

Sunday, January 10, 2021
“The Hope of a Waiting Church: A Tantalizing Testimony.”
I Thessalonians 1:5-7

A certain southern gentleman was an indifferent and backslidden believer and known more for his power with Bovines than he was for his love for the Lord. One day he was visiting with a good friend who boldly asked him, “When are you going to get yourself a testimony?”. He was not suggesting the man’s profession of faith did not actually occur, but that his life was showing little or no fruit for the Kingdom. The cattleman took inventory of his life and came to the conclusion that his friend was totally correct! He decided to clearly break from his sins, embrace Christ completely, and begin serving the Lord in the Church in every way he could. His testimony rang clear and loud to his community from that day forward. Individual Christians and also churches must reveal a testimony that proclaims powerfully, “We love the Lord!”. How tantalizing and effective is your testimony? How much influence is our congregation having on this community?

I. Understand the Contents of a Tantalizing Testimony (v.5)

- The Gospel of Christ offered then and offers now pure forgiveness for us through Jesus Christ- “our Gospel”.
- The Gospel’s appeal can never stop at eloquent and learned discourse and dialogue. - “power”.
- No believer can proclaim a truth until he has experienced that truth!
- God’s power is constructive because it builds and blesses; His “dynamite” is far superior to physical “dynamite”.
- A tantalizing testimony possesses a firm conviction or assurance “that God is in this”!
- The “proof is in the pudding” in a tantalizing testimony.

(Charlatans were present in Thessalonica and are here.)

II. Unwrap the Characteristics of a Tantalizing Testimony (v.6)

- A triumphant Christian is discovered doing exactly what Christ would want Him doing at His Return. (Revelation 22:12)
 - A purified life is a characteristic of a good testimony.
 - We must “imitate” by mimicking Christ. (We are the “only” Jesus some might see.)
 - Are we receiving the message with joy and can others see our hunger, our happiness and our hilarity for Christ?
 - Joy and affliction are bedfellows in in a mature walk with Christ.
 - Pressure and stress should yield delight, a characteristic of a tantalizing testimony.
- < To follow Paul in those days was to follow Christ because Paul followed Christ so closely.>

III. Unleash the Consequences of a Tantalizing Testimony (v.7)

- “Example”- (John 20:25)- The same word used for the prints of the nails in the hands of Jesus! (What does my imprint look like?)

- Christianity was able to conquer the Roman Empire because it was so obviously genuine!

- How many people am I affecting positively for the cause of Christ?

1. Am I exhibiting joy when under affliction?

2. Do I portray the joy of the Holy Spirit?

3. What kind of example am I to others?

< Christianity today is still “caught” more than taught!!>