"Heroic Ministry"
1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

C.I.T.—Paul's apologetic for his ministry serves to defend himself from detractors and set the tone for how they should imitate him.
C.I.S.—As we minister in our own context, we should imitate this biblical example of ministry.
Purpose—I want to frame the context of Christian ministry.
Introduction—80th Anniversary of D-Day—heroes to emulate

I. ***Heroic Ministry is Courageous***. Vs. 1-2
   a. Vanity
      i. Empty in substance or in result.—soft
      ii. Their ministry was robust and legitimate both in substance and in result.
   b. What brought about this "non-vanity?"
      i. Experience of deliverance from difficulty
      ii. They had faced extreme persecution in Philippi and other places, and yet the Lord delivered them each time.
      iii. This brought about a faith in the power of God that regardless of what happened to them, He would see them through.
   c. This faith resulted in speaking boldly the gospel of Jesus to the Thessalonians, not because they would avoid difficulty, but in light of it.
   d. Illus.—Saving Private Ryan—bombs dropped the inexperience for cover, veterans didn't budge
   e. Application
      i. Whether we live or die is not determined by the opposition against us, but by the God that sent us.
      ii. We do not have to minister in fear, since we are emboldened by our faith in the one who promised that he would be with us until the end of the age.
      iii. Your personal ministry should be one of courageous boldness by faith.

II. ***Heroic Ministry is Commissioned*** vs. 3-4
   a. Exhortation—preaching with the idea of coming alongside/comforting/encouraging
   b. Not from a alterior motive
      i. Not from error—either error in the content of the teaching or error in the motive for teaching/preaching/ministering
      ii. Not from Uncleanness—used to refer to sensual impurity, however, in this context it refers to an impure heart and motive
      iii. Not guile—deception and two facedness
   c. Motive if from the Lord
      i. Approved by God
         1. Examined and tested
         2. Found faithful for a purpose
      ii. Entrusted with the gospel
         1. The gospel message is the message of salvation.
         2. Trustworthy in life and in belief.
         3. God judged them worthy of that calling
      iii. Pleasing God
         1. God was the one that sent them, he was the one that would judge them.
         2. Their motive was not for themselves, but to honor God.
   d. Illus.—Dwight Eisenhower—Walter Kronkite—1964—"These men came here British and our other allies, Americans, to storm these beaches for one purpose only, not to

gain anything for ourselves, not to fulfill any ambitions that America had for conquest, but just to preserve freedom."

e. Application
    i. We do not minister for our own benefit, but for the call of God.
    ii. We minister and serve, because of Him and one day we will face his examination.
    iii. We don't minister for any personal ambition, but just to bring freedom.

III. ***Heroic Ministry is Compassionate*** vs. 5-8

a. Not with…
    i. Flattering speech—as if to butter you up
    ii. False motive of covetousness—to get something from you
    iii. Seeking glory from men—receiving accolades or gifts
    iv. Even though as apostles it was their right to receive material blessings from those who received their ministry
    v. Each of these points to the personal benefit of the minister/messenger.
b. Instead
    i. As an infant—gentleness
    ii. Metaphor of a mother
        1. Nursing mother with her children
        2. She will get up at all hours of the night for their wellbeing
        3. She sets herself and her needs aside, to gently minister to the needs of her baby
    iii. The ministers were willing to share their souls because they loved them.
c. Their love for those needing the message prompted them to set themselves aside for the sake of those who were perishing.
d. Illus.—On Dday, we invaded France in order to liberate, France
e. Application
    i. The message of the gospel brings great benefits to those who believe it.
    ii. The motivating factor for a heroic minister is not what can I get out of this, but what can I give.

IV. ***Heroic Ministry is Contagious*** vs. 9-12

a. Remember their example
    i. Labor and hardship—diligence and resiliency among them
    ii. Consistency—night and day
    iii. Worked not to be a burden—tent making
b. They witnessed this behavior as did God.
    i. Devoutly—with respect to God
    ii. Righteously—with respect to others
    iii. Blamelessly—with respect to themselves
c. Their example and behavior reflected a father with his children.
    i. Father teaches and instructs through both word and example.
    ii. Encouraging/Comforting/Imploring
d. Walk worthy of the kingdom and calling of God
e. They expected them to minister historically.
f. Illus.—Inspired by the true story
g. Application
    i. We are expected to minister to others this same way.
    ii. Imitate me, Paul says.

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iii. Each of us has a particular way we minister, and we should do so heroically

Conclusion—Dick Winters—Band of Brothers—We are to be a company of heroes.