

After leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas travelled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica. They stayed as guests in the house of a man called Jason.



As was Paul's custom, on the Sabbath day, he went to the synagogue. For three Sabbaths in a row he explained from the Scriptures that God's Saviour, the Messiah, must suffer and rise from the dead.



'This Jesus I'm telling you about is the Messiah,' said Paul.



Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women.



But other Jews were jealous and gathered troublemakers from the marketplace to form a mob. They attacked the home of Jason, hoping to capture Paul and Silas. When they could not find them, they grabbed Jason and some of the other believers and dragged them before the city council.



'Paul and Silas have caused trouble everywhere,' they shouted, 'Jason has welcomed them into his home. They are all guilty of treason against Caesar, for they profess allegiance to another king, named Jesus.'



The city council, were thrown into turmoil by these reports. So the officials forced Jason and the other believers to hand over money as a guarantee they would banish Paul from the city. Then they released them.



That night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.



The people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica. They listened eagerly and searched the Scriptures each day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. Many Jews and prominent Greek women and men believed in Jesus.



However, when some Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching in Berea, they arrived to stir up trouble.



The believers acted immediately sending Paul on to the coast, while Silas and Timothy remained behind. Those escorting Paul went with him to Athens. Then they returned to Berea with instructions for Silas and Timothy to hurry and join him.



So Paul waited in Athens, but was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw in the city.

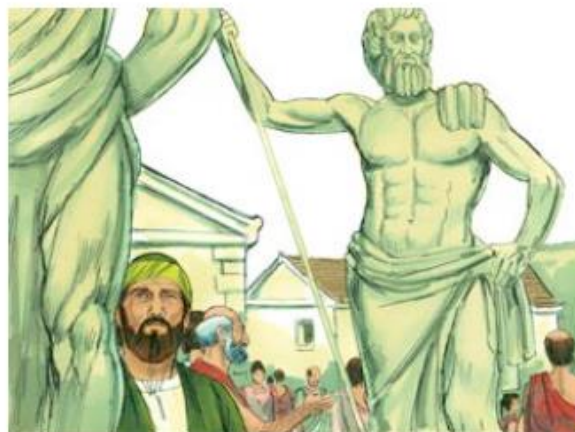




Paul was in Athens waiting for Silas and Timothy to travel from Berea to join him.



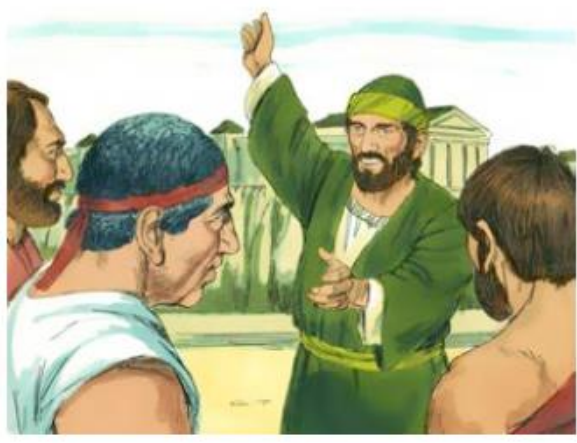
While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city.



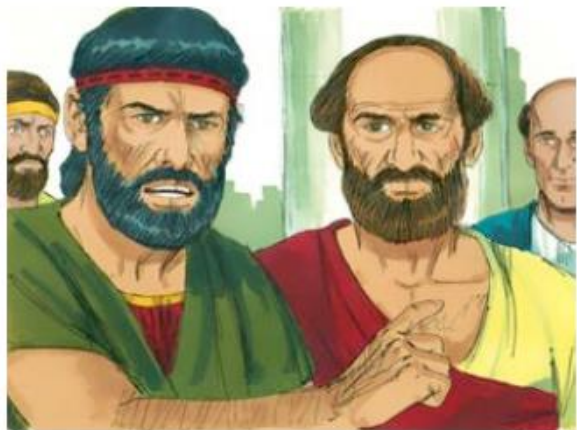
He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who were there. The Athenians liked to spend time discussing the latest ideas.



He also debated with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, 'What's this babbler saying with these strange ideas?' Others said, 'He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods.'



They took Paul to the high council of the city who asked, 'Tell us about these strange things and new teaching.'



Paul stood and addressed the council: 'Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines.'



'One of your altars had this inscription on it: *To an Unknown God*. This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about.'



'He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since He is Lord of heaven and earth, He doesn't live in man-made temples.



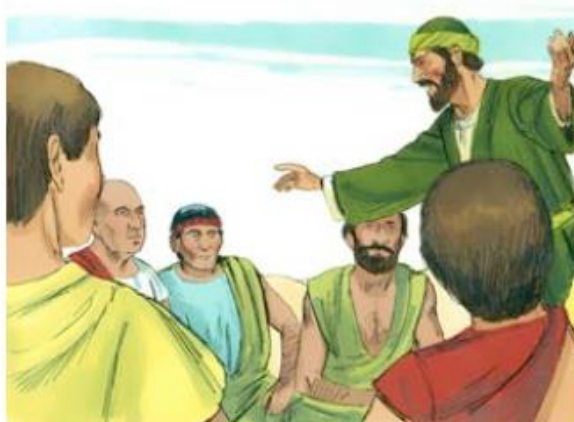
'He gives life to everything. From one man He created all the nations. He controls when nations rise and fall.



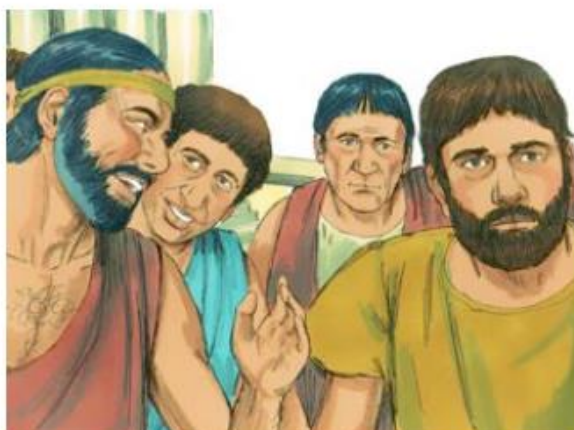
'God wants us to seek and find him. It is in Him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring." God is not an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone.



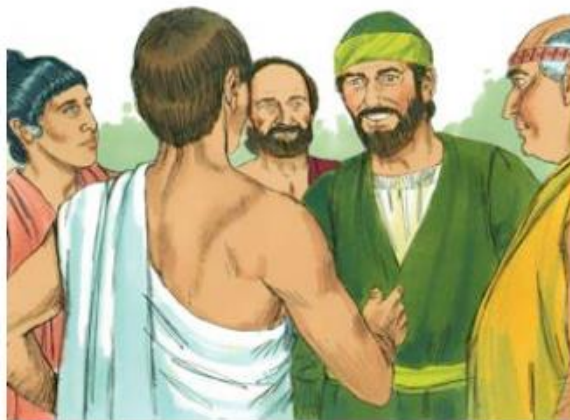
'God commands everyone to repent of their sins and turn to Him. For He has set a day when the world will be judged by Jesus whom He has raised from the dead.'



When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt, but others said, 'We want to hear more about this later.'



That ended Paul's discussion with them. Some, however, became believers including Dionysius, a member of the council and a woman named Damaris.



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