

the Royal

MAKING SENSE OF THE BIBLE

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Pet. 2:9

Week 15: Special Guest Andrew Palau

Much like last week, we are going to visit a topical approach to the curriculum. Andrew Palau was a guest speaker this week, and along with a great testimony, he showed us how we can "Do Something" in the community by partnering up with Luis Palau Ministries for City Fest in Mission Bay. It will be a great time of fellowship, community service, and most importantly evangelism. That is precisely what we will be focusing on this week:

1. What did evangelism look like for Paul in 1st Century Rome? We will examine the answer in Acts 17, where he preaches his famous sermon on Mars Hill. There he preached to the stoics and the philosophers about their very own "Unknown God". He explains who this God really is, and why they needed to know that. There he also preached about the resurrection of the dead, and why Christ came to do so.
2. We will also look at what evangelism looks like for us today. Why is it so hard to preach and evangelize to people in our culture? Why is there fear in doing so? And how can we learn from Paul's example?

This should hopefully get everybody out of their comfort zone, and allow our fears to be exposed. We want our fears to be exposed so we can be properly equipped to preach the gospel at all times and at all costs. At the end of the lesson, there is a copy of the link where people can post their praise reports of stepping out of their comfort zone and preaching the gospel and ministering to non-believers. Encourage one another to this and hold each other accountable to the great commission.

In Him,

Rock Church Small Group Team

Part 1: Opening/Recap Weekly Challenge/Small Group Sermon Discussion

Opening

- Open in Prayer
- Worship (optional)
- Recap Week 14 Homework
- Small Group Sermon Discussion

Recap Week 14 Weekly Challenge

- 1. Recite Heb. 10:10.**
- 2. Discuss experiences practicing the Discipline of Study.**

Small Group Sermon Discussion

- 1. Discuss thoughts and reflections from the message given by special guest Andrew Palau. Also discuss if anyone in the group is interested in serving at City Fest in Mission Bay.**
 - ▶ If interested in serving contact nicole.adres@therocksandiego.org, or register at http://www.sandiegocityfest.com/get_involved.

Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – Acts 17

Read Acts 17

With Andrew Palau preaching this past Sunday on the necessity of evangelism, all the devotions this week tie into that theme. This week in our groups we want to highlight the necessity to study from an evangelistic viewpoint. One of the chapters in the Bible that focus on this concept is found in Acts 17. This is a very popular chapter of Scripture with a lot of great tools for us to keep in mind when we preach to those that are unaware or misinformed of Jesus and the Truth. We start the chapter by Paul preaching to the Jews in Thessalonica for preaching the gospel, and then is almost killed by them. He escapes the mob and finds himself in Berea. The Berean's were described as "noble men", other than those in Thessalonica, because they excepted, yet still examined, what Paul was preaching to them. After his ministry to the Berean's he goes to Athens to minister in the synagogue and also to the marketplace to preach to the Romans. Some key notes to keep in mind while reading and studying this chapter:

Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – Acts 17

(continued)

Acts 17 Notes

- ▶ Paul spent three Sabbath days, or Saturday's, reasoning with Jews about the Scriptures. He was accustomed to always doing this (v. 2).
- ▶ He always did this to prove the necessity for Christ to die and rise again (v. 3).
- ▶ His persistent reasoning drew some Jews and Greeks to faith in Christ, and followed him and Silas (v. 4).
- ▶ However, there were some that did not, and they become jealous and some even became violent (v. 5-9). This led Paul, Silas, and others out of Thessalonica, and into Berea.
- ▶ After Paul preached to the Berean's, the Jews of the town accepted it with eagerness and examined the Scriptures themselves to see if these things were true (v. 11-12). Many men and women came to faith in Christ after that.
- ▶ After Paul was sent out from Berea, he ended up in Athens. This is the "Mecca" of paganism of that time. Though paganism was the religion of most of the known world at that time, it was he in Athens. Athens was also the home of many philosophers and stoics. They would always spend their time learning, or speaking of new things they would learn about (v. 18-21).
- ▶ Paul was then brought to Areopagus, or Mars Hill to instruct them on this "new teaching."
- ▶ The rest of the chapter, from verses 22-34, shows Paul teaching them about God, by using doctrines and information. This is where we want to narrow our focus for the study.
- ▶ Read Acts 17 as a group, however focus mostly on 17:22-34 for the study.

Reflect Acts 17

1. Why do you suppose Paul was so successful in his evangelism at Mars Hill to the philosophers?

- ▶ Consider verses 22-23, and also verse 28, how he delivers his presentation.

Respond Acts 17

1. Do you struggle evangelizing to certain people? Do you get fearful when you have to proclaim the gospel to people you may not know? Why do you think that is?

2. What lessons can we learn from Paul and he evangelized to those in Athens, in the midst of an extremely pagan culture?

- ▶ Go back to the reflect portion of this study. In verse 28 he quotes one of their own philosophers. This raises the question of how important is it to know our culture? Not only did Paul memorize Scripture, he was also well versed in pagan philosophies which helped him to prove his case for Christ.

Part 3: Weekly Challenge

- ▶ **Scripture Reading Guide:** Go through the devotions that correspond with each day. These are given to everyone in their lesson plan every week. (August 9 – 15)
- ▶ **Scripture Memory:** “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” **Acts 17:11 (ESV)**
- ▶ **Bible Study Tool:** Navigate through www.blueletterbible.com and discover the great resources available for free for your personal gain.
- ▶ **Spiritual Formation Practice:** Each week we will introduce a “spiritual discipline” that each person can try to adapt to their personal devotion. This week is the **Discipline of Evangelism.**

This is simply to put into practice what we discussed in group this week. Preach the gospel to somebody you do not know. Use the example of Paul in Acts 17 as a guide. Examine what he did, understanding the culture and the people. Talk to them with respect, and know their objections. This may require more time than just walking up to a random person. This is a discipline that the believer is called to do. So you are encouraged to practice this.

There are ministries and teams that do street evangelism as well. If that is something you are interested in participating in, we want to hear about it. Post how God used you and your group to minister the gospel to those that do not know Christ. You can post this praise report at <https://therocksandiego.wufoo.com/forms/share-what-god-is-doing/>.

Also based on the Sunday message from Andrew Palau, if you or anyone else you know wants to serve at City Fest in Mission Bay, follow this link to sign up http://www.sandiegocityfest.com/get_involved, or email nicole.adres@therocksandiego.org for more information.