

“In Him We....” Acts 17:16-34
Devotional

Acts 17:16-18; *Philippians 1:27-33; Matthew 5:14-16*

Observation/Application questions:

1. Take a moment to think. How would you describe an idol? Can they be literal or figurative? Can they be physical or unphysical? What are the core characteristics of an idol? Why was Paul stricken by the presence of so many idols?
2. What were the two groups, aside from the Jews, who heard what Paul was preaching? Why might Paul's message have seemed like senseless babbling to them? Did this make them less curious or more curious?
3. Typically, are people initially more attracted to or repulsed by things they don't understand? Is my testimony before others so different from the normal that people want to know what is going on with me, or is my behavior too close to the world's that it seems ordinary?

Acts 17:19-21; *Psalms 135:15-18; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Jeremiah 9:23-24*

Observation/application questions:

1. Is there anything about the message of Christ that might seem strange to worldly ears? What kinds of things did idols “demand” from their worshipers? What about Jesus? What did idols offer or supply to their worshippers? What about Jesus? How were worshipers supposed to approach or communicate with their idols? What about Jesus?
2. What was the Athenian's primary pastime? Can God be completely understood by the mind of man? Why? Or why not? Is it necessary that He be completely understood for us to believe in Him?
3. What are the dangers of a purely academic approach to Christianity? Does God always operate in ways that we can understand or find logical? Should God be held up to my standards or me to His?

Acts 17:22-23; *Jonah 2:8-9; Matthew 11:28-29; Ezekiel 36:26*

Observation/Application questions:

1. What was the evidence that Paul saw and heard of that the Athenians were “very religious?” How did they demonstrate their concern that they may have missed a god in their zeal to worship and appease them all? Was their worship personal and relational? Is mine?
2. Some of the Athenians were aware that they were missing something or someone. Do you know anybody like that? Is God calling you to be a Paul for somebody you know who is searching for something they can't seem to find?

Acts 17:24-28; 1 Samuel 12:24; John 4:21-23; 1 Corinthians 3:7-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11

Observation/Application questions:

1. **Do a little research:** What were the Greek and Roman gods like? What did they represent? How did they supposedly interact with man? How does Paul's description of God contrast with what the Athenians were used to?
2. How much does God *need* me to serve Him? How much does He *want* me to serve Him? Should my service to God be motivated by a perceived need or by a profound love? Have I spent much time recently connecting with God? In what ways might God be inviting me to partner with Him in service?
3. What might happen if I refuse to serve God in the areas He is leading? Have I ruined God's plans? Is He surprised and scrambling to fix things? What *have* "I" missed out on? What might my refusal to surrender mean for me in the long or short run?

Acts 17:29-34; Isaiah 29:13-16; John 9:4; Romans 9:2-3; Romans 13:11-12

Observation/Application questions:

1. Back in verse 16, think again why Paul's spirit was provoked? Do you have any friends or family who are misled and deceived by worldly philosophies? How does that make you feel to see them running after lies that could lead to destruction?
2. What does Paul tell his listeners that God is responsible for? Where does Paul tell his listeners that God is not found? What does Paul warn his listeners about what will happen to the world some day?
3. Is there anybody I know that needs to hear the same words that Paul shared with these Athenians? God is creator and sustainer of all, He is not sprung from the mind of man, but is Himself, and one day we will all stand in Judgment before Him! Do I believe that too?