



More Than Words

Sermon Series on 1 Thessalonians

September - November 2009

This Book Belongs to _____

“More Than Words”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6 • Matthew 4:19-20

Introduction

They say, “A picture paints a thousand words.” It is true we can look at a picture and have it change our lives. It is also true that our lives are like a canvas and God is the artist working on a masterpiece.

When Jesus called His followers, He said, “Come, follow me....” He didn’t say, “Sit and listen.” He didn’t suggest that His followers simply believe (as we think of belief); He insisted they become active learners and followers.

1 Thessalonians is a letter that speaks about relationship, ministry and leadership. It is written in the context of community, but also has insights for individuals. We begin this series of lessons with one key objective: That our faith, ministry and belief will be, “More Than Words.”

Sermon Notes

If a _____ paints a _____ words, then how many _____ come to mind when we hear a spoken _____?



Too often we forget the power of _____. That said, the Apostles constantly remind us that our faith needs to be _____ than words.

The followers of Christ need to be . . .

People of _____

People of _____

People of _____

How do we _____ in ministry?

How do we _____ our relationships?

If this series is a _____ and not a _____, we'll have gained _____.

Your Own Thoughts

Small Talk

Bring: A favorite picture or story to share

Some people primarily talk. Other people primarily act. The goal is to balance our actions and our words. Think of a time when someone's actions were so powerful, they didn't need to say a single word to make an impact.

Or, think of a picture that really affected your life when you saw it. Share with your friends why it made such an impact. (If you can, bring a print of the picture to share with the others).

Text Talk

Read: 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6 (NIV)

For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

1. Paul describes the manner or fashion in which the people received the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ. He says it came, "...not simply with words," but with three additional elements: Power, Holy Spirit and Deep Conviction. What do you think he means when He says that the Gospel came accompanied by these three characteristics or companions?

2. Paul also states that their faith was not just taught...it was modeled. Without considering the rest of 1 Thessalonians (as a matter of fact, let's make that off-limits for this discussion), how did the Apostles model faith to the churches they planted?

Life Talk

1. Both words and actions can be powerful. When you think of “words” that have changed your life – maybe a speech, a sermon or book, – what was it about those words that made a difference in your life?

- How could you change your use of words to better impact other people towards greater faith?

2. Actions also make a big difference. Think about your life and things you’ve done that were in sync with God; something that really made a difference in someone’s life. What common thread is there in actions that change people’s lives? For example, is generosity the common thread that makes an action have an impact or is it timeliness? Discuss all the options you think of.

- In what ways do you need to change your actions in order to be a more powerful influence on others?

3. In American churches, people often describe “faithful Christians” as people who attend services. Christianity, however, should be more than a belief system or a habit/style of worship. According to what you know about the Bible and the example of Jesus, how should your faith increase in its activity and move beyond words into action?

Beyond Talk

Write down one thing you are going to “do” this week that will help make your faith become “more than words.” Share your goal with your group so they can pray for you and support your goal.

**15555 15th Avenue NE
Shoreline, WA 98155
www.nwchurch.net
206.364.2275**