

Paul's Athens Address

Text—Acts 17: 22-31

Introduction—

- A. David's Series on Preaching Christ.
 - 1. Preach the man, not the plan
 - 2. Preach the savior, not salvation
 - 3. Preach Christ, not the church
 - 4. Can't preach one without the other

- B. Acts 17: 22-31
 - 1. An address, not listed as a sermon
 - 2. However, he preached in synagogues
 - 3. Tonight's lesson is based on what Paul might have taught.

- C. Athens—a city given over to idols
 - 1. Show Map of Second Journey
 - 2. Distance of Jerusalem to Athens

- D. Paul waiting for Silas and Timothy's arrival
 - 1. Preached in the synagogues
 - 2. Told of Jesus and the resurrection

- E. Paul was brought to the Areopagus—vs. 19-21
 - 1. Interested in this new doctrine—vs. 18
 - 2. Assumed to be yet another god

- I. To an Unknown God—vs. 22-23
 - A. Paul complimented them
 - 1. Instead of spewing hatred about idols
 - 2. Encouraged desire to be religious
 - 3. Christians today should do same
 - a. Denominations, church holidays
 - b. Different beliefs, different gods

 - B. Each statue represents a god
 - C. Unknown God, represents any that they had overlooked
 - 1. Don't want to offend any god, used one idol to represent the rest.
 - 2. Like Tomb of Unknown Soldier
 - a. Represents many, unidentified
 - b. Not an actual tomb, but a monument for many fallen soldiers who weren't identified.

D. Before Paul could preach Christ

1. He had to talk about the one God.
2. If he started with Jesus, son; many would claim him to be son of their god.

II. The One True God—vs. 24-26

A. Reminded Jews of their time in Egypt (vs. 24-25)

1. Moses and the Ten Plagues—Ex. 7-11
2. Each plague represented an Egyptian God
 - a. First Plague—Water to Blood (Ex. 7: 17-19)
 - b. Gods disproved
 - i. Tauret—Goddess of the Nile
 - ii. Hapi—Spirit of the Nile
 - iii. Khnum—Guardian of the Nile
 - iv. Selket—Guardian of Life
 - c. 8th Plague—Locusts (Ex. 10: 12-15)
 - d. Gods disproved
 - i. Ermutet—goddess of crops
 - ii. Isis—protector of crops
 - iii. Nepri—god of grain
 - iv. Seth—protector of crops
 - v. Thermuthis—goddess of fertility and crops
 - vi. Geb—Earth god
 - vii. Atum—Sun god

B. The Mount Carmel challenge—1 Kings 18: 22-39

1. Elijah vs. the prophets of Baal
 - a. Call upon your god—vs. 26-28
 - b. Elijah's turn—vs. 31-38
 - c. The End result—vs. 39

C. No other God

1. 1st and 2nd Commandment—Ex. 20: 2-5
2. Reminded after wanderings—Deut. 5: 6-8
3. “Besides me”—Isa. 44: 6-8, 14-17

D. “Every Nation of men”—vs.26

1. Eve—Gen. 3: 20
2. Abram—Gen. 12: 2-3
3. Boundaries—
 - a. Created—Gen. 1: 27-28
 - b. On earth, no other planet or solar system

III. The Offspring of God—vs. 27-29

A. Grope for him

1. Many look for creator
2. Some invent own—Gen. 1: 26
3. Make themselves god—Dan. 3: 1, 4-6
4. Herod—Acts 12: 18-23

B. Not far from us

1. Personal God
 - a. Eden—Gen. 3: 8-10
 - b. Abraham and visitors—Gen. 18: 1-5
 - c. Burning bush—Ex. 3: 1-6
2. Omnipresent
 - a. “The Lord is at hand”
 - b. Always there
 - c. Hears our prayers and answers them.

IV. The Judgment of God—vs. 30-31

A. “Times of Ignorance”

1. God gives His people a second chance to do right.
2. Under a New Law
 - a. Foretold in prophecy—Jer. 31: 31-34
 - b. Fulfilled in Christ—Matt. 7: 28-29; Col. 2: 14

B. All should repent

1. John the Baptist—Matt. 3: 1-3
2. Jesus—Matt. 4: 17; Lk. 13: 2-5
3. Peter—Acts 2: 38; Acts 3: 19

C. The Judge—Jesus

1. Foretold in Prophecy—Gen. 3: 15; Deut. 18: 18-19; Micah 5: 2
 - a. Born of a virgin—Isa. 7: 14-16
 - b. Form of a man—Phil. 2: 7
 - c. Tempted like us—Matt. 4: 1-10; Heb. 4: 15
2. Raised from the dead—
 - a. Prophecy—
 - b. Jesus predicted—Matt. 16: 21; 17: 23; 20: 19
 - c. Fulfilled—Jn. 2: 19-22; Lk. 24: 1-8

V. Results of Paul’s Address—vs. 32-34

- A. Some mocked
- B. Others weren’t convinced
- C. Some were converted

Conclusion

You won't convert everyone but you must make the effort.

Isa. 58: 1; 1 Cor. 3: 6-7