

Series "God At Work" Book of Acts
"Gospel Reception or Rejection"
Acts 17:1-15
Study-31

Acts 16 records that the masters of a girl who was a slave, who was demon-possessed, were angry when she was set free from Satan **Acts 16:19**

Rejection - Acts 17:5; Acts 17:13

Acts 17 describes Paul's ministry in three cities: **Thessalonica, Berea**, and **(Next Study) Athens**, and how some of the people in those cities responded to the Word of God.

Thought of our Passage: "The Gospel Message Will Be Received Or Rejected, There Is No Neutrality, Either We're For Christ Or Against Him."

1. Verses 1-9 Paul in Thessalonica

2. Verses 10-15 Paul in Berea

1. Verses 1-9 Paul in Thessalonica:

Acts 17:1 Now – Context - when they had traveled - Paul, Timothy and Silas have just left Philippi. It was the first city in Europe to have the Gospel preached.

through Amphipolis (33 miles south of Philippi) **and Apollonia** - He left Philippi and went the Egyptian way.

Athens – an **Intellectual Center**; **Corinth** – a **Commercial Center**; **Ephesus** – a **Political Center**. Through reaching these centers, the other cities would be reached.

they came to Thessalonica (Today Thessaloniki) (37 miles southwest of **Apollonia**) From Philippi to Thessalonica is 100 miles. Capital of the province of Macedonia.

Thessalonica was a center for business, rivaled only by Corinth.

Paul would establish a church to which he would write two letters, **1 & 2 Thessalonians**. Paul was only there for a short time, but it was long enough for God to do a great work. **Acts 17:2**, It was a city steeped in idolatry. **1 Thessalonians 1:9**

where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Philippi, 100 miles away, did not have a synagogue.

Verses 2-4 Acceptance of The Gospel: Acts 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths Paul would

always go to the Jews first. Because if Paul had gone to the Gentiles first, the Jews would then close him out.

for three Sabbaths - This was the window of opportunity in the synagogue.

Paul was a tentmaker by trade **Acts 18:3; 1 Thessalonians 2:9, 13**

There are four things we can learn from Paul's approach in Thessalonica:

1. (Verse 2) Paul Reasoned: reasoned with them from the Scriptures, reasoned – English root word “dialogue” *“to say thoroughly, discuss, Paul dialogued with them through questions and answers. (Exhortation).*

from the Scriptures all they had was the OT Scriptures. **Isaiah 55:11; Hebrews 4:12**

2. (Verse 3) Paul Explained: explaining (“opening”) *“to open thoroughly, the Scriptures to them,” lit. (to expound) Exposition (Clarity and Simplicity) – You explain historically, give meaning, then give application to life. Expository Teaching –*

3. (Verse 3) Paul Gave Evidence: and giving evidence means *“to lay down alongside, to prove by presenting the evidence.”* OT passages: **Psalms 22; Isaiah 53**

“The New Testament Is In The Old Concealed, While The Old Testament Is In The New Revealed.”

that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, (Psalm 16:10) In the sermons in Acts, emphasis is on the Resurrection, for the believers were called to be witnesses of His resurrection (**Acts 1:21-22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32**).

4. (Verse 3) Paul Preached Christ: proclaiming - Paul was careful to announce (“preach”) **and saying, “This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.”** That Jesus was the Savior, God’s Son. From Scripture and by historical fact.

Acts 17:4

Acceptance of the Gospel: And some of them (Jews) **were persuaded** *to convince (by argument, true or false).*

along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. There was a large mixed multitude. Greeks and leading women.

Verses 5-9 Rejection of The Gospel: Acts 17:5

But the Jews, becoming jealous - They were jealous over the conversion of these people to the Christian faith. **Romans 11:13-14;**
1 Thessalonians 2:16

wicked men from the market place - Literally – "*Market place loafers*"

Acts 17:6 "These men who have upset the world have come here also; Literally "*These men have turned the world upside down.*"

Acts 17:7 another king, Jesus." The Jews' accusations were similar to the ones used at the trial of Jesus: disturbing the peace and promoting treason **Luke 23:2**

another king, The Greek word translated "**another**" means "*another of a different kind,*" that is, a king unlike Caesar. Of course, our Lord's kingdom is neither political nor "of this world" **John 18:36-37**

Acts 17:8 They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. They got the city officials involved, and no doubt said it involved their positions.

Acts 17:9 He posted bail and promised that Paul would not come back.
1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

2. Verses 10-15 Paul in Berea:

Acts 17:10 The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea;

Berea: This is 45 miles southwest of Thessalonica.

they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Same pattern as before to the Jews first.

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded "*generous-minded*" literally "*a better breed than those in Thessalonica.*" These were people who were thinkers.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

Three Qualities Of The Bereans That Every Believer Should Imitate:

1. Receiving The Word With Great Eagerness: for they received the word with great eagerness,

2. Examining The Scriptures: Examining the Scriptures - The word **Examining** – "*scrutinize, investigate, interrogate, determine, ask, question, discern, judge, search*"

3. Examining Daily The Scriptures: daily, to see whether these things were so.

Acts 17:12 Therefore (They Studied) **many (Jews) of them believed**, They were eager to receive; they were open, and they studied to see if these things were so.

along with a number of prominent Greek women and men. One of the men who was converted was Sopater, who later assisted Paul (**Acts 20:4**). He may be the same man (Sosipater) who later sent greetings to the Christians in Rome (**Romans 16:21**).

Rejection of the Gospel: Acts 17:13 The hatred and jealousy continue 45 miles to Berea, and they are stirred up.

Acts 17:14 They would later join up in Athens (**1 Thessalonians 3:1-2**)

Acts 17:15 brought him as far as Athens; About 300 miles.

Luke had been left behind in Philippi; **Silas** and **Timothy** remained in Berea. Paul would now go alone to Athens.

Application:

Paul In Thessalonica - Reasoned, Explained, Proved, Proclaimed:

Paul In Berea – The Jews Eagerly Received The Message, Examined The Scriptures, Examined The Scriptures Daily: **1 Peter 2:2**

2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God Note: All Scripture not some, not most, but all!

profitable for teaching, doctrine (What Is Right), Doctrine - *systematic approach to teaching*. It is looking up the teaching throughout Scripture and noting and lining up with God on His subject.

For reproof (What Is Not Right), The Bible tells us what we should not do.

For correction (How To Get Right), Confession, Repentance of Sin.

For training in righteousness; (How To Stay Right), Abiding in Jesus, walking in the light.