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**The Apostle Paul Visits Athens**  
**Acts 17:16-34**

**This city was the intellectual and cultural capital of the Roman Empire with a renown history and magnificent buildings and monuments.**

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**What Caught Paul's Eye?**

**More a missionary than a tourist, Paul especially noticed the rampant idolatry.**

Acts 17:16, NLT  
While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city.

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### American Idols

Even without statues and altars lining our streets, idolatry flourishes in our country today.

An idol = a God substitute  
Anyone or anything that we put in his place!

When we "idolize" people or things, we expect them to do for us what only God can do!

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### Paul's "Easter Sermon"

He brought his message of the risen Jesus to the marketplace of ideas.

Acts 17:17-19, NLT  
...he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there. He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and the resurrection, they said, "What is this babbling trying to say with these strange ideas he's picked up?"...Then they took him to the high council of the city. "Come and tell us about this new teaching," they said...

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### Establishing Rapport

Paul begins on a congenial note, speaking tactfully about the city's idolatry.

Acts 17:22-23, NLT  
So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: "Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: 'To an Unknown God.' This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about."

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### It All Starts With God!

**He is the Creator—to whom we owe everything!**

Acts 17:24-25 & 27-28, NLT

He is the God who made the world and everything in it...He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need...His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. For in him we live and move and exist.

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### What's Wrong With The World?

**Our fallen human nature is inclined to focus on life's good gifts and forget about the Giver!**

Acts 17:25, NIV & 17:29, NLT

He himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else...we shouldn't think of God as an idol...

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### It Will All End With God!

**He is the Judge, to whom we are accountable!**

Acts 17:30-31, NLT

...he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.

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**B-I-B-L-E**  
**Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!**

**The final Judge wants you to pass the final exam!  
 He came into the world to make the grade for you!**

2 Corinthians 5:19 & 21, NIV  
 ...God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them...God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we could become the righteousness of God.

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**The Choice Is Yours!**

**There are three possible responses to the risen Jesus.**

**1. You can put him down!**

Acts 17:32, NLT  
 When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt...

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**The Choice Is Yours!**

**There are three possible responses to the risen Jesus.**

**2. You can put him off!**

Acts 17:32, NLT  
 When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead... others said, "We want to hear more about this later."

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## The Choice Is Yours!

There are three possible responses to the risen Jesus.

### 3. You can put him first!

Acts 17:32 & 34, NLT

When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead... some joined him and became believers.

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## Live Happily Ever After? No Fairy Tale!

We can truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world...had only been the cover and the title page. Now at last they were beginning chapter one of the great story—which no one on earth has read, which goes on forever, in which every chapter is better than the one before.

C.S. Lewis

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