



Making the Unknown Known

Introduction: Silas and Timothy sent Paul to Athens for a much needed break. Paul had suffered persecution throughout his preaching journey. While Paul was waiting for them to join him he began walking around the city. His spirit was stirred within him as he saw the many false idols throughout the city. This led to his infamous speech on Mars Hill.

Text: Acts 17:16-34

Discussion:

1. Icebreaker: When have you been (stirred, provoked, bothered, etc.) by something you have witnessed? Write/Discuss how you handled the situation.
2. Why was Paul's spirit provoked? What does this reveal about Paul's view about God? What does this reveal about Paul's heart for the lost?
3. Where did Paul share the good news of Jesus? How does this challenge you to be a witness of the gospel?
4. Google Epicurean and Stoic philosophy. Do you see some of the influences of these two philosophies in our culture today? Where and who are the pop icons who promote these beliefs?
5. What are the false idols that people worship today? What false idols do you battle?
6. What was the message the Paul preached? What are the essential elements to his teaching?
7. Paul began by pointing out that the Athenians were very religious. How would you describe our culture?
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9. Why did Paul begin with God as creator rather than the OT scriptures? Do you feel that this provides a good model for sharing the faith? Why/Why not?
10. How does Paul explain God as Creator? Provider? Ruler? And Savior? What is the impact of these truths?
11. How did the people respond to Paul's message?
12. Many people do not share the faith for fear of rejection. If Paul used that same reason how would that have impacted his ministry? Why should we not allow people's response to impact our faithfulness in sharing the gospel?
13. Evaluate your work environment. How would you describe the people you work with? What is the best approach in witnessing?

Think About it:

There are many false religions and philosophies in the world today. Our culture embraces freedom and the power of choice. The thought of accountability to God is a foreign, or even, a scorned idea. The reality is that there are millions of American who are lost and without hope. They worship the false gods of pleasure and self expression. There will be those who will not receive the good news of Jesus. However, there will be those who do. So—allow God to place a burden on your heart for the lost and pray that He will grant you boldness to share the faith.

Moving Forward:

Use question 13 as a guide for this week and truly get a picture of the people you work with. Take time this week to pay attention to the media and what you see on social media and see if you can here the voices of the false gods of our culture. Pray that God places a burden for the lost around you and for the boldness to speak the truth.