

Introduction: How did the Gospel come to you personally? How has the Gospel changed your life?

I. HOW THE GOSPEL CAME TO THE THESSALONIANS – v.5

- gospel - good news; essentially seeing themselves as news deliverers; the news of Jesus Christ, what He accomplished and teaches His followers
- our Gospel – they had themselves received it, believed it, and now are passing it on
- the emphasis in this first section is how the Gospel came, not the effects of it

A. Negatively

- It did not come **in word only**. It did come in word, for it is essentially a message of the person of Christ; the Gospel does not come where there are not words, the message
- The contrast is that it didn't come merely in words; it CAN come in word only (in contrast to what we will see)

B. Positively

1. It Came with Power

- Gk. dunamis, a force which effects some kind of change

2. It Came with the Holy Spirit

- The Gospel came with the blessing of the Holy Spirit

3. It Came with Much Assurance

- (Gk. playrophoria) complete assurance, full confidence, certainty; also much (Gk. pollay), emphasizing the degree of assurance

- Specifically, what does this mean? Is he referring to miracles and wondrous works? While possibly so, much more.
- These things were **seen in the messengers** of the gospel. The power of a transformed life, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the full confidence were the way that the Gospel came, and was in the hearts of the messengers.
- God used human instruments, and the lives of those men significantly impacted the hearers of that message.
- The message was verified as true by the life of the messengers; there was "proof in the pudding."
- The lives of these men commended the Gospel to them, and their love and integrity was part of what God used..
- They did it "for your sake." It wasn't only motivated by a desire to please God, but also for the salvation of others.

Application: The greater influence of the Gospel will ordinarily be accompanied with the lives of transformed people who carry that Gospel into the world. God *may* use a variety of things (a book, tract, sermon), but this is what He ordinarily uses.

- While it is true that all men are responsible to respond to the Gospel for its own sake, God ordinarily uses godly people to significantly influence others to believe that Gospel (1Cor9:22)
- Assuming that you are bringing the Gospel to others, how do you bring it to them? In word only, or on the wings of a transformed life?

II. HOW THE GOSPEL CHANGED THE THESSALONIANS – vv.6-10

A. They Became Followers of These Godly Men and the Lord – v.6a

- Gk. mimaytais – an imitator, one who follows the example of another. This is more than the gaining of information, but the change of life.
- Contrary to the modern notions of teaching, they understood the concept of teaching as more than the imparting of information, but the copying of an example (Mt10:25 Lk6:40).

B. They Became Joyful in Affliction – v.6b

- The specific affliction was both religious and social (Acts 17). It was targeted first on Paul and his companions, but then continued when they left the city.
- Treated as a heresy by the Jewish religious community. Treated as possible traitors and treasonous by the state. This would certainly effect them in their families as well.
- Nevertheless, because of what they believed about Christ and the Gospel they were able to overcome the temptation of feeling depressed and sad. In the difficulty they had true joy as they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

C. They Became Examples to Others – v.7

- The very thing the messengers were to them, they then became to others.
- By their life the Gospel was trumpeted forth. There was a lot of talk about how God had transformed the Thessalonians, and that a church had begun there in the midst of a sinful city.

D. They Became Servants of the True God – v.9-10

- It was the evident testimony that they had turned from the Pantheon of gods dedicated to various spheres of life to the one true God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Application: How has the Gospel changed you? Has the Gospel changed you in these ways?