

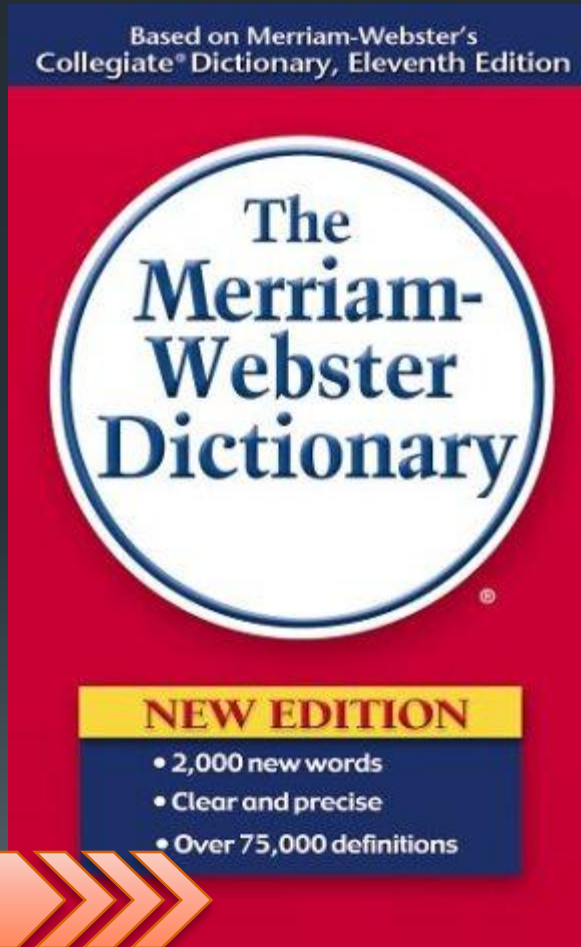


# RECEIVING THE WORD OF GOD

*Conversions In  
Thessalonica,  
Berea, & Athens*

**Acts 17:1-34**

## Convert; Converted



transitive verb

- 1 - a : **to bring over from one belief, view, or party to another** b : to bring about a religious conversion in
- 2 - a : to alter the physical or chemical nature or properties of especially in manufacturing b (1) : **to change from one form or function to another** (2) : to alter for more effective utilization

# CONVERSION OF SAUL FROM TARUSUS



## Convert; Converted



**Matthew 18:3-4 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are **converted** and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore **whoever humbles himself** as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.





# CONVERSION OF SAUL FROM TARUSUS

## Convert; Converted



Luke 15:11-24

- ✦ Not merely a change in actions –
- ✦ A change in knowledge –
- ✦ A change in conviction -
- ✦ A change in allegiance –
- ✦ A change in thinking & will –
- ✦ A change in commitment – resulting in a change in relationship & identity -
- ✦ A change in who we are – how we talk – where we go – what we do -





## Psalm 19:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD *is* perfect,  
converting the soul; The testimony  
of the LORD *is* sure, making wise  
the simple;

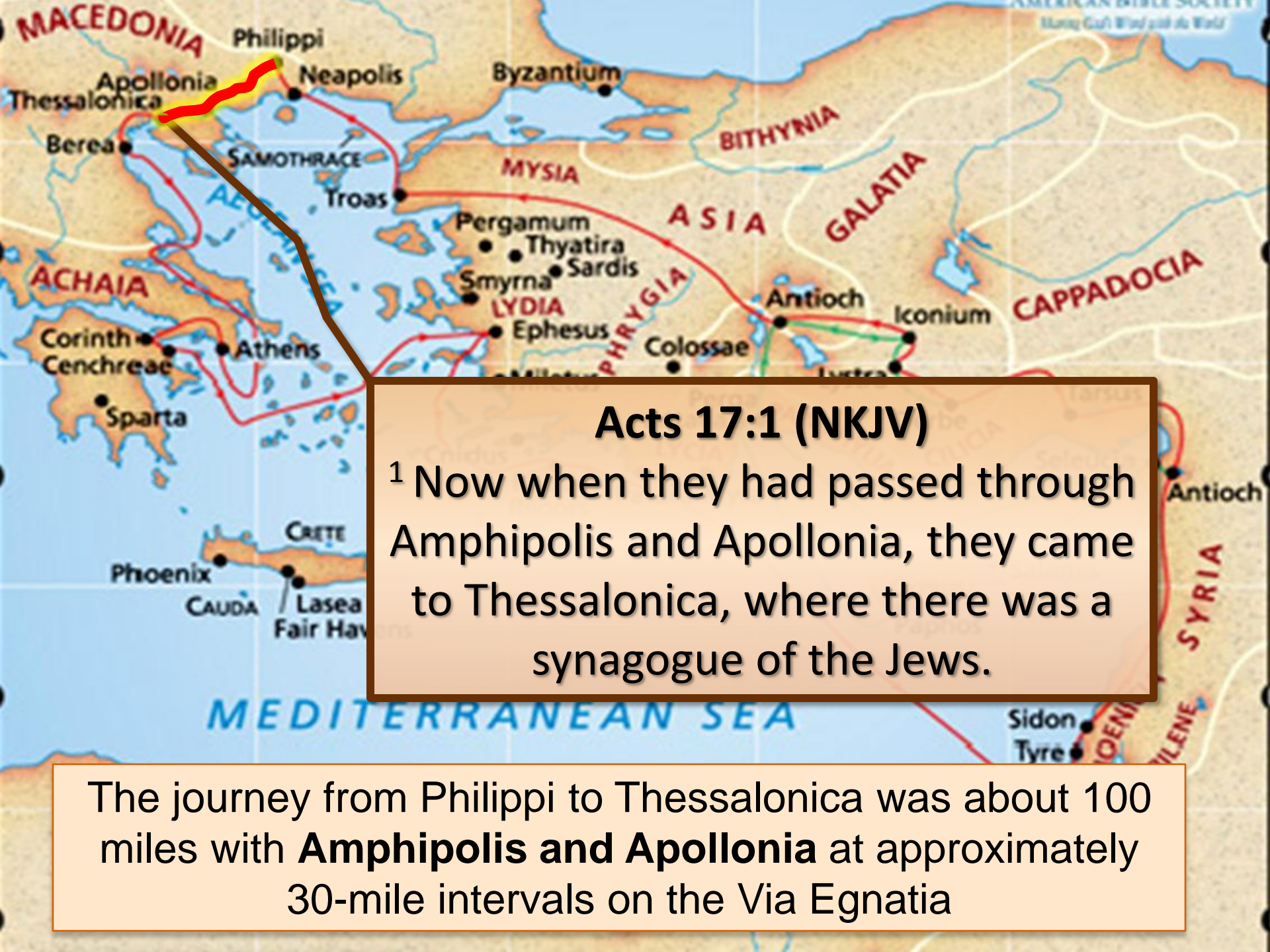


# CONVERSION FROM 2-16



- ♦ **The Jews on Pentecost** – Heard, pricked in hearts, repented and were baptized – Act 2:14-42,47
- ♦ **The Samaritans** – Heard Jesus preached, believed and were baptized – Acts 8:4-13
- ♦ **Eunuch** – Heard, believed, and was baptized – Acts 8:30-39
- ♦ **Gentiles** – Heard, believed, were baptized – Acts 10:1-11:18
- ♦ **Lydia** – Heard, believed, heeded – was baptized – Acts 16:11-15
- ♦ **Jailor** – Heard, believed, was baptized – Acts 16:25-34



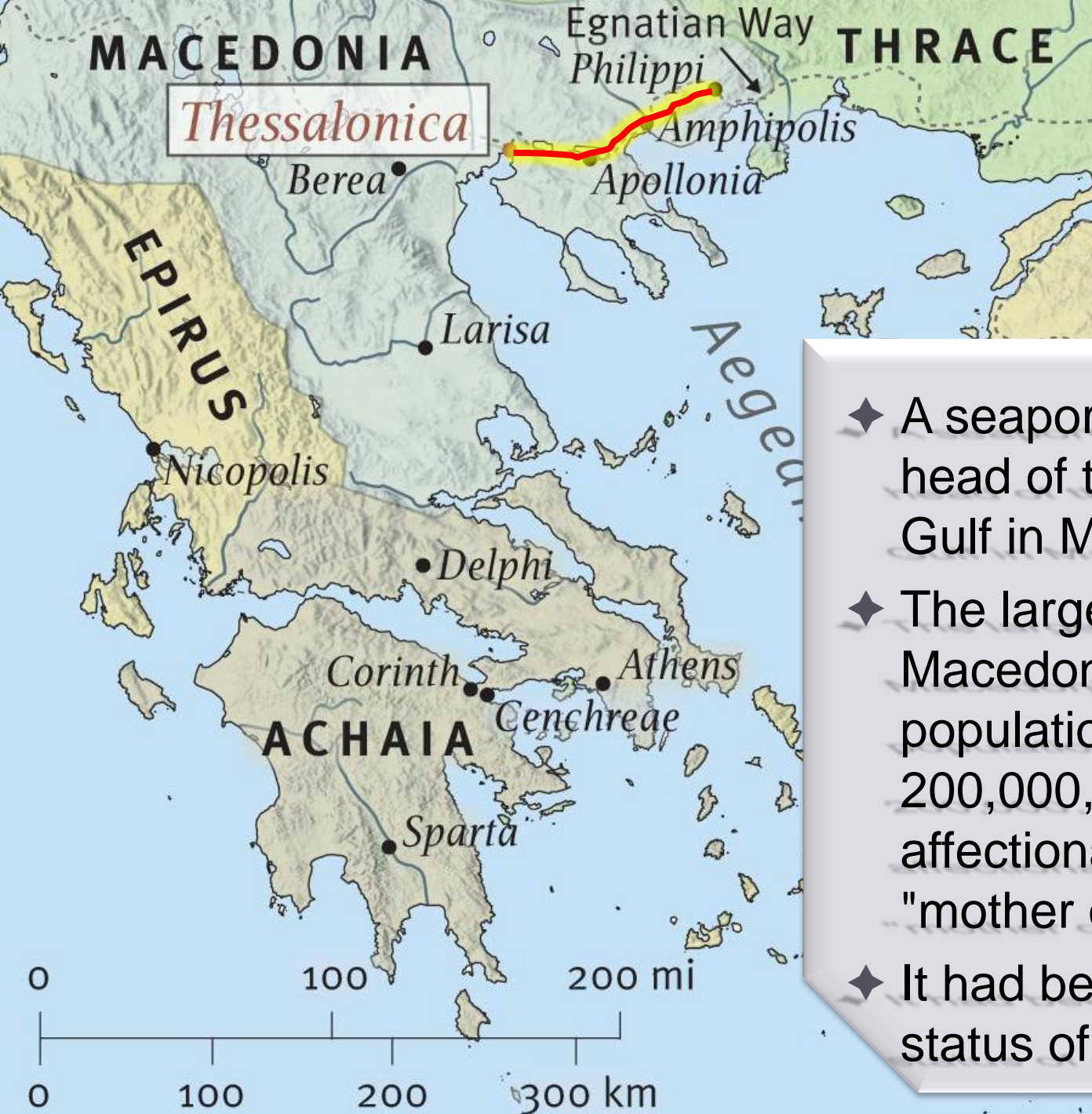


### Acts 17:1 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

The journey from Philippi to Thessalonica was about 100 miles with **Amphipolis and Apollonia** at approximately 30-mile intervals on the Via Egnatia





- ◆ A seaport located at the head of the Themaic Gulf in Macedonia.
- ◆ The largest city of Macedonia, with a population of ca. 200,000, The city was affectionately called the "mother of all Macedon."
- ◆ It had been granted the status of a free city.



- ◆ An immoral city - (1 Thes 1:9).
- ◆ Large Jewish population with synagogue (Acts 17:1).
- ◆ 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians was written by Paul in 52 A.D. from Corinth and sent by Timothy, who returned with good news of their faith (Acts 18:1,5; 1 Thes. 3:1-8).



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT THESSALONICA - (17:1-9)



- ♦ Paul went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath for three weeks – *as was his custom* - (17:1,2)
- ♦ Reasoned with them from the scriptures - (17:2).
- ♦ Explaining & proving that Jesus is the promised Messiah & that He had to suffer, die & be raised from the dead - (17:3; cf Ps 22; Is 53).
- ♦ Some were persuaded & joined them - (17:4).



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT THESSALONICA - (17:1-9)



- ◆ Unbelieving & envious Jews form a mob of evil men attempting to stop the spread of the gospel – (17:5)
- ◆ Attacked the house of Jason who had welcomed Paul & his party - (17:5-7).
- ◆ The power of the gospel to turn the world upside down - (17:6; Ro 1:16).
- ◆ Accused Paul of teaching against Caesar saying “there is another king – JESUS” - (17:7,8; Lk 23:2; Jn 19:15)

## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT THESSALONICA - (17:1-9)



- ◆ Received the word of God as God's word - (1 Thes 1:6; 2:13)
- ◆ Chosen by God, in that they heard, believed and obeyed the gospel -(1 Thes 1:4; 2 Thes 2:13-15).
- ◆ Followed apostles and the Lord - Work of faith and labor of love – Truly repented - (1 Thes 1:3,6,9)
- ◆ Evangelistic - Helped spread the gospel - (1 Thes 1:7-10)
- ◆ Imitated the churches in Judea - (1 Thes 2:14)



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT BEREA - (17:10-15)



- ◆ Sent away from Thessalonica by night - (17:10)
- ◆ Went into the synagogue when they arrived at Berea - (17:10).
- ◆ “These were more noble-minded” – (i.e., noble in character, honest, seeking what is true - 17:11)
- ◆ They received the word with all readiness - (not gullible, but truth seekers – 17:11; cf. Acts 2:41)
- ◆ Searched the scriptures daily - (17:11; John 5:39; 2 Tim 3:15-17)



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT BEREA - (17:10-15)



### Acts 17:11-12 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

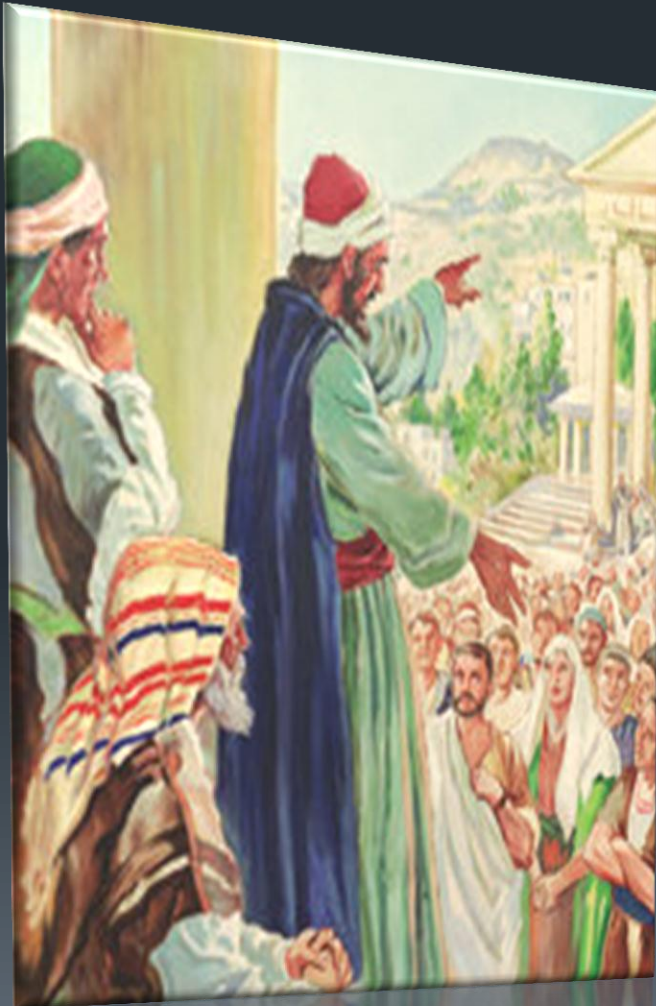
## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT BEREA - (17:10-15)



- ♦ They heard the same gospel that those in Jerusalem, Samaria, Caesarea Philippi, Philippi and Thessalonica had heard –
- ♦ They received the same gospel and believed the same gospel –
- ♦ Wouldn't it be reasonable, logical, and certain to conclude that they repented & were baptized just as the others? (Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12,13,37-39; 9:18; 22:16; 10:47,48; 16:15, 33)



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT ATHENS - (17:16-34)

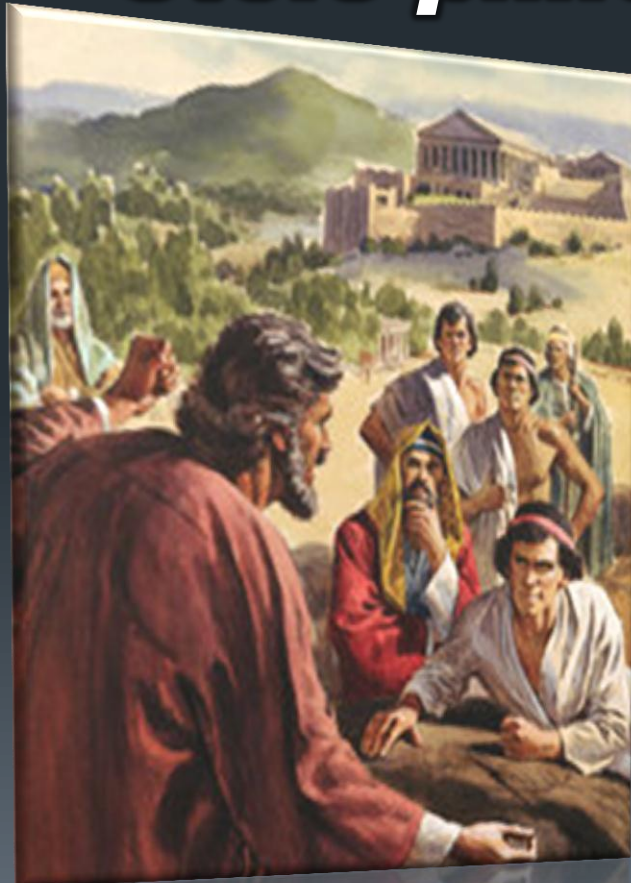


- ♦ **The city given over to idols** – (Paul's spirit was provoked - 17:16)
- ♦ **Reasoned with those in the synagogue** – (both Jewish & Gentile worshippers – 17:17)
- ♦ **Reasoned daily in the marketplace** with those who were there – (17:17)
- ♦ **Encounter with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers** – Taken to Areopagus, "Hill of Ares" or "Mars Hill" so they could hear this new doctrine of Jesus and the resurrection – (17:18-21)



## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT ATHENS - (17:16-34)

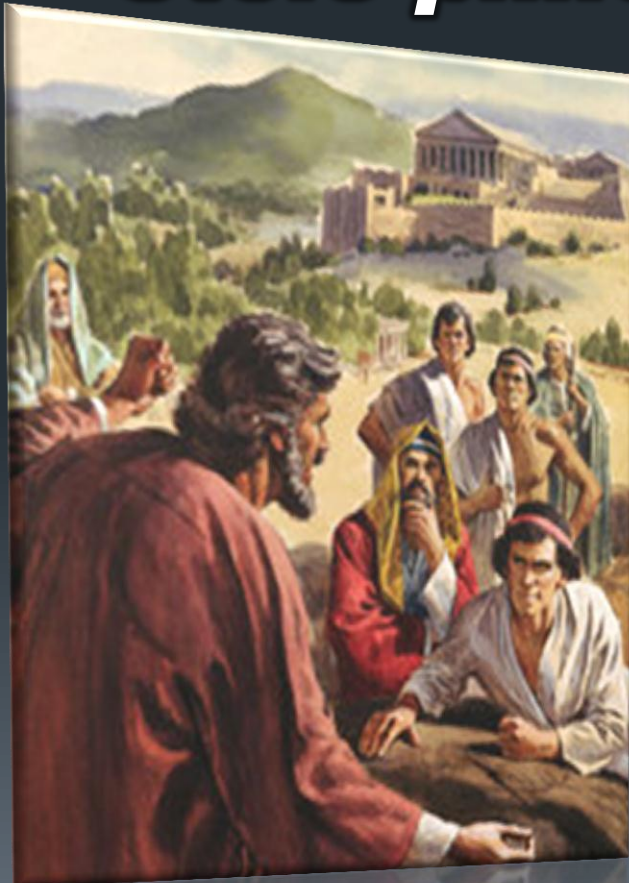
### ***Encounter with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers – (17:18-21)***



- ♦ **Epicurean:** Pleasure, the highest end in loving - (*generous, kindly, and patriotic* - “eat, drink and be merry”)
  - ❖ Denied the world was created, matter is eternal,
  - ❖ Denied future retribution
  - ❖ Denied the immortality of the soul
  - ❖ Denied the gods exercised any providential control

## PAUL, SILAS & TIMOTHY AT ATHENS - (17:16-34)

### ***Encounter with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers – (17:18-21)***



- ♦ **Stoic:** The world was created by Zeus - *All things were governed by the “Fates,” to whom Zeus himself was subject*
  - ❖ Self-denial was thought to contribute to the highest end in life
  - ❖ affections were to be suppressed - apathy to pleasure or pain
  - ❖ mastery over all desires and lusts
  - ❖ Denied the immortality of the soul



## PAUL'S SERMON ON MARS HILL - (17:22-31)



- ♦ He perceives the Athenians to be “very religious” – vs. 22
- ♦ Idols representing all their “gods” lined the city road which Paul referred to as “objects of worship” - vs. 23
- ♦ Among them was an idol labeled “To The Unknown God” - 23

## PAUL'S SERMON ON MARS HILL - (17:22-31)

**“Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.”**

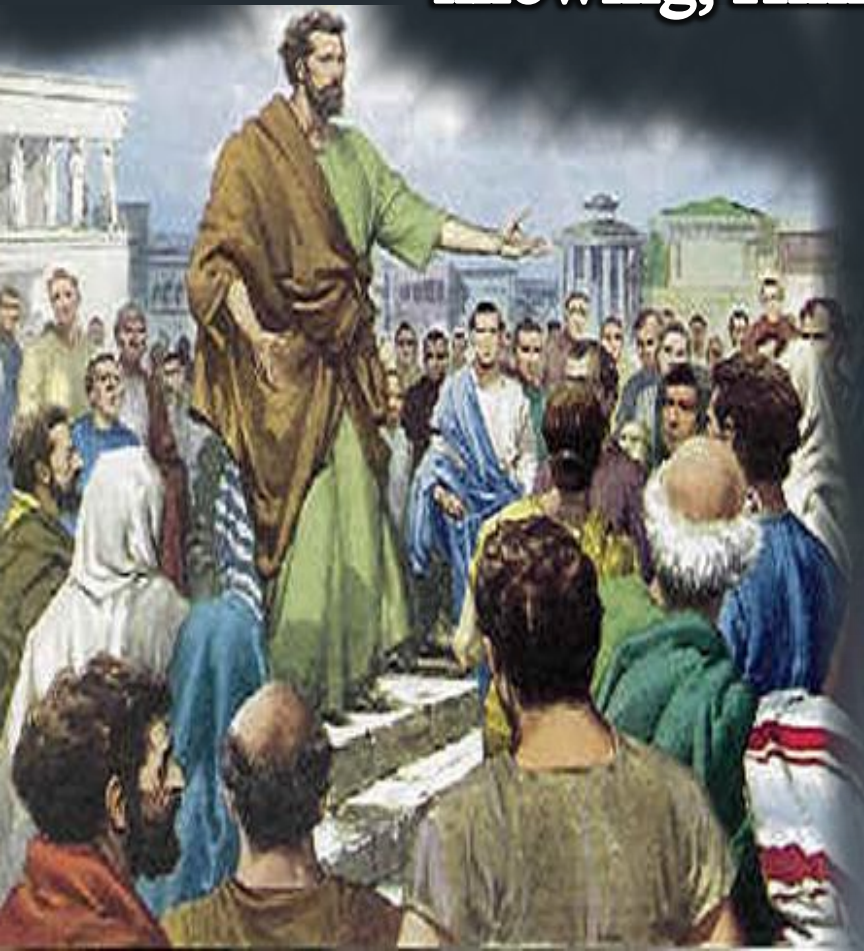


- ◆ “Made the world and everything in it...” - 24
- ◆ “Lord of heaven and earth” - 24
- ◆ “Does not dwell in temples made with hands” - 24
- ◆ “Not worshiped with men’s hands...” - 25
- ◆ “Made from one blood every nation of men...” - 26
- ◆ “Determined man’s times and the boundaries” - 26
- ◆ “He is not far from each of us” - 27
- ◆ “In Him we live and move and have our being.” - 28
- ◆ “Divine Nature – Spirit, creator, not created” - 29



## PAUL'S SERMON ON MARS HILL - (17:22-31)

**“Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.”**

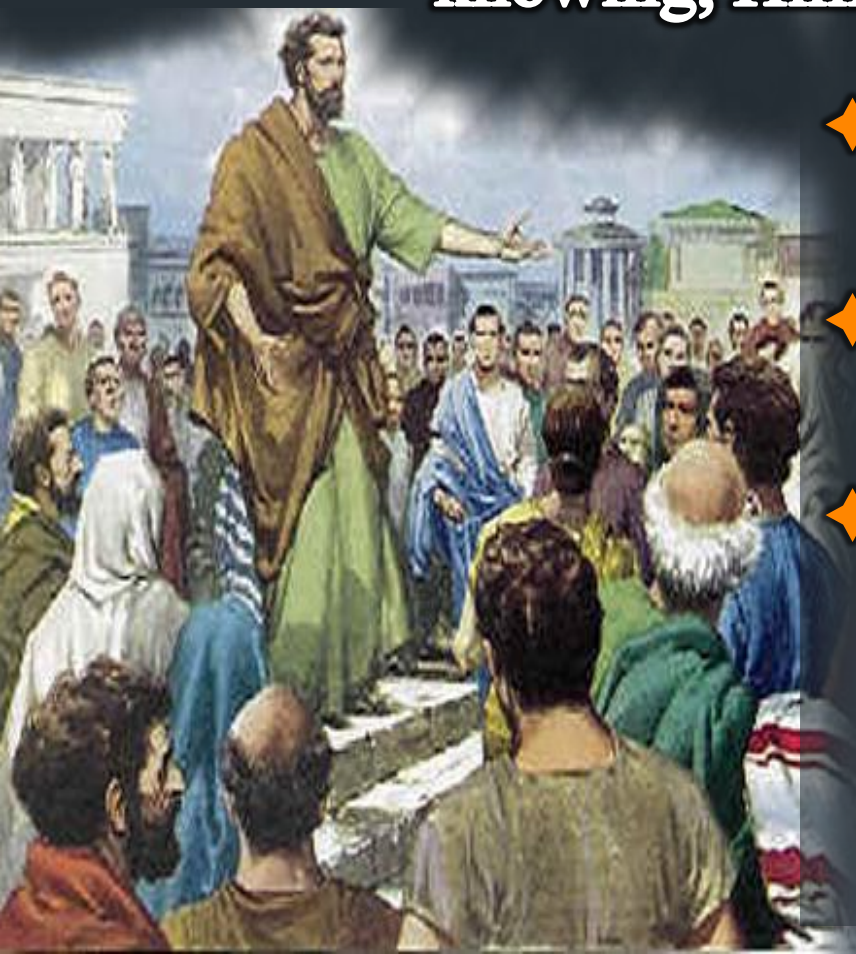


**Acts 17:30-31 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup> Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

## PAUL'S SERMON ON MARS HILL - (17:22-31)

“Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.”



- ♦ Some mocked at the idea of the resurrection – 17:32
- ♦ Some procrastinated – we'll hear you again . . . 17:32
- ♦ Some joined Paul and believed – Dionysius, an Areopagus member (*i.e., a council member*), and a woman named Damaris and others– 17:34



## Conversions In Thessalonica, Berea, & Athens - Acts 17:1-18:18



- ✦ Some in Thessalonica were persuaded by the evidence – *received the word, believed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit* – **Acts 17:4; 1 Thes 2:13,14; 2 Thes 2:13,14**
- ✦ Many in Berea heard with readiness, searched it out and received the gospel as the truth by obeying it – **17:11,12; Acts 2:41; 1 Pet, 1:22,23**
- ✦ There were some in Athens willing to receive the word of God, repent and join the disciples – **17:34; Acts 2:47;**

# RECEIVE THE WORD OF GOD

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## LESSONS & APPLICATIONS



- ◆ Not saved without hearing the gospel – *(start where people are)*.
- ◆ We must be truth seekers.
- ◆ All saved the same way – hearing, believing, repenting, confessing, being baptized.
- ◆ The gospel is for all!!
- ◆ We will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ –



# HAVE YOU BEEN CONVERTED?



- ◆ Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God?
- ◆ Have you confessed Jesus as the Christ?
- ◆ Have you by faith, obeyed the truth in repentance and baptism? (1 Pet. 1:22,23)
- ◆ You can leave this morning prepared for the coming judgment!







# RECEIVING THE WORD OF GOD

*Conversions In*

*Thessalonica, Berea, & Athens Acts 17:1-34*

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## 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. <sup>14</sup> For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans,



## 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, <sup>16</sup> forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

## **1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. <sup>18</sup> Therefore we wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us. <sup>19</sup> For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? <sup>20</sup> For you are our glory and joy.