

SERMON TEXT: Acts 17:1-12 (During the Apostle Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey. About 49-52 A.D.)

Vs. 1 - When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came **to Thessalonica**, where there was a Jewish synagogue.

Vs. 2 - As **his custom** was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them **from the Scriptures**,

Vs. 3 - explaining and **proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead**. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.

Vs. 4 - **Some** of the Jews were persuaded and **joined** Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

Vs. 5 - **But the Jews were jealous**; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

Vs. 6 - But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here,

Vs. 7 - and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus."

Vs. 8 - When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.

Vs. 9 - Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

Vs. 10 - As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.

Vs. 11 - Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was truth.

Vs. 12 - Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

GREETING: Jesus says: heaven & Earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away. . (Matt. 24:35)

It seems to me that every day since the middle of March, when turning on the television set or listening to the radio or looking on-line we hear the tragic news about how many people have died each day in America from COVID-19 followed by the total number of those who have died since the beginning of this illness.

And so with all this talk of death on American media, I thought I would look online and find out how many people died each year and each day BEFORE the COVID-19 pandemic.

I picked just one year, the year was 2017.

In the year 2017 there were 2,810,500 people who died in America.

$2,810,500 / 365 = 7,700$ people died each day in America in 2017.

And so, even before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, death was a problem.

We can look at the statistics and shake our head, but for every individual who dies, there are loved ones who are still here in this world who mourn. At least we hope that everyone who dies has someone who loved them.

For every Father or Mother who dies, there are children who mourn.

For every Grandparent who dies, there are grandchildren who mourn.

For every husband or wife who dies there is a spouse who mourns.

For every child who dies, there is a Father and or Mother who mourns.

And then you can add in all the other relatives and friends of every individual who dies each day, each month, each year, and there is a lot of grieving, pain and broken hearts and tears.

For every individual who dies, there are the times for those still living who are reminiscing about the good times that were had with that individual who had died. "I Remember when"

A Cure is being sought for COVID-19 so that the lifestyles which people in America have become accustomed to can resume.

People want to go back to making money, going to sporting events, going to

Unfortunately, even if and when a Cure is found for COVID-19, there is no cure for death.

In This text we hear that the Apostle Paul went to the city of Thessalonica during his 2nd Missionary journey. (49-52 A.D)

As Paul enters the city of Thessalonica, we see that AS IS HIS CUSTOM he goes to the synagogue where the Apostle Paul Proclaims and gives the CURE for death.

Vs. 2 - As **his custom** was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them **from the Scriptures**,

Vs. 3 - explaining and **proving that the Christ had to suffer and RISE FROM THE DEAD**. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,"

Jesus the Christ is the CURE for death!

The Apostle Paul is at the Synagogue and he reasoned from the Scriptures, that is from the Word of God, The Holy, Inspired, Infallible, Inerrant Word of God, which we as people living in the year 2020 have the incredible opportunity to open up our Bible every day of the week. The Bible which was originally in Hebrew and Aramaic for the Old Testament, and the New Testament which was originally written in Greek.

We have the privilege of reading God's Word as translated into a language that we can understand.

God sure is good to give us His Word in a readable language.

The Apostle Paul directed the attention of those listening to Jesus, the Christ.

As we look at the pages of Scripture we see Jesus.

- After Jesus rose from the dead, there were two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

As these two disciples were walking, Jesus came up behind them and it was during that walk that Jesus directed those two disciples **to the Scriptures** from Moses and the Prophets about the work that He, Himself would do to win salvation for all mankind on the cross of Calvary and on the third day to rise from the dead. (Luke 24:13-35)

On the first Pentecost Sunday after the Resurrection, The Apostle Peter directed the crowd to the Work of Jesus **by using Holy Scripture**. (Acts 2:14-40)

In this section from Acts 17:1-12, The Apostle Paul was proclaiming the message of Salvation to the people of Thessalonica, and we see that his preaching had results. The Word of God worked.

Vs. 4 - *Some of the Jews were persuaded and **joined** Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.*

Some people were brought to faith in Christ their One and Only Savior from Sin.

We also see that as the Apostle Paul proclaimed the Word of God in Thessalonica that it had some unfavorable results.

Vs. 5 - *But the Jews were **jealous**; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.*

Vs. 6 - *But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here,*

Vs. 7 - *and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus."*

Vs. 8 - *When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.*

Vs. 9 - *Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.*

God's Word always works. (Isaiah 55:11)

The faith of believers is strengthened.

Unbelievers are brought to faith.

And unfortunately sometimes the unbelievers are hardened in their hearts all the more.

As Paul was proclaiming the CURE for DEATH it is unfortunate that some rejected the message of Salvation in Christ Jesus and actually became jealous and angry with the Apostle Paul.

If and when a CURE is found for COVID-19 will people be angry?

Will authorities arrest the person who came up with the cure?

Will authorities make people post bond for befriending the scientist or doctor who found the CURE for COVID-19?

I would guess that NO ONE would be angry.

Rather I would hope that the person or group who finds a cure for COVID-19 will be praised and be lifted up on a pedestal and saluted as great! But of course the ultimate praise should and must go to God Who gives mankind their wisdom and abilities, even the wisdom to find a cure for COVID-19.

As the Apostle Paul gives the CURE for DEATH in Christ Jesus who was crucified and rose again, we see that he is sought out like a criminal.

And so Paul and Silas were forced to move on.

They moved on to Berea.

It was there in Berea that the Apostle Paul found those who were serious about the Word of God as we hear in this text:

Vs. 10 – *As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.*

Vs. 11 – *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was truth.*

Vs. 12 – *Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.*

The Bereans listened to the message that the Apostle Paul brought and they searched the Scriptures everyday to see if what Paul was proclaiming was true.

And so I encourage each and every one of you to "Be as the Bereans".

Search the Scriptures every Day.

Learn more and more of your Savior and the Salvation history of God your Creator and Savior.

It is from the Holy Scriptures that:

We are made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (II Timothy 3:15)

It is only in the Holy Scriptures that you learn that your sins are forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the World. (John 1:29)

It is only in the Holy Scriptures that you learn that you have heaven, where there is no more sin or death or sorrow or pain or pandemics. (Revelation 21:1-7)

It is only in the Holy Scriptures that you learn that in heaven we will have new and glorified bodies and live forever with God our Savior. (Philippians 3:20-21)

And so: "**Be As The Bereans**"

AMEN