

Acts 17:1-3

October 26, 1976

Part II (Research material)

Now, I'm ready to go to Acts chapter 17. I'll show you how we work this stuff.

First of all, I always put in front of me either a pad or a piece of paper; sometimes an envelope, depends on what I have in my pocket or where I can get a hold of stuff. And, I get lectured good and proper if I put it on an envelope, because I usually lose it after it's over with. And they think these things are important to them so we file everything in some file under Acts. They don't want me to lose them, I guess, so Donna files them. But nobody will ever be able to read them because I just scribble them; and sometimes I can't read them hardly.

I take, for instance--we'll start in Acts 17--and I'll show you how I work this Word when I begin to sit down and to prepare a work for the ministry.

Acts 17:1

Now, naturally, I know that they are headed for Thessalonica. Let's say I want to know something about "Amphipolis." You can read that word one hundred times and unless you look at it, and you're doing exactly what I would do, too. I flip to the back of my Bible, take a look at the map that is proper for that particular New Testament period, and I endeavor to find these cities as they are listed on my map. But beyond that, I write down on my paper, like I have written here, "Amphipolis." I just put "Am," that's all I've got; that's why I say nobody will ever know what I'm doing. But to me that registered Amphipolis. And I put "Ap" below it. That isn't Associated Press that means Apollonia. If I need to know anything about those, I go to my Bible Dictionary and I look up "Amphipolis."

"Amphipolis" - an important strategic and commercial center at the north of the Aegean, situated on the river Struma, about three miles inland from the seaport of Eion; Prized by the Athenians and Macedonians as the key both to the gold, silver, and timber of Mt. Pangaeus and also the control of the Dardanelles; It became, under the Romans, a free town and the capital of the first district of Macedonia; Amphipolis (polis is city, you know) is about thirty miles southwest of Philippi on the Via Egnatia, a great Roman highway and Paul passed through it on his way to Thessalonica.

Now, I looked this up and I found out that it was 33 miles southwest of the city of Philippi. The next town is Apollonia, which I have also written down on my paper. And Apollonia, I checked out, and I found out that Apollonia is 30 miles further; and that is almost halfway between Amphipolis and Thessalonica. Now, as far as I am concerned, you see, in my head, I've covered what I needed to know; two cities, I know about their distance, 33 and 30 miles.

"synagogue of the Jews" - I do not need to look up "synagogue of the Jews," because I know from my previous knowledge and recollection that, in order to have a synagogue, you had to have twelve men. Twelve Jewish men could form a synagogue, so I know there were at least that many.

Acts 17:2

I just go and put a "2" on the side of my page, because now I am going to do verse 2 in my working.

Now there's only one word in there that I would really need to look up. Which one do you think it is? "Reason" Now, watch it carefully, I'll read it again.

“as his manner was” - What does that mean to you? Custom; the way he lived. I don’t have to look that up. I know that’s what it is.

“unto them” - the synagogue of the Jews

“and three sabbath days” - Well, I happen to know what the sabbath is and therefore I know that on three sabbath days, he “reasoned with them.”

“out of” - from the scriptures

“reasoned” - Now that word “reasoned,” bothers me so I take my Greek text and I go to **Acts 17: 2**:

Delegato - as I see this word here in verse 2--it has a footnote at the bottom, so I check out the critical Greek texts on these things. But, even further than that, I now will take this critical Lexicon and I’ll look up the word “reasoned.” And there I notice it is number one usage, *dialegomai*--see above number three. “To speak to and fro; alternately; to converse with; discuss; reason; argue.” I could go with translation, then, “to converse with; discuss; reason; or argue.” Now, you’ll wonder, “Well, why don’t I go with argue.” The reason I don’t go with argue is because in **verse 3**, “opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered.” And having read this before, you know, a hundred times before I began to work it, I know these words are coming up and therefore I know “opening and alleging” does not mean argue. Therefore I know that this word, *dialegomai* (this word, reason) could not be translated “argue.” But, then I get another key. And the key is *dialegomai*, which is transliterated over into our English word “dialogue.” And that, I think, is a fantastic translation of the word reason. Now that is spiritual perception and awareness. That’s not just looking at the word, but it is sensing the spiritual depth and the awareness that; that is exactly what he meant. And you not only have the Greek texts to back it up, but you have the depth of it. Now watch this: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in and three sabbath days had a dialogue...” And if you understand synagogues, you can understand the dialogue. It’s really something.

That, I think, would be a literal working of that word “dialogue”, where he presented the truth of God’s Word out of the scriptures. I have no further need of looking up anything or putting a word down because I think I’ve covered every important word in that verse that needs to be double-checked and understood to see that we rightly divide it and do not handle the Word of God deceitfully.

Acts 17:3

Now, I take my pencil again, and I write down the word:

“opening” - You know, you could just by-pass it, because “opening”--”opening and alleging.” My question is opening what? A can of beans? And alleging what? You see, that’s why my working of the Word; I’ve worked it so long that I can just see these words that I have to look up or I have to double-check if I want the innermost meaning, what we refer to as getting to the depth of the integrity and accuracy of the Word. But, you’ve got to know more than the depth of the accuracy of the Word. Word-wise, you have to develop that spiritual response and receptivity to the spirit of God, that’s at work within you, that will teach you whether you use the word “argue” or “dialogue” or “reason.” That’s what we talk about as one of the Corps principles. Now, we told you it was a Corps principle, right? Which one? Number one. We never told you you’d master it all in the Corps; because once you’re Corps, you’re Corps how long? Till the return and then you get in God’s Corps. That’s better. Once you’re Corps, you’re Corps! And that keeps you, we believe, growing through the years. You don’t stop after two or three years of sitting here with me. You keep developing. If

you don't; we're in the soup. So, I put down the word "opening." I put down the word "alleging."

And then there's a unique thing here, he pushes "risen again." I like that; because I happen to remember **Romans 10:9** and it's in the resurrection that we have the greatness, not the crucifixion. Here he is having a dialogue in the synagogue. What do you think he is really putting up there? Risen again. Right. You know what he's after? Get them born again! Why sure. He wants them saved. Why do you think we teach the Foundational Class? We teach it so that we can get people who aren't saved, saved. Everything in that Foundational Class is headed to the one place: get them born again of God's spirit and then get them manifesting what they receive. Now, in order to get to that, we use twenty hours of messing to get them to the place where they either have to say, "Yes, it is God's Word," or "No, it is not God's Word." Well, look at the greatness of this thing. "Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered." Then the suffering had to be for something.

Now I have a little difficulty with this phrase:

"And that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ" - I'll handle these things so I remember this in my mind and I just begin working again.

"opening" - *dianoigō* - to open; stand open; spoken of doors, heaven, a book, the mouth, ears, eyes; to open through of what before was closed; to open fully.

Now, I've got a picture! "To open full"; opening fully. What would it mean if you opened fully? Completely; effectually. I can understand effectually. I think it would be much better: opening fully; unfolding completely. "Unfolding completely"; now, that would be a translation according to usage. If you open something fully, you don't hide anything. You could open something effectually and still not tell it all. Opening fully had to bring him to the resurrection. The reason I go with that opening fully is because it's "the resurrection" in here that he's after. You see it? Okay, let's see what else we come up with; we may change our mind.

I've got to look up that word "alleging." Let's see what Bullinger does with it first. Literally, he says "setting before them." The Greek is; *paratithēmi*. "Unfolding completely and setting before them." That doesn't suit me completely, because he's talking about the resurrection. And usually, and this now is why I know this from my former working of the Word, whenever it's talking about the resurrection it just doesn't set it in front of people; but it "socks it to them." He hits then hard. It's more that setting in front. You know, it's like taking an ice cream cone and shoving it in your mouth.

Now, we're looking up "alleging." I just allow myself to get this tired when I work the Word. But we sure messed around a lot tonight. Nice messing. Wonderful. But it's a remarkable thing; no matter how tired I am, I'm only tired physically, my mind isn't tired. So I just keep driving myself, and if I have to get it, my mind is sharp. It's just a matter of keeping my mind screwed down on the thing. "Alleging"; only used once - to place near or by the side of; as of food. Unfolding completely and placing it by the side as food, something for people to eat; to set or lay before; to set, or lay before; to set clearly. I could set it before, over here, it would be darker. Clearly puts it where? Before one by argument; by dialogue; reason. It can't be argument because we had the dialogue a little while ago. So now I know that that wouldn't fit. Lay before; and especially to prove. That's a good one. By citations from writers. That I can really use. Prove by giving the Word (citation from writers.) Scriptures he said earlier. Reason with them out of the scriptures. They are the writers. See it? And especially to prove by citation from the Word; by giving of the Word.

"alleging" - prove by giving the Word

Acts 17:3 literal according to usage (with the spiritual in-depth awareness that we have at this moment):

Reasoned with them out of the scriptures; unfolding completely and proving by giving them the Word: that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead.

Now the usage, and the reason I know this from verse three is because of other locations in Romans; this has to be put together here in verse 3 with Christ Jesus and Jesus Christ all put together. I noticed a little while ago, Bullinger has a very fine presentation of this here: "Christ must needs"--literally, it was necessary that the messiah should suffer and rise.

"from the dead" - out from among - nobody else rose. He's the only one up, that's why it's "out from." The gathering together is used the same way; where the dead in Christ shall rise first. The rest of the unbelievers are going to stay dead and the Israel stuff; the resurrection for the believers, stay dead.

"This is the Christ, Jesus, whom I preach (declare, expound)." - I think it is because of the resurrection that the word Christ should come first over here. "The Christ, Jesus (the humiliated one; the Joshua; the savior), that's the one I preach."

A literal translation would generally just be:

Unfolding completely (fully) proving by giving the Word that Christ must needs have suffered, risen again from the dead, and this is Christ, Jesus, whom I preach (or I proclaim).

See how we work it? I just put down word after word and just try to handle it that way. Well, I trust the night has given you an idea of some of the stuff you have to go through, or we do go through, in order to work that Word. Now, if you can't work it like this tomorrow, don't feel badly. But, if you don't start working it gradually, you'll never arrive at it. But, there are some of you in the Corps who are not so adept at this. I know everybody thinks they would like to be, but some of you are absolutely the best seamstresses the world has ever seen. Some of you are the best mothers that could ever mother anything. Yet, on a lot of the research and in-depth stuff like I'm working here, if I show you the truth of it, you don't have to work it. It's just like Uncle Harry; you just believe it and put it in practice. That's why I said to you the other day, "I feel sorry for my kids that are eighteen and nineteen running up against theologians and clergymen." I'll take them on anytime. It would be any bother for me. But, for my poor kids, even if you're forty, you see, you don't have that backlog. You don't need to have it. You just have to be convinced that it's true. And then if they yak at you, you say, "Okay. Believe what you want to believe. This is what I believe." And you just take a stand. They say, "Well, explain it to me." You say, "Okay, take a class called Power For Abundant Living." None of their business, because the Bible says we stand approved before God, not men. So, you don't have to prove anything to a man. All you have to do is witness to the Word. Now, those who want to hear, they'll listen.

Just because you can't sit down and maybe take a concordance or that figures or the rest of that stuff and do what I did tonight, does not invalidate your ministry or make it any less than mine, because we all have different jobs to do. So don't you ever get discouraged or ever upset about it. You know the neat thing about the Corps is: you're going to be teaching in the future - Twigs, Branches, this kind of stuff. If you know a little bit about this, you can isolate yourself in a corner for two, three, or four hours, and you can come out all fired up. And you know where you're going. But, you know for

the most part, you can't handle Greek with your Twigs. They just know it's Greek to them to begin with. What you do is work it out ahead of time. Like if I walked in on a Twig meeting now, I wouldn't handle this like I did with you. I'd simply say that the basic root meaning is, "opening fully." Then I would translate it for them and give them the heart of it because I worked it before.