

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

September 27, 2009

The noble mind

by David King

"Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so" (Ac. 17:11 NASV).

In the history of Paul's missionary endeavors, the story of the Bereans stands as a refreshing exception to the norm. In every city where Paul went with the gospel message, the Jewish population usually responded with hostility. But in Berea, it was different. These people took the time to honestly consider what Paul taught, and accepted his teaching.

Luke describes them as "noble-minded." The word literally describes "one of noble birth," i.e., a nobleman. The object here, of course, was not their physical pedigree, but their character. Their reaction to Paul's message showed them to be fair and reasonable people. Unlike the Jews of Thessalonica, whose rejection of the gospel was motivated by envy (v. 5), the Bereans were willing to consider the evidence without prejudice.

Let's look at two key elements of their response that demonstrated their nobility of character.

First, they listened to what Paul had to say: "They received the word with great eagerness." The message they heard from Paul was clearly one they had never heard before. Was it the truth? Initially, they didn't know. The Bereans were not gullible dupes who swallowed whatever was fed them. But neither were they pre-programmed automatons who automatically rejected anything that did not fit their exist-

ing belief system. The fact that they even listened to Paul at all is noteworthy.

Second, they "examined the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." This examination was not merely a glance at their Bibles to confirm that Paul had his quotes right. What these people were doing went much deeper than that. They were doing their own research on the meaning of the Scriptures Paul was using. It was a careful process of sifting, sorting, comparing, thinking, and discussing. Furthermore, their conclusions did not come quickly. They did this "daily," over some period of time. The implications of what Paul was teaching were radical, and they wanted to make sure that no stone was left unturned in their quest to know the truth about the matter.

So what was the result of this process of impartial examination? "Many of them therefore believed" (v. 12). God's word had encountered good and honest hearts, and they responded as God knew they would. This process will not always result in acceptance of a new teaching. Sometimes the result is rejection (1 Jn. 4:1; Rev. 2:2). But at least the rejection is based on rational examination, not blind prejudice.

The spirit of the Bereans was rare then, and it is rare today. Most people are content to hold on to their current beliefs, and do not want to be challenged. Religious leaders discourage their followers from actively engaging contrary teaching, for fear of losing them. But those with a noble mind will give a fair hearing, and study carefully to learn the truth.