

Nov 22, 2015



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The more you love Jesus, the more you'll talk about Him

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Lord, help us see, through transformed eyes, This world of people in despair; We want to reach out with Your love To tell them just how much You care. —Sper

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us

(1 John 1:2 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Feb 21, 2014)

**Series: THE CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Spreading the Gospel

NEXT WEEK

Teaching God's Word
(Acts 18:1-11,18-21)

Making God Known

Acts 17:1-4, 10-12, 22-25, 28

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson admonishes us as Christians to seek and use different ways of **Making God Known**. The **study's aim** is to understand that we should determine each person's spiritual awareness in witnessing to them. The **study's application** is to share basic Biblical truths with people in order to make God known to them.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

Why are the Scriptures so important to the church? Why are certain words on a page (or screen) more important than others? What is the best use of Scripture? These questions are all related to the nature of authority when it comes to certain works of literature, the concept of using the writings of others as guides for our lives. This great Jewish heritage of Scriptures, sacred writings that have authority in the community and in the lives of individuals, has passed to Christians. We believe that God speaks through the books of the Bible, written by men but inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). Part of today's lesson concerns the Bereans, synagogue members who searched the Scriptures diligently to see if the claims of Paul about Jesus were true. May we never forget that God's truth resides in the Scriptures, and that like those noble Bereans, we can search them ourselves to learn things of utmost, eternal importance. One of the most interesting stories in Acts is about Paul and his experience in the city of Athens. That Greek city was famous for having been the home base of noteworthy philosophers in centuries gone by. Athens' legendary reputation is summed up nicely by Robert P. Conway: Athens reached its zenith under Pericles (495-429 BC), who built the Parthenon, numerous temples, and other splendid buildings. Literature, philosophy, science, and rhetoric flourished; and Athens attracted intellectuals from all over the world. In Paul's day, its prestige was challenged by Alexandria [compare Acts 18:24] and Tarsus [compare Acts 21:39; 22:3], but not in popular opinion. A factor often overlooked today is that ancient Athens was also a religious center (Acts 17:22, part of today's study). The dividing line between philosophy and religion that is drawn by many today was unknown in the ancient world (and surely the two cannot be separated even now). That context meant that Paul's preaching of the gospel outside the synagogue (17:17) required a different strategy than he used in Thessalonica, Berea, etc.

Paul was prepared to engage the philosophers of his day. He was not shy about presenting the claims of Christianity in the inner sanctum of the learned—the Areopagus of Athens. Paul believed that truth would withstand any challenge and that it must be proclaimed and defended. When he worked with Jews with whom he shared a common understanding of the authority of Scripture, his appeal was on that basis. But when he spoke to Greeks who did not share that belief, he pressed his claims on the basis of logic and quotations from their own writers. The church needs highly educated Christians who are able to speak its message in all contexts. To be able to debate with philosophers as Paul did is not the calling of every Christian. But we must not settle for putting our faith in a box, apart from our intellectual life.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

MAKING GOD KNOWN IN THESSALONICA (ACTS 17:1-4)

Scriptures studied (1-2)

Study so that we can correctly handle the Word of Truth (2 Tim 2:15)

Study to find those things that are helpful (Acts 20:20)

Study to help distinguish good from evil (Heb 5:14)

Salvation proclaimed (3-4)

A salvation that God appointed through Jesus (1 Thess 5:9)

A salvation through justification by Jesus' blood (Rom 5:9)

A salvation that bring eternal life (John 11:25)

MAKING GOD KNOWN IN BEREIA (ACTS 17:10-12)

God known through leaders (10)

Leaders that should seek the deep truths of the faith (1 Tim 3:8-10)

Leaders that should teach only sound doctrine (2 Tim 1:13-14)

Leaders that will have to give an account for those under their care (Heb 13:17)

God known through people believing (11-12)

Believing that all things are possible for Jesus (Mark 9:23-24)

Believing that Jesus is God's one and only Son (John 3:16-18)

Believing the truth (Eph 1:13)

MAKING GOD KNOWN IN ATHENS (ACTS 17:22-25, 28)

Explaining the unknown God (22-23)

Explaining by persuading others about God (Acts 26:24-29)

Explaining by telling about what God has done for us (Ps 66:16)

Explaining about those things we know about God (Acts 4:20)

Explaining the Creator God (24-25)

Creator of all things (Col 1:16)

Creator through whom all things consist (1 Cor 8:6)

Creator explained by Jesus Himself (Heb 1:2)

Explaining the sustaining God (25)

God sustains by upholding those who fall (Ps 37:23-24)

God sustains from birth (Ps 71:6)

God sustains because He will never forsake His own (Ps 55:22)