

The Way

Growth of the Church

Lesson 12: Paul's Second Missionary Journey - Phillipi to Antioch

We are indebted to [Ethnos360](#) for providing the basis of these lessons

Review (Where We've Been)

Zoom in on Paul

- **15-20AD** Saul is Trained at the School of Gamaliel (**Acts 22:3**)
- **31AD** Saul Holds the Coats of the Mob During Stephen's Martyr (**Acts 7:58**)
- Saul Begins Hunting Down and Persecuting Christians (**Acts 8:1-3**)
- **34AD** Saul Encounters Jesus on the Road to Damascus and is Converted/Commissioned to Take the Gospel to the Gentiles (**Acts 9**)
- Saul Spends 3 Years in Arabia (**Galatians 1:17-18**)
- Saul Travels Home to Tarsus and Remains for 10 Years (**Acts 9:30**)
- **47 AD** Barnabas Travels to Tarsus to Bring Saul to Antioch (**Acts 11:25; Gal. 2:1-2**)
- **48AD** Paul, Barnabas, John Mark Launch First Missionary Journey (**Acts 13; 13:9 → Saul/Paul**)
- **51-53 AD** Paul and Silas's Second Missionary Journey (**Acts 15-18**)

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BIG Idea

Acts 17 and 18 tell the last half of Paul's second Missionary Journey with Silas, from Philippi to Antioch where he continues to spread the Gospel that **Jesus** is the Messiah.

Information (What You Need to Know)

Paul in Thessalonica

Paul and Silas, along with Timothy, leave Philippi and travel to Thessalonica...

Acts 17:2-3 (ESV) "And Paul went in (to the Synagogue) 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."

Paul had a **two pronged** approach to evangelism;

- *He would start with the **Jews in the Synagogues***
- *Then move on to the **Gentiles in the Marketplace***
 - He was a tentmaker - While there he would speak to all who would listen

We will see BOTH today; Mixed results

(V4) "and Some were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women."

(V5) "But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed **a mob**, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd."

Why?

(Jew/Gentile Graphic #1) **QUICKLY!!!**

- Jews

- Culture deeply rooted in the law
- Relationship with God rested on their adherence to the law
- Christians threatened their **heritage** and **holiness** as a people
- Paul would walk them through the Hebrew Scriptures showing that Jesus perfectly **fulfills** the prophets and the law (The journey! - **ACTS 13 // Peter Acts 2 // Stephen Acts 7**)

- Gentiles in the marketplace.

- The gentile culture was deeply rooted in idolatry and polytheism
- Believed that social order rested on the recognition and appeasement of the gods
- So Christians were a threat to the stability of society
 - their religious, political, and economic systems, their ethics and values, and their family heritage, safety!
- When teaching the gentiles, Paul would adapt the same Gospel message to language they would understand

No matter his audience and his approach, Paul always preached the same Gospel. You are a NEW thing!

Galatians 3:28 (ESV) "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Both Jews and Gentiles had one thing in common - ***Jesus turned their world upside down.***

V6 -The mob (MIXED MOB JEW/GREEK), looking for Paul, attacked the house of **Jason**, a guy that was known in the community for aiding Paul and Silas and followers of the way.

Acts 17:6 “*And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities...*”

- Hanging out with the wrong crowd?

...Shouting, “these men who have turned the world upside down have come here also...”

While they meant this to be a menacing accusation - it sounds a lot like Jesus

Lord, Let this be what is spoken of us at the Summit Church in North Canton.

(V7) *...and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrease of Cesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. And the people and the city authorities were disturbed when they heard these things.”*

Cesar was thought to be a god - fully deified after his death

(V10) Paul and Silas slip away by night from Thessalonica and go to the next town over, Berea.

How did they turn the world upside down?

- **They were Zealous**

- They were passionate about who Jesus was (is) and **wanted** to share that truth with others no matter the consequences.
- What you are passionate about will naturally come out in conversation.
 - What is your passion? Sports? Clothing? Hobbies? Fitness? Diet?

Paul in Berea

Persistently following their same plan, they go straight to the Synagogue, and things seem to be going well!

Acts 17:11(ESV) Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so."

- I hope we are **all** examining the Scriptures daily, and checking to make sure that what is taught here is sound theologically.
 - **Messages, books, podcasts, youtube videos are all good, helpful even!** But they **are not** replacements for your time in the word!

(V12) Many were turning to Jesus and believing! Until... **(V13)** *Acts 17:13 (ESV) But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, They came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds.*

(V14) Paul is sent away again, but this time Silas and Timothy stayed there

At this point, do you think Paul feels like he's winning?

Matthew 5:11 *“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

How did they turn the world upside down?

- **They Persevered**

- They were persistent despite opposition
- The presence of conflict or opposition is not always an indication of failure or unfaithfulness to God’s will.
 - **Persevere. Press on. Keep on Keeping on.**

So **Unrelenting Paul** is sent off yet again to another city, Athens.

Silas and Timothy are still cleaning up the (*good*) mess he made in Berea, and he doesn’t skip a beat, but goes straight to work as he waits for his friends

Paul in Athens

Acts 17:16 (ESV) *“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.”*

Paul was deeply distressed at the sight of the rampant idolatry in the city.

(V17) Consistent as before, “he reasoned in the **synagogues**... And in the **marketplace** everyday with those who happened to be there.”

Luke shifts our focus from Synagogues to the streets

Acts 17:18 (ESV) “Some of the epicurean and stoic philosophers also conversed with him.

**Simple conversation leads Paul to a platform to share the Gospel

And some said, “what does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities” - Because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.”

Acts 17:21 (ESV) “Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new”

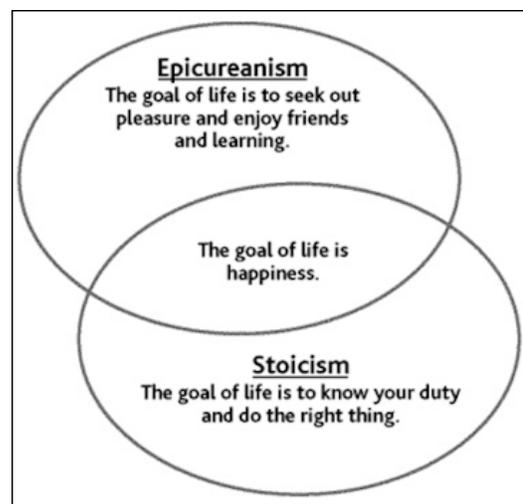
(V19) they take him to the **Areopagus (AKA Mars Hill) and ask him to tell them more about this Jesus...**

The purpose of the Athenian Areopagus was similar to that of the Jewish Sanhedrin. Both were groups of respected local men charged with investigating spiritual or philosophical ideas.

-GotQuestions.org

Graphic #2

✓ Epicurean Philosophy - Believed reality was only found in what could be experienced by the 5 senses. Ultimate good is seeking pleasure and harmony of body and mind. **YOLO, Listen to your body, Live, love, laugh**



✓ **Stoic Philosophy** - Believed the ultimate good is seeking knowledge and doing the “right thing”. **Be a good Human**

Modern western *philosophies align very closely with what Paul was seeing here.*

Paul’s Message to the Athenians (please read!! V22-34)

*Acts 17:22-23 (ESV) “...Men of Athens, I perceive that, in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship. I found also an altar with this inscription: “to the unknown god.” *Graphic #4**



Why was there an altar to “The Unknown god”?

- **Fear** - N.T. Wright - There was no loving relationship with the gods, only appeasement.

Paul realizes this fear, and uses it to help convey his message.

- **(V22)** First, he acknowledges their philosophy and religion
 - “In every way you are very religious”
- **(V23)** Then, he identifies their unknown god
 - “What you therefore worship as unknown, I know!”
- **(V24-26)** Begins tugging on the “fear” string
 - Warranted fear - “There is a God you’ve missed that is very powerful, not made with human hands, made *ALL*”
- **(V27)** Exposes their longing for the truth
 - That searching within you - God put it there “Humans are seeking Him always, but He is not far”

- **(V28)** Uses their own familiar literature to validate his claim
 - Excerpts from works of Epimenides and Aratus
- **(V31)** Finally, He preaches THE TRUTH
 - Acts 17:30-31 (ESV) "...He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He will judge the world in righteousness by a man (Jesus) whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead."

That was all they could hear...

(V32) "now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this."

So Paul leaves, but **(V34)** *some* joined him and believed. (One locally known philosopher and a woman named Damaris and "some others")

So...Was Paul's message effective?

- Peter (Acts 2) - **3,000 saved**
 - The rebellious prophet Jonah (3:4 "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!") - **the entire city repents!**
 - Paul here - a handful of people
- Could I have done something better?***

We are not able to save people.

- There is no magic phrase
- There is no "proven formula"
- There is no perfect message

We are responsible only to **speak** when God says speak.

How did they turn the world upside down?

- **They Were Bold**

- They talked about Jesus and the Scriptures with anyone they could, then allowed the **Spirit** to work
- Verbs that indicate speaking appear **39 times** in chapters **17 and 18 alone!**
 - Words like; reason, persuade, say, explain, prove, speak, proclaim, converse, present, etc.
- No miracles, good deeds, or helpful acts of kindness **at all** recorded in chapters 17 and 18 - **a total of 9 cities - roughly 2 years of ministry.**
- Just walking and talking...
 - *****CONTEXT*****

The emphasis here is not on what they did, but on what the Holy Spirit did with their willingness to talk to others.

“He wore my sin, I’ll gladly wear his name”

- Are we willing to **speak** His name?
 - Practical - ask twice / listen / ask if you can pray for them / tell them what you believe

Paul in Corinth

The last stop on Paul’s second missionary journey before returning to Antioch that we have time to cover today is Corinth.

Paul meets Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos

Acts 18:9-11 (ESV) “And the Lord said to Paul, one night in a vision, “do not be afraid, but go on speaking, and do not be silent for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in the city who are my people.” And he

stayed a year and six months teaching the word of God among them”

Paul spent 18 months in Corinth at the Spirit's leading.

- Not a part of the plan
- We see this over and over on the second missionary journey.

How did they turn the world upside down?

- **They Were Adaptable**

- They were sensitive to the Spirit's leading, and willing to change course if necessary

- **God will not hesitate to inconvenience you for the sake of the lost sheep around you.**

- **Parable of the 99 - WE are the 99**

- **Be Zealous**
- **Be Persistent**
- **Be Bold**
- **Be Adaptable**

- **Let's turn this world upside down**