

THE LORD'S WORK DEMANDS THOROUGHNESS
THE LORD'S FAITHFUL WORKER – PART 2 OF 5
1 CORINTHIANS 16:7-8

BE THOROUGH

1. **THOROUGHNESS** = “to execute without negligence or omissions; to be complete or perfect in all respects”
2. **PARTIAL** = “incomplete, not total”
3. **MINIMUM** = “the least quantity or amount possible; lowest amount, lowest value”

KEY THOUGHT: Paul’s ministry was characterized by thoroughness as he used his **time** to its full **advantage** (Eph. 5:16).

I. PAUL SOUGHT TO GIVE THE TIME NECESSARY TO DISCIPLE OTHER CHRISTIANS (1 COR. 16:7-8).

- A. Paul longed to teach **every Christian** thoroughly (Col. 1:28, 29).
- B. Paul wanted every Christian to reach their **full potential** in Christ (1 Thess. 3:10).
- C. Paul yearned to teach Christians the **full counsel** of God (Acts 20:27).
 - ◆ Ornithologist = someone who is an expert in working with **birds**
 - ◆ Herpetologist = someone who is an expert in working with **reptiles**
 - ◆ Ophiologist = someone who is an expert in working with **snakes**
 - ◆ Theologist = a Christian who is experienced in serving **God**, using what he knows, and working in **His** kingdom

KEY THOUGHT: Good purposes, intentions, and plans are **worthless** if they are not **faithfully** executed (John 17:4).

II. THOROUGHNESS SHOULD MARK A CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IN CHRIST (PHIL. 3:17-21).

A. Live and minister like **Jesus** (Matt. 4:23; 9:35).

²³ Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Matthew 4:23

³⁵ Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Matthew 9:35

1. **Actively going** to minister to others
2. Teaching the **Bible**
3. Sharing the **Gospel**
4. **Ministering** to the needs of others

B. Stephen and **Philip** are examples of men who lived thorough lives for Christ.

1. They both performed **practical, mundane** ministry as “waiters” to assist the apostles (Acts 6:2-5).
2. These men became good **preachers** (Acts 6:8–8:40).
3. Stephen’s **empowered** preaching and his martyr’s death led to Paul’s conversion.
4. Philip **evangelized** throughout Samaria and shared with the Ethiopian eunuch that indirectly impacted **Africa** with the gospel.

KEY THOUGHT: Thoroughness for a Christian can be seen as being “**hearers** and **doers**” of God’s Word (Matt. 7:24-29).

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

June 26, 2011

SUNDAY: ***Paul's ministry was characterized by thoroughness as he used his time to its full advantage (Eph. 5:16)!*** Paul sought to achieve as much evangelism and discipleship as he could in each city he visited or lived. There was not a "success formula" that Paul followed for his ministry. Sometimes he stayed for a few weeks or months. If the situation warranted the investment of his time, he stayed a year and a half. Paul was thorough in his preparation of the disciples he trained. The training was not partial and certainly not the minimum. How thorough are you with the time you invest in ministry? Are you even investing time to build the kingdom of God, or are you "spending" all your time on yourself? Are you being thorough in how you are living your life for the Lord? Ask the Lord what you need to scale down so you can invest in building his kingdom. ***May your desire to be thorough become a passion in your Christian life!***

MONDAY: ***Paul sought to give the time necessary to disciple Christians (1 Cor. 16:7-8)!*** Paul longed to teach every Christian thoroughly (Col. 1:28, 29). The stated objective was to train every Christian to become mature in Christ. This aggressive goal would require a thoroughness not yet achieved by the pastors and Christian Educators to whom the torch has been handed. Paul also wanted every Christian to reach his/her full potential in Christ (1 Thess. 3:10). As a Christian is maturing, he/she can live up to his/her full potential at that moment. Assignments to teach in a ministry or lead a portion of that same ministry can be given. Growth in biblical knowledge and gaining a greater grasp of theology will lead to more substantial assignments. Therefore, Paul yearned to teach Christians the full-counsel of God (Acts 20:27). He desired that Christians would learn about God's character and nature so that they could become *theologists*. A *theologist* is a Christian who is experienced in serving God and working in His kingdom. You can ask a church leader to help you move forward in your Christian life to become a *theologist*. Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt your heart to shed unhealthy spiritual habits in favor of godliness. ***May your life with Christ deepen as you decide to live for Him instead of just knowing about Him!***

TUESDAY: ***Your intentions to serve God should be acted upon (John 17:4)!*** What has God equipped you to do in His service? Have you identified how you are to serve Him during this season of your life? Are all your plans for serving God in the future, even the distant future? Good purposes, intentions, and plans are worthless if they are not faithfully executed. In less than three years, Jesus was able to tell the Heavenly Father that He had finished the work that had been assigned to Him on earth (John 17:4). Obviously, none of us are Jesus. However, what step(s) could you make this summer and in the fall to begin implementing the good intentions and plans you have for serving God? Pray for clarity about why you are delaying your obedience. Ask the Lord to show how you could take a small step forward and begin to create some momentum in your spiritual life of service. ***May the adventure of serving God to build His kingdom stimulate you to love God even more!***

WEDNESDAY: ***Christians are to live and minister like Jesus (Matt. 9:35)!*** The first requirement for a Christian to live and minister like Jesus is to surrender his/her life to His

leadership. One of many verses that describe that transfer of leadership is Galatians 2:20. Serving others is the reason and purpose that Jesus has assigned to Christians (John 15:13 “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends”). The ministry style employed by Jesus can be seen in at least these two verses (Matt. 4:23; 9:35). First, Jesus was actively going out where people were busy living their lives to encounter them. The Great Commission commands Christians to make disciples as ‘we are going’ about our daily lives (Matt. 28:19-20). Second, Jesus was teaching those He met about God. He spoke about the greatness of God and their need to know Him personally. The third aspect of Jesus’ ministry style was to tell those that would listen about how to become followers of God. Both of the verses in Matthew mention the gospel message being shared to lead men to repent of their sin and place their faith in God (4:23; 9:35). Lastly, Jesus was able to divinely heal in His ministry. Though healing does occur today, we generally minister to the hurts and wounds of those that we encounter. Pointing them to Jesus and how knowing He will transform their lives. Ask the Lord to help you live out Jesus’ style of ministry. ***May this become a template for your prayer life and an outline for your actions!***

THURSDAY: *Jesus is calling His followers to live thorough lives for Him (Col. 1:28-29)!*

Stephen and Philip are examples of men who lived thorough lives for Christ. They both performed practical, mundane ministry as “waiters” to assist the apostles in their ministry (Acts 6:2-5). They were willing to serve the needs of others. These men were gifted in the ministry of speaking and developed that gift to become good preachers (Acts 6:8–8:40). Stephen’s passionate, articulate defense of the faith stirred a young Pharisee who was holding the cloaks of those seeking to end Stephen’s life. Stephen’s empowered preaching was punctuated by a martyr’s death and was used by God in Paul’s conversion. Philip evangelized throughout Samaria and shared with the Ethiopian eunuch at the time of that influential man’s conversion. Philip had an indirect impact upon Africa by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with a high ranking official. Ask God how you can be more thorough in your life in Christ? Pray for strength to be obedient to the assignment God gives you as you pray. ***May your willingness to live a thorough and complete life bring victory into the lives of many around you!***

FRIDAY: *Thoroughness for a Christian can be seen as being “hearers and doers” of God’s word (Matt. 7:24-29)!*

The house in this illustration represents the religious life, and the rain, the divine judgment of God. The parable outlines that only the life built upon the foundation of obeying God’s word will remain standing. Being a hearer and doer of the Word of God will involve repentance, salvation through Christ alone, and living in light of God’s merciful love. The Christian is not to practice easy “believism”, but is to live a thorough, godly life serving Jesus by serving others. Commit your life wholeheartedly to God today. Tell God you are through playing games and faking your Christian life. ***May this commitment stand the test of temptation and time!***

SATURDAY: *Choose to live a thorough life for Christ (Gal. 2:20)!* When your days draw to a close on this earth, you will want to know that you have lived your life thoroughly for God. Read His word. Live by the precepts and principles contained in the Word of God. Serve Christ by serving others. Ask the Lord for the strength to live a thorough life for Him. ***May your joy abound, and may God’s peace fill your life!***