



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

ACTS 17

Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey (Part-11)

Wednesdays
7.30-8.30PM

Mission work in Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens

Thessalonica (1-9): What does “as was his custom or as is manner was” say about Paul? What was Paul’s approach in preaching and communicating the gospel? What does “**Jesus is Christ**” mean and why is it important to emphasize? How was the response? What did they accuse Paul of? Why did Jason suffer?

Berea (10-15): What was unique about Berean Jews? What can we learn from Bereans? How was the message received in Berea?

Athens (16-34): Where all did Paul preach? What was Paul’s reaction on seeing idol worship? How should we react to ‘biblically’ wrong practices in our society? What was unique about Athenians? What is Paul’s preaching style? How does Paul introduce God, and how does it counter idol worship? What was the reaction to Paul’s message? Are people still worshipping ‘unknown Gods’, and why?

Personal Reflection: *Paul was grieved by the sin of idols in Athens and did something about it ... How about us? What should be our response to the spiritual darkness all around us?*

Acts 17

09.30.2020



In Thessalonica (verses 1-9)

What does “as was his custom or as is manner was” say about Paul?

What was Paul’s approach in preaching and communicating the gospel?

What does “Jesus is Christ” mean and why is it important to emphasize to Jews?

How was the response? What did they accuse Paul of?

Why did Jason suffer?

Thessalonica

- What does “as was his custom or as is manner was” say about Paul?
 - Natural for Paul to preach ... always ready with a word ... always on a mission!
 - Preached boldly in synagogue (Acts 9:20, 13:5,14; 14:1)

“Preach the word; be prepared in-season and out of season” II Timothy 4:2

- What was Paul’s approach in communicating the gospel?
 - “Reasoned” with them using scriptures (2)
 - Preached coming of Christ to die and rise again (was prophesied)
 - **Concludes** - Jesus is Christ (how else could we complete it? Jesus is ...)

An Important Truth ... Jesus is CHRIST

CHRIST

- From Greek word, *Christos*, and means the 'anointed' or 'chosen' one
Hebrew equivalent word – *Mashiach* – Messiah

**CHRIST HAS ARRIVED, BEEN CRUCIFIED/BURIED/RESURRECTED
...and CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN!**

- Jesus prophesied as Christ (Psalms 22, Isaiah 53/61)
- Jesus claimed to be Christ (Luke 4:17-21)
- Peter recognized Jesus as Christ (Mathew 16:16)
- Jesus is the anointed one and Messiah that Jews have been waiting for
- Why did Jews fail to recognize Christ as their Messiah?

Response to Paul's message

- **Mixed response**
 - Many believed (Jews, great multitude of devout Greeks, prominent women)
 - Unbelieving Jews stirred trouble by inciting riots and violence against Paul & Silas (as before Acts 13:45,50, Acts 14: 2,5,19)
 - Accused them of 'turning the city upside down'! (great complement) and calling Jesus as King
- Jason attacked as he was hosting Paul & Silas
 - Jason asked to post bond/security to guarantee peace
- In the night, believers sent Paul & Silas away
 - Paul on the run again (Acts 9:25)



In Berea (10-15)

What was unique about Berean Jews?

What can we learn from Bereans?

How was the message received in Berea?

Berea

- Again, they begin in synagogue
- Berean Jews
 - Received message with eagerness
 - Verified to see if what Paul was saying was true
 - Many believed (Jews, Greek men, and prominent Greek women)
- Like Bereans, are we eager to learn and do we check the preacher's message?
- Jews came from Thessalonica to stir opposition! Paul on the run again
Timothy & Silas stay back and will follow soon.

Word of God is The Truth

- Paul **REASONED** in Thessalonica
- Paul's message **RECEIVED but VERIFIED** in BEREIA

- **HOLY BIBLE IS THE TRUTH**

Bible is able to challenge and satisfy any sincere skeptic and
is able to withstand any reasonable test of reliability



In Athens (16-34)

Where all did Paul preach? What was Paul's reaction on seeing idol worship? How should we react to 'biblically' wrong practices in our society? What was unique about Athenians? What is Paul's preaching style? How does Paul introduce God, and how does it counter idol worship? What was the reaction to Paul's message? Are people still worshipping 'unknown Gods', and why?

Paul at Athens

- What was Paul's reaction on seeing idol worship?
 - Distressed (16) on seeing idols
 - (Nehemiah 1:3, cried for broken walls of Jerusalem; Luke 19:41, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem)
 - Lord needs to open our eyes to see the idols around us
 - Paul prompted to reason and preach about the true God, Jesus and his resurrection (18)

Paul at Athens

- Where all did Paul preach?
 - In Synagogue and the market place ... **what is the 'marketplace' for us?**
 - There are more "lost" people in the market place (hence need more outreach)
 - Paul could address different audiences effectively (a great gift!)

Reaction:

He was called a 'babbler', accused of bringing 'foreign Gods'(18) ... but some wanted to learn more about this 'new thing' (20)

Speaks on Mars Hill, Athens, Greece



Paul's great sermon on Mars Hill

Who is God? ... creator, sustainer, judge
... how do we respond to such a God?

- Creator – only one God behind all of creation (24) (Genesis 1)
- He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth (24) (Supreme God)
- Does not reside in temple made by hands (24)
- Does not need anything from man ... Instead, He gives (25)
- Adam (one blood) is the source of all nations (26)
- Man is designed to seek God (27)
- Need for repentance (30)
- God will judge ... resurrected to return again (31)

(Paul captures Genesis to Revelation ... creation to final judgement!)

Our God is a Jealous God ... we cannot worship Idols

- **EXODUS 34:14** For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God:
- **ISAIAH 42:8** I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.
- **Psalms 115:4-8** ... on the vanity of idols and idol worshippers
- **Greatest Idol for man in 21st century** ... **Money** (Jesus warned, we cannot worship God and Money, Mathew 6:24)
- **Hurdles to spiritual life** ...ungodly use of **Time, money, relationships** (no time for heavenly feast, Luke 14:15-24)

Reaction to Paul's great message on Mars Hill

- Mocked 😞 (32), Need more time to consider (32), Some believed (34)
 - **Even today, the reaction is very similar when we preach the gospel ... fear of rejection often prevents us from sharing our faith**

Mathew 10:32, 33 (NIV) Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. **But whoever disowns me** before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven

How about us? ... are we acknowledging God or disowning God ?

Are people still worshipping an “unknown” God? Why?

YES

We are created to attain satisfaction only after we find God ...
Unbelievers have substituted 'true God' with all kinds of Idols.

“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and
our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.” Augustine