**4 – Seeking of the Bereans**

*Acts 17:10-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13*

*The seeking of the Bereans not only sets an example for how an unbeliever should react to the truth, but how we as Christians should approach the preaching and teaching of the truth. We should be sure of what is taught, and develop seeking habits like those of the Bereans.*

**Fair-minded**

* Fair-minded – (KJV – *“more noble”*) – well-born, literally, high in rank.
  + Literally refers to those born into high-ranking families.
  + The Holy Spirit uses it figuratively to describe their mindset. 🡪
  + Figuratively the word is used to mean *generous*.
    - **They did not have any prejudice against Paul’s preaching, but gave him fair hearing.**
    - They were more generously minded than the Jews in Thessalonica. 🡪
* **(17:4) –** There were those who believed in Thessalonica just as there were in Berea.
  + There is no indication that all in Berea obeyed either. However, the majority is being considered.
  + Paul and Silas got a better overall reception in Berea than in Thessalonica. 🡪
* **(17:5-9)** – This is concerning the Jews who did not believe in Thessalonica.
  + They were jealous of Paul and Silas because of the success they had.
  + Instead of giving Paul a fair hearing, they caused an uproar.
  + They were unwilling to consider the doctrine preached.
  + ***“turned the world upside down”*** – where the gospel is preached there is always one of two reactions.
    - **2 Corinthians 2:14-17** – The fragrance of Christ’s knowledge that the Apostles diffused was the same fragrance in every place (***cf. Galatians 1:8 – “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”***).
      * **The fragrance meant something different to two different groups of people. Those who were being saved, that is, those who received the truth and obeyed it, the fragrance was life. Those who rejected it, those who are perishing, it was death.**
    - **Colossians 3:15** – The call of Christ, that is the gospel, promotes peace and unity.
      * The problem in Thessalonica was not the message, but the people.
      * Why did the gospel prove more successful in Berea? 🡪 The people’s attitude. They were willing to give Paul and Silas a fair hearing. They were generous to them in their thoughts.

**Received the Word with Readiness**

* Readiness – (KJV – *“readiness of mind”*) – predisposition; eagerness.
  + They were excited to hear Paul’s preaching.
  + **Furthermore, they were ready to accept it if it was the truth! They had a love for the truth, and did not have any prejudice toward any message.**
    - If the message proved to be true, they loved it because it was truth!
  + Example of opposite: **John 12:12-13 (Excited to see Jesus because with miracles He proved to be the Messiah – the Son of God – 11:14-15, 45)**
    - **12:37, 42-43** – Many did not believe Him even though they saw the signs. The atmosphere changed drastically. Why? 🡪
      * Jesus did not say what they wanted to hear (**cf. 12:27-36** – He said He would have to die. They wanted an earthly king that would reign as leader of physical Israel, making them a kingdom forever.)
      * They had their preconceived idea of who the messiah was and what He would do. When the truth did not add up to their standard they rejected it.
  + Paul and Silas preached Christ – **17:2-3**
    - This was in the OT scriptures. Old testament prophecy spoke of the Christ as one who would die for the sins of the world and raise up again, thus conquering death.
    - This is what Paul preached, ***“we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness” (1 Corinthians 1:23).***
      * The Jews wanted an earthly king who would reign on a physical throne in material excellence. Not a messiah who would die a shameful death on the cross.
    - However, the Bereans were willing to search this doctrine out to find ***“whether these things were so.”***
      * This is exactly what we should be doing.
      * ***John 17:17 – “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”***
      * **Galatians 1:6-10** – compare to the truth already known.
      * **1 John 4:1-3** – Testing the spirits. You do this by using the standard.
        + **It is possible to believe something just because someone said it, and have better knowledge of the subject because what they said was correct. Just as it is possible to believe something just because someone said it, and that leading you in the wrong direction because it is false. However, your faith will be more genuine and strong if you search the scriptures and find the truth yourself!**
        + ***“So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17)***
  + **Their seeking was daily!!!**
    - **Psalm 1:1-2 – This is something we must continually do if we are to know truth from error.**
    - **2 Corinthians 4:16 – The renewal is daily.**
    - **Personal study is a must – *“give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Timothy 4:13).***

**Many of them believed.**

* The result of an honest heart seeking truth is belief and salvation.
* **Matthew 7:7-8** – Seekers find!
  + ***The word produces faith, but an evil heart produces hat****e.*

*Paul and Silas did have success in Thessalonica, but it was with those who wanted truth, and found the doctrine they brought as the word of God (****cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:13)***

* This is accomplished by approaching learning with an open mind, willing to accept whatever the truth may be, and finding the truth through self-diligence!