

Heathenism (Part 1)

This is our third study in a special entitled, **Studies from Thessalonians**. It is related to missionary evangelism from First Thessalonians in conjunction with our February Foreign Missions Emphasis.

We will begin with two definitions of heathenism.

- **World Book Dictionary:** "A heathen is a person who does not believe in the God of the Bible." This definition is too broad for biblical discussion to use with Paul's missionary evangelism
- **Doctrinal definition:** "A heathen is a person or people who volitionally reject the revealed truth about God and /or about the gospel of Jesus Christ, God's Son."

(2 Thess.1:8) "Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel (to euagelleion / d.s.m) of our Lord Jesus."

<p style="text-align: center;">This lesson will study two <u>introductory points on Heathenism</u></p>

1. We will begin by examining missionary evangelism of Thessalonica recorded in Acts 17:1-10.

We will examine (Acts 17:1-10) by the following five homiletical points and apply the doctrine of the ambassadorship of the Church Age Believer (CAB) to it.

- **Call to Macedonia** (Acts 16:6-10; 17:1-4)
 - Ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor.5:18-21) – open door to pockets of Positive Volition (PV) (Col.4:2)
- **Custom of Paul** (Acts 17:1-3; 14:46-47)
 - Rom.9:1-4; 10:1-4; 11:11, 15, 28
- **Converts** (Acts 17:4)
 - Some Jews, large numbers of God fearing Gentiles, and a number of leading women.
- **Conflict** (Acts 17:5)
 - Mob mentality; home church of Jason (1 Thess.1:6; 2:2; Phil.1:29)
- **Court** (Acts 17:6-9)
 - Legal persecution of new converts (no underground church. (Acts 17:6)

2. Positive volition (PV) places the responsibility on God to provide gospel -hearing no matter where or who in the world (Matt.28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 10:34-43; 16:9; 20:21).

God knows and sends ambassadors of Christ to pockets of PV and to those people with PV (2 Cor.5:18-21). God send Paul, Silas, and Timothy to Macedonia-Achaia (five cities). In Philippi, God sent Paul to a group of ladies and then to a jailor (Acts 16:16-40).

Doctrinal principle: (Acts 10:35) "**But in every nation** the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him." [Peter about the gospel to Gentiles] (Acts 17:4)

- God, The Holy Spirit brought the Ethiopian eunuch to Jerusalem, sent Ambassador Philip to share with him the Gospel of Grace Salvation and then God, The Holy Spirit sent the Ethiopian back home with the that same Gospel message of Salvation (Acts 8:26-38).