

# A Mission that Matters

(Series: Reimagining Church; Message Thirty)  
Acts 17:16-34

## A. Acts 1:8 is the mission statement for Christ' Church

*"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)

## B. The reality is, the Great Commission doesn't excite us greatly

1. When we hear the word "evangelism" we get nervous, maybe feel guilty
2. Fact is, most of us are intimidated by this evangelism thing
3. We're not convinced the rewards outweigh the risks

## C. Luke invites us to the Apostle Paul's "School for Effective Evangelism"

*"Of the worlds four supreme tragic artists, Athens produced three. With Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, stands only Shakespeare."* (E.M. Blaiklock)

### (1) THE LESSON OF ATTITUDE (Acts 17:16)

#### A. Paul is deeply distressed by the rampant idolatry

1. Evangelism must radiate from our compassion for those who are lost
2. We need to see spiritually lost people through the eyes of Jesus

#### B. We need an attitude that's more gentle than judgmental

### (2) THE LESSON OF APPROACH (ACTS 17:17)

#### A. Paul is so distressed he intentionally goes to where non-believers go

#### B. Intentionally ask God to intervene in another person's eternal destiny

### (3) THE LESSON OF AUTHENTICITY (ACTS 17:18-21)

#### A. Paul is mixing it up intellectually with these Greek philosophers

1. It was how God had wired Paul - for face to face debate
2. Authenticity and integrity are necessary for effective witnessing

#### B. God has wired us all differently. We need to discover our style

1. There is Paul's intellectual style (Acts 17) and the testimonial style of Acts 19
2. In Acts 10, Cornelius illustrates the invitational style
3. The service style of ministering to others is used by Dorcas in Acts 9
4. Philip uses the interpersonal style with the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8

## 5. Peter uses a confrontational style in Acts 2

*"[Every] man is destined to die once, and after that the judgment! (so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many)"* (Hebrews 9:27)

## C. Share your faith as God designed you to share your faith

### (4) THE LESSON OF ARTICULATION (ACTS 17:22-23)

#### A. Talk gospel! People need to hear the Good news

*"How can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?"* (Romans 10:14; NLT)

1. Paul tailors his response to his listeners
2. Paul is observant; he listens. He earns the right to share the Gospel

#### B. Listening is probably the most important skill in effective evangelism

### (5) THE LESSON OF APOLOGETICS (READ 17:24-31)

*"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"* (1 Peter 3:15)

#### A. Paul doesn't just tell them to believe, he offers them reasons to believe

#### B. Engage in learning...Be prepared

### (6) THE LESSON OF ASSIMILATION (READ 17:32-34)

#### A. Results matter. Simply informing people about Jesus changes nothing!

1. The mission is to transform lives, assimilate new believers into God's family, and to change people's eternal destiny
2. We can never lose sight of the mission

#### B. Are we willing to offer ourselves to God to transform lives?

### (7) THE LESSON OF ACTION

#### A. Good intentions mean nothing

#### B. We need to step out in faith, to be God's witnesses, to Do It!