

9/11/25

Mission Accomplished
1Thess. 2:13-14

Paul has been the attorney for the defense regarding his ministry at Thessalonica. 1Thess. 2:1-12

1. He has called and cross examined his three witnesses, the Thessalonians, the missionary apostles and God.
2. The physical evidence which he has pointed out has been based on character, care and conduct for the Thessalonians.
3. The false allegations by the Jews regarding Paul and the others were exposed for what they were, lies that attempted to keep the Thessalonians from following Jesus as their Messiah.

And now Paul becomes also the presiding judge who proclaims the verdict.

1. The verdict of Paul was that the word of God accomplished what it purposed. 1Thess. 2:13-14
* This comes in a form of thanksgiving to God for He alone did the work.
2. The verdict of Paul was that the word of God had been rejected by the Jews. 1Thess. 2:15-16

We want to look at Paul's verdict that the ministry at Thessalonica had been a mission accomplished, evident by three things: 1Thess. 2:13-14

- I. The word of God was sown. vs. 13a-e
- II. The word of God took root. vs. 13f

III. The word of God brought fruit. vs. 14

I. The word of God was sown. vs. 13a-e

- A. Paul thanked God because the Thessalonians were open to the word preached. vs. 13a-b
 1. The apostles were thanking God without ceasing for the response of the Thessalonians, "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing." vs. 13a
 - a. The reason is stated in what follows, not in what precedes as some believe.
 - b. The thanks and gratitude is to God, who has provided the plan of salvation, through the gospel.
* The plural pronoun "we" indicates all three missionaries, Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, and is emphatic in the Greek, "we on our part".
 - c. The action of thanks was without ceasing, meaning when ever it came to their mind, not twenty-four hours a day. 1Thess. 2:1; 2:13; 5:18
 - 1) The phrase without ceasing "adialeptos", re-enforces and strengthens the indicative present active tense of thanking God.
 - 2) The word is found only four times in the New Testament, three times are in this epistle. 1Thess. 1:3; 5:17

2. The thanks to God for the Thessalonians is clearly stated, “because when you received the word of God.” vs 13b
 - a. The word received “paralambano” used as a technical term for receiving something formal or outward tradition, objectively.
* This is a participle aorist active, literally, “having received”.
 - b. The word is used of Joseph to take Mary as his wife. Matt. 1:20
 - c. The word is used by Paul of the gospel message. 1Cor 15:1, 3; Gal. 1:12
3. The Thessalonians embraced the word of God they heard from the missionaries, “which you heard from us.” vs. 13b
 - a. The word of salvation, the message of God was proclaimed to them through Paul and the others. 1Thess. 1:5
 - b. The Thessalonians heard the good new.
 - 1) The word heard “akoes”, refers to the active hearing of the message of grace to assess and contemplate, as the Holy Spirit was illuminating God’s word dealing with the heart.
 - 2) Being open to receive God’s word outwardly as they heard it was good and an important step, but basically consisted only in mental acceptance at this point!

- 3) Being around the gospel and hearing it does not save a person; in fact it only makes him or her more accountable.
 - c. The plan of God is that He has chosen the foolishness of preaching to save man. 1Cor. 1:21
 - 1) The fact that he would use human vessels to proclaim the good news of salvation.
 - 2) The fact that it would be the Holy Spirit Who would bring illumination and conviction and salvation.
- B. Paul thanked God because the Thessalonians opened their hearts to the word preached. vs. 13c-e**
1. The Thessalonians knew the gospel was not man based, “you welcomed it not as the word of men.” vs. 13c
 - a. The word welcomed “dechomai” means to receive as a guest, willingly, personally and inwardly, beyond just an outward formality in their hearts.
 - 1) The word is used of receiving a prophet. Matt. 10:41
 - 2) The word is used of receiving the Kingdom. Mk. 10:15
 - b. The expression “not as the word of men”, indicates that the gospel they listened to and embraced did not have its source or origin from man.

- 1) The words of man can inspire.
 - 2) The words of man can educate.
 - 3) The words of man at times can comfort.
 - 4) But the words of man cannot convict a man of sin, regenerate and transform a person into a child of God!
* 1Cor 1:20-23; 2:1; 6-8; Col. 2:8
2. The Thessalonians welcomed the word as divine revelation, not human speculation, “but as it is in truth, the word of God.” vs. 13c-d
- a. The clear contrast is stated, “But as it is in truth, the word of God.”
 - 1) The word truth “aleethos” means indeed, surely implying certainty, reliability and genuine, as God being the originator, source and author.
 - 2) The word is used of the disciples towards Jesus when He caught Peter as he sunk in the water, “truly you are the Son of God.” Matt. 14:33
 - 3) It is used by the centurion about Jesus, “Truly this man was the Son of God.” Mk. 15:39
 - b. They welcomed God’s word in their hearts, not merely in their heads!
 - 1) Head knowledge is information and academic.
 - 2) Heart knowledge is transformation and spiritual.

- c. The needed element that makes the hearing affective is faith, belief in the revelation being heard, as it is activated and illuminated by the Holy Spirit.
* “Faith come by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. 10:17

Illustration

Parable of the Sower depicts the word of God being sown, the various soils are the conditions of the hearts of sinners, each responding different to the seed, the wayside, stony ground, thorny ground, good ground.
* Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.” Acts 26:28

Application

1. Christians are to not believe every spirit but to test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1Jn. 4:1-3
 - a. The Spirit of God confesses that Jesus has come in the flesh is of God. vs. 2
 - b. The spirit that does not confess Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God, but the spirit of Antichrist, who is coming and is already in the world. vs. 3
2. Jesus gave two warnings regarding our hearing as the word is sown.
 - a. We are to take heed **what** we hear in the Parable of the Sower, discerning truth from error. Mk. 4:24

- b. We are to take heed **how** we hear also on the Parable of the Sower, deciding how we live out what we hear. Lk. 8:18
- c. We must never confuse being open to the word from opening our hearts to to the word of God.
 - 1) Just being open to the word of God only, can bring deception thinking one is saved or safe when in fact we have a greater judgment.
 - 2) Opening one's heart will result in salvation and transformation. Rom 12:1-2
- 3. Jesus desires all of us to be Bereans. Acts 17:11
 - a. To receive the word with all readiness of mind, being born again by the incorruptible seed, which lives and abides forever. 1Pet. 1:23
 - b. Then to search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.
 - c. The reason is that we are sanctified by the word of truth. Jn. 17:17
- 4. The New Testament is declared to be the Word of God, His Divine revelation, Inerrant and Infallible.
 - a. "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2Tim. 3:16-17
 - b. "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any **private interpretation** (of human origin or

impulse), for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2Pet. 1:19-21

The word of God was sown in the heart of the Thessalonians!

II. The word of God took root. vs. 13f

- A. Paul testified to the efficiency of the word working in power in the Thessalonians, "which effectively works." vs. 13f
 - 1. Paul pointed out the natural outcome when a person hears the gospel and repents because the process equals the product, "which also effectively works."
 - a. The process.
 - 1) The process of proclaiming the gospel gives opportunity for sinners to see their lostness under the wrath of God.
 - 2) The process of proclaiming the gospel bringing conviction by the Holy Spirit, resulting in repentance for salvation or rejection.
 - b. The product.
 - 1) Being forgiven for all of one's sins.
 - 2) Being regenerated, born again by the word and Spirit of God, a new creation. 2Cor. 5:17
 - 2. Paul pointed out the proficiency of the word of God at work in the Thessalonians.

- a. The word which “hos”, refers back to the word not God” Lenski the Greek Scholar.
 - 1) He says that the middle voice is never used with reference to God, only the active is so used.
 - 2) It is the word of God that is doing the super-natural work “in you”, having taken the word to their heart.
 - 3) Not the words of man, they can do nothing for man, regarding his sin-nature, sinful state nor save him!
- b. The focus is on quality of the work brought about through the word of God by the power of God.
 - 1) The phrase effectively works “energeo”, means to be actively working in power efficiently.
 - 2) We get our word energy from it.
 - 3) The power is by the Holy Spirit, through the word of God, a super-natural and spiritual work.
 - 4) The word is almost always used in the New Testament of some form of supernatural activity.
- c. The tense is the indicative present middle voice in the Greek, an abiding process in the state of continuance.
 - 1) The word of God had sprouted in their hearts, resulting in salvation in the past when they came to them.

- 2) The word of God had continued to work to that very day, bringing forth God’s work in their hearts.
 - * “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure, the flip side is that man is to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling.” Phil. 2:12-13
- 3. The phrase “in you” refers to the Thessalonians and the many ways the word had already worked and was working in them.
 - a. It worked to convert them. 1Thess. 1:5
 - b. It worked against their afflictions. 1Thess. 1:6
 - c. It worked to make them a witness to all in Macedonia. 1Thess. 1:7-8
 - d. It worked for their transformation. 1Thess. 1:9
 - e. It was still working in them because their hearts were open to the word.
 - f. The word of God is not for behavioral modification.
 - g. The word of God is not to make man religious.
 - h. The word of God is not to condemn others and exalt ourselves.
 - i. The word of God is designed to work on the inner man. Eph. 3:16

- j. The word of God is designed to counter the evil heart of man and sin-nature. Jer. 17:9
 - k. The word does this by driving man to the cross of Christ. Rom. 6:6, 11
 - 1) At the cross every person is confronted with their sins.
 - 2) At the cross everything will die, so others can live, including the sinner.
- C. The apostle Paul identified the key to this continuing work of the word in the Thessalonians, “Who believe.” vs. 13f
- 1. The word believe “pistuo” it means to think to be true, to be persuaded, have confidence.
 - a. The word is in the present active tense, continuous with the idea of committing and trusting.
 - a. Faith is synonymous with the word believe and with being a Christian.
 - b. Faith is absolutely necessary for the word to take root and see God in our daily lives, for without faith we cannot please God. Heb. 11:6a
 - c. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17
 - d. Faith is not based on feelings, emotions, but God’s revelation of His word.
 - e. Faith is based on the word of God that is objective truth, not subjective truth.

- f. Faith to be “Biblical”, must be based on the word of God that reveals the will of God.
- 2. Faith is to be a commitment and trust in the promises of God’s word. Heb. 11:17-19
 - a. A righteous standing before God by the substitutionary death of Jesus. 2Cor. 5:21
 - b. A new life through a new birth. 2Cor. 5:17
 - c. A life that never ends. Jn. 3:36
- 3. Faith is never passive, but always active whether in trust or work, for faith without works is dead. Ja. 2:26
 - a. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11:1
 - b. Those that come to God, must believe that He is and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Heb. 11:6b-c

Illustration

The Parable of the sower presents three soils or hearts, one never penetrated the heart, the other two did not endure due to shallowness of commitment and cares and riches, not having lasting root, but the one that fell on good ground brought forth 30, 60 and 100 fold.

Application

- 1. Our faith, trust and commitment should always be on God’s word and it’s efficiency. 2Pet. 1:3-4

- a. God's divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. vs. 3a
 - b. God has done this through Jesus who called us by glory and virtue. vs. 3b
 - c. God has given us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you and I may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. vs. 4
2. Our faith is to be the work of the Holy Spirit, not our own power.
- a. Too many today are trusting in the church they go to, teachers or Pastors, though there is nothing wrong with these in themselves, but nothing changes in their lives.
 - b. The Thessalonians were not of this type, they were moving on in faith though Paul had left, they were not going back into the world!
 - 1) "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by **might** nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts." Zech. 4:6
 - 2) "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Eph. 6:10-11
3. Our trust for the salvation of sinners is the word and power of God alone, and for ongoing growth, development and maturity. Listen to Paul!

- a. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:16-17
- b. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. "1Cor. 1:18
- c. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the **word** of truth." 2Tim. 2:15
- d. "Preach the **word**! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." 2Tim. 4:2
- e. "holding fast the faithful **word** as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." Tit. 1:9

The word of God took root in the Thessalonians!

III. The word brought fruit. vs. 14

- A. Paul declared the Thessalonians had a true family resemblance. vs. 14a-c
 - 1. Paul addressed the believers, "For you, brethren". vs. 14a-b
 - a. The Greek grammar makes it emphatic, "you on your part."

- * What Paul focused on common likeness of all believers.
- b. The Thessalonians once again are called brethren, the key to the likeness.
 - * Brethren “adelphos”, born of the same womb, into the family of God.
- 2. Paul declared the Thessalonians bore the same feature and characteristics “became imitators of the churches of God in Judea.” vs. 14c
 - a. They manifested the likeness of their new family.
 - 1) The word became “ginomai” is the aorist passive to indicate in the past and were transformed by the word they heard and received.
 - 2) The word imitators “mimetes”, means a mimic.
 - 3) They had revealed the nature of children of God, as part of the church of God by believing the word of God, just like the churches of Judea.
 - 4) They became followers of the apostles and the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit. 1Thess. 1:6
 - 5) They became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe, as the churches of Judea. 1Thess. 1:7
 - 6) They were waiting for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the

- dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come, as the churches of Judea. 1Thess. 1:10
- 7) They were walking worthy of the Kingdom of God and glory, as the churches of Judea. 1Thess. 2:12
- b. They were conducting themselves as the churches of God by their spiritual birth from heaven, in contrast to other assemblies of man, even the synagogues. 1Thess. 1:1
 - 1) The churches are identified as from Judea, plural, refers first to the original one in Jerusalem, then those that sprung forth through persecution.
 - 2) The geographical location is a short distance north of Jerusalem, down south, half-way down the Dead Sea, west of the Jordan River.
 - 3) Distinguishing it from Samaria, Galilee, Peraea and Idumaea.
- c. They were imitators of the churches of God which were in Judea.
 - 1) The word churches “ekklesia”, means those called out.
 - 2) The word appears 115 times in the New Testament and the book that uses it more than any other is the book of Revelation, twenty times, all in chapter 1-3, once in Rev. 22:16.

- * The word identifies the riotous mob at Ephesus. Acts 19:32, 41
- 3) The church is comprised of those called out of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Col. 1:13
- 4) The members of the body of Christ on earth to give a glimpse of heaven.
- 3. Paul identified the common origin and life-source of the churches, “in Christ Jesus.” vs. 14c
 - a. The phrase “in Christ”, indicates the position of the believer, in view of his or her salvation.
 - 1) Having agreed with God that the atonement of Jesus is the only propitiation provided for salvation and redemption. 1Jn. 2:2
 - 2) Having repented of their sins and been made a new creation. 2Cor. 5:17
 - b. The title Christ “Christos”, means the anointed.
 - 1) The context indicates the promised Messiah of God.
 - 2) The title implies deity to His person, being God
 - c. The name Jesus “Iesous”, means Yahweh is salvation.
 - 1) The name represents his humanity, being a real man, at a set point in history.

- 2) This fully human man was the Last Adam, to provide redemption from the fall of the First Adam. 1Cor. 15:45
- 3) This Jesus is the head of the church. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18, 2:10
- B. Paul affirmed the common experience of suffering by the churches of God. vs. 14d-e
 - * “from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans.”
 - 1. The Thessalonians manifested the very same endurance and perseverance as all others who had preceded them for their faith, “For you also suffered in the same things.” vs. 14d
 - a. He mentioned it in the opening of the epistle, “And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.” 1Thess. 1:6
 - 1) They were the target of the unbelieving world.
 - 2) They were the opposed for the rejection of sin and darkness.
 - 3) They were like those Paul used to persecute. Acts 8:1; 9:1-2; Gal. 1:22-23
 - 2. The Thessalonians suffered after Paul left, “from your own countrymen.” vs. 14d
 - a. He had sent Timothy back to encourage the Thessalonians in their faith, “that no

- one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.” 1Thess. 3:3
- b. He had forewarned them, “For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.” 1Thess. 3:4
 - c. The persecution of the Thessalonians was of their own countrymen, literally “tribes people”, the Gentile.
3. They suffered in like manner, “just as they did from the Judeans.” vs. 14e
- a. The persecution against Paul was of Jewish origin. Acts 17:5-9
 - b. Peter and others were imprisoned by the High Priest and others, but the angel released them to preach in the temple. Acts 5
 - c. Stephen preached to the synagogue of Cryrenians and they stoned him to death. Acts 6-7
 - d. Saul consenting to the death of Stephen, at which time a great persecution arose against the church at Jerusalem and they were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Acts 8:1
 - e. Saul made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and

woman, committing them to prison. Acts 8:3

- 1) The persecution was not due to cultural difference.
- 2) The persecution was spiritual, due to having received the word of God, believing Jesus was the Messiah and Savior of the world.

Illustration

Parable of Sower seed fell among thorns, and the word was choked but not the good ground or heart, it was fruitful, 30,60,100 fold.

* Paul the apostle said, “Lord, what do you want me to do?” Acts 9:6d-e

Application

1. The common family resemblance of churches that belong to Jesus are to believe and obey God’s word.
 - a. That Jesus is God, who became man by the conception of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 1:20
 - b. That Jesus was the propitiation for the sins of the entire world. 1Jn. 2:2
 - c. That Jesus died and rose from the dead, being Lord of the dead and the living. Rom. 14:19
 - d. That Jesus is sitting at right hand of the Father waiting to return for His church in the rapture. Col. 3:1; 1Thess. 4:16-17
 - e. That the word of God is Inerrant and Infallible. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:19-21

- f. That Jesus is the only way, name and mediator between God and man. Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12, 1Tim. 2:5
- 2. The refusal to deny these truths and many other or hold on to them has always brought and will bring persecution to the church.
 - a. Physical.
 - b. Legal.
 - c. Imprisonment.
 - d. Death.
 - * “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” Acts 14:21-22
- 3. The believer is to bear fruit unto God, wherever God places a person.
 - a. We are called to bear much fruit by abiding and obeying. Jn. 15:16-17
 - b. We are to seek out the fruit of souls by preaching the gospel, the Great Commission. Matt. 28:19-20
 - c. We are to have our fruit unto holiness. Rom 6:22
 - d. We are to yield to the fruit of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23
 - e. Hebrews says, “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God,

- that is, the **fruit** of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” Heb. 13:15
- 2. Jesus said that the gates of hell would not prevail against His church, He would build it. Matt. 16:16
 - a. Persecution has never hurt the church, it has only purified it.
 - * It has been said that the blood of the saints is the seed of the church!
 - b. Persecution will bring out two things.
 - 1) Our genuine faith. 1Pet. 4:19
 - 2) Our need of Christ’s strength. Phil. 4:13

The word of God brought fruit in the heart of the Thessalonians!

Conclusion

This is Paul’s three-fold verdict that the ministry at Thessalonica had been a mission accomplished.

- I.** The word of God was sown!
- II.** The word of God took root!
- III.** The word of God brought fruit!
 - * Can you say, “Mission accomplished”, for your own life, regarding the gospel?