

“Shaped by Scripture”

“**The IKEA Instructions**”- Have you ever bought a big piece of IKEA furniture and opened the box with confidence, thinking, “*I’ve built stuff before—I got this*”? So you start putting it together your own way, skipping steps, assuming you’ll figure it out as you go.

An hour later, you’re surrounded by leftover screws, a wobbling frame, and something that was supposed to be a bookshelf, but now looks like modern art called “*Confusion*.”

Then someone who read the instructions walks in, looks at it, and gently says, “**You were supposed to follow this step-by-step the whole time.**”

And in frustration you finally admit, “**This would’ve been a lot easier if I just followed what was already given.**”

Many of us approach Scripture the same way, we trust instincts first, culture second, emotions third... and then wonder why life feels unstable when God already gave us the instruction for stability.

That’s why this message is called “**Shaped by Scripture.**”

Because everyone is being shaped by something, emotions, opinions, culture, experiences but only one foundation correctly forms us, and that is the Word of God.

Every day, voices compete for our attention, but if we are not careful, the very thing we need most becomes the thing we neglect most. Yet nothing has the power to transform, strengthen, and align our lives like Scripture when it is received with openness and consistency.

Acts 17:10–12 – ¹⁰ As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. ¹² As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

In **Acts 17**, Paul and Silas arrive in Berea after being pushed out of Thessalonica. Same message. Same gospel. Same truth, but a very different response.

Scripture says they were “more noble.” That means they didn’t respond with indifference or suspicion. Instead, they leaned in with **expectation**, **examined** the Scriptures daily, and received the Word with **eagerness**.

They show us what it looks like when people don’t build life their own way, but instead slow down, open the instruction, and allow themselves to be shaped by Scripture.

Will we allow Scripture to shape us?

This passage becomes a mirror. It doesn't just show what they did, it exposes how we respond to God's Word today.

Do we approach Scripture with hunger or distraction? Expectation or familiarity?
Openness or resistance?

The Bereans weren't defined by status, but by posture: They said, in essence, ***"God, if You're speaking, I want to hear it."***

I. A HEART THAT LEANS WILL BE SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE

The Bereans were called "more noble," from the Greek word ***eugenēs***, meaning open-minded, generous in spirit, and ready to receive truth.

They came without suspicion, argument, or agenda. They came with humility and hunger. They leaned in rather than pulling back.

In **Nehemiah 8**, the people stood attentively for hours as the Word was read, and revival followed.

We don't accidentally become spiritually hungry, we choose it. We prepare our hearts, remove distractions, and position ourselves to receive.

"A closed heart misses what an open heart receives."

II. A HEART THAT IS EAGER WILL BE SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE

The Greek word ***prothymia*** describes readiness, anticipation, and desire.

The Bereans didn't casually listen, they leaned in expecting God to speak. Today we have unprecedented access to Scripture, apps, sermons, devotionals, teaching, but access does not equal appetite.

The issue is not availability, it is desire.

We must ask: Have distractions weakened our hunger? Has familiarity replaced expectancy?

III. A HEART THAT EXAMINES WILL BE SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE

The Bereans didn't stop at hearing, they examined. The Greek word ***anakrinō*** means to investigate carefully and evaluate thoroughly.

They didn't blindly accept everything, nor did they dismiss it without thinking. They studied the Word for themselves.

Balance they carried:

- Not blind acceptance
- Not careless rejection
- But intentional examination

Early church devotion in **Acts 2, 6, and 20** shows Scripture as central, not secondary.

Application:

Spiritual maturity is not emotional response; it is rooted understanding that leads to obedience.

IV. HEARTS THAT ENGAGE SCRIPTURE WILL BE TRANSFORMED

“As a result, many believed.”

When Scripture is truly received, transformation follows. The Word is alive and active **Hebrews 4:12**. It penetrates, convicts, and produces change.

Jesus in **Matthew 4** modeled this, responding to temptation with Scripture and overcoming every attack.

The Word is powerful, but it requires engagement. A neglected Word produces a stagnant heart; a received Word produces a changed life.

V. GOD’S WORD DEMANDS A RESPONSE

The Bereans didn’t just hear, they acted. **James** reminds us not to be hearers only, but doers of the Word.

A powerful example is Josiah in **2 Kings 22**. When the Word was read, he didn’t delay, he responded immediately with repentance and reform.

Every encounter with Scripture demands a decision. The question is not only **“What did I hear?”** but **“What will I do with what I heard?”**

CONCLUSION: THE CALL TO HUNGER

There are two groups of people: those who casually hear and remain unchanged, and those who eagerly receive and are transformed.

The difference is not access, it is response.

A neglected Word leads to a stagnant life. A pursued Word leads to a shaped life.

God is inviting us back to hunger, back to consistency, back to surrender.