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The Adventure Continues – Part 6 of 8

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Acts 17:16-31

## Do You Have an “Unknown” God?

Acts 17:16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute 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 want 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.)

### The Background

Athens:

1. Paul was \_\_\_\_\_ and doing what most \_\_\_\_\_ do.
2. He was \_\_\_\_\_ (greatly distressed) by the idols. 2 reasons:  
“It was easier to find a god than a man in Athens.” Petronius
3. So Paul continued “\_\_\_\_\_” with Jews and Gentiles; and basically talking to \_\_\_\_\_ who would listen.
4. Two religious groups took \_\_\_\_\_:  
Epicureans –  
Stoics –

They accused him of “babbling” – “A \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_” -- and introducing new gods: Jesus and the resurrection (Anastasis).

5. But Paul was invited to speak to the \_\_\_\_\_ (a thirty-member \_\_\_\_\_ responsible for the educational and religious training in the city.) Areios pagos (Mars Hill) Fortunately, Paul was educated in Tarsus, a “university” city and this is the only time in Acts we see this side of Paul.

Acts 17: 22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men 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. Now what you worship as something unknown 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 hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because

he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. 27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 28 ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ 29 “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man’s design and skill. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

### The Sermon

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ – “The Unknown God” – A “\_\_\_\_\_”
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ (Paul can’t use the Jewish Scriptures!)
  - A. This “unknown God” is all-\_\_\_\_\_!  
He is \_\_\_\_\_ and is self-\_\_\_\_\_.  
He gives \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ else.  
He is \_\_\_\_\_ and determines dates, times and places.  
He is \_\_\_\_\_, but still must be “\_\_\_\_\_.”
  - B. This “unknown God” is made \_\_\_\_\_. He expects us to recognize Him and \_\_\_\_\_ of our \_\_\_\_\_.
  - C. This “unknown God” will \_\_\_\_\_ us and He has \_\_\_\_\_ that He has the \_\_\_\_\_ to do so -- the resurrection.

Acts 17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” 33 At that, Paul left the Council. 34 A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

### The Results

Some \_\_\_\_\_, some wanted \_\_\_\_\_ information and some \_\_\_\_\_. (Dionysius, Damaris and others)

### Our Lessons

1. Do you \_\_\_\_\_ on the things that distress you?
2. Do you have an \_\_\_\_\_ view of God?
3. Do you have a “god” that you worship above the \_\_\_\_\_ God?