

In Him we...
Acts 17:16-34

Subject Sentence: Paul preaches repentance and Christ resurrection to Athenian intellectual elites.

Aim: To cause the audience to know that all peoples need the knowledge of the one true God and that that knowledge leads to true saving faith through His son, Jesus Christ.

Divisions:

1. Setting of the Athens' Sermon.

- a. v16: Paul had just arrived in Athens after a hasty departure from Berea (v13-15).
 - i. **Provoked** by rampant idolatry: irritated, angry, arouse, exasperated, burn.
- b. City was full of idols. Paul is more than greatly distressed. The Lord reacted the same way to idolatry in Israel and so should we
 - i. Deuteronomy 9:7, 18, 22; Psalm 106:28-29; Isaiah 65:2-3; compare Isaiah 42:8
- c. v17: The Synagogue and Marketplace (Agora). Paul's normal approach.
- d. v18: Epicureans & Stoics:
 - i. Epicureans, atomic materialists, viewed reality as an endless chance combining and dispersion of atoms. They would find the concept of bodily resurrection laughable.
 - ii. The Stoics, materialist pantheists, identified the divine as the principle of reason pervading all and, in the form of fate, governing all. Because of either their cyclic eschatology (belief that there were periodic conflagrations of the universe after which history simply repeated itself) or their later adoption of the Platonic concept of the soul's immortality, they could not conceive of resurrection.
- e. v19-20: Took Paul to the Areopagus (Mars Hill) – May we know this strange teaching?
- f. v21: They spent all their time telling or hearing something new!

Principle: Allow God's Spirit to provoke us to faithfully present the truth of the gospel to all, in the church and the marketplace!

2. Paul's Sermon:

- a. v22: "I perceive you are very religious!"
- b. v23: Paul proclaims God as the unknown god!
- c. v24: He is the Creator God!
- d. v25: Above and beyond. Not served by His creation!
 - i. Psalm 146:6; Isaiah 42:5; 1 Kings 8:27; Acts 7:48-50
- e. v26: All from one (Adam). Predetermined periods and boundaries.
 - i. Genesis 1:28; 9:1, 7; 10:5, 20, 31-32
 - ii. Deuteronomy 32:8; Psalm 102:13; Daniel 2:36-45
- f. v27: That man would seek God! Seek God and He will be found!
 - i. Psalm 14:2; Proverbs 8:17; Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29:13; Amos 9:12; Hebrews 11:6.
- g. v28: "In Him we live and move and have our being!"
- h. v29: God made us...we cannot fashion God!

- i. Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3
- i. v30: Time of Ignorance - God overlooked this behavior (idolatry), but now He demands repentance!
 - i. Genesis 6:5-8; 9:11-17; Romans 3:25; Acts 14:15-16; 26:20
- j. v31: He has appointed a day to judge the world, by a man assured to all by raising Him from the dead!
 - i. He has set a day (Luke 17:24, 30, 21:34-36), universal (he will judge the world, or "whole inhabited world"; Acts 11:28; 17:6), fair (with justice; Psalm 96:13) and personal (by the man he has appointed, Jesus; John 5:27; Acts 10:42.)

Principles:

- a) God is the Creator of the world (v.24).
- b) God is therefore transcendent and not dependent on us or the world or anything in it (v.25)
- c) God is purposeful and Lord over all history. (v.26)
- d) God made us to know him and for fellowship with him (v.27)
- e) God cannot be worshipped through idols or images, things that man creates. (v.29)
- f) God has made Jesus Christ Judge of the whole world. (v.30-31).

3. Sermon Response:

- a. v32: Some mocked - from the pride of reason
- b. v32b: Others were intrigued or were they politely showing him the door?
- c. v33: Some joined him and believed!

Applications:

1. What is my world view? Is it "Biblically Filtered"?
2. Am I greatly distressed with what I see or have I given over to a life that is pain free or worse, given up?
3. Am I willing to speak the gospel even to "tough crowds"? Am I willing to allow Him to say, speak, go "In Him" and not in me?