

LIFE GROUP SERMON APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon: Acts 17:1-34 | Knowing the Difference Between a Crockpot and a Microwave

November 10, 2024



STARTING POINT: How have you grown in life as a result of people being both patient with you but also being encouraged to take the next step in your walk with Jesus?

IMPORTANT CONTEXT: Paul is in the middle of his second missionary journey. In chapter 16 Paul and Silas met Timothy in Lystra and Timothy joined as part of Paul's ministry team. They desired to go to up to Asia but the Holy Spirit closed the door to that so Paul responded to the call to go to Macedonia. They went to Philippi and where we read of the conversion of Lydia.

Paul and Silas are arrested for healing a young demon-possessed girl -- the men who had been abusing her were furious and misrepresented them to the city authorities. While in prison, God caused an earthquake and miraculously removed the shackles from the prisoners and opened the prison doors. Paul and everyone remained there, and the jailer was converted.

Paul and Silas are released and spend time with the new church in Philippi before heading to Thessalonica.

1. Read verses 1-9 (PAUL ALLOWS TIME FOR PEOPLE TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT JESUS AND THE SCRIPTURES) and discuss your notes.
 - a. Pastor Chris gave three essentials for everyone who teaches, preaches or shares Scripture. Review and discuss these:
 - o Accuracy
 - o Clarity
 - o Usefulness
 - b. In Thessalonica Paul takes the "crockpot" approach. What are some practical examples of when we should allow ample time for someone to grow and understand in life?
2. Read verses 10-15 (PAUL ALLOWS GOD'S PLAN TO SHAPE HIS PATH) and discuss your notes.
 - a. What was particularly noble about the Bereans (v11)?
 - b. What does it mean to "search the Scriptures to see if these things were so"?
 - c. Read and discuss John 5:39; 2 Tim. 2:15; Psalm 119:105

- d. Review and discuss the 3 ways you have to allow God to mold and change your thinking:
 - KNOWING HIM
 - KNOWING OTHERS
 - KNOWING SELF

3. Read verses 16-29 (PAUL ALLOWS PEOPLE THE SPACE TO PROCESS NEW IDEAS AND TRUTHS) and discuss your notes.
 - a. We talked about where we can compromise and where we cannot. Review your notes along with the list below:
 - What do we call the study and practice of logically defending our faith? (apologetics)
 - What do you know about apologetics?
 - How can you begin to work towards proficiency in having the skill to defend basic Christian beliefs?
 - Read and discuss 1 Peter 3:15 and Colossians 4:6

4. Read verses 30-34 (PAUL KNOWS WHEN TO PRESS FOR A DECISION) and discuss your notes.
 - a. Paul uses the “microwave” method at the end of his message and presses for a decision, a response to the gospel to the Athenians gathered at Mars Hill. What are times and situations where pressing someone for a response is appropriate?
 - b. Read and discuss 2 Cor. 6:2 and Hebrews 9:27.
 - c. Pastor Chris closed by giving examples of times to be patient and times to press in. Share notes and your own examples.

Close your time in prayer together using this format:

- Praise and prayers of adoration/praise/thanksgiving to God.
- Pray for our church to be a place of evangelism.
- Pray for our new Hope Kids remodel and Activity Center expansion project.
- Pray that Living Hope would be unified as a body of believers.
- Share and pray for the needs of those specifically in your group.