"GOD'S WORD WORKS"



1 Thessalonians 2:13-16
10-15-2025

INTRODUCTION:

**** You need to see that <u>God's Word really does work</u>! (v. 13d)***

Examine from vv. 13-16 two things about God's Word:

Examine:

I. THE <u>WAY</u> THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 13)
(The <u>Formula</u> for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>HEARD</u> (v. 13a)

Hindrances to hearing the Word:
1. preoccupation with other things
2. unconfessed sin
3. a reluctance to obey it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>ACCEPTED</u> (v. 13b)

Hindrances to really accepting the Word: (see Mt. 13:19-23)
1) Refusal to understand it (hard-hearted - v. 19)
2) Refusal to let it sink in deep (faint-hearted - v. 20, 21)
3) Preoccupation with worldliness (half-hearted - v. 22)

C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>BELIEVED TO BE FROM GOD</u> (v. 13c)

Examine:

II. THE <u>PROOF</u> THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)
(The <u>Evidence</u> that God's Word is at Work)

A. IT <u>CHANGES LIVES</u> (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

B. IT <u>IS OPPOSED</u> (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

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Examine:

I. THE _____ THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 13)
(The _____ for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____ (v. 13a)

Hindrances to hearing the Word:
1. _____with other things
2. unconfessed _____
3. a reluctance to _____it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____ (v. 13b)

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1) Refusal to _____ (hard-hearted - v. 19)
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C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____<u>TO BE</u>_____ (v. 13c)

Examine:

II. THE _____ THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)
(The _____ that God's Word is at Work)

A. IT _____ (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

B. IT <u>IS</u>_____ (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

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INTRODUCTION:

When it comes to machinery (automobiles, printing presses, etc.), I'm not so concerned about how it looks. My concern is: "Does it work?"

I am pragmatic when it comes to some things. If something is good, if it is real, it will work!

We hold in our hands today something that works! (The Bible)

"Effectively worketh" = - we get our Eng. word "energy" from it. It means to work with powerful energy, to operate with productiveness.

We should all desire God to use His Word in our lives and in the lives of others. To change us, mold us, revolutionalize us.

His Word is able!

The Bible is not just a book -- it's God's Word and its work is effective!

- It's a Mirror (it reflects the true condition of man)
- It's a Seed (it grows in your life and produces fruit)
- It's Water (it washes and cleanses)
- It's a Lamp (it shows the way)
- It's a Sword (it pierces the heart of man, bringing conviction)
- It's Nourishing Food (it is your milk, meat, bread, and honey)
- It's a Hammer (it can build you up)
- It's a Fire (it convicts, purifies, burning away the dross in your life)

And it is worth more than money!
It meant more to the Psalmist than "riches" (119:14), "thousands of gold and silver" (v. 72), and "fine gold" (v. 127).

The Bible is so powerful that it ought to have a warning sign on it, saying: "This Book is habit-forming. Regular use causes loss of anxiety (fear) and a decreased appetite for lying, lusting, cheating, stealing, and hating. You will notice the following symptoms: Increased sensations of love, peace, joy, compassion, faith, and courage."

*** You need to see that God's Word really does work! (v. 13d)**

Examine from vv. 13-16 two things about God's Word:

Examine:

I. THE WAY THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 13)
(The Formula for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS HEARD (v. 13a)

Over 6 billion people in the world and most have never heard!

"How shall they hear without a preacher?..." (Ro. 10:14)

"Faith cometh by hearing..." (Ro. 10:17)

Our responsibility is to get the word out so that people can hear it! It's up to God to save them.

God's Word is like a weapon (The Sword of the Spirit). It is only of use when put into action.

The Bible isn't to be merely admired and treated like a relic. It is to be proclaimed, and listened to.

Sometimes people can become calloused so that you hear words (sound) from the pulpit, but you don't hear the Word.

Make every effort to stay alert and be open to God's Word.

1) Treat the Bible with respect
(don't throw it around, or let it collect dust)
It's God's Word!

2) Read it carefully - It's God's Word!

3) Listen to it attentively - It's God's Word!

Hindrances to hearing the Word:

1. preoccupation with other things
2. unconfessed sin
3. a reluctance to obey it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS ACCEPTED (v. 13b)

"Received" = a hospitality word. It is the usual word for the reception of a guest.

The word means: to welcome, to willingly accept, to take to yourself.

In order for God's Word to benefit you, you must embrace it. You must take it into your life.

EX: Medicine does you no good unless you take it. The same with the Word.

The Thess. believers didn't just hear it - they accepted it!

Many are willing to hear but not accept.

We are good at hearing for others, and accepting the Word as it applies to others. But we will answer to God for what we did with the Word ourselves.

"To hear" = is to listen with the ear

"to receive" = is to listen with the heart

Hindrances to really accepting the Word:
(see Mt. 13:19-23)

1) Refusal to understand it (hard-hearted - v. 19)
2) Refusal to let it sink in deep (faint-hearted - v. 20, 21)
3) Preoccupation with worldliness (half-hearted - v. 22)

NOTE: V. 23 - the one with a tender heart obeys the Word (whole-hearted)

C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>BELIEVED TO BE FROM GOD</u>
(v. 13c)

It is amazing to think that we hold in our hands the actual Word of God! When you think about it, what a privilege it is to open up the Word of God. To gather together and be exhorted from the Truth!

When you sit down and read the Word, remind yourself: "This is from God!"

When you come to church and listen to the Word, remind yourself: "This is from God!"

Why isn't God's Word working in your heart? Why a lack of desire to read it?
--You are not really believing it is actually God's Word.

I, with Paul, can thank God for those of you who (when I preach and teach God's Word) humbly accept it as God's message.

When someone says: "Good message," our reply is: "Well, praise God - it's His Word!"

I'm simply passing on God's message.

As preachers, teachers, witnesses:
--we are His instruments using His Word
--We are His ambassadors proclaiming His message
--we are in His army bearing His Sword (the Word of God)

Cp. 1:5

Paul could preach with power, profound conviction, and with certainty (conviction) because what he said was not of man's devising.

Ways Satan gets people to deny God's Word--his lies are as follows:

1. The Bible was written by men (II Tim. 3:15, 16)
2. The Bible cannot be understood (it's not for you) (II Cor. 2:10-16)
3. Don't accept what is being taught - that's just Pastor's opinion/interpretation.

Sinful human nature tends to reject that which goes contrary to our presupposed beliefs or lifestyle.

I'm not saying that you should not examine the Scriptures to see whether what I'm saying is true or not; we should be like the Bereans (Acts 17:11). The Bible is our only authority, not the person proclaiming it.

The way a Christian treats his Bible shows how he regards Jesus Christ.
(The Bible is an extension of Jesus Christ)

He is the living Word (Jn. 1:1, 14), and the Bible is the written Word.

Both are called Bread (Jn. 6:48; Mt. 4:4); Light (Jn. 8:12; Ps. 119:105); and Truth (Jn. 14:6; 17:17).

Jesus Christ is forever the eternal Son of God (Ro. 1:25), and the Word of God will live forever (Ps. 119:89; I Pet. 1:23, 25).
(Wiersbe, p. 48, 49)

Examine:

II. THE PROOF THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)

(The Evidence that God's Word is at Work)

V. 14

"For" = introduces the proof (evidence) that God's Word works effectively.

A. IT CHANGES LIVES (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

You know something works when using it makes a difference (when you see results)-- EX: Marvel Mystery Oil
Downey Fabric Softener

"Became" = passive - lit. were caused (made) to become. The "Word" (v. 13) is the agent that produced this kind of fruit.

The same word that brings us salvation also changes our lives by equipping us with the ability to live for Christ and endure suffering for His sake.

"Followers" = imitators (cp. 1:6)

NOTE: Paul's thought is just like in 1:5-6.

First, the Word comes in power (v. 5)
Then the Word changes a life (v. 6)

We imitate the early Church and our Lord Jesus when we are willing to suffer affliction for the Word of God's sake!

"Followers" = they followed the same pattern that the churches in Judea did, even though they never saw the churches of Judea. The same Holy Spirit that came into the Judeans came into the Thessalonians. It is the Spirit who changes us. He makes us like other believers who live all the way around the world.

"In Judea" - geographically (physically)
"In Christ" - positionally (spiritually)
Only those who are really "in Christ" will suffer for their beliefs.

--Before salvation, you blush to say the name Jesus Christ, much less stand up for it.

--Before salvation, men curse that Name; after salvation, they suffer for it.

"The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation..." (Ro. 1:15-16).

B. IT IS OPPOSED (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

V. 14

Most often, those who will oppose you for Christ's Word are those closest to you (EX: relatives, neighbors, etc.)

Jesus said: "A prophet has honor, except in his own country."

V. 15

"Persecuted" = to hunt out

Bill Murray, the son of Madelaine Murray O'Hair, testified that anything that could be so hated and opposed by his mom had to be true.

People don't give their lives to oppose nothing! Satan knows the Word of God is true and it is powerful, so he is doing everything in his power to keep people from it.

If he had his way, he would stop all Bible-preaching churches; he would prohibit Bible's from being circulated.

He denied God's Word to Eve in the Garden (Gn. 3), and he hasn't stopped!

Why did the Jews kill Christ, the prophets, persecuted the Apostles? Why were they not pleasing to God and were contrary to all believers in general?
--Answer: Because they rejected the Word (the Truth).
--"Men love darkness rather than light..."
--Satan blinds the minds (of those who refuse to believe) from the light of the glorious Gospel (II Cor. 4:4-5)

Those who reject the Word, don't want anyone else to hear it either (SEE Acts 13:4-12 - Elymar the sorcerer, who tried to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith).

V. 16

The unsaved world (inspired by Satan and his host) doesn't mind if Christians speak (EX: on politics, world affairs, etc. -- ex: Phil Donahue show), just so long as our speaking isn't God's Word, just so long as our speaking is not for the purpose that others get saved.

One of the worst sins anyone can commit (the sin that fills the cup full) is the sin of preventing others to trust Christ.

"It would be better that a millstone was tied..."

"Wrath - God's anger has already come in full measure (it's only a matter of time before it is evident).

I wouldn't want to be in the shoes of those who hate God's Word!

"A nation (or a person) can reach a point in opposition to God where return is impossible" (Morris, p. 65).

CONCLUSION:

Examine:

1. The way that God's Word works
   (the formula for God's Word to work)
   --It can only work if it is heard
   --It can only work if it is accepted
   --It can only work if it is believed to be from God

2. The proof that God's Word works
   (the evidence that God's Word is at work)
   --It changes lives
   --It is opposed

Go to your Bible expecting to hear from God!

Go to church expecting to hear from God!

God uses men to deliver His truth to others (EX: Acts 8 & 10), but never forget it is His Truth.

When witnessing, don't stoop to scientific arguments--

--God's Word works!

When you have a problem, don't try man's solutions--

--God's Word works!

When you doubt that "so and so" will ever change his/her ways, don't give up--

--God's Word works!

When you feel discouraged, open God's Word! And get your needs met
--It works!
--It's the answer!