

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core Beliefs

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- **Authority of Bible**
"I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action."
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

Monday

Begin your time in prayer. Ask God to help you understand His Word as you study this passage.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 twice. To gain insight into this week's passage, answer these questions:

- What did the Thessalonians receive from the apostles?
- What was at work in the Thessalonians?
- Who had the Thessalonians become imitators of?
- What acts had the Jews committed as an attempt to keep the Word of God from spreading?

How will God respond to the Jews efforts to keep the message from the Gentiles?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16. Verses 1-12 describe the way in which the Gospel message was brought to the Gentiles. What do verses 13-16 describe?

Who do the apostles thank for the work that is happening among the Thessalonians?

Close your time in prayer. Thank God for making the message of Jesus clear to you and bringing you to a place of faith in Him. Pray for those around you who have not yet come to faith in Christ.

Tuesday

What is concerning you today? Spend a few moments praying for these things and ask God to help you focus over the next moments of studying His Word.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

The "Word of God" is referred to twice in this passage. Today we will look at other passages of Scripture to help us understand the message that the apostles preached, the Word of God.

The Word of God was taught...

by the apostles to the Jews: read Acts 4:31 and 6:2.

by Peter to the Gentiles: read Acts 11:1.

by Paul on his first missionary journey: read Acts 13:5,7,44,48,49.

by Paul on his second missionary journey: read Acts 16:32; 17:13; 18:11.

by Paul on his third missionary journey: read Acts 19:10.

Read Colossians 1:25-2:3. The Word of God is equated to a mystery. What does 1:27 and 2:2 say that this mystery is? (Note: the word *mystery* as used here means *something that was previously unknown but is now revealed*)

This mystery of Christ was also spoken of in the Old Testament through the prophets. The Levitical law given to Old Testament believers was to point them to their need for God and salvation. Christ was the fulfillment of everything which the Old Testament has been looking towards. All Scripture is the Word of God, the story of God's interaction with sinful people to rescue them from their brokenness.

From these passages what can we determine that the apostles were teaching as the Word of God to the Thessalonians?

Spend a few moments reflecting on your attitude toward the message of God. On a scale between apathetic and full of awe and gratitude, how would you rate your present attitude toward this rich truth of *Christ in you*?

Close your time in prayer, thank God for His Word—the truth of Christ that has rescued you and reconciled you with Him. Ask God to fuel your awe for this message and fervency to make it known to others.

Wednesday

Spend a few moments in silence. How did you see God at work in your life yesterday? Thank Him for this work in your life.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16. What does Paul say is at work among those who believe?

Today we will focus on the work of the Word of God in the lives of those who believe. Read each passage of Scripture below. Next to each reference, note the work that is mentioned regarding the Word of God.

Scripture Reference	The <i>work</i> of the Word of God
1 Peter 1:23	
2 Timothy 3:16,17	
Psalms 119:105	
Psalms 119:24	
Psalms 19:7-11	
Hebrews 4:12	
John 8:31,32	
Colossians 3:16	
Psalms 119:11	
Psalms 119:28	
Joshua 1:8,9	

What *work* of the Word of God do you sense that you need most today? Reread the verse that correlates with that work. Spend a few moments thinking on this verse, perhaps memorize it. Pray this verse as a prayer asking God to work in you through His Word.

Thursday

Take a few moments to jot down anything that could distract you during your time studying God's Word. Ask God to help you trust Him with tasks that need to get done and situations that concern you.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

How had the Thessalonians become imitators of the churches in Judea?

Read Acts 4:1-4; 5:40; 8:1 for more information on the suffering that the churches in Judea had withstood.

Read Matthew 26:39. What *cup* is Jesus referring to?

Read Matthew 26:27-55. Was this *cup* taken from him?

In following Jesus, we can expect suffering at the hands of those who are against the message of the Word of God. Suffering was a first-hand experience of Jesus, the apostles, and the Thessalonian church.

What was remarkable about the suffering Jesus and the early church withstood was how they responded to it. Jesus humbly and courageously accepted suffering, forgiving those from whose hands the beatings came. The apostles fearlessly continued to speak the message of God's Word in spite of threats and opposition.

How well would you stand in the face of opposition and suffering from those around you because of your faith? What form does the opposition to Christ's message take in your life currently?

Ask God to help you develop into a courageous and humble believer who will stand in the face of opposition without hatred or hesitation.

Friday

Begin your time in prayer, asking God to give you insight into His Word today.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16. Reread verses 15-16.

Who was responsible for killing Jesus and the prophets?

What is God's response to the Jew's actions?

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17. What does this tell us about Paul's actions prior to becoming a believer?

Why did the Jews attempt to keep the apostles from preaching the Word of God to the Gentiles?

Read 1 Timothy 2:4-6 and 2 Peter 3:9. What do these verses tell us about God's desire for salvation?

God desires all men to come to salvation, but these Jews stood in direct opposition to the will of God, attempting to stop the message of the Gospel from being spread.

Read Romans 2:5-11 for further detail on the judgment for those who do evil as these Jews did in attempting to stop the Gentiles from hearing of the salvation available in Jesus (vs. 16). What is promised for those who do evil?

End your time in prayer using the following ideas as a guide.

- Ask God to show you any ways that you are opposing, distracting, or getting in the way of His plan or will in your own life or the lives of those around you.
- Ask God to use you to bring His message of truth to those who haven't yet heard or responded. Ask God to show you one specific step you could take to make "redemptive contact" with someone in the coming week.