

Leaving a Legacy in Your Community

5 Day Devotional

Day 1

Reading: Acts 17:16-18

Devotional:

In this section of Acts, Paul finds himself in Athens, troubled by the city's vast array of idols. Despite being surrounded by philosophies and beliefs that conflict with his own, Paul does not retreat. Instead, he engages with both Jews and Greeks in the synagogue and marketplace, demonstrating his commitment to his missionary calling. His approach to ministry involves deep observation and understanding of the people around him, so he can effectively communicate the gospel to them. This passage highlights the importance of identifying the icons and philosophies that shape our communities and preparing ourselves to thoughtfully engage with them.

Application:

Reflect on the "idols" in your community. What are the prevalent beliefs, practices, or values that might conflict with the teachings of Christ?

Consider how you can engage with your community thoughtfully and respectfully.

Day 2

Reading: Acts 17:19-23

Devotional:

As Paul is brought to the Areopagus, a place known for intense debates and discussions, he finds himself amidst intellectuals and skeptics. Paul acknowledges the Athenians' religious devotion, though misguided, by mentioning their altar to an unknown god. This becomes his entry point to preach about the one true God. Paul stands out by addressing the Athenians without disparagement but by finding a common ground from which he can introduce the gospel. This teaches us the value of acknowledging where others are in their spiritual journeys before sharing God's truth.

Application:

Think about how you can find common ground with those around you who may not share your faith. **Consider** the altars to "unknown gods" that people in your circle might have erected in their lives. How can you use these as starting points for deeper conversations about faith?

Day 3

Reading: Acts 17:24-28

Devotional:

Paul speaks directly to the heart of the Athenians' worldview by presenting a God who transcends temples and human hands. He emphasizes God's sovereignty and closeness to humanity, noting that it is through God that we live and move and have our being. Paul's message pronounces both the grandeur and intimacy of God, challenging the Athenians to reconsider their perceptions of divinity. This section stresses how sharing who God truly is can transform misconceptions and open hearts to God's presence.

Application:

Contemplate the areas in your life where you might be "building shrines" to lesser gods or where you need a deeper understanding of God's presence.

Spend time in prayer, asking God to reveal areas where you need to acknowledge His sovereignty. **Consider dedicating a specific time this week to reflect** on how God has been active in your life and how you can share that personal testimony with others.

Day 4

Reading: Acts 17:29-31

Devotional:

Paul calls the Athenians to repentance, urging them to turn away from idols made of gold or silver and toward the living God who commands all to repent. He speaks of God's fixed day of judgment, pointing to Jesus's resurrection as assurance of this truth. Paul's message challenges the Athenians—and us—to move from ignorance to knowledge and from knowledge to action. Repentance is not just a change of mind but a transformation of life.

Application:

Reflect on what repentance means to you personally and corporately. Are there areas in your life where you've been reluctant to turn back to God?

Spend time praying about these areas and seek God's forgiveness and strength to turn away from these idols. Also, **consider how you can encourage others** to understand the importance of repentance in their spiritual walk.

Day 5

Reading: Acts 17:32-34

Devotional:

The reaction to Paul's message is mixed; some ridicule, while others express interest, and a few believe. This diverse response reminds us that not everyone will embrace the message of Christ, but that does not deter Paul from his mission. His success lies not in the number of converts but in his faithfulness to share the gospel. Dionysius and a few others' belief showcase how God's word does not return void, and that every effort we make to share our faith carries eternal significance.

Application:

Consider moments where you have shared your faith and felt discouraged by the outcome. **Reflect** on the idea that success in God's kingdom is measured by faithfulness, not numbers. **Think of someone you can reach out to this week** to encourage, share your faith with, or invite to a faith-based event. **Remember to pray** for both the individual and for your courage to be a faithful witness.