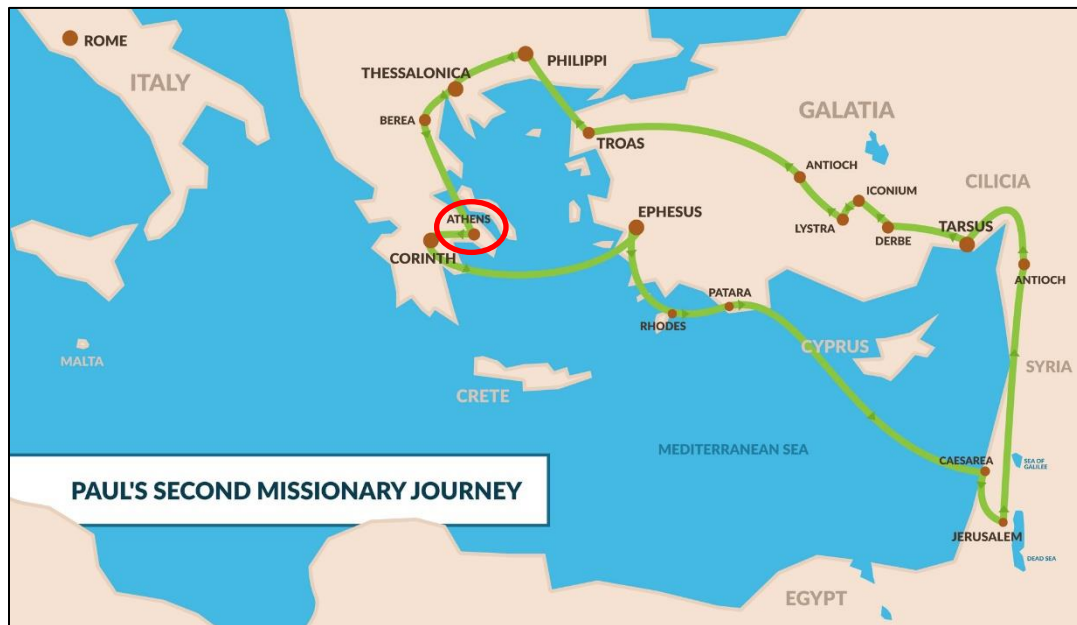


PART 22: LESSONS FROM PAUL'S VISIT TO ATHENS

ACTS 17:16-34

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MAIN IDEA

By observing how Paul evangelized the influential city of Athens, we find some important lessons about engaging unbelievers today.

I. BACKGROUND

A. Athens

- The religious center of Greece
- Virtually every god known to man could be worshipped there.
- Paul viewed Athens as a city of lost humanity, all doomed to a Christless eternity because of rampant pagan idolatry.

B. Epicureans

- Epicureans believed that the chief purpose of man was to achieve happiness.
- Man has free will to plan and live a life of pleasure.
- Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die.

C. Stoics

- Stoics believe the chief purpose in life was to reach a place of indifference to pleasure and pain.
- To understand life, one must deny emotions and feelings which can get in the way of finding truth,

D. Areopagus

- A prominent a rocky hill of the god Ares, or Mars.
- The name of the council which met on Mar's hill to question the rights of teachers who lectured in public.
- Paul was not on trial here; he was only being asked to defend his teaching.

II. HOW PAUL EVANGELIZED ATHENS

A. He **recognized** their situation (17:16)

B. He **reasoned** with them (17:17-21)

- He reasoned with Jews, Greeks, and those in the marketplace
- He reasoned with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers
- He reasoned with them at the Areopagus

C. He **revealed** God to them (17:22-31)

- God is the Creator (17:24)
- God is the Sustainer of life (17:25)
- God is the Ruler of the nations (17:26)
- God is knowable (17:27)
- God is the Father of humanity (17:28-29)
- God is both Judge and Rescuer (17:30-31)

D. He **received** a mixed response (17:32)

III. APPLICATION: HOW TO EVANGELIZE LIKE PAUL

A. Get to know **the person**.

B. Hear their **story**.

C. Share your **testimony**.

D. Expect a **response**.