

"The Second Missionary Journey"**Part 8****Acts 15:41-18:22**

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of Acts we have come to chapter 17 and it will be in this chapter that the second missionary journey will continue. In chapter 16 Paul and Silas were beaten because Paul cast the demon from the young slave girl. It was while they were in prison singing their praises to the Lord that God sent an earthquake and set all the prisons free. The jailor then desired to know how to be saved and Paul and Silas told him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This man was saved and so was his household as the Gospel was preached to them. Paul and Silas were then set free and departed for the house of Lydia. Then they departed and now the story will continue in chapter 17.

➤ The Church at Thessalonica**Notice Acts 17:1**

They passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and went directly to Thessalonica. Why did they not stop in the other cities? This was often Paul's practice to go to the larger cities and share the Gospel and then allow the saved of the larger cities to go out and reach the smaller towns. This is exactly what happened here as we shall see. Thessalonica was a rather large city of about 200,000 people. It was much like Corinth in its location. Thessalonica was a key seaport on the Adriatic Sea, a center of commerce, and was located on important trade routes. It was positioned on an especially important highway that ran through Europe.

Notice the words of Barclay.

"The great Roman road from the Adriatic Sea to the Middle East was called the Egnatian Way; and the main street of Thessalonica was actually part of that road. If Christianity was firmly founded in Thessalonica, it could spread both east and west along that road until it became a very highway of the progress of the kingdom of God."

Thessalonica was the chief city and capital of Macedonia. God would plant a church in this strategic location so as to get the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The people who were saved in this missionary journey did exactly what they were supposed to do. Let us notice what Paul said in his letter to these people.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

² *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;*

³ *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

⁴ *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*

⁵ *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.*

⁶ *And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.*

⁷ *So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.*

⁸ *For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.*

⁹ *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*

¹⁰ *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

Application:

These people heard the Gospel and then carried the Gospel out to others which is exactly what all believers are to do.

Mark 16:15-16

¹⁵ *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

¹⁶ *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

We are called to preach the Gospel to every person in the world. I want to take a moment and explain how important this command is. This past week I heard a clip of John MacArthur and he was trying to explain that Jesus Christ only paid for the sins of the

"elect" and not every individual. He said if Jesus died for everyone and provided atonement for everyone then everyone would go to heaven. So, he concludes that Jesus only died for the "elect." I want you to understand that his teaching has a major hole in it. Mark 16:15 shoots a hole right through MacArthur's teaching. Jesus tells us to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. What is the Gospel? It is the good news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day. If Jesus only died for those who would be saved and I then share the Gospel with someone who is not the "elect" then I just lied to them. Because according to MacArthur's teaching Jesus only died for the "elect." That then makes me a liar and to make matters worse Jesus ordained the lie because He is the One who told me to tell that person something that is not true.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

MacArthur is missing the fact that the finished work of Jesus Christ is only applied to our lives when we exercise faith. Jesus died for all but only those who believe will have His blood applied to their account.

Romans 3:22

²² *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon **all** them that believe: for there is no difference:*

Let us now get back to Acts.

Notice Acts 17:1-2

Paul went first to the synagogue and preached the Gospel. This was his practice upon entering a city.

Romans 1:16

¹⁶ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

I want you to notice that Paul went to the synagogue for three Sabbaths and he reasoned with the Jews from the Scriptures. He did not use human reasoning. He did not use human philosophy. He used the Word of God to reason with the Jews.

Application:

Let us understand that if we are going to win someone to Jesus Christ it will be through the Scriptures. God does not call us to spread human reasoning or human philosophy. But we are called to share the Truth of God's Word. This is what God will use to bring conviction and salvation. There are many verses that speak of the power of God's Word.

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Psalms 119:130

¹³⁰ The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Jeremiah 23:29

²⁹ Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Then there is the promise in Isaiah.

Isaiah 55:10-11

¹⁰ For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Notice Acts 17:2 again.

Some look at this verse and determine that Paul was only in Thessalonica for three weeks because he preached on three Sabbaths, but a search of the Scriptures tells us he was

there longer. He only preached three Sabbaths because it was then that the unbelieving Jews began to bring opposition. There are several reasons why it is believed that Paul stayed much longer than three weeks. Notice the reasons that Hiebert gives.

1. *Paul supported himself by manual labor while he was there.*

1 Thessalonians 2:9

⁹ *For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*

2. *While he was there the Philippians sent two offerings.*

Philippians 4:15-16

¹⁵ *Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*

¹⁶ *For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.*

These people would have had to have time to collect the offerings for Paul and then make the 100-mile journey to get it to him.

3. *Paul's ministry reached far beyond the synagogue.*

1 Thessalonians 1:9

⁹ *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*

Here in this verse, we see that Paul reached many of the Gentiles with the Gospel.

Notice Acts 17:3

Here we see that as Paul conversed with the Jews he opened and alleged the Scriptures. These two words are very important.

Open - This word means "to open that which had been closed completely." Let us notice how the word is used in other verses.

Mark 7:32-35

³² *And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.*

³³ And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

³⁴ And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

³⁵ And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

Luke 24:29-32

²⁹ But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

³⁰ And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

³² And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

Notice Acts 17:3 again.

The word "alleging" means that they used the Old Testament to prove the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

We will come back to this next week. As we end tonight, I just want to say that when Paul entered into a conversation with others about salvation he stayed with the Scriptures, He did not get caught up in politics or a conversation about how to fix the world. Those things will not convert one soul. It is the Gospel that changes lives.

1 Timothy 6:20-21

²⁰ O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

²¹ Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.