

Woodland Baptist Church
 June 20, 2012 - Wednesday Night in the Word
 Acts 17:10-15 Examining the Scriptures Daily

1) INTRODUCTION

2) READ VERSES 10-15

3) Verse 10 - We need to have an _____ for _____ evangelism

a) 10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue.

- i) **Berea** - (bih ree' uh) Place name meaning, "place of many waters." City in Macedonia to which Paul escaped after the Jews of Thessalonica rioted ([Acts 17:10](#)). The Jews searched the Scriptures as Paul preached, and many believed. Jews came from Thessalonica and forced Paul out, and so he continued his second missionary journey. A traveling companion on the last leg of his third journey was Sopater of Berea ([Acts 20:4](#)). Berea was not situated on the major highways. Surrounded by springs in the plain below Mount Bermion, it was 45 miles west of Thessalonica. It is modern Verria. [Holman Bible Dictionary]



ii)

iii) **Romans 1:16-17** -16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the **Jew first** and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

(1) The epistles of Paul illustrate to readers an individual who took his mantle as missionary to the Gentiles very seriously, but yet never forgot his roots and heritage as a Jew [Murrell]. His unique relationship with his Jewish nation was a source of both sincere affection and acrimonious tension. This dichotomy was never more evident than in two passages, Romans 9:1-5, in which one reads the despair Paul experienced over the spiritual condition of the Jewish people and 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16, in which he expresses a level of bitterness towards the Jewish people that surprises many readers [Downey].

(2) **Romans 11:17-20** - 17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. 19 Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20 That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

b) The scriptures are very clear about how our minds should be set for the Jews, our attitude toward the Jews should be the same as Paul's. We are to pray for them, evangelize them and love them, not scorn them for rejecting their own Messiah. We are to have compassion and try to reach them as we try to reach any people group on earth.

i) Question - why do most Gentile churches have no missions to the Jews?

4) **Verses 11-12** There are many _____ that will _____ to the gospel

a) **11** Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. **12** Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.

- i) More noble - eugenesterōi - well born, of a noble race...noble-minded, educated, open to try to understand based on facts...etc. Other uses of "noble":
- (1) **Luke 19:12** - 12 He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.
- (2) **1 Corinthians 1:26** - 26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.
- ii) Received the word with all eagerness - prothumias - 4288 prothymía (from [4235](#) / práos, "before, in front of" and 2372 thymós, "passion") – properly, "before-passion" referring to someone who is **already being willing**, i.e. an **eager disposition** which is **pre-inclined** (already "ready and willing").
- (1) **2 Corinthians 8:11-12** - [context of readiness/eagerness in giving] **11 So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. 12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.**
- iii) Examining the Scriptures daily - anakrinontes - 350 anakrínō (from [303](#) / aná, "up, completing a process," which intensifies [2919](#) / krínō, "to select by separating/judging") – properly, to distinguish by vigorously judging "down to up," i.e. **closely examining (investigating) through "the process of careful study, evaluation and judgment"** (L & N, 1, 27.44); "to examine, investigate, question (so J. B. Lightfoot, Notes, 181f). [The prefix [303](#) / aná ("up") shows the process involved that takes krinō ("judging/separating") up to its needed conclusion. Accordingly, [350](#) (anakrínō) is often used in its forensic sense in the ancient world. It can even refer to "examination by torture" (see Field, Notes, 120f, Abbott-Smith).] [biblos.org]
- (a) **2 Timothy 2:15** - 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

(2) **Lee Strobel** - Strobel received a journalism degree from University of Missouri and a Master of Studies in Law degree from Yale Law School, becoming a journalist for The Chicago Tribune and other newspapers for 14 years. He states that he was an atheist and began **investigating the Biblical claims** about Christ after his wife's conversion. As a **result of the evidence he discovered in his investigation, he became a Christian**. Strobel describes The Case for Christ as a retracing and expansion of him becoming a Christian. It summarizes Strobel's interviews with 13 evangelical Christian scholars — Craig Blomberg, Bruce Metzger, Edwin Yamauchi, John McRay, Gregory Boyd, Ben Witherington III, Gary Collins, D.A. Carson, Louis Lapides, Alexander Metherell, William Lane Craig, Gary Habermas, and J. P. Moreland — defending their view of the historical reliability of the New Testament.

iv) What was the result of the examination? Many of them believed - pisteuo -4100 pisteúō (from 4102 / pístis, "faith," derived from 3982 / peithō, "persuade, be persuaded") – believe (affirm, have confidence); used of **persuading oneself** (= human believing) and with the **sacred significance** of being persuaded by the Lord (= faith-believing). **Only the context** indicates whether 4100 / pisteúō ("believe") is **self-serving** (without sacred meaning), or the believing that leads to/proceeds from God's **in-birthing of faith**.
[biblos.org]

(1) Which was it in Berea? Was it persuading oneself or God's in-birthing...or both?

(2) Interesting to compare synoptics gospels [Matt, Mark and Luke] to John in this regard - synoptics use **repentance and faith**, while John uses **believe**.

v) Women of high standing - euscemon - 1. of elegant figure, shapely, graceful, comely, bearing oneself becomingly in speech or behavior (Euripides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato): τὰ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν, the comely parts of the body that need no covering (opposed to τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν, verse 23), 1 Corinthians 12:24; of morals: πρὸς τό εὐσχημον, to promote decorum, 1 Corinthians 7:35. **in later usage** (cf. Lob. ad Phryn., p. 333), of **good standing, honorable, influential, wealthy, respectable** (R. V. of honorable estate): Mark 15:43; Acts 13:50; Acts 17:12. (Josephus, de vita sua §9; Plutarch, parallel. Graec. et Rom c. 15, p. 309 b.)

b) Romans 11:25 - 25 **Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**

- i) In this case, it seems that the “noble Jews” that responded opened the way for a wide range of acceptance of the gospel for those attending the Berean synagogue. We must always remember, the hardening of Israel was ONLY partial, which means there are countless Jews through the ages that will respond and believe the gospel.
- c) What makes the difference? How can two Jews examine the exact same passage and come to two different conclusions?
- i) **Matthew 13:10-13** -10 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” 11 And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. [4 responses of the heart]
- 5) **Verses 13-14** Jewish/Gentile can provoke hatred
- a) **13 But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. 14 Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there.**
- i) It is amazing how persistent and deep gospel rejection can drive those who do not believe. These unbelieving Jews were traveling hundreds of miles to shadow Paul’s footsteps to try to stop the gospel being preaching. How ironic that just a few years ago Saul was doing the EXACT same thing with permission from the Sanhedrin.
- (1) **Acts 9:1-2** - 9 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.
- ii) Now Paul was the one being hunted and persecuted...but for him it was well worth it as he knew from the Lord himself the truth of who Jesus was...**11 For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. 12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

(a) Who remembers what passage that is?

(2) Romans 10:1-3 - Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them [Jews] is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

b) Agitating and stirring up the crowds - saluēontes & tarrassontes - to shake down, overthrow, i. e. tropically, to cast down from one's (secure and happy) state, [Acts 2:25](#) (from [Psalm 15:8](#) ()); by a tropical use foreign to secular authors, to move or agitate the mind, to disturb one: τινά ἀπό τοῦ νῶς, so as to throw him out of his sober and natural mental state (Buttmann, 322 (277)), [2 Thessalonians 2:2](#); τοὺς ὄχλους, to stir up, [Acts 17:13](#). Tropically, "to cause one inward commotion, take away his calmness of mind, disturb his equanimity; to disquiet, make restless" (the Sept. for לַהֲבִיב, etc.; passive, ταρασσομαι for τλγ, to be stirred up, irritated); α. to stir up: τὸν ὄχλον, Acts 17:8; (τοὺς ὄχλους, Acts 17:13 L T Tr WH). β. to trouble: τινά, to strike one's spirit with fear or dread, passive,

i) **Hebrews 4:12** - 12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, **piercing** to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and **discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart**.

(1) Question - How did the gospel affect you and your family when you were saved. Was there distress in your family and resistance to the gospel, or was your family supportive and nurturing?

c) Again, the unbelieving Jews [probably Judaizers] that dogged Paul's every step throughout his ministry, stalk him to Berea and somehow stir up the entire area against him. As verse 15 informs us, when this happens, his fellow brothers make sure he gets away as they escort him toward Athens.

6) Verse 15 This gospel _____ actually _____ the gospel

i) **Matthew 10:23** - 23 **When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.**

b) 15 Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

- i) **Kathistemi** - to conduct or bring to a certain place: τινα, Acts 17:15 (2 Chronicles 28:15 for אָבִיב; Joshua 6:23; 1 Samuel 5:3; Homer, Odyssey 13, 274; Xenophon, an. 4, 8, 8 and in other secular authors). 2525 kathístēmi (from [2596](#) /katá, "down" and [2476](#) /hístēmi, "to stand") – properly, set down (in place), i.e. "put in charge," give standing (authority, status) which enables someone to rule (exercise decisive force).

7) CLOSE

- a) We need to have an **URGENCY** for **JEWISH** evangelism
 - i) How can you adopt the mind of Paul for the Jewish people and truly begin to diligently pray and seek for the salvation of them?
- b) There are many **JEWS** that will **RESPOND** to the gospel
 - i) What types of false teachings have caused us to put all Jews into the category of unresponsive to the gospel, when Scripture teaches us clearly the hardening was only partial?
- c) Jewish/Gentile **UNBELIEF** can provoke **AGGRESSIVE** hatred
 - i) Remember the hatred toward the gospel can be temporary as it was with Paul. We should not simply write people off because they reject the gospel.
- d) Gospel **REJECTION** actually **SPREADS** the messengers
 - i) In the book of Acts we see the pattern of persecution...fleeing...sowing more seed...persecution...fleeing....sowing more seed....etc.