

Courage to adapt the message

Acts 17:16 - 34

Paul alone in Athens

- Paul escorted from Berea to Athens by a group of believers
- Timothy and Silas remained behind in Berea
- Flexibility in ministry – Jelly not concrete!

Paul reasons in the synagogue and the market place in Athens

- Distressed by the idolatry in Athens
- A city that was very religious
- A city that was known for its search for the meaning of life
- V 21 ‘...spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.

Paul is invited to the Areopagus

- The Areopagus was a place where new ideas were listened to.
- Paul has seen the ‘altar to an unknown god’
- Paul is very direct. ‘So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship- and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

The God of creation

- The Lord of heaven and earth
- The giver of life
- The God who is not far from us
- The God who will judge by the man he has appointed.
- The proof is this man was raised from the dead.

A mixed response

- Sneering
- Enquiring and believing

Digging Deeper

1. How flexible (jelly like) are we as a church. What are the challenges and benefits of being flexible.
2. Paul was willing to engage with the culture in Athens. Luke describes him as reasoning in the synagogue and market place. In our gospel witness what would help us to reason?
3. Read Colossians 4: 2 – 6 what is the order that Paul reminds the Colossians with regard to prayer, living and speaking? Do we follow a similar order with our outreach?
4. Read Galatians 5: 19 – 26 – how we live as followers of Jesus is vital. Why do we tend to focus more on the gifts of the spirit rather than the fruit? Which should come first?
5. Why do you think Paul is not recorded mentioning the name of Jesus in his speech to the Areopagus? Are we prone to saying too much too soon when sharing the gospel?

Pray for those who have heard the gospel through the men's and women's events and the children and their families who attended the holiday club week.