

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

Analysis

So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls—homeir omenoi hymōn (όμειρόμενοι ύμῶν, 'yearning affectionately for you') is an extremely rare verb (possibly coined by Paul) indicating intense longing, tender affection. The phrase eudokoumen metadounai hymin ou monon to euangelion tou Theou alla kai tas heautōn psychas (εύδοκοῦμεν μεταδοῦναι ύμῖν οὐ μόνον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἔαυτῶν ψυχάς) reveals ministry's ultimate investment: 'not only the gospel... but also our own souls/lives.'

Paul distinguishes between professional distance and personal investment. Some ministers deliver content without relationship; Paul gave himself. Psychē (ψυχή, 'soul/life') indicates the totality of personhood—Paul invested his whole self in the Thessalonians' spiritual welfare. This sacrificial love imitates Christ, who 'gave his life' (Mark 10:45). Gospel ministry transmits doctrine but requires incarnational presence: entering people's lives, sharing burdens, becoming vulnerable. The Thessalonians received not just theological instruction but Paul's heart, producing the deep relationship evident throughout this letter.

Historical Context

Paul's affectionate language ('brethren beloved,' 1:4; 2:8; 'our own souls,' 2:8; 'comfort yourselves,' 4:18) reflects the intimate relationships formed during his

three-week ministry in Thessalonica (Acts 17:2). Though brief, this period produced such deep bonds that Paul compared himself to a nursing mother (v. 7) and bereaved parent (v. 17). This relational intensity contrasts with hired teachers who delivered lectures without personal engagement. Paul's model of incarnational ministry—living with, suffering with, investing in people—created spiritual family, not merely religious consumers.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between delivering religious content and imparting your own soul in spiritual relationships?
2. What specific evidence demonstrates that you've invested not just information but yourself in others' spiritual growth?
3. How does Paul's willingness to give his 'own soul' challenge contemporary church models that maintain professional distance?

Interlinear Text

οὕτως	ἰμειρόμενοι	ὑμῶν	εὐδοκοῦμεν	μεταδοῦναι
So	being affectionately desirous	of you	we were willing	to have imparted
G3779	G2442	G5216	G2106	G3330
ὑμῖν	οὐ	μόνον	τὸ	εὐαγγέλιον
unto you	not	only	G3588	the gospel
G5213	G3756	G3440	G2098	G3588
τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἀλλὰ	καὶ	
	of God	but	also	
	G2316	G235	G2532	
τὰς	ἐκαυτῶν	ψυχάς	διότι	ἀγαπητοὶ
G3588	our own	souls	because	dear
G1438	G5590	G1360		G27
ἡμῖν	γεγένησθε			
	unto us			
	G2254			
ye were				
	G1096			

Additional Cross-References

1 John 3:16 (References God): Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

2 Corinthians 12:15 (Parallel theme): And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

Philippians 2:17 (Parallel theme): Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Hebrews 13:17 (Parallel theme): Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

2 Corinthians 6:1 (References God): We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Galatians 4:19 (Parallel theme): My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,