



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Acts 17:16-34

“Great Lion of God - Paul and the Second Missionary Journey, part V”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul. What a magnificent ministry the Apostle did have and we thank Thee that by Thy grace through the Holy Spirit Thou didst work in his life to such an extent that many responded to the word and many did not. But many did and the message has come down to us today in 1983 that a man may be saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from any human works.

We are grateful for the grace that Thou hast shown to us. And we thank Thee for the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit who has shown us our sin and failure, and has caused us to lean on the blood that was shed for the forgiveness of our sins for time and for eternity. We are indeed grateful and we pray as we consider again the apostle's exciting ministry in the great city of Athens and Greece that we may be helped and blessed and encouraged and edified through the word. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] We are still studying the second missionary journey of the Apostle Paul and we have seen him come from Asia Minor across the Aegean Sea to Philippi and then on down to Berea where the Christians were more noble than those in Thessalonica in

the sense that they not only received the word with responsiveness as the citizens of Thessalonica had done but they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

Well, when the Apostle went on to Berea and when the Jews found out that the apostle was in Berea they came down to Berea in order to stir up difficulty for him again. And so the brethren sent Paul away to the sea and he made his way south to the great city of Athens. But nevertheless he gave them commandment as he left that Silas and Timothy should join him. And when you read the letters that Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica he makes reference to these incidental comments that he made to them about the way in which Silas and Timothy should join him and that ought to help you in your reading of the epistles that Paul wrote if you compare them with the Book of Acts.

But now he is in the city of Athens. There were two or three great cities in the ancient world and Athens was one of those great cities, Rome was another and Alexandria still another. But Paul the Tarsian Jew now preaches in the city of Pericles and Demosthenes, the city of Socrates, and Plato, and Aristotle, and the city of Sophocles, and Euripides. Many of the great men of the ancient world were associated with Athens and now Paul is at the intellectual capital of the ancient world. He was brought up in the religious capital of the world in Jerusalem, so far as his training was concerned, and he will end his days, so far as tradition goes, in the political capital of the world, the city of Rome. But in the midst of his days he preaches in the intellectual capital of the world, the city of Athens.

Athens, now, was a decadent pagan city with its glory fading fast. In fact, one of the better commentaries on the Book of Acts has spoken of the city at this time as a body without a soul. We notice, for example, in Acts chapter 17, in verse 21, that the historian Luke inserts a sentence which explains the condition of the city to some extent, for he says, “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.” Or some newer thing, or the latest

thing as we would say. So the city was given over to the sinking out of the latest fads, both in intellectual life and in other forms of life as well.

Here is Paul, then, a Jewish man now converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, a later Moses we might say, who confutes the descendents of the wisdom of Egypt again, another Daniel who proves to be wiser than the later caldians. Now Luke writes the story beginning at verse 16, he says,

“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest 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 some new thing.”

Now the apostle coming to Athens does not - no reference here is made to where he was staying, but as he observed the city and noticed the many places in which monuments were given to the gods of the day became disturbed in his own spirit. And perhaps sightseeing, like so many people today who go to Athens, sightseeing and looking at all of the monuments and all of the other things that suggested the false deities of the day, deep down within the Holy Spirit moved in his heart and he couldn't really stand it any longer. He was disturbed. He was not disturbed, incidentally, by the art, for Athens was a great city of art. He was not disturbed by the history and the traditions of

the city, for it was a city of great history and great traditions, and he was not disturbed by the philosophy. But he was disturbed by the idolatry.

One thinks that the life of the apostles and others must have been something like the street Christians of a decade or so ago who spent a lot of their time on the streets and in the process managed to win a number of people to the Lord, even though their doctrines were not quite as pure as they might be. Luke says that Paul's spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. There were temples to Demeter, the god of the earth. There were temples to Athena, the goddess of wisdom. There were temples to Zeus, the god of force and the great god. There were altars to shame, altars to rumor, altars to philanthropy. Almost all of the human ideas that we have had their altars and then, of course, the ancient gods of Rome and Greece were also represented there. Petronius, one of the earlier writers, said that it was easier to find a god than a man in Athens.

One can also see the vanity of human wisdom here, for they are interested in the gods but they are not really interested in what the apostle has to say. They do not go at it scientifically and even intellectually though it was the intellectual capital of the world. They hardly bother to pay any attention to what Paul is saying. They call him a seed picker, for that's what the word babbler means. He's just a seed picker, he's got a little thought here and a little thought there, it's like a fellow going out and throwing seeds on the ground. He doesn't have any real system, any real understanding of reality. He's no philosopher at all, but he's just got a few ideas. And one of his ideas is this god whose name is Resurrection. They don't even understand that he's talking about an event. And so they think of the doctrine of the resurrection is teaching about a god, a god named Resurrection.

That's so characteristic of the world. They don't understand Christianity, they don't really understand it, they do not want to understand it enough to even investigate its claims in a scientific and scholarly way. Now he mentions the Stoics and the Epicureans

who encountered Paul, and they specifically are the ones who said, “What will the seed picker say? Some, he seems to be a setter forth of strange gods.” No they’d like to know about strange gods because this would be some newer thing and they could go around to their friends and say, “Have you heard what Paul the apostle is saying?” It’s very much like Christians today who like to go around saying, “Have you read such and such a book and have you listened to - do you know, the new theory that so and so has propagated?” Almost all new Christian theories are false. You can read new books on the old topics and the great majority of them are false. But there are supposedly new approaches to the doctrine and almost all of them are false. The sad thing is that a teacher has to read a lot of them in order to keep up with what is actually being said, but so many of them are false. And I can just imagine that that’s the way in which they paid attention to the Apostle Paul.

As you know, from time to time I’ve given you some humorous definitions of philosophy and I won’t give you those again but I do have one that I thought you might not have heard. A modern philosopher is a person who, well this one I think you have heard, redoubles his efforts after he loses sight of his objective. But philosophy is the discovery that you might be worse off than you are [Laughter]. I kind of like that because that’s the way that one feels when he begins to study a philosophy and then until he finds that it really doesn’t measure up to the truth.

Well the Epicureans and the Stoics were rival schools of the day. Now they were like the existentialists and the new moralists and others of our day. We have different kinds of theology and different kinds of intellectual thought that grasp the people of the times. For example, today a great deal of talk is carried on over liberation theology, of existentialism which is still with us, and of course of some of the old, a little bit older now, in the orthodox theology of the Barthean school and the orthodoxy of other types.

In ethics the Epicureans felt that the chief aim of life was happiness. The Stoics, the chief aim of life is virtue by which a man becomes self sufficient. In religion the

Epicureans were theists. That is, they really believed in god. Not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's a great difference between believing in god and the God who is the Father of Jesus Christ. That's the difference between being a Mohammedan, or a Hindu, or a Jewish man and a belief in the God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a specific Christian doctrine.

So in religion the Epicureans were theists but they thought that the gods were largely careless of mankind and so they did not believe in the providence of God; that the power and authority of God governs all of our steps. The Stoics, on the other hand, were pantheists and they believed that god was in everything. That he was imminent, that he abided in everything and that the soul at death returned to the great soul, and thus for the Stoics there was no life after death. If one had to pick between the two the Stoics were much closer to Christianity than the Epicureans, but both were far from Christianity.

I say that the apostle was regarded as a seed picker. That is, a kind of person who really didn't have any system. He had a few thoughts that were interesting, they were faddist, but he didn't have any system, so they said, and therefore they regarded him with mockery.

The Berean Bible searchers, on the other hand, were entirely different. They were more philosophical than the Athenian men of learning because they did at least investigate the apostle's teaching to see whether it was so. That's the way we ought to do with all teaching. We should investigate it to see if it is true. But to dispense to say we are not interested in something without investigating it at all and then to speak dogmatically concerning it is to act foolishly. And in the case of the Stoics and the Epicureans that's what they did, they acted foolishly.

Some years ago I was asked to participate in Religions Emphasis Week at Southern Methodist University. A number of the leading students on the campus were engaging in growing together through common experiences in their little community, and a number of students were living together in a home and they called it a collegium. And I was asked

to go by the authorities of the university and speak to them on the subject of the resurrection.

And we gathered in the living room of this large house, and there were about twenty-five or thirty-five of the students at SMU. And in the gathering I presented something of the evidence for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, you could sense as the message that I was giving was given to them that they were no more interested in that than they were anything. That as far as I was saying was concerned they listened with a sort of bemused mockery and never bothered even to give any serious questions at the conclusion in the time of discussion. They were totally prejudiced and unscholarly in their search of the truth. And all that they could manifest was a thinly veiled scorn for everything that the Scriptures said concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is not scholarship. True scholarship is to seek to know the truth.

Well the Stoics and the Epicureans were the ones that the apostles encountered particularly in Athens, and so they took him to the Areopagus. That may be a reference to a place, or it may be a reference to group, for a group of men were also called the Areopagus, and may have been some of the leading men of the city to which he was taken. Or it may be to the place which one can see today when one visits Athens as the Areopagus. But we are not absolutely certain about that. There are some indications in this account that it was a group of men before whom he was speaking.

It's sometimes said that when the apostle came to Athens that there he spoke as a philosopher might speak to philosophers. And some have even said that this gives us grounds for approaching people on the grounds of philosophy. But the apostle does not argue from a philosophical viewpoint. It might sound at first as if he does. He doesn't talk about first principles as a man might talk about them in speaking to philosophers. One might argue right from the beginning concerning principia, our presuppositions, and speaking with a philosopher and pointing out that it's perfectly reasonable and it is

scholarly to begin with certain presuppositions, which would be contrary to certain presuppositions of human reason that a philosopher might begin with, and argue the case in that way for Christianity. One can make a very good argument for Christianity along those lines. It is not, of course, a convincing argument because conviction and convincing ultimately comes only from the Holy Spirit. But at least one can approach the truth that way.

But the apostle does not do that. Even though he is in Athens he approaches those who are before him from the standpoint of the biblical revelation of God as the creator and judge. And one can see this if you read it closely, that he does not do anything more than go back to the Book of Genesis. Now he goes back to the Book of Genesis because he's speaking largely to people who were not Jewish. If they had been Jewish and Hebrews he could have begun with the Old Testament revelation of the choice of Abraham and moved on from there as he did when he was in Antioch and Pasidia. But here, before people who are not exposed to scriptural truth, he goes back to the Book of Genesis and God is creator, and God as the ultimate judge, and begins and argues from that point.

And it's interesting, too, that he gives them something to believe. There are people who sometimes forget that one must give out something to believe before he calls upon people to believe. There's a word from Mr. Spurgeon that I've always appreciated. He talks about individuals who tell people to believe, believe, believe, but then do not give them anything to believe. And so Mr. Spurgeon says, “Hence if we do not teach men something we may shout, “Believe, believe, believe!” but what are they to believe?” Each exhortation requires a corresponding instruction or it will mean nothing. Escape, a preacher might say. But one will say, from what? Or fly, but whither? Be converted, but what is it to be converted? What from, what to? It is ours, as the Lord's instruments, to make known the answers to these questions. We cannot bring a person to faith but we are responsible to give the message of God. We are responsible to tell them about their

human condition, about the way that Jesus Christ has met our human condition by dying for sinners. And then we are responsible to appeal to them, trusting the Holy Spirit to work in his sovereign way in the hearts of men to bring those who are his people to Jesus Christ.

Well now let's notice the apostle's sermon beginning at verse 22, “Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.” To the Athenians admission of a search for something, Paul courteously and cleverly claims to have found it. He says, you're very religions, “For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, (that is your objects of devotions,) I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”

So Paul says, “I know that you're seeking some things because you have all of these things about you and you have an altar that says, ‘To the unknown god.’ You don't know him and I want you to know that I know him. And so I'm going to tell you about the one which you have an altar to.”

Now the body of his sermon follows in verse 24 through verse 29, and he says, in essence, the true God is not an idol, the true God is a parent. A parent. He is the Father of all men by creation. Listen to what he says, verse 24. Now notice how he begins from the divine revelation, “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.”

You see, they have the thought of a limited God that they can place in a temple in the form of an idol. And so they bow down before an idol. But God is not a limited God. He's the one who is the Lord of heaven and earth and he's made all things. In fact, he's made all of them materials out of which you built this great temple. It's a fundamental mistake people make to think that God is a limited God. We cannot even represent God by an idol. If we represent God by an idol what do we say about God? Well we know that no matter what kind of physical idol we set up in the desire to

represent God, every piece of physical material sooner or later will corrupt, even gold and silver. And so what we are saying, in essence, is that God is a corruptible God.

Now, of course, I know many people do not, in knowledge, do that. They do not intentionally do that. But nevertheless that is true. Any person who worships an idol has a limited view of God. He may say, “This helps me think about God,” but it helps him think about God in an unbiblical and untrue way.

So the apostle begins with Genesis chapter 1, “He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” So he is not only the creator and therefore immense, filling the whole earth and beyond. In systematic theology we say concerning God that he is not only omnipresent, that is in everything, he is incidentally in this pulpit. Of course he's not in this pulpit in the same way that he is in heaven but there is no place in his universe that he is not there. But when we say, “God is immense,” we mean he is not only here but he is also beyond everything in this universe. He is not only an imminent God, one who abides here in our midst in everything and cannot be excluded from anything, but he is also over and above all things and beyond. And even out beyond space. And when there is no space but God, there God is. He is omnipresent and he is immense.

So how can you set a God like that in a temple? “Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, since he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” Now the Epicureans thought of matter as eternal. They felt that matter was eternal and thus there were two eternal things, would be two eternal things. That is, the personal God and also matter. But the apostle does not believe in doctrine like that. To him there is one eternal being and it is God. He is the maker and he is not made.

Furthermore he is the originator of the nations. In verse 26 the apostle says, “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” Now

this is a blow to the proud Athenians. The Athenians thought there was a major distinction between Athenians and everybody else.

When I studied classical Greek one of the first things that our teacher told us when we began to read in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and, in fact, when we began to read any of our sentences he said, “It's important that you understand the meaning of the term *hoi barbaroi*. Now *hoi barbaroi*, of course, is the word from which we get “the barbarians”. But the Athenians thought of everybody who was not an Athenian as being a barbarian.

I didn't have any difficulty at all in understanding that, and perhaps the teacher went on to say, “It's just like we Charlestonians.” We are the people and everybody else outside of Charleston is the barbarians and so all of the Greek class for the next week or two spoke of everybody outside of Charleston as being *hoi barbaroi*. That's the way we used to speak of you Texans, *hoi barbaroi*. You weren't from the holy city and consequently that's what you were [Laughter].

Now you can see that when the apostle comes into an atmosphere like that where they took it seriously, we didn't take it seriously in Charleston, we smiled occasionally when we said that [Laughter]. But they took it seriously in Athens. And so for him to say that, “He is made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,” caused them to think, “Well the Partheans, you mean they are just as we are? And the Egyptians and all of the rest of the people are just as we are?” So the apostle is stepping on some toes here when he speaks of the Athenians and everybody else being the same. All of these doctrines that we have about individuals not being on a level with others like, of course, the Nazis and the superiority of the Nordics and the Arians, all of that is a vast scientific hoax. That may be true that in a particular time and in a particular age certain parts of our human race may be so deprived of the proper training and experiences that they may be greatly behind others in intellect but basically all people are the same. And sooner or later that will be demonstrated. We all have the same, yes, we

all have the same family tree. We all go back to Adam. And so consequently we all have the same family tree.

Now the apostle continues, I can imagine that there was quite a bit of stirring in the audience about this time, he says, “And has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” The times before appointed. In other words, he is the governor of history. There is a purpose of the ages. The apostle in Ephesians chapter 3, in verse 11, speaks of the purpose of the ages; the eternal purpose. God has a purpose. It, of course, goes all the way back to the arrangements made in ages past between the persons of the trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each determining to carry out the particular task to which they are committed. The Father to elect a people, the Son to accomplish an atonement for the people, the Holy Spirit to apply the benefits of the atoning work of Christ and then, of course, ultimately for the people to be given dominion over the whole of the earth. And there are many ramifications in this program and purpose of God which is set out in the Bible. We don't have time to speak of the details, of course. And when the apostle states here that he has determined the seasons before appointed he's simply saying that this is the product of the determination of God. It is true that all things do come to pass according to the counsel of his will. The apostle believed that with all his heart and he taught it. And while there may be people and no doubt were, and know there were, in Athens who said, “It just,” what did the letter say? [Laughter] “There is no way that this teaching could be so,” I can just hear them right now. “There is no way that this teaching, that this seed picker, is talking about can be true.” But, of course, it was true.

And then Paul goes on to say in the remainder of that verse, “And the bounds of their habitation.” So he is not only the originator of their nations, he's not only the governor of history in the sense that all of the ages and the seasons of the earth flow from the purpose of God, but he is also the predestinator of the geography of this earth. That's interesting, isn't it? There is no blind fate in the rise and fall of the nations. All of the

nations are governed by the providential working of God. The fact that we live in the United States of America and have been preserved from war to this point, war in our land like the nations of Europe and other nations, is part of the providential working of God. We may not know all of the reasons for it but nevertheless it is true.

Mr. Wesley was right when he said, “I read the newspaper to see how God is governing the world.” And one can look and observe the movement of the nations and the movement of history and determine after the event, of course, the providential care of God. Bismarck said, “That the duty of a statesman was to observe when the garment of God rustled through human events, and to pay attention to that.” So he is the predestinator of geography.

This was a refutation of Epicurus because he thought that the world was governed by chance. It was a refutation of the Stoick doctrine because they regarded the world as governed by fate. It also is a refutation of science, which does not see any hand of a personal God in the scientific way of life. Of course from science that's all you can determine. But by divine revelation we know that above and beyond the principles of science there is the God of science.

And further in verse 27 he says, “That they should seek after the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.” Well that, of course, is an exposition of God's imminence in our society. All his works are designed to urge us to seek him who is everywhere. And if we have difficulty in realizing that God is near us always it's because we are spiritually blind. It's one of the evidences of our blindness that we do not realize that he is here with us.

And finally in verses 28 and 29 he says that he is the parent of man. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.” So we are the offspring of God. Now, of course, the apostle is not talking about

redemption. He is talking about the fact that we are all ultimately individuals who have come from the hand of God.

Martha and I were reading in our Bible reading a couple of days ago Luke chapter 3 and Luke's account of the genealogy. And remember it ends with, you know, so and so was the son of, the son of, the son of, and then Adam who was the son of God. That's by creation. Of course Adam became a son of God by redemption through faith. But he was the son of God by creation. We are all ultimately descended from God by creation. We can say we are all sons of God by creation but unfortunately not all the sons of God by creation are going to heaven. Only those who are the sons of God by redemption go to heaven.

Well Paul is like all preachers, he likes to make his appeal, and that reminds me of Whitefield. Whitefield had a maxim and I'm going to read it to you. It was his favorite maxim, was to quote, “Preach as Apelles painted, for eternity.” Whitefield was first struck with this when he was a young man at the table of Archbishop Boulter in Ireland where the great doctor Delaney said to him, “I wish, whenever I go into the pulpit, to look upon it as the last time I shall ever preach, or the last time people may hear me.” And so he talks about the fact that he preaches as if he were preaching for eternity. And if we don't preach as if we are preaching for eternity then we may be dealing in the false commerce of unfelt truth.

Paul was a person who preached for eternity. Listen to what he says. Verse 30 and 31,

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at, (or overlooked. That is, he didn't exercise judgment immediately on the Old Testament believers but he waited. And he has been waiting unto the cross when the atonement was made and now waits for the execution of divine judgment in future. And the times of this ignorance God overlooked,) but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day,

in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

Incidentally, that expression about God overlooking sin is the explanation of the prosperity of the wicked in Old Testament times and the prosperity of the wicked in this time. The wicked may prosper now, that's all the prosperity that they shall have. Let them have their prosperity. Do not be upset over it. There is a time coming when God is going to settle all of the affairs of the human race and he will execute his justice. But in the meantime Paul says, “He calls upon men to repent.” That is, repent of idolatry, repent of anything in which you may have your trust for salvation. It may be the church, it may be your good works, it may be your family, it may be your culture, it may be your education, it may be a number of things, but Paul calls upon men to turn from that. To realize their sin and to rest upon the blood that Christ shed. Because there is a time coming when he's going to judge the world and the evidence of the fact that he will judge the world is the fact of the resurrection of Christ. He's given assurance in that he has raised him from the dead.

So he ends on the note of Jesus and the resurrection. People have said, “Paul made a mistake when he came to Athens.” When he was in Berea and when he was in Thessalonica he preached the gospel from the standpoint of the Old Testament. When he came to Athens he tried to be philosophical and the result was he didn't have such good results. We don't read of any church big formed in Athens.

I don't find that in Acts chapter 17 at all. It's true, we don't read of any church in Athens but actually we don't read of a letter to the church in Berea. I said last time it may be, however, because they were such good Bible students they didn't need any letters from Paul. Well we know there were believers in Athens. Luke goes on to tell us that some mocked but some believed.

Notice the reaction, verse 32, “And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, Will hear thee again of this matter. Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, (evidently an important man,) and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.”

So the apostle did have results in Athens. And I say, at least it seems to me to be true, that this fellow, the Apostle Paul, never did move away from preaching the word of God. And he began with Genesis and preached God as creator and God as judge.

And isn't it striking, how many of you have read Demosthenes? How many of you read Euripides? How many of you read Plato? How many of you have read Socrates? Well the chances are there are very few of you that have. It's out of style these days. But even in any society very few would. But how many of you have read Paul? Well, you would all raise your hands.

You see, when history finally evaluates things, things are different. The poor Athenians thought that Pericles, and Demosthenes, and Plato, and Socrates, they were the important ones and this babblers, this seed picker was giving them some doctrine that was insignificant. But it was just the other way around.

And what is so pitiful is when they said, “We will hear thee again,” that's just another way of saying, “We don't want to hear you now.” That's the way it is. You'll have people like that to whom you talk. You'll talk to them about spiritual things and they'll say, “Well I'd like to talk to you again about this.” Now you ought to learn to translate that. That's a statement which properly translated means, “I've heard enough of it now and I don't want to hear it any more.” Rarely someone might really have something to do but most of the time it's the other way around.

So Paul, the later Moses, confutes the wisdom of later Egypt. But the pride of religion, they were very religious, the pride of intellect, they were filled with the philosophy of Zenus the Stoick, and Epicurus, the pride of intellect, they were

philosophers, is always poor soil for the gospel. And the same is today. We have the same idolatry, we often have the same trust in human intellect. In Athens they deified the middle, they thought of Athena as the goddess of wisdom, the Demeter as the apotheosis of the physical Zeus, the worship of strength. The Epicureans and Stoics, the indifferent and the self-righteous, they're all still with us but the gospel has overcome.

If you are here tonight and you have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ we remind you again that the gospel of Jesus Christ is that men are sinners, that Christ has offered the atoning sacrifice by which our sins may be forgiven, and that if God the Holy Spirit has moved in your heart to bring you the conviction of your sin you may come to him in your heart saying, “I thank you Lord for dying for sinners, for I am a sinner. And I take your salvation.” May God help you if you haven't believed in him, to believe in him now. Don't say, “We want to hear about this at some other time.” Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for the apostle's ministry, and we thank Thee for the faith...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]