

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – February 23, 2020

Theme: The Acts of the Apostles **Topic:** The Berean and Athenian Experience

Main Text: Acts 17:10-34

Key verse: Acts 17:28A – “for in Him we live and move and have our being,” (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: As the gospel moves in the pursuit of the mandate to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19A), it will cross geographic, social, religious and cultural boundaries. And it will provoke different reactions and responses from different peoples. Leaving Philippi, Apostle Paul continued his mission in Macedonia, going first to Thessalonica, then Berea and eventually Athens, preaching both to Jews and Gentiles with varying results. His movement is in line with the words of Jesus when He said, “When they persecute you in this city, flee to another” (Matt. 10:23A). He lived and moved with the gospel.

1. (a) What lessons can we learn from the character and attitude of Paul as he moved with the gospel from city to city in the face of opposition and resistance? (b) Which of these character traits and attitude of Paul’s do we need in order to take the gospel to difficult and hostile places around us?

The Bereans are every gospel minister’s dream. We are told that “*the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul’s message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.*” (Acts 17:11 NLT). See also John 5:39

2. (a) What are some characteristics of the Bereans that are worthy of emulation? (b) The Bereans didn’t reach for any other written or unwritten material to verify Paul’s teaching, but the Scriptures. What can we learn from them about the authority of Scripture? (c) If every believer formed the habit of daily searching the Scriptures and crosschecking every teaching they hear with the Scriptures, how will that impact the church and society today?

Leaving Berea, Apostle Paul travelled more than 400 km south to Athens. Paul was not intending on ministering in Athens; he was waiting for his companions to join him (Acts 17:15-16). But while he waited, he couldn’t help noticing the many pagan gods and goddesses. What he saw distressed him to the point that he went preaching in the synagogues and marketplace, to whomever would listen. His preaching drew the attention of the intelligentsia of the city – the Epicureans, who believe the highest aim of man is to seek a pleasant life, and Stoics. The Stoics believe that man’s happiness consists of bringing himself into harmony with the universe. Whether it was the ordinary man on the streets, or the atheists and pantheists, Paul pointed them all to the One true God, who created everything and to the resurrected Christ who is God’s means of reconciling wayward man to Himself (Acts 17:18b, 31).

3. (a) Let participants read Acts 17:22-31 and identify how Paul went about preaching the gospel of Jesus to a pagan audience. (b) What do we think enabled Paul to so preach the gospel without being confrontational? How can we apply Apostle Paul’s strategy to preach to people of other faith and religion? (c) The resurrection message will always be a stumbling block to many (Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:33). Is there any way of presenting the gospel about Jesus Christ without causing offence?

Prayer: Father, please give us wisdom and boldness to preach Your word in the marketplace and to people of other faith and religion in Jesus Name, Amen.