

ACTS CH 17 – PAUL ADDRESSES THE AREOPAGUS

17:10-11 – “examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so”

- It is your responsible to test everything through the lens and truth of the word of God.
 - 1 Thess5:19-22; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Peter 3:14-18

17:18-21

- “Areopagus means the “hill of Aries” (AKA Mars Hill). Aries was the god of war in Greek mythology, who is called Mars in Latin. This was the name of a location and also of the civil and religious council that met there.” It “was a rocky hill about 370 feet high, not far below the Acropolis and overlooked the Agora (marketplace) in Athens.”

Who were the Epicureans and Stoics?

- Epicureanism is a philosophy that began with Epicurus in Athens at about the year 300. Epicurus argued that the world was made of atoms and purely material; also believing that gods were uninvolved in human affairs, that humans should pursue pleasure, and that there was no afterlife or judgment.
- Stoics were a sect of Greek philosophers at Athens, so called from the Greek word stoa (a “porch” or “portico”), which was their principle meeting place. They have been called “the Pharisees of Greek paganism.” Stoicism was founded by Zeno in the third century BC, who taught his disciples that a man’s happiness consisted in bringing himself into harmony with the course of the universe. They were trained to bear evils with indifference, and so to be independent of externals. Materialism, pantheism, fatalism, and pride were the leading features of this philosophy.

17:22-34 – Paul addresses the Areopagus (becoming all things to all people so that he may save some)

- “Robert and Gretchen Passantino point out, to observe a kind of golden rule when discussing non-Christian belief systems: **represent their belief system as accurately as you would have them represent yours**. Only then can we hope to be taken seriously as we confront the errors of the false religions with the claims of Jesus Christ. The problem with false religions, is that they cannot ultimately satisfy the deepest longings of the human spirit; only the true gospel can do that.

Cultural Idols - Tim Keller - “Everybody worships; the only choice we get is what we worship” Culture defined: The attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group. Idolatry is a condition of the heart. 1 John 2:16. Something becomes an idol when you take a good thing and make it a God thing (or an ultimate thing). Idolatry happens when you look to creation for what only the creator can provide.

- The first and greatest commandment - Matthew 22:37, “And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”
- Ezekiel 20:15-16; Matthew 18:17-20

How to identify idols:

- How do you respond when it’s attacked? Do you respond with anger, defensiveness, or guilt?
- What do you run to for comfort? What do you run to for comfort when: you’re tired, bored, have “had enough”, or feel the need to escape from your reality and surroundings?
- What has caused you to be angry at God? (hearts with this attitude will say things like: God, how dare you let me lose...; How dare you not let me have...; How dare you let this person die; Why did you/How dare you let this happen to me?)
- What do you feel ashamed or guilty of?

What do we do about it?

- Remember that Christ Died for you - Romans 5:6-9
- Remember what Christ died for - Romans 7:4, 14:9
- Repent
- Put it to death – Colossians 3:5
- Put on your true identity - Colossians 3:2-17