

1 Thessalonians 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

Analysis

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance—Paul distinguishes mere rhetoric from pneumatic reality. The phrase οὐκ ἐν λόγῳ μόνῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει, 'not in word only but also in power') echoes 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, contrasting human persuasion with divine demonstration. Dynamis (δύναμις, 'power') refers to the Spirit's convicting work; plērophoria (πληροφορία, 'full assurance') describes the deep conviction produced by Spirit-empowered preaching.

As ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake—Paul's character authenticated his message. The missionaries' suffering for the gospel (Acts 17:5-9) proved they weren't in it for gain. True gospel preaching combines doctrinal content ('word'), supernatural power (Holy Spirit conviction), deep persuasion (assurance), and credible messengers (godly character). The Thessalonians didn't merely assent to propositions—they experienced God's transforming power through the word.

Historical Context

Paul had come to Thessalonica from Philippi, where he and Silas had been beaten and imprisoned (Acts 16:22-24). Arriving with wounds still fresh, they preached boldly despite previous suffering. This suffering-servant pattern authenticated the

message—why endure such cost for a lie? The Holy Spirit used Paul's courageous testimony to produce deep conviction in hearers. The rapid conversion of Thessalonians, including prominent women (Acts 17:4), demonstrated power beyond human persuasion.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between intellectually accepted truth and Spirit-empowered conviction in your own faith experience?
2. What role does the messenger's character and willingness to suffer play in validating the gospel's power?
3. In what ways have you experienced the gospel as 'power' and not merely 'word' in your conversion or spiritual growth?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐγενήθημεν εἰς ὑμᾶς
For G3588 gospel our not came unto you
G3754 G2098 G2257 G3756 G1096 G1519 G5209

ἐν λόγῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν
among word only but also among power also among
G1722 G3056 G3440 G235 G2532 G1722 G1411 G2532 G1722

πνεύματι ἀγίῳ καὶ ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ καθὼς
Ghost the Holy also among assurance much as
G4151 G40 G2532 G1722 G4136 G4183 G2531

οἶδατε οἵοι ἐγενήθημεν ἐν ὑμῖν δι' ὑμᾶς
ye know what manner of men came among you for you
G1492 G3634 G1096 G1722 G5213 G1223 G5209

Additional Cross-References

Mark 16:20 (Word): And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 (Word): For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 (Parallel theme): Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:20 (Word): For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

1 Peter 1:12 (Holy): Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

Colossians 2:2 (Parallel theme): That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

Acts 11:21 (Parallel theme): And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Ephesians 3:20 (Parallel theme): Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Romans 1:16 (Parallel theme): For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

2 Timothy 2:8 (Parallel theme): Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

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