

**Be Reformed** – Open the bible: study, dig and ask what the main point of the passage is

**Be Charismatic** – Expect the Holy Spirit: ask God to speak, minister, build up and lead us to maturity

**Be Community** – Love God's people: share vulnerably, apply, pray and build each other up

**Be Missional** – Win the world: apply lessons to outreach, make content accessible to non-Christians

## Acts 17:16-31

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. 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. 18 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. 19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." 21

Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,

<CONTINUED IN ACTS 17:25-31>

## Study Guide 17 Oct 2010 – Where Did God Come From?



### Summary

The Athenians wanted to know about this God Paul preached. They had important questions: the existence of God and the character of God are things that define the very meaning of life itself.

The Greeks had many gods, as do we. They had both deities and functional gods: science, wealth, pleasure, religion that motivated them. All of us have faith in something.

Paul preached to them about "the unknown god". For all their thought and philosophy, the Greeks were still asking fundamental questions. The only end to those questions was Paul's proclamation of a God who simply IS – a God not created by hands or imagination.

God made everything, is sovereign and doesn't need anything. He is the foundation of existence and gives life and meaning to everything. God directs us so that we may reach out and find Him and so we must repent – Jesus will return to judge the world.

This is Paul's message – God is, and that changes everything.

### Key points

God did not come from anywhere. He has always existed and will always exist. The implications of this on our lives should be enormous.

### Explanation

- >>What does the Bible say existed before the universe?
- >>Does everything have to have a cause? If so, where is the start?
- >>What is God like?
- >>What are functional gods?
- >>What do we have faith in?
- >>What motivates us?
- >>What does Paul say about God in Acts 17?

### Application

- >>What is the meaning of life if there is no God?
- >>How do we know for sure how we should live our lives?

### Final thoughts

How does the existence of God change your life? How does it change the meaning of life?