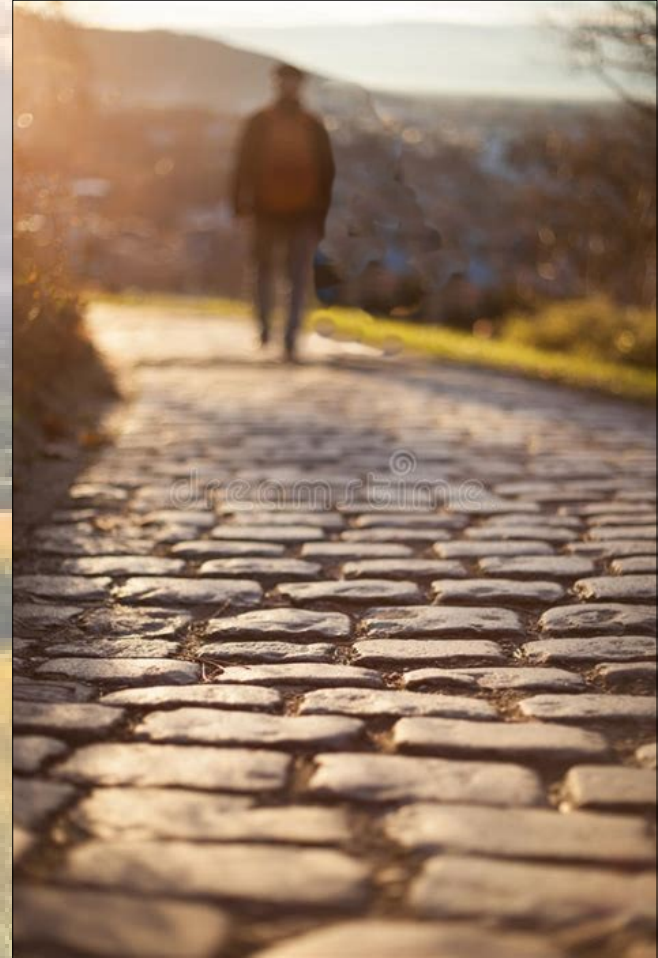


## **Acts 17: 1-15**

On the move with the gospel ...



After being asked to leave Philippi ...

When they had **passed through** Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.



We are not told what they did on the way. These towns were quite large Roman settlements, but they continued their journey and when they got to Thessalonica they found a Jewish community there that had built a synagogue.

As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue,



To the Jew first because:-

1, God had worked that way

2, They were his own people  
– he loved them

3, They knew about God and  
the scriptures  
-in theory it was an  
easier starting point

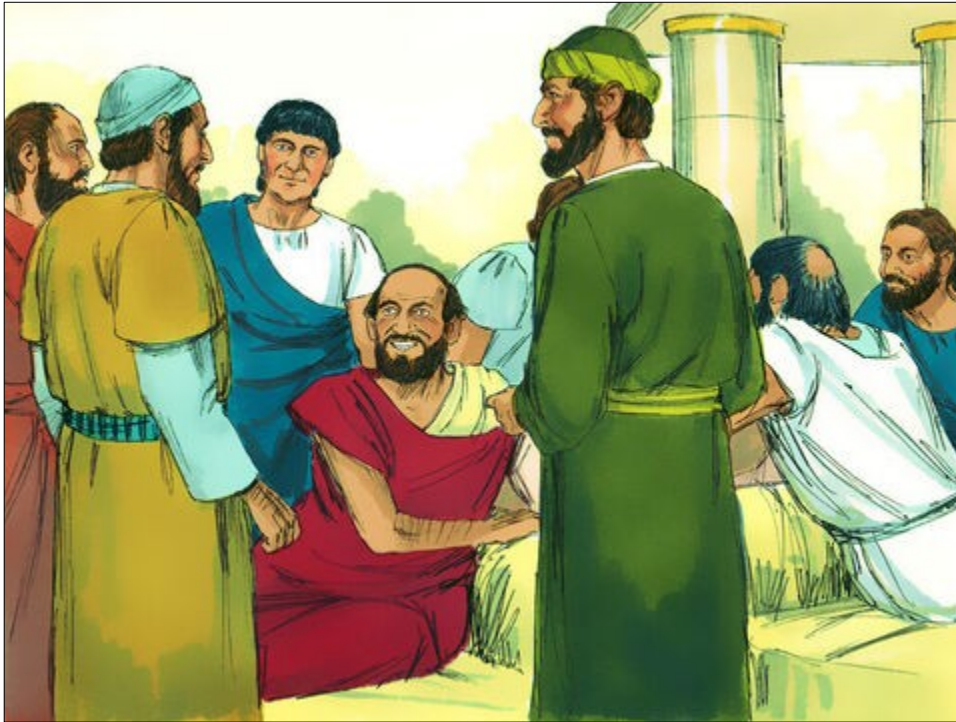
As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,



Over 3 weeks he was discussing and explaining the scriptures  
– he had seen the ‘light’

The Scriptures are THE Basis of our knowledge of God.  
The Holy Spirit gives us the understanding of them.

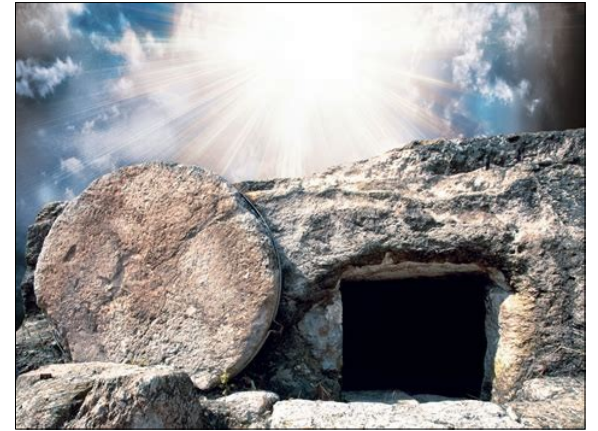
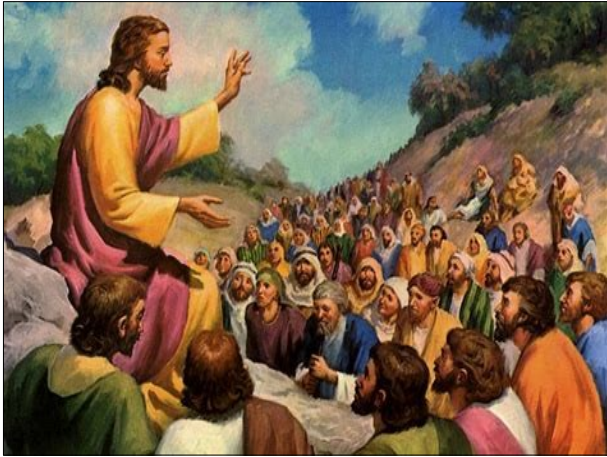
he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead.



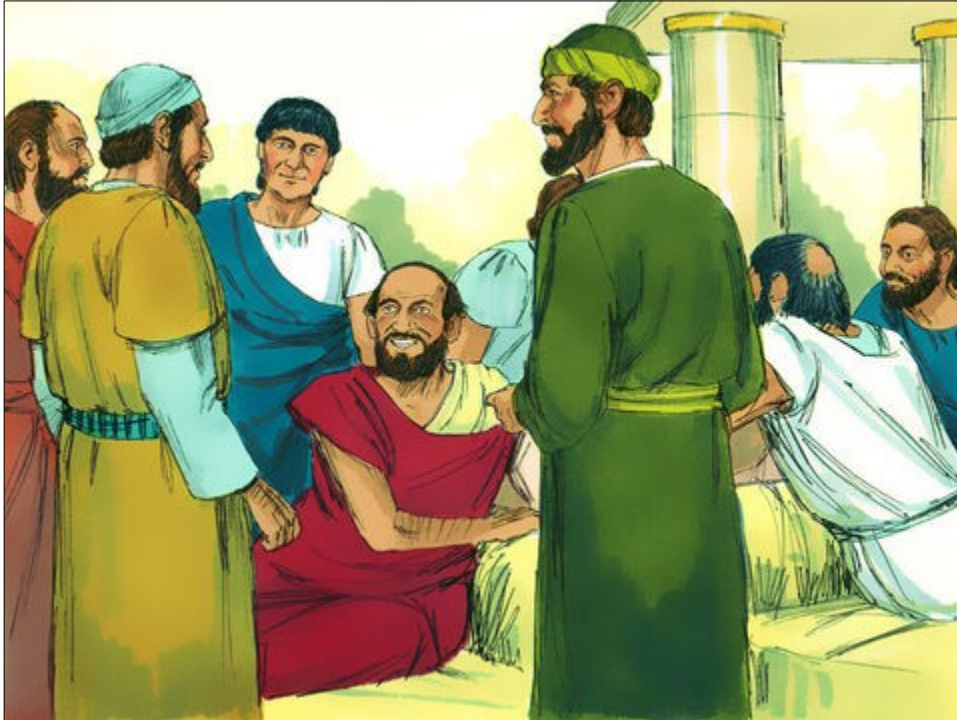
The (Hebrew ) scriptures when understood properly set out the need for a Messiah-Saviour from sin. And that he had to die, fulfilling the sacrificial system, and he would rise from the dead in order to lead his people.

"This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ, " he said.

From the account of Jesus's life, ministry, death and resurrection  
- Jesus is our Messiah.



Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

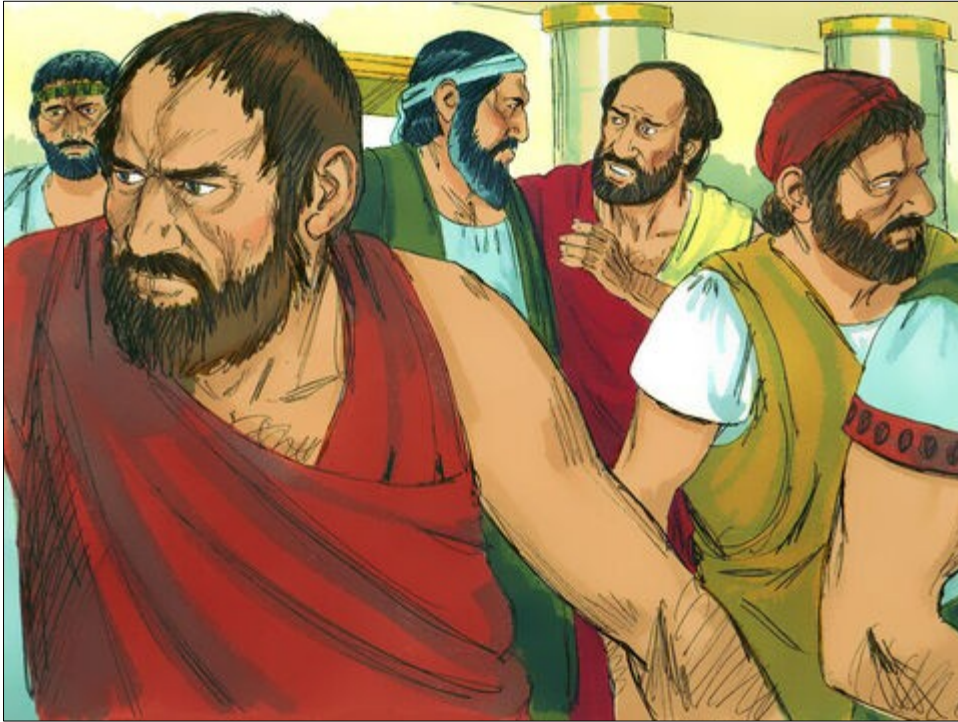


SOME Jews were persuaded (reason prevailed by the grace of God) BUT many God-fearing gentiles also believed.

The times of the gentiles?  
(Romans 11:25)

A very successful outreach

Some of the Jews were persuaded .... But the Jews were jealous;



Note the contrasting use of the term 'the Jews' – the latter refers to the persecuting group (generally the leadership). They were feeling threatened by the success of the gospel. Their 'kingdom' was under threat.

Jealousy is a sin



so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace,  
formed a mob and started a riot in the city.



The methods of the jealous  
group reveals the state of  
their evil hearts.



They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

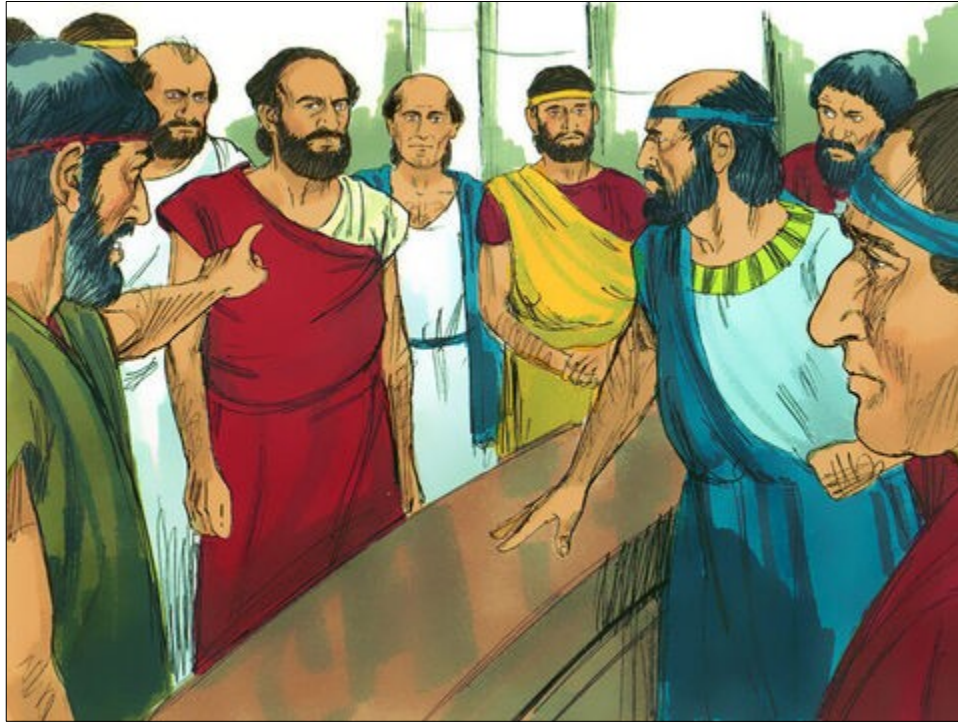
They were after Paul and Silas, as the leaders.

They had been invited into Jason's home and so were expecting to find them there.

Turning the crowd on them would have meant certain death. The commandments obviously meant nothing to them.



But when they did not find them,  
they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the **city officials**,



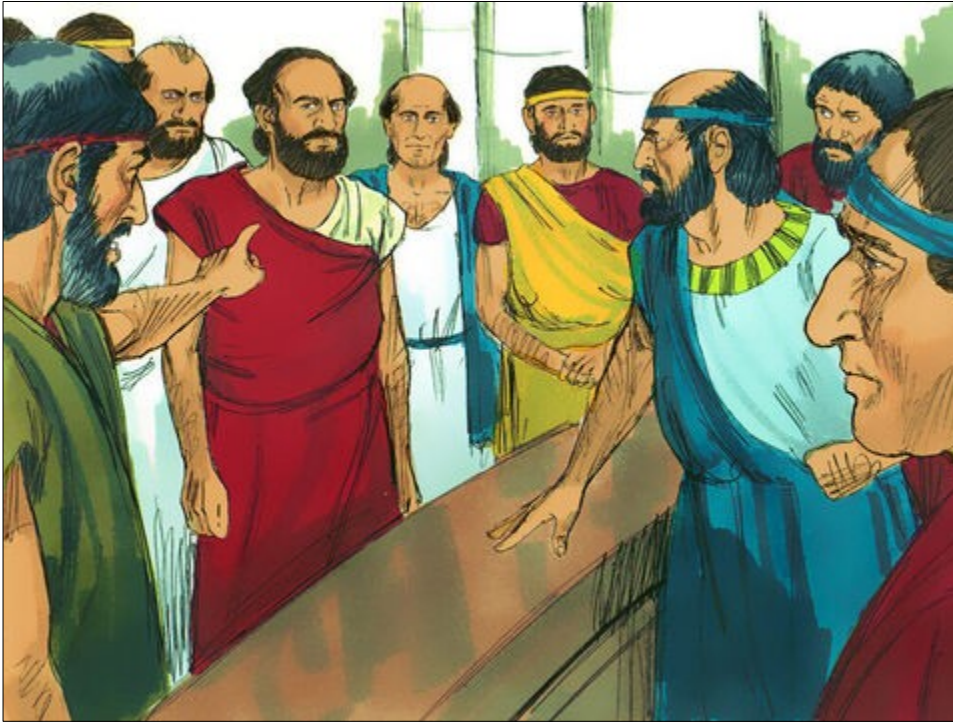
God over-ruled.

Paul and Silas weren't there!

But not content to leave it, they  
man-handle Paul's friend, Jason

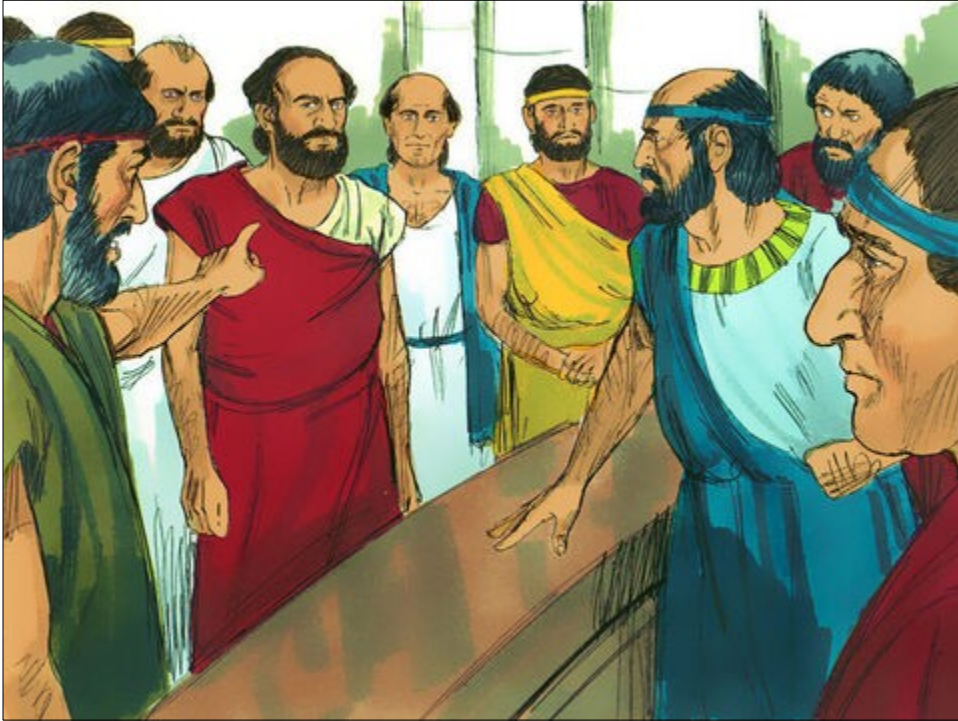
The title of the city officials is not  
known in other literature but was  
found on an inscription in  
Thessalonica.

shouting.. "These men who have caused trouble all over the world  
have now come here,



Shouting didn't demonstrate  
a reasonable case.  
Their claim is rather  
exaggerated. - at the time!

and Jason has welcomed them into his house.



He was accused of  
harbouring trouble-makers

This was guilt by  
association.

They are all defying Caesar's decrees,  
saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.

Once again a political charge is made to cover their real motive – jealousy.

At this time the Lordship of Jesus was not seen as a threat to the Romans – but it would be eventually.

Remember Pilate's response to Jesus.



When they heard this,  
the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.

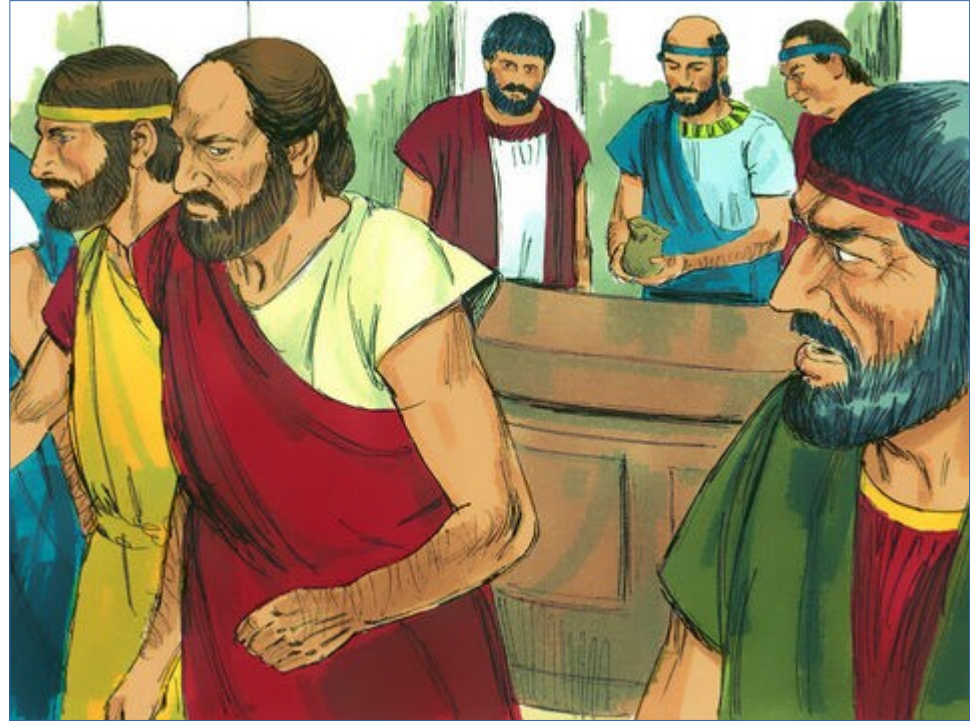
They had effectively  
manipulated the crowd by  
inflammatory language.

*1 Thessalonians 2:14 For you,  
brothers, became imitators of  
the churches of God in Christ  
Jesus that are in Judea. For  
you suffered the same things  
from your own countrymen as  
they did from the 'Jews'*



Then they put Jason and the others on bail and let them go.

But a measure of order was restored – but the imposition of bail was not fair.





As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea.



Time to leave – again!



On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.



Once again they go first to the synagogue.

People need to hear about the Messiah – Jesus.

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians,

The Bereans (the Jews + others at the synagogue)  
were of more noble character than  
the Thessalonians (persecutors),

BETTER  
THAN YOU ?

for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

What made (makes) the difference in character?

Were they just born that way? - No.

It shows the difference between  
Cultural Religion vs. Biblical Religion

cf. Cain, Ishmael, Jewish leaders with Paul , hostile Thessalonians with believers, the established church with the reformers etc.

**CULTURE**

**FAITH**

for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

They were willing to listen,  
learn  
and check things out.

And Paul would not have objected to honest  
questions and argument.

This is the guaranteed road to character  
improvement!



Many of the Jews believed,  
as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.



When the (*unbelieving*) Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching **the word of God** at Berea, they went there too,

Hatred is never satisfied.

They didn't believe that Paul's message was the word of God – but Luke tells this what it was.

They were doing to Paul what he had done to the early believers.



agitating the crowds and stirring them up.



Did they think that their violent tactics were justified?



The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast,  
but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea.

The brothers found out in time.  
It was Paul they wanted to kill.

Silas and Timothy were able to  
continue the work.

On the road – again!



The men who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.



Paul was left on his own in pagan Athens.

What would he do next?

Paul couldn't go back then so later he wrote to them!

# Do you want to be a Berean?

*the Bereans were of ... noble character*



They were **willing** to  
**listen,**  
**learn**  
and **check things** out  
from the Scriptures

And having found the truth  
about the Lord Jesus Christ,  
they received it and by the  
grace of God lived it.