Hello again, Pine Ridge Family!

I hope that you all were blessed by our Palm Sunday Service. This was our first time livestreaming. We had recorded the previous services and then Dave downloaded them right to YouTube. However that recording and then downloading occupied Dave for hours. All day Saturday! So we decided to livestream which is live and therefore done - about three hours. There were some small glitches, but it was our first time. Okay, there were some glitches that weren’t about livestreaming, but that was due to Pastor’s failure to proofread very well. We will address those problems. Thank you for your patience.

This morning, I was reading in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 for my devotions. I know that upon hearing that, most of you will assume that I will deal with verses 13-18. However we should not neglect verses 1 along with 9 & 10. Here Paul combines strong admonitions with great praise.

Paul has three steps in the first verse. First, he requests and admonishes them to walk worthy of the Lord. This is clear and direct. Do what you know to do. In this, the Thessalonians needed no more instruction. They understood this walk with the Lord because in the second step Paul says, “just as you actually walk!” Their example of walking with Christ was reaching the entire area (Chapter 1:7). This was a walk that they were already known for. People in Philippi and Berea and all the little towns around had heard of their transformation in Christ, their faithfulness, and work in the Spirit (1:3).

So why is Paul calling this church, that must be considered exemplary, to walk to please the Lord if they were already doing it. His third step, found here and in verses 9 & 10 is that they, “exceed all the more.” As good as the Thessalonians were, and from Paul’s description of them, they were really good, but there is never a time when we can pause in our growth or service. You can be a pretty good Christian or a really good Christian, even an excellent one, but you are never a finished Christian when it comes to growth. There is always room for improvement – plenty of room. One important proof of our salvation is growth. The challenge I received to pursue the ministry came in a sermon by Word of Live Director, Harry Bollback when he asked the congregation, “What have you done ***today*** for Jesus Christ?” “Not what have you done this year, or this month, but what have you done for Jesus ***today***?” Then I realized that I needed to take this new found faith to a new level. I needed to know this Lord I had accepted.

For all who have been called by God, every day belongs to Him. What have we done for Jesus today?

Although our movement may be limited, neither our service nor our growth are. Christians have faced and now face prison and concentration camps and persecution. Still they have found opportunities to be lights in that deep darkness. May we at Pine Ridge, with all our technology, find ways to grow and to bless and to serve.

In Christ

Pastor EA