

“BE A BEREAN!”

Acts 17:5-10

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INTRODUCTION

How do you respond to the preaching of God’s Word? When you hear something new or at least something taught from a different perspective, do you:

- Immediately react with a closed mind and maybe even animosity, or do you have an open mind and determine to search the Scriptures to see if the teaching is accurate?
- Do you eagerly welcome the challenge of investigating and determining truth, or are you apathetic or disinterested?

The Jews of Berea have set an example for all time as to how we must respond to the preaching of the Word of God. **Little did they know how many Christian organizations and churches would take their name after the synagogue in this town of Berea.**

YOU MUST EAGERLY RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD AND SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES DAILY!

- I. CLOSED MINDED LISTENERS (10:13-15)
 - A. Rejection of the Message at _____ (10)
As the result, the missionaries had to flee by night.
They went on to Berea—the next significant city, south toward Achaia, off the Egnatian way.
 - B. Rejection by some at _____ who were stirred by the envious Jews coming down from Thessalonica (13-15) **They had not caused enough trouble in Thessalonica, they had to go also to Berea!**
 1. Jews in Thessalonica heard about the Gospel’s success in Berea—someone told them, likely those who were dissatisfied and wanted to stir trouble
 2. The agitators likely used the same techniques in Berea with the crowds.
 3. Here the political leaders do not seem to have become involved; and note that no mention is made that the politarchs from Thessalonica had anything to do with this.
 - Shaking—like an earthquake, for which this word is often used
 - Stirring—same verb used of the trouble in Thessalonica.
 4. Due to the danger to Paul, the believers escorted him away from Berea (14)
 5. Silas and Timothy remain behind to help the fledgling work; being given instructions by Paul’s escort (v. 15) to come to Paul in Athens ASAP.
 6. Paul went “as far as to the sea” or “as if to the sea”; did he go by ship to Athens, or once near the coast—where the road went in order to bypass the mountains—continue by land in order to confuse any pursuers?
 7. The escort was for protection and encouragement.
 8. We must not assume as some do that Paul was extremely depressed here.

Paul was three for three in Macedonia—the place to which God had called him:

- Beaten, jailed, and sent out of Philippi
- Scurried out of Thessalonica due to a riot and mock trial

- Hustled out of Berea due to another uprising

What are we to assume? Was Paul's ministry a failure? Was Paul thoroughly discouraged?

WE CANNOT AND DARE NOT GIVE UP BECAUSE OF THE OPPOSITION OF CLOSED MINDED PERSONS!
Besides, there were open-minded listeners as well!

II. OPEN MINDED LISTENERS (11-12)

Once again Paul begins his ministry in the Jewish synagogue—but finds a much different response than in Thessalonica.

A. The Jews were “more _____-minded” than those in Thessalonica.

1. They received the Word with great _____(readiness)
2. They “_____ the Scriptures daily” [careful examination as if by a legal process]
The word connotes “careful and exact research, to sift up and down” (Rogers, p. 274).
Note that this ought to be the characteristic response of people to the preaching of the word of God, **and such has always characterized Bereans—whether those unsaved looking objectively at the evidence for the gospel, or those saved who carefully evaluate every unfamiliar doctrine or interpretation of Scripture to check for accuracy.** Notice that these people were NOT GULLIBLE. We all have the duty of **private interpretation**—A BAPTIST DISTINCTION—*INDIVIDUAL SOUL LIBERTY*.

Harrison points out that some can search the Scriptures and still “fail to find the way of life (Jn. 5:39)” (p. 264). Paul knew that the minds of his countrymen generally had a veil over them until they turned to Christ—when the veil would be taken away (II Cor. 3:14-16). Christ alone “gives clarity of meaning to the Old Covenant” (p. 264).

3. They were not _____—they checked to see “whether these things were so.”
Paul's teaching had to conform to the Old Testament revelation; if not, they would reject it!

B. Many responded to the Gospel with faith and were saved (12).

1. Many of the _____—**such is the result of open, honest, and diligent search of the Scriptures!** Paul said, “So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). It is the power of the Word of God that changes people.
2. Many “prominent Greek _____ and men.” [Note the place of women again!]

CONCLUSION

Back in 2002 The Queen Creek Baptist Church deliberately chose to change its name to Berean Baptist Church OF Queen Creek. Why? **Because our church desires to emulate the kind of behavior manifested by these Jewish believers in Berea.**

THEY BECAME BELIEVERS BECAUSE THEY OPENLY STUDIED THE BIBLE AND WERE WILLING TO ALLOW GOD'S WORD TO CONTROL THEIR THINKING.

Are You willing? Will you follow their example: In _____? In _____?

