

# The Power of the Message

**Text: 1 Thessalonians 3**

## **Introduction:**

1. We have Paul telling us, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel*” – **Romans 1:16** - There was a strong care for souls then; preaching the gospel was God’s work; the preachers in the first century were his workmen, and labored in this calling. It is the same still, **but who works?**
2. Paul is also telling us in the third chapter of first Thessalonians that the power of the message continued to work in the Christians who were in Thessalonica.
3. God is telling us today that we, as Christians, can learn from the Christians in Thessalonica by the fruits that were produced by the message.

**The power of the good news (the gospel of Jesus Christ) or the message to the Christians at Thessalonica was:**

## **I. To Exhort (v2 – 6)**

- A. To strengthen one in the faith *no matter what happens*
  1. Timothy was sent to the church at Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage them because these young converts were facing persecution and might fall away unless established and comforted. (*the same today can happen to those who are not established or comforted*)
  2. The strength to face the daily battles that are placed before us. (v3)
    - a. Every Christian should understand that it will always like this (*with these battles*). The hostility between light and darkness is such that the upright, moral behavior of Christians is alone sufficient to incur the world’s displeasure and hatred.
    - b. Cain hated Abel, and why? “*Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous*” - **1 John 3:12**.
    - c. All Christians are servants of Jesus Christ and may expect the same treatment, wherever it is possible for the world to inflict it that was received by the blessed Lord himself and his holy apostles.
  3. The strength to continue on the narrow path to eternal salvation.
    - a. The Apostle Paul stated the following, “*For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,*” – **2 Corinthians 4:17**
    - b. The afflictions that we have are for us to help others who are going through the same affliction (**an affliction that our Great God helps us through**), “*who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*” **2 Corinthians 1:4**
    - c. The strength to persevere *no matter what*.
    - d. The strength to stay the course – to stay the race like running a marathon race (in which we are a race for ‘**OUR VERY LIFE**’)
- B. To encourage one in the faith *no matter what happens*.
  1. By not being alone in facing the same struggles
    - a. Elijah thought he was alone -- “*...I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away... Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him*” – **1 Kings 19:13-18**
    - b. In withstanding the temptations put before us each and every day by Satan.
    - c. In withstanding the persecutions that we receive by those who do not know God.

- d. In knowing that others have faced the same problems and persevered. – Chapter of Faith – **Hebrews 11**
2. Not only to be encouraged in the faith, but to encourage others who are down and out and starting to lose their spiritual compass.

## II. To Bring Good News (Or Good Results) (v7-12)

- A. Which is an encouragement to others (v7)
  1. As Andrew told to his brother Peter, "*We have found the Messiah*" – **John 1:41**
  2. As told by the woman at the well, "*Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?*" – **John 4:29**
  3. From Jesus Himself, "*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*" – **Matthew 11:28**
  4. The obedient faith of the Thessalonians, their true Christian love ([Greek: agape – unconditional love]) for both God and man, and their continuing affection for the beloved apostles were sufficient grounds for Paul's full encouragement and thanksgiving. (v12)
- B. Likened to a breath of fresh air after a rainstorm when one finds one who is so strong in the Lord and has remained faithful.
- C. Something that we do not hear much of anymore (good news that is).

## III. To Provide Direction (v13)

- A. In giving us a spiritual compass, "*As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tested; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.*" – **2 Samuel 22:31**
  1. As shown by God in His Word
    - a. His way – not our way
    - b. For our own safety
  2. Being guided by Jesus Christ our Great Shepherd.
    - a. Our very stronghold in the time of need
    - b. Our provider, to who else can we go?
    - c. Along life's 'bumpy' road.
- B. In how we are to live
  1. Godly – not as the world - "*Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,*" says the Lord." – **2 Corinthians 6:17**
  2. In how we are to walk in this life here on earth, "*seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*" – **2 Peter 1:3**
  3. Realizing that there is life beyond the grave.
  4. Realizing that each and every one of us are but from one step into eternity.

### Conclusion:

1. The power of the message that Paul delivered to the Christians at Thessalonica was to:
  - a. Exhort by using God's word.
  - b. Bring good news through God's word.
  - c. Provide direction from God's word.
2. The message, when received with all meekness as those in Thessalonica, brings fruits of righteousness and obedience to God.
3. The same is for us today, God's message is meant to (1) exhort us onward and upward in our spiritual walk with our Lord, (2) to continue to give us good news, either from His word or from hearing about others who have a strong faith in the Lord and (3) to give us a spiritual direction, not after the words of men, but by our Great God and His word – for His word remains throughout all eternity, while man's word is here today and gone tomorrow.

4. Therefore, the question is: Are you allowing God's message to work on YOU?