

# Engage the Culture with the Gospel

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Date: 15 November 2015

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Let's go to our Bibles or take out your devices and go to the book of Acts chapter 17.
- Acts 17, if you're visiting with us, the black Bible in the chair in front of you, you can pull that out and go towards the back, page 107.
107. Acts 17, we're going to do the first 15 verses. Acts 17, 1 through 15. Acts 17, 1 through 15.
- And I'll read the passage, then we'll do our study. Acts 17, 1 through 15.
- When they had traveled through Empipholus and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.
- [ 1 : 21 ]     And according to Paul's custom, he went to them. And for three Sabbaths, reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, saying, This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.
- And some of them were persuaded. And joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. But the Jews, becoming jealous, and taking along some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar.
- And coming upon the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, These men who have upset the whole world have come here also.
- And Jason has welcomed them. And they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.
- And when they had received the pledge from Jason and the others, they released them. And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. And when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.
- [ 2 : 37 ]     Now, these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica. They received the word with great eagerness, examining the scriptures daily whether these things were so.
- Many of them, therefore, believed along with a number of prominent Greek women and men. But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul and Berea also, they came there likewise, agitating and stirring up the crowds.
- And then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as Athens. And Silas and Timothy remained there. Now those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens.
- And receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed. Popular analyst, cultural analyst, and writer Chuck Klosterman.
- He was on stage at Leonard Ryan University. This past Thursday. The popular culture analyst in an interview, he said this.

[ 3 : 46 ] He said, because of the way my career has unspooled working rock magazines and being really involved with the coverage and the analysis of popular culture, I still have a pretty decent understanding of what's happening in youth culture.

When he would come on stage there at Leonard Ryan University, he says he never really knows who will show up to his appearances, so he doesn't know exactly what he will discuss. As his audience's age and interests vary, so too do his topics.

Quote, It's not like a lecture. I'm not somebody who comes in and says, Okay, I'm going to tell you how to think about things and what opinions to have. It's not really like that, Klosterman says.

It doesn't really matter what you're interested in. What matters is how you think about the things you're interested in. He says, There's very little in my talk that I would say is instructive.

I'm not really trying to enforce opinions. In other words, says the article, it's about each individual's relationship with popular culture, which Klosterman says may be the only culture we have left in the United States.

[ 5 : 02 ] Why do I bring this up? Did you hear what he said? Popular culture is possibly the only culture left in the United States.

Really? What is popular culture? Definition from Wikipedia. The entirety of ideas, perspectives, attitudes, images, and other phenomena that are within the mainstream of a given culture, especially Western culture.

Of the early to mid-20th century. And the emerging global mainstream culture of the late 20th and early 21st century. That's popular culture.

Well, what's culture? Culture is a way of life of a group of people. Their behaviors, their beliefs, their values, symbols.

That they accept generally without thinking about them. And that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. That's culture. And just Google that and that's the definition you get.

[ 6 : 17 ] A more intellectual type definition. For all you geeks out there. Daniel's not here. He would have been like, oh yeah, yeah. He admits he's a geek just to let you know.

He says that. Clifford Geertz says this. This is for you, Daniel. Quote, An historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols. A system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life.

That's culture. So going back to what this guy says. The popular culture analyst. If this is right.

That popular culture is the only culture left in the United States. That's a very scary place to be. What's our relationship to popular culture as Christians then?

I mean, what do we do as Christians? How does the gospel fit into the paradigm of popular culture? Does it really matter?

[ 7 : 33 ] Yes. But how can we respond to this? How should we respond to this? How do we get involved in culture as Christians?

Actually, it's kind of simple. It's all the definitions and this and that. It's actually simple. Not necessarily easy.

But simple. As we come to this part in Acts, just do it. Just be who you are. Let God use you to fulfill His mission. The simple part is simply engage the culture with the gospel.

Engage the culture. And you could even put, in parentheses, engage the pop culture with the gospel. I'm going to get into what I mean by the word engage.

I'll define it for you. And then we'll define it throughout the message as well. Engage the culture with the gospel. Let me propose something to us.

[ 8 : 42 ] I propose that we engage our culture, pop culture, with the gospel. Whether it be with those familiar with the Bible, as in the case of our text this morning.

Or those totally unfamiliar with the Bible, with scripture. As we'll see next week when Paul is on Mars Hill. So this goes for engaging the culture.

You engage with Mormons. Jehovah Witnesses. You engage with Muslims. And you engage with atheists.

And agnostics too. We say, well wait a second. How do you do that? How do you engage atheists with the gospel? How do you engage agnostics with the... How do you do that? We'll get to that.

What do we mean by engage though? What does that mean? Now there's one meaning of engage. Which is to participate or become involved in. That's one meaning.

[ 9 : 47 ] I don't mean that. There's another meaning though for engage. Engage means to establish a meaningful contact or connection. Or cause someone to become involved in.

So when we think of engage. I want you to think of. We try to establish a connection with the culture. With the gospel. People. So you try to establish a connection with the culture.

People. Their behaviors. Their values. Their beliefs. We try to establish a connection with them. With the gospel. As we do. So. Is that not what God did with us?

God did that with us. The very gospel. Is God engaging with us. Right? God. Because God. How did God establish a connection with people?

In the very ultimate way that you can establish a connection with people. He actually became like one of us. He incarnated himself.

[ 11 : 03 ] I mean. Do you realize. Jesus will forever be God man. God has forever connected himself to humanity.

His creation. He will always be God man. That's an amazing concept. That God would engage in the culture that he has made so much.

He actually steps in and becomes like us. And then. And then. He lived where we failed. He dies as a substitute on behalf of sinners.

He resurrects from the dead. For anyone who turns from their sin and puts their trust in Jesus Christ. That's that God did this.

So we do the same thing. We have to engage. We establish a connection. Or some people like to use this phrase. Which I understand that. We incarnate ourselves.

[ 12 : 06 ] Into the culture. With the gospel. That's what we do. Why are we able to engage though?

Why. Why are we able to engage with unsafe people? I mean let's think about it. Why. Why are you able to engage with that. Five year old child that you have. Or six year old.

Why are you able to engage with that spouse. Who doesn't know Christ with the gospel. Or. Your. Your parents. Your father who doesn't know. Your mother who doesn't know Christ. Your co-worker.

Your neighbor. Why are you able to engage with them? Why are you able to do that? Why are you able to do that? This goes back to the gospel really. We're able to do this because.

Of our point of contact. I'm giving you a apologetics lesson here. On presuppositional apologetics. If you don't know that. I'm actually teaching you this.

[ 13 : 07 ] What is a point of contact? What are you. What are you talking about Jim? A point of contact. Contact. It's something. Two opponents have. They have this in common.

And which as such. Is a point that one person can use. To make contact with the other person. And build toward greater agreement. So you have two. Two opponents. They have something in common.

One person. One person. Uses this point of contact. To make contact with this other person. To build toward a greater agreement. So what's your point of contact.

With that Muslim. That lives across the street from you. What's the point of contact. That you have with that atheist friend. What's the point of contact. That you have with the Mormon. That lives down the street.

What's that point of contact. You have. With your parent. Who doesn't want to. Know. Who doesn't want. Do anything to do with the gospel. What's your point of contact. Why are you able to.

[ 14 : 05 ] Talk to them. And engage them. With the gospel. The point of contact. Their sense of deity.

The knowledge of God. Every person has. Friend. Whether you're talking about. A Muslim. A Mormon. A Hindu. An agnostic.

An atheist. An atheist. A Taoist. Anyone. Whoever you're talking about. Every single person. Has a sense of deity. Every single person. Has the knowledge of God.

The one true God. Greg. Bonson. Says this. Deep down in his mind. Every man knows.

That he is the creature of God. And responsible to God. Every man at bottom. He knows that he is a covenant breaker. So every person.

[ 15 : 06 ] Has a sense of deity. Which they continually. Suppress. And exchange it for a lie. Romans chapter 1. Verse 18. And following. Paul says. They have this knowledge of God.

But they take it. They suppress it. And they exchange it. So every person. Has a sense of deity. Has a sense of who God is. They actually.

Know. The one true God. And though they knew God. They did not honor him as God. Says Paul. So they took that. And they suppress that truth. And they exchange it for a lie. Like what?

Atheism. There is no God. Muslim. Muslim. The God is Allah. Buddhism. You must follow the eightfold path.

And then you will enter nirvana. Everyone has a sense of deity. And they are groping at. They are trying to figure this out. And the reason why. They are trying to figure this out. Is because of their fallenness.

[ 16 : 02 ] And their sin. But they have the sense of deity. And that is why. We can engage people with the gospel. Whether it is an atheist. A Muslim. A Jehovah Witness.

A Hindu. An agnostic. Or even an orthodox Jew. And in our text. That is what Paul does. He engages the culture.

With the orthodox Jews. Jews and God fearing Greeks. They had a great knowledge of God. They knew God. They knew the God. Visceral God of the Old Testament.

But it had to be completed. Had to be really made known to them. They had to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. So after I've given you the lesson.

On presuppositional apologetics. And the heart of epistemology. You all know that now. You never say I didn't give you anything. Let's talk about this. Let's figure out first.

[ 17 : 03 ] The first point we have. Engage our culture with the gospel. This is what Paul does. Notice verse 1. Epiphilus. Apollonia.

They came to Phaselonica. The capital of Macedonia. Really the whole region. It was a major harbor. It was the link to the Black Sea.

The population ranged from. The lowest estimate is like 20,000. It could have been up to 100,000 people. It's a pretty big area. Very, very loyal to Rome.

What does Paul do? As his custom. Verse 2. He went to them. And for three Sabbaths. He reasoned with them.

Three Sabbaths. Sabbaths. And then a longer period. Ministering elsewhere in the city. So. He didn't. And by the way. He didn't just talk on Sabbath. About the gospel.

[ 18 : 09 ] Well I'm only doing it on Sabbath. And I'm not going to talk to anybody else after that. No. I mean so you're talking. At least three weeks. He's engaging them with the gospel. Now.

Now we have to figure out. What is the gospel? Notice what it says here. In verse 3. The Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead.

Saying. This Jesus whom I proclaim to you. Is the Christ. Reminds us of what Jesus did. In Luke chapter 24. Remember. He said this to the disciples.

He says. This is what needed to happen. It was necessary. For the Christ to suffer. And to rise again. And repentance unto forgiveness of sins. Should be preached to all the nations.

Paul does the same thing. And he uses the same word day. D-E-I. It is necessary. It was necessary. For the Christ to suffer. Die.

[ 19 : 06 ] To rise again. And this Christ. Is Jesus. He's the one. This is the gospel. Jesus is the Messiah.

And he argues this. Not from. Vacuum. Or vacuum of reason. He does this. From where? From the scriptures.

Which is what? The Old Testament. Ain't no such thing as New Testament at this time. He does this from the Old Testament. This is the gospel.

The gospel is not your best life now. No. The gospel is not Jesus will be your friend. The gospel is not Jesus will help your marriage. No.

The heart of the gospel. Is. It was necessary for the Christ to suffer. To die and be raised. And Jesus fulfilled all this. The gospel is not you will never be lonely.

[ 20 : 05 ] The gospel is not Jesus will help you with your problems. The gospel is not Jesus will help you with your addictions. That's not the gospel. The gospel is God is just.

We should be condemned. Jesus lived, died and rose. Repent and trust him. That's the gospel. That's what we engage the culture with. This is gospel truth.

Because as Paul says in Romans chapter 1 verse 16. 1-1-6. The gospel. What is it? It is what? Tell me. The power of God. Thank you all two of you.

The gospel is. What is it? Tell me. It is. The power of God. Unto salvation to anyone who believes. God's saving plan for humanity.

It is the life, death, resurrection of his eternal son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This had to happen. It must happen. So I ask.

[ 21 : 05 ] Are you here today and not a follower of Jesus? Do you need to respond to this message of hope? You need to respond to this message of forgiveness of sins.

God will forgive you of all your sins. You will be made right with God. God will forgive you of all your sins. God will forgive you of all your sins. The gospel is that God engaged with this world's culture.

He stepped into us by becoming like us. Incarnating himself. Taking on very flesh. Living.

Dying. Rising. So that you can have forgiveness of sins. And God's grace and compassion flows to you in Jesus Christ. That's the gospel.

So Paul engaged the culture with the gospel. Notice how he does it. One, two, three, four, five.

[ 22 : 10 ] Five words. Reasons. Explains. Proves or demonstrates. Proclaims. Proclaims. Persuades. And he's doing it from the scriptures.

From the Old Testament. How do you establish a connection with people? With culture? You take the gospel.

What we just spoke about. You reason. Explain. Demonstrate or prove. Proclaim. Persuade them. That's how you do it.

Do you see those words there? There in verse two. I skipped over that on purpose. So we can center on this. Three steps. Reason. From the scriptures. Explaining.

From the scriptures. Demonstrating. Or giving evidence. From the scriptures. The Christ had to suffer and rise again. This Jesus who I am proclaiming to you. And then verse four.

[ 23 : 11 ] And some of them were persuaded. This is why. I personally.

Just me personally. I struggle with just handing out tracts. To total strangers. And I understand. It's actually easier.

It's easier to hand out a tract. Right? Because you don't have to get involved in a personal conversation with somebody. And end up doing this. Reason.

Explain. Proclaim. And try to. Persuade. Friends. We don't reason people to faith.

In some nebulous type knowledge. Some over here. You reason with them from the scriptures. You reason with them.

[ 24 : 12 ] You explain. You demonstrate. You prove. You proclaim. And you persuade them. Using this. We do this because.

Scripture itself. Is self-attesting. It has self-attesting authority and power. Wait a second. What did we just quote?

What was it? Romans 1.16. The gospel is the what? Thank you all two of you. The gospel is the what? The gospel is the power of God.

Not you trying to reason somebody to faith. Not you trying to show that. Well you kind of. You know. You do this. And you do that. And all the way. You just.

Use the bible. That's what you use. The gospel. To reason. You explain it. You prove. You proclaim it.

[ 25 : 14 ] And you persuade them. See it takes more effort. To reason. Explain. Prove. Proclaim. And persuade. Rather than handing out a track. Huh. Now again.

Not to say handing out a track. Is sinful and wrong. I'm not saying that. Please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying that. If we're talking about. Reference to the gospel. And the principles that we pull out.

From how Paul. Establishes a connection. Engage. With the culture. With the gospel. It takes more.

Than just spending a minute. We build a relationship. And discuss the gospel. It's not using imposition. You don't use manipulation.

You develop a gospel relationship. With the unsaved. A gospel relationship. Now it doesn't mean. You don't give them a gospel. In a minute.

[ 26 : 13 ] Sometimes. That's all the time you have. Maybe it is. A plane ride. Where you. Give someone the gospel. For a minute. Maybe that's all you have. Is just a minute. It just.

It just means though. We must understand that. We are making disciples. We're making learners. I mean.

How do you explain something? You're actually teaching somebody. The gospel. You teach them the gospel. You help them to grasp the gospel. I'll give you an example.

I thought of this. As I was going through a message last night. There's a guy in Jerome. He got off drinking. Went off alcohol.

Last Friday. We're talking. He's talking about this. You know. Getting off alcohol. This and that. I'm asking. How long. Been. While I've been doing this. When this and that. So he's talking about different things.

[ 27 : 16 ] And all the while he's talking. I'm praying. Like God. How in the world. Am I going to. Get the gospel in this way. How in the world. Am I going to. Bring this to the gospel. He's talking about.

You know. Just have a desire. You know. And it's trying to. Do something else. You know. With that desire. And I. And then I. Said.

And this is. By means of the spirit of God. Working in our hearts. Planting things into our heads. I said. You know. It's. It's so. True.

That. We always try to. Grasp. After different things. In this life. Thinking that they're going to. Satisfy us. Whether it's booze. Drugs.

Prescription. Junk. Food. I even said chocolate. The chocolate. Different things. And. And yet. God gave us those things. So that way we can use those things.

[ 28 : 13 ] To glorify his name. But. What's happened is that. We make those things into idols. And we end up going after those things. Thinking that they satisfy. And yet. God says. No.

I gave you those things. But you must realize. That I'm the one who satisfies you. Jesus is the one who satisfies us. With himself. Even giving of himself.

On behalf of sinners. Living and dying. And rising again from the dead. So we. We can have life. And we can be totally satisfied in him alone.

Because that's why we've been made. Establishing that connection. With this guy. With the gospel.

That's what we're trying to do. And believe me. It takes. Time. Sometimes it takes you. Talking about the gospel. Two.

[ 29 : 07 ] Three. Five. Twenty. Thirty. Fifty. A hundred times. You're talking about the gospel. And then you talk about something else. So we're talking about this. And then something. Somebody came over. And then we got interrupted.

And this and that one. That's usually how it happens. Right? But it takes time. And it's just planting the seed. Where you reason.

You explain. You prove. You proclaim. And then you try to persuade them. To the gospel. We have to be careful about slippery slopes.

What I mean by that. Be careful. Of two slippery slopes. Relational. And bible thumping. You like that bible thumping answer?

So relational. Excuse me. You say. I'm going to build a relationship with this person. And I'm just going to live out the gospel to them. But you. You don't say anything.

[ 30 : 09 ] Well that's. That's a slippery slope. Because I'm just going to live out. Well that's not what Paul did. Right? I mean he reasoned. He explained. He tried to prove.

He proclaimed. And he. Persuaded. In the gospel. So let's. Here's. Here's where we engage the culture. We're trying to establish a connection with people. With the gospel.

A slippery slope. I'm just going to build a relationship with them. Just look at that. The other. Slope is. Bible thumping. Right? Come on. Right?

And just. Show them the gospel. The other. I'm just going to lay. Like. Like. Like. And what happens is. Then. You're not building a relationship. And then. They. Feel like. That you just really don't care.

[ 31 : 05 ] You're just trying to get another number in your church. For me. As the pastor. If I'm a pastor. You're trying to get another person. Who's going to give. That's. Automatically the thing that they tell me.

Trying to get another person. Who's going to give to your church. No. I'm not trying to get you to come to my church. That's what they say. When people come to your church. They say. First of all. It's not my church. Second of all. I'm not trying to get you to come.

I'm not trying to get you to come to my church. That's not the point. So the Bible thumper. That's the slippery slope.

The other is. I'm just going to build a relationship with them. Just love them. Engage them with the gospel. How do we do that? How. Engage. What does that mean? You try to establish a connection with people.

How do you do that? Reason. You proclaim. You explain. You try to persuade. You demonstrate. And what do we use?

[ 32 : 03 ] What are you talking? What are we? This. This. This. Bible. Is self. Attesting. To itself. Why? Because the gospel.

What is it? It is. Power of God. Thank you. There's more of you. 20. Out of 50. Let's try it together. The gospel is. The power of God.

That's what it is. When you do this. Oh. One new. A good balance between them. Relational. Bible thumping.

Build a gospel relationship. With non-believers. Engage them with the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's what we're trying to do. Now. What could happen if we do this?

Three possibilities. What happens when we do this? When we engage people with the gospel? What happens? Number one. They could end up getting mad at you.

[ 33 : 03 ] It could provoke turmoil. Five through nine. The Jews became jealous. Why? Because they saw all these Gentiles responding. Well. We want them to become Jews.

We want them to become part of Judaism. Why didn't they join the synagogue? Why are they joining with Paul? The greater the response. The greater the opposition can be. Took along with them some wicked men from the marketplace.

Formed a mob. Set the city in an uproar. They gathered literally from the rabble. These rabble were lowlifes. They were troublemakers. So the Jews used these punks.

To stir up the city. Kind of ironic. They started trouble in the city. Yet they accused Paul of making trouble. Okay. That's really weird. So they go looking for him. Went out to the people.

They go looking for Paul and Silas. They didn't find them. Verse six. They dragged Jason. Some brethren before the city authorities. They're shouting. Right.

[ 34 : 03 ] Right. They said two accusations. One. They're disrupting the peace. Two. Sedition. They're going against Rome. Remember. Thessalonica was very loyal to Rome.

Disrupt the world. Literally the wording is like this. They're turning the world upside down. And Jason's welcoming them.



Well that's what we do isn't it? The message of the gospel turns the world upside down because when one believes their world gets turned upside down doesn't it?

I notice they also say contrary to the decrees of Caesar saying that there is another king. Jesus. Oh yeah it's true. He's the king but he's not to overthrow Caesar.

Yes. Yes. Their message was truly world changing because they proclaimed Jesus was the promised Messiah who would rule the world one day.

[ 35 : 10 ] And he calls all people to come to him and give him allegiance. Yes. That's what we do. That's what we do. When one responds to the gospel they have new priorities.

New loyalties. Right? What? I mean it transforms their personal relationships, business ethics, social connections, ambitions, desires, their attitudes.

Even their attitude towards a government that's persecuting them. What's altered? Their culture. Their behaviors, their beliefs, their values, their ambitions, their culture changes.

From pop culture to now a gospel culture. From popular culture to a Jesus culture. See that's why when we proclaim the gospel, it disturbs the social and political status quo doesn't it?

Big time. Why? When we proclaim the gospel, it can transform homosexual desire to Christ-exalting desire.

[ 36 : 28 ] It can change bitterness, hatred to love and forgiveness. It can alter a love and just a craving for sex to a love and a craving for Jesus Christ.

It can transform a thirst and just a wanting of alcohol to a thirst and a wanting for Jesus Christ. That's the power of the gospel.

We try to establish that connection with these people, with the gospel, realizing that when the gospel comes in, it totally alters their culture. Their behaviors, their values, their beliefs, everything about them.

Notice what happens in verse 8. They stirred up this crowd, these authorities, when they heard these things, and they received a pledge from Jason. The others, they released them. So Jason negotiates some bond, a guarantee that Roman law will not be broken, because they were ready to kill them.

So then they let them go. I've said this to you numerous times, and we're going to see this in the book of Acts. Constantly, when we proclaim the gospel, opposition will come.

[ 37 : 48 ] Whether it's in the form of persecution, or just suffering in general. Look, the enemy hates the gospel, and he will stop at nothing to stop you. He will stop at nothing to stop you from explaining, reasoning, proving, demonstrating, persuading, and proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ.

You, establishing a connection with people to try and engage them, to try and connect with them with the gospel. He hates you, and he hates the gospel.

So you will face opposition. Notice what happens in verse 13. When they go to Berea, these Jews, these jerks, zealous jerks, they travel from Thessalonica, they found out the word of God has been proclaimed by Paul and Berea, they came there, agitated, they did it again.

Notice verse 14 and 15. The brother immediately sent Paul to go as far as the sea. Silas and Timothy remained there. They brought him as far as Athens. Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea.

Apparently, what happened is, receiving a command for Silas and Timothy, I keep confusing those, to come to him as soon as possible, he departed. So, Paul had sent them back to Macedonia, meeting up with them in Corinth.

[ 39 : 14 ] Apparently, Timothy went back to Thessalonica. Maybe Silas went to Philippi, and then Paul is still in Athens, which we'll look at next week. God's message always brings a mixed reaction.

And people still respond like that for the gospel. Some people respond negatively, even vehemently. So it can provoke turmoil. Opposition when you do this.

But in the face of turmoil, we as God's people need to remain firm, strong, and steadfast, proclaiming and holy to this gospel. And God gives us His sustaining grace.

Number two. It could provoke eagerness. Verse 10 and 11. After they were sent away from Thessalonica, by night they came to Berea.

Notice Paul goes into the synagogue. These were nobler than the Thessalonians. High-minded behavior. Why'd they show it? Verse 11.

[ 40 : 18 ] They received the word with eagerness, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. So these were zealous for the truth of the gospel, having a nobler attitude.

They examined the scriptures, as Paul spoke about the life, death, resurrection of Messiah. Praise God that some people won't respond vehemently and negatively to you.

Isn't that nice? It's like, wow, good thing, because you feel like that, right? You feel like everyone's, oh my goodness, everyone's attacking me. Some people, they will, it will provoke in them an eagerness.

They'll examine what you say. They didn't persecute the messengers. Notice, they listened intently to what they said. They searched it themselves. It is pertinent that when people come to God's word with open minds, that they might see the truth of the Lord Jesus and believe.

Look, only God can open minds, because the evil one has blinded the minds of the unbelieving to the truth, right? Yeah, 2 Corinthians 4.4.

[ 41 : 25 ] The God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving. Say, we'll not see the light of the gospel, of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. Say, we'll not be able to see the light.

The light is Christ, and Christ is glory. They're blinded to that. The other thing too, they think, they think they're open, and you're closed minded, right?

You flip that around. No, friend. Actually, the opposite is true. I said that to somebody, kind of threw them off too. I said, no, actually, you're closed minded. I'm the one who's open to the truth.

It kind of looked to me funny. This is what we want to instill in people when we're proclaiming the gospel. We want them to search the scriptures on their own, to see the Lord Jesus Christ, and all his glory and power.

And we let them see for themselves. Tell them, here, read the Bible. Don't believe what I'm telling you. Search for it yourself. And let the spirit work in their heart.

[ 42 : 33 ] If you're a parent here, us parents, it is vitally important that we teach our kids the gospel from the word on a regular basis. We're showing them from the word. This is the truth of the gospel.

Daily, every other day, once a week, three times a week, they need to be told what wretched sinners they are. They are wretched sinners. But how much they need God's gracious love.

Christian, do we diligently study God's word like these Bereans? How much are we reading God's word? How much do we study God's word?

Are we habitually challenging ourselves in the word? Or are we just simply speaking it and reading it on a Sunday morning? Is it most you read from God's word on Sunday?

I hope not. So when we are engaged in our culture with the gospel, there's three possibilities. It can provoke turmoil. It can provoke eagerness.

- [ 43 : 32 ] And praise God, it could provoke belief. Notice verse 4 and verse 12. They were persuaded and joined with Paul and Silas, a great multitude of the God-faring Greeks, a number of leading women.

Once they responded interesting, they connected themselves to Paul and Silas. They joined with him. Interesting. When we engage the culture, we're trying to establish a connection.

When they respond to the gospel, they will connect themselves to us. Sometimes people respond to the message. Praise God.

Praise God. A new church had begun in Thessalonica. And notice in Berea, verse 12. Many of them therefore believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

Interesting. Many Greeks respond, even prominent men and women, not just in Thessalonica, but also in Berea. Both Jews and Greeks respond positively to the message.

- [ 44 : 38 ] Having searched the scriptures, diligently, examining them carefully. When we engage the culture with the gospel, reasoning, explaining, proving, proclaiming, and trying to persuade them, it can provoke belief.

So don't be afraid. Don't be afraid to engage our culture with the gospel. Don't be afraid to try to explain the gospel and reason.

Try and demonstrate it. Proclaim it. Try to persuade them. There could be turmoil. There could be eagerness though. There could be belief.

I mean, didn't God open our own hearts? And isn't the fact that God engaged us with the culture, isn't that the very motivation for us to engage others with the culture?

That the God steps into our time, isn't that the motivation for us to step into theirs? Don't be afraid to engage the culture with the gospel.

- [ 45 : 48 ] Take a moment and pray. Do that. Father, we're so thankful that you engaged us. You've tried to establish a connection with us.

Thank you that you've been so gracious to us. As you have incarnated yourself, let us incarnate ourselves into the lives of these people.

People in Jerome. Neighbors across the street. Spouse. A parent to their child. A child to their parent.

Father, mother. An uncle. A close friend. A co-worker. You know the interactions that we have throughout the week, throughout this past month.

Give us grace to engage, to try to establish a connection with them, with the gospel. Reasoning.

- [ 46 : 55 ] Persuading. Explaining. Proving and proclaiming that Jesus had to die and he was resurrected.

Let's take a few moments and just have some silence for us to think and to ponder what we've seen in God's Word. See him now. Notice that the way IM California would be and be Thank you.