

This week we focus on how we can deliberately elevate our love for God's Word. We consider the Bereans who "received the message with great eagerness" and "examined the Scriptures every day." We need both the serious study of God's Word juxtaposed with a passion and desire to know it. Why? Because it is God's Word that will help us see who Jesus is and how we can follow Him.

# SESSION 3

## Our Next Level of Love for God's Word

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

—HEBREWS 4:12

Your word is a lamp for my feet,  
a light on my path.

—PSALM 119:105



# ACTS 17:1-15

## Read Aloud in Your Group

<sup>1</sup>When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.

<sup>2</sup>As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,” he said. <sup>4</sup>Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.

<sup>5</sup>But other 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.

<sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, <sup>7</sup> and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” <sup>8</sup>When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. <sup>9</sup>Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

In Berea

<sup>10</sup>As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. <sup>11</sup>Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than

those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. <sup>12</sup>As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

<sup>13</sup>But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up.

<sup>14</sup>The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea.

<sup>15</sup>Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.



## FOR DISCUSSION

**INTRODUCTORY QUESTION:** If you've ever done a Bible "lucky flip" where God's Word spoke to you, share your story. Or, share one of your favorite Bible verses and why it's a "go-to" verse for you.

1. Look closely at this passage. What verbs describe the difference between the motivations and the responses of the Jews in Thessalonica versus the Berean Jews?
2. Why did the Bereans "examine the Scriptures?"
3. What obstacles have you encountered when reading or studying the Bible? What has helped you to overcome them?
4. How does knowledge of the Bible increase our love for God? How have you seen this process work?
5. What can you do as individuals and a group to grow in love and knowledge of God's Word? For example, you can watch *The Bible Project* videos ([Bibleproject.com](http://Bibleproject.com)) on how to read the Bible and understand better the context of each of its 66 books.
6. If you do not have a regular practice of reading the Bible, you can start it now. Here are several options:
  - Commit to doing the Take 5 devotionals, written by Calvary staff and posted online each day.
  - Go to the Bible app and pick out a daily reading plan or devotional focused on a topic that interests you and the duration you'd like to try.
  - You can also listen to the audible Bible or read a different translation which helps you engage with God's Word in a fresh and different way.



7. If you are new to Bible study or would like a simple easy way to study Scripture, here's the SOAP method.

### THE SOAP BIBLE STUDY METHOD

**S**

#### SCRIPTURE

As you read, write out the verse(s) that stuck out most to you.

**O**

#### OBSERVATION

What truth can you learn? Are there any warnings? Principles? Commands? What is the overall message of the verse?

**A**

#### APPLICATION

How does this verse apply to your life today?  
How can you live differently in light of this truth?

**P**

#### PRAYER

Turn these thoughts into prayer. Ask the Lord to show you how to meditate on and apply this scripture to your life.



# TAKE 5

## TIME TO DIG DEEPER?

Dick Thompson, Seasoned Adults Pastor

### ACTS 17:10-11

*“As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”*

For some reason, the Bereans were ready to go to the “next level” in their love of the scriptures. What motivated their receptivity? Was it that they had just been through the wars that ravaged northern Greece? Had they suffered under Roman prejudice and persecution? One thing we know for sure, we go to the “next level” in our love for God’s Word when we become dissatisfied with the level, we’re on now.

We experience this dissatisfaction when the way we used to read the Bible no longer suffices and we find ourselves with questions about what we are reading. Often these questions arise when we come into a new chapter in our lives. Perhaps we are in crisis or have new responsibilities that feel overwhelming. Maybe we are staring at the prospect of “retirement” and life in the “third third.” It may be that someone asks a question prodding us to search deeper into the scriptures. A single experience can shove us out of our comfort zone where our assumptions about “the way it was,” are no longer “the way it is.” How would you rate your “receptivity” to taking your love and curiosity about God’s word to the next level? What questions are prodding you?

Notice that the root of the word “question” is “quest.” Doubts are flags signaling where we need to dig. By the time Paul and Silas showed up, the Bereans were ready, waiting, and aching to hear the good news—the true King had come. Sin, death, and Satan had been defeated. A new day had dawned. Some important questions were answered. But now they will have new questions. And so do we.

*Wondrous and Almighty God,*

*Help us cherish our questions the way the Bereans did. You have so much You want to show us!  
Thank you for the Pauls and Silases who help me dig deeper into Your Word and love it more.*



Scan to view Take5  
daily devotionals