

Words That Bring Change

News spreads at a fast pace when an event that is supernatural occurs. Words like, “did you hear what happened?” perks everyone’s interest. These are words that bring change and hope to those who need good news. The same thing occurred in the days of the apostle Paul in the New Testament. He wrote in 2 Thessalonians 3:1, “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you.” Paul asked the believers in Thessalonica to pray that the drastic change which had taken place in them would happen throughout the surrounding area. The news of their inward transformation spread everywhere. Everyone was talking about the good news. It was the news of the gospel of peace through Jesus Christ that brought change to many lives.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, Paul gives us details of what had taken place in the lives of the new believers. He commended them for their example of faith, love, and hope. Others looking on could see firsthand how God’s word effectively worked to change the lives of these new Christians. They received the word of God believing it as truth, and welcomed it not as the word of men, but as the word of God. Therefore, the drastic transformation in these lives was clear to all. The news spread throughout their town and the surrounding regions.

Paul applauded their work of faith as evidence of their newfound faith in Christ. It was shown by how they turned from idolatry (which in that culture included ritual sexual immorality) to serving the living and true God. They laid aside the worship of false idols, for they placed their faith in the power of God to save and transform their lives. He also complimented their labor of love, shown in their gratitude and love for the Lord. It produced a deep desire to serve the Lord in ministering to those around them. They also demonstrated a changed life as they patiently hoped in the Lord while enduring severe affliction and did so with joy. Their hope was in the return of Jesus Christ, who would someday come to deliver them from their suffering and from the wrath of God that is to come. They turned their focus from the temporary to the hope of eternal life that is found in Jesus Christ.

Spending time in God’s word not only brings comfort and hope, but will transform the attitude of our hearts and minds as we receive it in faith, as did the believers in Paul’s day. However, it is sad to say that many today do not believe that the Bible is God’s inerrant word, without error. If they believe He is the Almighty God,

why is it they don't accept that He can communicate and reveal His truth while preserving it even today?

The fundamental problem is that they no longer choose to believe in God and what He states in His word. Yet through the centuries, the Scriptures have stood the test of time and the fires of persecution. In a Time Magazine article cited by James Boice Commentary, it stated, "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived—and is perhaps the better for the siege." The Bible still stands true today. Therefore, I encourage you to trust it as God's authoritative word.

Upon hearing the word of God, the believers in Thessalonica chose to believe it. Perhaps you are having a hard time believing it to be God's truth because your heart has become hardened, unresponsive through the deceitfulness of sin. Sin can deceive you into believing you are in a good place when in reality you are far from God. Unconfessed sin will keep you from seeing the truth of God's word which will produce a heart of unbelief, an unwillingness to believe and trust God. Please, I urge you, come to the Lord in true repentance and faith and allow Him to transform your heart. Ask the Lord to soften your heart and open your eyes to see the truth before you step further away from Him. God has a plan for your life, and desires to do you good and not evil, to give you a future and a hope as He promised in His word. Turn your heart towards Him, for He will not turn you away.