

Acts to Revelation
The World of the First Christians

Session 9 – A Road Trip to Athens

Session Summary –Paul, Silas, and Timothy escaped Thessalonica and set-up shop in the remote city of Berea, where they preached the Gospel. Once again, the mobs got violent, and Paul was sent ahead to Athens for his safety. Tonight we will take the 300-mile road trip from Berea to Athens in present-day Greece, visiting ancient sites such as Mount Olympus and Thermopylea along the way. In the epic city of Athens, we will investigate the accounts of Paul, including his work as a tentmaker in the Agora and his preaching of the Gospel at the Areopagus.

“People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To an Unknown God.’ So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship – and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.” – Acts 17:22-23

The Areopagus, also known as Mars Hill, is a small mountain of marble just northwest of the Acropolis. When Paul was in Athens, the Areopagus had become a popular gathering place to discuss and debate ideas. According to Acts 17, it was here at the Areopagus that Paul engaged the “professional thinkers” of Athens. In his speech to the Areopagus council, Paul used an altar to the “unknown god” to illustrate that the God unknown to the Athenians was the one true God of the Bible. Paul went on to make the Gospel understandable within the Athenian system of belief.

Scripture Reading: Acts 17:110-34

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain how the ancient Bereans modeled the proper way to listen to Bible teachers?
2. Explain how Mount Olympus is both real and mythological?
3. Who led the alliance of Greek city-states at the Battle of Thermopylae?
4. What is considered the most famous building on the Acropolis in Athens?
5. What is Mars Hill?

Scripture for Next Week: Acts 18, 1 & 2 Corinthians

