

Sermon Notes

The Life of Paul and Evangelism Lessons

From His Message to Athens

“Introduction”

I. Introduction.

A. Why study the life of Paul?

1. Answer: Because his New Testament writings largely
S_____ C_____ T_____

B. Structure for upcoming messages.

1. Life of Paul and His message at Athens.

II. Life of Paul

A. Birth place.

1. Tarsus of Cilicia: Acts 21:37; 22:2

B. Significance of Tarsus

1. Little remains today.
2. A noteworthy city of commerce, culture and higher education.
 - a. Evidence.

C. Jewish heritage and education.

1. Strongly asserted in Romans 11:1 and Phil. 3:5.
2. Similarity and dissimilarity with other apostles.
 - a. Similarity ó all Jewish.
 - b. Dissimilarity ó He was highly educated in Greek and Roman thought as well as in Old Testament law.

III. Message to the Athenians.

A. Text: Acts 17:16-31.

B. City of Athens

1. Its importance, fame, and noteworthiness.

C. Verse 16: óHis spirit was provokedö (agitated).

1. Paradox of Greek culture.
 - a. Higher thought, yet gripped by stone images of pagan gods.
2. Previously, Paul encountered idolatry at Lystra.
3. The name óAthensö is in honor of Athena.
4. Paulø view of idols.
 - a. Note Ten Commandments.
 - b. Connection to demonology ó I Corinthians 10:20

D. Reasoning in the synagogue and marketplace, verse 17.

1. Same verb used in Acts 17:2.
2. His presence at two locations.
 - a. Synagogue
 - b. Marketplace.

IV. Points for Reflection.

- A. The prestige of Athens is similar to the esteem given to U.S. and North American culture.
- B. The idolatry of Athens is just as present in our own culture.
- C. The market place (*agora*) was the center of Greek culture as is our Farmerø Market, shopping malls, coffee shops, and everywhere people come together to chat, exchange ideas, and shop.
- D. The agitation of Paul provoked him to action, but our agitation usually results in consternation and not evangelism.