

# 3

## Leader Guide

### Gospel Conversations Part 2: Share the Gospel *October 15, 2023*

**Main Passage: Acts 17:16-34**

#### Theological Theme

Paul's speech at Mars Hill is one of the most important in the New Testament and one of Paul's most famous. Paul showed how the message of Christ can connect with a pagan culture.

#### Introduction

- ? What do you know about apologetics? Why is it important for Christian evangelism? Why is more required in evangelism than just knowing the right answers?
- ? In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul said love is a more excellent way. How can you defend your Christian faith with truth and love? Why is this important?

#### 1. Earn a Hearing (Acts 17:16-18)

Paul went to Athens to wait. He was not on a mission or ministry trip in Athens; he was waiting for his traveling companions to catch up so they could head on to Corinth. While Paul waited, he went to the Synagogue to "reason" with the Jews, and he spent time in the marketplace. There, Paul was provoked, or stirred in his spirit, by the idolatry of the city.

- ? Do you typically have enough margin built into your life that you are willing to let God interrupt your plans for something different? Why does this matter?
- ? How does your life give evidence that you love the unbelievers you encounter? If it doesn't, what might need to change?
- ? Application: Evangelism requires intention and effort. Where do you go or what do you practice regularly with a desire to open doors to share the gospel with others?

#### 2. Finding Connection (Acts 17:19-21)

Remember, Paul went marketplace because he could meet people there. But Paul found other points of connection too. Athens was a city of learning, where "all the Athenians and the foreigners residing there spent their time on nothing else but telling or hearing something new" (v. 21). Paul was a teacher, and he had a message to share. And he connected with his hearers intellectually by sharing the message of Jesus.

- ? How was Paul uniquely qualified to connect with the philosophers of Athens? How did God use those things in this setting?
- ? What things are you passionate about? How might you use your hobbies or other passions as vehicles to share the gospel?
- ? Application: Name some people you encounter on a regular basis who don't have a relationship with Jesus. What do you have in common that could be a connection?

### 3. Speaking Truth (Acts 17:22-34)

Paul put himself in a place where he could minister, and he observed of the culture around him. He spoke to the Athenians of their religious convictions and of their various idols, but he pointed specifically to “The unknown God.”

- ❓ How do the idols of our culture look different than those in ancient times? What are the greatest idolatrous struggles within the church today? How might the idolatry of Christians hamper their ability to effectively communicate the gospel with others?
- ❓ What kinds of marginal debates can distract Christians from the message of the gospel?
- ❓ Application: Who is God calling you to seek a gospel conversation with? How might you move toward obedience in this?

### Questions to Guide Your Group’s Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

\*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

### Here’s How to Become a Christ-Follower:

*Read the following verses and ask after each one: “What does this say to me?”*

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

### Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).