

Come Be Part of Us. Part 4. Contagious Christians

leading to spread from person to person.

My dad when I was a child, would on joyful occasions, do what he called "the figure 40". It was a dance move that involved the shuffling of his feet in a form of the figure 40. He would turn around on the 0 and use his arms to balance his turn. I can still see his feet today as I remember the moment. It's a beautiful memory of my dad. Its beautiful for several reasons:

1. My dad was never an emotional person. So, for him to explode in a moment with a dance made an impact on us.
2. It meant something good had happened and he couldn't contain himself.
3. My dad was paralyzed at the age of 56 which was just a few years after we witnessed this figure 40. In fact, my dad was in the latter years of 40 that my memory holds these events. So, to remember him dancing was removes the years of him not being able to dance.
4. I remember it made us all break out in a dance when he started.
5. When I turned 40, I danced the jig in celebration as well. It made a lasting impression upon my young mind.

The bible tells us that "beautiful" are the feet of him who brings good news! Why feet? Why didn't the Lord inspire to say beautiful is the smile of the one who brings good news, or the voice, or the hands...but he said the FEET.

I think that it was the feet because we do not go anywhere without them. They are the PUSH AGENT to going somewhere. Our hands are responsible for touching people, but our feet are the agents that get us there.

GOD SAYS OUR FEET ARE BEAUTIFUL WHEN WE TALK ABOUT JESUS WITH OTHERS.

1 Thess. 1:5-8 NIV 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. 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. ⁸ The Lord's message rang out (sounded forth -NKJV) from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere.

1 Thess. 1: 4-8 (MSG) When the Message we preached came to you, it wasn't just words. Something happened in you. The Holy Spirit put steel in your convictions. ⁵⁻⁶ You paid careful attention to the way we lived among you, and determined to live that way yourselves. In imitating us, you imitated the Master. Although great trouble accompanied the Word, you were able to take great joy from the Holy Spirit!—taking the trouble with the joy, the joy with the trouble. ⁷⁻¹⁰ Do you know that all over the provinces of both Macedonia and Achaia believers look up to you? The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word, not only in the provinces but all over the place. The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore—you're the message!

When Paul arrived in Thessalonica, he was ecstatic! The church was only 1 year old after Paul had only taught them for 3 weeks in his prior visit...remember, no bible yet.

There is something about a person that has "convictions of steel" that cause others to marvel and draw near to such a one.

These people as Paul stated had GONE FROM THE RECEIVER TO THE TRANSMITTER. They had developed a contagious atmosphere around them that PUSHED THEM ALL from just being hearers but doers of God's word. It made the Word come alive within them.

Illus: Leonardo da Vinci had once worked on a great masterpiece for a long period of time. There was a young student standing next to him as da Vinci worked, and the student watched the master work as the painting had evolved in front of him. The student was awed by da Vinci's technique and had been observing him in hopes of picking up some of the master's skill.

Just before finishing the painting, da Vinci turned to the student and gave him the brush saying "Now, you finish it." The student backed away and protested that he wouldn't dream of touching the Master's work, but da Vinci said, "Will not what I have done inspire you to do your best?"

AS YOU READ THRU THE BIBLE YOU SENSE THE WORK OF THE MASTER. All of it pushing us toward sharing Jesus with others. Everywhere we go, when we go, as we go, and when we sit down, lie down, rise up and run. We are to be contagious agents of the grace and mercy of God almighty!

The Thessalonians did simply that. THEY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF INFECTING AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE WITH WHAT THEY HAD BEEN INFECTED WITH.

Today, we shared stickers to place on each other just to show...how INTERACTIVE we all can REALLY BE.

- Some laughed as they applied their stickers
- Others just hurried through to get rid of their stickers
- No one really took time to choose a sticker

But we all placed stickers on each other. We all interacted. But in REAL LIFE, do we impact others as the Thessalonians did? To where there was nothing else that Paul could teach them because they were EFFECTIVELY SPREADING THE GOSPEL!

The summary of this entire book of 1 Thessalonians gives us insight into what Paul wanted them to continue to do to be CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIANS.

1. Have convictions of steel. (ch.1-2:2)
2. Have no hidden agendas. Be pure in your faith. (ch.2:3-ch.3)
3. Be God-taught. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly. (ch. 4:1-12)
4. Remember constantly THE MASTER'S COMING. (ch. 4:13-5:1-11)
5. Stay true to the way Jesus wants you to live. (c.5:13-28)
 - Honor leaders, overwhelm them with appreciation & love
 - Get along among yourselves, each doing your part.
 - Warn the freeloader to move on
 - Encourage the stragglers
 - Reach out to the exhausted, help pull them to their feet
 - Be patient with each other, attentive to individual needs. And when you get on each other's nerves, don't snap at each other.
 - Look for the best in each other and always do your best to bring it out.
 - Be cheerful no matter what
 - Pray all the time
 - Thank God no matter what happens
 - Don't suppress the Spirit
 - Don't stifle those who have a word from the Master. On the other hand, don't be gullible. Check out everything and keep only what is good. Throw out anything that is tainted with evil.

THIS IS THE WAY GOD WANTS YOU WHO BELONG TO CHRIST JESUS TO LIVE.

CLOSE WITH THE REMAINING 10 STICKERS...CHOOSE WISELY, CHOOSE STICKERS TO SPEAK YOUR INTENTIONAL THOUGHTS TOWARD ANOTHER. GO TO THEM AND PLACE THE STICKER ON THEM NOW.

PRAYER FOR US ALL TO BE INTENTIONAL IN PASSING THE BRUSH ALONG.