hebrews 4:12-13:

12 For the word of God is living and operative, and keen above any two-edged sword, and penetrating up to the parting of soul and spirit, both of the articulations and marrow, and is a judge of the sentiments and thoughts of the heart.

13 And there is not a creature which is not apparent in its sight. Now all is naked and bare to the eyes of Him to Whom we are accountable.

The word of God IS operating and it should change you, encourage you, and build you up in your spirit, or you should move on.

When Barbara and I moved to Dallas in 2012, I found the radio ministry broadcasts, which were recorded sermons from Sunday services of various pastors around the country; and I listened to several of these on a daily basis for about two years. I realized, in the second year, that I had heard almost the same messages the year before; in fact, I heard very similar messages at the same time from different pastors. I wondered if there was a book of messages that they all owned and used year-to-year.

That's not as absurd as it may sound: One of the few friends I made in church was the pastor's son, and we would often go home with one another for the day after church. I remember his dad studying to prepare his message from a book of possible sermons, complete with themes, stories, notes, and relevant Scriptures (from the King James Bible, of course). I remember being taken aback as I realized, *"This guy gets what we hear on Sunday, from this book!"* I was disappointing; I had expected better, silly me.

So here these preachers were, preaching the same message to the same people, year after year, followed always by an appeal for money, disguised as, *“the resource of the month, which is available for a donation of any amount.”*

Paul’s example is completely opposite; he’s totally invested, because he knows in every fiber of his being that his life is not his own, but Christ’s. Yeshua could just as easily killed Paul as show Himself in His glory and speak to Paul on the road to Damascus! He’s not about to squander the calling and the commission from Yeshua that Paul knew he didn’t deserve! This is a guy who doesn’t come with his own agenda; he comes with Christ’s as the Lord’s ambassador, and Paul does it meekly, with fear and trembling, as we read before. Paul, if I may say it, is the pattern by which all others should emulate who purport to speak for God, ‘cause that’s what preachers should be doing. Paul is also the pattern by which all other ministers of the Gospel should be judged, and that is a high standard indeed.