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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Bereans "received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so."

1

II Thessalonians



2

Much of our anxiety as broken people in a broken world comes from losing sight of who we are and what we have in Christ.

Psalm 30:11

"You have turned for me my mourning into dancing"

Ephesians 1:18

"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

3

2 Thessalonians 3

"1 Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; 2 and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. 4 And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. 5 And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ."

4

2 Thessalonians 3

"1 Finally, brethren, pray for us that **the word of the Lord may spread** rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you;
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"The word of the Lord"

Paul's Gospel

New covenant

Romans & Ephesians

Word and Way of the Cross

Grace, Peace, Faith, Hope, & Love



5

Making Disciples - God's grace and our response.

2 Corinthians 3

"5 **Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,** 6 who also **made us adequate as servants of a new covenant**, not of the letter, but of the Spirit;"

Colossians 1

"28 And we proclaim Him, … that we may present every man

complete in Christ.

What God has done FOR us through Christ.

29 And for this purpose also **I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me**."

What God is doing as Christ's Spirit works IN & THROUGH us.

6

Three keys to our response?

1. Know what we we have in Christ by faith.

serenity, security, significance, sociability, & salvation

Paul's letters start with affirmations not exhortations.

What Christ has done for and in us.	*What Christ is doing with and through us.*
Our position in Christ by grace through faith	*Our behavior in Christ by grace through discipline*

At this point we are not exhorted to do anything but pray for God to help us see.

7

GOD'S GRACE and our response

God's implanted Image in every human - leaves instinctive impulses, longings, and ability to respond so that we are without excuse.

Acts 17

"26 and He made from one, every nation of mankind, to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they should **seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;** 28 **for in Him we live and move and exist**,"

Acts 14

"16 And in the generations gone by He **permitted all the nations to go their own ways**; 17 and yet He **did not leave Himself without witness**, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

8

Romans 1

"19 because **that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them**. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For **even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks;**"

Romans 2

"14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law **do instinctively the things of the Law**, these, not having the Law, **are a law to themselves,** 15 **in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness,** and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,"

Are all humans capable of knowing God and having justifying faith, without Paul's Gospel?

Consider: Abraham and all the O.T. saints.



9

GOD'S GRACE and our response

God's imputed righteousness via the Cross.

2 Corinthians 5:21

"He made Him who knew no sin to **be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him**."

God's indwelling Spirit in all who believe.

Galatians 4:6

"**God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts**,"

God's Inspired word in Apostolic teaching.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

"when you received from us … **for what it really is, the word of God,**"

God's Iconic model in Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:1

"**Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ**."

10

Three keys to our response?

2. Know how to use what we have "in Christ".

Preparation - as adopted, anointed, alien, ambassadors
Principles - Scriptural message (context) not prooftext
Perspective - based on Kingdom, not worldly values
Prayer - for wisdom, God's plans not YOURS
Persevere - abide in faith and good works
Priorities - major on majors, not minors
Purity - listen to your conscience



11

Three keys to our response?

3. Know that choices, commitment, and conduct are critical.

Romans 12

"1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the **mercies of God**, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may **prove what the will of God is**, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Matthew 4:1-11	*2 Corinthians 12:7-10*
The temptation of Christ - material provision, protection, and power	Paul's thorn - "When I am weak, then I am strong."

12

Protection from the ways of the evil one

2 Thessalonians 3

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2 and that we may be **delivered from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith**. 3 But **the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one**.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. 5 And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ."

Hebrews 12

"1 let us also **lay aside every encumbrance**, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us, 2 **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the **author and perfecter of faith**"

2 Corinthians 2:11

"in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; **for we are not ignorant of his schemes."**

13

Bait traps of the evil one

Matthew 4

"1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, '***Man shall not live on bread alone***, *but on* ***every word*** *that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*'"

A "bread alone" bait trap **CONTEXT - provision**

5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, '*He will give His angels charge concerning You*'; and '*On* their *hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.*'" 7 Jesus said to him, "**On the other hand, it is written**, '*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*'"

A "prooftext" bait trap **CONTEXT - protection**

14

Matthew 4

8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, '***You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only***.'"

"Ends justify means" bait trap **CONTEXT - power**

11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to **minister to Him**.

Jesus would have all that he needed

What do we do when we feel that we have not received all that we have needed?

Read James 4:1-10 and learn from the lives of Jesus and the Apostles.

15

We are changed by Christ's cleansing cross, not condemning commands.



"Whom you would change you must first love, and they must know that you love them."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

16

"Walking in the Spirit" starts with enablement, entitlement, and enlightenment and must lead to expression.



"The vision must be followed by the venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps - we must step up the stairs."

Vance Havner

17

The Spirit filled life is not so much about "letting go and letting God" (waiting), as it is about waking up, wising up, and walking in the Spirit of Jesus.



"Discipleship involves following Christ in obedience, not merely admiring Him."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

18


II Thessalonians
Next lesson
3:6-15
Spiritual
salt shakers
and lighthouses