

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"GOSPEL ACTION" | 1 THESSALONIANS 2 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What are common ways the gospel is shared in our culture today?

"Gospel Motives" (1 Thess 2: 1-20)

Paul reminds the people that he and his team shared the gospel out of love and became like family to them. **What are the advantages of sharing the gospel through friendships/close relationships? What are the disadvantages?**

"Gospel Methods and Message" (1 Thess 2: 1-20)

Paul and his team came with boldness as they shared the gospel, a message of what Jesus did for humans through His death and resurrection. Because it is true, pure and without deceit, the gospel can be shared boldly. **How can believers share the gospel both with boldness and in love today?**

"Gospel Oppositions" (1 Thess 2: 1-20)

Paul points out that believers have been hindered in sharing the gospel and persecuted for their faith like Jesus. **Who or what hinders you from following and sharing the gospel?**

"Gospel Outcomes" (1 Thess 2: 1-20)

Paul is so thankful that the gospel was "accepted" by the Thessalonians, and it was "at work" in their lives. **What changes in a person's life when the gospel is at work in them?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

The gospel changes people's lives in a way that changes their character to become more like Jesus, but that also leads to persecution from society and Satan. **Have you been suffering for your faith lately? Have you been looking to God to give you endurance and wisdom? Pray that God would continue to make you an imitator of Jesus through all of it.**

1 Thessalonians 2

7-23-23

Gospel Action

I. Slide1 Announce:

A. Slide2-5 AL: Perspectives. Missions Prayer. CG. GS.

B. Slide6 Baby Dedication (2nd): Sienna & Trey Williams. (Paul & Ashley Williams)

1. Sienna fell off a trampoline and broke her elbow. When they went in to get that taken care of they noticed something else, which presented a **tumor on her brain**. They have been doing different surgery's and chemo, and goes in for an MRI on August 4, would like prayer for that apt.

II. Slide7 Intro: Gospel Action

A. **Big Idea:** When *sharing the Gospel*, check your **motive**, **method**, and **message**.

1. **Outline:** **Gospel Motives**. **Gospel Methods**. **Gospel Message**.
Gospel Oppositions. **Gospel Outcomes**.

B. What is the gospel? Why am I being tested? What should be my *motives, methods, and message* when I share the good news? Will I run into oppositions? What outcomes should I expect?

C. **Prayer:** Lord, we've seen **good** ministry behavior, and **poor** ministry behavior.

D. Slide8,9 *Read all* - 2:1-20 [change slide after vs.8].

III. Slide10 GOSPEL MOTIVES

A.(7) We were **gentle among you** - Paul had the same **love** for the Thessalonians as a *new nursing mother* delights to care for her newborn.

1. Young believers need *sp parents* to lovingly nurture them in the Lord.
2. We read earlier Paul's ministry was a ministry of **courage and boldness**, **but** it was also a ministry motivated by **love**.
3. **It's true**, love has to be **tough-love** sometimes, **but** it must **1st** be taught to be **tender-love**.

B.(8a) Being **affectionately desirous** of you - 1 word, *only used here* in bible.

C. (8b) we were ready to share with you **not only the gospel of God but also our own selves**, because you had become very dear to us.

1. For Paul, it was important that **the gospel** wasn't only **the right words** being spoken, **but the right life** being lived. [RO leader - u visit us & eat w/us]
2. **Paul points out that his ministry in Thessalonica was not a hit-and-run gospel invasion. Instead**, he and his associates were happy to **stay, form friendships, and invest** in their new friends' lives.
 - a) What are the benefits of so-called “relational” or “friendship” evangelism?
 - b) What are the potential dangers?

D. (11,12) For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

1. Paul was **caring/nurturing like a mom** and **motivating/urging like a dad**. [obviously moms can **motivate & urge** and dads can **care & nurture**]

IV. Slide11 **GOSPEL METHODS**

A. (2) We had **boldness** in our God to declare to you the gospel of God - Paul came with a definite aim and he hit what he aimed for.

1. And this **boldness** came **right after** suffering and being shameful treated at Philippi (Acts 16:22-24). **What happened in Philippi?**
 - a) Men of the city were *trafficking* a slave girl who had *a spirit of divination, which brought them much gain through fortunetelling*. Paul cast the demon out of her. The owners of her stirred up a mob. Paul and Silas were *stripped naked, beaten w/rods, whipped, thrown in jail, & their feet fastened in stocks*.

B. Paul said, they never came with words of **flattery**, nor w/a pretext of **greed** (5). They **didn't seek glory** from people (6). They **didn't make demands** on them from their position as **apostles** (6).

V. Slide12a **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

A. **What is the Gospel?** [lit def. *good news, good story*]

1. The gospel is what has been done for us by **God** in **Jesus**.
 - a) The gospel is **God's story** of *His character, His is love, His grace*; wrapped in **Jesus's story** of His *death, burial, and resurrection*.
2. The gospel is the startling news that ... what **God** demands from us, **He provides** for us.
3. The gospel is not only **the gateway into** the Christian life, **but also the pathway of** the Christian life. (8)

B. **Slide12b** (3) *For our **appeal** does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive.*

1. The Gospel didn't have its source in **error** (the facts are **true**)
2. The Gospel is not **impure** (Christianity didn't have any *immoral rites & rituals* like the cults did)
3. The Gospel wasn't **deceitful** (no lying to get people into the kingdom. **The ends don't justify the means, or The morality of the means is more important than the desirability of the end**)

C. **Slide12c** (4) *We have been **approved** by God to be **entrusted** with the gospel -*

1. **Own this!** You and I have been *approved* and *entrusted* with **His Best News** for others. Charles Hodge said it this way, *Every member of God's family has **the right and the obligation** to make known this great salvation to his/her fellow humans.*
 - a) **Entrusted** - this gospel treasure is not ours. It did not originate with us. It is not a rough draft. It needs no editors. Our responsibility is simply to *believe it, cherish it, apply it, guard it, and proclaim it*. **And** Paul insists that this gospel stewardship must be accompanied by **pure motives** and **open methods**.

D. **2 more things about the Word of God** (or *The Gospel of God*)

1. **Slide13a 1st**, God delivered His Word through ordinary men in terms we can understand.

a) 2 Pet.1:20,21 *Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation* (origin). *21 For no prophecy was ever produced* (never came into being) *by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit* (*carried along* = a nautical term, to be borne along, a ship carried by winds. The prophets raised their sails, and the Holy Spirit filled them, & carried their craft along in the direction He wished)

2. Slide13b 2nd, The Word of God **changes** people & makes them **different**

a) 2 Tim.3:16,17 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching* (what is right), *for reproof* (what is not right), *for correction* (how to get right), *and for training in righteousness* (how to stay right), *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

VI. Slide14a **GOSPEL OPPOSITIONS** opposed and hindered

A. The **BIG IDEA** in (13-16): the dynamic power of God's Word produces **godliness** in believers that provokes **persecution**. This leads to 2 very different outcomes: **Endurance for believers** (13,14). **Wrath for the persecutors** (15,16).

B. **Remember 2 things**: Opposition is permitted by God (Job). Opposition is His method of training (to overcome trouble, and to rise above it).

C. Slide14b Why Does God **Test** Us?

1. **To Expose** what's in our hearts. (Deut.8:2 *And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart*) [God knew, they didn't know]
2. Slide14c **To Refine** us. (Ps.66:10 *For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried*) [increase heat. refine precious metal. dross removed]
3. Slide14d **To Mature** us. (James 1:2-4 *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*)

a) **Illust:** In Savannah Georgia, they have those *Savanna oak trees*, w/*Spanish moss hanging from their branches*. They all lean in the same direction and are twisted. Why? They lean towards the Atlantic.

(1) The strong winds that come off the ocean **buffet** the tree. And the trees of **learn to lean** against the wind. And they become **strengthened** because of that.

(2) **That's the way it is with us**. We are going to lean into the things that buffet us ... **but** it will make us **stronger** for it.

D. **Slide15 Suffering** for the gospel was the calling not just of the apostles (1,2) **but also** of the whole congregation (14).

1. The Thessalonians' opponents were not enemies from *foreign lands* **but** were *their own countrymen* (14).

2. **Have you ever suffered** relationally or socially, perhaps even physically for your Christian faith? **Or** from your *Christian-countrymen*?

E. (16) Paul says that **the Jews** who killed Jesus **and** who protest to *thwart gospel advance* are “[filling] up the measure of their sins.”

1. This depicts a period of **recurring sin** that eventually reaches a breaking point **and** induces God's judgment.

F. (15) **Oppose** all mankind -

G. **We've already seen opposition from:** the **state** (2), from **society** (14), **and now** from **satan** (18).

H. (18) **Satan hindered him** - *enkoptō* literally means *to cut up*. It could be used to describe *an army destroying an enemy's road*, **consequently hindering their travel**.

1. **In which ways, as you look back on your week, have you been hindered?**

VII. **Slide16 GOSPEL OUTCOMES** hope, joy, crown, and YOU (our glory & joy)

A. Their preaching had **immediate** and **impressive** consequences, and a **permanent change** took place in the lives of the believers.

1. (13) They had an **appetite** for the word of God (*received* and *accepted*), **and they put it to work** immediately (*works in you*).

a) *received* refers to **the ear**, *accepted* it refers to **the heart**.

b) A **rabbi** was asked a question by a **pupil**, referring to Deut. 6:6 *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.* "Why is it said this way?" the pupil asked. "Why are we not told to place them in our heart?" The rabbi answered that it is **not within man's power** to place the divine teachings directly **in** his heart. "All that we can do is place them **on** the surface of the heart **so that** when **the heart breaks** ... they will **drop in**."

B. What is our **hope** or **joy** or **crown** of boasting before our Lord Jesus at **His coming**? Is it not **you**? For **you** are our **glory** and **joy**.

1. **CM** - **YOU** are my **hope**, and **joy**, and **crown**, and **glory**, at the 2nd Coming of Christ :)

C. Keywords: motives, methods, message, opposition, outcomes.