

061922A

INTRODUCTION

1. Paul in Athens - A17. Lk give major sermon in each of the 3 journeys: to Jews, to Gentiles, to elders of the church.
2. Paul in Athens seen in light of Rom 1 - preaching to pagans.
 - i. Focus v18 - *preaching Jesus & the resurrection* [v30-31].
 - ii. v22-23 ignorance of God - idolatry: violates Ist & IInd commandments
 - a. Paul would have an OT view of idolatry.
 - b. Recall Rm 1 - suppress & exchange - [Rm 1:25].
 - iii. v24 It is foolish to try to contain the Creator in any man-made thing.
 - iv. v25-26 It is foolish to try to sustain the life of the God who alone gives & sustains all life & it is foolish to think that the God who made all men is not the God of all men.
3. Today v27-28 - read v29-32.

1st: It is Foolish Not to Seek the God Who is Near & Who Sustains Our Lives - v27-28

1. How can men spend their lives groping blindly in idolatry & not find God when He is so near, even as some Athenian poets acknowledge?
2. v24-28 is 1 sentence. God: transcendent Creator over providence should be sought. What is chief end of man? To glorify God & enjoy Him forever.
3. Isa 55:1-8 esp'ly v6. Seek w/ faith & repentance & find compassion/pardon
4. Isa 65:1 YHWH found by those not seeking Him; Israel - apostate [v2ff]
5. Jesus - *What do you seek?* [Jn 1:38-39]. Heb 11:6 [Ps 27:8]. *Ask, seek, knock* - [Lk 11:9-10]. People not seeking encouraged to seek.

6. Why seek? Hope to *find*. Is the problem that God cannot be found? *There is none who seeks for God* [Rm 3:11 cite Ps 14:1-3]. Man is created to seek God but tragically, he does not fulfill that purpose. A17:27
 - i. possibility: *if perhaps...* but in reality [*altho*]: situation could change
 - ii. *might grope & find* - grammar of possible, potential of finding b/c *He is not far from each of us*.
 - a. *grobe* = feel your way in the dark - idolatry is *groping* in the dark
 - b. Isa 59:10 context: wrath due to idolatry & injustice. Paul points to pagan darkness into wh/ he will shine gospel light.
 - iii. *Perhaps* some will *find Him* - Jer 23:23; 2T 2:25-26
 - iv. Paul isolates ind hearer: *each one of us*. Personal - Jn 10:3; Isa 55:6.

7. A17:28 - Ps 90:1. Phrase attributed to 1, if not 2, Grk poets.
 - i. Stoics: God as a "life-force" [Star Wars].
 - a. Paul cites Greeks but thinks as Hebrew.
 - b. v28 explains God's nearness [v27. We live in God's presence, not as a pantheist, in the being of God. [Jer 23:23-24]. Lord *filling* & our *existing in Him*, does not deny the Creator/creature distinction.
 - c. We live our created life dependent on God.
 - ii. *we are His offspring* = Aratus - man's likeness to G [image of God] wh/ Paul affirms in v29 - *we are children of God*
8. Paul is not equating poets w/ Scripture. He cites poets to indict. Cites Meander in 1C 15:33; Epimenides in Tit 1:12 - builds case against pagans using testimony of their own spokesmen.

Applic #1: We Should Be Grateful For & Respond to God's Patience & Grace

1. Learn from Paul's approach to pagan idolaters. Understand that we are now in *the day of salvation* - urgent: Christ is about to return!

THE ACCESSIBLE GOD - A17:27-28

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2. Paul is *provoked* [v16]: not call down fire, but proclaims *Jesus & the resurrection*. First, exposing culpable sin of idolatry & call to repent.

3. Rm 2:4 - context of Rm 1's idolatry & immorality & hypocrisy [2:1-3].
 - i. *think lightly*
 - ii. *riches*
 - iii. *kindness*
 - iv. *tolerance*
 - v. *patience* - protracted zeal, heat [long-thermos]

4. God postpones judgment - day of grace: gospel is being proclaimed:
Come!