

Skin in the Game: Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians

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Three Surprising Ways to Improve Your Ability to Love Others

(1 Thessalonians 4:9-12)

"Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for {anyone} to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more,

1. Slow Down.

"and make it your ambition to lead a quiet life"

2. Stay in Your Own Lane

"and attend to your own business"

3. Work

"and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need." (1 Thessalonians 4:9-12)

For Further Thought and Discussion

Getting Started

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?
2. What was the most loving group you've ever been part of? What made them different from other groups?

Going Deeper

3. Please read 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10a. How does Paul know that God is at work in the Thessalonians? What do you learn about love from these verses? Why is God the source of love? How do you think He teaches us to love one another?
4. Please read 1 Thessalonians 4: 10b-12. Why do you think Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to "excel still more" in loving people? What is the relationship of the three commands to love?
 - a. "...make it your ambition to lead a quiet life..."?
 - b. "...attend to your own business..."?
 - c. "...work with your hands..."?
5. How would applying each of these commands make us a better representative of Christ and a more loving neighbor? (vs. 12) If all believers applied this passage to our lives, what do you think would happen in our country? Which of these commands do you need to apply? Why?

Application

What is one thing you can do this week to apply this passage?