

## The free course of the word

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June 6, 2025

### Introduction

1. 2 Thessalonians 3:1
2. Paul wanted the Thessalonians to pray that the word might have a free course.
  - a. The Olympic games were held every four years in Athens and Corinth.
  - b. Paul uses these games as an illustration several times 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 12:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:1
  - c. The free course would be free from obstacles, not hurdles or barriers to overcome.
3. It is also impossible to have a right relationship with Jesus without having a right relationship with and regard for His word. John 14:15; 1 John 5:13
4. If the word of the Lord is to run, it will be because brethren who love God and His truth actively proclaim the Gospel.
5. “Glorified” here means to make renowned, render illustrious i.e. to cause the dignity of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged.
6. What are some hurdles that some put in the way of the Gospel so that it does not have a free course?

### II Discussion

1. Prejudice is one hurdle that some put in the way of the Gospel
  - a. Prejudice is “preconceived judgment or opinion.”
  - b. The word “prejudice” is not found in the Bible but the idea is:
    - i. Ahab 1 Kings 22
    - ii. Naaman 2 Kings 5
    - iii. People who have closed their eyes to the truth. Matthew 13:15
    - iv. The Jews were prejudice against the Gentiles Acts 21:28; 22:21-22; Galatians 2:6-12
  - c. Some today may be prejudiced against the Gospel
    - i. It might be baptism
    - ii. It might be church of Christ
    - iii. It might be obedience
    - iv. It might be worship
    - v. It might be singing without instruments
  - d. The proper attitude is essential if men are saved. John 7:17
2. Religious error may be a hurdle that some put in the way of the Gospel
  - a. The fact of religious error
    - i. Predicted by Jesus Matthew 7:15
    - ii. Proclaimed by Paul 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
    - iii. The idea that it does not make any difference what you believe does not make any since in the Bible.
  - b. Error was taught in the New testament times
    - i. John 1 John 4:1; but 1 John 5:13
    - ii. Peter 2 Peter 2:1-3 but 2 Peter 1:3, 5-11
3. Indifference is a hurdle that some may place in the way of the Gospel
  - a. Indifference is a lack of feeling or commitment for or against a thing
  - b. See in the church at Laodecia Revelation 3:15-17

- c. Indifference can be produced by the cares of this life Luke 8:14
  - d. Instead of being indifferent to spiritual ideas men ought to be addicted to them. 1 Corinthians 16:15
- 4. Materialism is often a hurdle that some place before the Gospel
  - a. This is a world of things Luke 12:15-21
  - b. Materialism contrasted Matthew 4:4; 6:19-21; 16:24-26
  - c. There is something more important than thing, i.e. the saving of the soul. James 1:21-22; 1 Peter 1:9, 22-23.

### III Conclusion

- 1. Do we place hurdles before the way of the Gospel
- 2. Will we let the Gospel have its free course in our lives?
- 3. We must know the truth John 8:32
- 4. We must obey the truth 1 Peter 1:22-23

Sources: Christ is coming sermon outlines from 1 & 2 Thessalonians by Tom Holland;  
Denton lecture on 1 & 2 Thessalonians and Philemon