

The Route of the Model Church

1 Thessalonians 1.4-10

We're already knee-deep in Paul's (and Timothy's and Silas'!) first letter to the Thessalonians. We've gleaned important background information about this being a church that barely survived infancy. In a sense, this section addresses how this miracle happened. So tackle the questions you can. Don't worry about the rest.

Pastor Eric

A Church That Survived Against the Odds (1 Thess 1.4)

Paul says he *knows* the Thessalonians are "chosen" because of what he sees in their lives. How does this way of understanding "chosen" differ from how you often conceive of it?

The text connects being "chosen" with being "loved by God" in verse 4. How does linking those two ideas change the emotional weight of the word *chosen* for you personally?

The Gospel—What It Is and What It Does (1 Thess 1.5, 10)

In your own words, how would you summarize the Gospel as it's briefly touched on in verse 10?

God's wrath is his holy opposition to evil, not his uncontrolled anger. How does this understanding affect the way you see God's justice and goodness?

The Route the Gospel Took (1 Thess. 1.6-8)

The Gospel Arrived (v.5)

Paul says the gospel came with words, power, the Holy Spirit, and conviction. Which of those do you think we tend to overemphasize, or underemphasize, today? Why? What does the truth say to you?

Have you experienced a moment when the gospel felt like more than just information—when it came with power or deep conviction? Can you remember what was happening in your life at that time?

The Gospel Transformed (v.6)

The Thessalonians were infant believers who changed by imitating Paul and the others. Who has been most influential for you in modeling what following Jesus looks like?

Since real comprehension of Jesus inevitably leads to transformation, in what ways have you seen your faith reshape your values, habits, or responses to life situations?

The story of Maximilian Kolbe highlights how encountering sacrificial love creates lifelong witness. What does it mean, practically, to live as someone who believes they've been rescued?

The Gospel Rang Out (vv.7-8)

Paul describes them as a *model* worth imitating. What qualities make a Christian, or a church, worthy of imitation? If someone were to imitate your faith this week, what practices, attitudes, or rhythms would they pick up?

Becoming a Model Church Today

What is one specific area you want the gospel to continue transforming you right now? In what ways do you hope our church might be transformed to become a model to others?