

Theme: The unbelieving world is addressed in the same way today as it was by Paul. There is One God, who will judge the world. God has raised this righteous judge *and deliverer* from the dead.

Introduction/Background: "... when we cease to worship God, we do not worship nothing, we worship anything", G. K. Chesterton. Athens: Arguably representing the highest level of culture reached in the ancient world.

## I. Provoked to Action

A. Why so disturbed?

B. What to do?

-“Reason” in the synagogues

-“Reason” in the streets

C. What does he find?

1. Epicureans:

- Followers of Epicurus (340-270 BC)

- Practical *atheists*

- Live a simple life of pleasure

2. Stoics:

- Followers of Zeno (340-265 BC)

- Sought to live consistently with nature.

- It is **virtuous** to maintain a **will** in accord with nature.

- *Pantheistic* – God is the world-soul. "Keep a stiff upper lip!"

3. Babblers - vv.18,21

- Paul called a babbler (Literally – “seed picker/collector”)

- Athenians were the true “babblers”

## II. Proclaiming the Truth

A. Where? The Court of Areopagus on “Mars Hill”

B. Paul’s Message

1. Gaining a hearing - “To the unknown god”

2. The Message vv. 24-31

a. God **Is** the Creator!

1) Does not live in temples made by hands of men (Acts 7:48)

2) Not served by human hands (Psalm 50:9-12)

- b. Creator of the human race in particular. (Deuteronomy 32:8)
  - **All was ordered, providentially arranged**
- c. That they might seek God and find Him. (Romans 1:20)
  - 1) Quotes their own poets
  - 2) Why does Paul use these quotes??
    - To a degree, they demonstrate an understanding of revealed truth.
- d. We are God's offspring.
  - not pantheistic
  - *created* in His image
- e. REPENT. Judgment is coming! v.30
  - Doesn't fit either philosophy represented.
  - God has been patient (Romans 3:25)
- e. The RESURRECTED ONE. The judge of the world has come. (John 5:27)
  - Paul's message never changes

### III. The Pride of the Athenians

#### A. Mockery

- Aeschelus – 500 years earlier - “when the dust has soaked up a man's blood, once he is dead, there is no resurrection.”

#### B. Maybe later (Paul was gone)

- Winston Churchill - “Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened.”

### IV. The Power of the Gospel

#### A. Is the Word of Life

- Dionysius and Damaris will be in heaven.

#### B. Exposes the idols

- in our midst.
- in our hearts.

#### C. Is greater than our fears.

- Can we talk about judgment?
- Can I share the good news with any and all?