



Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11

Why am I Lutheran? I should've known better

These are perhaps the most humbling words an angry authority figure can say: "You should've known better!"

These words hurt because they're true, but it's more than that. They hurt because they accuse you of willfully going against something you knew. That's not being ignorant. It's being foolish. And if you think about it: foolish is way more embarrassing than ignorant.

In Acts 17, Luke tells the story of a group of people who heard the apostle Paul preach. Paul was, at this point, becoming pretty famous. He had just snuck out of Thessalonica because the people there accused him of causing "trouble all over the world." He went from Thessalonica to Berea, and while he was there, he preached. The people who heard him had some options.

They could simply reject his message, treating him like a rabble-rouser.

They could simply accept his message, treating him like a visionary.

OR (and this is what they did) they could take what he said, compare it with the Scriptures, and if it agreed with the authority of God, they could trust what he said.

It would have been ignorant to ignore Paul, and it would have been foolish to just accept him. They chose, instead, to know better.

Why are you a Lutheran? Is it because somebody told you to be one? Don't stay in ignorance. Take a close look at what the Lutheran church says and compare it to what the Bible says. And if you believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and if that Word can clarify for you whether or not it is worthwhile to be and remain a Lutheran, but you still haven't engaged in that kind of study—then aren't you being a fool? Shouldn't you know better? Shouldn't you do more than just go with it?

It's not simple. I don't mean to make it sound like it is. You'll spend your whole life being like a Berean, learning what God says and connecting it with the world around you. Let the encouragement of this devotion be that you don't need to be afraid to ask questions like, "Why am I a Lutheran?" and "What do I believe?" and "What is the truth?"

In fact, God calls it *noble* to ask them and to run after the answers to them. Be of noble character. Learn important things. And, once you know better, don't run after that which is worse.

Prayer: Lord, teach us to know better through your word. Amen.