

## **INTRODUCING THE UNKNOWN GOD**

**Acts 17:16-18:22**

### **TESTIMONY TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH 13-28**

Confirmation of God's plan to accept Gentiles into God's new people, leads to the spread of the church throughout the world by the persecution.

They preached the gospel everywhere.

### **FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY 13-14**

The gospel spreads to nearby islands and Turkey (Asia Minor). Establishes initial pattern of rejection by the Jews and acceptance by Gentiles.

### **COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM 15:1-35**

The salvation of Gentiles provokes debate about *how* we can be saved.

The Jerusalem council determines:

Salvation is through faith in Christ alone, for them AND for us!  
We shouldn't be restricted in ways God hasn't required (15:13-19).

They ask Gentiles not to conduct themselves in ways that would offend Jews (15:20-21).

The people are grateful for the answer.

The work continues to grow.

### **SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY 15:36-18:22**

Paul and Barnabas decide to make another journey to revisit the churches.

### **PREPARATION FOR THE JOURNEY 15:36-41**

Dispute over John Mark multiplies their ministry in 2 new teams.

**SELECTION OF TIMOTHY 16:1-5****ADVANCE INTO MACEDONIA 16:6-11**

After prayerful consideration of what the Lord wants to do, Paul receives a vision of a man from Macedonia asking for help.

God moves them another step away from Israel.

This move changes the religious environment.

Fewer Jews are present in the cities.

A more direct confrontation with paganism is necessary.

Persecution is multiplied because it comes from *both* Jewish and pagan sources.

**MESSAGE PROCLAIMED AT PHILIPPI 16:12-40****Acceptance by Lydia 16:12-15**

Lydia, a Jewish business woman and faithful worshipper of God, heard Paul's message and trusted Christ (16:12-15).

Her response demonstrates appropriate response for Jewish people around the world, who are seeking to follow God (John 6:45; 7:17).

**Deliverance of possessed girl 16:16-24**

When they free a girl from a demon (16:16-18), her owners complain because of their business loss and have Paul arrested (16:19-24).

**Conversion of the jailer 16:25-34****Release of Paul 16:35-40**

To demonstrate injustice of persecution, Luke tells how rulers try to release Paul (16:35-40). 35-36

They want to send him away quietly.

Paul insists they escort them out since it was illegal to arrest a Roman citizen without a formal charge. 37

In fear, they lead him out, demonstrating his innocence. 38  
He leaves a small church behind in Philippi.

### **Message proclaimed at Thessalonica 17:1-9**

Paul went on to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue, to preach concerning Jesus (17:1-9).

Some of the Jews and many Gentiles receive his message. 4

The rest of the Jews are jealous and start a riot against Paul. 5

They make an ungodly alliance. 5

### **Message proclaimed at Berea 17:10-15**

At Berea the Jews want to hear and many believe. 11-12

When Jews from Thessalonica hear that Paul is there, they go to stir up the crowds against him.

Another unholy alliance!

### **Message proclaimed at Athens 17:16-34**

In pagan cultural center, Paul is safe from the opposition of the Jews but faces a different kind of resistance

#### **Encounter with philosophers 17:16-21**

He encounters the pagan philosophers of the day.

They always enjoyed new ideas!

He preaches the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

#### **Message 17:22-31**

They listen attentively as he talks about another new religious idea (17:22-31).

Change in message to address pagan audience—to introduce the unknown God 23.

Paul preaches the message of the one true God.

Begins the story at creation. 24-28

He is not an idol; He is a Person.

We are God's offspring—NOT the other way around. 29

They accept this radical idea!

He overlooks man's foolishness and invites man to repent and to turn to Him. 30 Still true!

If they do not repent and turn to God they will be judged by the One God raised from the dead.

Response **17:32-34**

The resurrection is the hard part for the Greeks to accept

Some make fun of the idea.

Others are willing to hear more later.

Only a few of these intellectual philosophers believe. 34

Difference in response isn't due to the evidence given!

**Message proclaimed at Corinth 18:1-17**

Next Paul goes to Corinth where he stays for a year and a half.

His support **18:1-3**

He meets and joins Aquila and Priscilla in tent making to earn money (18:1-3).

**His message 18:4-5**

He preaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath.  
Jesus is Messiah!

**Rejection by the Jews 18:6**

When the Jews in Corinth reject the message,  
Paul turns to the Gentiles with the message of  
salvation (18:6).

**Faith of a remnant 18:7-8**

His ministry is received by a handful of Jews  
and many Gentile citizens of Corinth.

**God's protection 18:9-11**

God promises Paul that in spite of intense  
opposition, He will protect him.

The promise is confirmed when the Jews seek to  
take legal action against Paul.

**His persecution 18:12-17**

The governor refuses to participate in their  
religious feuds.

He stays firm, even when they beat a  
synagogue ruler in front of him.

**Return to Antioch 18:18-22**

From Corinth Paul returns to Antioch.

Thus the stormy second missionary journey  
concludes.

The persecution begun against Paul on this visit  
continues to afflict the churches he founded in  
these cities.

## ***Significance of 2<sup>nd</sup> journey for development of the church?***

Penetration deeper into pagan territory.

Impact is less dramatic among people of this culture.

Just a handful respond.

Emphasis places on Jewish rejection and pagan Gentile reception.

The contrast becomes increasingly more intense.

### ***Main lessons for us today?***

The question is repeatedly raised today, as it was in Paul's day: "If God has led us here, why isn't it working out the way we expected?"

"We must have been mistaken?"

Maybe the disappointment and affliction are part of God's plan.

God sometimes uses the unexpected circumstances of our lives to demonstrate the importance of total dependence on Him.

The affliction may be part of His plan.

Our part is to be sure we are following God's will each step of the way.

If we're committed to doing whatever God wants, more than anything else, He assumes the responsibility for guiding us where He wants us.

It's God's part to work out the results in a way that will glorify Him.

When we don't understand what's happening, He wants us to trust Him and cling to Him.

He'll handle the disappointments and the challenges.

Then HE gets all the glory.

Circumstances change.

Varied circumstances.

Varied responses.

God is still in charge!

God protects His faithful servants from the opposition and uses them for His glory.