

## § 5.5 • Account of Paul's Teaching in Athens

## PART 39

117 Now while Paul eagerly awaited them in the regions of Athens, his spirit became disturbed within him as he observed the city, for it was filled with idols. <sup>2</sup>As a consequence, he dialogued with the Jews and other worshippers in the synagogue, but he also dialogued with any that he happened upon in the marketplace every day. (<sup>3</sup>In fact, some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers met with him.) <sup>4</sup>Some were saying, "What might this rumormonger [*spermologos*] possibly have to say?" <sup>5</sup>But others were saying, "He seems to be a promoter of foreign deities." <sup>6</sup>They said these things because he was proclaiming the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.

17:16–18

118 When they had caught up with him, they led him on to Mars Hill, saying,

"<sup>2</sup>Enable us to understand. <sup>3</sup>What is this new teaching which is being articulated by you? <sup>4</sup>For you have brought certain surprisingly extraordinary things to our attention. <sup>5</sup>So we want to understand whatever things these might be."

(<sup>6</sup>Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who were visiting the city spent their spare time in nothing else but to divulge or to listen to some new thing.)

17:19–21

119 So Paul, having been placed in the midst of the gathering at Mars' Hill, said,

"<sup>2</sup>Men of Athens, I perceive you to be quite religious in accord with every religious option. <sup>3</sup>Now as I passed through and took careful note of your sacred sites, I, in fact, discovered an altar upon which it had been inscribed—"To the Unknown God." <sup>4</sup>Now then, what you worship, having no knowledge of, this I disclose to you. <sup>5</sup>The God, the one who fashioned the world and everything in it—this one, existing as lord over heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made by hand, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything. <sup>6</sup>He is the one who gives to all people life and breath and everything they have.

<sup>7</sup>And he made from one man every ethnic group among men such that they dwell over the entire face of the earth—and he determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation—with the aim that they might seek God, if perhaps they might grope and find him, even though he exists not very far from each one of us. <sup>8</sup>For in him we live and move and exist. [alludes to a

line by Epimenides of Crete]

9•In truth, as a certain one of your own poets has said, “Of him in fact we are kin.” [*Phainomena*, a poem about Zeus by Aratus] 10•Therefore, because we exist as the kin of God, we ought not think that the divine image can be likened to an image—in gold, or in silver, or in stone—made from the craft and creative imagination of a man.

11•So, while God, on the one hand, overlooked times of ignorance, in these current times he is enjoining men that all of them everywhere should repent, because he has appointed a day in which he is about to rule the world in righteousness by the man whom he has designated, providing a basis for belief to all men by raising him from the dead.”

17:22-31