

FLIP THE SCRIPT

LARRY CHAPPELL | JUNE 29, 2025

Text: Acts 17:16–34

"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. 17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. 18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. 19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? 20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. 21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) 22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." (Acts 17:16–34)

Jesus

INTRODUCTION

- a. Athens historically a dominant, large city of Greece
- b. City wholly given to idolatry
- c. Paul was highly educated in Greek language and culture (also Hebrew Scriptures)
- d. Paul on 3rd Missionary journey

1. ASSESS THE Moment (v. 16)

Quote: "Waiting moments are not wasted moments"

A. Paul Was Spiritually discerning

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

B. Paul Was Rightly distressed - broken heart

WHAT BROKE PAUL'S HEART?

1. Widespread Idolatry - Exodus 20:3-4
2. Passive Ignorance - Hosea 4:6
3. Empty Intellectualism - 2 Timothy 3:7

Quote: "When we cease to worship God, we do not worship nothing. We worship anything." - G.K. Chesterton

2. ACTIVATE Conviction (v. 17-21)

conviction leads to action.
Quote: "Conviction is worthless unless converted to action."

A. Go to the broken heart (v. 17)

HOW SHOULD CHRISTIANS RESPOND TO THE BROKENNESS AROUND THEM?

1. Some Will Isolate - John 17:15
2. Others Will Imitate - Romans 12:2
3. World-Changers Will Infiltrate - Matthew 5:14

Broken
secular
society

- speak with boldness (Acts 4:13, 29, 31)

Quote: "The church must never surrender its high calling to adapt to the world. We are not diplomats, but prophets."

—A.W. Tozer

- B. Speak with conviction (v. 18)

Quote: "Give me one hundred men who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I will shake the world."

—John Wesley

- C. Seize Every opportunity (v. 19-21)

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."
(1 Corinthians 9:22)

Quote: "A great many men have a great many ideas, but few have truth."—C.H. Spurgeon

3. APPEAL TO Repentance (v. 22-34)

- A. He confronted what Was False (v. 22-23)

"...how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;" (1 Thessalonians 1:9b)

- B. He clarified what Was True (v. 22-29)

Quote: "The gospel is like a lion. You don't need to defend it. Just let it loose, and it will defend itself."—C.H. Spurgeon

- C. He called for a Decision (v. 30-34)

"...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2b)

CONCLUSION



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