"The Centrality of God's Word"
1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

C.I.T.—Paul gives thanks for the their faith in God's Word.
C.I.S.—We must view the Bible as God's Word to us.
Purpose—I want to elevate the role of Scripture in our minds.
Introduction—Deut. 8:3—We live on the Word of God.

I. Accepting the Bible as God's Word

a. Paul, Silas, and Timothy came to Thessalonica, preaching the gospel message of Jesus Christ.
    i. They started in the Jewish Synagogue.
    ii. They would have had the Old Testament, but they would not have had the New Testament.
    iii. Their message about Christ would have been a new and challenging message for these Jewish and Gentile Thessalonians.
b. The Thessalonians had two options with regards to the message the these missionaries proclaimed:
    i. This was a message from man.
    ii. This was a message from God.
c. What convinced them that it was a message from God?
    i. Unity/Logic of the Message
    ii. Historical and Archeological Evidence
    iii. Scientific Evidence
    iv. Prophetic Accuracy
    v. Quality/Passion of the Delivery
    vi. Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus
    vii. Ultimately, it was the conviction of the Holy Spirit convincing them of the truth.
    viii. John 16:8-11
d. What does accepting it as God's Word look like?
    i. Recognizes its legitimacy.
        1. 2 Peter 1:20-21
        2. The LORD spoke to prophets and apostles.
        3. They preached and taught.
        4. They wrote His word down.
        5. These writings were collected and combined to be Bible.
    ii. Recognize its veracity.
        1. John 17:17
        2. It is true, without error.
    iii. Recognize its efficacy.
        1. Hebrews 4:12
        2. Active and practical
    iv. Recognize its sufficiency.
        1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
        2. It is all we need for following Jesus and for living this life.
e. Illus.—Prank call vs. real call from the President
f. Application
    i. Once we realize and recognize that this is not merely a message from man, but from God, it changes the game.
    ii. We revere God's Word.
    iii. We respect God's Word.

iv. We respond to God's Word.

II. Applying the Bible as God's Word

a. A Faith that Saves
- i. Received/accepted—aorist, event
- ii. Present tense—those who are believing
- iii. Event with ongoing reality
- iv. Realizing God's Word leads to legitimate saving faith.

b. A Faith the Works
- i. At work in you
- ii. Refers to the ongoing work of the Bible in maturing and equipping and cleansing
- iii. This would apply individually to the believer, but also collectively to the church.
- iv. Result was that they were imitators of the churches in Judea.
- v. None of them had been in Judea or witnessed how that church did what it did.
- vi. How then did they imitate the church in Judea?
- vii. The same Word of God that was working in the church in Thessalonica had been at work in the church in Judea.
- viii. If a church follow God's Word as God's Word, and if a Christian follows God's Word as God's Word, we will look very similar regardless of when and where we are.

c. A Faith that Lasts
- i. They endured persecution at the hands of their fellow country-men.
- ii. The Judea Church endured the same.
  1. The Jews in Judea murdered Jesus and the prophets, both Old Testament, but also New Testament prophets.
  2. They Persecuted the rest of the church
  3. They did please God.
  4. The were hostile to all men—by putting hindrances to the Gospel.
- iii. They will receive and have already started to receive the reward for this opposition, the wrath of God.
- iv. The Thessalonian church will receive and has already begun to receive the blessing of endurance.
- v. It was the conviction that the Bible was God's Word that enabled them to endure.

d. A Fath that Praises
- i. Paul and his fellow Missionaries were thanking God for their conviction.
- ii. They were concerned that the difficulties of following Jesus would cause them to fall away.

e. Illus.—Parable of the Sower

f. Illus.—Parable of the houses built on rock/ sand

g. Application
- i. The life built on the Bible as God's Word will benefit from its work.
- ii. They will have a faith that saves, works, lasts, and praises.
- iii. Those who do not follow the Bible have a weak inept faith that will falter and fall at the smallest hint of opposition and distraction.

Conclusion

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- If you are going to have a strong body, you must eat healthy food regularly and you must swallow that food.
- If you are going to have a strong spirit, you must read and study God's Word and by applying it to your lives.
- At FBC, we have multiple options to study God's Word: Worship Service, Sunday School, Discipleship Classes, and in Age Graded Ministries.
- But it is up to you to partake.

Deuteronomy 8:3 He humbled you by letting you go hungry; then he gave you manna to eat, which you and your fathers had not known, so that you might learn that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

John 16:8 When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: [9] About sin, because they do not believe in me; [10] about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; [11] and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

2 Peter 1:20 Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet's own interpretation, [21] because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, [17] so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

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I. A_____ the Bible as God's Word
   a. Recognizes its _____
   b. Recognizes its _____
   c. Recognizes its _____
   d. Recognizes its _____

II. A_____ the Bible as God's Word
   a. A Faith that _____
   b. A Faith that _____
   c. A Faith that _____

d. A Faith that _____