THE ONE-TWO PUNCH

How do you view the gospel – as a story to read or a lifestyle to embrace?

The word is more than clever human speech, philosophy, and persuasion – it carries the supernatural power to change lives and produce real spiritual fruit

1 Thes 1:5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

The one-two punch is the gospel in divine truth and with divine power – they cannot be separated and still be successful

Like Paul, I boldly declare that my living and preaching or presenting the gospel cannot be in word only , but accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit with signs, wonders, and miracles!

To some people the church is nothing more than another form of entertainment instead of a place where the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit is on display

v. 5

1. THE GOSPEL DIDN'T COME IN WORD ONLY

My words alone can inform, encourage, and entertain and possibly persuade you of your need for Christ but they can't regenerate a dead heart!

If our preaching, teaching, and witnessing is just clever speech, cultural relevance, neatly produced and planned out ideas, they will always lack the saving power to transform lives!

He created us to be like Him and to reflect His image

Eph 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

The American church pastors care more about their strategic preaching calendar than the Holy Spirit's agenda

Hear me, the gospel we live and cultivate should produce His manifest presence to convict, draw, deliver, restore, transform, and give new life!

2. THE GOSPEL CAME IN POWER

It's the one-two punch that produces His NT church not our ability but the Holy Spirit's activity!

Strongholds can only be broken by divine truth and power!

Paul said this gospel came not just in word only, but also in power (dunamis) which Jesus promised with the arrival of the Holy Spirit

Powerless churches with no altars or altar calls void of the Holy Spirit's gifts to transform and produce lives with an expectant and hopeful walk of faith anticipate God to move through His church today with signs, wonders, and miracles

Man-made leadership and teaching/preaching cannot produce the manifest presence of God

We can only produce who we are if His presence isn't our priority we will produce a barren gospel void of His power to truly change lives

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE POWER

He is the active agent who actually breathes life into the spoken and declared word of God

It's Him who opens blinded eyes, softens stubborn and rebellious hearts and draws you to Himself with His great power

Paul said this one-two punch the Word and the Spirit will bring the miraculous manifestations in full view, not pushed into some back room

Why? Conversion is a work of God from the inside out, not just man's persuasion

The true test of anything that claim to be Christian is the test of power

The test of authenticity is the test of results produced by divine power

This one-two punch resulted in repentance of sin and all pagan idol worship to the service of a living and true God

This passage shows results of the word being preached with power

The Thessalonians turned from idols to serve God only, they became imitators of Christ

Have you left behind your idols or are you trying to blend them in with Christianity? It won't work

Paul said without power, the Word has no value. He exhorts us to seek God until His Word comes to you in the power of the Holy Spirit

Heb 4:12,13 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. [13] And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

His gospel is both alive and active!

Then He will enable you to forsake all to serve Jesus!

I want you to come back tonight, I'm going to challenge you to settle for nothing less than revival!