

The Word of God

Key Verse: *“For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.”*

—I Thessalonians 2:13, New American Standard Bible

Selected Scripture:
I Thessalonians 2:1-20

OUR KEY VERSE OFFERS

timely encouragement for God’s people. In our age of doubt, fueled by secular bias and generally dismissive attitudes toward religion, the Bible stands as a beacon and refuge for Christ’s devout followers. Those who ridicule it have apparently not considered its message carefully. In an act of “tossing out the baby with the bathwater,” many unwittingly reject God’s Word when rejecting church dogma. We note a principle expressed by Paul in the Book of Romans, where he observes that, just because some Jews did not accept the Gospel, their unbelief did not nullify God’s message. “What then? If some did not believe,

their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged.” (Rom. 3:3,4, *NASB*) Indeed, even if every man proves to be a liar, God shall be found to be true.

In our lesson, Paul praises Christians in Thessalonica for understanding and accepting what his writings and teachings were—the Word of God, not meager inventions of men. This fact is attested to by another apostle. Peter, in his second epistle notes: “Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.” (II Pet. 3:15,16, *NASB*) Thus Peter equates Paul’s epistles with Scripture.

The Scriptures are life sustaining for Christians. Stark is the imagery of the Prophet Amos. “Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord GOD, When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD.” (Amos 8:11, *NASB*) Today we have a famine for God’s Word. Our Lord Jesus said, “It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4, *NASB*) Perhaps this analogy may inform our deeper understanding of Jesus’ model prayer, saying, “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matt. 6:11) We do not doubt that Christians, despite saying the Lord’s Prayer, have died of hunger through the centuries. However, neither do we doubt that God’s Word ever failed to sustain their spirit.

A confirmation of the verity of Scripture is offered in our Key Verse. Paul observes that the Word of God, “also performs its work in you who believe.” Committed Christians, serving Christ in sincere heart devotion, are changed by the Word. They put aside the hateful, petty, selfish ways of their past and put on the character of Christ—full of love, generosity, and mercy. By their fruits they shall be known. (Matt. 7:15-20) Our desire for you, dear reader, is that the Word of God will also perform its work in “you” who believe. ■