

Thessalonica, Berea and Athens

Key Verse: *“As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”*
—Acts 17:23

Selected Scripture:
Acts 17:1-34
an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.” (vs. 5) Accusations were made against Jason, who was a Christian, concerning the disturbance that occurred. He had to post a bond to guarantee there would be no further riots, after which he and the others were released. As a result, Paul and Silas departed quickly for Berea.—vss. 6-9

As usual, the missionaries went first to the synagogues, where there were honest-hearted students of the

FOLLOWING THEIR TIME IN
Philippi, Paul, Silas, and Timothy journeyed to Thessalonica. There they found a Jewish synagogue, and for three Sabbath days, discussed the Scriptures with those in attendance. Paul emphasized that Jesus was the Christ who was raised from the dead. Some of the Jews as well as a number of devout Greeks accepted the message and became followers of Christ.—Acts 17:1-4

“But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on

Scriptures. As a result, many of them became believers. When word of this successful ministry in Berea reached Thessalonica, the unbelieving Jews there made a trip to Berea, once again stirring up the people against these missionaries. Paul then sailed for Athens, while Silas and Timothy remained in Berea to strengthen the new Christians.—vss. 10-15

Upon his arrival in Athens, Paul observed that the city was given over to idolatry, and he began to declare God's Word in the synagogue and marketplace. Some of the Greek philosophers invited him to address the Areopagus, a judicial body that met on Mars' hill. These were Gentiles, and being aware of all the idols in Athens, Paul commenced his message by noting he had observed they were very religious.—vss. 16-22

In our Key Verse, Paul mentioned seeing an altar to "THE UNKNOWN GOD." He then transitioned his discourse toward enlightening them concerning the one true God, and set forth various features of the divine plan, including the doctrine of the resurrection. Paul affirmed that the true God does not dwell in temples made by human hands, but that he is the Creator of all things, and will reveal himself to those who seek after him. He told them that God had overlooked the ignorance of those who never knew him in the past, but now the time had come for repentance because of a coming period of judgment, which would be executed by Jesus Christ. Although some listeners considered his message, especially with regard to the resurrection of the dead, to be incredulous, others wanted to hear more about it later, and a few even became believers.—vss. 24-34

The zeal of the Early Church in spreading the Gospel is inspiring. May their example serve as an encouragement for each of us to share the good news of God's kingdom under Christ Jesus that will bless the entire human family, thus ending all of the evil that presently exists in the world. ■