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**Cultivating a Desire for Others**

***1 Thessalonians 2:17-20***

Your life is your chance to prepare to meet God. So how do you prepare for the most important day of your life? Our initial response is probably to say something like, “Live holy” or “Obey God” or “Do right.” While all of these are true, too often we miss the point of all these, the thing that Paul was living for and which we ought to as well. A huge part of getting ready to stand before God is to. . .

**Eternally Invest in Those around You**

1. **Eternal investment in the lives of others must be intentional (v 17).**
2. **We must be prepared for the obstacles.**

Paul here describes his separation from the Thessalonians as being violently ripped apart. There will always be circumstances that seek to get in the way of our investing in others.

1. **We must have a deep desire for others.**

Paul heaps up words here to describe how intensely his desire for this church were. He describes himself as “endeavoring more eagerly and with great desire.”

1. **We must prioritize personal ministry.**

Paul was writing letters to them, but he wanted more. He desired to see this church face to face.

1. **Eternal investments in the lives of others will face opposition (v 17)**
2. **What was Satan’s opposition?**
3. Illness? – Job
4. Circumstances? – Job
5. Opposition from unbelievers? – Jews (John 8:44)
6. Opposition from believers? – Peter (Matthew 6:23)
7. **What can be done about the opposition?**
8. Pray through it (1 Thessalonians 3:10).
9. Push through it (1 Thessalonians 3:1-3).
10. **Eternal investments in the lives of others prepare for Christ’s coming (vv 19-20).**
11. **People are our hope.** Do you look forward with confidence to the day when the people you have invested in will stand before God?

1. **People are our joy.** Will Christ’s return be a cause of joy for you and those you love? Do you find other people to be your joy now?
2. **People are our glory.** The only thing we can take with us into eternity is other people. Paul looks forward to the Thessalonians as being his crown of boasting – Paul would one day be proud of the success of his spiritual children!