

## ACTS 17:14-34

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<sup>16</sup> Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. <sup>17</sup> Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the *Gentile* worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup> Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, "What does this babbler want to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods," because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

<sup>19</sup> And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak?" <sup>20</sup> For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean." <sup>21</sup> For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

<sup>22</sup> Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; <sup>23</sup> for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

### TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: <sup>24</sup> "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. <sup>25</sup> Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. <sup>26</sup> And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, <sup>27</sup> so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; <sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' <sup>29</sup> Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. <sup>30</sup> Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

<sup>32</sup> And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this *matter*." <sup>33</sup> So Paul departed from among them. <sup>34</sup> However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

**18** After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth....

## DON'T FORGET THE GOSPEL!

**QUESTION:** Unlike other cities, Paul did not make very many converts in Athens. *Why?*

**ANSWER:** Compare his preaching in Athens with his very different preaching in Corinth.

**1 CORINTHIANS 2** And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

**POINT:** While being relevant is important, doing so should never reduce the gospel.

## THE GOSPEL IS –

- Not to be diluted.

**1 CORINTHIANS 1** <sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

- Perceived as foolishness.

<sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.....

- The power of God.

- What God uses to save us.

<sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

- What God uses to humble us.

<sup>22</sup> For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

- Not easily seen by unbelievers.

**2 CORINTHIANS 4** <sup>3</sup> But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

- To be kept pure.

**GALATIANS 1** <sup>6</sup> I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, <sup>7</sup> which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

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