

Sermon Text Discussion 1/28/2018

Acts 17:16-34 – “The Gospel for Skeptics and Intellectuals” by Drew Hunter

Overview

1. What Paul Felt (v. 16)
2. What Paul Did (vv. 17-21)
3. What Paul Said (vv. 22-31)
4. What Happened Next (vv. 32-34)

Quotations

“Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, ... not being or doing what he requires in his law.” – *The New City Catechism*, answer to question 16, “What is sin?”

“Idolatry is trusting in created things rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance and security.” – *The New City Catechism*, answer to question 17, “What is idolatry?”

“In evangelism we need to be willing simply to move the ball down the field a bit.” –Drew Hunter

Understanding & Application

- 1) Paul saw Athens from God’s perspective. What do you think is God’s perspective on your community (Zionsville, Carmel, Lebanon, Brownsburg, Indianapolis, etc.)?
- 2) Paul’s spirit was “provoked” by what he observed. What is our emotional reaction to the things we observed in answering the question above? If we think that reaction is lacking, what are some things we can do to better capture God’s feelings about the situation? Should we wait for a certain feeling before sharing the gospel with others?
- 3) Paul was flexible in his approach to evangelism. Identify several different people you know who have different backgrounds and interests, such as a family member, a friend or coworker, a neighbor, or a store worker you see regularly. Assume that a conversation with them has led to an opportunity for you to share the gospel with them. Discuss what might be effective ways to share the message with each kind of person. Keep in mind Paul’s example of both affirming and challenging. Perhaps you can share some real examples!
- 4) Drew Mentioned Rico Tice’s idea of a “painline”—a threshold we cross in a conversation where we know we risk a negative reaction. (See Rico Tice’s book *Honest Evangelism*.) What are some things that can motivate you to cross the painline when talking with someone about the gospel?
- 5) In Athens, some mocked the gospel, some received it, and some were between: not convinced but open to hearing more. What can you do to “move the ball down the field a bit” with people in the third group? Perhaps consider some of the people and situations you discussed in question 3 above. When you have opportunity to discuss the gospel with someone, should you always share the whole message?