

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (Acts 17:1 NKJV)

Thessalonica was a key port and the capital of the province of Macedonia.

Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (Acts 17:2 NKJV)

Arguments without Lordship breed pride;

Lordship without reasons breeds anti-intellectualism.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always [be] ready to [give] a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; (1 Peter 3:15 NKJV) explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and [saying], "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." (Acts 17:3 NKJV)

Explaining – opening the mind, and **Demonstrating** – laying alongside as evidence.

Paul unwraps the Hebrew Scriptures like a treasure map.

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He [was] wounded for our transgressions, [He was] bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6 NKJV)

This suffering servant is a person, and that person is the Messiah.

For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; (Psalm 22:16 NKJV)

Paul connected the dots. The Messiah had to suffer, and Jesus suffered.

The Messiah had to rise, and Jesus rose.

Messiah = Anointed of God

Crucified = Hanged on a tree = Cursed of God

"If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, "his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you [as] an inheritance; for he who is hanged [is] accursed of God. (Deuteronomy 21:22-23 NKJV)

Messiah who is anointed of God became cursed of God—for us.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"), (Galatians 3:13 NKJV)

The gospel is substitution before it is example.

And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. (Acts 17:4 NKJV)

The gospel is doing what it always does: breaking down dividing walls.

But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. (Acts 17:5 NKJV)

We move from acceptance to opposition.

When truth confronts power, power recruits hostility.

But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. (Acts 17:6 NKJV)

Christianity is not a hobby; it is a kingdom collision with every idol.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. (Matthew 5:13 NKJV)

"Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king--Jesus." And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go. (Acts 17:7-9 NKJV)

When people can't win the argument, they try to label believers as a threat to society.

From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." (John 19:12 NKJV)

Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. (Acts 17:10 NKJV)

Paul and Silas don't rest. They don't hide. They do it again.

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily [to find out] whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11 NKJV)

Key points here: *Received*—heart open, *Searched*—mind engaged.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV)

Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. (Acts 17:12 NKJV)

Christianity is evidence-based.

We'll never lose our faith by studying God's word—we'll deepen it.

But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed. (Acts 17:13-15 NKJV)

Satan seldom innovates; he agitates.

Let's be Bereans. Reason with people. Respect the Word. Receive the truth.

And be ready for how God will use you to turn your world upside down.

Amen!