

Taking God at His Word  
Class Notes Week 6 08-09-15  
Class Memory Verse: Eph. 4:29  
Text: Acts 17:1-15

## GOD'S WORD IS FINAL

### 1. Two episodes in two cities - Thessalonica, Berea

#### Commonalities:

- Paul's evangelistic work began in the synagogue. (vv.1,10)
- The Word is proclaimed, examined.
- Reason & persuasion were used. (vv. 2, 3, 4, 11, 13)
- Responses similar: controversy. (vv. 4,12)

#### Contrast:

- the approaches to receiving the gospel by the Thessalonians & Bereans.

### 2. The Troubled Thessalonians.

- their attitude to the "good news" is destructive and delusional.
- personal prejudice towards Paul's popularity clouds their judgment. (v. 17:5)
- indifference in "doing" the Word.
- full of prejudice, blind to their own inconsistencies they resort to:
  - 1- physical assault (v.5)
  - 2- verbal abuse (v. 6)
  - 3- twisting the truth (v.7)
  - 4- didn't search the Scriptures, but decided that the Bible is the "anti-book."

### 3. The "Becoming" Bereans.

- eager to hear the Word.
- persistent in studying the Scriptures. (v. 11)
- examined the Scriptures daily. Was Paul's word supported by God's Word?
- diligent in discerning the truth, testing everything against God's Word.
- submissive to Scripture.
- God's written Word was THE authority, the FINAL Word.

## DIFFERING CONCLUSIONS ON THE AUTHORITY DOCTRINE

As with the "Clarity" doctrine, the 3 main branches of western Christianity don't give the same answer regarding the "ultimate," final authority of Scripture question.

### 1. The Roman Catholic Statement. (Peter Kreeft)

2. The American Liberal Protestant Statement. (Gary Dorrien)

3. The Evangelical Statement. (Westminster Confession of Faith)

Striking contrasts:

- Catholic Keefe: Church tradition is the final authority equal to Scripture.
- Liberal Dorrien: Scripture must be in agreement with reason & experience.
- Evangelical Statement: Scripture stands outside, over and above the church & all human opinion.

### BELIEVING TO UNDERSTAND

We know God...

- by His creation, the visible things to allow us to ponder the invisible things of God (Rom. 1:20); all of which are enough to convict men and leave them without excuse.
- by His holy and divine Word, revealing God more “openly.”
- general revelation convicts us that there is the Almighty God of the universe.
- special revelation speaks more openly and more authoritatively.

Findings in history, archaeology, and textual commentaries assure us that the Old & New Testaments are completely trustworthy.

The Bereans approached the Bible with a reverence reserved for God alone. The authority of the Scriptures affirms that God’s Word is final!