

44-Acts-Pt17-Transcript

you already are the oldest president in history and some of your staff say you were tired after your most recent encounter with mr. mr. Mondale I recall yet that President Kennedy will had to go for days on end with very little sleep during the Cuban Missile Crisis is there any doubt in your mind that you would be able to function in such circumstances not at all mr. Truitt and I and I want you to know that also I will not make age an issue of this campaign I am NOT going to exploit for political purposes my opponents youth and inexperience

ouch shots fired hopefully you found that as amusing as I did and we've just come through another u.s. election and in this election as in the election of Ronald Reagan and previous presidents before him debate is very much a part of the election process when people have to make choices it is a service to them when ideas can collide when when different positions can be presented and and people have to defend their position in front of their opponent it allows people to sort through the sense and the nonsense and then make a particular case that that is reasonable to them and so in this chapter now of Acts chapter 17 we're going to encounter Paul engaged in debate and I think a lot of Christians when they hear the word debate they panic and they think that it's something horrible but let's study this chapter together and understand the role of debate in evangelism

we'll open with prayer Heavenly Father we praise you and we thank you Lord God Almighty that you have brought us to your truth you have opened your word to

us and we pray father that as we study
the continue to study the book of Acts
and now chapter 17 that you'll open our
understanding we ask that you'll bless
our study and we ask this in Jesus Holy
Name Amen

so we left off last time in fact just
before we go into acts 16 where we left
off

Christ indicates that we will be
involved in debate by this promise that
he makes to his disciples in Luke when
he says settle it therefore in your
heart's not to meditate before what you
shall answer for I will give you a mouth
and wisdom which your adversaries shall
not be able to gain say nor resist that
doesn't mean I don't take this to mean
that you know when we have to give an
answer we just say one or two words or
maybe one sentence or two sentences
and then people just stopped they said
oh wow that's just so profound that I
never thought about that okay you win
when it says that they're not going to
be able to gainsay or resist it means
they're going to try that you're going
to be entering into debate a conflict
over these ideas over the identity of
Christ and Christ is just gonna give us
through the power of the Holy Spirit
recall that we've studied we've searched
the Word of God and he's gonna give us
the recall that we need to say the right
thing at the right time in these in
these exchanges that we find ourselves
in and certainly Luke is now going to
show us with Paul that Paul had this
confidence that as he was working with
the different groups that he was
evangelizing that he just had the
ability to engage them successfully and
turn them to the gospel now last time
when we finished Acts chapter 16 we saw

that Paul and Silas were in prison there was an earthquake that loosed everybody all the prisoners stayed with him the prison guard was gonna kill himself commit suicide because you didn't want to face the Roman authorities when he was given a very clear charge to really bind these men and hold them Paul mentioned that everybody was together and then that prison guard and his household converted to follow the Lord now his whole household miraculously accepted the truth and previously Lydia and her whole household accepted the truth and these are the first converts in Europe now also we saw at the end of chapter 16 that in verse 37 here Paul said to them they've beaten us openly uncondemned and they've cast us into prison and now they thrust us out privately I don't think so and he said he said let them come and fetch us out so he now is pulling the Roman citizen card that they had not realised they just thought he was a Jew or Jewish rabble but Paul was a Roman citizen and that's very significant and he plays this card now and they they are terrified that they have mistreated a Roman citizen that could mean their death so he is released from prison he joins the brethren at Lydia's home and now we come to Acts chapter 17 and it starts this way now when they had passed through Macedonia and Phyllis and Apollonia they came to Thessalonica and just again a reminder of our map that they had started in Jerusalem they went up to Antioch in Syria from there they went in to Lystra and Iconium then into Antioch then they were trying to go into Berea and into Asia but the Holy Spirit prevented them and Paul then had a vision saying

to come to Macedonia and to help them so Paul now crosses over from the Middle East into Europe and it's a good thing he did because if you look where Jerusalem is underneath Jerusalem you'll see Arabia and in a few hundred years armies are gonna burst out of Arabia fly through the Middle East fly through Judah and and through Asia and Cappadocia and slaughter all of these Christian brethren all of our spiritual ancestors are going to be subjugated they're going to be slaughtered they're going to be raped they're going to be completely destroyed so that today there is no true gospel coming out of the Middle East all of these churches and all of their their descendants and our spiritual ancestors they either died in the faith facing the sword or they converted to Islam fortunately the gospel crossed into Europe and from Europe and through the the Crusades they were able to fend off these powerful armies a arabian armies they will defend them off and retain Europe as a Christian nation and then from Europe into the UK and then into the new world and so the West is now fundamentally Christian and the reason the West is fundamentally Christian is because of the Crusades and their ability to fight back these tremendous armies that burst out of Arabia and basically slaughtered all of the Christian brethren in the Middle East so here we see now the the gospel this is the period where it transfers over from the Middle East into Europe and he came to Thessalonica where there was a synagogue of the Jews now when he went into Macedonia there was no synagogue so he went to the place by the river where

prayer was want to be made but he always whenever he goes to a city he goes to the Jew first then to the Gentile and so he goes now in 2 Thessalonians the synagogue of the Jews and it says as his manner was he went in unto them and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of their scriptures now notice Luke is calling out very clearly to Theophilus that Paul is following very closely his Lord and Master Jesus Christ so in Luke 4 verse 16 Christ came to Nazareth where he had been brought up and as his custom was he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read and so we can see here that Jesus Christ was a Sabbath observer he observed the Sabbath he kept it holy and this was his habit this was his custom Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles followed his Lord he was a Christian he was a follower of Christ and so Paul's habit the very same way he saw it he learned from Christ he kept the Sabbath as a habit as as not something like oh I think it's a good idea to keep the Sabbath once in a while no true Christians observe the Sabbath that's there that's our manner that's what we do we follow our Lord Jesus Christ so Paul as his manner was he went in unto them and for three weeks he reasoned with them out of the scriptures now what does it mean to reason with them if we look at the the definition of this word reason with them it's actually the Greek word die dialogue oh my that we get our word dialogue from this and and notice here what it means it means to say something thoroughly to really examine an issue and express your full mind on the issue to discuss in argument or exhortation to really argue your

point to dispute to preach to reason to speak so this is a very strong word that that conveys dispute and debate and so that's what Paul did for three weeks out of the scriptures and notice now in verse 3 it says here opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead and that this Jesus whom I preached unto you is Christ now this is a what we call a collision of ideas and this is the service that we provide when we enter into dispute in to debate about the identity of Christ we're able to show people what is true and truth always stands no matter how much error you try to throw it truth no matter how much craft no matter how much you try to bring the truth down the truth is the truth the truth comes from God and it cannot be destroyed and so when we have this collision of ideas the truth stands and and notice now what is the fruit of having this collision of ideas well what what comes of of this debate he's going in and for three weeks he's coming back and he's showing them that that Christ had to suffer now why was that important to the Jews that Christ had to suffer because they were looking for their Messiah since the days of Solomon they have lost the kingdom and they've been in subjugation from one Gentile kingdom to another and now they're under subjugation from the Romans but they're reading their text and they know that they are to have a kingdom the Kingdom of Israel is to rule the whole world and so they're looking for their Messiah to come as they the the root of Jesse and the offspring of David and to sit on the throne of David and to establish the Kingdom of Israel and Christ came and

and said that he is the Christ and he didn't really look like a powerful King and he didn't look like the solution to the subjugation that they were suffering from the Roman emperors and so they rejected him not understanding that he was to come twice that first he was to come as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world and through that slaying to redeem all mankind and bless all the families of the earth and bring all mankind into Israel and then he is to return as the Messiah the true king the with with all the power and glory of the Son of God which is what they were really looking for and so Paul has to explain to these Jews this is the Messiah and and the necessity of his crucifixion because they just couldn't understand this they're they're looking for a powerful King and then all they see is Christ crucified and so for three weeks he's disputing with them and showing them the scriptures and showing them the necessity of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ that it was necessary for him to have suffered and then risen again from the dead and that this Jesus whom he is preaching to them this is the Messiah this is what the debate is all about this is what he's bringing to their attention that Christ is indeed the Messiah now the fruit of this conflict of ideas is that some of them believed and they associated then with Paul and Silas they they they put their allegiance now with these teachers because they realize this this Jesus is in fact Messiah and of the devout Greek so you also in the synagogue now you also have the god-fearers they're not Jews they haven't gone through the circumcision and and become Jews but but they are god-fearers

and they do go to the tempter to the
synagogue and they hear the word of God
and they practice the morality that is
taught from the Hebrew God and so these
devout Greeks a great multitude so so
everybody's listening to this debate
going back and forth and he
Christ could never be the Messiah look
he suffering he died that's not art
that's not our our Messiah yes it was
necessary look here's the Scriptures let
me go back to what Moses taught you
let's look at what all the prophets
taught let's look into the Psalms this
is a necessary process he is our Messiah
and not just our Messiah not just our
king he's the son of God and he is
coming to establish the Kingdom of
Israel and so the devout Greeks are
listening to all of this a great
multitude and of the chief women not a
few so a lot of people are listening to
this collision of ideas and look what
happens they realize in the collision of
ideas the truth stands the truth stands
and so they are now converted and
brought to the truth by this collision
of ideas what if Paul was shy
what if Paul thought you know I have the
truth and I'm really comfortable knowing
the truth and I'm gonna be in the
kingdom and what I like to do is go to
Sabbath services by myself with my few
friends and have a coffee and have a
biscuit and it's really nice we have a
nice sermon coffee and biscuits and then
we go home and we come back the next
week and it's really wonderful that was
in Paul Paul was I've got to bring this
truth to everyone they must know that
Jesus is in fact the Christ and so he's
willing to go and risk his life even to
bring this truth to the people but the
Jews which didn't believe so it's people

think the Jews didn't believe no the
Jews believed the Jews were converted
but there are a set that didn't believe
those Jews that didn't believe they were
moved with envy oh okay so this is
what's going on there at the Sabbath
each week looking very high and mighty
and very holy and all the robes but they
have a different agenda

God is not really serious business for
them what is serious business is being
in control and building a bit of a an
ego Empire and so when they saw the
masses of people that began to associate
with Paul and Silas and want the truth
from Paul and Silas they didn't rejoice
that people are being converted to the
truth they were envious that they didn't
have that ability and they maybe think
it's human ability they didn't have that
ability to

people to the truth and so what did they
- they took unto them certain lewd men
men men that you know you just wouldn't
expect a Christian to associate with
these type of men of a baser sort and
they gathered a company and set the city
in an uproar and assaulted the house of
Jason and sought to bring them out of
out to the people now actually just
before I get into this let me mention
that we are having our debate next week
next Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. we
are going to be debating I am going to
be debating a Muslim Imam around the
question is Allah the God of the Bible
because if he is then the Muslims truly
have the moral right to to bring this
truth to us and and convert us to Islam
so Jews become Christians because Christ
came and then they say he Christ was
just a prophet he wasn't the Son of God
and he actually put predicted that
Muhammad would come as the last prophet

and now Muhammad came is so we should all now go from Jews to Christians and then from Christians to Muslims well it is Allah the God of the Bible because if he's not Islam is false and if he is then Christians should become Muslim so this is a fundamental question are we worshipping the same God and so we certainly hope that you'll join us on November 17th at 7 p.m. and I actually just got an email from somebody who's flying up from the states to to participate and be involved in this debate and audience participation will be welcome and you know a lot of people are afraid of debate and when they hear debate they they think of something like this so here's here's a Muslim debate so you know I'm not sure how helpful this is and a lot of people when they think of debate they sort of think it is free-for-all but I don't think that this is what Paul was involved in when when we looked up that word reasoned and dispute it meant that he he showed his whole mind on it on a topic and so obviously he was engaged in a process where he could speak his mind and his opponents could speak their mind and the people listening could listen to both sides and that's why the debate that we're having is not a free-for-all it's not going to be something like this where people are interrupting each other and not listening to each other it's gonna be professionally moderated and I've spoken to the amount of sherry or shake I had a good conversation with him on the phone he seems like a very reasonable man an intelligent man and so gonna be an intelligent conversation professionally moderated so that people can hear both sides and we can get to the truth now that's what we mean by by

a debate it's in exchange it's a dialogue that's rich that that's not soft it's hard but it's professionally done so that we respect each other and we listen to both sides and certainly hope you'll participate in this so we saw now that after this dispute that the the Jews were moved with envy or some of the Jews that didn't believe were moved with envy and so they're associating with these lewd fellows crimm vulgar people that who know godly man should have an association with but they did and this is sort of how how these people who appear religious on the outside but inside they're far from it this is how they behave so they gathered a company and set all the city on an uproar and assaulted the house of Jason and sought to bring them out to the people and when they found them not so they couldn't find paul and silas they drew jason who were one of the disciples and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city crying and what's their what's their cry what they should say is we are envious we don't like the progress that Paul and Silas are making but instead they sugarcoat it and what they say is these have turned the world upside down and they have come here also so so they've heard the reputation of Paul and Silas and the power of the word that they preach and they're now telling the rulers look they've come to disrupt Thessalonica as well whom jason has received into his house and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar saying that there is another king so they know how to rile people up they rile up the crowd and now they want to rile up the the the rulers saying that that there's another king one Jesus so the so they

would have listened to the dispute where Paul was educating the Jews that Christ in fact is the Messiah because they were all looking for him and so he had to explain to them that he is in fact the king of kings and that it was necessary for him to die and to be dead for three days and three nights according to the scriptures and then to rise to then ascend to heaven and then he's going to return as the king so they they go they understand very clearly if he's the Messiah he's the king and they use that even though that's the Jewish knowledge and understanding and for hundreds of years this is what they've been looking for they now use this knowledge to go to the Romans to say oh they're talking about another King one Jesus to rile up the the wrong and so says here they troubled the people and the rulers of the city so just stirring things up when they heard these things and when they had taken security so some sort of bond or bail of Jason and of the other they then let them go and the Brethren immediately they understand now the danger that Paul and Silas are in so they immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea so again we saw in the map where where they're going so they crossed over into the Apple listen to Philip I to Amphipolis - Apollonia they went down to Thessalonica and now the the Brethren because of the danger they're in are moving them over - now to Berea so who coming there again this is his habit to go into the synagogue of the Jews so he keeps the Sabbath every week and he always goes to the Jew first and so now he goes to Berea finds the synagogue and he goes there now these Jews the Jews in Berea were

more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind if you're preaching the Word of God you're preaching the scriptures okay we're gonna listen to you it wasn't this automatic resistance because they had some other form of agenda on their mind no we want the truth and so he Luke notes this that as he went with Paul to Berea this this is how the truth was received in Berea what did they do they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so so Paul is showing them that Christ is Messiah and that he is the king coming to restore the kingdom to Israel and so they would hear this message on the Sabbath Paul would point to the various scriptures and then every single day for the rest of the week they're searching the scriptures to see are these things so then they come back on the Sabbath for the next installment and Paul is just educating them on the role of Messiah on the role of Christ as Messiah and so now he says here that many of them believed also of honorable women which were Greeks and of men not a few so he has a lot of converts in Thessalonica where there was resistance but God Christ gave him the wisdom to deal with that resistance tons of converts then he comes to Berea where there isn't the resistance there's acceptance if you're preaching the scriptures we're gonna listen to you and so he has the audience now where they're gonna listen to him but they're not just cult members who just follow anything that they're told they go and they search the scriptures to see could Christ really have been prophesied in all of the scriptures did Moses speak of Christ did Isaiah speak of Christ that

Jeremiah speak of Christ is Christ in the songs and so they're searching the scriptures to see is what Paul is telling us in fact true and they see that it's true and the tons of converts as a result and then immediately the Brethren sent away Paul did I wonder if I missed uh sorry I missed a verse let's go back so therefore verse 12 many of them believed also of honorable women which were Greeks and of men not a few so a lot of the people are now even the Honorable Greeks are coming into the church but when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the Word of God was preached of Paul in Berea they came there also and stirred up the people these were really envious Jews they did not like the fact that Paul was being successful and be built up inside them and they wanted to destroy Paul's work so they leave vessel Anika they come down to Berea to then challenge Paul with his teachings and then immediately the Brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea so you can see that the Brethren understand the danger that Paul is in and they rally behind him and they support him and they send him to a place where he can be safe but Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea and they that conducted Paul brought him to Athens and receiving the commandment unto Silas and Timothy for to come to him with all speed they departed so so now there it be he's moved to Athens and he sends a message to the people that brought him to Athens go back and tell Silas and Timothy to get here as quickly as possible now while Paul waited for them at Athens his spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry so now he's deep into Europe he's in Athens

now and he just can't believe what he's seeing the whole city the whole city is given to idolatry and so he says here therefore know this again there for disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews and with the devout persons and in the market daily with them that met with him so the whole city which would implicate the Jews as well are all involved in this idolatry and again the word here for disputed the word that's translated disputed here is the same word dialog Emine which we saw earlier was to say thoroughly to have your full say to explain something to discuss an argument to exhort to dispute and so he was in debate he was in debate in Thessalonica now he comes to Athens and he's in debate again but clearly is the kind of debate where they're not cutting each other off and talking over each other they're able to say their whole piece and really exchange and listen to one another so he does that on the Sabbath and then every single day he goes to the marketplace and he disputes with the Greeks and so in the market daily he's needs debating with the Greeks that met him then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him and it's important for us to pause here and just say how important philosophy was to the Greeks and how important philosophy was to West civilization our whole civilization we really must credit to the Greeks when when everybody was involved with all these different gods and what we call pre modernism it was it was the Greeks that just suddenly began to ponder really big questions and to debate with one another and to enquire with one another what is true that the the the

same polytheism that from Nimrod went into all these different societies all these different civilizations and was really at the root and foundation of every civilization including the Greeks these men suddenly came along and started to ask some big questions and question their gods and and begin to wonder about God and and what what is the purpose of life and and that the the real stars the superstars of Greek philosophy were Socrates Plato and then Aristotle that this man Socrates who is this profound and very rigorous thinker he came on the scene there are many philosophers before him but he sort of the defining philosopher and then he had a student Plato that he talked and and Plato has influenced our society it's influenced Christianity Plato is everywhere basically but and why was Socrates didn't write anything down Socrates just had disciples including Plato and he asked me at this what's called the Socratic method so he taught by asking questions giving people to understand what they don't understand and to be humble about what they know because there's so much that they don't know and so he was a very profound thinker and had a big big impact but he taught Plato Plato wrote things down and Plato started a school photonic school and so Plato had a huge impact on many many philosophers even though he learned from Socrates and then he had his own idea so the Platonic thought is very different from the Socratic thought but yet he was a student of Socrates and owes a lot to Socrates and then Plato taught Aristotle and why this is so important is the the concepts that they were arguing over the language had to evolve in order to

contain the meaning and the nuances that they needed to communicate with each other so God will then choose this Greek language to communicate the truths of Messiah in the New Testament and a lot of people think that you know the Hebrew language is their sacred language it's not the Hebrew language is just the language that Abraham spoke and God is very practical so Abraham spoke this language so he worked with that language because that's not the language that these Hebrews people spoke and in fact the Hebrew language is very concrete and very useful for things like do this don't do that but now when we start having to deal with the notion that God becomes man and and and the resurrection and all we need a very precise language that is able to deal with the abstract and that's what happened with these powerful thinkers is they were dealing with the abstract and they created a language that could contain effectively with precision the truths that God is now going to communicate through Messiah now Aristotle had a student and his name was Alexander the Great and as he learned all of these full of philosophical concepts from Aristotle he was just stricken with amazement and he thought that what the Greeks had developed was so wonderful that the whole world needed to be exposed to this or not so much exposed to it as subjugated by it and so as a young man 30 years old he just burst out of briefs in all directions to basically Helen eyes the whole world in Greek was known then as Hellenes and so the notion of making the world Greek was hellenization and so this language then just covered the whole known world and and we call it

Koine Greek meaning common Greek because everybody used that everybody spoke it it was the common they they go back in architect

archeology and they find shopping lists in Koine Greek they find random notes in Koine Greek this was the language of the people in the whole world spoke it so so the the Greek Empire had all these different nations as subject nations but they could all communicate with each other because they all spoke the same language

we said earlier that Paul was a Roman citizen and and what Rome did when when Rome conquered Greek are the Greeks really the Greek culture conquered Rome so they were so enamored with the Greek culture that they adopted it so yes they conquered Greek or Greece financially economically Greece was subjugated to them but the culture from Greece conquered Rome so the Romans became the new Greeks and that combination of this powerful language this very precise and robust language and the Roman infrastructure the Romans went everywhere building roads why so that they could collect the taxes from all these different nations and bring the taxes back to Rome today the old saying all roads lead to Rome basically meaning all the taxes that are collected need to get back to Rome this combination sets the stage for the preaching of Paul so Paul was a chosen vessel

he knew Greek inside out he knew Greek philosophy he was a Jew of the Jews a Hebrew of the Hebrews he was a Roman citizen so he could travel all over these roads freely into all nations and could use this Greek language very powerfully going into the Septuagint and preaching to the Greek and the Jew how

the truth of Messiah so this is a very very happy coincidence between the philosophical rope philosophically robust language of the Greeks and the very powerful infrastructure and wide infrastructure of the Romans and the rich knowledge and capability of Paul it's a very very happy coincidence I shouldn't say coincidence we know it's not a coincidence it's the design of and this is how now the gospel can spread to the whole world because everybody speaking this language that has the ability to contain very powerful and abstract concepts and so the truths of God can now be communicated to the whole world and so he come now to Athens and there's these philosophers first the Epicureans now the Epicureans or Epicurians who founded this school of thought it was all about he was a hedonist so it's all about pleasure and he says here it's impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and honorably and justly and it's impossible to live wisely and honorably and justly without living pleasantly so what he's really saying here is that the purpose of life really is to be happy to have a to have pleasure but he's not talking about pleasure the way hedonist today talk about pleasure if you go to Jamaica or some of these resorts it's all about sensual pleasure he wasn't into sensual pleasure he was into a mental pleasure he was into the pleasure of a happy long life and so there had to be balance you had to you had to live in such a way that no bad consequences would come upon you and so that was up the curious now Epicurus was also an atheist and so in his school of thought and with his disciples he basically taught that

there's no God and this was sort of the logic that he would use to destroy anybody who wanted to believe in God is God willing to prevent evil but he's not able to well then he's not omnipotent omnipresent is he able but not willing well then he's malevolent is he both able and willing well then where does evil come from is he neither able nor willing then why call him God and so with this kind of reasoning again these are very powerful thinkers with adept use of language he basically created a lot of atheists with his philosophy now the scripture also speaks in addition to the Epicureans of the Stoics and the Stoics were similar to the Epicureans in that they also believe that the purpose of life is happiness and here they say which is achieved by virtue living according to the dictates of reason ethical and philosophical training self-reflection careful judgment and intercom and so their whole philosophy was that you know it's not what happens to you it's how you perceive what happens to you and if you can get to the state of intercom or nothing disturbs you and you can go through life and just be happy because you're not your your moods and your your experience your your outlook on life is not subject to or govern by the experiences that happen around you anything can happen around you and you have this inner calm that was the this the teaching of the Stoics now between the two the Epicureans were atheists they did not believe in God whereas the Stoics did believe in God even though they both had the same sort of notion that you need to lead a happy life and in fact the Stoics were closer to christianity and and paul would later

borrow some of these stoic notions to to explain christianity which kind of indicates that probably some of these thoughts are the ones that came into the church but in any case would we continue here that there was Epicureans that encountered him as well as the Stoics and some said what will this babbling say these are the intellects and here comes this jewish guy talking about some strange religion and they want to know what does he say others though said he seems to be a setter fourth of strange gods

we even we've never heard of these gods and they took him and brought him to a replicas saying may we know what this new doctrine were of you speakers so you know again the all these roads led to to Rome and this infrastructure was there but because of that that as people traveled after the Roman soldiers went to these different posts and they spent time and they learned about these different gods they would then come back and this was the place to exchange all these different doctrines and ideas so they basically heard it all and now Paul comes with something that they haven't heard before so this is the place with a sort of central point and and they're listening to him and they want to know what is this new doctrine for you bringing certain strange things to our ears we would know therefore what these things mean for all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear of some new thing and again if you think of this old old world that Rome built all of these roads and there this infrastructure allowed people to travel mix with other nations and then come back and have these exchanges

and so this is what they did they they would gather together and have these conversations to say you know what do you believe what have you heard and they're trying to figure out what is love what is life all about then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and he said to them so he's now in the middle of Mars Hill and he said to them you men of Athens I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious for as I passed by and behold and beheld your devotions I found an altar with this inscription to the unknown God and so he saw this altar that you know there's all different altars to all these different gods from all the different nations but then he finds this one altar that's to the unknown God and so I found an altar with this inscription to the unknown God whom therefore you ignorant ly worship it might declare unto you notice how really adept Paul is because you know he's used to going into the Jews and working with the Jews and so he worked with Jews out of their scriptures now he's in Athens by himself and he's seeing how superstitious they are and how they they're totally into idolatry and every which way and so he finds an angle that he can he can reach them where they are he says you know I've become all things to all men that by any means I may gain some and so he's constantly seeing what's the angle that I can take to reach this mind and in this case as they have all these different altars he finds an avenue he finds a door he finds a window okay this God that you're worshiping here the unknown God this is the God that I'm telling you about so it's not so strange you you're already worshiping and you

just don't know who they're for you
ignorant ly worship Him declare I unto
you God that made the world and
everything in it see that he is Lord of
Heaven and Earth dwells not in temples
made with hands so of course they would
have had lots of temples and he's
telling them look God doesn't dwell in
temples made with hands neither is
worshipped with men's hands so again
these are these are idolaters and
they're coming from all different
nations and learning about all these
different gods and he's saying look
neither is he worshipped with men's
hands as though he needed anything
seeing he gives to all life and breath
and all things and has made of one blood
all nations of men for to dwell on all
the face of the earth and has determined
the times before appointed and the
bounds of their habitation that they
should seek the Lord
if happily they might feel after him so
there is this this desire in this need
in every nation and that's why you're
seeing them all these different gods are
assembled in this this place because in
every nation there is this desire to
know God to seek Him and to find him
though he be not far from every one of
us for in him we live and move and have
our being
notice this now as certain also of your
own poets have said for we are also his
offspring I mean we should not read over
this Paul he reaches people where they
are he's familiar with their poetry the
Greek language is this very robust
language and you look at something like
Homer's Iliad and Homer's Odyssey these
great works and and and other poets as
well this is what they prided themselves
in and Paul is not oh I only read the

scripture I only read the Bible that's
all I do
I don't know anything but the Bible well
if you only knew the Bible then he
cannot speak to people from different
persuasions but here he's able to talk
to them and say you know I've read your
poets and then you're in in their poetry
the poets say that we are his offspring
so let's talk about your poetry and
let's begin there but this is very very
powerful and I think if Paul were alive
today he would read the Quran when 25%
of mankind is Muslim denying the
divinity of Jesus Christ and this 25%
are enforced they cannot leave the
religion or they'll be put to death and
now they're spreading and this is an
ideology that is spread by coercion Paul
would know the Quran and he would be
able to quote the Koran and reason with
the Muslim mind from the Koran us oh no
no I would I would never read the Quran
and I don't care about Muslims let them
all you know who cares if they end up in
the lake of fire as long as I can go to
Sabbath and have a cup of coffee and a
biscuit and hear a good sermon and then
go home I'm happy you know I read a
couple of years ago a book by this man
Bill Warner and it's called a two-hour
Quran and I have been recommending this
book to as many people as I can because
what this scientist has done
is he has gone through the Islamic
scriptures very painstakingly and very
methodically the Quran is a very
confusing bucket it's not written in a
narrative form it's a kind of mumble
jumble it's mixed up that you can't just
open it and read and understand it and
what he's done because it's not an order
what he's done is he's taken it and he's
put it back in chronological order

because he studied the life of Muhammad and he understands which which verses came to Muhammad or which verses were written based on what Muhammad with what was happening in Muhammad's life so he's taken Mohammed's life and he's put the Quran back in order and then he there's a lot of repetition in the ground he's taken all the repetition out and in two hours you can understand the Quran now if we are to take the gospel to all nations and Islam is the dominant religion on the planet and fastest growing shouldn't we be familiar with their texts if Paul was alive he'd be familiar with their text and he'd be able to appeal to them out of their text as a starting point and then bring them to the scriptures so I certainly hope that you'll join us for this debate next week so that you can become familiar with what Muslims believe and and I certainly hope you would look up on Amazon I get the Kindle version of this book it'll probably cost you seven or eight nine ten dollars a very inexpensive for the price of a latte and then a couple of hours you can be informed and you can understand what Muslims believe and why they deny the divinity of Jesus Christ and how to reason with them in a way that they know that you understand where they're coming from so here now he says you know your poets teach this that we're all his offspring and so I'm gonna appeal to you from your own your own poets for as much then as we are the offspring of God we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone and that's what a lot of these Gentiles Gentile nations would do is they would worship stone and they would believe that spirits inhabited these stones and

some of these stones were meteorites
that would fall from the heavens and so
they would worship these meteorite
stones and think that they had very
special significance and certainly in
Arabia that's what they did before
Muhammad hundreds of years before
Muhammad was born they worshipped the
stone in the Kaaba and then when he came
he basically put a biblical narrative
around it saying that this is something
that Abraham did but the Scriptures tell
us we must never bow down to stump and
so five times a day all over the world
Muslims are facing this stone and
they're worshipping it and here the
scripture makes it very clear that the
Godhead is not to think that the Godhead
is like unto gold or silver or stone or
graven art and man's device and the
times of this ignorance God winked at
but now commands all men everywhere to
repent so now is the time of repentance
because he has appointed a day in the
which he will judge the world in
righteousness by that man
that's Christ whom he has ordained so
this is now that the gospel is now open
to the whole world and he's commanding
men everywhere all men and there's our
job to take the gospel to all men all
nations and and preach the gospel to
them and command them to repent whereof
he has given assurance unto all men in
that he has raised him from the dead and
so that is the assurance that were given
that Christ as Christ has risen from the
dead
even so will we rise from the dead and
so we can have this occurrence that we
will live after our death because Christ
lived after his
and so this is the assurance in that he
raised him from the dead and when they

heard of the resurrection of the Dead
some mocked but others said we will hear
you again of this matter so very clearly
those that mocked would be the
Epicureans they they they didn't believe
in afterlife they didn't believe in God
just sits here and now live a good life
and then you die and so to have somebody
now say you know when you die you're
gonna be brought back God is gonna bring
you back to life they just laughed at
this

but the Stoics did believe in God and
they had just never heard this before
and they're listening to this and it's
making sense and they're like okay we
want to hear this again so it so come
back and we want to go into this more
deeply we'll hear you again of this
matter

so Paul departed from among them however
certain men clave unto him so certain
men remember these are philosophers so
some of these philosophers are getting
it and they're now attaching themselves
to him

so wherever he goes they're now
following him and they want to learn
more about this doctrine and and they
believed so he was able to reason with
them out of their poetry out of their
different gods that this is the unknown
God you're already worshiping him you
need to understand who this is and so
they listen to this there they're gonna
give him in here and then he's able to
then take them to the scriptures and
show them the truth and these
philosophers now become Christians among
the which was Dionysus the era replicate
and a woman named Damaris and others
with them so obviously when this was
written these were very famous
individuals well-known Theophilus would

know exactly who these are so he would understand the implications of this but it's important for us to see that you know Diana psious was one of these philosophers and this this is when the philosophers now start coming into the church so prior to this we've had the Jews first coming into the church very solid in the scriptures we had the Greeks who were god-fearers coming into the church very solid in the scriptures understanding the Hebrew context and now we have these really intelligent philosophers who don't have any background in the Hebrew Scriptures they're now believing with their powerful intellect and they're now coming into the church and this is the beginning of really the end this this is going to cause no end of pain for the Christian Church because this is now the beginning of Gnosticism this is where they come in and they borrow the the scriptures but they infuse the scriptures with meaning that comes from the Gnostics from the ancient Egyptian ancient Greek philosophy it is now starting to come into the church and a lot of these people don't realize it but much of traditional Christianity begins right here and that in a couple of centuries with with the Council of Nicaea and the council at Laodicea and all of these different councils it's these Greek philosophers that have infiltrated the church and have have hijacked the scriptures and begin to allegorize everything that they create a completely different religion so between Arabia the Arabians coming in and cleaning house and between these philosophers hijacking the religion it's a wonder that the truth of God remains today but it does and and and Christ

told us that it would in fact he goes further to say this gospel of the kingdom of God will be preached to the whole world and then the end will come so what a what an honor and what a glory and what a privilege that we simple people as we are can understand the Scriptures and and have the honor to declare it to the whole world and so I want to remind you again that next week on Thursday at 7 o'clock p.m. at the Sandman

tell in mississauga we're going to have this debate we're going to have a dispute a professionally moderated dispute with a Muslim Imam that says that Christ is not God that he's just a prophet in fact that he prophesied the coming of Muhammad and that we should all follow Muhammad and myself a convert a believer in the Lord in the Messiah and a pastor there to declare the gospel of the kingdom of God and let's see what stands after this exchange so we certainly hope that you'll join us I hope that you've enjoyed Acts chapter 17 and we look forward next week God willing that will continue with acts 18 thanks so much for joining us and if you're able to join us on the chat that would be wonderful at CGI org slash web cast and again god bless you
Jesus Christ his Lord