



1 THESSALONIANS

STANDING FIRM



After being shamefully treated in Philippi (Acts 16:12-40), Paul's church-planting mission trip brings him to the prosperous and hugely influential city of Thessalonica. After a very short time there (- maybe no longer than three weeks), the opposition to his preaching is so intense that he has to make a humiliating night flight from the city (Acts 17:1-14).

What he leaves behind is 'the church of the Thessalonians in God'. Although they were very young Christians, there was real evidence of a remarkable, genuine work of God in each of them. They'd turned to God from idols (1:9-10), and Paul warmly remembers their 'work of faith, labour of love and steadfastness of hope' (1:3). His concern was whether they would continue as Christians.

Just a few months later, Timothy brings wonderful news to Paul (now in Corinth) that they were **standing firm**.



FOCUS ON 1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-12

Paul describes **what he did** when he visited Thessalonica for those few weeks.

- What did he do?

(v3)

(v5b)

(v4)

(v6a)

(v5a)

(v6b)

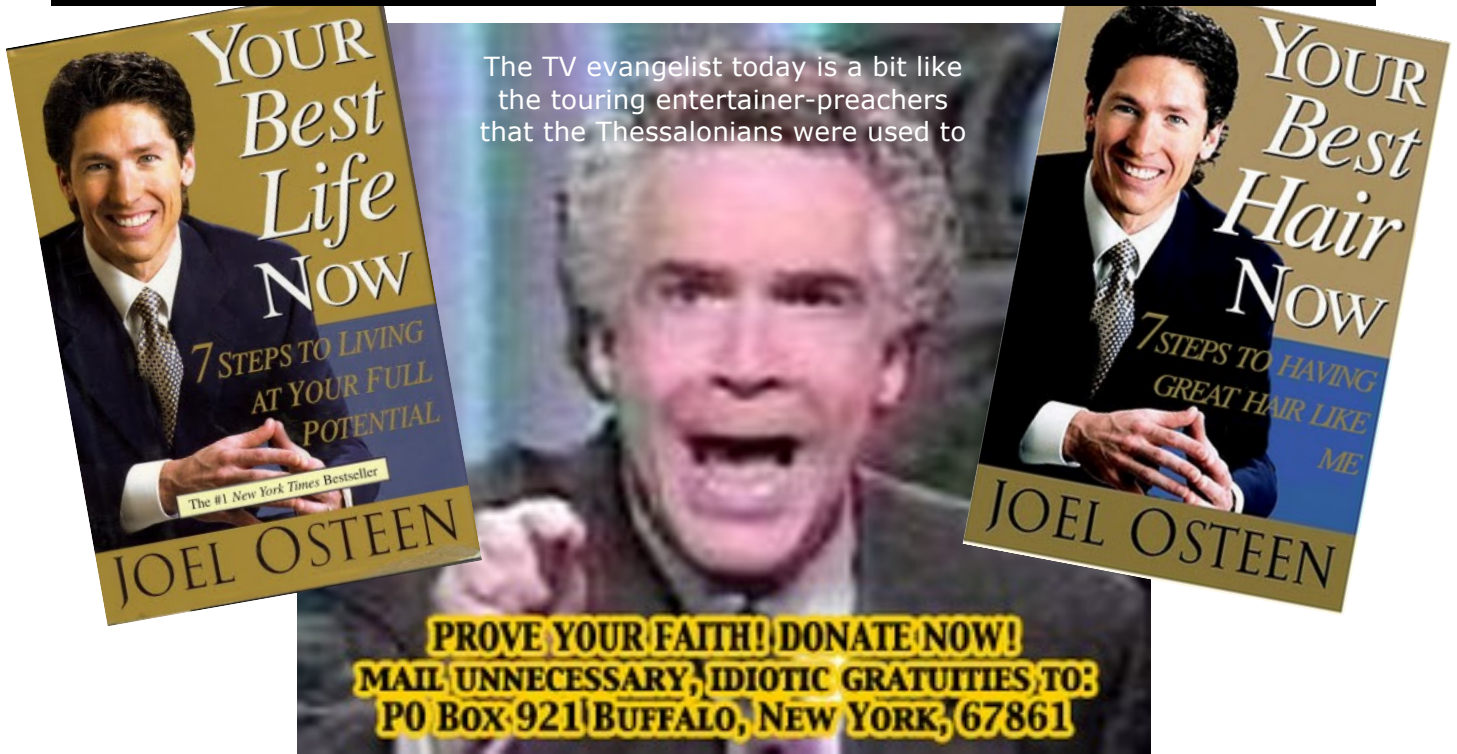
- How did he do what he did?

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- What impression do you get of Paul as a church planter and missionary?
- Is there any application of Paul's example for today? To whom would you apply this, and why?

TURN OVER AND DO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE BEFORE YOU DO THIS SIDE!



Why does it matter that those who 'declare the gospel of God' are like Paul, as he describes himself in this passage?
(... *this is worth thinking through for a while; it's not straightforward*)

FOCUS ON 1 THESSALONIANS 2:13-16

Paul describes **what the Thessalonians did** when he'd visited them for those few weeks.

- What does it mean to 'receive' and 'accept' the word of God?
- What did they experience?
- Make a list of everything we're told here about those who oppose the gospel

Next Sunday, five people will be baptised at Emmanuel.
If you had the chance for a pre-baptism chat with each of them, what would you want to say to them (from this passage):

- what would you want to check
- what would you want to warn them about?
- what would you say to encourage them to keep going?