

The Significance of the Gospel (Part 2 of #2)

I Thessalonians 1: 5-10

Last week we began our study in these verses dealing with the significance of the gospel. Clearly Paul was aware of its significance; he had been transformed by the gospel and he had witnessed the transformation of countless others through the power of the gospel.

We are in the midst of some dark and difficult days, but we have a resource that this world can't match or destroy. We have the truth of God's Word, and in particular, the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Word has not lost its power to convict. It is not a book that is outdated and obsolete. It is current and relevant to everyone. The Bible is more up to date and accurate than this morning's newspaper. God's Word will stand will all else is gone.

I want to continue to consider the **unchanging truths** regarding: **The Significance of the Gospel**. Let's take a moment to refresh on what we discovered last week. First of all we noticed:

I. The Authority of the Gospel (5)

A. The Presentation – **For our gospel came not unto you in word only.**

B. The Power – not in word only, but also in power.

C. The Person – and in the Holy Ghost.

D. The Persuasion – and in much assurance.

E. The Preparation – as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

II. The Acceptance of the Gospel (6-7)

A. Their Conversion – And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord.

B. Their Commitment – having received the word in much affliction.

C. Their Consolation – with joy of the Holy Ghost.

D. Their Communication (7) – So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

III. The Advancement of the Gospel (8) – For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. The gospel advanced through the efforts at Thessalonica. Notice:

A. It was Shared (8a) – The church there sounded out the gospel of Jesus Christ. This has the idea of “*sounding forth intensely; blasting forth.*” It doesn’t appear that they were ashamed of the gospel or shy about sharing it. It was not spoken of quietly or in secret.

They literally shouted out the gospel message. I believe they talked of it wherever they went.

- Would you not agree that we are lacking in sounding out the gospel? We are content to sit quietly as the world continues on its downward spiral, with-out God, lost and undone before Him. We have the solution to the varied problems of our day, but the world doesn't know because we keep it quiet. May I challenge each of us to proclaim the gospel with great confidence and boldness? Lest us share the Truth with the world!

III. The Advancement of the Gospel (8)

A. It was Shared (8a)

B. It was Spread (8b) – Paul speaks of the gospel being proclaimed in Macedonia and Achaia. This is no small feat. When the Romans conquered Greece, the country was divided into two provinces, Macedonia to the North and Achaia to the South. It was clear that the Thessalonian church had shared the gospel with all of Greece. They had proclaimed Christ to the entire nation. There was not a corner of the country where the gospel had not been shared.

- That in and of itself is miraculous, but Paul goes on about their commitment to the gospel. **The message was**

not confined to Greece, but also in every place where their faith in God was **spread abroad**. Quite literally the gospel influence of Thessalonica was not confined to Greece, but it was reaching the world for Christ!

- Is that not challenging to us? It would be great if it could be said that Fellowship was reaching Mount Airy for Jesus. It would be ever greater if we were impacting North Carolina. Our church would be very diligent and committed if we could honestly say that we were reaching the USA, but what about reaching the world? We can do it! By faith and a determined resolve we can reach our Jerusalem and the utter most parts of the earth!

III. The Advancement of the Gospel (8)

A. It was Shared (8a)

B. It was Spread (8b)

C. It was Sufficient (8c) – This is a very profound statement by Paul. **He declared that he and the others need not speak anything!** That is not to say that they didn't need preaching, but the groundwork had already been laid in many of the places Paul went. When he arrived in a new city, evangelists sent out from Thessalonica had already been there! They were

reaching the world for Christ and Paul could focus on helping them mature in their faith because they had already been saved.

- Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could leave that kind of legacy? There will always be those who need to hear the gospel, but wouldn't it be great if we could lay the groundwork for future generations. Wouldn't it be great if the next pastor and our children could feel confident building upon the work that is already here rather than feeling as if nothing had been accomplished?

III. The Advancement of the Gospel (8)

IV. The Assurance of the Gospel (9) – For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; Consider:

A. The Testimony (9a) – Paul was amazed at what he encountered. It seemed as if everywhere he went, he was hearing of the church at Thessalonica. He didn't have to take his time to share what the Lord had done for them, people already knew. Word had spread that God was working wonders in and through the church there!

- I know that we are not to be covetous, but I envy what the church at Thessalonica had. It was not for their glory, but it glorified the God they served. Their lives and testimony had so impacted the world that people everywhere knew of their faith. God was using them in a marvelous way!

- That ought to be the desire of our hearts as well. Our testimony is one of the most precious things that we possess. Wouldn't it be wonderful for Fellowship to be recognized here and even abroad as a place where God is honored, His people are committed to His work, and lives are changed? Wouldn't it be great if our name was recognized for serving the Lord? I am not speaking of being arrogant or boastful, but living in such a way that God is honored and souls are reached through the lives we live!

- Many churches have a reputation, but it is not one to be desired. I want us to have a godly reputation. I want us to be a place that our members can be proud to be a part of our church family!

IV. The Assurance of the Gospel (9)

A. The Testimony (9a)

B. The Triumph (9b)

B. The Triumph (9b) – For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; Paul was well aware of the reason for their profound influence and testimony. Those who knew about Thessalonica knew of the idolatry and immorality that was prevalent there. This stood as a powerful testimony to the grace and power of God. He had delivered them from a life of idolatry to a life of worship offered to the true and living God. The Lord had taken a people whom the world would have given no chance and transformed their lives for His glory.

- What a profound lesson for us today. Nothing is impossible with God. Just think about what He has done in our lives. We tend to doubt that God can save certain people. We buy into Satan's lies that our generation has been lost and there is no hope for the future. We serve One who is able to save to the uttermost. We just need to be faithful to share the gospel and leave the work of conviction and conversion to Him!

III. The Advancement of the Gospel (8)

IV. The Assurance of the Gospel (9)

V. The Anticipation of the Gospel (10)

V. The Anticipation of the Gospel (10) – And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Paul knew what these had received. He knew the significance of turning to the true and living God. Paul knew that these, as well as all who accept Christ, had received more than could be understood. We too can claim these glorious promises. Notice:

A. The Expectation (10a) – Those who had received Christ were instructed to wait for the Son from heaven. They could anticipate His return.

- Our blessed Lord left us with the promise that He would come again. He has gone away to prepare a home in heaven for all the redeemed. He will come again and receive us unto Himself, that where He is we may be also!
- We ought to live each day in anticipation and full expectation of our Lord's return. He is coming again just as He said He would and this could be the day for His return!

B. The Resurrection – Paul reminded them that Christ had risen from the dead. He was no longer in the tomb,

but alive forever more. They had hope and assurance because Jesus rose again.

- That is where our hope lies as well. Had there been no resurrection on that third day, we would have no hope of life beyond the grave. Because Jesus lives, those who belong to Him have the promise of eternal life. He overcame death and the grave and we are assured resurrection in Christ! 1 Cor.15:20 – But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor.15:52-55 – In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. [53] For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. [54] So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [55] O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

V. The Anticipation of the Gospel (10)

A. The Expectation (10a)

B. The Resurrection

C. The Justification (10c)

C. The Justification (10c) – And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Paul reminds them of their justification in Christ. The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death. When sin is finished it brings forth death. Eternal death in judgment is the punishment for sin.

- God is holy and cannot condone or have fellowship with sin. There had to be a sacrifice that could forever atone for man's sin. Christ provided that sacrifice in His own body upon the cross.
- All who come to Christ in salvation are cleansed of their sin. Their account is wiped clean; the account is paid in full. The redeemed have the righteousness of Christ applied to their lives. We no longer stand accountable for our sin. When God views the redeemed, He only sees the righteousness of His only begotten Son. We are justified and delivered in Him!

This has been a powerful, encouraging, and challenging study. I rejoice for the hope and forgiveness that the saved have in Christ. I have hope and assurance for the future in Him.

Have you trusted Christ as your Savior? If not you are yet in your sin. Apart from Christ, you will stand before God accountable for that sin. You have no means of reconciliation and eternal judgment will be your sentence. Christ came to save that which was lost. Why not come to Him for cleansing and redemption?

Church how does Christ view our efforts and our labor for Him? Are we doing all we could for His glory? Do we have a name for Christ? Are we recognized for our commitment?