

Good Morning and welcome to this edition of the Berean Break. My name is George A. Sinkie and I am so glad that you have joined me this morning. I want to wish you all a Happy New Year, on behalf of the Lord's church here in Mitchell, SD. As we take our break today, I want us to consider the basis of this program, the Berean Break. Before we go to our lesson for today, let's have a word of prayer,

Great God in heaven, Thank You for this day in our lives, And for this time that we can study together. We thank You for Jesus, And the great sacrifice He made for all of us. We also thank You for Your word, That reveals all of Your will to us. Help us today to understand Your word, And when we understand it, To be convicted by it and obedient to it. No matter how much time you give us, may we bring You glory and honor. In Christ's Name, we pray!!! AMEN!!!

Some of the books that Paul wrote were the books of First and Second Thessalonians. These books were written to the church in the town of Thessalonica. Paul's visit here is recorded in Acts 17: 1-9. While he was there, some were persuaded by Paul's preaching about Jesus being the Christ. They were the start of the church of Christ in Thessalonica. When persecution arose from the Jews, the Christians sent Paul away to another town called Berea. One of the big differences that Paul encountered in Berea was that these people checked out Paul's teaching with the Scriptures. For this diligence God called them more noble minded than those from Thessalonica. Occasionally I will say things in my teaching that are just my own personal beliefs or ideas, usually when I do that I precede it by saying that this is "just George and you can take it or leave it." This is not true when it comes to the teaching of the word of God, either we take it or we are rejecting God. Anyway, "just George" thinks that the reason we do not have a book written to the Bereans is because they were so diligent in checking out what they were taught that the false teachers and false teaching, never got a big foothold in the Lord's church in Berea. Sadly the Thessalonians were not so diligent and so we see Paul writing to them to help them overcome the false teachings of their day. That is why I call this program the Berean Break, because we need to have that same noble-mindedness that the Bereans had and check out what we are

taught.

To help you better understand this program and the will of God I want to go over the basis of this program. For those who may be longtime listeners, it is always good to get back to the basics occasionally. The name for this program, Berean Break, is taken from Acts 17:10-11 where it says,

And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 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.

It should be our goal to be noble-minded as well. And if we, like these people from Berea search the Scriptures to check out what we are taught, and follow only what the Bible teaches then we will be pleasing to God as well. It is important to notice that when these people were taught something religious they checked it out with the Scriptures to see if it was true. Each one of us need to decide what we are going to use as the standard for what we believe religiously. I heard a speaker one time use an excellent example to illustrate this. It was a visual illustration and so I will try to adapt it to this audio only medium. Here in front of me I have a brand new pencil, it has never been sharpened. Just by looking at it I would say that it is 8 inches long. I am an honest guy, you can trust me. Now I want to ask you a very serious question - Will you trust the destiny of your eternal soul to my saying that this pencil is exactly 8 inches long? I hope that you would not trust your salvation to this. Yet many people do this with religious doctrines. They go by what some man thinks is God's will, and so they follow the preacher, or the synod, or the council, or the catechism, or the creed. These people may be good sincere people but they are not the standard that I want to entrust my eternal soul's destiny to.

Or let's say that I told you that I have a ruler here and I measured this pencil and the end of it comes to 8 and one quarter inch. Would you now trust your eternal salvation to the teaching that this pencil

is 8 and one quarter inches long? There are also those who are like this in religion, they listen to what some man says the Bible says. But guess what, I fooled you, when I measured the pencil, I did not have the end of it on the zero mark and this made my measurement wrong. As you read through the writings of some men they use some Bible references, maybe even a lot of them, but they use them like Satan did in Matthew 4:5-6, where Matthew writes,

Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'"

Now you can read these words that Satan says here over in Psalm 91:11-12, but Satan has distorted the meaning of them and tried to teach an false doctrine from them. But he could have very easily have said this is what it teaches in Psalm 91. Now we, like Jesus, have to consider all of the teaching of God and as Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:15, we need to rightly divide it. Paul wrote,

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

Now if I took this pencil and ruler and I line up one end with the zero mark. Then I look at the other end it is at 6 and 15/16ths. For you to check this out you would need this pencil and measure it with your own ruler. In the religious realm the Bible is the ruler and when I teach something, or any one teaches something, we need to check it out by the word of God.

This illustration works better when you are right there and can check it out but I hope that you were able to get the point of it over the radio.

Let's consider for a moment the standard we should use to know what the will of God is for mankind. First turn with me to 2 Peter

1:2-3, where Peter writes to Christians and says,

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The true knowledge of God is revealed to us in the Bible, as we shall see here in a little bit. It is in this true knowledge that God has revealed to us everything pertaining to life and godliness. When this group or that group says that they have a new revelation from God or some further will of God they are lying, because the Bible is complete.

Let's go on and see this in some other passages. Turn with me over to 2 Timothy chapter three. This is going to be a longer reading and so I want you to follow along with me closely. I will be reading out of the New American Standard Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

Scripture reveals to us the complete and final will of God for mankind. And it is the thing that makes the man of God adequate for every good work. When someone says, "yes we need to follow the Bible but we also must follow this catechism or creed," they are teaching false doctrine. The reason that it is false doctrine is

because it is not following the teaching of the Bible. Some may think that it is wrong to follow only the word of God but listen to what Jesus says in John 12:47-50,

"And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. "And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

Can you imagine being in school and let's say that the teacher says you are going to be tested over some new and untaught math concept, the teacher also tells the students that everything that they need to know is found in the book, "Math Made Easy." At the end of the day the students go to the library and they check out the book "Spelling Made Easy." They go home and study diligently and master all of the principles of how to spell. The next day they take the math test over the book "Math Made Easy." How will they do on this test? They will fail it because they have studied and followed the wrong book. In the religious realm the only book we need to follow is the Bible. That is why on this program I encourage you to open your Bible and check it out. It is always a good time to take a Berean Break, each Sunday we are going to search the Word so that we can verify the will of God.

Remember those Thessalonian Christians who sent Paul on to Berea. They were enduring a lot of persecution, but Paul told them that God would take care of it. Read with me 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9,

For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the

penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Note that Paul doesn't say it is going to be those who persecute God's people who are going to be punished. No it is larger group than that, it is going to be those who "do not know God" and those who do not "obey the gospel." For the sake of our eternal soul, we better study the Bible so we know God. And we better obey the will of God, in particular the gospel.

Our time is up for this week, Lord willing, we will return next week for another Berean Break.

This Berean Break is brought to you, in love, by the pre-denominational and non-denominational church of Christ that meets at 1600 East First Ave. in Mitchell SD. You are welcome to meet with us at 10:00 Sunday Mornings for our assembly followed by a time of Bible Study, also on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 for an additional time to study God's Word. If you have a comment or a sincere Bible question, please call or text me at 605-770-5555. We want to remind you of the non-denominational TV program, "KNOW YOUR BIBLE" on KDLT-TV at 9:00 on Sunday mornings. This is George A. Sinkie for the Lord's church, here in Mitchell, good-bye for now, Remember that we care about you and may God bless you as you do His will.

All quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from the: New American Standard Bible. 1986 (electronic edition.) La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.