

Acts of the Apostles

37 – Stand up and Speak out

Acts 16.35-17.15

Philippi

- Godless / Pagan city made for a long night of great ministry
- Maybe it doesn't always work out smoothly in the end – they did end up back in jail (“come out”)
- Concerning my rights and when to stand up and speak out:
 - When it helps others
 - When it holds others accountable
 - Both of those hold a sense of “responsibility” instead of “getting what I deserve”

Thessalonica

His approach:

- Start where they are (both in geography and worldview)
- Reason from the Scriptures – not so much argument as announcement
 - If what you said can't be read, then you're not clear – say what the Bible says in the tone in which it says it
 - ILL: Power Paradox / Brené Brown
- Jesus before issues
 - Their objection – Messiah = Delivering King and Snake Crusher but it was the wrong kind of deliverance and wrong identity of the snake
 - Our objection – any number of social issues but if Jesus rose from the dead than He deserves a hearing on the most important questions
- Be patient (3 weeks with M-F conversations)
- The result was a diversity (v.4) and jealousy (v.5) that we should anticipate too
 - When you preach the Gospel and live it out, diversity is one type of fruit that grows on the Gospel tree
 - When you have to align yourself with wicked men to get your way, then you are prostituting your morals for power (they weren't acting against Caesar – they were proclaiming there is One King, not “another king”)

Berea

- Nobility / Open-minded
 - Eager to hear what was being said from the Scriptures
 - We are a people who open the book (Dura Europos vs. Mithra Temple)
In your life (no part it doesn't speak to) – in church life – read a whole book?
 - Examined the Scriptures daily to see if what was said was true

- We are a people who believe God speaks as He has spoken
- He wasn't wrong the first time AND the deeper we go the more they apply to us
- The result was belief (v.12) and opposition (v.13) – expect both

Questions for Discussion

1. Trent opened the sermon talking about how stories can be told to make a point. What's the story from your childhood you remember your parent(s) telling to make a point or drive home a lesson to you?
2. As Americans, we're prone to demand "our rights." Paul hardly ever did. As an example, read 1 Cor. 9.3-15. What parallels and contrasts do you see between that passage and Acts 16.35-40? What "rights" are you prone to demand? What would change if you thought about them as "responsibilities?"
3. In Thessalonica, Paul used a four-step approach to sharing the Gospel. Out of the four steps listed, which one do you find easiest to do? Most difficult? Why?
4. In the sermon, Trent said it was important to talk about Jesus before talking about issues. What are some reasons for doing so? What are some strategies you can employ (statements you can make, etc.) that can help you talk about Jesus first and issues second? How have you seen the opposite go badly?
5. How is the Bible shaping your (personal) life right now? How do you see it shaping our church family? What is one way that you can be "more Berean" in your approach to the Scripture?