

Introducing the ‘Unknown’ God

Acts 17:16-34

PART ONE

Introduction

I ATHENS – The Place (vv16-18);

II AREOPAGUS – The Platform (vv19-21);

III ADDRESS – The Presentation of the ‘Unknown’ God (vv22-23);

IV ARGUMENT – The Powerful Creator God (vv24-25);

V APPLICATION – The Purposes of God (vv26-34)

I. ATHENS – The Place (vv16-18)

v16

“his spirit was provoked within him” ‘to urge, stimulate; to rouse to anger or indignation.’

“the city was full of idols”

v17

Paul *“reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and devout persons”* on the Sabbath,

“in the marketplace every day.”

v18

Epicureanism

Stoics

“babbling” literally, ‘seed picker’

“He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

“divinities...resurrection”

II. AREOPAGUS – The Platform (vv19-21)

v19 v20

“Areopagus”

v21

The insatiable nature of polytheism vs The ultimate satisfaction of monotheism.

III. ADDRESS – The Presentation of the ‘Unknown’ God (vv22-23)

v22 v23

“I perceive that in every way you are very religious in every way.”

Not wanting to alienate himself, this statement no doubt won their favor.

Paul’s use of this particular idol was brilliant strategically.

“What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.”

You cannot worship what you do not know.

The one true God that Paul presents IS knowable, but only through revelation.

He can be apprehended by *reason*, but He cannot be *known*.

Therefore we reason with the lost because they can apprehend God through the senses.

But they cannot know God unless and until God reveals Himself to them.

Deuteronomy 4:35

Matthew 11:27

1 John 5:20-21

“that they may know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth.” Psalm 83:18

IV. ARGUMENT – The Creator God (vv24-25)

v24

“The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth,”

The Athenians looked for God in all *created* things: the heavens, the earth, even in humans.

Every statement made by the apostle is grounded in OT truth:

Genesis 1:1

Psalm 33:6

Jeremiah 32:17

“...does not live in temples made by man,”

1 Kings 8:27

Acts 7:47-50

The one true Creator God Most High will not be kept in manmade boxes – whether *mental* or *material*!

v25

Psalm 50:7-12

Job 35:7; cp 1 Corinthians 4:7

“since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.”

Job 12:10

Job 33:4

Job 34:14-15; cp Gen. 2:7

Psalm 104:29

Psalm 100:3

Psalm 145:8-9

Psalm 50:14-15