

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

Analysis

For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad—exēchētai (ἐξήχηται, 'has sounded out') uses trumpet imagery: the word reverberated like a blast echoing through mountains. The Thessalonians became not just examples but evangelists, their testimony spreading beyond Greece to 'every place.' This wasn't organized mission strategy but organic gospel expansion—transformed lives naturally proclaimed transforming truth.

Your faith to God-ward is spread abroad (hē pistis hymōn hē pros ton Theon exelēlythen, ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἡ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐξελέλυθεν)—the perfect tense 'has gone forth' indicates completed action with ongoing results. Their radical conversion from idols to the living God (v. 9) created such contrast with paganism that travelers spread the news. Authentic Christianity doesn't need advertising; transformed lives become advertisements. A church can be numerous, wealthy, and organized yet spiritually silent; the Thessalonians were few, poor, and persecuted yet their witness resounded.

Historical Context

Thessalonica's strategic location on the Egnatian Way (the Roman Empire's main east-west highway) meant constant traffic of merchants, soldiers, and travelers. These travelers encountered believers radically transformed from polytheism to monotheism, from sexual immorality to purity, from fear of death to joyful hope in resurrection. Such dramatic change provoked conversation. Travelers carried news westward to Rome and eastward to Asia, making this young church famous before Paul's letter arrived.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What aspects of your faith would be newsworthy enough that observers would naturally spread the word without being asked?
2. How does organic gospel expansion through transformed lives differ from programmatic evangelism strategies?
3. Why does the church's reputation often spread further than its intentional outreach, and what does this say about authenticity's power?

Interlinear Text

ἀφ'	ὑμῶν	γὰρ	ἐξήχηται	ὁ	λόγος	τοῦ	κυρίου	οὐ
from	your	For	you sounded out	G3588	the word	G3588	of the Lord	not
G575	G5216	G1063	G1837		G3056		G2962	G3756
μόνον	ἐν	τῇ	Μακεδονία	καὶ	Ἀχαΐα	ἀλλὰ	καὶ	ἐν
only	in	G3588	Macedonia	also	Achaia	but	also	in
G3440	G1722		G3109	G2532	G882	G235	G2532	G1722
παντὶ	τόπῳ	ἡ	πίστις	ὑμῶν	ἡ	πρὸς	τὸν	θεὸν
every	place	G3588	faith	your	G3588	to	G3588	God-ward
G3956	G5117		G4102	G5216		G4314		G2316
ἐξελέλυθεν	ὥστε	μὴ	χρεῖαν	ἡμᾶς	ἔχειν	λαλεῖν	τι	
is spread abroad	so	not	need	that we	G2192	to speak	any thing	
G1831	G5620	G3361	G5532	G2248		G2980	G5100	

Additional Cross-References

Romans 1:8 (Faith): First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

2 Thessalonians 1:4 (Faith): So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Revelation 14:6 (Parallel theme): And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Isaiah 52:7 (References God): How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

2 Thessalonians 3:1 (Word): Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

3 John 1:12 (Parallel theme): Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

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