

■ Acts 17:9-13

Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.¹⁰ As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.¹¹ Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.¹² As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.¹³ But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up.

■ Acts 17:16

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

■ Acts 17:30-34

In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."³³ At that, Paul left the Council.³⁴ Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

5. The angry mob went looking for Paul. When they could not find him, what did this riotous crowd do?
6. What were Jason and the other believers with him required to do before going home that day?

7. Where did Paul and Silas go next?

8. How were the Jews of this community described?

Why were they described like this?

9. What was the result for many of the Bereans?

10. What was a delegation of Thessalonian Jews doing in Berea according to verse 13?

11. In response to the agitated crowd, the believers send Paul to the coast and only Silas and Timothy remained in Berea. Where did Paul go from there?

12. In verse 16, what grieved Paul's heart that was all around this city?

13. What does the Scripture tell us was the favorite pastime of the people of Athens in verse 21?

14. What specifically from verse 23 did Paul point out and use as a way to begin teaching them the good news?

15. What was the response of the people to all Paul shared that day?

16. Once again, what is the outcome of Paul's faithfulness to share the gospel?

Application

1. The apostle Paul began sharing the gospel from the point the people were at spiritually. He simply relied on the Scriptures to show the truth of what he was sharing. When you are sharing the good news do you

ask God to help you find something you can use as common ground in order to move the conversation from secular things to spiritual things?

List a few secular topics that you could use to start a conversation?

■ Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.

■ Psalms 37:1-3

Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; ²for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. ³Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

■ James 4:7

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

■ Hebrews 10:36

You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

■ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails...

2. In verse 5 we are told some of the Jews from Thessalonica became jealous. Is there anything a person can do when others are jealous?

What makes jealousy so much harder to deal with than anger?

Read Romans 12:21, Psalms 37:1-3, James 4:7 and Hebrews 10:36. What is the best response when someone is jealous?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. What were these jealous Jewish men of Acts 17:5 lacking?

What are we lacking if we allow jealousy to rule in our hearts, even for a moment?

4. Paul came to Berea and preached to the people. The Scripture says the Bereans were more noble than the Thessalonians. What two reasons were given that marked them as more noble-minded?

What is your response when you hear teaching on spiritual things?

5. Paul's spirit was grieved for the people of Athens. Acts 17:16 says the city was full of idols. The definition of an idol is anything on which we set our affections—that to which we indulge an excessive and sinful attachment. An idol is anything that surpasses the place of God in our heart. Are idols a problem in America today?

What might be idols today?

Can something good become an idol?

6. When Paul thought about those who had not experienced forgiveness of their sins he was distressed. What breaks your heart?

When you speak with a friend or family member or meet someone new who is not saved, does your spirit grieve for them as Paul's did? Does the Holy Spirit whisper any instructions or suggestions to you while you're

Acts 17:22-31

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you."²⁴ "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.²⁸ 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'²⁹ "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

with them, or even prior to you being with them?

7. In verses 22-31 Paul proclaimed the Lord as the maker of heaven and earth. In the sidebar underline the facts he shared about the One True God.

Look at Acts 17:27, why did he say God did all this?

In your own words, describe the love God has for you.

8. Once again, we see people respond to Paul sharing the gospel. When you were in church the last time did anyone accept the Lord?

If so, did you rejoice with them? Did you tell them how happy you are for them?

This is the greatest decision anyone can ever make because it changes their eternal destiny. This is something to rejoice about.