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**You
Asked
For It**



WEEK 1 | **Difficult Spaces**

PRAYER

Gracious God, you are the only source of life and health. Help, comfort, and relieve us, and give your power of healing to those who minister to my needs; that my weakness may be turned to strength and confidence in your loving care; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

—*Episcopal Prayer*

WARM UP (OPTIONAL)

If you could ask one person (besides Jesus Christ) a question and be guaranteed an answer, who would you ask and what would be your question?

NOTES

WORD

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵ Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. . .

[ACTS 17: 10-34](#)

We see in these passages, the apostles, Paul and Silas, forming tight relationships with a group of Berean believers who were noble (vs. 11) and who would use scriptures to see things accurately. As their faith and passion grew, the Thessalonians came to start trouble to the point where Paul had to flee to Athens to await his disciples, Silas and Timothy.

While in Athens, Paul had the opportunity to present God to philosophers in a manner that they could understand, by quoting their own fellow poets and by showing them that their search for eternal fulfilment could only be found in his God.

We, too, should be challenged to form tight relationships with those around us who have a passion to examine the scriptures in order that we may build up our faith and be prepared to powerfully present the Gospel to those we may encounter who are far from God, in a way they may comprehend and respond to.

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale of 1-10 (1 = extremely difficult; 10 = extremely easy), how do you rate your ability to engage in difficult and awkward conversations with people who don't hold the same faith and convictions as you?
2. Silas and Timothy were mentored by Paul whilst on the road doing ministry together; the same way Jesus would mentor his disciples. Do you have a mentor who speaks into your life? Are you mentoring anyone?
3. If you a follower of Christ, what is your greatest challenge in sharing your faith with those who don't hold the same beliefs as you? If you are not a follower of Jesus, what is your challenge in sharing with Christians about where your views might differ?
4. What are the dangers of Christians not knowing how to engage with people who hold contrary views on ANY topic of their worldview?
5. Are there any topics you find hard to discuss with people who hold different views from you? If so, why?
6. If you do not yet have a relationship with the God who saves us, and sets us free from trying to pointlessly work our way into righteousness, would you like to follow him and enter into a saving relationship with him through Jesus? Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer with them:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' name, Amen.