



WOW: Word Of the Week

Receptivity

April 23, 2025

Christians want people to listen as we share eternal Good News. We seek to be attractive. We try the latest “gizmos and gadgets.” We try to engage people—often to see them take the “candy” and go away unchanged. The spiritual harvest fields of Latin America are receptive. What does that mean? Why? How? Just thinking....what could we learn?

Begin in Scripture. Mark 1:5, “All the land of Judea went out to him, along with those of Jerusalem, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.” Early in Mark, you know the context, you know your Bible. This is not a description of Jesus. This is John the Baptist.

Wow! Was he ever different! He was called to prepare the way for the Messiah-Christ. He spoke to people who had given up hope. They were not sure the Messiah would ever come. Why did people go out to hear him? Perhaps because he was of the priestly lineage—he had background, authority. His was a fresh voice. Perhaps they felt obligated to go hear him. But that is not the entire story.

He was bold, speaking truth in a culture that could get you killed – which is exactly what happened to John when he told a political ruler that his marriage was illegal. John the Baptist dressed funny, ate weird stuff. Different. He aroused curiosity. And—he was wildly popular—and effective.

Receptivity is not in externals. Not in fine buildings, popularity, eloquence, enjoyable experiences. John prepared people for Jesus’ coming – the same task we have today. He for Jesus’ first coming—we for Jesus’ second coming. Some of John’s hearers had concluded that the Messiah would not come in their lifetime. Sound familiar? Some rejected his message. Sound familiar? We today are called to speak truth in a culture where many have decided there is no such thing as objective truth.

Receptivity involves preparing hearts, inserting truth kernels, planting, watering, depending on God to give the increase. Receptivity comes from staying on message—like John. From speaking unpopular truths. Expecting rejection. Rejoicing in God’s powerful harvest. Believing Jesus’ promise. Following Jesus’ instructions.

The fields are white unto harvest. Pray for the harvest, pray for harvest workers. If those sent are not harvest workers, there is little chance that the harvest will be reaped. The harvest fields remain unharvested, often the fields remain unseen.

Receptivity in the local church? In the US? How many spiritual conversations have been had in the last week? How many people have been engaged spiritually? How diligently are we seeking receptive people? What would our prayers reveal? If we are not looking for receptivity, there is little chance that we will find it.

Know this! God will bless us as we seek to follow him in his mission to this world!