

CITYWEST CHURCH

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GODSPEED: THE PACE OF BEING KNOWN.

Living the Way of Jesus Where Life Happens
New series on 1 and 2 Thessalonians

“Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

Psalm 46:10 (NLT)

We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. 3 As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4 We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people. 5 For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance^[c] that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you. 6 So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. 7 As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-6 (NLT)

There is a short film titled Godspeed that shows the journey of an American pastor who finds himself in rural Scotland. He approaches his role like any Westerner would, asking where his office was, etc. Only to be told his office was out there on the streets. He would knock on the doors of the townsfolk, and if invited i,n would read scripture over a cup of tea.

In it they interview NT scholar NT Wright, and he says of modern Christianity that if we could all just slow down, we might catch up to God.

Koyama, a Japanese theologian, wrote Three-Mile-an-Hour God to challenge the way many people imagine God as fast-moving, controlling, and solving problems

instantly. Instead, he presents God as slow, patient, and intimate—like a God who walks alongside us, not rushing.

- *Three miles an hour is basically human walking speed. God moves at our pace, entering our daily struggles, joys, and ordinary life.*
- *Koyama emphasizes that God's power is not about speed or force, but about faithfulness, presence, and love in the long term.*
- *It's a call to see God not just in dramatic miracles, but in everyday life, in relationships, care, and the "slow work" of transformation.*

God isn't in a hurry. God's love unfolds gently, patiently, and in ways we can truly participate in.

To live as a presence person we must be willing to slow down, to catch up to God.

Paul begins Thessalonians not with urgency, correction, or strategy—but with gratitude and prayer. That tells us something. Before the church does anything, Paul notices who they are becoming.

God's presence is not absent.

But we are often too hurried to notice it.

The Thessalonians lived under pressure, persecution, and uncertainty—yet they were spiritually attentive. Presence People begin here: slowing down enough to notice God.

1. STILLNESS IS AN ACT OF TRUST.

Psalm 46 does not deny chaos—it speaks into it. Nations rage, kingdoms fall, yet God says, “Be still, and know that I am God.”

Stillness is not inactivity. Stillness is releasing control.

Paul says the Thessalonians were chosen and loved by God before they achieved anything (1 Thess. 1:4). Their security didn't come from performance, but from belonging.

We do not slow down because life is calm.

We slow down because God is faithful.

Presence begins when striving ends.

2. ATTENTION BEFORE ACTIVITY.

So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. 7 As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-7 (NLT)

You can be near Jesus and still miss Him. Presence People choose awareness over busyness.

Before I do anything for the Lord, help be still before the Lord.

Human beings, not doings.

Paul praises the Thessalonians not for doing more, but for receiving the message with joy from the Holy Spirit

3. TIME WITH GOD MAKES YOU A BLESSING TO PEOPLE.

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.

Mark 1:35 (NLT)

If Jesus needed space with the Father, we do too.

“Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day.”

Dallas Willard.

In a fast-paced world that you can't get out of, you need to walk at a slower pace on the inside. The pace of being known, to know God and to know others. To notice not just what is happening but what God is doing.

He replied, “You know the saying, ‘Red sky at night means fair weather tomorrow; **3** red sky in the morning means foul weather all day.’ You know how to interpret the weather signs in the sky, but you don’t know how to interpret the signs of the times!

Matt 16:2-3 (NLT)

Don't just see the information, notice the signs of the times, that is a key to being a presence person.

You need to be with God, in order to be a blessing to people.

YOU CAN'T POUR FROM AN EMPTY CUP.

Connect group questions:

1. What would it mean for you to walk at “three miles an hour” on the inside this week?
2. What simple rhythm (e.g., morning prayer, walking, slowing conversations, Scripture before phone) could help you become more attentive to Jesus during your week?
3. What might you need to release control of in order to slow down internally?

