

# ACTS

## of the Holy Spirit

### Session #26 – 17:1 - 15

## I. God's Work in Thessalonica (17:1 - 4)

### Verse 1

When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.



Thessalonica was founded in 315 BC E by Cassandra, Alexander's general and brother-in-law, and named for his wife, Alexander's step-sister, Thessaloniki. Since 168 B.C.E., it had been under control of the Romans, who deported the local population. Built around a natural harbor, the city thrived as the only port on the Via Egnatia, outstripped Athens during the Byzantine period, and even today is the second largest city in Greece after Athens. When Paul arrived he found a walled city of about 65,000 people, the largest city in and capital of Macedonia, and one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire. He would have entered the city through a gate on the Via Egnatia, still one of the main streets of the modern city.

Paul later wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians (51AD) from Corinth.

## We are in the midst of Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Paul and Silas and Timothy and Luke are traveling together from Derbe to Lystra to Troas and across to Philippi. Tonight we move to Thessalonica and Berea



### Verse 2

As was his custom, (ethos = a way of life) Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned (dialegomai = argue from the scriptures) with them from the Scriptures,

### Verse 3

A) explaining (dianoigo = to open a person's mind/expound)  
 B) and proving (paratithemi = give evidence/set before) that

- 1) the Messiah (Christos) [General sense]
- 2) had to suffer (pascho = feel suffering)
- 3) and rise from the dead. (anistemi nekros)

Old Testament Prophecy – Isaiah 41

- 4) "This Jesus (Iesuou)
- 5) I am proclaiming to you (katagello = to announce)
- 6) is the Messiah," (Christos) [Specific sense] he said.

NT reality

Fantastic logical argument – connecting the truth of the Old Testament with the reality of current history!

#### Verse 4

Results:

- 1) Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined (proskleroo = only use – choose to associate with – join in the inheritance of another – faith perspective)  
Paul and Silas,
- 2) as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks
- 3) and quite a few prominent women.

## **II. Persecution in Thessalonica (17:5 - 9)**

### Verse 5

**But**

other Jews were jealous; (zeloo = burn with envy/anger/hatred – probably jealous of their attention and influence)

so they rounded up some bad characters (poneros = evil) from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city.

They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

This is also what happened in Pisidian (13:45,50), Iconium (14:2,5), and Lystra (14:19) on Paul's first missionary journey.

### Verse 6

But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason (means "one who will heal") and some other believers before the city officials, shouting:

*"These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here,*

We have no idea who Jason is until now. He was obviously the host for the team in Thessalonica.

In fact God was working to turn the world "right side up" but when you are "upside down" you don't see it that way!

### Verse 7

*and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus."*

This was a common attack plan against Christ and the early church to turn political forces against the message of Christ.

### Verse 8

When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.

### Verse 9

Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

## **III. God's Work in Berea (17:10 - 12)**

### Verse 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.



A city in Greece. Modern name is Verria or Boor. In ancient times Berea was a Greek town in the Roman province of Macedonia, about 50 miles west of Thessalonica and about 24 miles from the sea.





#### Verse 11

Now  
the Berean Jews

- 1) were of more noble character (eugenes = literally “do gooders”)  
    than those in Thessalonica,
- 2) for they received (dechomai = embrace/approve)  
    the message (logos = the inspired Word of God)  
    with great eagerness (prothymia = good zeal)
- 3) and examined (anakrino = to judge/investigate)  
    the Scriptures (graphe = the written word)  
    every day  
to see if what Paul said was true.

#### Verse 12

As a result, [therefore]

- 1) many of them (Jews) believed,
- 2) as did also a number of prominent Greek women
- 3) and many Greek men.

### **IV. Thessalonian Persecution in Berea (17:13 - 15)**

#### Verse 13

But

when the Jews in Thessalonica  
learned that Paul was  
preaching the word of God  
at Berea,

some of them went there too,

- 1) agitating (saleuo = to incite/destroy by causing wavering through doubt) the crowds
- 2) and stirring them up. (tarasso = cause to act through hatred)

#### Verse 14

The believers immediately sent Paul  
to the coast,  
but  
Silas and Timothy  
stayed at Berea.

#### Verse 15

Those who escorted Paul  
brought him to Athens  
and then left with instructions  
for Silas and Timothy  
to join him  
as soon as possible.

So for the fifth time, Paul is run out of a city for preaching the truth about Christ.

It appears that Paul wanted to plant a church in Berea and wanted to leave Silas and Timothy there to be founding pastors. But the persecution was too great. Consequently, there is NO Christian church in Berea today.

If you don't get anything else today, just remember – You want to be a Berean – Not an Thessalonian!