

Athens, the Great Intellectual and Philosophical City (Part I):
 The Preacher's Urgency and His Audience —
 Who It Is That Needs the Gospel
 Acts 17: 16–21

1 *The messenger, Paul, was in Athens, the great intellectual and cultural centre*

- a. He was distressed
- b. He preached daily

2 *There were the religionists*

3 *There were the God-fearing people*

4 *There were the average persons or citizens*

5 *There were the Epicureans or pleasure-seekers*

6 *There were the Stoics or the self-disciplined*

7 *There were the philosophical questioners of Christ*

- a. Confronted Paul
- b. Were disturbed by the resurrection
- c. Requested to hear more
- d. A great need:
Aimless, meaningless, empty

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

19 Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?"

20 You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean."

21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)