

TABLE TALK

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE for September 18-September 24, 2022

“ACTS IN 30” Chapter 17: *The Disciples Turn Their World “Upside Down”*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW: Acts 17 describes how the Apostle Paul continues his 2nd missionary journey to Macedonia and Greece beginning in Thessalonica. Paul would later send Timothy to Thessalonica and eventually write two letters encouraging the believers there (the books I & II Thessalonians). No matter where Paul and Silas traveled, chaos and riots followed. Why? Because their Gospel message of Jesus being the Messiah and the resurrection of the dead for all believers was too much of a counter-cultural bombshell for many hearers. One rioter summed it up by proclaiming, “*These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.*” (Acts 17:6 NKJV)

DAY 1: Many Devout Greeks, Leading Women and Some Jews Become Believers

READ: Acts 17:1-9

REFLECT: Paul preaches in a local synagogue and “*proves*” (v. 3) to them that Jesus is the Messiah over a 3-week period. Some are persuaded and become believers but some “*jealous Jews*” (v. 5) hire local bandits to start a riot that force Paul and Silas to flee the city.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: What does it say to you about Paul’s pastoral heart that he preached for 3 weeks in Thessalonica (before being forced out), later sent Timothy back to them, and then eventually wrote two letters to encourage the believers there?

Application Question: What do you think it would mean for **believers today** to, “*turn the world upside down*” for Jesus? What would that look like practically speaking? What role could you imagine yourself playing in that type of scenario?

DAY 2: The Bereans Trust – But Verify – that the Apostle Paul is Preaching the Truth

READ: Acts 17:10-15

REFLECT: In the city of Berea, several Jews who were “*more noble*” and open-minded than those in Thessalonica listened intently to Paul’s messages that Jesus was the Messiah. They would daily “*examine the Scriptures*” to verify if what Paul was saying was the truth.

Context Question: What are some Bible verses that you can imagine Paul used to “*explain*” & “*prove*” to them that Jesus is the Messiah?

Application Question: How important is it to you to take time to verify or check out if what another preacher, pastor, or Christian speaker is saying is true - or not - based on Scripture like the Bereans did with Paul’s messages?

DAY 3: Paul Makes “The Unknown God” Known In Athens

READ: Acts 17:16-27

REFLECT: Paul and Silas begin preaching in Athens – the center of Greek culture and mythology – and his “spirit” became deeply troubled seeing the idols and false gods there. Paul quotes from Greek philosophers then persuades them to the truth that -through Jesus Christ- the revelation of God has now been made known to all humanity.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: In I Cor. 9:22a Paul stated, “*I have become all things to all people so that by all means I might save some.*” Do you believe this story of Paul using the Greeks’ empty philosophy to show them the truth of Jesus is an example of that passage? Why or why not?

Application Question: What can you personally learn about persuading people to the truth of who Jesus is by reading about Paul’s approach here? What are some creative ways you too can connect with those in your life who don’t know Jesus?

DAY 4: Jesus and the Resurrection of the Dead for all Believers is Too Much for Some to Handle

READ: Acts 17:28-34

REFLECT: Although Paul creatively connected with his audience, he did not hold back from the truth, “(God) *now commands that all people everywhere to repent*” (v. 30). Some in his audience did repent & believe while others mocked him. For Paul, it was all worth it!

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: What were some of the hard truths that Paul challenged and confronted the Athenians with?

Application Question: The Bible commands believers to, “*speak the truth in love*” (Ephesians 4:15). When was the last time you had to tell someone a “hard truth” about a situation? How did it go? Did you personally grow closer to Jesus through it?
