

# Introducing the ‘Unknown’ God

Acts 17:16-34

PART ONE

## Introduction

I ATHENS – The Place (vv16-18);

II AREOPAGUS – The Platform (vv19-21);

III ADDRESS – The Presentation of the ‘Unknown’ God (vv22-23);

IV ARGUMENT – The Powerful Creator God (vv24-25);

V APPLICATION – The Purposes of God (vv26-34)

### I. ATHENS – The Place (vv16-18)

#### v16

*“his spirit was provoked within him” ‘to urge, stimulate; to rouse to anger or indignation.’*

*“the city was full of idols”*

#### v17

Paul *“reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and devout persons”* on the Sabbath,

*“in the marketplace every day.”*

#### v18

Epicureanism

Stoics

*“babbling”* literally, ‘seed picker’

*“He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.*

*“divinities...resurrection”*

### II. AREOPAGUS – The Platform (vv19-21)

#### v19 v20

*“Areopagus”*

#### v21

## **The insatiable nature of polytheism vs The ultimate satisfaction of monotheism.**

### **III. ADDRESS – The Presentation of the ‘Unknown’ God (vv22-23)**

#### **v22 v23**

*“I perceive that in every way you are very religious in every way.”*

Not wanting to alienate himself, this statement no doubt won their favor.

Paul’s use of this particular idol was brilliant strategically.

*“What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.”*

**You cannot worship what you do not know.**

**The one true God that Paul presents IS knowable, but only through revelation.**

He can be apprehended by *reason*, but He cannot be *known*.

Therefore we reason with the lost because they can apprehend God through the senses.

But they cannot know God unless and until God reveals Himself to them.

Deuteronomy 4:35

Matthew 11:27

1 John 5:20-21

*“that they may know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth.”* Psalm 83:18

### **IV. ARGUMENT – The Creator God (vv24-25)**

#### **v24**

*“The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth,”*

The Athenians looked for God in all *created* things: the heavens, the earth, even in humans.

Every statement made by the apostle is grounded in OT truth:

Genesis 1:1

Psalm 33:6

Jeremiah 32:17

*“...does not live in temples made by man,”*

1 Kings 8:27

Acts 7:47-50

**The one true Creator God Most High will not be kept in manmade boxes – whether *mental* or *material*!**

**v25**

Psalm 50:7-12

Job 35:7; cp 1 Corinthians 4:7

*“since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.”*

Job 12:10

Job 33:4

Job 34:14-15; cp Gen. 2:7

Psalm 104:29

Psalm 100:3

Psalm 145:8-9

Psalm 50:14-15