

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

Date: May 31, 2020

Title: "Areopagus Eggheads versus a Seed-Picker" (Part 2)

Text: Acts 17:16-34

INTRODUCTION: Please open your Bible this morn. to Acts 17:16-34.  
The setting of this passage and Paul's ministry in Athens: Paul's . . .

1. Second Missionary Journey

SCRIPTURE: Acts 15:36-18:22; and DATE: A.D. 49-52

A. From Antioch to Troas (15:36-16:10)

- revisited churches of Galatia; read letter from Jerusalem Council to them.
- tried to go into Asia, & then to Bithynia, but the Lord bro't. them to Troas.

B. Evangelism in Macedonia (16:11-17:15)

In Philippi (16:11-40); Thessalonica (17:1-9); and Berea (17:10-15)

C. Evangelism in Achaia (17:16-18:22)

In Athens (17:16-34), and in Corinth (for 18 months; 18:1-17)

2. Paul arrived by sea from the north. His friends, who had given him a safe escort from Berea, had gone. He'd asked them to send Silas & Timothy to join him as soon as possible (17:15). Meanwhile, as he waited for their arrival, he found himself alone in Athens.

**WHAT PAUL SAW** (vs. 16)

The city was "full of idols." The adj. communicates the city was "under" them; "smothered with idols" or "swamped by them" (TM: "a junkyard of idols").

**WHAT PAUL FELT** (vs. 16)

The verse reads, Paul "was greatly distressed/provoked." The Gk. verb is regularly in the Septuagint of the LORD's response to His people's idolatry.

**WHAT PAUL DID** (vss. 17-21)

He shared with them "the good news about Jesus & the resurrection" (vs. 18). Luke tells us there were three groups with whom Paul spoke.

1. With Jews and God-fearing Greeks in the Synagogue.
2. With "casual passers-by" (NEB) in the marketplace on weekdays.
3. With Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.
  - A. Epicurean philosophy  
Epicureans emphasized chance, escape, & the enjoyment of pleasure.

B. Stoic philosophy

The Stoics emphasized fatalism, submission, & the endurance of pain.

THEIR RESPONSE:

A. One group \_\_\_\_\_ Paul and his teachings.  
They called Paul a "babbling" (lit. "seed-picker" or "scavenger").

B. Another group was \_\_\_\_\_ but interested.  
"He seems to be advocating foreign gods." F. F. Bruce writes: "In the ears of some frequenters of the Agora these two words sounded as if they denoted the personified and deified powers of 'healing' (ἰασις) and 'restoration' (ἀνάστασις)."

**WHAT PAUL SAID** (vss. 22-34)

Paul opened his address with a compliment. "I see that in every way you're very religious" (22). They were so religious, in fact, that they even had an altar to "the unknown god." So, Paul took as his text, or rather as his point of contact with them, this anonymous altar. He said: "What you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you." He then went on to share 4 basic truths about God, and so to expose the errors ... even horrors ... of idolatry.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God: He is **Creator** (v. 24)
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God: He is **Provider** (v. 25)
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God: He is **Ruler** (vv. 26-29)
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God: He is **Savior** (vv. 30, 31)

**HOW THE ATHENIANS' RESPONDED** (vv. 32-34)

As always, when the gospel is preached, there was a mixed response.

1. Some \_\_\_\_\_
2. Others \_\_\_\_\_ (they put off a decision)
3. Several \_\_\_\_\_

Challenge: In what / on whom are you depending for the forgiveness of your sin, and the assurance of your entrance into heaven?