

LESSON 4: ACTS 17:1-12

The Second Missionary Journey: Thessalonica and Berea

1. What approach does Paul take in presenting the Gospel to the Thessalonian Jews (vv. 2-3)?
2. What is the basis from which Paul argues (v. 2; see also 2 Tim. 3:16-17). What happens in the Church when you start to add to and/or subtract from, or simply ignore the Word of God? (See 2 Tim. 2:14-17).
3. Why do the Jews find the idea of a dead and risen Christ so repugnant (vv.3-5)?
4. Lydia and Jason both invite the missionaries who were virtual strangers into their homes (16:15; 17:7). What kind of trouble and expense are they willing to accept as a result of their hospitality (16:20-22; 17:5-9)?
5. What is there to learn about Christian fellowship from Lydia and Jason?
6. What famous epithet is brought against Paul and Silas, and what is the heart of their message (vv. 6-7)? What principles in dealing with authority do these actions suggest?
7. How is the response of the Berean Jews to Paul's message different from that of the Thessalonian Jews (vv. 5,11)? Why is the Berean reaction the best way to deal with new and startling teaching? What document is the basis for all the discussion?

The Second Missionary Journey: Athens

8. What causes the Gospel to come to Greece (vv. 13-14)? How does God use evil men for his own purposes today?
9. How are Athens and its citizens described (vv. 16,21)? Is this similar to another capital city with which we are all intimately familiar?
10. What provokes Paul's violent reaction (v.16)? Do you react in the same way to today's idols?
11. What do the cultured men of Athens think of Paul (vv. 18-19)?
12. Paul addresses well-born and well-educated men in an age when class distinctions were walls between people. However, he is able to confidently face these men (vv. 18,32). How is he able to do so? (See 1 Cor. 1:18-31.) Why can you as well, speak with confidence to the world in which you live?
13. What is Paul's purpose in his opening words (vv. 22-23), and why does he quote Greek poets the Athenian philosophers like (v. 28)?
14. When he is invited to speak, what does Paul say about the nature of God; the nature of man, idols, and Jesus (vv. 22-31)?
15. How is this presentation to Gentiles (vv. 22-31) different from what Paul has said to Jewish audiences in 9:20,22; 13:16-41; 17:2,3? Notice how the Gospel message is suited to different situations, but is never diluted.

16. Why is the resurrection central to the Gospel (v. 32; see also Rom. 1:2-4, 6:8-11; and 1 Cor. 15:12-58).

The Second Missionary Journey: Corinth

17. How is Paul's visit to Corinth (v. 4) similar to his visits to Thessalonica (17:2), Berea (17:10), and Ephesus (v. 19)?

18. What did it mean to reason or argue for the Gospel? Does anyone do this today? If not, why not?

19. To what does Paul devote himself (v. 5)? To what do you devote yourself?

20. What significant decision does Paul make and why (vv. 5-6)?

21. What does God promise Paul in Corinth, and what is Paul's response (vv. 9-11)?

22. How much time does Paul spend in Corinth and what does he do (v. 11)? How does this differ from the way evangelists operate today?