

Athens: Building Bridges

Acts 17:16-34

October 16, 2022

Background: The center of culture and education... But past its prime!

Key players:

- Epicureans – Materialists and atheists; Pursuit of happiness; no fear of coming judgment.
- Stoics – Pantheistic; Personal discipline & self-control; self-sufficiency

Story:

- Issue and Invitation 17:16-21
 - Paul in Athens – full of idols!
 - Dispute with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.
 - Some said: “Babbler”; Others: “Great more gods...”
 - But preaching the Good News about Jesus & the resurrection!
 - Invitation to speak: Areopagus!
- Paul’s Presentation 17:22-31
 - 22-23 Main Theme: Ignorance of pagan worship
 - “Very religious” = starts with a positive connection!
 - “Unknown God” – fear of offending a deity
 - 24-25 The Object of true worship: 24-25
 - See 1 Kings 8:27; Acts 7:48-50; Isaiah 42:5; Psalm 50:7-15.
 - 26-27 The relationship of humans to the Creator
 - God’s providence over humanity – placement of all nations.
 - Human responsibility to God – to seek Him.
 - 28-29 Final Evidence
 - Evidence from their own sources/ inadequacy of idol worship
 - 30-31 The call to repentance
 - If idolatry is inadequate – you must change!
 - The Judge is coming – evidenced by the resurrection!
- 32-34 Reaction/ Judgment of the Council
 - Some sneered, some were interested, a few were convinced!

Key: Bridge building

- Developed relationship – found points of connection.
- Spoke their language – used familiar concepts.
- Quoted their sources – used their “scripture.”

Application: Are you a bridge builder? //Or a bulldozer?

Homework: Read 2 Thessalonians