



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

Acts 17:16-34

Lost and Looking Good

Due to safety concerns in Berea, Paul was put on a boat that ended up in Athens (Acts 17:16-34). As he is walking around the city, he sees a place full of idols. Some say that there were around 25-35 thousand public statues. In other words, everywhere you looked you would have seen images of stone gods. Athens was a very scholarly place with incredible architecture. Their goal was pleasure and their art was directly associated with their idols. They also loved dialogue, new ways of thinking, and healthy debate. Paul was so burdened for the people that he went everyday to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and to the marketplace to reason with the Greeks. After hearing about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they wanted to hear more. Paul was taken to the Areopagus (which was the council whose job it was to watch over religion and education in the city so they could investigate new teaching). They held court on Mars Hill (a place you can visit today). Paul, in front of this powerful group of men, presents truth in love. He tells them about who God really is and what He has done.

- He is the creator of the world and everything in it
- He's the giver of life and breath
- He made from one man (Adam) every nation of mankind to live on the earth
- He is sovereign, ruling over all, but He is not far from each one of us. This was radical to these men. The fact that they could know God was astounding. Their Greek gods were distant and did not concern themselves with the needs of men.
- He does not live in temples made by man

Paul told them that God created man in His image, so it is ridiculous for you to make gods in your own image. The Greek gods were like men and acted like men. Paul was exposing their idolatry. He then tells them that God's final revelation has come in the person of Jesus Christ. God raised Jesus from the dead, and there is coming a day when He (Jesus) will judge those who have rejected Him. The way to know God and have a relationship with Him is through Jesus. If Jesus is God's final revelation to man and if He died and rose from the grave, we all must answer this one question, "What are we going to do with Jesus?"

As you seek to apply this passage to your life, ask yourself these questions:

- **Are there any idols in my life that are hindering me from coming to Jesus or from walking rightly with Jesus? Am I willing to renounce any idols I may have in my life and put Jesus back in His rightful place?** Remember an idol is anything I am looking to, other than Jesus, to meet the needs and desires of my heart. While we may not have idols of stone we certainly have idols in this country. You find them in things like sports, money, possessions, sex, and alcohol. One of the biggest idols in our country is the idol of comfort.
- **What are you going to do with Jesus?** You either will reject Him or believe in Him. Believing in Him is more than just mental knowledge. As Dallas Willard once said, "You believe something when you are ready to act as if it were true."

In the midst of the chaos in our country and in our world, let's rejoice that Jesus has risen. Let's keep our eyes on Him and participate in what He is calling us to be and do. He is our hope!

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