

Theme: The unbelieving world is addressed in the same way today as it was by Paul. There is One God, who will judge the world. God has raised this righteous judge *and deliverer* from the dead.

Introduction/Background: "... when we cease to worship God, we do not worship nothing, we worship anything", G. K. Chesterton. Athens: Arguably representing the highest level of culture reached in the ancient world.

I. Provoked to Action

A. Why so disturbed?

B. What to do?

-“Reason” in the synagogues

-“Reason” in the streets

C. What does he find?

1. Epicureans:

- Followers of Epicurus (340-270 BC)

- Practical *atheists*

- Live a simple life of pleasure

2. Stoics:

- Followers of Zeno (340-265 BC)

- Sought to live consistently with nature.

- It is **virtuous** to maintain a **will** in accord with nature.

- *Pantheistic* – God is the world-soul. "Keep a stiff upper lip!"

3. Babblers - vv.18,21

- Paul called a babbler (Literally – “seed picker/collector”)

- Athenians were the true “babblers”

II. Proclaiming the Truth

A. Where? The Court of Areopagus on “Mars Hill”

B. Paul’s Message

1. Gaining a hearing - “To the unknown god”

2. The Message vv. 24-31

a. God **Is** the Creator!

1) Does not live in temples made by hands of men (Acts 7:48)

2) Not served by human hands (Psalm 50:9-12)

- b. Creator of the human race in particular. (Deuteronomy 32:8)
 - **All was ordered, providentially arranged**
- c. That they might seek God and find Him. (Romans 1:20)
 - 1) Quotes their own poets
 - 2) Why does Paul use these quotes??
 - To a degree, they demonstrate an understanding of revealed truth.
- d. We are God's offspring.
 - not pantheistic
 - *created* in His image
- e. REPENT. Judgment is coming! v.30
 - Doesn't fit either philosophy represented.
 - God has been patient (Romans 3:25)
- e. The RESURRECTED ONE. The judge of the world has come. (John 5:27)
 - Paul's message never changes

III. The Pride of the Athenians

A. Mockery

- Aeschelus – 500 years earlier - “when the dust has soaked up a man's blood, once he is dead, there is no resurrection.”

B. Maybe later (Paul was gone)

- Winston Churchill - “Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened.”

IV. The Power of the Gospel

A. Is the Word of Life

- Dionysius and Damaris will be in heaven.

B. Exposes the idols

- in our midst.
- in our hearts.

C. Is greater than our fears.

- Can we talk about judgment?
- Can I share the good news with any and all?