

REFLECTION GUIDE

ACTS 17:1-15 | A MORE NOBLE PEOPLE

KEY TERMS

Thessalonica and Berea - Two cities located in 1st century Macedonia and modern-day Greece. Paul wrote two of his NT letters (1 and 2 Thessalonians) to the church in Thessalonica.

The Christ - The focus of Paul's preaching in Thessalonica and Berea is that Jesus is the Christ (or Messiah). Many 1st century Jews had a hard time believing that Jesus could be the Christ/Messiah because he had been shamefully crucified, so Paul attempts to show, from the OT Scriptures, that this is actually exactly what was needed and what God had promised to do.

DID YOU KNOW?

Although Luke focuses on Paul's ministry to Jews in Thessalonica over a three week span, we know from 1 & 2 Thess. that Paul's ministry to Gentiles in the city was highly effective and that he likely stayed for several months.

Jason - Jason is a supporter of Paul and his companions and his house may serve as the meeting place for the church in Thessalonica. Jason is also mentioned in Romans 16:21, showing, if it's the same Jason, he continued to support Paul beyond Thessalonica.

BACKGROUND

After leaving Philippi, Paul and his companions travel through a few small towns (Amphipolis and Apollonia) on their way to the larger city of Thessalonica. In contrast to Philippi, there was a synagogue in Thessalonica and Paul spent three Sabbath days *explaining and proving* (from the OT) that *it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead* (v. 3). The result was that some Jews believed, but *a great many* Gentiles believed, including *not a few...leading women* (v. 4). Just like in Philippi, a group of Jews wants to stop Paul and his companions from teaching about Jesus, but, unable to find Paul and Silas, they resort to bringing a man named Jason, who appears to be providing housing and/or financial support for Paul, out before the crowds (vv. 5-6). The Jews appear to be trying to turn the Gentiles in Thessalonica against the Christians by telling the crowd that the Christians are saying that Jesus is King, not Caesar (v. 7).

Fleeing arrest or worse in Thessalonica, Paul and Silas head to Berea where they follow the same pattern of preaching Jesus in the synagogues (v. 10). In Berea, however, the Jews *received the word with all eagerness* and spent time *examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so* (v. 11). Many Jews and many Gentiles in Berea believed in Jesus, news of which reached Thessalonica and led to Jews from Thessalonica traveling to Berea to stir up the crowds against Paul and his companions (vv. 12-13). This drives Paul from Berea to Athens, while Silas and Timothy remain a bit longer (vv. 14-15).

GOING DEEPER

Read John 20:30-31 and Romans 10:13-17. What do these verses teach about the role of God's Word in salvation? Read Hebrews 2:12 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What do these verses teach about the ongoing work of the Word of God in the Christian's life? How do they encourage you to be like the Berean's, *examining the Scriptures daily*?



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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Reflection questions are available when Redemption Groups are meeting. Groups will begin meeting again in June. To sign up for a group, go to redemptionokc.com/groups or email Chace at chace.ifland@redemptionokc.com.