

Acts 17:16-34

The commentator John Stott gives us a very helpful lens to look at this text. He essential says that if we are to act as Paul acted we must feel as Paul felt, and if we are to feel as Paul felt we must see as Paul saw.

Read Acts 17:16-34

1. (16) Paul sees a city full of idols. Every culture, time, and people have idols, things that we worship other than God. Things that we base our identity on, root our fulfillment in, can't bear life unless we have them. What would be the contemporary idols of our city?

2. (16) Luke uses the greek verb *theoreo* to speak of Paul's seeing. Meaning that he deeply considered the idols, what it told him about the spiritual state of the people of Athens, meaning he theorizing the inroads of the gospel. When you consider the contemporary idols of Toronto what does it tell you about our spiritual state? What potential inroads of the gospel would we consider?

3. (16) Seeing a city full of idols stirred up in Paul a deep emotional reaction. His spirit was provoked. This is the greek word *paroxysmos*. A complex emotion involving anger and sorrow, indignation and compassion. It is a word that is used of God in the old testament to speak of his emotional response to idolatry (see Isaiah 65:2-3). From the old testament reference discuss what the emotion entails.

