# Second Missionary Journey Pt. 2 (Acts 17:1-18:17)

These two chapters of Acts are marked by several instances where the gospel is proclaimed followed by intense persecution coming from the Jews. Paul continues to move west and now he will spend time in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth. The recurring theme is the consequence of the proclamation of the Word is persecution and ridicule.



# Day One

## Paul in Thessalonica (17:1-9)

* V. 1~ The journey from Philippi to Thessalonica was a little over 100 miles, so it would stand to reason that they would have a couple of stopovers in the trip. This is why Luke records that “they had traveled through Amphipolis” which was 30 miles from Philippi “and” Apollonia, which was situated about 27 miles from Amphilopolis and 35 miles from Thessalonica.
  + Paul and his companions are attempting to go to Thessalonica because “there was a synagogue of the Jews.” A synagogue was a point of contact for Paul and an opportunity for the gospel.
* Vs. 2-3~ Following his usual pattern (Acts 13:5, 14; 14:1; 18:4; 19:8) [[1]](#footnote-2), Paul goes to the synagogue and “reasoned with them from the Scriptures.” Paul was arguing with them from the Scriptures. He does this on three consecutive Sabbaths, most like he stayed more than three weeks in the city because We know that Paul supported himself there by making tents (1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:7-10) and that the Philippians sent two monetary gifts to him there (Phil. 4:15-16). “Perhaps he ministered primarily to Jews for the first three weeks and then turned to the Gentiles.[[2]](#footnote-3)”
* Paul is in the synagogues “explaining and giving evidence…”
  + The verb translated “explaining” comes from the Greek verb meaning ‘to open, to make evident.’ The idea here is to explain something that had been previously hidden or obscure[[3]](#footnote-4). Paul is opening the Scriptures to them, he is explaining the Messianic promises of the Old Testament to them.
  + He is also “giving evidence” Paul was establishing proof that the Messiah had to suffer and rise again from the dead. “That the Scriptures point to the suffering of Christ is a common theme in Luke-Acts: Luke 24:26, 46; Acts 3:18; 26:22f. Cf. 1 Cor 15:3f.; 1 Pet 1:11. The servant psalms of Isaiah would have comprised a major part of these OT proofs of the passion of Christ.”[[4]](#footnote-5)
  + Luke quotes Paul saying “This is Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.” As the capstone of his argument; the apostle’s main reasoning is that Jesus is the Messiah!
* V. 4~ Luke describes the result of Paul’s preaching by saying that “some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas.” The word persuaded denotes that they had believed, they were convinced from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.
  + Luke also says that there was a “large number of God-fearing Greeks and a number of leading women.”
  + “God-fearing Greeks” These were men that although we not Jewish, they were attending the synagogues and they were identifying themselves with the Jewish faith, though it is clear that they are not proselytes.
  + Regarding the leading women, F.F. Bruce writes, “Among these were a considerable number of women of high station. Macedonian women had a well-earned reputation for their independence and enterprising spirit. If some of the women who believed the gospel at this time were the wives of leading citizens, the initiative was theirs, not their husbands’.[[5]](#footnote-6)”
* V. 5~ After seeing spiritual fruit by witnessing conversions, Paul’s team now experiences a harsh persecution at the hands of the Jews.
  + Luke says that they were jealous and they gathered a group of “wicked men from the market place”, they formed a mob, and they started a riot.
  + They, on purpose, three the city into turmoil by causing a disturbance among those in the city.
  + Luke also tells us that they attacked the house of Jason. Most likely Paul and Silas were staying with Jason. The motive for this attack was “to bring them to the people.” To be judged.
* Vs. 6-7~ Since Paul and his companions are not there, this group of wicked men take the owner of the house, Jason and some of the believers there and dragged them before the magistrates of the city of Thessalonica.
  + The charge against them is that Jason was harboring a Jewish revolutionary who was agitating the people stirring them up against the empire.
  + This was a understated way of saying these men are dangerous to the Roman empire and are against our Caesar. “Even an unfounded suspicion of this kind was enough to ruin anyone against whom it was brought. In the present instance there was just enough color of truth in the charge to make it plausible and deadly. [[6]](#footnote-7)”
* 8-9~ “They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities” **– Stirred up** (“agitated, disturbed, troubled”) [[7]](#footnote-8) probably because they could not find Paul and Silas (17:6), the source of the city’s problem. Probably the “pledge” was to guarantee that Paul and Silas would leave town and not return. If more trouble arose, Jason and the others would lose their money. This may explain why Paul was prohibited from returning (1 Thes. 2:18). In spite of this, the Christians at Thessalonica kept on boldly proclaiming the gospel (1 Thes. 1:7–10; cf. 2:14–16).

# **Day One- Questions**

1. Look at the map and locate Philippi, Amphilopolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica. What does this tell you about Paul’s missionary journey?
2. Why is Paul’s custom going to the synagogues?
3. What was contained in Paul’s message? Why preach this?
4. Why were the Jews jealous? Who are these wicked men? Why did they attack Jason’s house?

# Day Two

## Paul in Berea (17:10-15)

* V. 10~ The believers sent Paul and Silas under cover of night away to Berea. Berea was off the Via Egnatia, the “highway” they were following from Phillipi, about 45 miles or 72 km west of Thessalonica. The text does not tell us if they were afraid of getting arrested, however we can see that they probably are trying to avoid another arrest and beating as it happened in Philippi. Thus, the next stop is Berea and as soon as they arrived there, they went to the Jewish Synagogue.
* Vs. 11-12~ The response in Berea was different than in Thessalonica (v.5). These Berea Jews listened carefully to what Paul preached. For several days they compared what Paul said to the teachings of their Hebrew Scriptures. “Their example of daily Bible study has inspired Christians ever since to do the same. Anyone who listens to new religious truth would do well to compare it with Scripture, as these Jews did. Many of these noble skeptics believed because Paul's teaching was consistent with the Old Testament.[[8]](#footnote-9)”
  + And many of them found out for themselves that Paul’s claims were true and so believed (v. 12). Many Greeks also believed, not just men but prominent Macedonian women as well, just as in Thessalonica (cf. v. 4). Some of these may have been worshipers of God attached to the synagogue. Some may not have been. “One would assume that Paul would not neglect his witness to Gentiles of pagan background even in a situation like Berea, where the synagogue was so unusually open to his message.”[[9]](#footnote-10)
* V. 13~ The surprising opposition of *the Jews in Thessalonica* is illustrated by the fact that they *learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea* and took the trouble to travel some forty-five miles to continue their opposition there. This pattern of Jews from one place following Paul to another in order to hinder his ministry was previously noted in 14:19. The Thessalonian Jews used the same method as before (v. 5), *agitating and stirring up the crowds*,making it necessary for *the believers* *immediately* to send Paul in the direction of the sea.[[10]](#footnote-11)
* V. 14-15~ The Berean believers took it upon themselves to protect Paul and to send them via a ship, alongside some Berea companions, to Athens (some 195 miles southwest of Berea). Silas and Timothy had remained behind, though Paul sent back instructions for them to join him.
  + “From Paul’s writings we know that these two missionaries promptly traveled to this city (1 Thess. 1:1; 3:1). Paul, however, longs to be with the believers in Thessalonica. Because he is hindered from going there, he sends Timothy to learn about the spiritual well-being of the Thessalonian Christians (1 Thess. 3:2). From Athens, Paul sends Silas back to Macedonia (Acts 18:5). Afterward Silas and Timothy return to Paul in Corinth.[[11]](#footnote-12)”

# **Day Two- Questions**

1. Why did “the brothers” sent Paul and Silas under cover of night?
2. Look at the map. Where was Berea located? Why did they go to Berea?
3. What was the reception of the Jewish synagogue in Berea? Why are they an example of Bible study?
4. Why did the Thessalonian Jews go to Berea? What does that tell us about Paul’s ministry?

# Day Three

### Paul in Athens (17:16-34)

* In these iconic passages of Scripture, Luke records Paul and his team of missionary’s advance in Achaia (modern southern Greece). Here is where the author contrasts the darkness of the culture of idol worship with the message of truth that Paul and his companions were bringing to these lost people. It is noteworthy to see the apostle’s sermon at Mars Hill where he preaches to pagan Greeks the good news of the gospel in a way that they would understand it.

### Paul’s Arrival in Athens (16-21)

* V. 16~ As Paul was ‘killing time’ waiting for the rest of the team to join him, he is walking around the city of Athens, one can imagine as a tourist checking out the sights and scenes.
  + The city of Athens was not the leading city of the Greek that it was once was in the 4th and 3rd century B.C., that title belonged to Corinth. However, it had still held a semblance of greatness because of its history. It was said that there were more statues in Athens than in the rest of the Greek Isles.[[12]](#footnote-13)
  + However, Luke records that “his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.”
  + The word translated ‘provoked’ translated also as ‘distressed’ or ‘greatly upset’ is a neutral word, which could be taken as a negative or positive. He could have been ‘greatly upset’ or he could have been ‘provoked’ to share the good news with those who were so lost.[[13]](#footnote-14)
* V.17~ Paul continued with his custom of his ministry to Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue, but he also shared the gospel with any who wanted to do so in the market place. The ‘agora’ (market place) “popular meeting place, and those whose trade required a large crowd or audience were to be found there on a daily basis: jugglers, sword-swallowers, beggars, and fishmongers are all specifically attested to.[[14]](#footnote-15)” There the philosophers gathered to discuss and debate their views. It lay to the west of the Acropolis, on which the Parthenon still stands, and Mars Hill. Paul is not speaking to God-fearing Gentiles but simply pagan Gentiles.
* V.18~ “And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him” Two of the groups that were engaging with Paul were the Epicurean and the Stoics.
  + **Epicurean**- “The Epicureans, who followed Epicurus (341–270 b.c.), said the chief end of man was pleasure and happiness. This pleasure, they believed, is attained by avoiding excesses and the fear of death, by seeking tranquility and freedom from pain, and by loving mankind. They believed that if gods exist, they do not become involved in human events.[[15]](#footnote-16)”
  + **Stoics**- “Stoics followed the teachings of Zeno the Cypriot (340-265 B.C.). … His followers placed great importance on living in harmony with nature. They stressed individual self-sufficiency and rationalism, and they had a reputation for being quite arrogant. Stoics were pantheists who believed that God is in everything and everything is God. They were also fatalistic. Stoics were also idealists.[[16]](#footnote-17)”
  + These two opposite philosophical alternatives were the way most Pagan Greeks dealt with life and difficulty.
* “Some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?” Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,” — because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.”
  + The response of these pagan people is diverse, some call Paul an “idle babble” which basically meant someone who was a hack, a third-rate information peddler[[17]](#footnote-18).
  + Others are accusing Paul of being a polytheistic preacher; since they could not wrap their minds around the idea of bodily resurrection. Also confusing said resurrection *Anastasis* with some goddess and Jesus with with one of their many gods.
* 19-21 ~ Some have viewed the fact that Paul was taken to the Areopagus as a formal judiciary court hearing, however it just seems to be just a hearing, since Paul has not been charged, and the end of it seems to just been dismissed as if nothing had happened.
  + “**Areopagus**, literally, “Hill of Ares,” was the **meeting** place of the Council of the Areopagus, the supreme body for judicial and legislative matters in Athens. In the Apostolic Age its power had been reduced to oversight over religion and education.”[[18]](#footnote-19)
  + Most likely Paul is being asked to explain this “new teaching” that he was proclaiming. In verse 21, “the parenthetical remark also allows Luke to establish the rhetorical situation for the following speech, in which Luke cleverly reverses the expectation of his readers by allowing Paul to demonstrate that in proclaiming the true identity of the ‘unknown God’ he presents something far from new.”[[19]](#footnote-20)

### Paul’s Sermon before the Areopagus (22-31)

* V. 22~ The apostle stands before this unofficial meeting of the council in the Areopagus and begins his speech commenting on their religiosity. He is not necessarily complementing them, but it seems that he is making an observation based on what he had observed thus far.
* V. 23~ As part of his opening remarks, Paul speaks of his tour through their religious center, where the Athenians were known to have statues of their gods and there was one altar that caught his attention, “with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’” Some historians assert that long before Paul there was a plague and the people of Athens were sacrificing to all the gods, even though who were unknown to them, this might have been a left over.
  + Paul utilizes this to say, this “unknown god” is the God I am proclaiming to you. The apostle is not highlighting the altar, but what it really represents, their ignorance, their unawareness of the true God.
* V.24-25~ Paul introduces his audience to the creator God. He is the “God that made the world and everything in it” Polhill writes, “The concept of God as absolute Creator, however, would not be so easy for them to grasp. For them divinity was to be found *in* the heavens, *in* nature, *in* humanity. The idea of a single supreme being who stood *over* the world, who created all that exists, was totally foreign to them. This was indeed an “unknown god.”[[20]](#footnote-21)”
  + Also, the apostle presents this “Unknown God” as the “Lord of heaven and earth” who does no dwell in a temple made by human hands. He is telling them that this ‘Unknown God’ since he is the creator of everything and the Sovereign of everything and everyone cannot be limited to a temple, he cannot be confined to an altar. He cannot be manipulated by any human religion.
* In verse 25, Paul argues that this ‘Unknown God’ because of who he is cannot be served by human hands because He is self-sufficient and needs nothing.
  + “Stoics and Greek-speaking Jews emphasized that God “needs nothing,” using the same word Paul uses here; the concept was also biblical (Ps 50:8–13), as was God giving breath to all (Gen 2:7; Is 42:5).[[21]](#footnote-22)”
  + Also, this God sustains all things, “He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;” Though God is the transcendent God, He is also the immanent God who is involved in every aspect of His creatures. “This contradicted the Epicureans' belief that God took no interest in human affairs, as well as the Stoics' self-sufficiency.[[22]](#footnote-23)”
* V. 26~ The Greeks, and especially the Athenians, prided themselves on being racially superior to all other people. Yet Paul told them that they, like all other people, had descended from one man: Adam[[23]](#footnote-24). This fact excludes the possibility of the essential superiority of any race. God also determines the times of nations—their seasons, when they rise and fall—and their boundaries. In other words, God is sovereign over the political and military affairs of nations. The Greeks liked to think that they determined their own destiny.[[24]](#footnote-25)
* V. 27~ “that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him,” The reason God created the world, is so that his creatures would have fellowship with Him.
  + Paul uses the verb translated to “seek” which means to search hard, and later he says that they “might grope for Him” this is a vivid illustration of a blind man trying to find something[[25]](#footnote-26).
  + The latter part of the verse, Paul assert, “though He is not far from each one of us;” Though this was not entirely new to their audiences, especially those who believed in pantheism, it was presented in a different way by the apostle. He is speaking of a personal God, not an idea or a feeling.
    - “This was a thought current in Stoic philosophy, but there it was taken in an impersonal, intellectual sense. Paul’s concern is with the living God of the Old Testament (Ps. 145:18) who is near to his worshippers despite his transcendence and greatness (Jer. 23:23f.).[[26]](#footnote-27)”
* V. 28~ Here Paul cited lines from two Greek writers who expressed ideas that were consistent with divine revelation. The Cretan poet Epimenides (c. 600 B.C.; cf. Titus 1:12) had written: "For in thee we live and move and have our being." The Cilician poet Aratus (c. 315-240 B.C.), and Cleanthes (331-233 B.C.) before him, had written: "We are also his offspring.”[[27]](#footnote-28). Paul uses these quotes not to find common ground and agree with them, rather he uses their own words to fit his own teaching by saying mankind derives all activity from God because we are his creatures!
* V. 29~ Paul’s conclusion is logical. Since God is the divine creator of everything and even created humanity. He cannot reside in a form of an idol, even if it is in the form of gold, silver, or stone. God’s divine essence is Spiritual and not physical. Paul is attacking image worship which would have been an affront to the Greek religious practices.
* V. 30-31~ **Verse 30** starts a new thought in Paul’s argument. “Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance” - He seems to close the loop speaking of their ignorant worship and idol-making. Now God is declaring or commanding that everyone should repent. The same God that created everything and sustains everything and everyone commands that all should repent from their sins.
* **Verse 31** gives the why of the need of repentance. God will judge the world. Because God is the creator and sustainer, He and only He has the right to judge the whole world. And He is chosen a man to do so, one whom He raised from the dead; Jesus.
  + The authentication of Christ’s person and work was His resurrection. Here again the resurrection of Jesus was preached. “The idea of resurrection (cf. Acts 17:18, 32) was incompatible with Greek philosophy. The Greeks wanted to get rid of their bodies, not take them on again! A personal judgment was also unpalatable to Greeks. The gospel message struck at the center of the Athenians’ needs.[[28]](#footnote-29)

### The Mixed Response (32-34)

* Many in the Areopagus just scoffed at Paul, “Epicureans believed in no human existence after death. Stoics believed that only the immaterial spirit survived death. To Greeks the idea of a body surviving death did not make any sense—even a transformed body.[[29]](#footnote-30)”
* Some were willing to hear him again. They were interested in what he said, this response seems to be genuine.
* Others believed: “Among the believers were Dionysius, a member of the Council of the Areopagus that had examined Paul, and Damaris, a woman that we do not read about again in the New Testament. However, Eusebius wrote that Dionysius became the first bishop of the church at Athens,3 and Chrysostom, in his book On Priesthood, claimed that Damaris was Dionysius' wife.4 Paul later wrote that the household of Stephanas was the first-fruits of Achaia (1 Cor. 16:15), so he and his household may have been other converts that Luke did not mention here. Or perhaps Stephanas lived in Corinth but he and his household became Christians through Paul's early ministry in Achaia.[[30]](#footnote-31)”

# **Day Three- Questions**

1. Why was Paul provoked when he was walking around Athens?
2. Why did Paul start his speech with the premise the God created the world?
3. What does “He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;” mean? How does this further Paul’s argument?
4. Why would Jesus have the right to judge mankind? (31)

# Day Four

That Luke did not intend to present a full-scale history of the Pauline mission is well illustrated by his treatment of Corinth. During the time of the church’s founding, Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth, as Luke attests (18:11). And yet the coverage is briefer than that of Paul’s work in Philippi, which lasted no longer than several months. It is several verses shorter than the Athenian section, which probably represents only a matter of weeks. We know from Paul’s two Epistles to the Corinthians, both of which were written during his third missionary period, that this was a time of severe problems for the church and a stormy relationship between it and Paul. For this period, Luke only mentioned Paul’s final three-month visit there, and that in but one sentence (20:2b–3). “Luke’s method was selective—to depict the establishment of work in the various areas where Paul worked and to relate individual episodes that were typical of Paul’s experiences and edifying for his Christian readers. In the present section vv. 1–11 furnish the history of the church’s foundation, and vv. 12–17 furnish the episode—the appearance before the proconsul Gallio.”[[31]](#footnote-32)

### Paul in Corinth (18:1-11)

* v. 1~ According to Luke, Paul alone leaves Athens and went to Corinth.
  + “Corinth was fifty-three miles (eighty-five kilometers) west of Athens, so the next natural stop for Paul; but it was also strategic. Rome destroyed Corinth in 146 b.c.; some Greeks continued to live on the site, but it was revived as a city again only when Julius Caesar refounded it as a Roman colony in 44 b.c. Although one of Athens’s ancient rivals, after being revived it had long since surpassed Athens. Its citizens were citizens of Rome, and official inscriptions emphasize its Roman character, but many Greeks (and others) continued to live there, with an apparent influx of more non-Romans in this period. **Roman Corinth was the political and economic center of Greece, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia and the transit point for all maritime trade between Rome and the prosperous Roman province of Asia**.[[32]](#footnote-33)”
* Vs. 2-3~ As Paul arrives in Corinth, he finds a Jewish man named Aquila, from Pontus (Asia Minor). He was displaced from Rome with his wife because of Claudius’ edict (about 49 to 50 AD- all Jews needed to leave Rome). This man came to Corinth to work on his trade and because of their common trade, Paul began working with them, since they were tent-makers[[33]](#footnote-34).
  + Luke does not say whether or not Aquila and Priscilla are followers of Jesus.
* V. 4~ Paul continues his evangelistic method. He reasons with (17:2, 17; 18:19; 19:8-9; 20:7, 9; 24:12, 25) and tried to persuade (13:43; 19:9, 26; 21:14; 26:28; 28:23) both Jews and Greeks in the synagogue every Sabbath[[34]](#footnote-35).
* V. 5~ After some time, Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth. They had stayed in Berea (17:14-16), and after their arrival, Paul was able to devote himself completely to the Word.
  + Paul’s comments on this situation in both 2 Corinthians 11:8-9 and Philippians 4:15. He explains how the arrival of these two men allowed him to be ‘occupied with’ or ‘fully absorbed’ with the Word.
  + These men brought financial support from the Macedonian churches so that he would be able to devote all of his energies to ministering the Word to those in need.
* Luke shares a summary of his message, “testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.”
* V. 6~ However, opposition was not far off for Paul. As He is sharing the good news of the gospel, he sees the opposition from some of the Jewish hearers who are blaspheming when they heard about Jesus being the Messiah.
  + Shaking out one's garments, so that no dust from the place remained on them, symbolized the same thing as shaking the dust from one's sandals (13:51), namely, rejection. Paul believed that he had fulfilled his responsibility to deliver the gospel to these Jews (cf. Ezek. 33:1-9). Consequently, he turned his attention to evangelizing the Gentiles, as he had done before (13:7-11, 46; 14:2-6; 17:5; cf. 19:8-9; 28:23-28)[[35]](#footnote-36).
* Vs.7-8~ Paul left the synagogue and by God’s amazing design, he finds a place to continue to preach the gospel, next door to the synagogue in the house of a man Titius Justus. This man was most like a gentile because he is called a “worshipper of God” just like Cornelius or Lydia before him. Also, Luke writes that there as another important man who repented, “Crispus, the leader of a synagogue,” he and his family believed. And “many Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized.”
* V. 9-11~ Serves as a bridge between the opposition from the Jews and the conversions of some Corinthian families (5-8) to the judgement seat episode with Gallio (12-17).
* After a rough start in Corinth, the Lord appears to Paul in a night vision to assuage his fears.
  + Jesus exhorts Paul not to be afraid. This was normal, Paul had suffered persecution everywhere he had been.
  + Jesus exhorts Paul to keep preaching and the command not to be silent.
  + Jesus assures Paul that He is with him and that no one will be able to mistreat or injure him.
  + Finally, Jesus tells Paul that there are many more of His people in Corinth. New conversions are assured by the sovereign Lord of salvation.
* V.11~ The effect of this night vision is seen in the fact that Paul decided to stay for a year and a half and not run away, like he did in other places. He stays there teaching the Word to these people.
  + Most likely from February or March of AD 50 to Early Fall of AD 51.

# **Day Four- Questions**

1. Where was Corinth and why did Paul and his companions go there?
2. Why was Paul able to fully devote himself to the Word? (v. 5)
3. What is meant by the phrase ‘he shook out his garments’?
4. What does the night vision say? How did Paul react to it?

# Day Five

### Paul before Gallio (18:12-17)

* v.12~ Luke introduces us to Gallio, a roman aristocrat from Cordoba, Spain, who began his term as proconsul in July of 51 AD.
  + This is a very important part of the narrative because according to commentators the case against Paul would be the one that would be set as legal precedence for how Roman authorities would look at Christians.
  + “A proconsul was the governor of a Roman province, and his legal decisions set precedent for the other proconsuls throughout the empire. Consequently, Gallio's decision in Paul's case affected the treatment that Christians would receive throughout the Roman world. This was the first time that Paul (or any other apostle, as far as we know) stood trial before a Roman provincial governor.[[36]](#footnote-37)”
* The Jews rose up in one accord and brought him before the judgement seat.
* V. 13~ Their accusation was simple, “This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.” Roman law did not permit proselytism, especially of new religious. However, Judaism was accepted as a religion because it was established. These Jewish accusers were saying that Christianity was indeed a cult and had nothing to do with Judaism.
* V.14-16~ Gallio refused to hear the accusation against Paul or Paul’s defense. He judges that this is a matter where he saw any infraction against Roman law. He had the prerogative, as a proconsul to take up the Jews’ cause and judge Paul, but he didn’t see it necessary. In fact, he didn’t see these charges deserving of his valuable time. He told them to settle the matter themselves and drove them out of his court.
* V. 17~ After the meeting with Gallio “they all” took a hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the Synagogue and began beating him before the judgement seat. Who is this “they all?”
  + Some think these are Corinthians who hated the Jews betrayed by their spirit of anti-Semitism that lay just beneath the veneer of society in Corinth[[37]](#footnote-38).
  + Other see that the Jews, Not being content with the outcome of their meeting with Gallio “they all” the Jews took a hold of their leader, Sosthenes and began beating him before the judgement seat.[[38]](#footnote-39)
  + However, whether it was the gentiles or the Jews, the issue is that for Gallio, this violence, was of no concern. Meaning he saw it was religious violence and not a public issue.

# **Day Five- Questions**

1. Why did they take Paul to a secular judgement seat?
2. What was the charge against Paul? What did they mean by “contrary to the law”? (v.13)
3. What was Gallio’s judgement on Paul? How was this helpful for the growth of Christianity?
4. Who is the “they all” of verse 17?

1. “This noun denotes the act of carrying out a custom or tradition [LN]. It denotes the act of maintaining a custom or tradition [BDAG].” Abernathy and Stutzman, 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Constable, 354. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Abernathy and Stutzman, 81 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Polhill, [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. F. F. Bruce, 323. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. F. F. Bruce, 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Toussaint, 401. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Constable, 357. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Polhill 363–364. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Peterson, 485. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Kistemaker and Hendriksen, 622. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Barclay, p. 141 "It was said that there were more statues of the gods in Athens than in all the rest of Greece put together, and that in Athens it was easier to meet a god than a man." [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Schnabel, 722. “This verb can be understood in terms of becoming irritated or angry, which leads to translations such as “distressed” (NRSV, TNIV), “greatly upset” (GNB, NET), or “annoyed” (Fitzmyer). The definition “cause a state of inward arousal” implies a possible positive meaning: Paul’s “spirit” (πνεῦμα) may not have been simply stimulated by the emotion of anger because of the idolatry of the Athenians and of grief concerning the people who did not know or worship the one true God,1023 but—at the same time—by the desire to convert them.” [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Schnabel, 723. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Toussaint, 402. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Constable, 361. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Garland, 490., “The word translated *babbler (spermalogos)* was originally used of seed-eating or scavenging birds and meant ‘picking up seeds’ (BDAG). Metaphorically, it was applied to people who obtained scraps of information from others and retailed them as their own. So, they were accusing Paul of being an ignorant plagiarist and a religious charlatan” [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Toussaint, 403. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Schnabel, 729. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Polhill, 372. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Keener, 377. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Constable, 365. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Peterson, 496-497- “The Greeks did not have such a view, but largely considered themselves superior to other races, whom they called barbarians. ‘Against such claims to racial superiority Paul asserts the unity of all mankind, a unity derived *ex henos*, i.e., from Adam.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Constable, 365. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. I was helped by Parsons, 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Marshall, 305. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. These quotations are cited on Constable, 366. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Toussaint, 404. “Note that Paul referred to sin (v. 29), righteousness (v. 31), and judgment (v. 31; cf. John 16:5-11; Rom. 1—3). These are the things that Jesus had told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would use to bring people to salvation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Polhill, 378. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Constable, 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Polhill, 379–380. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Keener, 378–379. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Toussaint writes, “The term used here is *skēnopoioi*, which some say includes working in leather. Perhaps leather was used in the tents as was goat’s hair, for which Paul’s home province of Cilicia was well known. As is still common in the Middle East, a workman’s shop was downstairs and his living quarters upstairs.” [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Schnabel writes that these two verbs are in the imperfect: “The imperfect tense of the two verbs indicates that Paul’s ministry among the Jewish community and among the Greek population of the city was an ongoing effort to proclaim the good news of Jesus as Israel’s Messiah and Savior of the world.” [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Constable, 376. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Constable, 378. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Toussaint, Constable, Vaughn, Peterson, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Commentators use this as an example of ambiguity in this passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)