

July 25th & 26th, 2026

The Heart of a Compassionate Man

Acts 17:16-21

Acts 17:16 “Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.”

A Provoked Spirit

❖ Paul was provoked in his spiritual heart, where life, devotion, discernment, and direction come from.

↳ Every human being is a spiritual being.

Genesis 2:7 “then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23 “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

↳ All physical life is produced from the spirit that God put within us.

James 2:26 “For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

Ecclesiastes 12:7 “and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”

↳ Even when our spirit is producing physical life, it can be spiritually dead.

Ephesians 2:1 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins”

↳ Our spirit is transformed from death to life when we are born again.

Ezekiel 36:26 “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

📖 John 3:5-8

❖ We live in a time when society has lost sensitivity to God.

↳ God detests a society that distorts the truth.

Isaiah 5:20 “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”

📖 Romans 1:18-25

↳ God detests those who endorse the practice of wickedness.

Romans 1:32 “Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

❖ We need a spiritual awakening that acknowledges God and refuses idolatry.

- ✧ Paul identified the idols of the society in which he was.

Acts 17:16b "...His Spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols."

Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,"

Acts 17:17 "So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there."

A Reasoning Man

- ❖ Paul reasoned about God with people. Reason is the human capacity to think logically and intelligently to discover truth and be persuaded.

- ✧ This was a normal way for Paul to communicate the deity, manifestation, and reality of God.

Acts 17:2-3 "And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, 'This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.'"

Acts 14:1-3 "Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. ²But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands."

- ❖ As we reason with others from the Scriptures, we must rely on the provisions of God for man to understand Him.

- ✧ God gives everyone enough knowledge through the conscience to recognize His existence.

Romans 2:14-15 "For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them"

- ✧ God placed His glory in creation to lead humanity to recognize His existence.

📖 Romans 1:18-20

- ✧ God gave the law, miracles, and wonders to the people of Israel to demonstrate His existence.

📖 Nehemiah 9:13-15

Psalms 111:6-9 "He has shown His people the power of His works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations. ⁷The works of His hands are faithful and just; all His precepts are trustworthy; ⁸they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. ⁹He sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever. Holy and awesome is His Name!"

- ✧ God came in Jesus to reveal His work of redemption and to demonstrate His existence.

Hebrews 1:1-3a "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, ..."

- ✧ God has given the Holy Spirit to provide the means which confirm His existence to us and to others.

1 Corinthians 2:14,16 "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

“‘For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.”

 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Acts 17:18-21 “Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, ‘What does this babbler wish to say?’ Others said, ‘He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities’—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, ‘May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?’ ²⁰For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.’ ²¹Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.”

A Preaching Servant

❖ Paul preached to the people. Preaching is the act of proclaiming a message from God that involves not only declaring the message but interpreting and applying it.

↳ John the Baptist was proclaiming a baptism of repentance.

 Luke 3:3,8-9

↳ Jesus preached the Gospel of God.

Mark 1:14-15 “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel.’”

Matthew 9:35 “And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.”

↳ Paul’s aim was to proclaim the message of salvation to everyone.

 Romans 15:18-20

↳ What are the characteristics of these mighty men of God that turned the world upside down?

↳ Converted, called, courageous, concerned, compassionate.