

## **Sermon Handout**

### **The Gospel & Social Unrest**

#### **Acts 17:5-9**

### **I. Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica**

- a. Length of stay
  - i. Three sabbaths in the synagogue v. 2
  - ii. Broader and longer ministry in the city
    1. Continued evangelism I Thess 1, 2
    2. Primarily among Gentiles I Thess 1:9
    3. Worked at his craft for support I Thess 2:9-12
    4. Received support from Philippi several times Phil 4:16
    5. Ramsay: probably six months (Dec-May, 50-51 A.D.)
- b. The converts: Jews, God-fearers, Greek men, prominent women
  - i. Similar group later in Berea v. 12
  - ii. Women in Macedonia more emancipated than elsewhere  
*See references in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea*
- c. Many of the synagogue Jews did not believe *see* vv. 5, 13 *cf.* Mt 10:16-17

### **II. The Mob Aroused by the Jewish Leaders**

- a. Drawn from a lower class of citizens v. 5  
“unprincipled loafers” *cf.* Mt 20:3
- b. Contrasted with merchants & aristocrats who converted
- c. Both envy & superstition played a role in raising the mob
- d. The mob seeks Paul & Silas, but they are hidden vv. 5, 6a
- e. Presentation to the *politarchs* vv. 6-8  
Sedition against Caesar – “another King” vv. 6-7
- f. The *politarchs* secure Jason's assurance that peace will be restored  
Paul & Silas are secreted out of town v. 10a

### **III. The Trouble Continues**

- a. Persecution of the Thessalonica Christians continues
  - i. Paul is hindered in returning I Thess 2:18
  - ii. Trouble from Jews as in Judaea I Thess 2:13-14
  - iii. Encouragement to steadfastness I Thess 3:3 *cf.* 1:8-9
- b. Christians are to sustain a distinction from the world
  - i. Neither inciting nor joining mobs
  - ii. Maintaining a steadfast trust in God's Providence
  - iii. Focusing on God's grace in the midst of trouble