

# Why Am I Not Growing?

## Moving Beyond Sunday Morning

### Acts 17:10-15

This study explores Acts 17:10-15, where Paul and Silas flee to Berea after facing hostility in Thessalonica. In Berea, the gospel is met with eagerness and daily engagement—a model for those wondering why they're not growing spiritually. This passage challenges believers to move beyond passive Sunday attendance and toward daily, intentional interaction with God's Word.

## I. Why This Study?

### A. Objective:

1. To explore how Acts 17:10-15 highlights the connection between daily Scripture engagement and spiritual growth.
2. To examine the danger of passivity and the importance of personal responsibility in faith development.
3. To gain biblical wisdom on overcoming spiritual stagnation.

### B. Relevance:

1. Many believers experience spiritual dryness or plateau after years of church attendance.
2. Acts 17:10-15 offers a clear contrast: faith grows not from listening alone but from daily study and reflection.
3. The Bereans encourage us to move beyond Sunday morning to active participation in our spiritual journey.

## II. Context of Acts 17:10-15

### A. The Background of Paul and Silas in Berea:

1. Paul and Silas are sent away at \_\_\_\_\_ from Thessalonica to Berea after facing violent opposition (v. 10).
2. As was his practice, Paul \_\_\_\_\_ in the synagogue (v. 10).
3. The Bereans are commended for their noble character—they receive the message eagerly and \_\_\_\_\_ the Scriptures daily (v. 11).
4. Many Jews and prominent Greek men and women \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 12).
5. Opposition arises again as \_\_\_\_\_ from Thessalonica arrive to stir trouble (v. 13).

6. Paul is sent to Athens, while Silas and \_\_\_\_\_ remain (vv. 14-15).

**B. Historical Insight:**

1. Berea's Distinct Response: Unlike Thessalonica, Berea is known for its \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ approach to learning.
2. Jewish Commitment to Scripture: Berean Jews knew their Scriptures but engaged them \_\_\_\_\_, testing new teaching.
3. Social Impact: Luke again mentions women and men of influence responding—showing the gospel's \_\_\_\_\_ power across social lines.

**C. Key Takeaway:**

1. Passive listening leads to \_\_\_\_\_. Growth comes through active, daily engagement with Scripture.
2. Spiritual maturity requires effort, inquiry, and personal \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. What Happens When I Move Beyond Sunday Morning?**

**A. The Power of Eager, Daily Engagement (vv. 10-11)**

1. Key Verses:

"Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." (v. 11)

2. Key Lessons:

- a) "\_\_\_\_\_ character" means being teachable, inquisitive, and devoted to truth.
- b) Daily \_\_\_\_\_ —not occasional listening—produces deep spiritual roots.
- c) Renita J. Weems (Womanist Theologian) writes: "Scripture that isn't interrogated becomes a stagnant pool, not the living water that refreshes our souls." (*Listening for God*)

**B. Growth Invites Both Transformation and Trouble (vv. 12-13)**

1. Key Verses:

"As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men." (v. 12)

"But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up."(v. 13)

2. Key Lessons:

a) - *True growth produces \_\_\_\_\_—changed lives and new believers.*

b) - *But growth also attracts \_\_\_\_\_ from those threatened by change.*

c) - *Rev. Dr. Cheryl Sanders reminds us: "Gospel transformation threatens those committed to unjust systems." (Saints in Exile)*

**C. Sometimes Growth Requires Separation (vv. 14-15)**

1. Key Verses:

"The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea."(v. 14)

2. Key Lessons:

a) *Seasons of growth may require \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves from conflict or distraction.*

b) *Even leaders need \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to continue growing.*

c) *Esau McCaulley writes: "The Bible was never meant to be weekend entertainment—it is our daily bread." (Reading While Black)*

**IV. Scholars' and Theological Insights on Moving Beyond Sunday Morning**

**A. John Chrysostom (4th century, Early Church Father & Preacher)**

"The Scriptures were not given to be heard once but to be constantly revisited, like letters from home." (Homilies on Acts)

- Chrysostom stresses daily interaction with the Word as necessary for growth.

**B. Augustine of Hippo (4th-5th century, North African Bishop & Theologian)**

"The Word of God is a feast—those who only taste on Sundays starve their souls." (Confessions)

- Augustine pushes us toward daily spiritual nourishment.

**C. 3. Howard Thurman (20th century, African American Mystic & Theologian)**

"Life grows shallow when our faith is borrowed. Only what is personally known of God shapes us deeply." (Meditations of the Heart)

**D. 4. Jarena Lee (19th century, African American Evangelist)**

"The Word grew in me when I ceased to be a listener only and became a witness." (Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee)

- Lee embodies the move from passive hearing to active engagement.

**E. 5. Delores Williams (20th century, Womanist Theologian)**

"Growth is impossible without knowing God's promises—and we know them only by studying." (Sisters in the Wilderness)

**F. 6. Prathia Hall (Civil Rights Preacher and Theologian)**

"Preaching changes nothing if it doesn't provoke daily change in us."

**G. 7. Dr. Wil Gafney (Contemporary Womanist Biblical Scholar)**

"God invites us to wrestle the text, not worship someone else's interpretation." (Womanist Midrash)

**V. Prayer Focus**

1. Pray for God to stir a hunger in your heart for daily Scripture engagement.
2. Ask for courage to confront spiritual complacency.
3. Pray for discipline to move beyond Sunday-only faith into daily relationship with God.

**VI. Key Takeaway:**

The Bereans remind us that true spiritual growth doesn't come from passively attending church or listening to sermons. It comes when we—like them—receive the Word eagerly and search the Scriptures daily. Growth happens when we stop outsourcing our faith and start owning it—every day, not just on Sunday.

**VII. Discussion and Reflection Questions**

1. What made the Bereans "more noble" than the Thessalonians?
2. How does daily Scripture study impact your spiritual growth?
3. Have you ever felt spiritually stagnant? What contributed to that?

4. What changes would help you move beyond Sunday morning in your faith life?
5. How can your church community encourage Berean-like engagement with Scripture?