

A Daily Dose of Good News

Thursday, August 6, 2020

Pastor Steve's devotion is offered at <https://youtu.be/QnEzp3EePhI>

That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas off to Beroea; and when they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. These Jews were more receptive than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the scriptures every day to see whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, including not a few Greek women and men of high standing. But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Beroea as well, they came there too, to stir up and incite the crowds. Then the believer immediately sent Paul away to the coast, but Silas and Timothy remained behind. Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him. (Acts 17:10-15)

The Support of Scripture

Through all these centuries,
The witness of the Jews in Beroea
Can be a word of encouragement and guidance
To those of us in 21st century America.

With the world changing around them
More than they could even comprehend for themselves in the moment
With all the political intrigue and capricious leadership of the Roman Empire
And now news of a man raised from the dead
Revealing God's infinite love for all people
Beyond the powers of sin and death,
Anyone paying attention had to be wondering
Where to turn for truth and understanding about life and community.

Paul and Silas and Timothy were on a mission
To invite people into the truth and understanding
Of God's unending self-going love
As revealed by Jesus of Nazareth and him raised from the dead.

That message turns out to be hard to hear for self-minded people of the world though.
In fact, it turns out to be impossible for people to hear while they cling to self-interest,
And who find themselves confronting community-interested people
For the limits that community-minded people place on their self-interest.

There were some in Thessalonica who couldn't or wouldn't hear
The good news of God's love for all in Christ Jesus
And how that love is most fully recognized in love for each other.
And when Paul, Silas and Timothy found hearts more open in Beroea,
Malcontents from Thessalonica rushed into Beroea
Trying to incite the people there to ignore the good news too.

In face of that onslaught, the people of Beroea stayed strong,
And they found a primary support in the gift of holy scriptures.
And that is their word of encouragement and guidance for us.
In fact, it is the impetus for the Daily Dose of Good News
We have been sharing with you every day for the last 5 months.

With the world spinning around us
First with the effects of a pandemic
And then with turmoil of protests of social injustice and civil unrest
And now all of the political intrigue heading our way this fall,
The Bible and its access to God's promise of mercy and life for all
Are more and more important.

So while we might find the news and social media
And even perhaps family and friends
Inciting to contests over personal interests
We'll continue to revel in that good news
Of God's promise of mercy and life for all
Day after day after day
Thanks in part to the witness of Jews in Beroea
So long ago.
Amen