

Acts 17: 16-34 (Luke 19:10)

“A heart like Jesus who came to seek and save the lost”

INTRO

Have you ever noticed how **religious** our **culture** is? **Religious** in **every way** that is, **but** in TRUE religion. **Did** you know that **Mount Hood Meadows** hosts a **Pray for Snow party** every **November**. A **festive party** involving **live music**, **dancing** and **quality beer** to **kick off another ski season** with the **hopes** of **bountiful white stuff...hence pray for snow party**. *Who are they actually praying to?* **And when that season is finished** the **Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association** throws a **Pray for Wind party** every **June** to **kick off a new season of windsurfing**,...**complete** with **live music** and **food in abundance**. *Is this the same god prayed to in November at the Pray for Snow party?* **Just recently** we went **out to dinner** as a **family** celebrating **Marcy's 41st birthday**. **At this place of dining**, I could not help but notice the multitude of varied artwork decorating the walls of the brew pub,...**each of which** having **pointedly stated** within it... “**Earth first, Beer second.**” Now **quality local food** is something **we truly enjoy** along with **fine crafted fermented beverages**...but **1st?...2nd?** *Far from it!*

These are just a **few examples** to provide a **glimpse** into the **great multitude** of **idols worshiped** all around us. **Things** or **activities** that *in themselves* are **not intrinsically evil** but are made such when we elevate them to the status of **deity**,.. **shown** by our giving ourselves to them as our **chief pursuit** in **life**. I look forward to **spending** time on the mountain with my **son** this coming **ski season**. But I'm **not going to be undone** if it's a **dry** winter and **the conditions unfavorable**. It's an **enjoyable recreational activity** but it's **place in my life** is of **little importance** when **compared to my devotion** to **God**, my **family** and the **church**. If it's **forever removed** from my life...I'd be **sad yes**, but **not wrecked** because it is **not why I exist** NOR what I **live** for. **YET**, *it is certainly all around us is it not?* People ordering all in their lives so that they may have as much **devoted time possible** in giving themselves to idols. It's the **culture** we live in. **Have you ever considered it a heartbreak?**,...that the same **attention**, **devotion** and **effort** is not given to the **God of Heaven** who sends the snow to fall upon the mountain and the **wind** to blow down through the **Columbia gorge** or **causes the vineyards** to produce **succulent grapes** for **fine wine** to be made or **fragrant hops** for **well crafted beer**. The **rivers** we **fish** or **kayak** in, the **forests** we **run**, **bike**, or **hunt** in...ALL THESE and **countless** more **wouldn't be there**,...if **God** hadn't created them. **Does it grieve your heart** that the trails are full of **recreationalists on Sundays** **but** the **pews** are **vacant**? Or the **great effort** **poured out** by many in **planning their next adventure** **while no effort**, or *thought*

for that matter, is given to **gather for a prayer meeting to pour our hearts** out to the God of Heaven with **thankfulness**, adoration, **praise** and **pleas for mercy**. **Are you grieved by all those around us here in the Hood River Valley** who are **seeking satisfaction in life in everything but** in the **One Alone** who can **truly** satisfy? **Is - your - heart - hurting - for - the - lost?** **Paul's was.** **Paul**, as an *example to all Christians*, had a heart like Jesus who **“came to seek and save the lost”**. **A heart like Jesus** who **came to seek and save the lost.**” This mornings passage **provides a testimony account in his life** where **this was lived out.** Let's begin by seeing what **first happens** in **Paul's heart like unto His saviors** **“who came to seek and save the lost.”**

BODY

● Our first point this morning - **A heart, like Jesus HURTS FOR THE LOST**

Read along with me (**verse 16**).....We find **Paul** in Athens **waiting** for **Timothy** and **Silas** **who recently left Macedonia to rejoin up with him.** And **while waiting in Athens for them**, his **spirit** was **“provoked within as he saw that the city was full of idols”**.. Now the **word** here **provoked** **entails the idea** **that he was deeply bothered by all the false worship around him.** **Not bothered in the sense of being annoyed** or **“how ridiculous could they be”** **type of attitude** but **rather a grieved heart**, our you could say **‘had a broken heart’** over **how lost these people** in the city of **Athens** were. **All around the city was idols.** The **people in Athens made anything and everything a god....little ‘g’ god...** They even, as we'll soon see *later on in the sermon*, had an **alter with an inscription to the unknown god.** Essentially saying... **“we have an idol for every god we can think of but in case we forgot one...here...here is an alter for this unknown god.”** You can see why the ancient writer Petronius asserts **“that is was easier to find a god than a man in Athens.”** This was **abundantly clear to all** who would come to **Athens** and Paul...**wasn't indifferent to it.** It **deeply bothered him** in a **manner that reflected** the **heart** he shared of His savior Jesus who came to seek and save the lost.

Application - Are you grieved for the lost? **Those who have not come under the joyful rule and reign of Christ in their heart.** **Are you indifferent to it** OR are you **deeply troubled by it?**.....When **was the last time** you **prayed** for the **salvation** for **one by name** who is **lost..who doesn't know Jesus as their savior?**...-pause- **Jesus came to seek and save the lost.** **His people ought to share his heart** and **be provoked within** at the **blatant worship** of something other than him **who alone** deserves our worship.

And we'll notice that this **provoking** within Paul's heart **compels action** revealing that *it is indeed* aligned with the heart of Jesus who **'came'...** to seek and save the lost. One precedes the other. **Sincere broken-hearted-ness over the lost, compels action** on their behalf. **Do you see those match up?** Look at the **next two** verses (17-18) and see this **provoking** within Paul **compel** him into **action** TO SEEK OUT THE LOST.

- Our second point this morning - A **heart** like **Jesus** SEEKS OUT THE LOST. (verses 17-18)

Troubled in heart, Paul is compelled into action...daily. **Day in and day out....** His **heart,.. in seeking out the lost,..is steadfast.** *How does he go about it?* He is in the **synagogues 'as was his custom' (Acts 17:2)...**reasoning with the **Jews** and **devout** persons...**but also in the marketplace everyday** with,..**get this...**with **whosoever 'happened' to be there.** **I read this and cannot help but see Paul as a conversationalist.** Paul could have a **conversation** with **anyone.** **Wealthy business woman, a jailor, Jews, devout men, pagans, commoners, rulers...anyone** who would give listening ear that would **engage** him in **talk.**

He **conversed** with them all and **reasoned** with them...**sharing Christ.** **I see Paul as one who was easy to have a conversation with.** He likely asked **good questions,** listened **attentively,** didn't **interrupt,** showed a **sincere interest** in the **person** or **persons** he was **conversing** with...all of which makes a **good conversationalist.** **But he also didn't have a conversation just to converse.** His **conversations** were always **purposed** in **finding their way to lead** into **deeper,** more **spiritual** matters. For **as he spoke plainly about himself** to this - **(Romans 1:14-16).** **Paul** says "I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Take note of Paul's example whether you're a **timid conversationalist** or an **audacious** type, purpose to **thoughtfully engage** in **stimulating conversation** while always having in the **back of your mind** what your heart **ought to rightly be** motivated FOR....and **that is** a place to share Christ.....And **expect negative kickback** as **plainly seen in** our text this morning. That's a given. Not **every** time. But **most certainly common and to be expected.** It **happens here to Paul** in our text this morning. **Be prepared** for it...**don't be shocked or derailed** in your **conversation** by it. You'll...**get...kickback.** And the ones who **give Paul kickback** in these **passages** are **ever so prevalent in this post**

christian society in which we **live and breath**. These two **gentile philosophers** presented here...the **Epicurean** and the **Stoic**,.. are **ALIVE** and **breathing today just as they were** in Paul's day here in **Athens**. If you were to be, let's say, in the market place and hear them...(these two philosopher groups) **banter back and forth** with **sneering remarks** to **one another** you might hear the **Epicurean** say to the **Stoic**.... "Dude, it's all about **PLEASURE** man...do what feels good...learn truth by experience....you need to chillax and pursue the finer things...avoid all stresses and attain serenity now man." While the **Stoic** would reply... "Not at all. You have it all wrong. Pleasure is *not* good and pain is a virtue to be had by means of personal discipline and self-control. You are to be self sufficient and unmoved...*you hear me*... '**unmoved**' by inner feelings or outward circumstances. Take **PRIDE** in yourself and **ALL** your accomplishments. Your life of pleasuring seeking is not one to be proud of. My pursuit is."

One commentator put it this way - "The Epicureans would say '**Enjoy life!**' whereas the Stoics would say '**Endure it!**' BOTH are **hostile** to the **gospel**. BOTH are **very prevalent** in our **world** today. **Pleasure seeking** through experience, doing only what makes you happy while avoiding all things difficult, ...and **Pride** through self advancement, achievement and accomplishment. It's everywhere is it not? -pause-

Be careful, *though*, **be careful...not to only look outwardly** because these two **ruling principles of Pleasure and Pride** are **indwelling sinful enemies** to **ourselves** as well. *Which one are you tempted to lean towards?* The **Epicurean sway** (swagger) or the **Stoic**. Or maybe you swing from one to the other. It's good to know your tendencies **so that you may rightly resist them** and **pursue the ruling** of **CHRIST** in your **heart who is tender** and **passionate** BUT **deliberate** and **clear minded** as to **fulfilling the Father's will at ALL cost**. **That's the pursuit.** To live as **Christ** lived. **J.C. Ryle** noted rightly that "holy people are the happiest people"...X2..Live a **holy life**...LIVE as **Christ** lived.

Paul, **living as Christ** lived...**seeking out the lost** by **engaging in conversation** with these **two camps of Philosophers** gets the **not to surprising kick back from them**. Some were **jeering at him** saying that he's a **pretend teacher**. **Speaking only that which** is a **collection of hand-me-down thoughts** he's formulated from ideas he's gathered of others from all over. **Picking and choosing what he liked** from them and is **babbling on** as if it's his **own original thought**. The word **babbling** in (verse 18) literally means "a picker-up of seeds," **bird-like in the sense** of a **bird picking up seeds and spitting out what it doesn't want**....they were accusing Paul as **one who picked up scraps of knowledge seasoned to his palate** who was then relaying it as his own. FAR

from a **compliment**. And then **still others** were saying.. “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities” - because he was teaching Jesus and the resurrection. In other words... “*We haven’t heard about what appears to be a god (little ‘g’) whom this man is speaking much about. This intrigues us. A new divinity???* Interesting.” **Knowledge** can be gained by this new teaching from a supposed preacher...*they thought*. This is no longer a marketplace conversation. It’s time **we take it to** a more **suitable location** for **discourse** on this **new doctrine** we are hearing.

And so the scene quickly moves to ‘the **Areopagus**’ which **literally means** “Hill of Ares” **ARES** *being...* the **Greek god of war**. Later, the **Romans**, referred to this same very place as ‘**Mars Hill**’ after ‘**MARS**’,..their **god of war**.... This rocky hill positioned to overlook the city was the meeting place for the **Council** of the **Areopagus** which was the **long-established body** that held a **strong authoritative role** over the civil and religious matters in **Athens**. (PIC) It is to **this hill** and **before this Court**, this **Council of authoritative body**, **Paul is taken to from the marketplace to hear more** of this ‘*new doctrine*’ coming from his lips. He is **not on trial**, but rather **has open ears from those who loved to hear something new**. And though **they appear more stimulated simply by learning some ‘new teaching’** there is **undertones, I believe**, of the **lost....searching**.

- Our **3rd point** this morning in having a **heart** like **Jesus who seeks and saves the lost** - THE LOST ARE SEARCHING - Give attention to (**verses 19-21**) along with me - *read*

How about that last verse? “All the Athenians AND the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in *nothing* except telling or hearing something new.” I’m not sure about you, but when I read that my first thought is “Give me a break.” Their time would be spent in **nothing** except telling or hearing something new. NO **foundational ground whatsoever**. If it was new, something different...they wanted to hear it. And if you heard something new...the spotlight was on you while you shared it....scratching everyone’s itching ear with the **strange things**...new teachings...philosophical ideas to **stimulate everyone’s interests**,...for a time,..till they would **get dull again** and hungry for the next latest news **break**. I like what **Eric Hoffer** wrote **commenting on how these people in Athens spent their leisure time telling or hearing** “some new thing”. He writes - “the fear of becoming a ‘has been’ keeps some people from becoming anything.” The person who chases the new and ignores the old **soon discovers that he has no deep roots to nourish his life**. - *ooouu..don’t miss that*. He also discovers that nothing is **really** new; it’s just that our **memories**

are POOR (Ecc. 1:8–11). That's so well **stated** and **familiar** in our day in age right? -*pause*

In these **transitional verses** where we go from **Paul in the market place** to **Paul addressing the Council of Areopagus** and all those **gathered on Mars Hill**...I'd like to draw out **3 things** for **consideration** in this 3rd point.

The 1st

I'll start off as a question. **What stimulates your interest?** Growing deep root through (**Psalm 37**) befriending steadfastness and faithfulness? Or....looking for the next change of **scene**, change of **pace** or simply **change** for the sake of **change** because life seems or *is* so **mundane**? - *pause*- **How about in regards to teachings.** Is it **sound doctrine you are hungry for** and **that which satisfies** or is it **new teachings out there**? Do you **have an ongoing search** for the **latest** discovery in Biblical **interpretation** or do you **rest** upon "that which is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the **cornerstone**"

(**Ephesians 2:20**).only that which **accords** with **sound doctrine**. (**Titus 2:1**). Are you **rooted firmly in scripture**? In **orthodox doctrine**? Or are you **prone** to being "tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."? (**Ephesians 4:14**) Be on **guard** and plant yourself firmly in **sound** doctrine. "Delight in the law of the Lord, and on his law meditate day and night. Blessed is the man *who does so,..for you will be* like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers." (**Psalms 1:1,3**)

Number 2

The lost are searching. The **emphases** of the **main point** of these **3 verses**. **The lost are searching.** (**Ecclesiastes 3:11**). "...He 'God' has put eternity into man's heart." YES, these **Athenians** and foreigners living in Athens spend all their time in **nothing except telling or hearing something new**. **All along** not getting closer to the truth,.....**but searching none-the-less**. And '**Paul**' **picks up** on this later. **The LOST are searching.**

And 3rdly

Paul isn't **deterred in the least** by this. Unlike my initial response of "Give me a **break**". Paul *on the other hand* sees this **as a sweet opportunity** to **preach Christ**. With a **heart** like Jesus who seeks and saves the lost... Paul, **seeking out the lost who would be saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ** *gladly* seizes the moment to **proclaim** the **message** of **salvation**.

And this is where we pick up now in (verses 22-23) where Paul, with a heart like Jesus, proclaims the God of Heaven and Earth to the lost.

● Our 4th and final point this morning of having a heart like Jesus who seeks and saves the lost. - and that is - PROCLAIMING THE GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH TO THE LOST.

And there are 4 parts I want to give attention to in this final point.

First is how he begins -

Paul begins by approaching them where they are at. He first connects with the lost. Notice in (verses 22-23) - read (follow quickly to notes)...

Paul's been taking notes. He's been doing his homework while here in Athens. He draws from something local...something everyone of them would be familiar with....the altar he saw with the inscription "to the unknown god"....and he leads into it with a soft compliment really. "I perceive that in every way you are very religious." It's accurate..not shaming...not flattering either..BUT simply sharing what is clearly observed and aiming to access their hearts through it. Much like one of us sharing with an outdoor adventurer. "You are your happiest when you are out in nature and experiencing it's life all around you." It's accurate. Not shaming them...perhaps it's being shared while you both are on a mountain bike ride together. NOR would you be flattering them by saying that. It's a realistic avenue by which you may have a heart connection with them.

This is Paul's aim and example to us as he draws from the altar that perhaps stopped him in his tracks, and deeply bothering him in a manner that reflected the heart he shared of His savior Jesus who came to seek and save the lost. Burdened in heart for these lost sinners he launches into the expounding of his message that began back in the market place. He leads into it by drawing from this well known altar they all would connect and identify with to proclaim to them the GOD of Heaven and earth. Brilliance in is delivery. He'll even quote local poets to these lost souls as we'll soon see. He did his homework much like a brother I recently had a conversation with who discovered a friend of his grew up Seventh Day Adventist. He was compelled out of a heart like Jesus who came to seek and save the lost to do some research and study into the background and beliefs of Seventh Day Adventist with the purpose and intent to pick up their conversation again that he may lead this lost sinner to Christ. James Miller taking up the study of the Native

language of the villagers in Grayling is another example. Such actions reflect the heart of Jesus. Paul first connects with the lost.

And now, the 2nd part, - Reveal the God of the Bible to the Lost. He gets straight to it. From the launch pad of the connection made, Paul cunningly demolishes their gods (little 'g'), not by tearing each one down one by one which places focus on them..rather he decimates them all at once by giving testimony to the greatness of the one true living God who is Creator God, Sovereign God, Providential God, a God who can be known, God who judges righteously, thereby placing the focus where it belongs...on the God of Heaven and earth whom he is proclaiming to them. In two brief statements, Paul completely wipes out the entire religious system of Greece.

Let's pick up in (verse 24)...where we'll see Paul answering the Athenians belief in a god for anything and everything...who make altars for these gods... and pay homage to them...bringing them gifts....keeping them in a state of repair...when damage occurs or erosion. - read-verse - look with me at (verses 24 & 25).

“This is who this unknown God is!” Paul is saying.. It would be similar to us sharing with one who is mesmerized by astrology, enraptured by the greatness of the galaxies, their limitless expanse, beauty, and mystery that rightly make us feel very small. It would be like us sharing in a heart connected manner...mutually humbled by the universe... “The God of Heaven and Earth stretched out the heavens like I would open a curtain covering a window. The God of the Bible (Job 9:8, Isaiah 42:5, 44:24 ,45:12 ,51:13 , Jeremiah 10:12, 51:15, Zechariah 12:1) stretched out the heavens...the galaxies that have no end in searching out. This is the God I worship...the one “who determines the number of the stars...the stars we are unable to count...he determines their number and gives them their name.” (Psalm 147:4). They shine for Him who I worship and proclaim to you.

Or this majestic mountain we take countless pictures of, risk lives ascending, seek thrills in descending..tremble at the thought of it erupting. Mutually humbled by it's majestic presence... At the God of Heaven and Earth's approach,...it will melt like wax and become a mountain puddle much like a candle under the flame. (Psalm 97:5, Micah 1:4, Nahum 1:5). This God needs nothing from us, on the contrary...we—need—HIM...It is He who gives to all mankind life and breath to everything.

And now that Paul has gripped their attention, he **keeps going** in **proclaiming** the **greatness** of this '*unknown god*' to them. (**Verses 26-28**) Listen... **Paul is saying**. **God is sovereign**. We **all come from one man** and it is **God** who has determined the **time period** in which we live and **where we live** on earth during **that time period**. **God is sovereign** and all of us can **trace** our **origins** back to the **same one man** through **whom all nations** on the **face of the earth** came from. IN SHORT, **He is *the* God..ALL OF OURS...there is no other**. Paul **demolishes** their little 'g' gods and then **makes it ever so clear** that there is **only one** True Living God and **all mankind** have their **life** and **existence** from Him....and...*get this*...He is **knowable**....Mankind **should seek him to know him**...**Not blindly** to "perhaps feel their way towards him and find him"...Both verbs in (**verse 27**) translated '*feel their way*' and '*find*' are in the **optative** or '**if only**' mood in the GREEK, suggesting possibilities considered uncertain of realization. "*If only we could know God...try we may*"...**Paul** says STOP. He '*can*' be known. "**Yet He is actually not far from each one of us.**" **Even** your own **poets** write about **God** this way "In him we live and move and have our being". "For we are indeed his offspring."

Guiding his listening audience along to this point **Paul** now directs attention to the **accountability** WE ALL SHARE **under** this One True Living God.

Our 3rd part in PROCLAIMING THE GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH TO THE LOST. **Make clear that we are all accountable** to this One True Living God who has fixed a day in which He will Judge the world in Righteousness. - **Make clear that we are all accountable**.

Look down at (**verses 29-31**) - read-

The **Sovereign Creator** who is above all and in all will call **everyone** to give an account of their lives. **Though we all deserve immediate judgement**...immediate judgement didn't come. "**But now, hear me**" says **Paul**. "**Judgement is coming**". And the **COMMAND** given by **THIS God** I proclaim to you is...**REPENT!** Same message **John the Baptist** came **preaching**...the **SAME message** **Christ** came **preaching** "**Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!**" (**Matthew 3:2; 4:17**). Turn from your **idolatrous** ways and **turn** toward the "God who made the world and everything in it, the Lord of heaven and earth." **It is to Him we must give an account to** and **it is Him who has appointed a day** in which we all will stand before "Him who will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." **I'm waiting for them to say** "**WHO?**"..."**Who is this man appointed by God through whom all judgement will be executed?**"... '....' **Who!**... **Who is it ?**

Sadly, Paul is not, at this moment, able to testify to the name of Jesus Christ. Whom the apostle John says in his gospel account (John 5:22) that “the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son.” The **Son of God**. The risen Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is interrupted before he completes his proclamation of the gospel to the entire gathering with listening ears. He is cut short in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ...the gospel message of salvation through FAITH in him. YES, **Judgement is coming**..it’s an appointed day through an appointed man...that also, through that same man we have **HOPE**.....But they didn’t hear it that part... For (verse 32). “Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked.” Interrupted by mockery. 1 of 3 responses observed in the 4th part of this final point of having a heart like Jesus who seeks and saves the lost.

And that 4th part is this:

WHEN PROCLAIMING THE GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH TO THE LOST - you’ll get a response.

You’ll get a response. ONE, *as already mentioned* - **Mockery**. Some of the lost will **mock** when you share the gospel.

The 1st of responses to observe. You’ll be the **butt their jokes**. Made fun of. Many hearing Paul up until this point suddenly erupt into mockery upon hearing the resurrection of the dead. Their religion was all about the glorification of the present life. (**Sound familiar??**).....- And **death** was the absolute freedman from pain and suffering...**Immortality** yes. The **Greek’s heroes** were deified ‘after death’...NOT brought back from the dead. Speaking of a **resurrection was nonsense** and tantamount to **saying** “all that you live for, all that you aspire to, all that you pursue...if it’s not to and for the glory of God,..then it’s in vain.” **To this** they would **no longer give ear to** and respond as the world does - with **mockery**. CHRISTIAN... be prepared for it. **That helps**. EXPECT IT. **Receive it as compliments from your Heavenly Father** for being bold for His Son. PAUL was called a babbler earlier on in the text and NOW, **who knows** what other **condescending remarks** of jest and mockery were **made** at his **expense**. Him who said (2 Corinthians 12:10) “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, **insults**, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” Content with **insults**..of which he was receiving here. This ought to be familiar territory...for an **obedient christian** who is **actively sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ**. Hard to hear isn’t it? But it’s TRUE.

While others - (verse 32) ...said, We will hear you again about this.” Now this is an interesting group - the lost who want to hear more.

The 2nd response to observe. Those who want to hear more. I see **two types** that fit in this **category of response**. Those who are pleased to hear more...have ongoing conversations. **Intrigued by this faith you hold**. Fascinated to hear more of what you believe...BUT... **never** come to **saving FAITH**. Hear you share all about Jesus while they **themselves never** come under the joyful rule and reign of Him in their hearts. They remain **hard hearted**.

And **then there are those** who are TRULY **seeking** and want to GENUINELY **know** this God in whom you proclaim to them and ‘DO’ come to saving faith.

Are we to discern between one and the other? I don't believe so. As long as an ear is given to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ...proclaim away for (Luke 8:17) Jesus says "...nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light."

Those who come to true saving faith will be made manifest by the transformative life of Christ in them which comes to light in the newness of life they walk in.

This is what Paul did. He proclaims the God of Heaven and Earth to the lost. And when mockery sets in...he (verse 33 & 34)... "Paul went out from their midst. But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysus the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them." Some of the lost get saved!

The 3rd response to observe. Lost men and women get saved! One of which, Dionysus, being one who sat on the council of Areopagus to whom Paul was brought. This man in high standing and perhaps his wife Damaris (we don't know for sure) but they, with other remnant from the multitude gathered...joined Paul and BELIEVED! Salvation came to a remnant. Oh the wonders of the miracle of conversion. When God makes a sinner a SAINT. Along with the angels of heaven...(Luke 15:7) WE rejoice "with the joy in heaven" when any ONE sinner repents. The salvation of one sinner is worth the whole world for their salvation was purchased by the precious, spotless, holy, eternal blood of Jesus Christ. He,.. who has a heart for the lost and came to seek and save the lost...had his heart (Isaiah 53:5) "...pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

CONCLUSION

In closing - Everyone of us who are in Christ now, were once a lost sheep whom the Father sought out to bring back home, into the fold of God, that we would receive mercy on the appointed day of judgement by the one man whom "the God of peace... brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant." (Hebrews 13:20) in whose righteousness we stand in by FAITH. No longer under the JUST WRATH by Him "who will judge the world in righteousness." — — — — Jesus came to seek and save the lost and laid down his life for their ransom.

Is your heart aligned with his? Is your heart hurting for the lost? Do you seek out the lost who are searching...searching for HOPE? For the answer to why we are here,..whereby we would proclaim to them the God of Heaven and Earth and the hope we have in His Son Jesus Christ. Do you share the heart of the savior you profess to be yours? Jesus, who came to seek and save the lost. His representative body here on earth ought be like him who came to seek and save the lost for they have His Spirit and His message to BRING. Go therefore and be compelled into action as Paul was and seek out those whom

God would *use you* as an *instrument in His hands* to bring back into the fold of the One True Living God.

COMMUNION

(Romans 2:3-8). Says. “Do you suppose, O man - you who judge those who practice such things (*such things being the sinful behavior*) and yet do them yourself - that you will escape the judgement of God? Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, (*in that He hasn't executing His judgment upon you immediately*) not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up for yourself on the day of wrath (*the appointed day of judgment*) when God's righteous judgement will be revealed. He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; **but** for those who are self seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.”

Where do you stand this morning? **Do you** remain **hard** and **impenitent** of heart...unwilling to repent? **If so**, the **Wrath** and **Fury** of God **abides** on you? **Therefore**, I **plead** with you **friend**, to **humble** yourself before God, **confess** your **sin**, turn away from it and **plead** His **forgiveness** and **mercy** made available to us only through His **Son Jesus's accomplished work** on the Cross of Calvary. On the **cross only** may you find **mercy** and **forgiveness** from the ONE who **judges in righteousness**. Where the **punishment you deserve** is placed **upon Jesus** in your **place** and likewise, by **faith**, the **righteousness** HE earned is **credited** to your account. For HE and HE only lived a **perfect** life fulfilling all righteousness. **Justice and mercy meet at the Cross of Jesus Christ**. **By faith in Him** we may **escape the wrath to come** and **have the hope of eternal life free to worship along with all creation and the host of heaven** - He alone who is worthy to receive all praise glory and honor. - Repent and turn to Him.

To those here who stand in this grace through faith in Jesus and thereby wait patiently in well doing. The **elements of communion** are prepared this morning representing his body that was broken and blood that was shed...**purchasing our redemption**. The work the Father **approved** of by raising Him from the dead. **The table is prepared**. **As the Spirit directs**, I invite you to **come forward** and partake and proclaim His death until He returns on that appointed day of judgment.

Benediction - Matthew 9:35-38 (*heart like Jesus and therefore his eyes of compassion*)

Family

Table Talk



December 23, 2018

Sing!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come
 Let earth receive her King!
 Let every heart prepare Him room
 And heaven and nature sing
 And heaven and nature sing
 And heaven, and heaven and nature
 sing

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns
 Let men their songs employ
 While fields and floods
 Rocks, hills and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy
 Repeat the sounding joy
 Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

No more let sins and sorrows grow
 Nor thorns infest the ground
 He comes to make
 His blessings flow
 Far as the curse is found
 Far as the curse is found
 Far as, far as the curse is found

He rules the world with truth and
 grace
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of His righteousness
 And wonders of His love
 And wonders of His love
 And wonders and wonders of His
 love



Advent Reading... Week 4

- Isaiah 40:1-5
- Matthew 3:1-12
- John 1:6-8, 15, 19-37
- Matthew 17:1-13
- John 3:16-21
- Luke 2:1-7
- Scripture Memory: Hebrews 11:3

"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." - Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (ESV)