

Introduction

In February 2023, George Barna released some new survey results about having a biblical worldview. According to Barna, here is what a biblical worldview is:

What is the biblical worldview? The biblical worldview is a means of experiencing, interpreting, and responding to reality in light of biblical perspectives. This view provides a personal understanding of every idea, opportunity, and experience based on the identification and application of relevant biblical principles so that each choice we make may be consistent with God’s principles and commands.... It is asking the question, “what would Jesus do if He were in my shoes right now?” and applying the answer without concern for how we anticipate the world will react. A biblical worldview is thinking like Jesus. It is a way of making our faith practical to every situation we face each day.... “It’s like having a pair of special eyeglasses we wear that enables us to see things from God’s point of view, and to respond to those perceptions in the way that He would prescribe if He were to provide us with direct and personal revelation.”¹

Barna’s research and assessment was “based on fifty-four worldview-related questions drawn from eight categories of worldview application, measuring both beliefs and behaviors. Those categories are:”²

1. Bible, Truth, and Morals	5. Human Character and Nature
2. Faith Practices	6. Lifestyle, Behavior and Relationships
3. Family and the Value of Life	7. Purpose and Calling
4. God, Creation, and History	8. Sin, Salvation, and God Relationship

Here are the results of Barna’s survey:

- Among Senior Pastors, only 41% hold a biblical worldview.
- Among Associate Pastors, only 28% hold a biblical worldview.
- Among Teaching Pastors, only 13% hold a biblical worldview.
- Among Children’s and Youth Pastors, only 12% hold a biblical worldview.
- Among adults in the U.S., 88% embrace syncretism as their primary worldview. (Syncretism is a blending of ideas and applications from a variety of holistic worldviews into a unique, but inconsistent combination that represents their personal preferences.)
- Among pastors in the U.S., 62% hold a syncretistic worldview.
- In the areas of beliefs, behaviors, truth, and morality, only 39% of pastors have a biblical worldview.³
- Of those identifying as Christians, only 6% have a biblical worldview.
- Within the born-again population, only 13% have a biblical worldview.
- 82% of American adult population falls into the World Citizen category, described as people who may embrace a few biblical principles, but generally believe in ways that are distinct from biblical teaching.⁴

¹ Think Like Jesus: Make the Right Decision Every Time, George Barna (Issachar Resources, 2003), pp 19-22.

² https://www.arizonachristian.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/AWVI-2021-22-Methodology-Brief_Digital.pdf

³ <https://www.arizonachristian.edu/2022/05/12/shocking-lack-of-biblical-worldview-among-american-pastors/>, Dr. Tracy F. Munsil, Executive Director, May 12, 2022, CRC, American Worldview Inventory 2022

⁴ <https://www.arizonachristian.edu/2023/02/28/biblical-worldview-among-u-s-adults-drops-33-since-start-of-covid-19-pandemic/>, Dr. Tracy F. Munsil, February 28, 2023, CRC, American Worldview Inventory 2023

Our passage is about how the Thessalonians responded to the Gospel. Paul identifies three key ways that they responded. First, they received God's word for what it really is, the word of God. The key to having a biblical worldview is to believe that God's word is really what it is, God's word. The Thessalonians accepted the word of God and they based their decisions and lifestyles on God's word. They allowed the word of God to perform its work in their lives. Second, the Thessalonians responded by imitating the churches in Judea. Third, they endured sufferings. In Part One, we will cover how they received God's word. In Part 2, we will look at how they imitated the churches in Judea. In Part 3, we will look at how they endured suffering.

(1 Th 2:13-16) "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. {14} For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they *did* from the Jews, {15} who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, {16} hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost."

How The Thessalonians Responded to the Gospel

1. They received God's word
2. They imitated the churches in Judea
3. They endured sufferings

They Received God's Word

- a. What is God's word
- b. What is the work of God's word
- c. How do we accept God's word

a. What is God's word (1 Th 2:13)

Paul constantly thanked God for the Thessalonians receiving the word of God as it really is, not the word of men, but the word of God. This is something that we should pray for ourselves, our children, grandchildren, and for others. If they have accepted it as the word of God, we should also give thanks to God for that.

(1 Th 2:13) "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."

What is the word of God? The Thessalonians received it, not as the word of men, but as the word of God. In simplest form, it is a book containing words that the Lord spoke to us about Himself, His ways, and how we are to live our lives. Paul wrote that "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." It is *theopneustos* (Strong's G2315) in the Greek, which is a compound word. *Theo* is the Greek word for God, and *pneo* means to blow upon. *Pneo* comes from *pneuma*, which means wind or breath. God breathed or inspired the scriptures. The Bible is not the word of men, but it is the word of God.

(2 Ti 3:16–17) “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; {17} so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

The apostle Peter wrote that “no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.” Why? It is not up to us to come up with our own interpretation because we did not write it. He goes on, “for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” The Scriptures were given to us by God. The Holy Spirit moved or blew upon men and they spoke from God. The Scriptures are God’s words to us.

(2 Pe 1:20–21) “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation, {21} for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

Barna’s survey showed that 62% of pastors hold to syncretism, which means they take some things from this source, and that source, and also the Scriptures, and they form their own belief system. We cannot hold the words of men and the word of God equal. The word of God is our source, and 100% of our beliefs need to come from the Scriptures. Anything that you read or hear that does not line up with the Scriptures needs to be removed from our belief system.

There are people that know the Scriptures, but it does not perform its work in them. The Pharisees and Sadducees knew the Scriptures. They did not understand the Scriptures, but they knew the Scriptures. Jesus told them, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.” The Scriptures first and foremost introduce us to God. We learn about His names, His character, His works, and His ways. It is our faith in Jesus Christ that gives us eternal life. The Scriptures in the Old Testament prophesied about the coming of Christ; they foretell Christ. They also reveal the work of God, His names, and His covenants with His people. The Old Testament gives us many word pictures of what Jesus was going to do. The Scriptures in the New Testament reveal that Christ came. Everything points to Christ, and the religious leaders missed all of this.

(Jn 5:39–40) “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; {40} and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus explained to the two men the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. At that time, it was only the Old Testament. There are some today that say that we do not need the Old Testament, particularly in evangelism. We need all of the Scriptures, and they are all profitable. We can use the Old Testament in evangelism, which is what Jesus did.

(Lk 24:27) “Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.”

That is also what Philip did with the Ethiopian eunuch. He preached Jesus to him, and led him to Christ using Isaiah 53.

(Ac 8:32–35) “Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: “He was led as a sheep to slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He does not open His mouth. {33} “In humiliation His judgment was taken away; Who will relate His generation? For His

life is removed from the earth.” {34} The eunuch answered Philip and said, “Please *tell me*, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?” {35} Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.”

God’s word is God’s word to us. He gave it to us because we need it in our lives. It is our instruction manual. In Deuteronomy 8, God tells us that we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Our souls need to be fed the word of God. Peter tells us that we need to be like newborn babies and long for the pure milk of the word so that we can grow in our faith. It is necessary food and we need to partake of it every day.

(Dt 8:3) “He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.”

(1 Pe 2:2–3) “like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, {3} if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.”

Characteristics of God’s Word

In the Scriptures, God tells us many things about His word. We do not have time to examine all of the things, but are some of them.

- **Fire and Hammer** God’s word is like fire, a hammer that shatters a rock (Jer 23:29)

(Je 23:29) “Is not My word like fire?” declares the Lord, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock?”

- **Living and Active** It is sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing (Heb 4:12)

(Heb 4:12) “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

- **Truth** (Jn 17:17)

(Jn 17:17) “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

- **Joyful** (Jer 15:16, Ps 119:111)

(Je 15:16) “Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”

(Ps 119:111) “I have inherited Your testimonies forever, for they are the joy of my heart.”

- **Perfect** (Ps 19:7)

(Ps 19:7) “The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”

- **Inspired and Profitable** (2 Tim 3:16-17)

(2 Ti 3:16–17) “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; {17} so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

- **Final** (Rev 22:18)

(Re 22:18) “I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;”

- **Eternal** (Is 40:8)

(Is 40:8) “The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.”

- **Light** (Ps 119:105)

(Ps 119:105) “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

- **Pure and Refined** (Ps 12:6)

(Ps 12:6) “The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.”

- **Effective** (Is 55:10-11)

(Is 55:10–11) “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; {11} so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.”

- **Powerful Weapon** (Eph 6:13-17)

(Eph 6:13–17) “Therefore, take up the full armor of God.... {17} And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

- **Food for our Souls** (Dt 8:3, Mt 4:4)

(Dt 8:3) “He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.”

(Mt 4:4) “But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

- **Sweet** (Ps 119:103, 19:9-10)

(Ps 119:103) “How sweet are Your words to my taste! *Yes, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!”

(Ps 19:10) “They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.”

b. What is the work of God’s Word

The Thessalonians accepted the Scriptures as God’s word that performed its work in us. When I received Christ, I was not being disciplined, and I was not part of a church where I would be fed. My life did not change. I was still a self-absorbed, fleshly, worldly, young man. My life was no different than any other non-believer. About nine months after I prayed to receive Christ, I stayed at TCU for summer school. I was allowed to fly back to Iran, where my parents lived, once a year, and I had gone home for Christmas. So, I attended summer school, and God put a strong believer named Jim in the dorm room next to mine. It did not take very long for Jim to ask about my faith, and when he heard that I had already prayed to receive Christ, he began to share with me some principles about growing spiritually. He said that I needed to read my Bible every day. Second, he said that I needed to come to the weekly Campus Crusade meetings, where I could get to know and fellowship with some other Christians, and hear some solid teaching. Third, he encouraged me to go to church every week. These were all great pieces of advice, and I began to do all three things. I had a Bible from a religion course that I had taken. It was not the NASB that I have been using most of my life. The church that I began to attend was McKinney Bible church and the pastor, Paul Young, used the NASB. Karen bought me a NASB Bible and I have used one ever since.

Jim did not teach me how to have a Quiet Time, or where to read. So, I just opened up to Proverbs and began reading. I would read eight chapters of Proverbs every day. I fell in love with Proverbs and the wisdom that Solomon shared. Then, I began to read other places in the Bible, particularly because most of the teaching I heard came from places other than Proverbs. Reading the word of God was a joy. Jeremiah wrote, “Thy words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart.” That was very true in my life. God’s word became a joy and delight in my heart. Jeremiah went on to say, “For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.” When Jeremiah ate the word of God, his life changed and he began to resemble God. He life was being transformed and he was becoming more like God. People saw the difference in Jeremiah’s life and called him by God’s name. That is what happened in my life. After I started reading God’s word, it began to perform its work in my life, and my life started changing. I began to be less selfish and self-absorbed. I laid my golf on the altar and put Christ first in my life. I stopped using foul language. My entire life began to change when I started reading God’s word. That is what the Thessalonians found out. They accepted God’s word, not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which performs its work in our lives.

(Je 15:16) “Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”

What is the work that the Scriptures do in our lives? Paul wrote that the scriptures are profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. This tells us that all the Scriptures are

profitable for teaching. We need to be teaching the word of God, not the words of men. The word of God is our authority in all matters. We are to use the word of God in reproof, or showing someone his fault or error. We are to use the word of God for correction, which is showing someone how to get back on track. We are to use the word of God for training in righteousness, which teaches people how to stay on God's path. We are to use the word of God in training people so that they are equipped for every good work. The word of God is our authority in all matters of doctrine and practice.

(2 Ti 3:16–17) “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; {17} so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

Over the years I have put together a list of ways that God's word works in our lives. We saw in Jesus' response to the religious leaders that the Scriptures point to Christ. Paul wrote to the Galatians that the Law has become a tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. He wrote the Romans that people cannot believe unless they hear, and they can't hear without a preacher. He summed up saying that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

(Rom 10:14-17) “How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? {15} And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!" {16} However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" {17} So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

(Gal 3:24) "Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

God's Word at Work

Here are some of the ways God's word works in our lives. I have lumped some of these together, even though they deserve to stand on their own.

- **Builds us up.**

(Acts 20:32) "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

- **Encourages us.**

(Rom 15:4) For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

- **Sanctifies us.**

(John 17:17) "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.

- **Gives knowledge of sin.**

(Rom 3:19-20) Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

(John 15:22) "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

- **Profits and equips us.**

(2 Tim 3:16-17) "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

- **Cleanses us.**

(John 15:3) "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

- **Gives a glimpse of the future.**

(John 16:13) "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."

- **Gives us light to see our ways.**

(Psa 119:105) "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path."

- **Warns and helps us keep from sinning.**

(Psa 119:9-11) "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word. With all my heart I have sought Thee; do not let me wander from Thy commandments. Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee."

- **Keeps our trust in God.**

(Prov 22:17) "Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge; for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, that they may be ready on your lips. So that your trust may be in the LORD, I have taught you today, even you."

- **Pierces our heart.**

(Acts 2:37) "Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?'"

- **Gives us sorrow unto repentance.**

(2 Cor 7:8-9) “For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it-- for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while--I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.”

- **Helps us grow.**

(1 Pet 2:2) “like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,”

- **It gives us wisdom, instruction, discernment, prudence and wise counsel.** Proverbs 1:1-6.

(Pr 1:1–6) “The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: {2} To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding, {3} To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity; {4} To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, {5} A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel, {6} To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.”

c. How do we accept God’s Word

1. We submit to the authority of God’s word

For us to benefit from the word of God, we must accept it as God’s word. The Thessalonians accepted the word of God as God’s word. It did not come from men, but from God, who created the heavens and the earth. We must accept it as God’s word to us. If we know that it is God’s word, we will submit our lives to the word. We will yield to its authority. When we see something in God’s word that is different than the way we think or act, we repent and ask God to apply it in our lives. If it was just the word of men, then it would be just someone else’s opinion, and we could keep doing what we wanted. That is not the case with God’s word; we must accept it and yield to its authority, because it is synonymous with yielding to God.

2. Fill our hearts and minds with God’s Word

Second, we must fill our hearts and minds with God’s word. Paul said we are not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. When I was a new believer, my life was conformed to the world. As I began to read the word, my mind started to be renewed, and my life began to be transformed. We must read, listen, memorize, meditate, and study God’s word. If we do not carve out time in our schedules and prioritize God’s word in our lives, it will not perform its work in us. The best time for you may be different than the best time for me or someone else. The important thing is for you to prioritize reading God’s word. That is what Job did; he said that he treasured God’s word more than his necessary food. Most of us do not miss meals; we should put an even higher priority on getting our spiritual food.

(Ro 12:2) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Job 23:12) “I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”

3. We apply God’s Word in our lives

Third, we must become doers of the word. It is not enough to read and study God’s word; we must apply it in our lives. James tells us not to deceive ourselves by merely being hearers of the word. He exhorted us to be doers of the word. We must apply the word of God in our lives. As we read and study the word of God, we must be looking for personal applications. How does this apply to me? How can I apply this in my life?

(Jas 1:22) “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

When I was a young believer, the Lord impressed Ezra 7:10 upon my heart. I had the distinct impression that this was my life verse. Ezra set his heart to study the law of the Lord, practice it, and teach it in Israel. For me to fulfill God’s calling on me as a teacher of His word, I had to set my heart on studying Scripture. Second, I had to become a doer of the word. I had to apply God’s word in my own life. Then, I could do the third thing, which was to teach God’s word to others. I try to give lots of personal examples because they help people apply the principles in their own lives.

(Ezr 7:10) “For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice *it*, and to teach *His* statutes and ordinances in Israel.”

In Matthew 7, Jesus spoke about two men who built houses. One of them built his house on the rock, and the other man built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came up, and the winds blew on those houses. The house on the sand fell flat, but the house on the rock stood firm, for it was founded on the rock. Jesus ended by saying, “Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them (apply them in their lives), will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.” We must build our lives on God’s word. The Thessalonians accepted God’s word for what it really is, and they were building their lives on the foundation of God’s word. We must learn from the Thessalonians and build our lives on the word, rather than the sinking sand of the wisdom of the world.

(Mt 7:24–27) “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. {25} “And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and *yet* it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. {26} “Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. {27} “The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

Conclusion

The Thessalonians received the word of God, not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which performs its work in you who believe. They accepted it, received it, and applied it to their lives. The word of God performed its work in them, and they became examples to all the churches of Achaia and Macedonia.

(1 Th 2:13) “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.”

- Have you accepted the word of God for what it really is?
- Have you submitted and yielded to the word of God?
- Are you filling your heart and mind with the word of God? Is your mind being renewed by the word of God? Is your life being transformed by the word of God?
- Is the word of God richly dwelling inside of you?
- Is the word of God performing its work in you?
- Do you have a reading plan to read through the entire word of God?
- Are you meditating on the word of God?
- Are you building your house on the rock? Do you have a biblical worldview?
- Or are you building on the sinking sand of a worldly worldview? Do you pick and choose what you want to believe in God’s word. (Syncretistic worldview)
- In response to hearing about the word of God, what would God have you do?

Closing Prayer

Father God, we live in a day when most people in the church do not receive Your word for what it really is, the word of God, which performs its work in us. Help us to receive and accept Your word like the Thessalonians. Give us a new appreciation for Your word. Give us a new commitment to fill our hearts and minds with Your word. Help us to be doers of the word, and apply Your word in our lives. May Your word perform its work in us. May our lives be transformed, and may we become more like You in our words, actions, and attitudes. You said that Your disciples will know the truth. Help us to know the truth, and to walk in truth. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

How the Thessalonians Received the Gospel – Part 1: They Received God’s Word

Introduction (1 Th 2:13-16)

- a. **What is God’s word** (1 Th 2:13, 2 Ti 3:16–17, 2 Pe 1:20–21, Jn 5:39–40, Lk 24:27, Ac 8:32–35, Dt 8:3, 1 Pe 2:2-3)

Characteristics of God’s Word

- Fire and Hammer (Jer 23:29)
- Living and Active (Heb 4:12)
- Truth (Jn 17:17)
- Joyful (Jer 15:16, Ps 119:111)
- Perfect (Ps 19:7)
- Inspired and Profitable (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- Final (Rev 22:18)
- Eternal (Is 40:8)
- Light (Ps 119:105)
- Pure and Refined (Ps 12:6)
- Effective (Is 55:10-11)
- Powerful Weapon (Eph 6:13-17)
- Food for our Souls (Dt 8:3, Mt 4:4)
- Sweet (Ps 119:103, 19:9-10)

- b. **What is the work God’s word** (Je 15:16, 2 Tim 3:16-17, Rom 10:14-17, Gal 3:24)

God’s Word at Work in us

- Builds us up (Acts 20:32)
- Encourages us. (Rom 15:4)
- Sanctifies us. (John 17:17)
- Gives knowledge of sin. (Rom 3:19-20, John 15:22)
- Profits, teaches, reproves, corrects, trains, equips us, and makes us adequate. (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- Cleanses us. (John 15:3)
- Gives a glimpse of the future. (John 16:13)
- Gives us light to see our ways. (Psa 119:105)
- Warns and helps us keep from sinning. (Psa 119:9-11)
- Keeps our trust in God. (Prov 22:17)
- Pierces our heart. (Acts 2:37)
- Gives us sorrow unto repentance. (2 Cor 7:8-9)
- Helps us grow. (1 Pet 2:2)
- It gives us wisdom, instruction, discernment, prudence and wise counsel. (Pr 1:1-6)

- c. **How do we accept God’s word** (Ro 12:2, Job 23:12, Jas 1:22, Ez 7:10, Mt 7:24–27)

1. We submit to the authority of God’s word
2. We fill our hearts and minds with God’s word
3. We apply God’s word in our lives