

WALKING OUT HIS WORD EACH DAY

The I Thessalonians Series #6

February 11th, 2018

TEXT: I Thessalonians 3:6-10

CONSIDER THIS: A familiar colloquialism is “Hey, it isn’t rocket science”. We say that to convey the idea that the topic at hand is not complicated or difficult to understand. Today’s study in I Thessalonians is not rocket science! However, it is something many Christians either don’t seem to understand or they don’t remember to put into practice. To what are we referring?

- 1) The power of thankfulness
- 2) The power of praise.

When we remember the historical background of I Thessalonians and the situation both Paul and the Thessalonian Christians were facing, these twin concepts are truly life-changing. They are vitally important to **WALKING OUT HIS WORD EACH DAY**.

REVIEW: Paul’s brief time in Thessalonica (described in Acts 17:1-10) resulted in many people coming to faith in Jesus Christ, the birth of a new church, and intense persecution from those opposed to the gospel and to Paul. Approximately 6 months after having been forced out of the city by his opponents, Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians to encourage them, instruct them, and to defend himself from the lies told to the church that Paul had abandoned them and did not care about them. In 2:1 – 3:13 we read Paul’s defense written to reassure his friends of his love for them, but we also learn much about how we should seek to live every day.

I TOUGH TIMES ARE PART OF THIS FALLEN WORLD

- A) When sin entered this world it brought four great evils with it.
1. A broken relationship with God that makes us His enemies (Ephesians 2:1-3).
 2. The process of death and all the diseases and physical ailments that afflict our bodies (Romans 5:12).
 3. The created world groans under the weight of droughts, floods, famines, earthquakes, extinction of species, etc. (Romans 8:20-22).
 4. The sinful world’s hatred toward God’s people. Jesus was very honest about this cost of following Him (see John 15:18-19).
- B) The Thessalonian Christians experienced this hatred even as today persecution is on the rise (I Thessalonians 1:6; 2:14).

II UNLEASHING THE RESURRECTION POWER THAT IS WITHIN YOU

- A) *“The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us”*. This is not poetic license used for praise music, it is literally true (I Thessalonians 1:5; Acts 1:8; Romans 15:13; Ephesians 1:18-20, II Peter 1:3).

Christian, if you think or feel that your life lacks God's power, if you feel routinely defeated by depression, fear, loneliness, discouragement, anger, lust, guilt, regret, loss, etc., you need to understand that you do not lack power, for God is not stingy with His gifts. God's Word teaches that thanksgiving and praise will enable you to unleash the power of God that has already been given to you.

- B) There is power in a thankful heart. Paul was thankful to God and his expression of that thankfulness is evident in 1:2-3, 2:13; 3:9.

KEY: In order to be thankful you must invest time in **thinking** about your blessings!
See I Thessalonians 5:16-18.

- C) Thankfulness doesn't have the power to change your circumstances ... but the power it does have is a greater power = the power to change your perspective (see Philippians 4:11-13).

III THE POWER OF PRAISE

- A) **Surprise!!!** The praise meant here is not about praising God, it is about praising other people. Paul was effusive in his praise of his friends in the church of Thessalonica. See 1:3, 6-9; 2:13-14, 19-20; 3:6-9; 4:9-10.
- B) His praise was **not** flattery (2:5). In the Roman Empire, flattery was a tool to manipulate people. The Greek/Roman philosophies known as *Rhetoric* and *Sophistry* were often degraded and simply used flattery to gain an advantage over people. That is why Paul refused to use flattery.
- C) Honest praise of other Christians (all to the glory of God!) has power to change their lives. Have you ever considered the meaning of the word "encouragement"? It literally means "to inspire to courage" (see I Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11). The Thessalonians faced persecution and intense opposition with great courage and joy because Paul had encouraged them. See also Proverbs 15:4, 16:24; 18:21.
- D) To properly praise another person also has the power to change the person giving the praise. How? By changing how we perceive the other person. The power of praise has healed and restored many damaged relationships.

To take the time to **think** about those things about which we can praise the other person will change our perspective in wonderful ways.

Thankfulness to God and appropriate praise of others ...
here is the power to be
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