

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (September 1, 2024)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

This morning one of our own, Bladimir Rivera, will lead us farther into our study of the book of Acts. Bladimir, his wonderful wife Trinidad, and his amazing kids, Amy, Julian, Keila, and Sofia have been an important part of Gracia de Cristo / Grace of Christ for many years. On any given Sunday you will likely find him, and his family, praying with others, attending classes, playing drums in our worship services, greeting, leading, loving, welcoming those they meet.

Bladimir has been in the Yakima Valley for more than 30 years. He became a Christian in his mid-teens and immediately jumped in to serve. He learned how to play the guitar, the drums too, and then started a band, toured and recorded CD's, all with the purpose of helping others meet and know Jesus.

After marrying Trinidad he pastored and preached in a church in Toppenish, and then, thankfully, God led them here. He and his wife genuinely love Jesus. They live out their faith with passion, kindness, and warmth. It is an honor to have Bladimir preach this morning. In chapter 17 of the book of Acts, in the city of Berea, the people there, "received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things (about Jesus) were so." I want to be like that! I want to examine the Bible, seek Truth, meet and know God. That's my prayer personally, and for this church, for our city too.

One Service Summer Sundays: Bladimir Rivera (Acts 17:1-14 ESV)

"¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, 'This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.' ⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵ But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶ And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, '**These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ⁷ and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.**' ⁸ And the people and the city authorities were disturbed when

they heard these things. ⁹ And when they had taken money as security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there."

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What was Paul's experience in Thessalonica?
2. Why were people upset and angry about what Paul taught?
3. What was Paul's experience in Berea?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

4. What does, "explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead" mean? v.3
5. What does, "they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus" mean? v. 7

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

6. What is one thing you are passionate about, know a lot about, do often, and enjoy? Why are you so passionate about this?
7. When did you first hear about Jesus? How did you respond?
8. Why do some today get upset when Jesus is talked about?
9. What, or Who, makes a person (yourself included) want to study the Bible, seek Truth, and learn about Jesus? Discuss
10. Compared to where you were in your first years as a Christian, (in studying the Bible and knowing God) where are you today?
11. What steps do you need to take now to grow in your understanding of, and love for, Jesus? Write out these steps.

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be a natural part of your day. Prayer is a conversation: talking to God and listening to God. Ask God to place in you a passion and desire to seek Him, to seek Truth, to study the Scriptures. Ask God to meet you and help you know Him. He will ... because He loves you.