

The Divine Design for Edification

A 2-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®
Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

This study explores the divine design behind God's Word and its effectual working in the life of every member of the Church, the Body of Christ. Drawing from 1 Thessalonians 2:13 as the theme verse for the 1999 Northern Rocky Mountain Berean Bible Camp, Keith Blades examines what it means for God's Word to "effectually work" — not merely effectively, but in a final, conclusive, and irreplaceable way — within the inner man. Through examples drawn from Job, Jeremiah, Paul's epistles, and the Thessalonians themselves, believers are equipped to understand how the specific doctrines of Romans through Philemon are designed to renew the mind, produce willing hearts, and generate conduct that is genuinely God-honoring and God-glorifying.



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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	The Nature and Design of God's Effectual Word
Lesson 2	Doctrine in Action — Examples of the Effectual Working

Lesson Summaries

L1

The Living Words of the Living God *Understanding the Effectual Working of Scripture*

The Living Words of the Living God — Understanding the Effectual Working of Scripture

- 1999 Northern Rocky Mountain Berean Bible Camp theme verse: 1 Thessalonians 2:13 — Paul's thanksgiving that the Thessalonians received the Word of God not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God, which effectually works in those who believe it
- The Thessalonians: the "model church" — their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope were entirely produced by God's Word effectually working within them, not by nature, upbringing, or education

Effectual vs. Effective

- "Effectual" = final, conclusive, cannot be improved upon, and is not to be substituted for — God never uses the word "effective" of His own works; His provision is always effectual
- "Effective" = merely successful in accomplishing a purpose; the world offers effective substitutes for every doctrine God has given, but none are effectual
 - Examples: peace from the world vs. peace from Christ (John 14:27); psychological tools vs. the Word for handling tribulation; social motivation vs. doctrine for ambassadorship

Man Created for Godliness (Genesis 1:26)

- God created man in His own image for godliness — a three-part design: (1) thinking like God does, (2) doing things God's way, (3) laboring with God in what He is doing
- God's Word is designed to fit into that created makeup like a hand in a glove, producing functional life unto God's honor and glory
 - Spirit → thinking like God | Soul → doing things God's way | Body → laboring with God in His work

Scriptural Examples of the Word's Design

- Matthew 4:4 — "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" — the Lord's declaration of the Word's design to produce functional life
- John 6:63 — "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" — designed to operate in the human spirit and produce life; contrasted with the flesh which "profiteth nothing"
- Jeremiah 15:16 — Jeremiah's stability against persecution was restored when he consumed God's words: "Thy word was the joy and rejoicing of mine heart"
- Job 23:12 — "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" — the right valuation of the Word that allowed Job to withstand the psychological pressure of his three friends
- Hebrews 4:12 — The Word is "quick and powerful" — not merely alive, but fully functional; able to divide soul from spirit, operating with precision in the inner man
 - Note: Hebrews is written TO Israel's remnant, but this verse illustrates the operational design of God's Word as it works within the inner man

Two Stages of the Effectual Working (Philippians 2:12–13)

- Stage 1 — "to will": the doctrine renews the mind and makes a believer genuinely willing to do what God desires
- Stage 2 — "to do": the doctrine teaches how to carry it out in a way that honors and pleases God
 - Every doctrinal issue covered in the series follows this two-stage pattern: ambassadorship, the walk, personal tribulation, local church, and heavenly conversation

L2

Doctrine in Action *Specific Doctrines and Their Designated Effectual Purpose*

Doctrine at Work — Specific Doctrines and Their Designated Effectual Purpose

- Ephesians 3:20 — "According to the power that worketh in us" — the power

is not mystical; it is the living words of the living God effectually operating within the believer's inner man

- God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think — there is no circumstance in which His Word cannot effectually work and produce a God-honoring, God-glorifying response

The Battle of Imaginations (2 Corinthians 10:3–5)

- The warfare is not carnal — it is the casting down of imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God
- The believer's greatest enemy is his own imagination: how circumstances appear vs. what God's Word declares to be true
- Reckoning (Romans 6) — counting God's Word to be true and operating upon it regardless of what circumstances suggest; this is the obedience of Christ

Examples of Doctrine and Its Designated Effectual Purpose

- 1 Corinthians 4:8–14 — designed to make a believer willing to be a "fool for Christ," to be despised and defamed, rather than seeking social acceptance in the world
 - The Corinthians blended doctrine with worldly philosophy to remain "honorable" in Corinthian society — Paul's contrast: "We are fools for Christ, but ye are wise in Christ" (v. 10)
- 2 Corinthians 5:1–8 — designed to produce not only confidence that death brings the believer into the Lord's presence, but willingness to die for the cause of Christ
 - Most believers benefit only from the death-and-presence truth; Keith notes this is about one-tenth of the passage's full effectual design
- Romans 12:3–8 + 1 Corinthians 12:13–27 — designed to teach a believer to love as God loves, by renewing the mind away from natural selfish love toward selfless, body-conscious love for fellow members of the Church
 - Every word of the body analogy in 1 Corinthians 12 is designed to effectually work within a believer and produce the mind that cherishes others more than self (cf. Philippians 2:5–8)

The Gospel — God's Effectual Power unto Salvation

- Romans 1:16 — "The gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" — the one portion of the Word designed specifically to save from the debt and penalty of sin
- Romans 1:18–3:26 — the complete gospel: (1) man's guilt and deserved wrath, (2) the human impossibility of self-rescue, (3) God's free gift through Christ's substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection
- Believing in Jesus = trusting Him completely to do what the sinner cannot do for himself — the only condition is full persuasion of the sufficiency of Christ's finished work
- Romans 5:1–2 — the first thing God desires to effectually work in a newly justified believer: peace with God, access into grace, and rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Effectual vs. Effective

Throughout both lessons, Keith draws a critical distinction between what is "effective" and what is "effectual." Something effective merely succeeds in accomplishing a designated purpose. Something effectual is final, conclusive, cannot be improved upon, and is not to be substituted for. God's Word is always effectual — never merely effective. This distinction is foundational to the entire series: for every doctrine God has given in Romans through Philemon, the world and Satan's policy of evil offer effective substitutes. But only God's Word accomplishes the effectual, God-designed result.

Two Stages of Doctrinal Effectual Working

Keith consistently identifies two stages in the effectual working of God's Word, drawn from Philippians 2:12–13: God works in believers "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Stage one ("to will") is the mind-renewal stage — the doctrine changes the way the believer thinks and makes him genuinely willing to do what God desires. Stage two ("to do") is the instruction stage — the doctrine teaches how to carry it out in a God-honoring way. Both stages are present in every Pauline doctrine, and both are necessary for the Word to accomplish its full effectual purpose.

The Specific Design of Each Doctrine

Keith teaches that every doctrine in Romans through Philemon has a specific, identifiable, designated purpose — it is not interchangeable with other passages. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 are designed to teach selfless love for fellow members of the Body of Christ. Second Corinthians 5:1–8 is designed to produce willingness to die for the cause of Christ. First Corinthians 4:8–14 is designed to produce willingness to be a fool for Christ. A believer who cannot identify what a doctrine is specifically designed to accomplish has not yet allowed it to effectually work within him — and should not substitute any other motivation in its place.

Key Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 2:13	1999 Northern Rocky Mountain Berean Bible Camp theme verse — God's Word effectually working in believers as they receive it in faith
Philippians 2:12–13	God works in believers both to will and to do His good pleasure — the two stages of effectual working
Matthew 4:4	Man does not live by bread alone but by every word from God — the Word's design to produce functional life
John 6:63	Christ's words are spirit and life — operating in the human spirit in contrast to the flesh which profits nothing
Genesis 1:26	Man created in God's image for godliness — thinking like God, doing things God's way, laboring with Him
Job 23:12	I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food — the right valuation of God's Word

Jeremiah 15:16	Thy word was the joy and rejoicing of mine heart — the Word's effectual stability against persecution
Hebrews 4:12	The Word is quick and powerful, dividing soul from spirit — illustrating the operational design of Scripture
Ephesians 3:20	The power that worketh in us — God's Word, not mystical activity, is the source of His exceeding work in believers
2 Corinthians 10:3–5	Casting down imaginations — the warfare of the mind between God's declared truth and circumstances-based thinking
Romans 1:16–3:26	The Gospel of Christ — God's effectual power unto salvation for every one that believes
Romans 12:3 / 1 Cor. 12:13–27	Doctrines designed to renew the mind toward selfless, body-conscious love for fellow members of the Church

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