

## The Journey, And Two Kinds Of Christians

### Scripture Text:

Acts 17:1-12 KJV Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: (2) And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, (3) Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. (4) And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. (5) But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. (6) And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; (7) Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. (8) And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. (9) And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. (10) And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. (11) These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (12) Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

### Message:

Last week I showed us how the journey of Israel from Egypt through the wilderness towards Canaan is compared in the book of Hebrews 3 to our lives as Christians.

- We discussed how Christians have a destination to reach for after they are saved, just as Israel had a land to occupy after they were taken from Egypt.
- And Hebrews 3 tells us what this destination is:

Hebrews 3:10-14 KJV **Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. (11) So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) (12) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. (13) But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (14) For **we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;****

It is becoming PARTAKERS OF CHRIST.

Now, if partaking of Christ is compared to the destination of the Exodus journey, then WE ARE IN A PROGRESSIVE JOURNEY towards this.

I do want to pause and state that the concept of Canaan representing Heaven, as though we cross the Jordan of physical death one day to then go to heaven, if we remained faithful to God in this life, is not only a very shallow concept, relegating our time on earth as to merely holding on to what we've got, but a diverting tactic of a lie to keep us away from doing everything God desires us to do in this world.

- As we have mentioned afore, heaven has nothing compared to giants and enemy tribes of people and well-walled cities that we must overcome.
- If that is your sense of heaven, then you can take your struggle of a heaven and keep it to yourself!

Partaking of Christ is taking part of everything that Christ is for the Christian.

- And He is everything we need!
- Paul said we are complete in Christ!
- That means we lack if we know him, but just need to start taking this heritage and enjoying it in this life now.

**But this is a journey.**

WE DO NOT EXPERIENCE EVERYTHING THERE IS FOR US TO EXPERIENCE WHEN WE ARE FIRST SAVED.

- If this is a journey, then there are greater experiences to know.
- There are more truths to learn.
- There are more realms to walk through and in which to exist than we have ever known yet.

The reason churches have become halls of boredom and no competition to the pleasures and entertainment of this world is because much of Christianity has lost the concept of further experiences and the idea of a journey we are on as we travel into greater depths of truth and experience in Jesus Christ.

- Too many circles have pitched their tents at some point of truth their forefathers discovered, and refused to be open to receive any more truths, or to accept any further leading.
- And the generation alive today from a former people who excitedly found depths of truths in times past, have no discovery of their own.
- And any generation that rests on the treasures of the past is a generation doomed to die!
- And this can all be circumvented by the understanding that God has so much truth that no matter how many generations of the church exists in this earth, no one will ever exhaust all of God's provisions.

- This does not mean, though, that there is not a destination for each life that cannot be reached.

Understand there are two categories of truth.

- There is the unlimited storehouse of experiences and awareness that any generation can seek out further than their predecessors and enjoy.
- Take advantage of what the generations before discovered.
- But also reach out for discoveries yourself!

And then there is the category of each generation having to learn for themselves how to personally come to a place of maturity where we grow into the fullness of the stature of Jesus Christ, to a complete and unlack person.

- And to no longer waste weeks and months and years with struggling, so we can free up to launch out into more truths and enjoy more experiences.

So there is the realm of never ending searches into wonders of God.

And there is the realm of personal journey to maturity.

- You can only mature so much.
- But you can ever search out the glories of God.

AND TIME is an element God uses in all of this.

- I am excited to know this is a journey!
- The moment I learn of what victory I can have, for example, is not the moment I am expected to totally enjoy that victory.
- Our minds were so limited from the life of sin in which we all lived before salvation, that it requires time even for God to change our thinking so we can expect MORE than what we ever expected to

live as slaves to sin.

- Paul said we are no longer slaves and servants to sin.
- We were freed from sin (Ro 6:7).

And because this limited thinking was in our very blood, born in us due to having been born in sin, it takes TIME for this to eventually replace our limited concept with this unlimited awareness.

- THIS IS THE TRANSFORMATION BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MINDS.
- It's one thing to know this, BUT YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO LIVE A LIFE OVER SINNING THE MOMENT YOU KNOW IT.
- IT TAKES TIME TO CHANGE YOUR THINKING until you really and truly "GET IT".
- You see, we can know these things, but they are nothing more than mere words, with no real substance in our hearts until we GET A LIFE-IMPACTING REVELATION and we genuinely KNOW this to be true!
- When you truly have no doubts about it, you will then LIVE BY it.

Coming to APPRECIATE these truths we are hearing, and to replace our natural thoughts that are tainted by sin with these new concepts until we totally CAN LIVE BY THEM (for we cannot live by something if we do not fully believe it and are convinced of it) TAKES TIME.

We see the note in the exodus of PROGRESSIVE JOURNEYING and conquest.

Deuteronomy 7:16-24 KJV **And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee. (17) If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? (18) Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; (19) The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God**

do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid. (20) Moreover the LORD thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed. (21) Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible. (22) And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. (23) But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. (24) And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.

#### LITTLE BY LITTLE.

Isaiah 28:9-10 KJV Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. (10) For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

#### IT TAKES TIME.

Romans 12:2 KJV And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

#### FOR EXAMPLE: JESUS WASTES NO TIME

We all know Jesus does not fool with sin today.

- He wastes no time with sin and messing with such a weak entity in comparison to His power and His works in glory today.
- The bible teaches us he ever intercedes for us as high priest.
- That means IT IS STILL ONGOING.

- And we read He sits on the right hand throne until all enemies are made his footstool.

Imagine Jesus still struggling with sin and trying to get clear of sin so He can be freed up to do God's will.

Romans 6:9-10 KJV **Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. (10) For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.**

He is so free of sin and so much more powerful than sin, that he wastes no time in messing with petty little sin!

- That is what it means to read HE DIED TO SIN.
- And He lives to God.

DIED is one single past event.

- LIVETH has the ETH suffix and implies CONTINUAL LIVING.
- Imagine Christ continually living to sin and always struggling against it, neck to neck.
- That is silly.
- He is above sin.

BUT THAT IS WHAT PAUL SAID WE ARE SUPPOSED TO REALIZE IS OUR HERITAGE RIGHT NOW!

Romans 6:11 KJV **Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

He did not say we could PARTLY reckon or consider this to be the case in our lives since we were saved.

- He said LIKEWISE!

- In every way!

THAT is partaking fully of Christ.

- Now it's easy to know that now, even if you never heard that preached before.
- But it's another thing to have absolutely no doubts about it, and enjoy the benefits of the fact.
- AND THAT IS WHY PAUL SAID IT IS A JOURNEY!

You are NOT EXPECTED TO EXPERIENCE THIS, AND NEVER SIN AGAIN, THE DAY AFTER YOU HEAR THIS.

IT IS A JOURNEY!

- God knows how much this negativity and sin-consciousness is ingrained within us.
- So he told us this is a JOURNEY like the EXODUS to come into this.

FORGIVER

God is a forgiver.

- When you sin, you must know the POWER of God's forgiveness.

1 John 1:5-10 KJV This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: (7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (8) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all



unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

He is faithful.

- We have to have a faith that GOD FORGIVES when we sincerely repent after sin.
- He did not say you would FEEL it.
- He did not say you would see a sign in heaven stretching across the sky saying YOU ARE FORGIVEN.
- ALL YOU HAVE IS HIS WORD TO GO BY.
- AND WE MUST LEARN TO BELIEVE IN HIS WORD.

Forget feelings.

I am trying to gather every believer with us as we journey to all truth, and see them cease struggling.

BEREANS AND THESSALONIANS.

But here is where I want to bring in the subject of the Bereans tonight.

Another very important aspect to understand in this JOURNEY, is the need to be OPEN MINDED.

The Thessalonians who first heard Paul's preaching heard something they were never taught beforehand.

- And they reacted quite similarly to people today.
- There are Thessalonians even today, and this is what makes the bible so up to date.
- It deals with people, and there will always be open minded people and closed minded people.

Some Thessalonians believed Paul.

- But the ones who didn't, reacted quite childishly.
- They moved with envy.
- They took baser sort of people -- wicked and useless people -- and set them out to stir people against the man of God and his message.
- They soon assaulted the house where Paul stayed and Paul had to flee the area.
- I mean, why not simply disagree?

And it is interesting to note that the name THESSALONICA means this: CONQUEST and VICTORY against THESSALIANS

- And it also means VICTORY OF FALSITY (NT Greek Lexicon).

"Berea" means BEYOND THE COASTLINE.

- It means HEAVY or WEIGHTY.

Some people only want to win an argument, rather than learn truth.

- They hear something different and they shoot it down because it's not what they were taught.
- They do not think they might have been taught wrong, but they just fight everything that disagrees with their thoughts.
- Thessaly was a kingdom conquered by this people.
- So it speaks of simply conquering people.
- We can get the idea of simply wanting to conquer people, and that is not what Christians should be set to accomplish.
- These people simply fought people.

Also, ERROR or FALSITY finds easy prey in people who do not search the scriptures when they hear ideas issued forth they never heard.

- The Thessalonians were prey for error!

But Paul went to Berea and these folks were more noble, since when they heard something contrary or different than their present beliefs, they did not cast them out and stir up rebels to wreak havoc in the city, but they searched the BIBLE to see if Paul was correct.

And BEREAL means DEEP AND WEIGHTY.

- People who are not shallow but deep in the Lord are people who have the habit of SEEING IF WHAT THEY HEARD WAS TRUE OR NOT, RATHER THAN SIMPLY LOOKING TO SHOOT IT DOWN.

Its not people we are against...

- Some people live to argue.
- ITS TRUTH WE ARE AFTER.
- AND IF THIS IS A JOURNEY AND YOU AND I HAVE NOT YET ARRIVED, THEN OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING IN OUR BELIEF SYSTEM IS WRONG SOMEWHERE.
- AND WHILE EVERYONE WILL ADMIT THIS, NOT MANY LIVE LIKE IT, BECAUSE SO MANY DISAGREE WITH ANYTHING THAT CROSSES THEIR PATHS THAT THEY DID NOT ALREADY BELIEVE.

If I shoot down everything I hear that I never before was taught, then if God ever wishes to give me more truth than what I have, so as to take me further in my JOURNEY, then I am going to reject what He tries to give me.

- But if I remember I am on a journey, and God is trying to lead me into ALL TRUTH, then anything I come across that differs from my views will be RESEARCHED IN THE BIBLE WITHOUT SIMPLY LOOKING FOR SOMETHING WRONG IN IT TO SHOOT DOWN.
- See if it holds up against Scripture.
- CONSIDER it and GIVE IT A CHANCE.
- That does not mean you fall for everything that comes your way.
- We cannot be blown about with every wind of doctrine.

- But it does mean we check it out and put some effort into it and find out if the bible contradicts it or not.
- And if we think the bible contradicts it in a certain passage, then we must ask ourselves if we even had that passage right the first time or not.
- Could we have taken that passage incorrectly in times past?
- Obviously we are taking something wrong in the Bible, if we are still in need of correction in our understanding.

Truth is too serious to play with by holding to something we've been taught and not make SURE, not leaving one stone unturned, that it is true or not.

- Whatever you think is not important, just might be overly important!
- So we need to be open to re-assess our priorities as well as open to what is truth.

And let me also say we must never consider anything in the Bible as useless information.

- If God took time to inspire it, then we must realize HE WANTS US TO KNOW IT.
- AND IF HE WANTS US TO KNOW IT, we are obligated to deem it as important.

HOW TRUE THAT NOT MANY PEOPLE OLDER THAN FORTY YEARS OF AGE EVER WISH TO LEARN ANYTHING MORE THAN WHAT THEY ALREADY KNOW.

- That is the case with some older and some younger than that.

Romans 12:2 KJV **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is**

that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

PROVE IT OUT!

- TRY IT.

John 7:16-17 KJV Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. (17) If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Even Jesus gave us the BEST AND MOST FAIR answer of all regarding whether or not He was correct.

- DO WHAT HE SAID AND SEE IF IT WORKS.
- But don't just criticize it and say He is wrong without TRYING IT.

Proverbs 18:13 KJV He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

HEAR IT OUT and then TEST IT OUT.

This prophecy issue I teach has caused my eyes to truly be opened to see how many people are closed minded and how many are like the Bereans.

- I know one dear brother who asked me about it, and said he was hungry to be corrected and that he cared no longer whether or not people like his beliefs, but that he wants to please God and receive whatever God wants him to have.
- What a breath of fresh air.

BE WILLING TO REASSESS YOUR THOUGHTS!

- Be ready to check out something told to you that you never heard before.

- Do it in the fear of God for your soul, because any given teaching may break or make your Christianity!
- You just do not know until you search the scriptures to see if it is so.

I've spoken to people who manifested no evidence of open mindedness.

- Nothing you can say that is different than their present beliefs will even be considered by such people, and yet they admit they need correction somewhere.
- They do not listen to your argument for the belief to weigh it out, but simply look for something wrong in it to shoot it down.
- Such people are not even honest with themselves.

And then there are the people who think they cannot learn, and leave all their checking out to the preacher.

- True pastors are there for you to help you in your walk and to give direction.
- But we are not God, and neither can we walk every step of the way with you, nor carry you in our arms all the time.
- You need to work out your own salvation with FEAR AND TREMBLING.

We are on a journey!

- Expect to be CHANGED BY GOD.
- Expect priorities to change.
- CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE VIEWS, and in the fear of God, knowing you shall stand before the one true God who intended you to believe only one truth about any given issue, and give an account to Him.

There is the idea that truth is arbitrary.

- That means that truth is only true for the person who believes it is true.
- I believe that is extremely dangerous thinking.
- If that were not dangerous, and was the concept to live by, we would never read this:

Isaiah 5:20 KJV **Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**

If there was not an absolute good and absolute truth, and it merely mattered what YOU think truth is, then God would not say that some people will call evil to be "good" and bear the burden of woe from God!

- Such a statement would make no sense if truth is whatever YOU believe it to be, as though what is true for you does not necessarily have to be true for me..
- Read Isaiah 5:20 again.

It would make no sense for God to say:

Isaiah 5:21 KJV **Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!**

The above would make no sense if it were true that we can consider truth to be whatever we honestly think it to be.

- Obviously one who thinks himself wise would be complimented for thinking so, and encouraged, if truth was arbitrary.

God has ONE truth for us all to believe.

- And this is evident in this scripture as well.

Ephesians 4:13 KJV Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Ephesians speaks of growth, and states we are on a journey to UNITY OF FAITH.

Ephesians 4:3 KJV Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We have unity of Spirit UNTIL WE COME TO UNITY OF FAITH.

- If God did not want us to agree on truth, then it would make no sense to say we are coming to a unity of faith.
- But a unity of faith is compared to spiritual maturity.
- That makes unity of faith a MATURE quality, and not some false accusation of "bigotry" as some people propose about us who believe there is absolute truth that cannot be disagreed about.

John 16:13 KJV Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The Spirit does not come and condone us simply because it has come to us.

- Receiving the Spirit is no indication God thinks we are not wrong in any area.
- No.
- He comes BECAUSE we are not THERE yet, and He must LEAD US THERE.
- We need a leader and a guide.
- Some people act as though they must be right about all they believe if God was good enough to give them His Spirit, as though He confirms who is correct by giving them His Spirit.
- No, the Spirit comes because we have a lot of correction and



guidance required.

God cannot lead the closed-minded. He can only lead people who give Him a chance to correct their thoughts.

What do you do when someone shares something you never heard before?

- What do you do when someone states something you presently disagree with?
- Do you dismiss it and think it cannot be important IF YOU did not believe it before?
- How arrogant!

I've heard everything from accusations that I wanted to be superior to others, so I look for something different, to I was deceived.

- At any rate, this always comes from folks who do not manifest one grain of evidence that they act noble and search the scriptures as to whether or not something they disagree with is true.

God is going to lead us further in weeks and months ahead.

Israel refused to believe they could take the land of Canaan.

- God was angry with them and swore in his wrath they would die in the wilderness.

If God can make all of us the type of people who search the scriptures to check something out, then He will be able to lead us far more easily than a Thessalonian.

Are you simply a people fighter, or a SEEKER OF DEPTHS out past the coastline of shallow theology and Mickey Mouse Christianity?

