

# What on **Earth** are We Doing?

Part 3

## The Message

Acts 17:16-34

### Introduction:

*The Mindset, the Mission & the Message*

### I. Our Message engages People where they are.

*Paul's Witness in Athens was:*

A. **Reasonable** & Resurrection-based. vv. 17-18

B. **Relevant** & "Religion"-neutral. vv. 18-22

C. **Respectful** & Responsive. vv. 22-23

### II. Our Message proclaims God as He truly is.

*The God they had not yet known - the "Unknown God":*

#### **As Creator**

*Made us.* v. 24a

*Rules us.* v. 24b

*Has no Need of us.* v. 25a

*Sustains us.* v. 25b

#### **As Redeemer**

*Wants us.* vv. 26-29

*Calls us.* v. 30

*Will gather us.* v. 31a

*Provides for us.* v. 31b

## Acts 17:16-34

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. 17 Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. 18 Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, "What does this babbling man want to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods," because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? 20 For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean." 21 For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23 for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one blood[c] every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. 30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter." 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

**1 Peter 3:15**

NIV

15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer

[NKJ - always be ready to give a defense]

to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

**Haggai 2:6-7**

6 For thus says the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

7 And I will shake all nations, and the Desire of All Nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts.

**Isaiah 66:1-2**

“ Heaven is My throne,

And earth is My footstool.

Where is the house that you will build Me?

And where is the place of My rest?

2 For all those things My hand has made,

And all those things exist,”

Says the LORD.

“ But on this one will I look:

On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit,

And who trembles at My word.