

Berean

Prayer **Berean**

What is a Berean?

These (Berea) 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.

Where was Berea?

Berea was a city of the Hellenic and Roman era now known as Veria (or Veroia) in Macedonia, northern Greece. It is a small city on the eastern side of the Vermion Mountains north of Mount Olympus. Berea was about 73 km or 45 miles west of Thessalonica. Paul, Silas and Timothy travelled to Berea by night after they fled Thessalonica.

Paul wanted to elaborate on a specific characteristic of these people. Let's turn to Acts 17 verse 11

Acts 17:11 HCSB

The people (Bereans) here were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, since they welcomed the message with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

The Bereans were also very accepting of the Gospel message of Jesus. When they were preached the message, they would take it home, study it thoroughly. They were open minded and eager to discover more of the message of Jesus and how it related to the promised messiah.

Acts 17:12 HCSB

Consequently, many of them believed, including a number of the prominent Greek women as well as men.

Interesting... do you see the connection?

They were:

- Open
- Eager
- Studious

They eagerly approached the message with an open mind and they studied God's word.

What was the result of being open, eager and studious?

Quite simply... They believed. They had faith in the truth because they dug into the truth and owned it.

This morning do you have any doubt in your mind about Jesus?
Do you want to know what God is doing around you and in you?
Do you want to really and truly understand how the Gospel relates to your life today?

There is only one way and no shortcuts...

Absorb the Word of God. Listen to the teachings, take notes, look deeper.
To truly understand God, you need to understand his word. You do this by opening and studying what he has said. You start to see his plan, his heart and his nature in your reading. You begin a relationship with a God who may have seemed abstract or distant. The more you read and dig in the more life starts to make sense.

When you read his word a 3 part miracle happens...

- Real unshakeable faith takes root.
- Real and personal understanding happens.
- Real joy takes place in your heart.

We read in these passages of the early church that the Bereans searched the scriptures to see if what they were being taught was correct. In short, they wanted to verify what they were being told about Jesus with the Old Testament. They were excited about the new covenant in Christ.

So... let's dig in a bit more... How did they search the scriptures and prove this new information? If we go back to the Greek we see that the word "anakrino" is used. What is the direct meaning of this word. It is to properly scrutinize, interrogate and investigate the scriptures to determine the truth. In the KJV we see: Ask, question, examine, judge, search and determine.

So was this a group of doubting Thomas's running amok? Not at all, their intention was not to disprove or invalidate what was being taught. It wasn't to find fault, it was to discover if the new truth meshed up with the existing truth of the OT.

We must remember that this group of individuals was Jewish... This was a Jewish group of people living in a Gentile land. They were already aware of the OT and were open and embracing of the NT in Jesus, but they wanted to ensure that what they were learning of Christ lined up with the scriptures.

What else besides this openness, eagerness and studiousness can we learn from the Bereans?

Well... we read that they studied God's word on a daily basis. What's wrong with only reading the scriptures on Sunday? Because the application of his Word is meant for use on a daily basis... Ill let that sink in for a minute...

Think about what God was trying to teach rebellious Israel in the desert. Why did God require the Israelites to gather manna each day except Saturday. God was reminding Israel of his constant provision.

How about Our Lord's prayer? Why did Jesus leave us with this prayer?

Well... In the prayer we see that we are to be thankful for his provision each and every day. The understanding of the daily provision of God is what led the Bereans on their amazing journey of discovery. Think about what they were thinking on...

Let me give you a hint...

Whatever was true, lovely, praiseworthy and excellent...

In our culture we often embrace the negative and focus our thought life on that. We become used to looking at life from a negative point of view. Because they were in the Word daily, their hearts and minds were focused on the things and ways of the almighty God and the freedom of his plan in sending Jesus as the messiah.

What is another big take away here this morning?

When we consider the people of Berea we can see that they revered their belief system. But more than that they strived to see the pure truth apart from cultural bias. In short, they wanted it to produce fruit. Hypocrisy wasn't their problem.

What made them special was their desire to seek to understand and to follow God's truths.

Something abstract here to consider...

Berea was historically known for all the streams and rivers of water flowing through it. Could it be that the city was well watered symbolized the relationship between the faith the Bereans exhibited and the flow of God's Holy Spirit in and through them on a daily basis?

This morning we consider what the Word is teaching us through the lives, attitudes and actions of the Bereans... For just a moment let us consider the contrast between those who rejected them in Thessalonica and that of the Bereans.

The behaviors of the Thessalonians showed obstinacy, closed mindedness and an unwillingness to look deeper. This morning can you see the contrast?

One group is obstinate, closed minded and unwilling to dig in. The other is open, eager and studious.

The one that is open, eager and studious produces fruit and is three fold blessed. They received:

- Real unshakeable faith
- Real and personal understanding.
- Real joy that takes place in your heart.

If nothing else this morning, hear this...

We need to approach God's Word with zeal and an open heart that is willing to learn and grow

This morning do we yearn to know God and the truth he has shared with us?
Are we willing to take the time to examine, investigate, query and scrutinize the scripture for its riches?

Here is the reality folks. We live in a corrupt world, we can get pulled down by the cares of this world. We can lose sight of the prize, but we don't have too. We can get washed in his Word every day, we can sustain ourselves on his promises and our thirst can be quenched by his Holy Spirit.

I remind us all of this important scripture this morning.

Jeremiah 29:13

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

Bottom line:

We all need to read God's Word to truly understand and we need to pray every day.

Prayer