

MESSAGE: RECEIVING THE WORD
SERIES: AWAKE MY SOUL!
TEXT: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20
Heritage Church, Van Buren, AR, May 18, 2025

Receiving the Bible as God's Authoritative Word leads to ...

1. TRANSFORMING OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRIPTURE.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 ¹³ *This is why we constantly **thank God**, because when you **received the word of God** that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the **word of God, which also works effectively in you who believe.***

Hebrews 4:12 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.*

Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

2. ENDURING OPPOSITION WITH STEADFAST FAITH

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 ¹⁴ *For you, brothers and sisters, became **imitators of God's churches** in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you have also **suffered** the same things from people of your own country, just as they did from the Jews ¹⁵ who **killed** the Lord Jesus and the prophets and **persecuted** us. They displease God and are **hostile** to everyone, ¹⁶ by keeping us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. As a result, they are constantly filling up their sins to the limit, and wrath has overtaken them at last.*

3. INVESTING IN ETERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

1 Thessalonians 2:17-20 ¹⁷ *But as for us, brothers and sisters, after we were forced to leave you for a short time (in person, not in heart), we greatly desired and made every effort to return and see you face to face. ¹⁸ So we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For who is our **hope or joy or crown of boasting** in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ Indeed **you are our glory and joy!***

Matthew 25:40: *"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."*

Maggy Barankitse -- "The Word of God shows me that these children aren't just orphans—they're my crown of rejoicing at Christ's coming. Like Paul with the Thessalonians, I ask: what is my hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not these children? Every relationship restored, every child healed, every life transformed—these are eternal investments."

Application: Intentionally invest in one relationship this week to impact this person's eternal destiny ...

Next Step: Memorize, meditate, and pray over one passage from today's message. Write it on a card or put it in your phone ...