

Upside Down |

the character of the Jesus movement

Resurrecting Art and Imagination | Creativity

Acts 17:16-34
August 13, 2017

Review: How did God get your attention this week? Where do you see God at work and inviting you to enter in? How does your awareness of heaven inform how you live?

Introduction: If you follow Jesus, you're a part of a movement. You're in with others. The movement of Jesus is about the people. Jesus invites us individually but deploys us corporately. The book of Acts invites us to stop coming to church and start being the church. Summer in Seattle offers a wonderful opportunity: Our neighbors are coming out of their houses. Will we welcome them into his? If we do, maybe they'll say what the Greeks said, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also..." (Acts 17:6).

This week Paul travels to Athens and tries to engage a city full of religion but devoid of awareness of God's true nature and purpose.

Pray: Lord Jesus, help us to engage and encounter you as we consider this text. May your Holy Spirit guide us to understand what we read and prompt us to apply the lessons we identify to our own lives now. Amen.

Read: Acts 17:16-34

Discussion:

1. Put yourself into Paul's shoes as he waited in Athens. What was provoking Paul as he walked around Athens? Where did he find people to reason with? What different kinds of people heard him speak?
2. What is the difference between a sculpture and an idol?
3. Paul is brought to the Areopagus and is questioned by leading men of the city. How does Paul begin his presentation? What has he observed about the people of Athens?
4. What does Paul tell about God? Which attributes of God's nature and character does he list? How does he also define what God is not?
5. For what purpose did God create human beings according to Paul? How does God enable people to fulfill this purpose according to Paul?
6. What does Paul say about the condition that we find ourselves in relation to God and His plans?
7. What is the assembly's reaction to Paul's witness?
8. What more could Paul have said if he had not been interrupted?

Application: This week try to find ways that you are relating to God more as an object than a being. Relying on the promise that God is always near to us (verse 27) consider what adjustments you can make to live each day more aligned to God's purpose and plan for you.

Pray: Father God thank you for investing our lives with purpose and meaning. As we navigate each day this week bombarded by messages that divert our attention from you, redirect our hearts and minds toward your holy purpose for us. Allow us to be living examples of a people who live, move and have their being in you. Amen.