

## 8-15-21 God's Word

### Acts 17:10-15.

In **Acts 17:1-4** we read that believer in Thessalonica were taking God's truths and doing radical things... they were changing lives. In **Acts 17:5-9** we read about the many Jews that didn't believe, who resisted/ opposed the God's word and the gospel. How they made Jason, a companion of Paul and Silas agree to make them leave.

**Read Acts 17:10.** Paul leaves town immediately, arrives Berea (50 miles southwest of Thessalonica) and when he arrives, he goes right into the synagogue.

Today we are going to read about the people in Berea and how they responded to God's word and the gospel.

How many read God's word daily? How many believe God's word is the absolute truth?

Barna Research Group did a study: The Bible in America: 6-Year Trends (June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016) Show some of their research. (PowerPoints)

Last week our takeaway points regarding too being able to turn the world upside down were:

- I. **They accepted THE truth, God's Truth.**
- II. **They applied THE truth, God's Ways.**
- III. **When God's truth is accepted and applied, attacks will come.**

In coming to Berea Paul found something different, a breath of fresh air, the fuel and encouragement to carry on.

**Read Acts 17:11, "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."**

"Fair-minded," noble, is from the Greek word, "*eugenes*", U-ga-nAce. Meaning, more noble minded, more open minded, willingness to learn and evaluate something fairly, willing to be open minded. Because of this mindset, this attitude they...

- I. **Received God's Word.**
  - **Read verse 11.**
  - Because they were fair-minded/noble they were open-minded toward truth, not prejudiced, hostile or suspicious of others, but who give others a fair hearing. The Bereans were called noble because they listened to the preaching of the gospel with open hearts as they **pursued** God and his truth.
  - To receive God's instructions, gospel we must pursue it.
  - Would society today be considered fair-minded/noble? Willing to listen and open minded. What about each one of us, are we open minded, noble when it comes to God's instructions?
  - It is my belief that we are to be noble minded, as believers, God's truths are always going to rub our flesh the wrong way. Are we pliable?

- We all must ask ourselves, are you willing to trust Jesus even though you may not agree with him? Are you willing to keep trusting Jesus even if you die with more unanswered questions than answered ones?
- **Galatians 4:8-18.** Paul was dealing with a church that was abandoning grace and pursuing the law. They were being convinced by Judaizers that by keeping the law they would be better Christians. The flesh falls for this false doctrine very easily. The law enabled them to do things and measure external results. As they measured themselves and their achievements, they felt a sense of accomplishment, and, no doubt, a little bit of pride. Especially notice **verse 16**.
- What is it that we are pursuing? Do we have a willingness to learn? God's truths can be like sandpaper and our old nature doesn't like it, so, we must be careful that we aren't ignoring, avoiding the conversation when God is speaking to us.
- **Acts 17:11, "received the word with all readiness..."** Have you ever witnessed the readiness of children on Christmas Eve? Other translations use the word, eagerness.
- The Bereans had an anticipation, an expectancy, that God might be speaking specifically to them. And this is what set them apart. There was a readiness and receptivity to the Word of God.
- I wonder how many of us came to church today with the expectation that God was going to speak to us? Perhaps coming to church has become merely a habit, and so, little thought is given to why we are here. We need to come into this place with the expectation that God will speak to us. Every Sunday we need to come with an eagerness of mind, with an openness of heart to hear what God will say. If these qualities are cultivated by us, they will place us in a position where we can hear the voice of God.

## II. Researched God's Word.

- **Acts 17:11, "...they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so"**
- These Bereans weren't content with the word of man. The reasoning of mere mortals was not enough for them. They wanted a "thus saith the Lord." And so, it says of them that they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether what they were being taught was true or not.
- We see that they examined the Scriptures during their daily exposure to God's truth. In the New King James and King James, it says they searched the Scriptures. The literal translation of that word is that they sifted the Scriptures.
- The Bereans were like the blessed man in,

**Psalms 1:1-3 "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper."**

- What about you? Do you welcome the message of the gospel, God's Word as the Bereans did? Do you study it daily, with passion, enthusiasm, zeal, delight, and hunger?

- The Bereans searched the Scriptures because they knew they could hear God. You see, it doesn't take a theologian or a member of the clergy to interpret the Word of God for you. God gives each of us the Holy Spirit to help us understand it and apply it.
- If we don't do this daily, we'll either just accept what someone else says is the truth and be led into error, or we won't hear what God is saying to us in the first place, and thereby fail to obey Him.

### III. Responded to God's Word.

- **Read Acts 17:12.**
- Because they had received the word with an eager mind and search the scriptures, (sifted) they were ready to respond to the revelation of God. That Jesus is the Son of God, and their salvation is found in and through Him. **"many of them believed..."**
- So many people today want to hear from God before they decide whether they are going to obey what they hear. But they will never hear until they are willing to obey.
- There is a moral element involved whenever we hear truth. Over and over, Jesus said, **"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."** Not everyone is serious about hearing because not everyone is serious about obeying what they hear.

**John 7:17, "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority."**

- A person must be willing to do God's will in order to have discernment to hear from God. There is a moral element involved in hearing truth.
- I have had numerous people come up to me and state they think they know what God wants them to do but isn't certain if they should do it. My response is if God is showing you to do it and it is backed up by His Word, principles, and precepts, then not to is to disobey Him.
- God's will isn't all that difficult for us to figure out. The more difficult matter is our will are we willing to obey what He says.
- Are we willing to do His will once He has revealed it to you? That is the real question we need to answer.
- Let's be like the Bereans. Let's receive the Word because we are of a ready mind; Let's research the Word because we have a high regard for the truth; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, Let's respond to the Word because we have received a revelation from God, and we want to obey Him.

### Conclusion

#### Get God's Word into your head.

- Make the effort to read God's word daily. If you need another translation or a paraphrase to read along with your current translation, do it. Get a commentary set to help you, ask and I will point you to some great ones.

- Come up with a reading plan. Read through the bible in a year. Another plan I do is read through a book of the bible 3-5 times before moving on.
- Commit to regular Sunday worship attendance if you can (this is difficult for some of you because of work responsibilities). Come with the expectancy that you will hear from God.
- Commit to attending a Sunday School class and read the material before and after each session.
- Plug into a Life group.

### **Get God's Word into your heart.**

- The challenge at a Bible church is to move from the head to the heart. You see, we can get so familiar with the Scripture that it no longer impacts us. For inner transformation to take place, we must seek ways to allow the Word to get into us.
- Meditate on it, ask God to show you what you need to see. Pray on it. Memorize it.

**Psalms 119:11, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You."**

### **Live God's Word out.**

- God gave us the Bible not just so that we fill our heads, or even our hearts, He wants us to take what He's written and to live it out. As we do, we'll be known not only as people who honor the Book but also as people who live by the Book.
- There's a moral element to all this, isn't there? It's not just what we know, it's what we do with what we know. The Bible must affect how we live.
- What is God asking you to do this morning? Perhaps for some of you, God has been using His Word to get your attention He wants you to stop doing something that you've been doing. Don't ignore Him. Live out what you know in your head and in your heart to be true.
- I love what Max Lucado says in one of his books, "God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way He wants you to be just like Jesus." God doesn't want us to stay just the way we are He's in the business of changing lives, and He uses His Word to do that.
- We're saved to serve, aren't we? We've been taught so that we can teach others. We've been given spiritual gifts so that we can be mobilized for ministry.

Either you believe the Bible is the word of God or you don't. I believe it is. This church believes the Bible is the Word of God. That's why the Bible has such a high position around here. That's why we have a Sunday School. That's why we have children and youth ministries. That's why we have Sunday School teachers. That is why we have Life groups and bible studies. We believe the bible is God breathed. There is no error, no contradiction. It is alive and transforms from death to life.

Do you believe the bible is the true word of God?

If so, have you trusted in the gospel it professes?

If so, are you willing, fair-minded enough to receive it, eagerly, and search it daily?

If so, are you willing to live the bible out daily, even when you don't agree with it, or when its not the popular thing to do?

Will you make the commitment to be like the Bereans today?