

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# Can the Church Grow in This Very Unchristian Society?

---

I Thessalonians 1:1-10

**1 Can the church grow in this very unchristian society? When our culture is dumping tempting immoral values at you from every side, can you survive? Can we as a church, or you as an individual, make any kind of a spiritual impact on our world?**

**You can make a spiritual impact by continually showing off the Lord in your life within your sphere of influence. 2**

**First Thessalonians, chapter 1, verses 1 through 10 gives us some ways our church and you, as an individual, can make a big spiritual difference. 3**

**First . . .**

## **I. Present to the World a Transformed Life -**

**v2-3**

**Present to the world a transformed life. Verses 2 and 3 state, *We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your***

**labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4**

Your genuine Christian life is the most impressive Bible most people will see! Most people won't read the Bible because its too intimidating. But they will notice a difference in your life. 5

First Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 13, says, **And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.** Your best witness is exhibiting these attributes in your life! 6

Let's couple this passage with verse 3 in our scripture. **Show the gospel message by your faith expressed through your work; your work produced by faith.** 7

The word **work** <sup>2</sup> here can mean a deed, action, physical labor, or employment. 8

---

<sup>1</sup> | Thessalonians 1:3 - We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>2</sup> ἔργον.

Faith is best seen through actions. James, chapter 2, verse 7, **Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.** <sup>9</sup> In fact, James says faith needs deeds to make it real! <sup>3</sup> <sub>10</sub>

Verse 3 also states you **show the gospel message by your love expressed through your labor; your labor prompted by love.** <sup>11</sup>

The word <sup>4</sup> labor means hard work, laborious toil or exhaustion and pain as a result of hard work.

Love and pain often go together. It's like the pain of giving birth coupled with the sacrifice of sleep for nightly feedings. <sup>12</sup> You exhaust yourself for someone you love! <sup>13</sup>

Finally, in verse 3 you **show the gospel message by your hope expressed through your endurance; your endurance inspired by hope.** <sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> James 2:26 - As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

<sup>4</sup> κόπος.

The word endurance <sup>5</sup> literally means to remain under, so to endure and be patient. Hope is waiting patiently for the Lord to come again to take us home. <sup>15</sup>

So, whatever cross you have to bear you can do it because of your hope. There will be an end and you will come out a winner! <sup>16</sup>

The second way you can make a spiritual impact is . . .

## II. Present to the World a Genuine Gratitude -

v4-7

Present to the world a genuine gratitude. Verses 4 through 7 say, **For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy**

---

<sup>5</sup> ὑπομονή.

given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. <sup>17</sup>

Verse 4 emphasizes that **you were loved and chosen**; . . . **loved by God, that he has chosen you . . .**

God loved you even when you were a dirty rotten sinner! <sup>18</sup> Romans, chapter 5, verses 6 through 8, **You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** <sup>19</sup>

Again, in John, chapter 3, verses 16 and 17, **For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. God chose you when Lord Jesus died on the cross for you!** <sup>20</sup>

Verse 5 says that **you were presented the gospel message yourself in word and deed; . . . our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power!** <sup>6</sup> <sub>21</sub>

Verse 6 continues by saying that **you responded to the gospel message invitation and were saved; . . . you welcomed the message with the joy!** <sup>7</sup>

As a saved person you began to imitate the Lord's character. Responding to the Lord involves reading His word and following the godly example of other more mature Christians. <sup>22</sup>

Verse 7, then, states **your life was transformed; . . . you became a model to all the believers!** <sup>23</sup>

Salvation implies a transformed life. **Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be**

---

<sup>6</sup> I Thessalonians 1:4-5 - For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

<sup>7</sup> I Thessalonians 1:6-7 - You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

**transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.** <sup>8</sup> <sub>24</sub>

The final way you can make a spiritual impact is . . .

### **III. Present to the World a Verbal Witness - v8-**

10

**Present to the world a verbal witness.**

**Verses 8 through 10, The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia — your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us.** <sub>25</sub>

**There's no substitute for the verbal witness!** <sub>26</sub> (Please feel free to use my tools for this at [ConnectionWithGod.Org](http://ConnectionWithGod.Org) and [BibleLifeMessages.Org](http://BibleLifeMessages.Org))

**Witnessing is genuinely living the Christian life.** <sub>27</sub>

---

<sup>8</sup> Romans 12:2.



**Witnessing is involvement in the church, her worship and her ministries. 28**

**Witnessing is giving sacrificially to the church and to the needy. 29**

**But, primarily, witnessing is sharing the gospel message with others! 30**

**Witnessing is telling others the good news announcement which is the story of the life, death, burial, resurrection and appearances of the Lord. 31**

**First Corinthians, chapter 15, verses 1 through 6, explains this, Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that**

he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>32</sup>

Witnessing includes introducing others to a loving Savior. <sup>33</sup>

Witnessing is sharing your life; what you have seen, heard and experienced. <sup>34</sup>

Witnessing is showing others from God's word how to become a Christian. People want good news! Give it to them! <sup>35</sup>

So, ring it out! <sup>9</sup> <sup>36</sup>

The word **ring out** <sup>10</sup> means to sound forth like a trumpet! Thunder it out! <sup>37</sup>

Romans, chapter 1, verse 16 says, I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. <sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> I Thessalonians 1:8 - The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia — your faith in God has become known everywhere.

<sup>10</sup> ἐξηχέω.

**The Great Commission, in Matthew, chapter 28, verses 19 and 20, says to ring it out wherever you go! Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. 39**

**Ring it out prayerfully as you ask the Lord to send laborers to the field. 40**

**Ring it out financially as you support missions and evangelistic outreach. 41**

**Ring it out in your life as you allow the Lord to shine in it. 42**

**Ring it out verbally as you share the good news of a resurrected Lord Who loves them. 43**

**Your church can impact our world spiritually as each of you live your transformed lives before it.**

**Do not be ashamed of the gospel and its power!**

**<http://biblelifemessages.org/>**