

## ***Hooked! Serving In The Marketplace***

### ***Acts 17:16-34***

#### ***Introduction***

*Dr. Robert Smith says, for the Church to be Relevant it must be ROOTED IN THE WORD, without being RESTRICTED BY THE WALLS WHERE THEY WORSHIP. Acts 17 demonstrates this principle in action. Paul never changed the message, but he continually changed the setting. His theology remained rooted in God's Word, while his ministry extended beyond the synagogue into the public square. The marketplace was the place where people worked, debated, conducted business, exchanged ideas, and built relationships. We discover that the audience will change; The Location will change; The approach will change; But **The Message Remains the Same**. The methods are flexible, but the Message is fixed. As believers, we gather in the church for worship, but we go into the world to witness.*

#### ***Ministry Is Set In Motion, When We Are Disturbed By What We See ~ {vs. 16-17}***

- ***What He Saw*** ~ Paul observed spiritual corruption, confused culture, false worship, and misplaced priorities; what he saw moved him to compassion, not criticism. Ministry begins we God shows us what is beneath the surface.
  - *The Burden in his heart moved him into service ~ {Nehemiah 1:2-4; 2:13-18}*
- ***Where He Served*** ~ He reasoned in the synagogue as well as in the marketplace day by day.
  - He did not see the two places as **competing places**; they were **complementary**
  - Engage with people where they are ~ where they worked, where they spent their time and money...He didn't go and invite them; he engaged with them **where they were**
    - He reasoned with them ~ had discussions, answered/asked questions, and built bridges
  - Jesus uses the same model ~ **Matthew 9:9-13**

#### ***God Turns Opposition Into Opportunities and Open Doors {vs. 18-21}***

- ***The Opposition*** ~ A group of philosophers debated with him...They tried to discredit **him** {Babbler} and **his message** {advocating foreign gods}
  - *Not every interruption is a setback ~ God uses distractions for direction*
    - *They thought they were putting him **on trial**; they were putting him **on stage***
      - *He was operating in Purpose; now God gives him a bigger platform*
- ***The Opportunity*** ~ "They Took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus" ~ this was Mars Hill ~ it was the location where the city's highest council met to decide important legal, religious, and moral matters....Now his audience is larger and more influential
  - ***A Closed Door Becomes A Hallway into Greater Opportunity***
    - *Faithfulness in ordinary conversations often prepares us for extraordinary opportunities.*
    - *God often promotes those who prove faithful where they are before He enlarges where they serve.*
  - ***The Questions They Asked*** ~ vs. 19 ~ May we know what this teaching is that you are presenting..... vs. 20, we would like to know what this means...
    - ***Conversion Begins With Curiosity***

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***God Places The Right Message With The Right Messenger {vs. 22-34}***

- *The Messenger* ~ Notice that God did not send Peter, James, or John to Mars Hill. To deal with intellectuals, God sent the right person. {*Acts 22:3; Philipians 3:4-6*}
  - ***The God who determines the assignment also designs the servant for the assignment.***
- *The Message* ~ Paul's goal is to lead them to Christ ~ His Substance is the same, But his Strategy is designed for the marketplace
  - *He began where they are.... "I see you are Religious"*
  - *He found common ground.... "Observation: We must study the culture without surrendering to the culture"*
  - *He Imitates them without being Influenced by them... "as some of your poets have said...vs. 28}*
  - *He Begins To Convict By Calling For Repentance ~ vs. 30 "He commands all people everywhere to repent*
  - *The Destination Is The Same ~ **The Resurrection** ~ vs. 31 "proof is raising Him from the dead"*
- *Notice The Results of the Message and the Exit of The Messenger* ~ Some sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject!!!" Paul exists because **the assignment is complete**
  - ***Some*** believed and became followers

***Conclusion*** ~ Not everyone is called to ***stand behind a pulpit***. But every believer has ***a platform***. Every day God places us ***before people*** who need the hope of Christ. God has ***strategically placed believers*** in the marketplace—not simply to make a living, but to make Christ known.