

MARKING LIVES - 3

Contagious Christianity

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us."
- 1 Thessalonians 2:8

"Christians are to *be* good news as well as *share* the good news."

Although our actions have nothing to do with gaining our own salvation, they might be used by God to save somebody else! Authenticity, compassion, and sacrifice all work together to help those outside the faith come to the point of saying, "*Who else but God could make anyone so real and kind and consistent as these people are? I wonder how I can have what they have?*"

Welcome

How has God been at work in your life this past week?

Worship

As a follower of Christ, people should be drawn closer to God as a result of Christ living in you. As His eyes, His feet, His hands, you are to do whatever Jesus would do in the lives of others. Possible songs: "Let The Beauty of Jesus Be Seen" (722), "How Beautiful" (365), "Instruments of Your Peace" (828), "To Love Someone More Dearly" (636).

Word

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1. What opposition to your faith are you facing at the moment? What encouraged Paul to persevere? What encourages you to persevere?
2. What really turns you off about the way some people present the gospel? How are you attempting to avoid these mistakes, and yet still maintain a strong witness?
3. What is it about sincerity, honesty and genuineness--that people find so attractive (vss 3-6)? As Christians, in what ways should we manifest authenticity?
4. Likewise, there's tremendous pulling power in the expression of even a single act of kindness. What makes compassion so disarming (vss 7-8)? What are some practical ways in which you can improve your own "compassion quotient?"
5. Paul modeled the strength of sacrifice--the sacrifice of investing time, the sacrifice of resources (he wasn't driven by material things), and the sacrifice of a consistent, godly lifestyle (vss 10-12). Which of these three sacrifices is the easiest for you to make? The most difficult?

Works

Are you marking lives, or just marking time? How is the Lord using this passage to encourage you to live more redemptively? Close your time by praying for one another.