

ACTS 17:18–26

A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. 19 Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” 21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

24 “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

ACTS 17:24

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.”

SERMON REFLECTIONS

- Think back on the Jews who chased Paul out of Thessalonica and then out of Berea. How was God using their opposition to further direct His mission for Paul?
- What does it say about God that He so desired the idolatrous Athenians to know the truth about Him, that He would put Paul through so much to have him bring them the message? What does it say about the circumstances we might face as we are sent to carry the message of the gospel to lost people?
- The Athenians were very religious but they did not know God. In Titus 1:16, Paul told Titus that there are some who claim to know God but they don't. God told a very religious Israel that they needed to know Him (Jeremiah 9:23-24). Jesus said eternal life was in knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom God had sent (John 17:3). What does it mean to know God? Why is knowing God the key to eternal life? How confident are you that you know God?
- Why is it so essential for everyone to know that God is our creator?
- Why is it so essential for everyone to know that God is our sustainer?
- What does it mean to repent and believe the gospel?