**Truth Sowers Life Group**

April 28, 2013

**Who Was the Apostle Paul?**

**Paul Travels to Athens**

**Introduction:**

Our key scripture for this study is:

**1 Thess 5:12, 13**

*12And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.*

**PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

**Paul and Silas in Prison**

### Acts 17

### Ministering at Berea

10Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11These were more fair-minded **NOBLE** than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so. 12Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

**In the Essentials, UNITY; In the Non-Essentials, Liberty!**

**Will you have the mind of the Pharisees or will you have the mind of the Bereans?**

**Religious people HATE for people to mess with their TRADITION!**

**Mark 7:7** The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus 2and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. 3(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%207&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-24468a" \o "See footnote a)])

5So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”

6He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

“‘These people honor me with their lips,  
    but their hearts are far from me.  
7They worship me in vain;  
    their teachings are merely human rules.’[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24471b)]

8You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

9And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe[[c](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24473c)] your own traditions! 10For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’[[d](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%207&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-24474d" \o "See footnote d)] and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’[[e](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24474e)] 11But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)— 12then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. 13Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

**The Jews hated Jesus SO bad for OPPOSING THEIR TRADITION THAT THEY HAD HIM KILLED!**

**This happens in the CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY and MOSTLY WITH OLDER CHRISTIANS!**

**Will you have the MIND (SPIRIT) OF THE PHARISEES or the MIND (SPIRIT) OF THE BEREANS?**

**Truth will always withstand scrutiny! Mormons forbid their people to read anything they consider to be “Anti-Mormon”. If there was anything to their faith, they would not have to worry.**

**Religious Christians do not like to have their tradition stepped on!**

**Many Pastors have been run off because of it!**

**Controversial Issues – 1. Did Jesus Die Spiritually – 2. Does Jesus Still Heal – 3. Use of the Spiritual Gifts (Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, supernatural faith, discerning of spirits, gift of miracles and gift of healing), and another big one, 4. does God love everyone but just hate their sin *(God loves everyone but just hates their sin cannot be found in the Bible.)***

**In fact, allow me to step on your tradition. There are some people that God hated and that God hates according to the Bible. You can translate that however you want. I will give you the scriptures and let you decide.**

**In fact the Bible says we can get angry and it isn’t always a sin!** Ephesians 4 26Be ye angry, and sin not

**Malachi 1:2b,3** “Yet Jacob I have loved; 3But Esau I have hated *(Heb. sane – to utterly hate like you would hate an enemy)*,

**Proverbs 6**: 16There are six things the Lord hates,  
    seven that are detestable to him:  
17        haughty eyes,  
        a lying tongue,  
        hands that shed innocent blood,  
18        a heart that devises wicked schemes,  
        feet that are quick to rush into evil,  
19        a false witness who pours out lies  
        and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

Genesis 6: 5The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. 6The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. 7So the Lord said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.”

**God loved the World enough to send Jesus to die for all of us but we know He can hate and we know that is a righteous hatred. I don’t know how that works. I just know I don’t want to be on that side of God. + We need to realize that we all have some TRADITION IN US AND WE NEED TO LEARN FROM THE WORD OF GOD AND GET THE WORD IN US AND GET THE TRADITION OUT!**

13But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. 14Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. 15So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.

### The Philosophers at Athens

16Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. **I sat through a couple of sessions of the Exponential Conference this week with about 6,000 other church planters and I thought if all of these people would preach about Holiness, maybe we could change this country.** 17Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the *Gentile* worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. 18Then[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-27542b)] certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, “What does this babbler want to say?”

Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,” because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

19And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak? 20For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.” 21For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

### Addressing the Areopagus

22Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus **A rocky hill near the centre of Athens, where the court of justice sat (Mars Hill)** and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

**These are people that had never heard of Jesus.**

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24“God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26And He has made from one blood[[c](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-27550c)] every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’ 29Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising. 30Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

32And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, “We will hear you again on this *matter.*” 33So Paul departed from among them. 34However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Notes For Verse 18

**a** [**philosophers**] Only use of the Greek: *philosophos* (GSN-[<G5386>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G5386)).

**b** [**Epicureans**] A sect of pleasure-loving philosophers at Athens  
Boyd's Bible Dictionary.

Followers of Epicurus, 342-279 B.C., who did not believe in any gods except in name. They denied that they exercised any government over the world or its inhabitants. They held that the chief good consisted in gratification of the appetites and that pleasure was the only end in life.

**c** [**Stoicks**] Members of a Grecian philosophical school, or sect, founded by Zeno, 308 b.c., who taught in the *stoa*, or porch, of the Agora at Athens. They held to a high morality, proud independence of spirit, fateful, in place of providential, superintendence, wisdom as the source of happiness, [Acts 17:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A18). Paul encountered both Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, and, on being taken into Areopagus by them, delivered to them the oration in [Acts 17:22-31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A22-31).  
Boyd's Bible Dictionary.

Followers of Zeno, 270 B.C., who believed in gods, but that all human affairs were governed by fate, and that no good came from various deities. They held that no supreme good was virtue, and that man should be free from passion and moved by neither joy nor grief, pleasure nor pain. They were the Fatalists and Pantheists of that day. Both these sects denied the resurrection of the body; the former denied immortality of the soul ([Acts 17:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A18)).

**e** [**babbler**] Greek: *spermologos* (GSN-[<G4691>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G4691)), seed-picker, chatterer. The name of a small bird that lives by picking up seeds on the road. It was applied to men who gathered scraps of information from others.

**f** [**setter forth**] A proclaimer, as in [Acts 17:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A3),[13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A13),[23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A23).

**g** [**strange gods**] Greek: *xenos* (GSN-[<G3581>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G3581)) *daimonion* (GSN-[<G1140>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G1140)), foreign demons. Daimonion is translated "devils" 52 Times and "gods" only here. See [Demons or Unclean Spirits](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=45&sec=00104764#Demons or Unclean Spirits). Preaching strange gods was forbidden both in Rome and in Athens. One charge against Socrates was that of introducing strange divinities. Heathen theology taught that the *theoi* (GSN-[<G2316>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G2316)) were gods of nature, and the *daimon* (GSN-[<G1142>](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?strongs=G1142)) were deified men. Paul had taught that Jesus was a man, crucified, risen and exalted at the right hand of God. This was the same to them as the deification of heroes who had been honored form their special services to mankind. Hence, the use of the term daimonion in connection with Jesus. To them He was not a god of nature, but a daimon or a deified man. The heathen Greeks also were used to personifying abstract ideas, as victory, pity, etc., and they may have thought that Jesus and the resurrection were two new divinities Paul was introducing. At least, they thought they had just grounds for bringing him before the council of the Athenians.

**h** [**Jesus, and the resurrection**] Paul had so emphasized Jesus and the resurrection that the heathen Greeks remembered that much of his message.

Notes For Verse 19

**a** [**Areopagus**] The hill of Mars where the great council of the Athenians was held ([Acts 17:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+17%3A22)). It was the most sacred and reputable court in the Gentile world. The legend is that Mars was tried there by a court of 12 gods for the murder of Halirrhothius, son of Neptune, but was acquitted. The justice administered in this court was held to be so strict and impartial that both the accused and the accusers were satisfied with the decision. Judges held court at night so they could not be distracted from the great business by the sight of the accused to pity or despise. The pleaders were strictly forbidden the use of any means whatever to excite either pity or aversion, or to affect the passions, everything being confined to simple relation, or statement of facts. The two persons involved, placed with bleeding members of an animal (slain on the occasion) between them, were obliged to take oath with a warning that if they did not tell the truth they and their families would be liable to such a horrible death. The gods of the infernal world whose temple was next to the court were called to witness the oaths. When the case was fully heard, the judges gave their decision by throwing flint pebbles on one of two boards or tables; one for condemnation and the other for acquittal of the person in question.

Dake's Annotated Reference Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments of the Authorized or King James Version Text.

**What happens to people who die when they stand before God and they have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ? What about American Indians?**

Romans 1

18But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.[[i](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%201&version=NLT" \l "fen-NLT-27910i" \o "See footnote i)] 19They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. 20For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

**What about little children that die?**

**Romans 7**

9At one time I lived without understanding the law. But when I learned the command not to covet, for instance, the power of sin came to life, 10and I died. So I discovered that the law’s commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead.

Age of Accountability – Mormons say Age of 8 but everyone is different and some never reach that age.

### Acts 18

New Living Translation (NLT)

### Paul Meets Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth

18 Then Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2018&version=NLT#fen-NLT-27522a)] 2There he became acquainted with a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently arrived from Italy with his wife, Priscilla. They had left Italy when Claudius Caesar deported all Jews from Rome. 3Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2018&version=NLT#fen-NLT-27524b)] just as he was.

4Each Sabbath found Paul at the synagogue, trying to convince the Jews and Greeks alike. 5And after Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul spent all his time preaching the word. He testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. 6But when they opposed and insulted him, Paul shook the dust from his clothes and said, “Your blood is upon your own heads—I am innocent. From now on I will go preach to the Gentiles.”

7Then he left and went to the home of Titius Justus, a Gentile who worshiped God and lived next door to the synagogue. 8Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, and everyone in his household believed in the Lord. Many others in Corinth also heard Paul, became believers, and were baptized.

9One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision and told him, “Don’t be afraid! Speak out! Don’t be silent! 10For I am with you, and no one will attack and harm you, for many people in this city belong to me.”**It is easy for us to think of Paul as some kind of superman but he must have gotten discouraged at times and he must have gotten scared at times. He must have been afraid here for God to come to him in a vision and to tell him not to worry. God put a big job on his shoulders plus give this evil spirit to be a thorn in his flesh. How many of us would continue?**  11So Paul stayed there for the next year and a half, teaching the word of God.