

Week of September 25, 2016

1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

¹³ And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. ¹⁴ For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind ¹⁶ by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!
(English Standard Version)

1. When did you first understand and receive the word of God? How have you seen it at work in your life?

2. The contrast in verse 13 is between the word of God and the word of men. What is the difference, and how can we tell?

3. What does this say about the message that Paul and the others with him were proclaiming? What does this mean for you, the church?

4. How might the way the believers responded to the word of God and the persecution they were facing be related?

5. What type of faith is required for someone to continue to believe in spite of hostility and persecution? How do you think your faith would stand up under persecution?

6. Paul says that they “became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus”. How does that impact the way you feel when you face any persecution?

7. In Matthew 5:11–12 Jesus says we are ‘blessed’ when we are insulted and persecuted and that we should ‘rejoice and be glad’. How is it possible to ‘rejoice’ when we are threatened and ill-treated by those who hate Christ?

8. Any other thoughts or insights from this passage?
