Sermon Summary

The missionaries move on from Philippi and their next stop is Thessalonica. Paul could only stay a few weeks here because of violent persecution, fuelled by the jealousy of the Jews. Even so, there are a good number of converts and a new church is formed.

Here we get an insight into Paul’s methods and the kind of opposition that the preaching of the gospel is likely to provoke.

Personal Application

Q Who are the people in your life that you find it hardest to witness to? What makes it so hard?

Q Read v1-3. Who is Paul speaking to? What is the approach that he takes?

Q What misconceptions did Paul need to address? What misconceptions about Jesus do people have today?

Q Read v4-9. What are the different ways that people reacted to Paul? Why do you think the Jews reacted so strongly?

Q What do they accuse Paul and Silas of?

Q What kinds of untrue things do people accuse Christians of today? How should we respond?
To avoid the riots in Thessalonica, Paul and Silas are sent away, about 50 miles southwest to a town called Berea. Once again, the brothers make their way to the Jewish Synagogue to share the Good News with both Jews and Greeks. This short section gives us a little portrait of a community who are “of more noble character than the Thessalonians”.

Q Why do you think people consider the Bible to be a boring, dusty old book!?

Q Read v10-14. How did the Bereans receive the message that Paul and Silas spoke to them? Did they just accept it at face value?

Q How did the Bereans determine if what they were hearing was true? Why would this have been quite a challenge for them in that day and age?

Q How would you describe what having a “noble character” means? What would the opposite look like? Have you ever encountered these different responses to the Gospel?

Q Why do the Jews from Thessalonica come to Berea? How does Luke describe the problem they had with these missionaries in v13?

Q Why is the Word of God so divisive?
Date: 3rd July 2022
Passage: Acts 17:15-34
Preacher: Andy Bruins

Sermon Summary

Paul has been left on his own in the great city of Athens. He quickly discovers that this city is a ‘forest of idols’ and he is deeply moved by the lostness of its citizens. Having engaged the local philosophers, Paul is granted an opportunity to address the gathering of the great thinkers on Mars Hill. This chapter gives us a brief record of how the Apostle tried to communicate the gospel in this melting pot of religion, superstition and philosophical thought.

Personal Application

Q What are some of the good and bad things that define our culture and shape the way that people think?

Q Read v16-21. What is it that distresses Paul about Athens? What does he do about it?

Q Where are the places today where we can meaningfully engage with the unbelieving world?

Q Read v22-31. What does Paul know about Greek culture? How do you think he has learned about it?

Q What do you think are the key things that Paul wants to get across? Why has he picked these things to focus on?

Q What can we learn from Paul about bringing the gospel message into our own culture?