**PREPARE THE WAY**

**The Church Working Right**

**October 30, 2022**

**How do you really know what a legitimate church looks like?**

*We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia**. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,* *for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,* *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.* (1 Thessalonians 1:2-10)

**Why were they a model church?**

**-They were a working church.**

*We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Thessalonians 1:3)

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.* (2 Thessalonians 3:7-9)

**-They were also a welcoming church.**

*You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit… for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God…* (1 Thessalonians 1:6,9)

**-They were a witnessing church.**

*The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it…* (1 Thessalonians 1:8)

**-They were a waiting church.**

*…and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.* (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

**How often God’s gifts to us become idols for us!**

**There’s nothing like the church, when the church is working right!**