



1 Thessalonians 2:13-16  
From Sermon 10.17.21

Read *1 Thessalonians 2:13-16*

Review from Sunday's sermon: After addressing Church leadership for almost a chapter, the Holy Spirit now has Paul return to focus on the entire Church body and tie in Christian character to the Word of God. The result is an outline of two groups: those who handle the Word correctly and those who do not. Genuine salvation and election is not determined, defined, or revealed by human standards. It always goes back to the Scripture and the truth in them. Since Jesus is the Word made flesh, how someone handles the Bible will reveal how someone views Jesus.

1. Paul describes the Word as having two strikingly different results. Therefore, we see the truth that the Word of God is Bittersweet. What does this mean? How is it sweet to one group and yet bitter to the other? To the elect, the Word is sweet. In it is found truth, salvation, peace, and hope. To the non-elect, it is death, bad news, judgmental. To one, the Word is life. To the other, the Word is death.

See also *Ezekiel 3:1-3, Revelation 10:9, & 1 Corinthians 1:18*

2. How do you explain that both John and Ezekiel found the Word to be bittersweet? They were both believers and God's Word was life and truth. But, they knew it would not be received by their culture and predicted the wrath on the world.

2a. In what way would you experience it the same manner? Various answers. But include: We love it and need it. But, the Word also shows that many people we love now will not be saved by the Word, but judged by the Word.

3. What was the blaring evidence of the genuineness of the Thessalonian Church? Their accepting and welcoming of the Word of God as not from men, but God. See 1 Corinthians 2:14

4. Rather than the exclusive, living Word of God, what were the Jews relying on for their salvation? A self-righteousness based on religion, works, law, ceremony, and heritage.

4a. What does the modern world rely on? Most probably don't see a need for salvation or a justification with God. The few that do usually rely on an all-loving God (by their definition), that their good deeds outweigh their bad, or that they've avoided the "biggies".

4b. What are the falsehoods and flaws with that philosophy? Various answers. God doesn't demand "good" or "better". He demands perfect holiness. It's not a behavior problem. It's a heart problem caused by a dead spirit. See James 2:10 & Matthew 5:27-28

5. How does the fulfillment of God's judgment (particularly on the Jews) further solidify our faith and hope in our salvation? God repeatedly promised judgment for disobedience. And, more so on those entrusted with the most truth. God judged both kingdoms (north and south) for idolatry in the Old Testament. He judged them for rejecting Christ. It shows that God is serious and keeps His Word. If He does so in judgment, He can trust He will also do so in salvation.