## PAUL'S SERMON TO THE ATHENIANS Acts 17:22-

## Introduction:

- A. Paul has come to Athens
  - 1) Satan "stirred up the people", in Berea
  - 2) He was "Immediately" sent away
  - 3) He was "conducted" to Athens
- B. Paul waited for Silas and Timothy
  - 1) Paul saw the idolatry of the city
  - 2) His spirit was "stirred". He became angry. Later he wrote, "Be ye angry, and sin not"
  - 3) He disputed with the Athenians
  - 4) They escorted him to Mars Hill
- I. They Were Very Religious Vs. 22
  - A. "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious"
    - 1) "perceive" = theoreo = "to attentively and studiously consider", "to see with regard", "not the mere act of an instant, but for a lengthened period"
    - 2) "superstitious" = deisidaimon = "fearing the gods", "in a good sense, religiously disposed", more so than others.
    - 3) "from every point of view I see that you are extremely religious"
  - B. Paul did not alienate these people with a stinging rebuke. Truth will offend soon enough.
    - 1) Religion, that is false religion, is not good, but bad. It does what its adherents want it to do. It is fashioned by man for man.
    - 2) The truth is revealed by God for man.
  - C. Their religious activity was based on ignorance Vs. 23
    - 1) "passed by" = dierchomai = "to pass through"
    - 2) "devotions" = sebasma = "that for which awe is felt", "an object of worship"
    - 3) II Thess. 2:4 (used of antichrist)

- 4) "I found an altar with this inscription"
- 5) "To The Unknown God" The many disasters that fell upon these people, plague, drought, death, defeat, domination, they all came as a result of angry gods or goddesses. They had been snubbed or overlooked, therefore in order to appease the "unknown" god, let us make an alter that bears no name."
- II. They Were Very Ignorant Vs. 23
  - A. "When therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."
    - 1) "ignorant" = hagnoeo = "not to perceive or know"
    - 2) "declare" = kataggello = "to bring word down upon anyone, to bring it home."
  - B. They were ignorant worshippers, not ignorant people.
    - "I don't understand how someone so well-educated could believe that trash"
    - Just because a person has an education, or power, or money, or prestege, doesn't mean they are competent in Bible knowledge.
  - C. The tragedy of ignorant worship
    - 1) It leaves mean without God
    - 2) It furnishes a false hope
- II. The Unknown God Made Known Vs. 24-
  - A. He made all things Vs. 24a
    - 1) "The world"
    - 2) "All things therein"
  - B. He is Lord of all things Vs. 24a
    - 1) "The Lord of heaven"
    - 2) The Lord of earth"
  - C. He s not confined to temples Vs. 24b
    - 1) He does not "dwell in them"
    - 2) These are made by man's hands

- D. He does not need man Vs. 25a
  - 1) "Neither is worshipped with men's hands"
  - 2) "as though he needed anything"
  - 3) Our worship does not sustain God but man." Human hands do not minister to His needs". If we don't meet, God will still by God.
- E. He is the life-giver Vs. 25b
  - 1) He gives to all life
  - 2) He gives to all breath
  - 3) He gives to all, all things
- F. He made the first man Vs. 26
  - 1) Men of every race came from one blood
  - 2) God controls the human race
  - 3) "And he made from one, every nation of men, and caused him to settle on all parts of the earth's surface. He fixed the epochs of their history. And he has given to each the cycles it must pass through"
- G. He is not far from all men Vs. 27
  - 1) men should seek the Lord
  - 2) They are to grope for Him
  - 3) Men may find him, by feeling after Him
- IV. The Relationship of Man to God Vs. 28-29
  - A. We are His offspring
    - 1) "offspring" = yenos = "genius", "race", "posterity"
    - 2) God is our creator, we are from Him and we are like unto Him
    - 3) "In Him we live, and move, and have our being" "In Him we have life and motion and our very existence"
    - 4) The Athenian Poets have so written
  - B. God is not a lifeless idol Vs. 29
    - "Godhead" = the = thing + theion = pertaining to theos", "what is God's"
       "that which is divine"
    - We cannot make an image of God from gold, stone or silver, by a human device.

- V. All Men Now Stand Equal Before God Vs. 30
  - A. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at"
    - 1) "times" = chronos = "the time in which a thing is done"
    - 2) "ignorance" = hagovia = "Want of perception"
    - 3) "winked" = hupereidon = "to overlook"
    - 4) "such ages of man's ignorance, God overlooked"
    - 5) This has reference to the Gentile and his worship of God. The Jew worshipped God in an acceptable fashion. Gentiles could be saved by faith.
  - B. "but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent"
    - 1) "Now" = (the article with nun) = "the actually present time", "the
      present, present"
    - 2) "commandeth" = paraggello = "to announce beside or near to anyone, to hand an announcement from one to another"
    - 3) "repent" = metanoeo = "to change one's mind and purpose", "to have a genuine change in heart and in lifestyle"
- VI. The Reason That All Men Should Repent Vs. 31
  - A. "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"
    - 1) "appointed" = istemi = "to place"
    - 2) "ordained" = horizo = "to make or set a boundary", "to mark out definitely, to determine"
    - 3) "judge" = krino = "to divide", "to separate"
    - 4) "righteousness" = dikaiosune = "the doing or being what is just and right"
    - 5) "man" = aner = "a man", "an adult male" God has committed the judgment of every man to the man, Jesus. He has lived on earth as a man. John 5:25-29 (vs. 27)
  - B. "whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
    - 1) "assurance" = pistos = "faith" (a guarantee)
    - 2) parecho = "to furnsh", "to brng forward evidence"
    - The resurrection of Jesus is a guarantee from God that men will be judged

- VII. The Response of the Athenians to Paul's Sermon Vs. 32
  - A. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked"
    - 1) "heard" = akouo = "to hear", "to listen"
    - 2) "mocked" = chleuazo = "to jest", "joke", "to jeer at"
    - 3) The statement concerning the resurrection was met with jeering taunts
  - B. "and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter"
    - 1) "hear" = akouo = "to listen"
    - 2) "matter" = = "we will hear thee concerning this again"

      Not so much neglect but thoughtfulness.
- VIII. Paul's Response to the Athenians Vs. 33
  - A. "So Paul departed from among them"
    - 1) "departed" = exerchomai = "to come or go out of any place"
    - 2) "And with that Paul went away from the meeting"
  - B. Paul had done all that God had called him to do
    - 1) We can't save but we can preach
    - 2) We can leave the truth in His care
- IX. God's Word Bears Fruit Vs. 34
  - A. "certain men clave unto him and believed"
    - 1) "clave" = kollao = "to glue", "to cement"
    - 2) "believed" =
  - B. There will always be this fruit.
    - 1) Certain men will believe!