

(1 Thessalonians 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.

Acts 17:2-4 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (3) explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." (4) And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas.

(we don't know if these were consecutive weeks or not; perhaps if it was just the Gospel presentation, then yes but there had to be more time spent in discipleship).

Any one of us can present the gospel: Sinless Christ born of a virgin according to Scripture; He died in our place to satisfy the righteous requirements of the Law that declared all of us sinners as recorded in the Scriptures; He was buried according to the Scriptures and as promised, rose again according the Scriptures;

But just memorizing those Truth's and reciting them as if you were reading a flyer won't make much difference in the life of those hearing these words. You could be the greatest apologist but if you are lacking just one thing, your knowledge will just puff you up. That one thing is trusting the Holy Spirit to give you the power and even the very words to use;

1 Corinthians 2:3-5 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. (4) And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (5) that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Is this guarantee of the listener(s) coming to Christ? No. There where always be those who reject the Truth. Our job is not to save but to proclaim the Word and be a witness to the Truth of Christ. *You are not selling something! You are inviting a person into a relationship with God!*

(1 Thessalonians 1:6) And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received **the word in much affliction**, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

Acts 17:5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming **envious**, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

How can you have joy in much affliction? Great Question! Affliction hurts! Suffering, persecution, tribulations, none of these "feels good"...

Romans 5:3-5 And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; (4) and perseverance, character; and character, hope. (5) Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1 Peter 4:12-13 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; (13) but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

Galatians 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 1:7) so that you **became examples** to all in Macedonia and Achaia **who believe**.

They bore witness to the Gospel by becoming examples of the transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit in them!

(1 Thessalonians 1:8) For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

Despite trials, tribulations, persecutions, the new Christians proclaimed the Gospel they so eagerly accepted.

(1 Thessalonians 1:9) For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you **turned** to God from idols **to serve** the living and true God, (10) and **to wait** for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

(1 Thessalonians 2:1) For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

The converts, now brothers in the LORD, were a testament that Paul, Silas and Timothy did not waste their time.

(1 Thessalonians 2:2) But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.

Acts 17:6-8 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. (7) Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king—Jesus." (8) And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things.

(1 Thessalonians 2:3) For our exhortation *did* not *come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit.

Paul and team did not lie, were not themselves deceived and always presented themselves honestly and in all righteousness.

(1 Thessalonians 2:4) But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

Their calling was from God and therefore He was the only One that they aimed to please.

(1 Thessalonians 2:5) For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness.

Paul and the team were NOT charlatans trying to just hook them with slick words and promises. There was no "bait and switch" going on with these men of God.

(1 Thessalonians 2:6) Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

They did not use their position in leadership for self-glorification nor did they "lord" it over them to get converts to put them all on high pedestals.

Verses 3-6 imply that this sort of thing was going on with other people selling their "religious" wares; things have not changed in several millennia!

But this is how Paul and company behaved:

(1 Thessalonians 2:7) But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children.

(1 Thessalonians 2:8) So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

(1 Thessalonians 2:9) For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

(1 Thessalonians 2:10) You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe;

(1 Thessalonians 2:11) as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and **charged** every one of you, as a father *does* his own children,

The word "charged" here does not mean command; rather it means to give testimony or witness – as a father might do to help train up his children.

(1 Thessalonians 2:12) that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

If you had to sum up God's expectation in a general way, this might do it: conduct your life in response to His saving grace in a way that demonstrates your gratitude in being invited into His glorious kingdom and presence!

The specifics are connected to HOW you will love Him and others...

(1 Thessalonians 2:13) For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

The new believers responded to the Word of God as just that: God's message to them. Paul is thrilled with their faith and even tells them His Very Word will transform them into faithful witnesses for the Savior!

(1 Thessalonians 2:14) For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans,

The Message of Christ Jesus came with much persecution from their own countrymen who hated them and from the unbelieving Jews who felt threatened by the new "sect" in town...not understanding nor believing in the LORD Jesus whom they killed.

(1 Thessalonians 2:15) who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men,

(1 Thessalonians 2:16) forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

They were "forbidden" because all gentiles are unclean! Salvation, if they had any concept of it, involved conversion to the Jewish religion, circumcision and keep the Law of Moses.

(1 Thessalonians 2:17) But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire.

Because of the persecution (acts 17), Paul got outta 'dodge' and ended up in Corinth where he wrote this letter after Timothy and Silas came to visit with a report of the church.

(1 Thessalonians 2:18) Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.

How does one tell if it's Satan hindering you or God? Paul was a man gifted with discernment and therefore knew who it was that got in his way; Every other time when something happened, Paul knew it was the Holy Spirit's work – either restricting them or commanding them to go to such-and-such place.

(1 Thessalonians 2:19) For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

(1 Thessalonians 2:20) For you are our glory and joy.

Paul is so thrilled with these people! He is ecstatic that even if he would not be able to visit again, he would see them in heaven or even before at His coming for His bride.