

Do The Work of an Evangelist – Acts 17:16-34 做传道者的工 - 使徒行传 17:16-34

Text: Acts 17:16-34

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.

17 So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present.

18 And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"-- because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?"

20 For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean."

21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

23 For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

24 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

27 that they would seek God, if perhaps 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 exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

29 Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

30 Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this."

33 So Paul went out of their midst.

34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them. (Acts 17:16-34, NASB)

Intro:

One of the greatest sermons in the NT, it gives great insight into the privilege, challenge and process of evangelism.

Motivation. (II Timothy 4:4)

A Provoked (paroxuno, stimulated, roused to anger) Spirit (17:16)

Angered. At what? The dishonor of God. The Dishonor of Man

Implicit, love for God. And love for man, created in the image of God but often dishonored and degraded by sin.

The Commandment of God (17:30)

The Fixed Day of Judgment (17:30)

Hebrews 9:27

A non-exclusive list of the motivations to evangelism.

Others:

Matthews 28:16-18;

I Corinthians 9:16; and

II Corinthians 5:15-20

Method (I Timothy 3:15; I Peter 3:15)

Observant (17:16-22)

Persistent over Time (17:17)

Reasoning/Conversant (17:17-18)

Serious in the presence of the trivial (17:21)

Takes advantage of Opportunity (17:19,22)

Appropriately “Cross-Cultural” (17:22-23,28)

Proclaiming (17:23-31) (But see Revelation 3:20).

The Supremacy of Scripture. Avoid “canned”, abiblical or unbiblical approaches to evangelism.

Tough-Minded in response to rejection (17:32-33)

Nurturing discipleship of those who believe (17:34)

Message

God, Creator and Sovereign (17:24-26)

The God who makes Himself known (17:23, 27-29)

Amos 4:13

“Propositional Truth”

The God on/in whom we depend (17:28)

The Gracious God who has “overlooked the times of ignorance” (17:30)

Romans 3:25

Cited/quoted in Wang Yi's Theses:

Paragraph 31 of Wang Yi's Theses:

“Just like the Apostle Paul said, "In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16), and also said, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). The terms "nations" and "peoples" include China and the Chinese people.”

The Incarnate Christ (17:18,31)

The Resurrection (and the Atonement) (17:18,31-32)

The God who has “furnished proof” by the Resurrection (17:31)

Acts 1:3 (Many infallible proofs — en pollois techmeriois)

The God who “Commands” “Repentance” and trust in Christ (17:30,34)

Conclusion