

# **Finding Life on Mars Hill**

**Acts 17:16-34**

**Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup> 2017**

1. What Paul told me (Luke's story)
2. Only one life, live it! (A sceptic's story)
3. Christ is risen! Hallelujah! (A new believer's story)

## Discussion Group Questions

1. Paul was “greatly distressed” to see that Athens was full of idols. What are the idols of our time? Where does contemporary idol worship generally take place? What is the most venerated idol – the Athena Nike – of our contemporary culture? Do we get used to this rather than distressed by it?
2. After mentioning the idols, Paul talked about an altar inscribed TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Are there signs that show people in our day still haven’t found what they are looking for?
3. Paul found entry points for the gospel in half-truths from Greek literature. Where can we find entry points in the things that people think about and talk about today? Can you think of concrete examples – perhaps from books, films, TV programmes, ... ‘God moments’ in the recent Manchester concert?
4. The Epicureans said that there is only one life and what we have to do is to live it and not fear death. How widespread is this approach to life in our contemporary world? Where have you met with it?
5. The Stoics thought of God as being not a person but the power of reason. Do we in our time give Reason a god-like position? Can you give any examples of how we do this?
6. Luke gives a fair bit of space to Paul in Athens even though only a few people became believers there. Was Paul’s mission there a failure? Do numbers matter? If so, why? If not, why not?
7. Does it strike you as strange that there seems to be no mention of the cross in what Paul said to the Areopagus? Why do you think he focussed on the resurrection on this occasion?
8. What has struck you most forcefully in your study of this passage?
9. Read I Corinthians 15 (the resurrection chapter) again and give thanks.