

Church at Home Pack – 9th May 2021

Join us in church for our 10:30am service on Sunday or watch live at home on

<https://ccwsm.org.uk/service-type/sunday-service-online/>

If you like, join in with the discussion on Facebook with our church family (@ccwsm)!

In some sections we make several suggestions of ideas. Some may be more appropriate to you or the different people in your family or life group than others. We're not expecting you to do all of them (although you are very welcome to!) Choose the ones which best suit you.

Our verse for the year is the same as last year's verse as we think about the difference being with Jesus makes to our lives

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13

GATHER TOGETHER

A prayer to start –

Father God,

You are not unknown to us.

You are not far away from us.

And yet we sometimes let other things become more important to us.

Help us to put you first as we come together to learn more of you.

Amen.

Action reminder –

From the top of my head

(Touch head)

to the tips of my toes;

(Touch toes)

from the lobes of my ears

(Touch ear lobes)

to the end of my nose;

(Touch nose)

from my back, to my front

(Turn round)

to my wiggly fingers,

(stretch out arms and wiggle fingers)

God loves me!

(jump up and down)

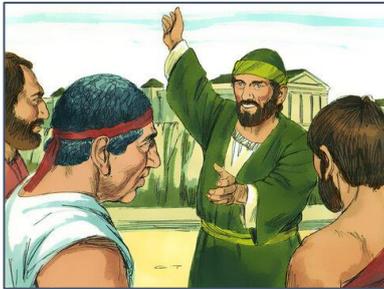
READ TOGETHER

Acts 17: 16-34



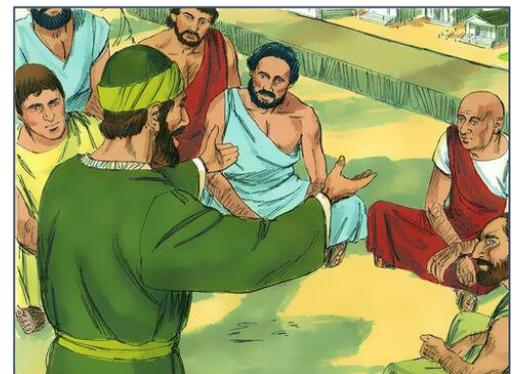
International Children's Bible (ICB)

¹⁶ Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens. He was troubled because he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ In the synagogue, he talked with the Jews and the Greeks who worshiped the true God. He also talked every day with people in the marketplace.



¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers argued with him. Some of them said, "This man doesn't know what he is talking about. What is he trying to say?" Paul was telling them the Good News of Jesus' rising from death. They said, "He seems to be telling us about some other gods." ¹⁹ They got Paul and took him to a meeting of the Areopagus. They said, "Please explain to us this new idea that you have been teaching." ²⁰ The things you are saying are new to us. We want to know what this teaching means." ²¹ (All the people of Athens and those from other countries always used their time talking about all the newest ideas.)

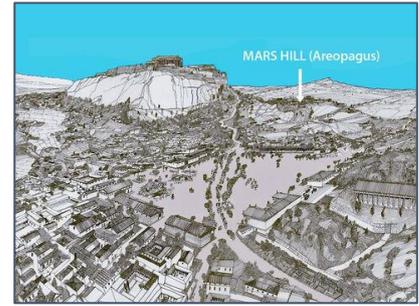
²² Then Paul stood before the meeting of the Areopagus. He said, "Men of Athens, I can see that you are very religious in all things. ²³ I was going through your city, and I saw the things you worship. I found an altar that had these words written on it: "TO A GOD WHO IS NOT KNOWN." You worship a god that you don't know. This is the God I am telling you about! ²⁴ He is the God who made the whole world and everything in it. He is the Lord of the land and the sky. He does not live in temples that men build! ²⁵ This God is the One who gives life, breath, and everything else to people. He does not need any help from them. He has everything he needs. ²⁶ God began by making one man. From him came all the different people who live everywhere in the world. He decided exactly when and where they must live. ²⁷ God wanted them to look for him and perhaps search all around for him and find him. But he is not far from any of us: ²⁸ 'By his power we live and move and exist.' Some of your own poets have said: 'For we are his children.' ²⁹ We are God's children. So, you must not think that God is like something that people imagine or make. He is not like gold, silver, or rock. ³⁰ In the past, people did not understand God, but God ignored this. But now, God tells everyone in the world to change his heart and life. ³¹ God has decided on a day that he will judge all the world. He will be fair. He will use a man to do this. God chose that man long ago. And God has proved this to everyone by raising that man from death!"



³² When the people heard about Jesus being raised from death, some of them laughed. They said, "We will hear more about this from you later." ³³ So Paul went away from them. ³⁴ But some of the people believed Paul and joined him. One of those who believed was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus. Also a woman named Damaris and some others believed.

New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.”



They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)



The altar of the unknown God,
Palatine Museum, Rome

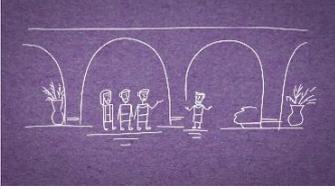
²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹ “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. ³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” ³³ At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴ Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

WATCH TOGETHER



Paul taught in Athens – CFBC Kids Ministry: <https://youtu.be/teh6QtXs980>



Paul's sermon on Mars Hill: <https://youtu.be/665kzWZfcOU>

TALK TOGETHER

- What do your friends and family like to spend time doing?
- What do they like to talk about?

STUDY TOGETHER

- What led Paul to start reasoning and debating with the Athenians (v.16-17)?
- Is there anything that we see in the world that distresses us? What positive action could we take to help make that situation better?
- Where did Paul talk with people about Jesus (v.17, 19)?
What might be the equivalent places today?
- (v.18) *Epicurean philosophers believed that the gods were remote and not interested in humanity. Everything was down to chance and there was no life beyond death. They therefore encouraged the pursuit of pleasure. Stoic philosophers believed that people should live in harmony with nature and reason even if this meant giving up what they wanted. They said it was important to become self-sufficient and disciplined.*
What was Paul's message (in v.18) and what did the philosophers think of it?
- v.21 says that the people of Athens loved to talk about and listen to the latest ideas. Are there people like that today?

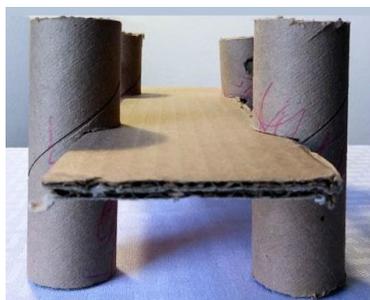
'Areopagus' literally means 'The hill of Ares'. Ares was the Greek name for the god Mars. By Paul's day, the Areopagus was a council whose members met to discuss matters of religion, morals and education which affected the city of Athens.

- What "bridge" does Paul find between the Athenians' religion and culture, and the gospel message (v.22-23, 27-29)?
NOTE (to help if necessary): In v.28, Paul quotes two philosophers: one from Crete and a Stoic philosopher from Cilicia.

- Paul found a bridge between what the Athenians knew and liked to talk about, and God. He used language which they would understand. Think about your family, friends, or work colleagues. Can you think of any links between God and what they like and the things they talk about?
What could we do to better equip ourselves to have conversations about Jesus with others?
- What is Paul's message about God to the Areopagus (v.24-31)?
What stands out to you the most in this message? Why?
- What was the reaction of the people (v.32-34)?

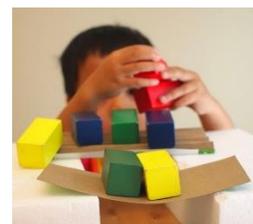
PLAY TOGETHER

Bridge building



Using only things you have in your house or garden, see who can build the longest, strongest bridge?
Only use things that you have been given permission to use.

When we talk to people about Jesus, it's like we're building bridges between them and God. We need to talk about him in ways that they will understand.



MAKE TOGETHER

Where is God in your timetable?

Verse 27 tells us that God is not far from any of us but sometimes other things in our lives can stop us from seeing him or can even become more important to us than him!

Make a timetable for the week. It can be a simple list of everything you will do each day, a grid or even use pictures (this is especially helpful with younger children). Make an extra space on your timetable each day and give it the title 'Where did I see God today?'

 A weekly timetable with a decorative border featuring flowers and stars. The title at the top reads "God is not far from any of us Acts 17:27" next to a smiley face. The timetable is a grid with columns for "Day", "Activity", "Activity", "Activity", "Activity", and "Where did I see God today?". The days listed are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Day	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity	Where did I see God today?
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Have a look at the **Do Together** section to see how you might use your timetable this week.

SING TOGETHER

He's got the whole world in his hands – Lifeetree Kids: <https://youtu.be/-T1CLIMjiTw>

One true God – Lifeetree Kids: https://youtu.be/i3djPBAP3_I

Idols – Jessa Anderson: <https://youtu.be/wV3GI5rC2IM>

Filled with compassion – Noel and Tricia Richards: <https://youtu.be/rxx0EN6Bqdc>

REFLECT TOGETHER

What are my idols?

Think about the things in your life that mean a lot to you. They might not be gold statues but they may still be idols. Money, entertainment, sport, fashion, social media or even friends and family can take our attention away from God.



We sang *Jesus be the Centre* during the service today.

Listen again here: <https://youtu.be/rNOLwKGgGWQ>

As you listen to the words ask God for his help to put him first.

Building Bridges?...

This bridge used to be over the river but the river has now carved out a completely different path and the bridge is useless.



We may think we're making a bridge between people and God but the culture we live in has changed and the language we once used may not be helping. Paul found a way to 'build a bridge' for people in Athens to understand the truth about God. Think about those you know who are far from God at the moment. How might you build a different bridge?

PRAY TOGETHER

Praying for those away from God –

- Write the names of people you know who are away from God at the moment on a piece of paper.
- Write God's name on another piece of paper.
- Cut pieces of string, ribbon or cotton thread and stick one end to each person's name.

- Cut another piece and stick one end to God's name.
- Hold all the strings that are attached to people's names in your left hand and the string attached to God's name in your right hand.
- As you hold the strings, pray for each person asking God to help them to find him.
- Think about what you can do to help build a bridge between them and God.

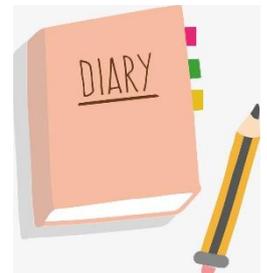


Go in the love and strength of God.
 Cherish your relationships.
 Build bridges at school and home and work.
 Speak words that encourage and inspire,
 and know that you are loved.
Amen.

DO TOGETHER

v27: God wanted them to look for him and perhaps search all around for him and find him. But he is not far from any of us:

Write down or draw pictures of everything you will do this week. Perhaps you have a diary (a paper one or one on your phone/computer) or you could make a picture timeline. If you made a timetable for the week in the **Make Together** section, use that.



Make time near the end of each day this week to think and talk about where you noticed God?
 If you struggle, ask him to help you see him tomorrow. ***He is not far from any of us!***

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Action Reminder taken from

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