

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Premier discourse of 2<sup>nd</sup> journey: Athens - A17.
2. Different approaches in synagogues & w/ pagans. Both biblical: one explicit the other presumed. In Lystra & Athens Paul is cut short - v15-18.

**1st: Paul Arrives in Athens**

1. v15: after harrowing experiences, now alone in Athens.
2. v16: Paul's rxn to Athenian culture: idolatry. Excerpts from Conybeare & Howson *The Life & Epistles of St. Paul* [1856].
  - i. Paul strongly offended: *his spirit* [not HS], *being provoked* [passive]
  - ii. Paul saw damaging effect of idolatrous lies. So [v18] he speaks truth.

**2nd: Paul in the Synagogue and the Agora**

1. v17a: *synagogue* - *reasoning*. 17:2-3 *explaining & give evidence*. Mode of communication using Script -> Jesus = Messiah: suffer & rise to glory
2. v17b: cont'd *reasoning in marketplace every day w/ those present*
3. People of synagogue: 2 places - 1] synagogue & 2] agora. 2 occasions - 1] Sabbath & 2] *every day*
  - i. v17 - people of syn: Paul *reasoning*. *Those present* of those in v17a.
  - ii. Construct of contrast. We are introduced to new audience in v18: *also*
4. v17 = *reason* w/ people of syn when he met them in agora

**3rd: Paul is Overheard by Philosophers**

1. v18 - audience: synagogue & *Epicurian & Stoic philosophers* listen in.
  - i. Commandeer Paul's attention: *conversing* connotes confrontation
  - ii. 2 kinds of paganism: 1] popular [gods & myths]; 2] philosophical pursuit of "the good life". Athens = home of democra-

cy: pagan view of reality wh/ consists of one order of being shared by gods & men

- iii. Stoic: Zeus controls nature, but fatalism; cultivate a steady unwavering disposition to life: "ataraxia" - peace of mind
- iv. Epicurean: materialist [no gods]; empiricist [5-senses]; virtue = no pain but pleasure - live w/o fear of death. Religion is of civic benefit.

**4th: Paul was "Gospeling"**

1. *b/c he was preaching* [gospeling] *Jesus & the resurrection* - declaring good news = evangelizing. Merges method & content of message. *Reasoning & gospeling*. Note: both methods convey authority of God
2. *reasoning* [v17] = 17:2 [*reasoning*: using OT Script]
3. *preaching* [v18] parallels 17:3 *explain & give evidence*
  - i. *explain* = make clear & understandable; interpret; show meaning
  - ii. *give evidence* = set before - teach, point out, convey
4. Example of *reasoning* - A13:16-26
5. Ex of *preaching Jesus & res, explaining & giving evidence* = A13:27-41

**5th: Paul is Confronted by the Philosophers**

1. *idle babbler wish to say* [*trying to say* NIV]: "seed-picker" = bird picks up crumbs of food; pseudo-intellectual; concoction of tidbits of incoherent nonsense: likely rxn of Epicureans: transcendence is nonsense
2. *seems to be a proclaimer* - likely Stoic rxn [true! v23]. A term not used re: skilled oratory; "preacher"- tone of authority: *strange deities* [Grk: demons]

**Applic #1: Live as a Christian in Our Pagan Society**

1. Pagan view of reality - morality of I<sup>st</sup> & II<sup>nd</sup> commandments
2. 1] Prioritize of worship; 2] Focus on Word of God: *reasoning & preaching Jesus & res*; 3] sustain ongoing, Word-focused fellowship w/

## PAGANS HEAR PAUL GOSPELING IN ATHENS - Acts 17:15-18

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Xns; 4] welcome pagan hearers & interact w/ them re: *Jesus & the resurrection*.

### Applic #2: Be Ready to Give a Defense for Your Hope in Jesus

1. 1Pt 3:13-16 *defense* - apologetics [reason & logic]: *keep good consc* - live w/ integrity & compassion; suffer w/o fear or *trouble* [*frightened* NIV]
2. Paul's spirit was *provoked*: zeal for God - calm courage: inbued Stoic virtue of inner peace w/ vitality of union w/ the resurrected Lord Jesus
3. Give reason for hope: set Jesus in biblical context & explain meaning of His life, death & resurrection - forgiveness of sin: hope to people w/o hope

### Applic #3: Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

1. A17:18 *Jesus & the resurrection* = gospeling the good news!