

## ~My Favorite Martian~ Acts 17:16-34

Had you been walking through Athens with Paul, you would have been in the intellectual center and the entertainment capital of the world. You may have walked by the homes of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Then you may have been introduced to the gods of Greek mythology, like Zeus, Apollo and Narcissus. For sure you could have conversed with the epicureans and stoics. No doubt you would have come to the same conclusion as Paul, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.”

How do we respond to differing belief systems?

Uncritical

Uncaring

Unprepared

What is the proper response?

Be discerning

Be caring

Be ready

Know your faith

Do your homework

Be respectful

What kind of response can we anticipate?

Rejection (“some mocked”)

Reluctance (“others said, we will hear you again on this matter”)

Reception (“some men joined Him and believed”)

Application:

1. Are there parallels between what the Athenians believed and what people believe today? Discuss them.
2. Why are people ready to accept anything that might sound spiritual, yet refuse Christ? Read 2 Cor. 4:3-4
3. You might hear someone today speak not of Christianity, but spirituality; Jesus, but not the church. Can we divide spirituality from Christianity and Jesus from the church?
4. True or False—Jesus did not come to improve our spirituality, but to save us from our sins? True or False—you cannot have Jesus without His body, the church, and spirituality without Christianity is an empty shell?
5. The Athenians were a pluralistic society. What is pluralism and does it affect the church today? How?
6. Where do you stand concerning other beliefs—uncritical, uncaring or unprepared or are you discerning, caring and ready?
7. What are you doing to prepare yourself to be a better fisher of men?

Be encouraged, a sovereign God is in control!