1Thess #5

Does the word of God come forth in your life?

Open up again in 1Thessalonians chapter one verse 6 where we left off.

What we will begin to see in this first letter to the church at Thessalonica is a spirit of gratefulness coming from the Apostle Paul. He is grateful for their serious commitment and he is gently beginning to nudge them in a certain area.

It will take almost all 5 chapters to get to the core of the fact that the Apostle Paul is gently guiding them back on course. By the time you finish this first letter you get a sense that the Apostle Paul had great respect for these Greek Bels, yet he needed to come in a do a gentle reprimand and retraining.

These were new Christians who were raised and living in a region fully entrenched in idolatry and secular wisdom.

/The skill of a gentle approach and lifting up those under your authority before you reprimand them is always the first course of action. The rare time of entering into aggressive correction has to be reserved for the unique situations or occasions when quickly altering the course of events is mandatory. This takes doctrinal wisdom to learn and apply.\

The Apostle Paul became an expert at this exact type of skill set, because he had to develop so many churches or leaders throughout his ministry.

Many people in leadership struggle with finding the middle ground between strong leadership and passive leadership.

Either one can get an authority figure into trouble and they will lose the respect and attention of those under their authority if they do not find a comfortable middle ground to operate from.

No one gets this right every day, this is a constant learning process for most people within the first few years of leadership.

Parents often struggle with their first child because of this and by the second or third child they become comfortable in their role as parents.

 REPEAT

Real, solid authority and leadership skills are learned and developed by following BD.

1Thes 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word during great affliction with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

[1Th 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/7/s_1112007) so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

The imitation the Apostle Paul is pointing out is the instruction of BD not the personality or habits of the teachers.

/[1Th 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/8/s_1112008) For **the word of the Lord has sounded forth** (*exēcheō*)**from you**, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place *the news of* your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need to say anything.\

EX-OH-HEYO, is means to resound it is echoing out all over the place. This is a Greek perfect tense, meaning they had done this in the past and were doing it at that moment.

They knew how to evangelize – they had done a good job speaking the basic gospel to many people.

 REPEAT

[1Th 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/9/s_1112009) For they themselves report about us as to the kind of reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

[1Th 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/10/s_1112010) and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is,* Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come.

This will bring us to a pertinent doctrine and that is the doctrine of evangelism.

/The Bels at Thessalonica did one thing very well and that was to speak out about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The fact that this city was populated by 200,000 people or more at any given time was an incredible breeding ground for truth to spring up. The Apostle Paul was grateful for these Bels even though he would have to correct them in other areas.\

This will probably be a three or four part series on evangelism and it may be the first time some of you have ever really dug into this topic in any real depth.

Let us open with the three basic areas or callings of evangelism;

/1. Personal evangelism, which every Bel is called to do. Sometimes it is sporadic or brief but it is always a call for Bels within their ambassadorship.

All Bels should grow into their Royal Ambassadorship and part of that maturity and calling is to boldly speak the gospel to a lost and dying world.\

This does not mean every day you proclaim the gospel to every stranger on the street. It means as you grow, you begin to recognize opportunities and divine appointments when your ambassadorship needs to shine at its full strength.

/2. Evangelism comes forth through spiritual gifts and callings – pastor-teacher, evangelism, missionary, prep school teacher, deacon, etc. This is within a sphere of a calling or ministry which often times comes with an office or title.\

Some Christians are called to serve under a church title or ministry that is much more visible or demanding. Within that spiritual gift or ministry, the call to evangelize simply becomes more natural and habitually.

/3. National evangelism through client nation missionary activity. Also, the client nation unto God, itself as a whole, produces Christian values or evangelism within its borders and also the missionary call outside its borders. It does not force Christianity but it does promote it and nurture it within its population and outside its borders.\

The earmarks of a client nation unto God are that Christianity is within its foundation or at least recognizable within its core belief system. Also, that active within its people, is a strong Christian element that preserve and teaches the bible. (pivot)

Other earmarks are evangelism within and outside its borders – there is a consistency of reaching out to a lost and dying world with the truth of TLJC.

There is also a sense of protection and respect for the Jewish population.

 REPEAT

Turn to the gospel of John chapter 16 RF.

Evangelism for the Bel is not complicated nor is it designed to be stressful. It is simply representing and speaking upon that which you claim to believe.

/Personal evangelism for the common Christian rests upon three elements within their life. 1. Verbal communication, basic knowledge of soteriology with a strong emphasis on eternal security. 2. Lifestyle choices which display standing firm during testing and attacks. 3.The two power options active in the Bel’s life.\

Not only your words but your lifestyle speak to true evangelism.

What happens during an attack or a spiritual test…are you putting your new nature on display so those around you can see Christ shine in your life?

Sometimes that does more to evangelize then bringing up scripture and speaking about Christ to an Unbel.

Jhn 16:7 “But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I am leaving; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

/[Jhn 16:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/jhn/16/8/s_1013008) “And He, when He comes, will **convict the world regarding sin**, and righteousness, and judgment: 9regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me;

God the HS does the work. We simply plant a seed or put our own fruit on display and let God the HS do HIS job.\

Keep in mind it is in God’s hand and HIS timing – never get anxious or frustrated while evangelizing that is a sign your flesh is getting involved.

[Jhn 16:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/jhn/16/10/s_1013010) and regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer *are going to* see Me;

/[Jhn 16:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/jhn/16/11/s_1013011) and regarding judgment, because **the ruler of this world has been judged.**

When we evangelize we should have the calm assurance and conviction that we are sharing the victory of Christ. We are on the winning team!\

Common grace is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in making the Gospel clear to the mind of the Unbeliever.

Efficacious grace is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in making the faith of the Unbel effective for salvation.

 REPEAT

The Unbel can’t understand the Gospel apart from God the Holy Spirit, the work and onus is upon God the HS.

/1Cor 2:14 But **a natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God**, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The Bel need not concern themselves with the salvation of another person because ultimately all we can do is plant a seed with words or lifestyle examples.\

Too many Christians chase Unbels away with rabid chatter and guilt or shame.

Christians usually are at one end of the spectrum or the other. They are either to afraid or ashamed to evangelize. Or they hit Unbels over the head with BD in such a fashion that it chases them away from Christ.

We need to trust in the power of the word and the power of God the HS;

/Isa 55:11 So will My word be which goes out of My mouth;
**It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire**,
And without succeeding *in the purpose* for which I sent it.\

Witnessing is the responsibility of every royal family member.

The witness of the Bels life speaks volumes that many Christians never account for.

Think about these Greek Bels in Thessalonica, who were preaching about TLJC and living a life dedicated to establishing a church in HIS name.

Jump over to 2Corinthians chapter six.

What a powerful witness they had become and that is why the Apostle Paul was elevating them in this first letter even though there were some who had gone astray.

/2Cor 5:20 Therefore, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though **God were making an appeal through us**; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Your lifestyle and strength under pressure or testing may evangelize better then your words.\

People all around you watch how you claim to be a Christian and what that means in your day-to-day life.

Your words should align with your lifestyle.

Because when they don’t, I can guarantee you, the Unbels will use that as ammunition and excuses to never come to know TLJC.

/2Cor 3:2 **You are our letter**, written in our hearts, **known and read by all people, 3 revealing yourselves, that you are a letter of Christ**, delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.\

This is one of the greatest ways to view your life – as a letter…open for everyone to read.

Would the majority of your letter point to TLJC or would it be highlighting the devil’s world?

/2Cor 6:1 And **working together** *with Him,* we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—

The Apostle Paul is saying in my ambassadorship I am given the privilege to work inside God’s plan. I am fulfilling my calling, I represent HIM!\

He is pleading with the Bels at Corinth to not take the grace of God in vain.

Which are what Bels do when they neglect their calling and God’s grace gifts.

They live like and Unbel - Paul wants to give the Corinthian Christians a sense of urgency.

[2Co 6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2co/6/2/s_1084002) for He says, “AT A
FAVORABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU,
AND ON A DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU.” Behold, now is “A FAVORABLE TIME,” behold, now is “A DAY OF SALVATION”—

The Apostle Paul uses a scripture from the prophet Isaiah (Isa 49).

Used at a time when the build up to the attack of the Assyrians was upon the nation of Israel and evangelism was the call of the day for Isaiah, there was urgency in that call.

God places everything in front of us and we are all given a certain number of days and years. There comes a time when the Bel needs to step up just as there comes a time when the Unbel should finally believe upon TLJC.

Time runs out for all of us at some point!

/[2Co 6:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2co/6/3/s_1084003) giving no reason for taking offense in anything, **so that the ministry will not be discredited** (*mōmaomai*),

Something to be mocked a failure or blemish.\

MUH-MOM-EYE, means a blemish or mark it also meant to find fault or blame. It was used for something that failed and was to be mocked or laughed at.

Your lifestyle and choices speak as loud as your words. So, in the arena of evangelism, you may have already caused an Unbel to push away from the gospel.

 That Unbel will never accept the gospel from you because you showed them something that made them question your Christianity.

We have all done this from time to time, but we have to grow up enough to realize our calling and ambassadorship is a serious ministry.

Now those Unbels are ultimately responsible for their own negativity.

The opportunities to present the gospel within our lifestyle and especially during times of testing and pressure are opportunities to advance in spiritual warfare.

They are opportunities to achieve a powerful glorification of God during this angelic conflict.

Each time we reject an opportunity for growth and confronting spiritual warfare it is an opportunity that you are passing on glorifying God and also a chance to receive blessings and rewards.

/1Thes 2:19 For who *is* **our hope, or joy or crown of pride**, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? Or *is it* not indeed you? 20 For **you are our glory and joy**.

A Crown of Rejoicing is believed to be a soul winners crown. (Phlp 4:1)\

The Apostle Paul knew he was going to receive crowns and rewards in the heavenly state.

We will close today in Romans chapter one.

/The race we are called to run and the battle we are called to fight is right now in the temporal. Too many Christians believe they will have time later for spiritual growth and be able to glorify God in some other form or fashion later on in life. They do not understand their life is simply a vapor in time.

(James 4:13-14) \

Jam 4:13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. For you are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while, and then vanishes away.

Let us close with the Apostle Paul speaking to the Bels in Rome.

Rom 1:14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to the uncultured, both to the wise and to the foolish.

Rom 1:15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

The Apostle Paul says I am willing to teach and preach to anyone. The heart for teaching the truth and evangelizing to anyone is a result of spiritual growth.

Paul’s ministry was to the Gentiles and he didn’t care who was in front of him.

/[Rom 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/rom/1/16/s_1047016) For **I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Salvation is a matter of free will which is available to anyone. For the Bel the question becomes are you ashamed to speak about Jesus Christ?\

If you are ashamed of speaking the gospel then you need to re-evaluate your spiritual walk.

Something is missing from your spiritual walk especially if you have a few years under your belt as a Bel.

You can not claim to love the LORD yet feel ashamed of speaking about HIS work.

The believer must witness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, he or she must exclude every system of human effort so as to not create any false issue about salvation.

/Evangelism is done verbally as well as physically related to your lifestyle. There is also a financial aspect of evangelism which points to how you support the teaching of truth or missionary work. When the opportunity arises to help others come to Christ the Bel should be open to support in any way that is manageable for them.\

Your physical, financial and mental health need to be in order first for you to be able to help others.

This is why an orderly, organized life is the calling for all Bels.