

Ready for Christ's Return | Part 3

Lesson 4

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

September 24, 2023

People Who Are a Joy to Lead

INTRODUCTION

Do internet searches on “how to be a follower” and “how to be a leader,” and you will find a 1 to 6 ratio of results. The on-line book sharing platform GoodReads lists over 37,000 leadership books but less than 50 books on being a follower. Everyone wants to be a leader but won't they need followers? In this passage, we will learn about being a good follower and, particularly, a follower of Christ. We will also see how a good leader, Paul, encourages followers.

Today, in the west, we are unique in history for generally being able to choose our leaders. We can change jobs, schools, and even churches if we don't like our leader. We can also vote for civic leaders. But if we are not good followers, our problems will likely follow us.

We need both leaders and followers, and most everyone is a leader in some situations (see last week's lesson) and a follower in other situations. Let's see how the Bible will instruct us!

Memory verse: “For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?”—1 Thessalonians 2:19

Pray, and read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What two things did Paul praise the Thessalonians for (and thank God for about them)? How frequently is Paul thanking God? (1 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

2. What did Paul observe that the Thessalonians had been through, and who did he compare them to? (1 Thessalonians 2:14)

3. Who opposed the Thessalonian (and the Judean) church, and by what means? (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)

4. How did Paul describe his absence? (1 Thessalonians 2:17)

5. How did Paul value the Thessalonian church? (1 Thessalonians 2:19)

3. What kind of persecution might a follower of Christ expect? (Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)

4. What should our response be to our own suffering and suffering by fellow believers? (Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 16:24-25; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. It is often asked if good leaders are born, made, or a product of their circumstances. What about good followers?
2. Do people need a good leader to be good followers or to bring joy to their leader? Why or why not?
3. Think about, and summarize below, what lessons you learned from this passage and study. Pray to God asking for help to apply these lessons to your life.