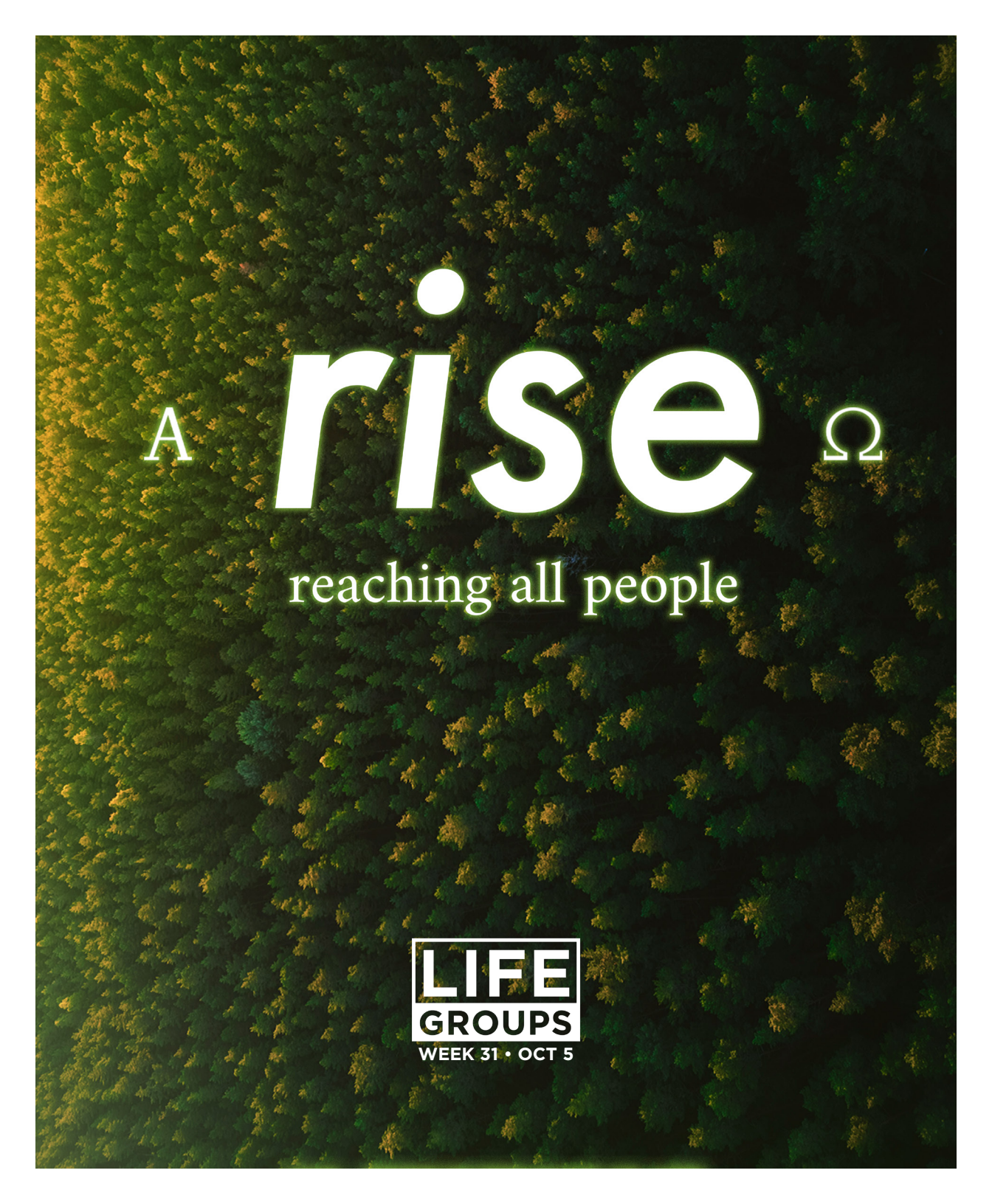




A *rise* Ω

reaching all people

LIFE
GROUPS

WEEK 31 • OCT 5

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

What's your most irrational fear?

BACKGROUND

Previously in Acts Chapter 16 we saw Paul and his companions in Philippi. In chapter 17, Paul and his group travel to the city of Thessalonica. Paul again seeks out a Jewish synagogue where he first brings the gospel to the Jews. Paul spent three Sabbath days discussing and teaching scripture, and within a month persuaded several Jews, many devout Greek gentiles, and notable women in the city to accept his views about the Messiah. Paul explained that the Jewish Messiah must suffer, die, and be resurrected. Most Jews could not accept that this Jesus of Nazareth was to be their expected version of the Messiah. His death on a roman cross was not the King they were looking for. Paul achieved results quickly but faced opposition. Jealous religious leaders incited unrest in the marketplace, turning people against Paul and Silas. But God fully in control, sends Paul and Silas away before the mob arrives. The mob must settle for dragging out Jason, the man who had offered lodging for Paul and his companions before the city authorities. The mob accuses Paul, Silas, Jason and others of acting against the decrees of Caesar. The people and authorities were greatly disturbed by these charges and Jason and others were required to pay a bond before being released.

In the night the brothers sent Paul and Silas on to the city of Berea where they repeat their pattern of teaching and preaching the Gospel. Luke describes a difference between the people of Thessalonica and Berea, stating that the Bereans examined Paul's teachings daily by comparing them to the Scriptures. When the leaders from Thessalonica learned about Paul and Silas's location, they followed them with the intention of causing further disturbance. This action forces Paul to flee to Athens leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 17:2-3

And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the scriptures, 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."

READ: Acts 17:1-15



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. What happened to the "new" Christians in Thessalonica? See 1 Thessalonians 1.
2. Jesus told a parable about four kinds of soil, comparing people who respond to the Gospel in different ways to different kinds of soil (see Luke 8:5-15). How do the Thessalonians and Bereans illustrate this parable?
3. What characteristics of Bereans are specifically praised in Acts 17? What does the reaction of the Bereans tell us today about how to deal with new and provocative teachings?

DEEPER DISCOVERY

- While Paul's specific calling from God was to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15), why was Paul's first stop in a new city always to the local synagogue? See Acts 14:1, 17:1-2, 18:4; Romans 1:16, 9:3-4; and Ephesians 3:8.



HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

1. What is meant by *and when they had taken money as security from Jason and the rest, they let them go* (Acts 17:9)? Do you think this may be what Paul was referring to in 1 Thessalonians 2:17-18?
2. What is peculiar about their (Jewish leaders) claim that Paul is "*acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another King, Jesus*" (v. 7)? What is the real reason for their accusation?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. How can we maintain our faith and continue our mission when facing opposition, like Paul and Silas did in Thessalonica and Berea?
2. How can we discern when to move on from a place or situation , as Paul did with Thessalonica and Berea?
3. What can we (Christians)do today to be more effective in “turning the world upside down”?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 9:15
But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.”

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)