

# The Reasonableness of Christ

## Acts 17

### MAIN IDEAS

- Paul's preaching in the Thessalonica synagogue won some to Christ, but created open hostility among unbelievers
- Paul's message in the Berea synagogue was received in a better way than Thessalonica, but the hostility followed him
- Paul turns his attention to the Greek philosophers in Athens and reasons with them about God and His Son, Jesus - the savior of mankind
- In each place he went, Paul's message started with what the listeners knew and then expanded their understanding of God's truth revealed in Christ Jesus

Compare and contrast the way the Gospel was received/handled in Thessalonica against Berea, Acts 17:1-15. How does God describe the Berean believers? What does this say about the responsibility on the part of the hearer of the Gospel?

What do we learn about the dissenters? How does their persecution further the spread of the Gospel? How does this knowledge change your perspective on current thoughts/attitudes towards Christianity?

Stoics believed in a virtuous life that embraced trials and sufferings while Epicureans believed in avoiding pain and suffering and seeking out pleasure. How did Paul meet these two opposing thoughts and bring them into God's truth, Acts 17:23-31?

The phrase, "he reasoned with" or "he reasoned in" is said twice in this chapter. Why do you think Paul used this approach rather than give his own personal testimony of his conversion? What principle can we gain from this account? Where else is this principle supported in Scripture?

### PERSONAL RESPONSE

Being able to reason from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Savior of the world assumes we're regularly studying God's word. What changes in your life do you need to

implement so that you're always ready "to give an account for the hope" you have for eternal life, 1 Peter 3:15?

In addition to using our minds to reason for Christ, Acts tells us that Paul was roused in his spirit for true worship of God, Acts 17:16. How does Paul model the marriage of head and heart for us in this chapter?

Consider how you would answer modern day objections or questions to Christianity. For example, how would you answer the objection, "There are multiple ways to God and Christianity is just one way"? How could you turn that objection into a moment to share the Gospel?

## GROUP RESPONSE

Has anyone in your group ever shared the Gospel with an unbeliever? What started the conversation?

Consider practicing with each other so that you're prepared to give a defense of Christianity.

Pray for God to equip you and give you opportunities to share the good news!

## REPRODUCE

Ask the unbelievers in your life to share their objections and questions concerning Jesus and Christianity with you. Use these objections/questions to grow your understanding of their beliefs and how to answer them.

## KEY VERSES

From the sermon:

- Acts 17

Additional verses from the study:

- 1 Peter 3:15