

The Book of Acts

Chapter 17

Growth of the New Testament Church

Quiz

2

- In what town did Paul meet Timothy?
 - Lystra
- Name one of the two areas the Holy Spirit forbid Paul to go.
 - Asia and Bithynia
- In Paul's vision, from where was the man who begged Paul to come preach in his area?
 - Macedonia
- Name three town in Macedonia where Paul preached.
 - Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea

Quiz

3

- Who was the first (named) to come to Christ in Philippi?
 - Lydia
- For what purpose were Paul and Silas beaten at Philippi?
 - Paul cast a demon from a fortunetelling girl
- What did Paul and Silas do in prison?
 - Prayed and sang praises to God
- Give two proofs that infant baptism is unbiblical.
 - Never mentioned in the Bible, not mentioned in history until 250 AD, the word “baptizo” means to dip.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Paul preached at Thessalonica, v.1-4

5

- Paul preached first in the synagogue of the Jews.
 - This was his manner or custom, v.2
 - For 3 Sabbaths he reasoned (discuss, argue) with them out of the Bible.
 - Paul opened (opened their eyes) and alleged (explained) two facts:
 - That **Christ** must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead
 - That this Jesus, whom he preached, is **Christ**
 - Some believed and consorted (added to, joined) Paul and Silas
 - A great multitude of devout Greeks (proselytes)
 - Many of the chief women (possibly Jewesses married to notable Greeks)
 - Some who believed came out of idolatry (1Th 1:9-10).

Assault on Jason's House, v.5-9

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- Envious unbelieving Jews stirred up trouble, v.5
 - They assaulted (raided) Jason's house looking for the missionaries
 - Not finding the missionaries, they took Jason and other believers, v.6
 - They accused Paul and Silas of “turning the world upside down”, of disobeying Caesar, and preaching king Jesus.*
 - By these words they troubled the people and the rulers, v.8
- They took security of Jason and the others and let them go, v.9
 - This security may have been financial or a verbal promise of some sort. Likely, they had to promise that Paul would leave and not return.
 - Paul was forced to leave town and not return, 1Th 2:18

Ministering at Berea, v.10-15

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- Paul and Silas fled Thessalonica by night and went to Berea
- The again began in the synagogue.
- The Bereans were more open to the Gospel message, v.11
 - They had ready minds and searched the Bible daily.*
- Many believed, v.12
- Troublemakers from Thessalonica followed them, v.13
 - Immediately the Christians sent Paul away, v.14*
 - When Paul reached Athens, he send for Silas and Timothy, v.15

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Philosophers at Athens question Paul, v.16-21

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- Paul was stirred by the idolatry of the people, v.16*
- He disputed (discuss, argue as in v.2) in the synagogue with Jews and proselytes and in the market daily, v.17
- Philosophers called Paul a “**babbler**” (a seed-picker) referring to one who like a bird picks up a seed from here and there, v.18
- The philosophers arranged for Paul to tell them of his new strange doctrines, v.19-21

Epicureans believed that **pleasure** was the greatest good and the most worthy pursuit of man. They meant pleasure in the sense of tranquillity and freedom from pain, disquieting passions, and fears, especially the fear of death. Epicurus taught that the gods took no interest in human affairs. Thus organized religion was bad, and the gods would not punish evildoers in the afterlife. Epicurus' followers also believed that everything happened by chance and that death was the end of all.

Stoics placed great importance on living in harmony with nature. They stressed individual self-sufficiency and rationalism, and they had a reputation for being quite arrogant. Stoics were pantheists who believe that God is in everything, and everything is God. They were also fatalistic, whatever will be, will be.

Epicureans & Stoics by Thomas Constable

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Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill, v.22-28

12

- Note Paul's attention-grabbing introduction, v.22-23
- Paul told them of the God of heaven, v.24-28
 - He created all things, v.24
 - He is Lord of heaven and earth, v.24
 - He does not dwell in manmade temples, v.24
 - He needs nothing from man's hands, v.25
 - He gives life and breath to all, v.25
 - He made of one blood all nations, v.26
 - He is near everyone, v.27
 - He gives life, movement and existence to each of us, v.28

Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill, v.29-31 (continued)

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- Paul quotes one of their poets, “For we are his offspring”, v.28
 - Since we are God's offspring, He cannot be made of gold, silver or stone or crafted by men, v.29
- God overlooked this ignorance, but now He commands us to repent, v.30
- At an appointed day, He will judge the world in righteousness by the one He ordained. To assure us of this, He raised that one from the dead, v.31
 - To this point, Paul had not mentioned the name Christ.

Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill, v.32-34 (continued)

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- When they heard of the resurrection from the dead, that ended his sermon.
 - Some mocked
 - Others asked to hear more another time
- Paul left Mars Hill, v.33
 - Certain ones clave (glued themselves) to him and believed, v.34
 - Two are mentioned by name.

As we examine Paul's sermon to the philosophers, we find that it is much different than his sermons to the Jews and proselytes. Because his audience believed that god was impersonal or that god was everything in nature, much of the sermon described the person and character of God. He urged them to believe that God was living and personal, not a carved idol. He identified God as calling men to repent or change their minds. At the end He spoke of God's righteous Judge whom He raised from the dead. This may be a condensed version of his sermon. He likely explained the Gospel and introduced Jesus more clearly to those interested. **When witnessing, we must begin where men are with the basics and expand for those who will listen.**

Paul's sermon to the Philosophers

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Applications for us today

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- Paul always began his ministry in a town with those who were religious.
 - Today, those who are a bit religious are usually more open to a witness than those who do not even believe in God.
 - As you witness, when you find a religious person, do not assume he is a Christian.
- Unbelieving Jews stirred up trouble.
 - I believe the most hateful unbelievers are those who have been hurt by religion.
 - Do not let their opposition stop you from telling others.
- The Bereans, while still unbelievers, received the Word eagerly and searched the Bible daily to see if Paul's message was true.
 - Do you receive the word eagerly?
 - Do you search the Bible daily?
 - You will never be a godly strong Christian if you neglect the Bible.
- Paul tailored his message to his hearers, yet without compromise.
 - It is wise for us to do the same.