

Series: God Journey?

Message: Our Affection for the Saints Text: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20 (AM 1/15/17)

The Church that “*Turned the world upside down...*” Acts 17:6, was born in the community of small groups. It began with the first disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem. It spread through the Roman Empire in house churches like Jason’s. Today, it continues in small groups like our Journey Groups meeting in the Church on Sundays and our homes during the week. Paul lays out the dynamics of healthy small groups in his endearing letter to the Thessalonians.

I. **The Content of a Journey Group (1-6)**

The life transforming Word of God

- The students (1-2a) “*Our coming to you was not in vain...*”
- The shepherd (2b-4a) “*We have been approved by God...*”
- The subject (4b-6) “*Entrusted with the gospel...not pleasing men*”

II. **The Community in a Journey Group (7-11)**

The life-saving Fellowship of God

- It’s a safe place (7) “*We were gentle among you...a nursing mother*”
- It’s a supportive place (8-9) “*We were pleased...to impart our lives*”
- It’s a structured place (10-11) “*Charged everyone...as a father*”

III. **The Context of a Journey Group (12-16)**

The world changing Church of God

- Members are sanctified (13) “*You received the Word of God...*”
- Members are sent (12) “*You walk worthy of God...in His Kingdom*”
- Members will suffer (14b) “*You also suffered in the same things...*”
- Members will share (14a) “*You brethren became imitators...*”

Application to life: Understanding the incredible benefits of being connected to a small group, *have you found yours?* If not, make the commitment today to join a Journey Group. We’ll help. What a tragedy to go through this life without the support of *YOUR* small group. Shepherds and members, is your class the kind that Paul outlined to the Thessalonians? What *changes* do you need to make in the New Year? Make that *commitment* to Him this morning. God’s doing amazing things through our Sharing Life Ministries...*But we’ve only just begun to see what He longs to do!*