

WE ARE ON MISSION TO REACH ONE MORE

CCC DNA Statements

Every person matters to God, so every person matters to us. God invites every one of us to join him in his great mission to reach one more—one more coworker, neighbor, family member, and friend.

Scripture Passages: Acts 17:16–34

OVERVIEW

Paul's time in Athens provides great insight for how we might share the gospel message today. Though he was surrounded by a marketplace full of idols, he was able to find common ground with the Greeks and share about Jesus with "those who happened to be there." His willingness to connect with relevant words in relational ways caused his hearers to say, "we want to hear you again." Paul's example encourages us to be persistent in our own efforts to "reach one more" for Christ.

GROUP OBJECTIVES

- Acknowledge and engage with the presence of God in our midst.
- Read through Acts 17:16–34 as a group.
- Discuss Paul's mission and message in the city of Athens.
- Reflect on the grace and direction God has given us to awaken and reconcile the world to God.
- Encourage one another and build each other up to live biblical, Spirit-empowered lifestyles.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What is the farthest from home that you have ever been?
- Was there anything about that place's culture that was hard to get used to?

OPENING PRAYER

- Pray that we will recognize God's presence and that his Word will speak to our hearts in a transformative way that honors him.

BIBLE STUDY

- Set up the text (Acts 17:16–34) with a brief biography of Paul up to this point.
 - » His radical conversion (Acts 9:1–31)
 - » His unique call to minister to the Gentiles (Galatians 1:15–16, 2:7–10)

Read through Acts 17:16–34.

- Encourage everyone to skim through the passage again silently and to take note of ideas that God is pressing on their hearts.
- Open up discussion by inviting everyone to share their initial responses. Let discussion flow organically from what is stirring in everyone's hearts or, for more focused conversation, you can ask some of the following questions:
 - » Who are the groups of people that Paul speaks to throughout this passage and what are the different venues in which he speaks?
 - » Epicurean philosophers believed that the principal aim of life was to secure happiness while Stoic philosophers believed that pursuing knowledge was the highest aim of life. Both believed that death was the end of existence. How might they receive the message of Jesus and the resurrection?

- » In what ways is Paul's audience in the synagogue different from his audience in the marketplace of Athens and the Areopagus?
 - » What prompts Paul's message (see verses 16, 19, 23)?
 - » What did Paul model for us to awaken and reconcile the world to God?
 - » What did Paul say that stands out to you?
 - » How did people respond to Paul?
- As your conversations move from what the text says to how we should respond to what it says, ask some questions like this:
 - » Read 1 Peter 3:13–17, emphasizing verse 15. How does Paul live according to this command? How do we live according to this command?
 - » Consider what Paul says in Acts 17:26–31. What do we know to be true about God's pursuit of all people?
 - » In what ways are our spirit's provoked for the people around us? How can they be provoked more deeply?

CLOSING PRAYER

- Open the time up for prayer requests from members of the group.
- Thank him for the time you have spent in his Word and presence.
- Ask God to continue reveal himself in life-changing ways.
- Pray that you are open and obedient to be the Christ-revealing community God has created you to be.