



A RIGHT RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

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Taught at: Ridgeview Classical Schools
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SUMMARY: "A RIGHT RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD" – "How we respond to the truth of Scripture has a great deal to say about us personally, and it exposes what our real relationship with Jesus Christ is like. Paul expresses thanks in **1 Thess. 2:13** that those he taught received what he had to say as not being 'the word of men, but 'the word of God' instead. Biblical truth has always been a dividing line. At a time when Scripture is doubted and is under attack, it has never been more important than now to have a right response to God's Word."

REVIEW:

- In our last study together in **1 Thessalonians**, we considered the question "What does it mean to be blameless?"
- Our text was **Ch. 2:10-12**, and we learned about several people in God's Word that were called 'blameless.' Yet none of them were perfect; they were all subject to the universal condition of sin.
- We then examined Paul's description of himself as 'blameless.' We saw he defined this by the way he had chosen to act towards others.
- He had acted like a loving parent would act towards their children. Paul outlined 3 qualities that we must constantly pay attention to:
 - #1 - We are called to encourage other believers to meet their difficult situations with confidence.
 - #2 - We must comfort one another in their disappointments, griefs, and concerns. That requires a personal investment of our time, resources, and energy.
 - (And #3) we must urge and implore fellow believers to live in a manner 'worthy of Christ' (just as Paul did).

NOTE: Today we move on to **1 Thessalonians 2:13**, and we will learn about **"A Right Response to God's Word."** This is a phrase I'll be repeating a lot today. **(READ):**

"And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe."

A. OPENING THOUGHTS

1. The larger idea here is we **"especially** thank God." Paul's been thankful for several things so far, and he has specified each of those things up to this point.

- But here – Paul is ‘**especially**’ thankful for these new believers’ **response to God’s Word**. Paul says they received it the **right** way – “*as it actually IS, the Word of God.*”
 - Paul then goes on to describe - not only the Thessalonians' outer reception of the Word of God, but also their inner response to it.
2. Paul says in the concluding part of this verse that, “*the Word of God is at work in you who believe.*”
- Paul sets up a contrast here. A person’s right response to God’s Word will always result in doing a good work in that same person’s life. A wrong response will not.
 - **True** believers **DO** something with what they know. Their lives are controlled by the principles, values, and truth of God’s Word.
 - Put another way, a right response to God’s Word results in important personal changes, and these things should be evident to others.
3. Multiple studies in recent times have shown there are fewer and fewer people in the church who have a **right response to God’s Word**. The statistics are alarming. Here are three examples:
- **The American Worldview Inventory (2022):** Conducted by Arizona Christian University's Cultural Research Center, this study found that only **37%** of U.S. Christian pastors possess a biblical worldview.
 - Most pastors instead (**62%**) hold a hybrid belief system called “syncretism”—mixing Biblical ideas with secular cultural philosophies.
 - **The State of Theology Survey:** In a recent study by Lifeway Research, they report that significant numbers of regular churchgoers - and self-identified evangelicals - disagree with core biblical doctrines, such as the absolute authority and inerrancy of Scripture, or the divinity of Jesus Christ.
 - **Sermon Content Analysis:** According to a 2025 article in [Christian Post](#) an analysis of sermon trends noted that **93%-97%** of sermons today rarely or never explicitly mention the topic of "sin" or personal repentance.
 - This study makes several other related points which show there is a growing reluctance to confront people with challenging Biblical truth.
4. At this point, I feel the need to remind everyone of Solid Bread Community’s stance on these matters, and specifically how **we respond to God’s Word**:
- We clearly defined our position when we formed. We continue to make our position and our teaching style plain on our website and in our printed materials. There are three things we constantly emphasize:
 - **First**, we teach what IS there. We don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it IS saying.
 - **Second**, we don’t teach what is NOT there. We don’t force a passage to say something it’s not saying.

- And – **third**, if the Bible states it plainly, we should TOO. Political correctness has seldom – if ever - been an ally of truth or sound doctrine.
- By today's 'woke' and 'tolerant' standards, Solid Bread Community is politically incorrect – and I 'take a lot of heat' for that. Sometimes people even leave Solid Bread Community because they don't want to hear what the Bible **really** has to say.
- But by the grace and provisions of God, Solid Bread Community has remained faithful to Scripture. A big part of this ministry is teaching God's Word properly – I will continue to pray that I always do that.

NOTE: (And so) on that note, I think we need a reminder of the fundamentals. Our text today, in **1 Thessalonians 2:13** is about a 'right response to God's Word.' Paul makes that plain. I think this is a good reset opportunity for us. It's a great time for us to revisit some of the fundamental truths about God's Word, and why we need to have a right response to it.

A. THE CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

NOTE: The Bible is ETERNAL TRUTH. It *contains*....and it *reveals*....that eternal truth. No other source provides this to you and I. This is a **very important issue** for us to understand.

NOTE, I need to make this personal. If you cannot grasp this basic fact – or, IF you are *unwilling* to accept it - then nothing else in your Christian walk is going to make much sense to you.

- You will struggle with the Bible, and you will find yourself in constant conflict with the eternal truth that the Bible **alone** holds.
- You will struggle to have "a right response to God's Word." You will struggle when the truth of God's Word challenges the preferences and choices that you want to hold and make instead.
- God's Word is the *basis* of **everything** we need to live and conduct our lives properly – with God, and with each other. So it is here that I must further emphasize...

1. The Bible is God's divinely inspired Word to mankind. It is His personal revelation to you and I.

NOTE: I have TWO foundational points to make about this basic truth:

- **The FIRST point is: the Bible is a DIRECT reflection of its divine Author.**
 - **Now (a side note) - the word 'Bible' does not appear in the Bible.**
 - ✓ That should not raise any concerns for us. The word 'trinity' does not appear in the Bible either - nor does 'rapture.'
 - ✓ BUT, the doctrine of the trinity is sound. It is *clearly* supported in Scripture. So is the doctrine of the 'rapture,' as we will be learning in this series on **1 & 2 Thessalonians**.
 - ✓ Like the words 'trinity' and 'rapture,' 'Bible' is a term we came up with; it has become an accepted part of our vernacular.

- ✓ The term 'Bible' has been used over the centuries to refer to the 66 books of the OT and the NT.
- ✓ 'Bible' comes from the Greek word 'biblia' which literally means 'books,' or '**the** books.' It is a plural term.
- ✓ Whenever I use the terms 'Bible,' 'Scripture,' or 'God's Word,' I use those terms synonymously. They are all the same thing.

➤ **The 66 books of the Bible are ALSO known as the 'canon.'**

- ✓ This is more of a literary term. 'Canon' refers to the total *collection* of the books of the Bible, ALL of which are divinely inspired and authoritative.
- ✓ There are other literary works which were studied and greatly respected by the early church fathers. They are mentioned - and they are even quoted - in the Bible, but they are not part of the canon.

NOTE: These other literary works are sometimes referred to as the 'pseudepigrapha' or the 'apocrypha.' They include texts like The Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, the Book of Jasher, and so on. These texts were studied and respected by the apostles and the early church fathers. They are important for their historicity, but they are **not** inspired Scripture.

- ✓ (But back to the Bible): The OT is comprised of 39 individual books, and the NT contains 27 books. These total 66, and they were collectively penned by about 40 different authors over roughly 1,700 years (+/-).
- ✓ These facts – and the way each of these books affirm the others - contribute to some of the greatest evidences of the Bible's supernatural origin. As I said earlier, the Bible is divinely inspired – ALL of it!
- ✓ That means God communicated directly to a human agent. Through the personality and nuances of THAT person, God then revealed what He wanted them to write.

NOTE: Paul says in **2 Timothy 3:15-17**, *"From childhood you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you **wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness**, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

NOTE: I want to point out three things from that passage:

- a. **FIRST**, the Bible makes us '*wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*' God's Word is holy, unique, and supernatural. (And) it leads to a holy, unique, and supernatural spiritual personal transformation.
 - It's why Paul says at the end of our text today, *"the Word of God is at work in you who believe."*

- No other ordinary – or even ‘extraordinary’ – book can achieve this. It’s not possible. But the Bible **alone** changes lives for all eternity.
- That’s because it **alone** contains eternal truth that comes to us directly – and supernaturally - from God. It is “*God-breathed*.”
- That means the Bible is **meant** to be understood. This is critical.

NOTE: It necessarily follows that the Bible **always** extols truth and correct interpretations. This is not a matter of ‘personal opinion.’ I hear this all the time: “Steve, you have your opinions and I have mine.” (That’s a callous and evasive maneuver to ignore what the Bible has to say.)

- This is **not** an issue of our personal opinions. Instead, it is a matter of properly gaining from God’s Word what God intended us to gain from it.
- Since the Scriptures do not contradict themselves, will we not contradict each other when we responsibly interpret them.
- Alternative explanations which steer us away from God’s intended message are neither correct nor are they from God.
- It is man’s rules and interpretations that always render our service to God ineffective. It is ALWAYS man’s ideas and choices which erode our faith and the expressions of it.

NOTE: Matt. 15:9 says (NLT), “*Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.*” We cannot afford to compromise **a right response to God’s Word** in such tenuous and apostate times as we live in.

b. SECOND, I want you to consider that very important phrase from this passage in **2 Timothy Ch. 3:** ‘*All Scripture.*’

- Let me be very clear. It is unwise to assign more value to certain parts of God’s Word over other parts. Paul says ‘*ALL Scripture*’ is God-breathed. It all came from the same source the same way.
- Not some Scripture. Not most of it. Not just the NT. Not just the parts about the Gospel; or the miracles of Jesus; or the Great Commission; or the themes of church, love, and community.
- We are clearly and plainly instructed here. There should be no uncertainty - no questions.
- ALL of God’s Word is divinely inspired, and it’s ALL important. Even the parts that confront us where we don’t want to be confronted. There are no exceptions to this!

c. AND THEN THIRD, Paul says ALL Scripture is beneficial for four things. Here’s an easy way to remember them:

- #1, for “*teaching*” – that’s for telling us what **is** right,
- #2, for “*rebuking*” – that’s for calling out what is **not** right,
- #3, for “*correcting*” – that’s for returning us **back** to what is right, and...

- #4, for “*training in righteousness*” – that’s for growing us in the things that **are** right.
 - ✓ Now, **ONLY** through divine inspiration could **all** of Scripture be beneficial to us this way.
 - ✓ **ONLY** through divine inspiration could the Bible have been written over such a long period of time, by so many different writers, in three different languages, and still be free of error.
 - ✓ **ONLY** through divine inspiration can the Bible remain one unified book from start to end without any contradictions. If it’s properly handled, the Bible does not disagree with itself.
 - ✓ **ONLY** through divine inspiration can the Bible contain many hundreds of prophecies which have already been literally fulfilled - - **right down to the smallest detail.**
 - ✓ **ONLY** through divine inspiration will many hundreds of prophecies **still** be fulfilled the same way - just as literally as the ones before - - **right down to the smallest detail.**
 - ✓ **ONLY** through divine inspiration can the Bible change us, “*work in us,*” and transform us for all eternity.

SO, HERE’S AN IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR ALL OF US: Does our attitude towards the Bible suggest anything about our attitude towards God?

- The answer is not just “Yes,” but “ABSOLUTELY YES!” The two issues are inextricably intertwined.
- Our answer to this question not only determines how we view God, but our answer reveals how we regard His place and priority in our lives.
- Our **response to God’s Word** has an eternal impact on us. There is no way around this.
- It is therefore dangerous to our spiritual welfare to compromise the eternal truth of God’s Word, to call it something it is not, or to refuse to call it what it is.

NOTE: I know pastors and Christian leaders that claim the Bible is largely ‘poetry,’ or ‘apocalyptic literature,’ or ‘Hebrew allegory,’ or whatever. They often claim large parts of it are not meant to be understood.

- (And so) they **REFUSE** to teach it literally. They **CHOOSE** to take a wrong view of Scripture. They take liberties with the Bible that are not their place or right to take.
- They have a wrong response to God’s Word - - and that is a personal decision they make.
- As we learned, the book of **Jude** has much to say about these sorts of folks. They **SUPPRESS** the authority of Scripture – and their

statements, priorities, and behaviors demonstrate that they are in a tenuous spot spiritually.

- **Bottom line: the Bible IS a reflection of its divine author.**
 - You cannot hold God's Word in suspicion without ALSO holding God in suspicion.
 - You cannot force your own concepts of the Bible without ALSO forcing your own concepts of God.
 - You cannot disregard or look down on large parts of the Bible without disregarding or looking down on the total person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - You cannot respond to God's Word irresponsibly without responding to God irresponsibly.
 - One's view of the Bible, and one's view of God go hand-in-hand.
- **And that gets to the SECOND foundational point about the Bible being God's revelation to you and I. This is a VERY IMPORTANT point. I've already mentioned it, and that is - the Bible is MEANT to be understood:**

NOTE: Whenever I say that, I know I have irritated some folks. I know I've ruffled the feathers of certain Christian leaders. That is because I have claimed that the Bible is **meant** to be understood. They don't want to hold that view because that makes them accountable to it.

- **But think about it - this point conforms to COMMON SENSE, because...**
 - ✓ **First**, IF - as we've already learned - the Bible is intended to change lives, then **it must be understood** in order to do that.
 - ✓ **Second**, IF - as we've learned - all of the Bible seeks to tell us WHAT is right, to call out what is NOT right, to return us to what IS right, and to develop us in the things that ARE right, then **it must be understood** to accomplish that.
 - ✓ **And third**, IF - as we've also learned - the Bible is our final authority, then **it must be understood** in order for us to firmly define and adhere to God's values and standards.

NOTE: The bottom line is God WANTS to communicate to you and I! He wants a personal relationship with us, and He wants to reveal Himself to us. That is only possible if the Bible is MEANT to be understood.

Romans 10:17 says, *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."*

- ✓ God speaks to all believers through His Word, and so He intends for us to grasp what is written there.
- ✓ Admittedly, there are times that this process requires some personal dedication.

2 Timothy 2:15 says, “Be diligent to show yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

- ✓ **Two things** I want to call your attention to in this last verse.
- ✓ FIRST, it instructs us to ‘*be diligent.*’ (Translations: ‘*study.*’)
- ✓ Either way, it’s work! Sometimes it takes effort to properly study the Bible, to memorize it, and to meditate on it.
- ✓ We are enabled in the proper study of the Bible by the ministry of the Holy Spirit whom **John 16:13** says, “*guides us into all truth.*”
- ✓ The SECOND thing **2 Timothy 2:15** mentions is ‘*rightly dividing the Word of truth.*’ Putting that another way, one must study and interpret God’s Word **properly.**
- ✓ There is a right way to do that, and there are wrong ways to do that. Plenty of people choose the latter approach.
- ✓ But, understand that it is unwise and it is wrong to *willfully* approach God’s Word improperly.

SIDENOTE: We are not supposed to seek out, subscribe to, or fall under the influence of extra-biblical revelations. It is dangerous for us to color outside the lines.

- ✓ Personally, I exercise caution around those people who habitually and casually claim they are ‘hearing God’s voice.’
- ✓ (Because) With God’s Word available to us, and the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit in the equation, we have what we need to arrive at the truth.

NOTE: Now, we’ve already learned two foundational things concerning the fact that the Bible is God’s divinely inspired Word to mankind. We’ve learned two things about having a **right response to God’s Word:**

- #1, the Bible is a direct reflection of its Divine Author, and...
- #2, the Bible is meant to be understood.

B. LET’S NOW REVIEW SOME BASIC ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE:

- ...BECAUSE the Bible contains and reveals eternal truth,
- ...BECAUSE it is God’s divinely inspired Word to mankind,
- ...BECAUSE the Bible is a reflection of its Divine Author,
- ...BECAUSE the Bible supernaturally changes lives, and....
- ...BECAUSE the Bible is meant to be understood....

...then here are three key assumptions (these are ‘givens,’ – these are things that are self-evident). I want to underscore these three assumptions for a moment:

- **The first assumption is, this means the Bible is inerrant.**
 - It is without any mistakes. It contains no errors or shortcomings.

- It has never been wrong, and it never will be. That means it can be fully trusted.
- **This issue is straightforward.** The Scriptures, as we learned, are “*God-breathed*.” They come from Him directly.
- THAT is why we can trust the Bible – because we can trust God.

Numbers 23:19 says, “*God is **not human**, that he should lie, **not a human being**, that he should **change his mind**. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and **not fulfill**?”*

Isaiah 25:1 reinforces this, “*LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect **faithfulness** you have done wonderful things, **things planned long ago**.*”

- This is an important matter – especially in today’s times when it is increasingly clear that we can trust nothing and nobody.
- The Bible is inerrant. That means it is trustworthy.

- **The second assumption is, this means the Bible is complete.**

- This assumption is closely related to the first one. Think about it.
- If the Bible was not complete, then it would lack something, and that means it could not be fully trusted. Something would be missing.
- But nothing is missing in the Bible – and nothing needs to be added to it. **The Bible is complete.**
- Despite all the furor and angst we see against God’s Word – even from those in the church - it says **itself** that it will remain intact and complete, *just as it is now*.

NOTE: Matthew 5:18 says (and this is Jesus speaking), “*For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*”

- This is the well-known “*jot and tittle*” verse as other translations put it. ‘Jots and tittles’ are tiny marks or strokes that are part of the Hebrew alphabet.
- They are the smallest details, but God says even these elements are important.
- The thrust of this verse is this: the truth and content of Scripture will remain ‘as is.’ It will remain in effect until the end of this current world.
- Furthermore, adding TO the Bible or TAKING AWAY from the Bible is forbidden in Scripture. Here are a couple cases in point:

From the OT we have **Deuteronomy 4:2** which says, “*Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.*”

And in the NT, in **Revelations 22:18-19** it says, “*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues*

described in this scroll. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and the holy city, which are described in this book...."

- The implications of this second verse are particularly sobering. We need to face up to what it is suggesting.
- It suggests that one who is **'truly saved'** will be marked by having a right response to God's Word.
- That's what Paul says in **1 Thess. 2:13** – *"...you accepted it as it actually is, the Word of God."*
- People who are **truly saved** will leave God's Word 'as is.' They will not try to manipulate it or diminish it to suit cultural trends.
- They will not teach it to suit personal preferences or conform to others' expectations. But, this very thing is happening in a lot of churches right now.
- The Bible is being edited, paraphrased, chopped up, diluted, ignored, and reduced to the most *irrelevant* and *irreverent* content imaginable.
- It distresses me to see the Bible being disrespected so much today, but this is happening in many pulpits every weekend. It is mishandled and misinterpreted.
- It is not properly revered as being inspired and God-breathed. There is very little of a **right response to God's Word**.

- **The third assumption is, this means God's Word is eternal.**

- There are many efforts to get rid of the Bible, but it's not going away.
- There are many efforts to dilute and discard its truth, but God will see to it that His Word remains timeless.
- God will ensure that His divine Word accomplishes its purpose.

Psalms 119:89 says, *"Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven,"* and in **vs. 152** of that same chapter, it tells us that God established His statutes *"to last forever."*

Jesus Himself said the very same thing in **Matthew 24:35**, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."*

And in **1 Peter 1:25**, we are reminded that *"...the word of the Lord remains forever."*

- There should be no question here. In multiple passages like these, the Bible affirms this important truth: *God's Word is eternal.*
- **Why is this so important?** It means the Scriptures possess absolute stability, perpetual immutability (meaning: it will not change), and enduring relevancy.
- And so, you can 100% rely on the Bible. It shows divine authorship.
- It came from God Himself, and so we can 100% rely on HIM! God's Word is eternal and we need to **have a right response to it**.

NOTE: There are some natural conclusions resulting from these things we've learned. Here are two:

- **FIRST, this means we are accountable to ALL of God's Word.**
 - You may choose to disagree with the Bible. That's your battle with God, but it's not a battle you will win. We will all answer to God.
 - You may doubt its veracity, ignore parts of it, or diminish the importance of certain doctrines or themes – but that's a bad position to get yourself into.
 - At the end of the day, you are accountable to ALL of God's Word. It is the final authority in your life – whether you like that or not.
 - You may not want those terms and conditions, but those things are not up to you. That's God's decree.
 - You need to believe ALL of the Scriptures – not just parts of them. That's not showing a **right response to God's Word** - - or to God!
- **The SECOND natural conclusion from these assumptions is this: the Bible will be attacked.**
 - Now, the Bible does indeed warn us about attacks we will face from the *outside* - - from the “big, bad, awful world out there.”
 - For example, Jesus says in **John 15:18**, *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”*
 - And **Romans 1:18** warns that we WILL face the *“godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness.”*
 - So, certainly, the “big bad awful world out there” will attack the truth of Scripture. That's a given. We can all see that.
 - Those who have rejected Jesus Christ want nothing to do with Him.
 - They want no reminder of Him, or His values, or His order of things. They don't want His followers having any influence or say.
 - But God's Word also warns us over and over – maybe even MORE - about the attacks that will come from the *inside*.
 - That means from *inside* the church, *inside* our fellowships, *inside* our Bible Studies, *inside* our families, *inside* our circle of Christian friends, etc.
 - This happens the most whenever sound Biblical truth is taught. This happens when folks are confronted in ways they don't want to be.

NOTE: And most of the time (and as I said before), this problem starts from **within** a body of believers – from **within** our fellowships and our churches....

Jude 1:4 pulls no punches about this matter. It says, *“For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”*

2 Peter 2:1 affirms the same thing. It reads, *“Now there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies....”*

Paul, in his farwell to the Ephesians, wrote in **Acts 20:29**, *“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.”*

Jesus reiterates the very same thing in **Matthew 7:15**. He said, *“Beware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.”*

We can easily see WHERE these attacks are coming from. They are coming from the *inside*. They are coming from folks who claim to be part of the Christian faith.

(And) in **2 Corinthians 11:13**, Paul drills down a bit more on WHO these kinds of people are. He calls them *“...false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ.”*

There are many passages like these - all of them warning about attacks and assaults **from the inside**. I’ll bring to your attention one more.

- Peter puts a spotlight on a **very specific symptom** that we can see with these ‘ravenous wolves,’ these ‘false apostles,’ these ‘ungodly people’ and these ‘false prophets.’
- It’s a symptom that **distinguishes** those who are poorly grounded in God’s Word. It’s something we can easily spot in those who are self-serving.
- They attack the integrity of Scripture. More specifically, they attack the prophetic themes of Scripture. Peter says in **2 Peter 3:3-4....**

“Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. “Where is the promise of His coming?” they will ask. “Ever since our fathers fell asleep, everything continues as it has from the beginning of creation.”

- What MARKS these people – these ‘ravenous wolves,’ these ‘false apostles,’ and these people who are not as well-grounded in the faith as they **think** they are, is this: they MOCK or SCOFF at Bible prophecy.
- They diminish it. Bible prophecy is not important to them. This is a quality many of them share. (And) the Bible specifically warns us of this dynamic.
- They mock the literal interpretation of Bible prophecy, and so they mock and doubt the pre-Tribulation Rapture.
- They mock the importance of ‘eschatology’ (doctrines of the End Times), and they scoff at those who give proper attention to these issues.
- What ALSO brands these people is the fact that they focus instead on ‘everything continuing as it has.’

- What's important to them instead is **today's** routines. They focus on 'right here right now.' They lack a responsible Bible-based future understanding.
- Peter says these kinds of people are fixated instead on their own selfish ambitions. It's a worldly mindset, and he calls these things '*evil desires*.'
- In other words, they are focused on the temporary. They have become dangerously conformed to this world and to its ideas and passions.
- And because they don't have a **right response to God's Word** which keeps them from scoffing at it, or keeps them from doubting it, they are unable to hide their true spiritual condition – they admit this in their own words.

WRAPPING UP WITH A COUPLE OF COMMENTS:

1. Whatever skeptics or apostates may say or think about God's Word, that does not change its true nature.

- A.W. Tozer once said, "What we think about God is the most important thing about us."
- Since God's Word is a direct reflection of its Divine Author, our thoughts and attitudes about God are explicitly reflected in our thoughts and attitudes about the Bible.
- It is terribly important that we have a **right response to God's Word**. It's a key indicator of our **right relationship with Jesus Christ**.

2. There is a big difference between hearing God's Word - and believing and acting on it.

- A lot of people in many churches today will "*come as they are, sing five stanzas of 'Just As I Am,' and leave just as they were.*"
- It is critical that we be found to be **good soil**, and that means we need to have a **right response to God's Word**.
- In **Luke 8:15**, it says, "*But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who **hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.***"
- In this parable of the Sower, Jesus says it was in this latter group that the message of God's Word was confirmed. It showed an active power in the lives of its recipients.
- They retained it. They persevered. They had a **right response to God's Word**, and that is because they were **good soil**.
- Paul says in **1 Thess. 2:13** that "*the Word of God is at work in you.*" He could see that these new believers were **good soil**; the results were evidence of this.
- Their lives had changed because they had a **right response to God's Word**.

NEXT WEEK: Our lesson will be "**Suffering For the Cause of Christ.**" Our text will be the next few verses in **1 Thessalonians Ch. 2**, and we'll see why God allows this suffering and persecution to take place. He has a purpose behind it all....



**SOLID
BREAD**

Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God's Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don't pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don't teach what is NOT there. Don't force a passage to mean something it really doesn't.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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