

Real Gospel

We have been covering the topic of “*Real Church*”. Today I want to talk about “*Real Gospel*”. Jesus has given us something to say to a lost and dying world. We have a unique assignment and a unique message. It is called the “Gospel of the Kingdom”.

Matthew 24:14 - *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

There are many different messages and voices in this world. They are not included in the message of the church. We have our own lane; we have our own distinctive message. The communication of that message in its purest form (undefiled, undiluted, and unpolluted) carries great power and we, as a church, are committed to this message.

Romans 1:16 - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

What is this message all about? What is the true nature of the gospel? What defines our message?

Opening Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:5-9

V. 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.*

What defines the real gospel?

1. Not a ‘word only’ Gospel

The Gospel is a message of hope and of good news. It is the most wonderful message men will ever hear. However, as wonderful as it is, it doesn’t stop there, it doesn’t end in words only.

- a) The real gospel packs more than just a mere message. If the gospel was just another message, then it would stand side-by-side and in competition with other messages, from other religions.

When Paul arrived in Thessalonica, they already had a very deeply rooted religion and advanced philosophy. What made them turn from their religion and their philosophy to embrace the gospel? – the power that came with the message.

- b) The gospel is more than a message, because attached to it, there is
 - *Power, (dunamis – strength, power and ability)*
 - *The Holy Spirit (the involvement of the 3rd Person of the Trinity anointing and guiding)*
 - *Much assurance (certainty, conviction)*

The **Passion Translation** says, “*For our gospel came to you not merely in the form of words but in mighty power infused with the Holy spirit and deep conviction.*”

Unlike the myths of Greek religion, the message of the epicurean philosophers, the stoics or the sophists, the Gospel came to the Thessalonians as a power-filled message that could be demonstrated in a very real way, in changed lives and miracles.

The gospel has the power to transform lives and impact people in a way that religion and philosophy can't!

- c) The true gospel is not limited to the skilful communication of concepts and ideas. It is not restricted to words only, but the true scope of the Gospel is unlimited – as unlimited as salvation itself is!

Psalms 71:15 - *My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, for I do not know their limits.*

The Gospel is as unlimited as the salvation it proclaims! It is not limited to words only. The true nature of the gospel is word, plus power, plus Holy Spirit, plus assurance (faith)!

We should hunger and desire all the ingredients of the real gospel!

2. It is a full gospel

Romans 15:18-19 - *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in **word and deed**, to make the Gentiles obedient— 19 in mighty signs and wonders, by the **power of the Spirit of God**, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

Paul wrote: “*I have fully preached the gospel*”. When can we say that we have fully heard the Gospel? According to this passage,

- a) When it comes *in word and deed* – not just in ‘word only’ but with the miraculous deeds that follow. Not just in presentation but in demonstration!

1 Corinthians 2:4 - *4And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in **demonstration** of the Spirit and of power*

- b) *By the power of the Spirit of God* – The Holy Spirit and power always accompany the communication of the real gospel.
 - Power is present.

1 Corinthians 4:20 NIV - *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of **power**.*

1 Corinthians 1:18 - *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

- The Holy Spirit is present.

Acts 8:14-15 - *Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.*

(They had received the word – now they needed to receive the Holy Spirit. The job wasn't quite fully done without the Holy Spirit).

Acts 19:1-2 - *and it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ²he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”*

V.6 - *And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.*

- c) Let us read again **Romans 15:18-19**.

God confirms His word “*to make the Gentiles obedient*”: He does mighty signs and wonders to overcome our resistance, our scepticism, our doubts, our rebellion.

Conclusion

The real church preaches its distinctive message: the real gospel. The real gospel is word, plus power, plus Holy Spirit and much assurance (faith). It is a message that can be trusted because it can be demonstrated. It is a unique message. No other message can match the power of the gospel.