



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

ACTS 17:16-34 / February 17

Welcome! Thank you for joining us in studying through Acts! Tonight we will spend more time studying in Acts 17.

Let's recap! We learned from Acts 16 that Paul and his companions have been to Philippi, where they were imprisoned but then set free by a "Gospel earthquake" that God used to save the Philippian jailer and his household. From there, in the first 15 verses in chapter 17, Paul, Silas, and Timothy go to Thessalonica and Berea where they have to escape both places quickly because of opposition.

Let's begin by reading Acts 17:16-21. Who is on this journey and where did they go? (Reference verses 14-15.) Who are the people in this story? What is happening?

- How does Paul feel about what he sees throughout Athens?
- Why do you think Paul was so upset about the idolatry he saw in Athens?
- What is his response?

Paul sees the overwhelming idolatry and can not help but respond by sharing the Gospel with Jews and Gentiles in Athens. The Epicurean (think modern day YOLO — "you only live once") and Stoic (think "what will be, will be) philosophers wanted to know more and took Paul to the Areopagus (religious and civil center) to address the group. In verses 22 and 23, Paul begins by recognizing their religiousness in their objects of worship. He uses this to reason with them about the one true God and call them to repentance.

- What are we tempted to make idols of in our own lives?
- Are you quick to repent of idols in your own life that you have allowed to take the place of God? Why or why not?

As people made in the image of God, we are created to worship. Paul sees plainly what the Athenians are worshiping and he knows that there is only one true God worthy of worship. Everything else is an imposter that threatens our life now and eternally. He wanted them (and us) to know the truth of the Gospel and why God alone is worthy of our worship.

Let's focus on three things we can learn about God that makes him worthy of our worship.

Read 17:24-31.

What does Paul say in verses 24-25 about who God is? (He is Creator, sustainer, life-giver, all-powerful, etc.)

- How do you think this group of philosophers have heard what Paul was saying to them? *(It goes against all that they believe, considering Paul says God does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands.)*
- How do these truths about God lead you to worship Him?

What does Paul say in verses 26-28 about who God is? *(He is sovereign, knowable, near to us, etc.)*

- How would this group of philosophers have heard what Paul was saying to them?
- How do these truths about God lead you to worship Him?

What does Paul say in verses 29-31 about who God is? *(Not created, judge, resurrected His appointed One to save, etc.)*

- How would this group of philosophers have heard what Paul was saying to them?
- How do these truths about God lead you to worship Him?
- Because God is the creator and sustainer what does it mean to you that He is also knowable?
- Because God is the creator and sustainer and knowable, what does it mean to you that He is also the judge and giver of salvation?
- How does knowing these things about God move you to worship?

Close in prayer. Thank God for being creator, sustainer, knowable, judge, and salvation through Jesus Christ. Ask Him, through his Holy Spirit and the community of believers, to point out our idols and to teach us to worship Him alone.

KIDS FOCUS

Tonight we will focus on 3 characteristics of God that will help us worship Him! After reading these verses, let's put together a spinning wheel that will remind us of who God is!

- **Read vs. 24-25.** What does Paul say about God? What does this tell you about God? Name some things that God made.
- **Read vs. 26-28.** What does Paul say about God? What does this tell you about God? How can you know God?
- **Read vs. 29-31.** What does Paul say about God? What does this tell you about God? Why does God judge people? How can you be saved by God?

Close in prayer. Thank God for making us and everything in the world, thank him that we can know him and be saved by Jesus.