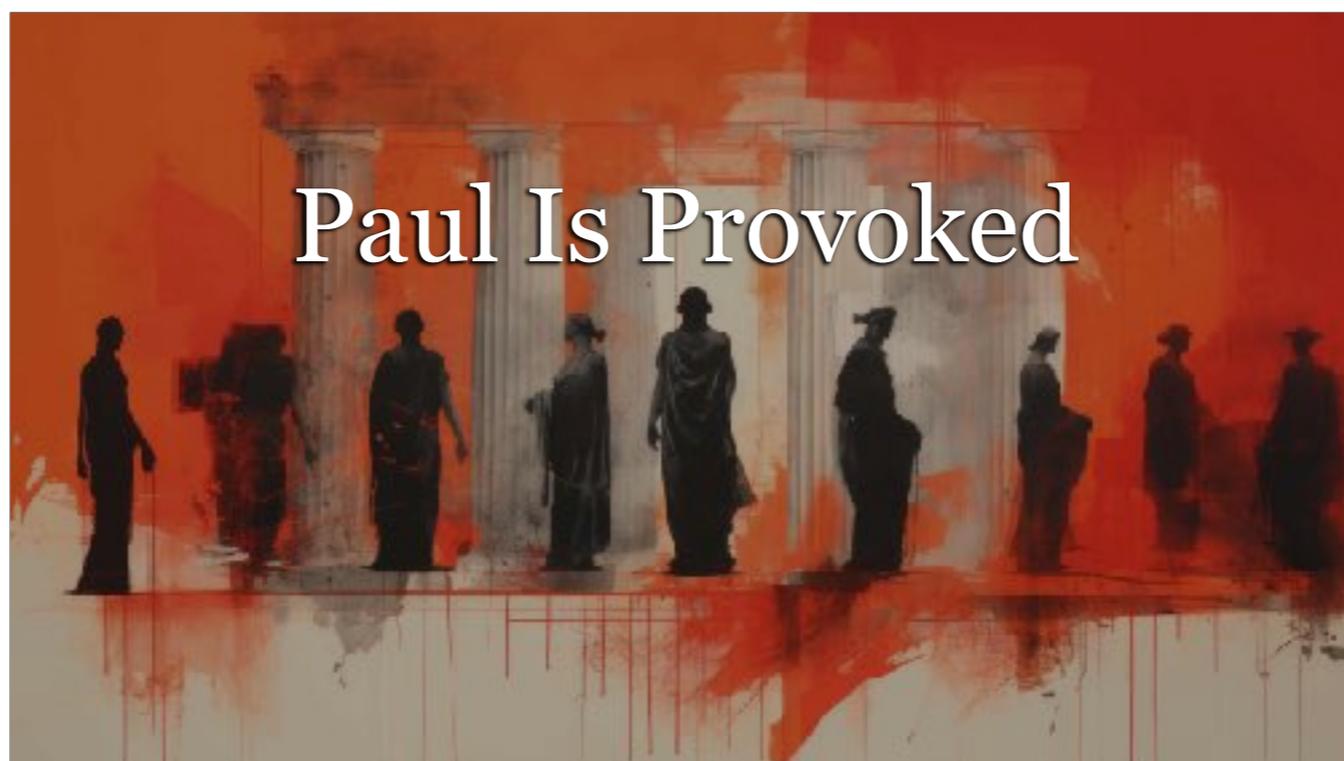




- Paul's has arrived in Athens, alone.
 - He's waiting for Silas and Timothy to arrive from Berea
- Athens has been described in very eloquent language as a city that none other rivaled for their learning, culture, philosophy



- Paul is provoked
- Paul's spirit is provoked because the city of Athens is full of idols
 - He grew up in a non jewish city — must have been accustomed to seeing idols.
 - He's traveled through many places
 - Why is Athens different?
 - Some tell us that there were not just idols at temples as in other cities
 - Rather every cross section of streets had some kind of idol.

Paul Is Provoked



- Why does this stir Paul up so much?
 - 1 Corinthians 10:20 No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons.
- This is not just about statues of wood and stone:
 - These people were deceived.
 - By demons, certainly
 - By themselves, also.

Paul Is Provoked



- Have you ever listened to an angry preacher/
 - Often issue oriented
 - Mainly telling you all the reasons you are wrong.
 - Tend to make me feel stupid for not agreeing with them. Or even questioning them.

Paul Is Provoked

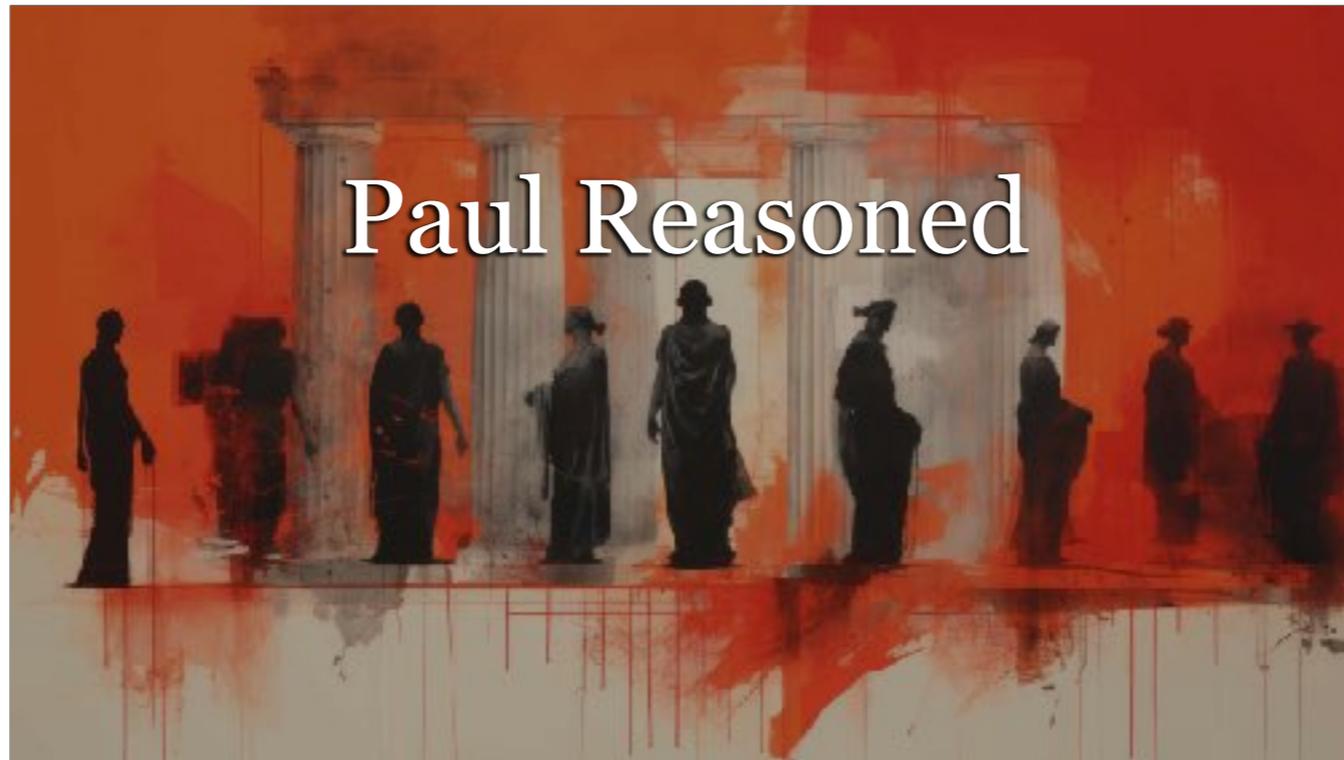


- Righteous people are often provoked by seeing sin in action
 - Moses with the golden calf
 - Phinehas with the sexual immorality
 - But those examples are sin in the midst of God's people.
 - Paul recognizes that the people of Athens have lived during a time of ignorance.
 - They don't need anger, they need knowledge
 - Which is what they were seeking.

Paul Is Provoked



- Paul has a quandary.
 - How does Paul help these people who have many gods to believe in Jesus?
- Will vehemence and acrimony be heard?
- No, these people will listen to Something New
 - Acts 17:21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.



- Paul Reasoned

Paul Reasoned



- Reasoned
 - to speak back and forth, converse, present intelligent discourse
 - argue, reason, contest, dispute
- Despite being provoked by their failure to know God, Paul doesn't become unreasonable, reactive, or even harsh.
 - He used the provocation to help his speak plainly and passionately about Jesus
 - It's okay to be provoked. Use it as positive incentive to teach.
 - He introduced them to God and ultimately to Jesus



- Paul's beginning place for these people is very different from his messages to the Jews and devout Gentiles: they know of Jehovah, he needs to teach them about faith in Jesus.
- Fascinatingly, he does start with their faith

Something New



- You are very religious
 - Also translated “superstitious”
 - Because the word can be used either way, positively or negatively
 - The tone of Paul’s message is overall very positive, so “religious” makes more sense to me.
 - They have faith in some gods.
 - He’d like them to have faith in the God.

Something New



- He has noticed their “objects of worship”
 - He doesn’t call them idols at this point, not that he’s opposed to saying so bluntly sometimes
- “To the unknown god”
 - Although they didn’t know this god, they worshiped.
 - It’s easy to infer that there is profound doubt to worship in such a way
 - And this is Paul’s way to introduce God
 - a god they don’t know
 - to a God they should know, can know, need to know

Something New



- THE God

- the greeks had a lot of gods
 - 12 main ones, but many more minor 'gods'
 - along with demigods, etc.
- So how can Paul help them to see that the God he is proclaiming is not just better or greater than their gods.
 - But that he's real, and the only God.

Something New



The God who made the world
and everything in it
Acts 17:24

- Who is the known God?
 - 24) Creator of all (world and everything in it)

Something New



- 24) Lord of all (heaven and earth)

Something New



- 24-25) Doesn't need anything from us,
 - Doesn't live in temples or served by humans
 - He is not material, physical like us
 - The Known God is spirit
 - 1 Kings 8:27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!"
- They needed to be aware of God as being different from what they imagined
 - He doesn't need their service, worship or belief so that he exists.
 -

Something New

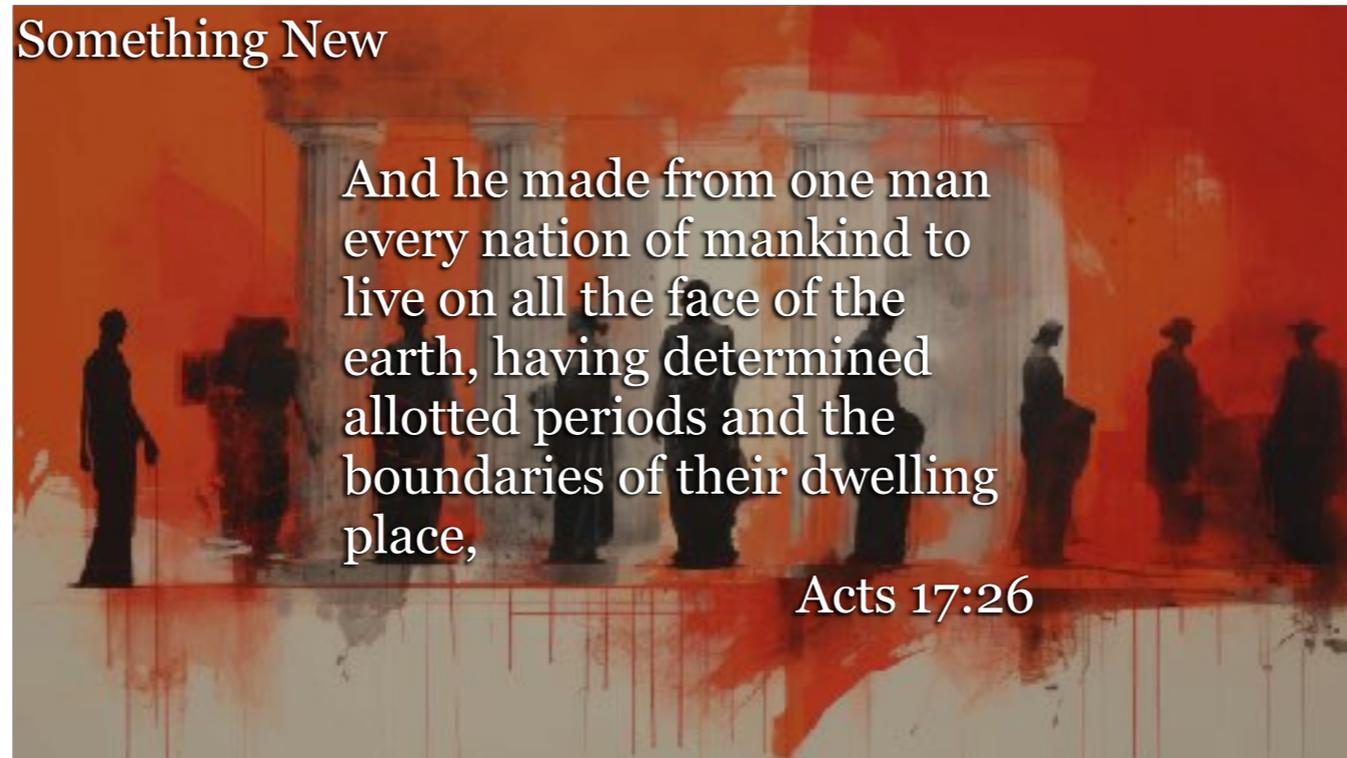
since he himself gives to all
mankind life and breath and
everything.

Acts 17:25



- 25) Gives life to all mankind: and everything

Something New



- 26) All nations from one man (biases have no basis)
 - live on face of the earth
 - determined allowed periods and boundaries
- This is an important concept about God for multiple reasons
 - There is no basis for biases between men (yet we still struggle with this)
 - Most nations conceived that they had their own gods
 - gods who established them
 - gods who protected them, went to war with them.
- The Known God is really in charge of all of these things

Something New

Being then God's offspring
Acts 17:29



- 28-29) Father (God's offspring)

Something New

Being then God's offspring,
we ought not to think that
the divine being is like gold
or silver or stone, an image
formed by the art and
imagination of man.

Acts 17:29

- 29) Divine being

Something New

because he has fixed a day on
which he will judge the world
in righteousness

Acts 17:31



- 31) Judge
 - 30) commands all people everywhere to repent

Something New



- What point has Paul made about the Known God?
 - Unique and different from gods as they conceived them
 - Their gods are, at best, shadows of the real God, cheap imitations
- It is vital for us to help those who don't know God to see him as clearly as possible
- Tearing down the false by exalting the true

Something New



- This is much more than just about who God is.
 - It's also about who we are
- We are his offspring (28,29)
 - Living beings: flesh, soul, spirit
 - Not —
 - gold or silver or stone
 - an image formed by art
 - imagination of man
 - This is a reflection of the ignorance of man (30)
 - They didn't know God

Something New



Being then God's offspring
Acts 17:29

- Good fathers care about their offspring
 - not just in their infancy and youth
 - but their whole lives
- God is a living being but divine
 - In him we live, move, have being
 - How wonderful that we are his children
 - Even these people of Athens who didn't really know him

Something New



- This God cares deeply about each of these people
 - 1 Timothy 2:3-4 — This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.



- Seeking God
 - What had they been seeking before from all their gods?
 - The point is they were seeking ... even to the point of honoring an unknown god
 - But that doubt lingers in their minds

Seek God

that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for

“In him we live and move and have our being”;

as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we are indeed his offspring.”

Acts 17:27-28

- Paul urges them to seek THE God
 - He's made it clear that this God can be found
 - feel their way toward him and find him
 - not far from each of us
 - (quoting two of their own people helps them realize that despite not knowing, there were indications of the God)

Seek God

that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for

“In him we live and move and have our being”;

as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we are indeed his offspring.”

Acts 17:27-28

- But there is a warning
 - They are not just seeking God
 - a day of judgment is coming
 - ignorance is no longer overlooked
 - judgment will be in righteousness
 - by a man God appointed
 - Paul is clearly leading up to telling the philosophers about Jesus
 - unfortunately, in this message, he doesn't get there
 - But he had in the synagogues and the market place

Seek God

that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for

“In him we live and move and have our being’;
as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we are indeed his offspring.’

Acts 17:27-28

- How do we know?
 - assurance is given in the resurrection of Jesus
 - Again, Paul doesn't get to proceed past this point.



- Paul has provided Good News for the people of Athens
- They now know the real God and understand his care for them in giving them life, nations, and opportunity to seek him
 - No longer ignorant of God



- They know there is a judgment
 - And their hope lies in the man raised from the dead: Jesus
 - They need to believe in him and repent
- Do you know God?
- Will you trust him for your salvation?
- There is good news.
- There can be great joy.

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Call to Action

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Good News! Great Joy!

#11

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Dave Stewart
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Something New

Acts 17:16-31

Synopsis: Paul's message to the Atheans was just something new for them to hear, but really it was a revealing of the known God and the hope they have in him if they will seek him.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”