

ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

Study 38: The Universal Gospel

READ Acts 17:16-34 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

After leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea to strengthen the fledgling church, Paul travels to Athens. As Paul waited for his friends he is provoked in his spirit by the spiritual blindness of the Athenians, displayed in their devotion to every conceivable idol, even idols that are unnamed. This drove Paul to preach the universal gospel to Jews, philosophers, and civil authorities, as the only means of bringing us to God, who is knowable, personal, and who will come to judge all who do not repent.

Big idea: The gospel is universal good news because all people have the same innate desire to worship, have been created by the same God, are under the same curse, and are requiring the same cure.

Questions:

- A. As Paul waited in Athens for Silas and Timothy what grabbed his attention and provoked his spirit (vv. 16, 22-23)? And how did he practically respond (v. 17)? See 1 Cor 10:20; Luke 19:41-44.

B. Why is Paul's reaction important?

C. What are some of the idols worshipped in your neighbourhood, city, or nation? How do you know when you have crossed over into idol worship?
- How did Paul wisely begin his message to the men at the Areopagus (vv. 22-23)? What are some helpful ways to initiate a discussion of spiritual things with unbelievers?

- From vv. 24-29 state characteristics of God and their implications:

<i>God</i>	<i>Implication</i>
<i>Made the world and everything in it (v. 24)</i>	<i>I am responsible to God and gain my identity in Him</i>

- Why is the doctrine of creation crucial to the gospel? How might we incorporate this into our presentation of the gospel?
- Some say that we should not mention repentance in a gospel presentation, but only faith in Christ (vv. 30-31). Why is repentance inseparable from saving faith?
- Do you think Paul was successful in Athens? Why or why not?
- What most encouraged or convicted you about Paul's time in Athens and how might you put into action Paul's example?

STOP AND PRAY:

Glorify: the one and only creator God of heaven and earth who calls us to Himself
Thank: God for opening up your heart to believe and receive the truth of the gospel
Pray: for a heart that is burdened by idolatry and jealous for God's glory