

Acts 17:16-34 Discussion Questions

Read Acts 17:16-34

1. The people of the ancient world worshipped many kinds of gods, as seen in our text. While most of us no longer worship statues in temples, we still worship and serve things like gods, and so making idols of our own.

- a. What do you think are the chief false gods or idols of our culture? (Pastor Mike suggested three of the main ones are image, possessions and self-expression).
- b. Why do we find those so appealing? Which ones are you most drawn to and why?

2. In this passage we find three approaches to life. The Epicureans pursued happiness by means of pleasure, believing that the gods didn't really get involved in our lives. The Stoics pursue peace through logic and discipline. And the Athenians in general were just into exploring new ideas.

- a. Do we see these approaches to life in our world today? If so, where?
- b. Do you identify or tend towards one of these?

3. Paul responds to these groups of people and their perspectives with some truths about God, humanity and judgment. How would you summarize Paul's message?

- a. How does this challenge the Epicurean (indulgent), Stoic (moralistic), and Athenian (uncommitted curiosity) ways of life?
- b. How does Paul's message address the idols of today?

4. Paul's defense elicits three reactions: mockery, uncommitted curiosity, and belief.

- a. When you first heard about Jesus how did you respond?
- b. How has your response changed over time?
- c. For those who believe, when you are tempted revert to disobedience or even spiritual apathy how do you work through it?