

1 THESSALONIANS 1:4-10, NLT. *"⁴We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people. ⁵For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you. ⁶So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. ⁷As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸And now the word of the Lord is ringing out from you to people everywhere, even beyond Macedonia and Achaia, for wherever we go we find people telling us about your faith in God. We don't need to tell them about it, ⁹for they keep talking about the wonderful welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. ¹⁰And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment."*

CHANGE AND INFLUENCE

→ The Christian faith is grounded upon the claim that people can be _____

→ In this letter, Paul begins by _____ the widespread influence these early Christians were making in their town and beyond

FIVE WAYS THEIR INFLUENCE & WITNESS SPREAD

1. They were _____ of faithful followers

- Paul never referred to any other church in this way!
- We derive the word _____ from the word Paul uses which indicates the imprint made by a stroke or blow, the impression left by a seal or the imprint on a coin, or a pattern

2. They were _____ of the Word

- They _____ the Gospel powerfully with words
- The word used here is the same that would be used to describe the sound of a trumpet or the booming of thunder

3. They were _____ how they lived

- They rejected the _____ of their day = those things that held their trust and allegiance
- *"Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"* – 2 COR 5:17
- To turn to the living and true God is to reject all of the idols that have their grip on a given generation.

4. They _____ and _____ the living and true God

- It's not only what you turn _____ that is important
- Of greater importance is what you turn _____ and what you _____ after you've turned
- The word Paul uses for servant is the same word the Bible uses for slave
- We may grant God _____ of the board of our lives, but to give Him absolute, unqualified authority in our lives is different
- *"You must not have any other god but me."* – EXO 20:3

5. They looked forward to the _____ of Jesus

- They were living with the _____ that Jesus would return
- *"Someday He will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"* – ACTS 1:11

WHY IS ALL THIS SO IMPORTANT?

→ How we're seen _____ who we are

→ How we're seen _____ our witness