

How to be Noble in God's Eyes Acts 17:10-14

Introduction:

1. Is there anybody here today that is of nobility? You are of noble stock, as they say? Most of us in here are just common folk, aren't we? I like the verse that says that the common people heard Jesus gladly.
2. But did you know that every person in here has the opportunity to be noble in God's eyes?
3. Paul and Silas had to flee the city of Thessalonica, and they fled to the city of Berea, about 50 miles southwest. The Bible makes quite a statement about these people in verse 11. It says "*These were more **noble** than those in Thessalonica...*"
4. This is quite an honor. Webster's Dictionary defines "*noble*" as:
 - great; elevated; being above everything that can dishonor reputation
 - of an excellent disposition
 - of the best kind; choice; excellent
5. How wonderful it would be if God were to call us noble. There are definite reasons why God called these people "*more noble*" than others. Let's examine the text and discover how you and I can be noble in God's eyes.

First, by receiving God's Word with eagerness – vs. 11a

1. As was Paul's custom, he went immediately into the synagogue where he began to preach, teach the Word of God, and explain to them Jesus Christ.
2. Probably much to Paul's surprise, the Bereans listened enthusiastically to the Word of God (vs. 11). In fact, "*readiness of mind*" indicates eagerness.
3. These people were sitting on the edge of their chairs, excited about the message of the gospel that Paul proclaimed. Let's compare this with most of the people in Thessalonica (17:5). Usually, Paul encountered disinterest and sometimes outright scorn.
4. Let me ask you a question. "How is your spiritual appetite?" Do you crave and long for the teaching of God's Word? Does it thrill you and excite you to hear God's Word taught?
5. Some believers sit bored stiff during church, but then can't wait to get home to watch football or their favorite TV program. If that is true of us, something is dreadfully wrong.
 - **Illustration:** Have you ever met a person who had no appreciation for a good home-cooked meal with meat and lots of veggies because they had fed so long on fast food and junk food? There is no appetite for truly good, solid, substantial food.
6. In the same way, we can feed our minds so much worldly junk food that we can't appreciate the good, solid, nutritious, fulfilling food of God's Word. Hebrews 5:12
 - A baby gets excited over a bottle of milk. But, over time, you expect that baby to change and develop an appetite for real food.

7. I've had many people tell me that they were going to a church where they felt like all they were getting was the light, fluffy cotton candy of God's Word. They tell me they love our church because they are learning God's Word and how to study it. This is why we have L.I.F.E. Groups, evening services, a Bible Institute, etc.
8. If our spiritual appetite is waning, we need to ask God to help us to rejuvenate it to the extent that we will always be eager to hear the Word of God taught.

Second, by studying God's Word daily - vs. 11b

- This is the next step. It is one thing to receive God's Word from another person. It is an entirely different level when we begin to study it for ourselves.
- Verse 11 states, "...and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so."
- When a person takes time to study God's Word, it reveals several facts about the person:
 1. First, they possess true wisdom.
 - The Bereans searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul was saying was indeed true.
 - They listened respectfully but did not accept blindly what was taught.
 - This not only protects the listener from false doctrine, but it keeps the preacher accountable and causes him to make sure he stays within the confines of God's Word.
 - The true minister doesn't fear such an investigation, but rather welcomes it and is thankful for it. Don't you know Paul and Silas had to be thrilled? They knew the Word of God would confirm everything they had told them.
 - We live in a day and age of religious frauds and charlatans who deceive people under religious pretenses in order to get into their pocketbooks. Christian, you better be in the Word! Colossians 3:16
 2. Second, they hold to a total faith in God's Word.
 - These Bereans went to the Scriptures to check out Paul's message. They didn't run to the writings of Socrates, Aristotle, or any other philosopher of the world.
 - They obviously believed the Scriptures to be the final authority. A believer must possess this kind of faith in God's Word. It is the Scriptures that are able to make a person wise. 2 Timothy 3:15
 - Many believers say they possess total faith in God's Word, but then they rely on worldly reasoning and worldly counsel when making decisions. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 3. Third, they are consistent in their pursuit of truth.
 - Notice it says that they searched the Scriptures **daily**.
 - They didn't just give the Word a casual glance. They were in the Word relentlessly, every day, comparing Scripture with Scripture. 2 Timothy 2:15

- How often do you eat physical food? Then, why do we feel we can go days without any spiritual food intake? Can you imagine if God gave us bodies that reflected our intake of God's Word? We'd have people coming to church looking like they lived in third world countries.
- We need to put the word "*daily*" back into our study of the Scriptures.
- We cannot soak up hours of TV, magazines, newspapers, and internet every day, ignore God's Word, and then expect to be spiritually healthy and exercise God's wisdom.

Third, by believing God's Word – vs. 12

1. It is fruitless to study God's Word if we are not prepared to believe what God has said. We live in a time in which people are refusing God's Word in favor of fables (falsehoods; lies). Paul predicted this would happen. 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 1 Timothy 6:20-21
2. God proclaimed these Bereans to be noble because they believed God's Word.
3. The world sneers and ridicules people who believe God's Word. They paint Bible-believing Christians to look like crude and unintelligent fools who lack understanding and good sense. vs. 13-14 (Who were the real troublemakers?)
4. Scripture gives us the true perspective. It is noble to turn to Christ as your Savior. It is noble to receive, study, and believe God's Word.
5. Eternity will label Christ-rejecters as the fools. They may have been dignified in this life, with high honors and position and much respect, but rejecting God's Word will make them eternal fools.

In Conclusion:

1. Are you noble in God's eyes? Answer these questions to find out:
 - Do I receive God's Word with eagerness?
 - Do I study the Scriptures daily?
 - Do I believe God's Word when I read and study it?
2. If you can answer "yes" to these questions, you are truly noble in God's eyes!