LESSON 19

PAUL AND THE UNKNOWN GOD



Aim: **To teach the children how Paul preached to people who had never heard of Jesus.**

Scripture Reading: **Acts 17:16-34**

Memory Verse: **Acts 17:30**
[God] commands all people everywhere to repent.

PRESENTING THE LESSON

STARTING POINT

What do you do on a visit to a place you have never been before? It can be another town or region, or just someone else's house. Yes, you take a good look around, because it is all new to you.

MAIN POINTS OF THE LESSON

1. That is just what Paul did when he visited the city of Athens for the first time. It was a big and important city, with many beautiful buildings. As he walked around he noticed that many of those buildings were places of worship. But the inhabitants worshipped idols, false gods they made from metal or stone. Paul was very sad when he saw that (17:16). The statues of those gods may have been beautiful works of art, but they were dead. They had no power to help anyone.
2. Every day Paul preached to the people in the synagogue, in the market-place and in other public places. The Athenians loved to discuss ideas and were always interested in new ones, so they asked Paul to explain his teachings before the city council (17:17-21).
3. Paul did not want to hurt or offend the people of Athens. He wanted to win them for the Lord, not drive them away. Therefore, he did not say how foolish they were to worship gods they had made with their own hands. Instead, he said all the objects of worship showed him that they were very religious. He said that he even found an altar named "to an unknown God". Paul declared that he could tell them about that God (17:22-23). **Show Picture 19.**
4. Paul taught them: God is Creator of the whole world and all mankind. God has a plan for this world and cares about us. The true God is alive, not some dead idol made of gold or silver or stone. God will judge those who do not turn their backs on sin and follow him. God wants us to know him personally, so he sent Jesus as our Saviour. He raised Jesus from the dead (17:24-31).
5. Some laughed at what Paul said, but a few Athenians did believe (17:32-34).

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Our Response to the Story

A man from an African island was converted to Christianity. His wife's parents were the caretakers of a temple for idols. The old father was partly paralysed; it took him two hours just to peel a banana. When the young men witnessed to them about the Lord Jesus, they were converted, too. Within two weeks' time, the father had grown so much better that he was able to use his hands to smash the idols he used to worship.

Our God is alive, not dead like an idol. God wants us to know him personally and receive his help according to his will.

Instil the Memory Verse



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