1. Intro:
   1.1. TY - Ed Hunt (Samoan Band); Calvin Russell A/V Father’s Day DVD.
   1.2. Fathers fight dragons almost daily. They hurry away from the breakfast table...off to the arena which is sometimes called an office or a workshop. There, with callused, practiced hands, they tackle the dragon with 3 heads: weariness, work, & monotony. They never quite win the fight, but they never give up. Knights in shining armor as they march away, to each new workday.
   1.3. 3 kids bragging about fathers:
      1.3.1. 1st My dad’s so smart he can talk for 1 hour on any subject.
      1.3.2. 2nd My dad’s so smart he can talk for 2 hours on any subject.
      1.3.3. 3rd My dad’s so smart he can talk for 3 hours & doesn’t even need a subject!
   1.4. Released from jail in Philippi, Paul & Silas with sleeves rolled up, minds engaged, & hearts ablaze,…head deeper into Greece!
      1.4.1. Enthusiasm, zeal, drive, vision…these are the characteristics of a person who is fully alive! (living the abundant life)
      1.4.2. John Powell describes in his book Fully Human, Fully Alive “Fully alive people are not necessarily happy all the time. No they experience failure as well as success. They are open to both pain & pleasure. The have many questions & some answers. They cry & they laugh. They dream & they hope. The only thing that remains alien to their experience of life is passivity & apathy. They say a strong “yes” to life & a resounding “amen” to love. They feel the strong stings of growing, but their sleeves are always rolled up, their minds are whirring, & their hearts are ablaze.”
   1.5. Full life – The abundant life, comes from Jn.10:10.
      1.5.1. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
      1.5.2. The thief came to take advantage or even kill the sheep; in contrast, the Good Shepherd came to benefit the sheep.
         1.5.2.1. He gives life which is not constricted but overflowing.
         1.5.2.2. The thief takes life; Christ gives it to the full!
   1.6. So strap on your hiking boots & let’s see if we can keep up with Paul.

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1 Adapted from Chuck Swindoll; Acts 17; pg.151.
2. **THESSALONIONES! (1-9)**

2.1. **THIS JESUS! (1-4)**

2.2. Following the *Egnatian Way* (main highway through Macedonia) they arrive in Thes.

2.3. (1) Philippi to Amphipolis (33 miles); Amphipolis to Apollonia (27 miles); Apollonia to Thessalonica (10 miles?). *[Prob stayed in Inn’s in 1st 2 cities]*

2.4. Thessalonica – the crown jewel of Macedonia, placed in a striking setting on the Thermiaic Gulf by the Aegean Sea. *[2nd largest city in Greece...& still is]*

2.4.1. Behind it the **majestic mountains** of Greece, including the fabled mount Olympus.

2.4.2. It had a **nice harbor**, was the chief center of commerce, & military strength. Nearby *Hot Springs* made it a fashionable luxury resort.

2.5. (2) Three reminders:

2.5.1. **[1] Reasoning** – “To select, distinguish, then to **revolve** in the mind.”

2.5.1.1. “To have *give & take* conversation, using the OT.”

2.5.2. **[2] Explaining** – “To open”, “to place alongside”, “to present evidence”

2.5.2.1. Making them **clear** so the people could see that the Messiah must die & rise again.

2.5.3. **[3] Demonstrating** – He gave evidence. He placed his own illustrations alongside Scripture to strengthen his argument.

2.5.3.1. Result? *Jesus is the Christ!* *[suffer/atonement & rise again/proof of victory]*

2.5.4. Paul presented the gospel **accurately, clearly, & practically.**

2.5.4.1. Q: Are you able to do the same?

2.6. **UPSIDE DOWN! (5-9)**

2.7. (5) Like magnets, some people are **drawn closer** (4), & others are **repelled** by it.

2.8. Evil men from the marketplace – It seems like every big city has these guys.

2.8.1. They don’t have jobs but just hang around & harass others in the marketplace. They were the city *loafers & hoodlums.*

2.8.2. They swarm *Jason’s house* where the missionaries had been staying.

2.8.2.1. (Like swarming *Gordon Oney’s* house, for housing *Dennis Strittmatter*)

2.9. (6) 3 unlikely desperados “**upset the world!”**

2.10. **Turned the world upside down** – *(adapted from Herschel Ford; Acts)*

2.11. In a sense the charge was **true.** Christianity is revolutionary!

2.11.1. The world today needs turning **upside down, or right side up.**

2.11.2. **This revolution** must take place in the **hearts** of individuals.

2.11.2.1. *[from revolve=a complete circular turn]*

2.11.3. **The way to change the world is to change the individuals** in it.

2.11.3.1. You can’t have a **better world w/o better people!**
2.12. When Christ comes into a life He turns it upside down. How?
2.12.1. Jesus turns our beliefs upside down – The things we once thought were false, now we believe to be true.
2.12.2. Jesus turns our pleasures upside down – What we used to find pleasurable, vs. now.
2.12.3. Jesus turns our home life upside down – Different level of home commitment.
2.12.4. Jesus turns our hopes upside down – From a hopeless life He gives us a hope of heaven & eternal life.

2.13. So, First, the world is wrong side up; Second, the world must be turned upside down; Third, we are the men to set it right.
2.13.1. Father’s, here is your Fathers Day challenge! May we be the change!
2.13.2. Let’s “flip our Valley”…1 heart at a time!
2.13.2.1. Let’s start w/our own hearts being touched!

2.14. Let’s learn how to care & not only believe!
2.14.1. You may believe there are kids starving, but do you care? (see diff)
2.14.2. What we need to change about us is what we care about not what we believe!

2.15. Men, we have the opportunity to unwrap God for people!

3. BEREAN’S! (10-15)
3.1. RECEIVE & SEARCH! (10-15)
3.2. He targets another town for the gospel…and the way they go.

3.3. Berea – a smaller community located about 50 miles from Thessalonica.
3.3.1. The atmosphere is different. [Today, Veria]
3.3.2. They were fair(noble)-minded, or had noble-character, (i.e.) they were sensitive & responsive to the truth.

3.4. How? 2 ways:
3.5. Received the word with readiness –
3.5.1. Not arms folded, with a critical heart.
3.5.1.1. [Some think that’s actually spiritual, no that’s critical]
3.5.2. Some love apologetics & forget it’s about loving people!

3.6. They searched the Scriptures to back up these things were right –
3.6.1. A spirit, not to prove him wrong, but prove it right.
3.6.2. Obviously dangerous for us to blindly accept what people teach.
3.6.2.1. That’s how cults get started.
3.6.3. Instead ask: Did Jesus/Gospels teach it? Did Acts/early church reveal it? Did epistles expound on it?
3.6.3.1. May we always ask, “does the bible or Jesus say”…rather than “what does this man or this movement say”!
3.7. **As an athlete** needs to keep fit in their core exercises; and **musicians** better practice their scales; so **Christians** must exercise God’s Word.

3.7.1. Jesus is *never boring & always relevant!* (Erwin mcManus)

3.8. **Fully alive people** don’t always have it easy:

3.8.1. They do however know how to handle life’s storms with *enthusiasm, grace, & balance.*

3.8.2. If Paul could give us 4 ropes to moor/tie down our ship, they’d be:

3.8.3. [1] **Stay determined** – Paul had the **courage** to stay on course in spite of hardships, beatings, even public slander.

3.8.4. [2] **Expect rejection** – When truth is declared, not all will receive.

3.8.4.1. If nobody rejects it, we probably aren’t telling the **whole truth**.

3.8.4.2. If they reject it, remember, they are rejecting **God not you**.

3.8.4.2.1. Q-TIP = *Quit Taking It Personal!*

3.8.5. [3] **Don’t wait for appreciation** – not always expressed at the right time. No one held banquets in Paul’s honor.

3.8.5.1. But we can’t survive w/o **encouragement**, & our most unfailing source of that is **Christ!!!** [He *cheers* us on; *reminds* us what we’re fighting for; & *supplies* the power to win the victory!]

3.8.6. [4] **Be enthusiastic** – enthusiastic means “one inspired (by a god)”

3.8.6.1. It’s from 2 Greek words “en” & “theos”, “in” & “God”.

3.8.6.2. To be **enthusiastic** then is to be *inspired by God.*

3.9. **Prayer:** Lord, where our life is flickering, stoke the divine fire in our hearts!