

Difference Maker

Imagine the Difference We Can Make Together!

October 2, 2016 / Jeff Gunn

² We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. ³ We 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.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, NIV

The Lord affirms our _____, our _____
_____ and our _____.

⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5, NIV

Behind our faith, love and hope (as well as the resulting work, labor and endurance) is the _____, which carries with it the _____ of the Holy Spirit.

⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. **1 Thessalonians 1:6-7, NIV**

The gospel has the ability to _____.
Life-change works for _____ benefit, and also for the benefit _____ who witness our new way of life.

⁸ 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, ⁹ for they

themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

1 Thessalonians 1:8-10, NIV

Life-changing impact is the result of a focus change from _____ to _____, from _____ to _____.

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel. **Philippians 1:27, NIV**

¹² We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. **2 Thessalonians 1:12, NIV**

²⁴ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace. **Acts 20:24, NIV**

Imagine the impact we will make, if we more fully _____ on God's grace, _____ by serving to his glory, and _____ to Jesus' return from heaven!

MEMORY VERSE

⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. **1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a, NIV**

Bottom line: The more we—together—lean faithfully and expectantly on God's grace, the deeper the impact our love and service will make in the world.

What's your next step today?

Mark it on your Communication Card.

Growth Group Activity 10/2/16 – 10/8/16
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Let's Get Started:

What is a “team” that you were part in your life?
(Any type, not just sports)

Back to Sunday:

What are some things that a group of Christians can do more effectively than a single Christian?

What are some things that a single Christian can do more effectively than a group of Christians?

My Story:

Break into groups of 2 or 3 people. Share your “journey of faith” story with another person in the group. Set a timer – take 3 minutes for each person.

Come back to the group. Share how your stories included both individuals Christians and groups of Christians.

Digging Deeper:

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4 When Paul was in Philippi he was beaten and imprisoned. But he went to preach in Thessalonica despite opposition.

Agree or Disagree If we are not facing opposition, we are probably not making a difference.

What is the significance of being someone who is entrusted with the gospel?

Paul served to please God, not men. Why is this important to remember when serving?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12

How would you describe the service that Paul offered the Thessalonians?

How important is it for a congregation to have people who go “above and beyond” expectation in serving?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15

What is the win of Christian service?

Why must a preaching of the gospel always accompany Christian service?

Taking in Home

Why is staying close to God through his Word the most important thing you do as you serve him?

Why might finding fellowship on a ministry team or in a Growth Group be the second most important thing you do as you serve?

Close with Prayer