

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

#### Part VI: The Ministry Of The Universal Church In Its Spread To The Ends Of The Earth, Acts 8:26-28:31

##### E. Christ's Use Of The Apostle Paul To Spearhead Worldwide Outreach, Acts 14:4-28:31

##### 14. Christ's Honoring Noble Responses To The Proclamations Of His Servants

(Acts 17:10-15a)

###### I. Introduction

- A. When we are exposed to spiritual proclamations in teachers or preachers, we risk making two errant responses that can get us into problems and a loss of honor before God: (1) we can be so open-minded that we adopt bad views, or (2) we can become so defensive against error that we reject even the truth!
- B. However, there is a "noble" way to respond to all spiritual proclamations, and it equips us to adopt all the good and reject all the bad that we hear, a way exemplified by the Berean believers in Acts 17:10-14:

###### II. Christ's Honoring Noble Responses To The Proclamations Of His Servants, Acts 17:10-15a.

- A. After being forced to leave godless persecutors at Thessalonica, Paul and his missionary team were sent by night by supportive believers to Berea 30 miles west southwest of Thessalonica, Acts 17:10a; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., map 13 "The Missionary Journeys Of Paul."
- B. Typical of his efforts in other cities, Paul entered the Jewish synagogue and began to minister the claims of Christ as he had in Thessalonica, testifying that the Old Testament Scriptures predicting the Messiah had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 17:10b, 2-3.
- C. The response of these Berean Jews was "more noble" than that of the Thessalonians (Acts 17:11a), for they took advantage of the opportunity afforded them upon hearing Paul's testimony to make sure they obtained the truth, all of the truth, and nothing but the truth (as follows):
  - 1. First of all, the "more noble" Berean Jews received the Word "with all readiness of mind," Acts 17:11b:
    - a. The Greek New Testament word, *prothumias* is translated as "readiness of mind" in the KJV, and it means "eagerness, enthusiasm," cf. U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966 ed., p. 484; Moulton & Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Grk. N. T., 1972, p. 540.
    - b. The word thus carries not only the concept of "open-mindedness," but "high motivation" [to learn].
    - c. Thus, the Berean Jews were "more noble" in that they eagerly paid attention to all of the spiritual information they could gather lest they miss any of the truths of God!
  - 2. Second, lest their eagerness to learn lead to adopting erroneous ideas along with God's truth, the Berean Jews "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so," Acts 17:11c-12:
    - a. The Greek New Testament verb that is translated as "searched" (KJV) is *anakrinontes*, meaning to "examine" so as to make an evaluation of what Paul had taught in light of the Word of God, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the N. T., 1967, p. 56.
    - b. The Berean Jews did this "daily," indicating it was an habitual activity on their part, Acts 17:11c.
    - c. The fact that they were evaluating Paul's teaching in view of Scripture reveals they saw the written Scriptures as their final authority, against which Paul's teaching, or any other teaching, was to be examined and tested for validity.
    - d. Thus, though the Bereans were to be commended in being highly motivated to pay attention to all that Paul had taught them, their "nobility" was **solidified** in that they adopted as **TRUE only** what the **written Scriptures VERIFIED** what Paul had taught was **indeed God's truth!** (Acts 17:11-12)
- D. Unbelieving Berean Jews who did not stay open to Paul's words and/or who did not examine the written Scriptures to evaluate his words both rejected his words and him, creating unrest and leading to Paul's flight from Berea southward to Athens, Acts 17:13-15a. **Thus, they MISSED OUT on God's TRUTH!**

***Lesson:*** *The Berean believers have been honored of God down through time for (1) being eagerly open to spiritual teaching (2) while ALSO CHECKING all they were taught with God's written Scriptures.*

***Application:*** *To take BEST ADVANTAGE of our exposure to all spiritual proclamations, may we (1) eagerly stay open for the truth to HEAR it presented, but also (2) GUARD our hearts by examining what we have heard in light of WRITTEN SCRIPTURE'S authoritative evaluation!*