

Sermon File # 918

Scripture Text: Acts 17:16-34

Sermon Title: *Christians in a Christ-less Culture*

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Christians in a Christ-less Culture

Introduction:

Open your Bibles with me to Acts 17:16-34, as we continue to follow Paul on his second missionary venture. Last Sunday we noted God's saving power in the dramatic conversion of the Philippian jailer (16:22-34). When Paul, for the sake of just treatment of the new believers in Philippi, informed the government officials that he had Silas had been unjustly treated in their beating and imprisonment, they received an obsequious apology and escort from prison. Paul and his missionary entourage next went to Thessalonica, where new converts were won but also a riot was stirred up by jealous religious leaders. So, Paul and Silas had to steal away furtively to Berea, where they found a more enthusiastic reception. Again, turmoil aroused by the opposition forced Paul to leave for the city of Athens, where we find him in our text for today.

The city of Athens was only a shadow of its former self. It was at the height of its glory in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ. Then it was the cultural center of the civilized world and the home of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. But even though it was at the time of Paul's visit beyond its glory years, Athens was still associated with highest culture and sophistication and was not the kind of city that would be the most likely for a new church plant. But what Paul thought and

did in Athens is instructive for us as followers of Jesus who also find ourselves living in the midst of a Christ-less culture.

Follow as I read **Acts 17:16-34**.

In our text for today, author Luke presents Paul and his speech in Athens as “the high peak in his missionary career” and as “the centerpiece for the entire book” of Acts (See Marshall, page 281 and Polhill, page 365 in sources listed below). What is instructive for us is the fact that Paul did his best work in the most unlikely of places. Athens was symbolic of the paganism and idolatry that dominated the ancient world. Because of its high culture and intellectual sophistication it was also the most difficult to penetrate with the message of Jesus Christ. Again, we find another “how much more argument” in Acts. If the witness for Jesus and his saving message can succeed in first century Athens, how much more can the message of Jesus and his witnesses succeed in 21st Century Brussels!

You and I, whether expatriates or Belgians, live in a culture that is post-Christian and typical of secular Western Europe. Even the European Union seeks to distance itself from the Christian heritage of its member nations in its constitution and policies. As evangelical Christians we find ourselves as a small minority in a country that has a large Roman Catholic Church tradition but very low attendance in worship or participation of any kind. When my wife and I walk to the car on Sunday morning, carrying our Bibles, we realize that to the few neighbors who might be awake on Sunday morning, our lifestyle must appear strange indeed.

But then we realize we *are* different by calling and commitment. *The Message* paraphrase of 1 Peter 2:9-12 highlights our difference from the culture around us:

“But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.

“Friends, this world is not your home, so don’t make yourselves cozy in it. Don’t indulge your ego at the expense of your soul. Live an exemplary life among the natives so that your actions will refute their prejudices. Then they’ll be won over to God’s side and be there to join in the celebration when he arrives.”

We are called to be Christ’s unique people in a Christ-less culture. The Authorized King James translation of 1611 says in 1 Peter 2:9 that we are God’s “peculiar people,” which is not a flattering description, given how we now understand the word “peculiar.” But as part of the Kingdom of God we are called to stand out from the rest of the culture, which indeed may make us seem very peculiar to people in the larger culture. Groups like the Amish people in North

America have focused this difference on outward appearances and non-conformity with modern dress, conveniences and appliances. They appear peculiar in a 19th Century sort of way. But our difference from others in the school, workplace and community is not to be based on outward appearances or whether or not we drive cars and use electrical appliances, although our Christian calling will dictate modesty and restraint. Rather, our difference from the Christ-less culture around us will be of the deeper kind that characterized the great apostle-missionary Paul. This is the kind of difference that will honor God and that God also will honor.

As Christians in a Christ-less world, we will...

➤ **See with a different perspective**

Our text tells us that as he walked through the city of Athens, Paul was “greatly distressed” by what he saw—a city that was “full of idols” (16). As William Barclay said, in Athens “it was easier to meet a god than a man” (Barclay, page 141). Paul was not in Athens as a sightseer, but as a soul winner, says Warren Wiersbe (page 48). I’m afraid that I’m guilty of being more of a tourist than a pilgrim when visiting interesting cities, such as Athens, which we enjoyed touring a few years ago. But even here in Brussels and its surrounding villages and neighborhoods, I’m afraid we may all be guilty of the charge made by Noel O Lyons, who for many years was director of the Greater Europe Mission. He said, “Europe is looked over by millions of visitors and overlooked by millions of Christians” (quoted by Wiersbe, page 48). As Christians in a Christ-less culture, we are not to overlook people and their needs or to look upon their culture and worldview as a passing tourist would do; but we are to see with a different perspective. And when we do we will be...

• *More than distressed*

Our NIV says that Paul was ‘greatly distressed’ by what he saw, but one New Testament scholar says this is a weak translation (16). The Greek word is transliterated “paroxysm,” which means “a sudden violent emotion.” Paul was deeply moved, just as was Jesus, who wept over the city of Jerusalem, realizing the judgment that awaited the unrepentant and oblivious (Luke 19:41). No doubt Paul was angry over the rampant idolatry because the one true living God was being overlooked and obfuscated by these dead, inanimate idols, and Satan had these people in the grips of spiritual darkness. No doubt Paul sensed the presence of the spirit of darkness, a darkness that could be felt (Exodus 10:21).

Paul was more than distressed—he was angry with a broken heart. He wasn’t angry with the people but rather with the devil, who had darkened the minds and hearts of these people. He yearned with the love and compassion of Jesus that these people might turn from darkness to the light of the truth in Jesus Christ. He

was angry with sin and Satan but not with the people. Paul was moved with compassion and sought to win the lost. He witnessed and spoke in the courtroom with genuine respect and love for the people and with a yearning for them to come to the knowledge of God's saving truth.

We are not yet prepared to be God's faithful witnesses in this Christ-less culture until we begin to see people around us as immortal souls who are destined either for a glorious eternity with Jesus or as dupes of Satan, destined for an eternity of suffering and separation from God. This way of seeing people in an ungodly culture returns my thoughts to CS Lewis' words about the weight or load of our neighbor's glory. "It is a serious thing," writes Lewis, "to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as now you meet, if at all, only in a nightmare...There are no ordinary people," says Lewis (page 15).

Paul was also more than distressed because the worship that the people were giving to these false and inanimate gods was worship and honor that was due only to the living Triune God of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul sought to do everything to the glory of God through the advancement of the message and the growth of God's kingdom. He knew that God alone was worthy of worship and thus he was distressed to see worship trashed on these unworthy idols.

And I doubt if we share this same kind of distress and grief of the Apostle Paul. Yet, if we are to live as we should in this Christ-less culture, we need to see the worth of people. And we need to see the worthlessness, unworthiness and destructiveness of the gods and idols of this culture that keep people away from saving grace and that rob God of the glory that is due to him in this place where we are called to live. We should be more than distressed...

- *But not discouraged*

As deeply distressed as he was, Paul was not discouraged. He understood that he was in Athens, not by accident or as a passing tourist, but as God's witness and representative of the saving message of Jesus. He believed he was there by divine appointment and thus he determined to join God in his mission in the pagan, Christ-less city of Athens. He believed that although Athens was an ungodly, pagan city, God himself was there in the city, in the synagogue, where there were God-fearing seekers, but also in the Agora market, the place where people assembled to shop and to talk. There he joined God by boldly, freely speaking the message of Jesus with anyone who would listen, and surprisingly, there were people who were eager to listen. In the words of Philip Yancey, Paul found God a work in an unexpected place (See Yancey, reference below).

Paul was more than distressed by the Christ-less culture but he never was discouraged or overwhelmed by the spiritual forces he faced. He put on the armor of God, and he sensed the prayer support of others and knew he was more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 6:10-20; Romans 8:37). He knew he was not on mission for Jesus but was on mission *with* Jesus (Matthew 28:20). Paul knew that “a great door for effective work” and great opposition from the world were often simultaneous occurrences (1 Corinthians 16:9).

His calling was to be faithful and he could entirely trust God to enable him for the task at hand, which meant he was to...

➤ **Speak with a different message**

Like Paul, as Christians in a Christ-less culture we are called to speak a different message than the world is used to hearing. Paul was angered when he looked around and saw all the false messages and false teaching and false gods that were influencing the people and blinding them to the truth about the living God. We have the message about Jesus Christ and the good news about his saving death and resurrection and his willingness to forgive sins and to give a new life. Paul spoke and we too must speak the message...

- *With boldness*

Note how Paul spoke freely at every opportunity, whether with the religious in the synagogue or with pagans in the market place. Even when confronted by the intelligentsia, the philosophers, Paul continued to speak with freedom and openness. In fact, he spoke so much and so freely that he was ridiculed as a “babbling,” which meant a dilettante who spoke about many things as though he were an expert! (See Polhill, page 367). He was ridiculed as a “jabber-box.”

Paul was undeterred by criticism and he continued to speak the good news about Jesus and his resurrection to any who would listen. Probably because he spoke with such freedom and boldness about Jesus the members of the Areopagus wanted to hear more from Paul and so they brought him to their courtroom for a meeting to find out about this message that Paul was declaring so boldly and freely. When we are truly excited about the message of Jesus we should be like Paul and Peter and John, who said to the authorities who tried to silence them, “We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (4:20).

For us to make a difference in this Christ-less culture, we too must have zeal to share the message, being convinced that what we know is what the world needs to hear. Paul was also compelled by the love of Christ, to draw these lost pagans, into a saving relationship with Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:14). Zeal for God’s kingdom and glory and Jesus-like compassion for the lost, and living in step with

the Holy Spirit will give us the boldness we need to speak up for him at every opportunity. Perhaps what we need here in Belgium is a new sense of the loss and hopelessness of these people who are outside of Jesus and his saving grace.

Then we will speak the message about him...

- *With relevance*

When Paul was brought before the Court of Areopagus, he spoke to them in a gracious way, using the Socratic method of discourse, which they would certainly understand and respect (Stott, pages 290f). Although Paul was passionately disturbed by their paganism and idolatry, his anger was directed against the Evil One and not against the people, whom he hoped to win to faith in Christ. Paul began by acknowledging that they were deeply religious, and then cited their many objects of worship and used one particular altar as his main point of connection: the altar with the inscription, "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD" (23). Obviously, this altar was erected to make sure all the ground was covered, in case they had omitted a god from their vast array of gods who would be important for meeting their needs. Holding up that image before them Paul then went on to introduce the God who was known to them.

Paul showed how that he was able and willing to become all things to all people in order that, by any means possible, he might win some to faith in Christ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). Paul showed some of the breadth of his knowledge by referring to philosophical ideas from Plato and concepts acceptable to the Epicureans and Stoics, to whom he was speaking. He even quoted Greek poets with which they were all familiar (See Marshall, pages 285-289).

Paul could not have begun his message by using quotes from the Old Testament, the Scriptures of the first century church, or even by speaking first about the message of Christ Jesus. He found a relevant meeting point with them as though to say, "We can agree upon these points, so let's begin our discussion here." This says to me that we as witnesses for Jesus in a Christ-less culture need to study what the people are studying and find a place of meeting them with their thoughts and be able to speak in their life language. We need to find things with which we can agree and things about which we can affirm and compliment them. We cannot come at people in this culture with a condescending air of superiority, but must meet them on their level with all due humility and respect that allows them the freedom and dignity to respect our message (1 Peter 3:15).

Once Paul made a connection and gained a hearing from his audience, he was ready to share the relevance of his message with them. Paul knew that Athens was in a state of decline and that the people had become a bit cynical about their own philosophies and religions. At the risk of great oversimplification, the Epicureans' supreme value was to find happiness in pleasure. Although they

began seeking pleasure through simplicity and self-control, their lives had degenerated into sensuality and self-indulgence. And to them, the gods were distant and there was no hope for any kind of immortality. The Stoics were pantheists, believing “god” was everywhere and in everything, and that their only hope was some amorphous immortality of the soul. They sought to find meaning through self-control, which turned into a system of pride in personal achievement (See Foster). Paul was aware of the felt needs as well as the real and eternal of his audience, as we must be.

And we too, here in Western Europe and North America, find ourselves surrounded by a host of idols, failed philosophies and ideologies and desperate searches for life’s meaning. We can see the idols of materialism and economic prosperity crumbling before our very eyes. As witnesses for Jesus, instead of worrying and fretting over the demise of our savings and investments, we have a message to give to those whose entire meaning in life has been in material gain and temporal pleasure. We can see that in this culture the gods of pleasure, through free sex and drug addiction, continue to disappoint their worshipers. We also know that these people, though they for the most part have abandoned the Roman Catholic Church, are still very religious. Through television, telephone and the Internet, many psychics are promising to tell people’s fortune and proffer invaluable advice for how to live their lives. And the god of scientific humanism is much in vogue, and yet the culture is increasingly noting how that science has been used as much for the ill of humanity and breakdown of society as it has been for our good. Militant atheism, which hates orthodox, biblical religion and accuses Christianity of all of society’s ills, fails to see that it is as much a religion as any. Godless atheists worship the gods of self and godless science (not true science), which creates potentially more problems than it solves.

Our message to this Christ-less culture is, “I see that in every way you are very religious” (22). But then, like Paul, we are ready to speak a different message...

- *With purpose*

Paul was able to meet them at a point of similarity and let them know he understood their culture and the way they thought. He was able to make some concessions to them without compromising his message to them. His purpose was to present the message about this “unknown God,” whom Paul knew to be the Triune God of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so Paul went on to tell about this “unknown God,” and how they could come to know him personally.

Paul’s purpose was to lead this audience of intellectuals down the path that would lead to the message of Jesus. He began with speaking of God as the Creator of all. Some in his audience would have thought, like some today, that matter is eternal and there is no need for a creator. But as Paul perhaps waved his hands in the direction of the Parthenon, atop the Acropolis, he reminded them that their culture had built this magnificent structure, but God, who cannot even

be contained in the Parthenon, has designed and built the universe and everything in it (Fernando, page 473). Paul then made an allusion to the futility of their idolatry when he told these Athenians about the Creator God who is Lord over all and is in need of nothing that man can give him. This God is the self-sufficient God who is in charge of history and that history is going somewhere (in contrast to the Greek cyclical view). As Creator, Paul continues, he is Father of all, having created us in his own image. And we are accountable to the One who will judge us at the end of human history (See Bock, page 573, for a summary of Paul's message).

Paul then approaches the heart of his message by speaking of God's making himself known and available to all who are open to his revelation (27). God is indeed near to all who will call upon him (Psalm 145:18; Romans 10:8ff). Paul then noted that his message was taking them to a new place of accountability. Before they heard the message, God was willing to overlook their ignorance. But now that they have heard about the living God and his crucified, risen Son, Jesus, they must repent of sin and unbelief to prepare to face his final judgment (30f). Paul's message was one of judgment but also of grace. He had noted that God is not in need of anyone or anything, but has given us life and also is the source of our salvation and our only hope (25). We cannot earn or deserve God's forgiveness and gift of eternal life. It's all a gift of his grace through the sacrifice of his Son (Ephesians 2:8f). With the incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus God has provided for the way of salvation. Yet everyone who will reach out and receive God's free gift must repent of sin against God (violating his holy law and living independently of him) and trust in him alone for his forgiveness and gift of eternal life.

The message of Paul finds its apex in the resurrection of Jesus. This was a strange word to these pagans, for whom a bodily resurrection was the farthest concept from their way of thinking. To them, the body was inherently evil and unworthy of immortality. And some of these pagans thought that by resurrection Paul was speaking of another god to add to their assortment of gods. Yet, the resurrection of Jesus signaled the inauguration of the age to come and the arrival of his kingdom that would find its consummation in the bodily resurrection of his people, who will live forever in his "being-redeemed" heaven and earth." The resurrection of God's redeemed people to everlasting bodily life will take place when wicked unbelievers are resurrected to judgment and condemnation to everlasting destruction.

(Many of us have heard preachers saying that Paul left Athens with regret that he failed to preach the cross of Christ and thus looked on his preaching there as a failure. For this reason, these preachers continued, when Paul went to Corinth his expressed his determination to preach Christ crucified. Although it made for a good sermon idea, this is a faulty interpretation, both from the standpoint of what actually happened in Athens and the context of Paul's declaration in 1 Corinthians 2:2. First, we have only a brief quotation from what Paul preached to

the Areopagus Council. What Luke records can be read slowly in less than 2 minutes and we can be sure Paul preached much more than this. And we can safely assume that his references to Jesus' resurrection presuppose what he must have said about his crucifixion (See NT Wright, page 86, below).

The witness that Paul gave in Athens is an example to us in our Christ-less culture. We too must seek to understand and speak the language of the people. And we must find a place of meeting, and the point of their felt needs, and boldly declare that Christ is the answer to whatever the need—for temporal provision, wisdom, strength and grace for living and hope for the life to come. We also need to be able to show how that our God is the true and living God of creation and also of special revelation. We must be familiar with the story of salvation and the way those outside of God's spiritual family can become children of God. And we need to tell them that history is going someplace and that now is the time to join God's kingdom and become part of his great plan of redemption for all his creation and for all who will believe.

Unlike the tried and failed gods and idols in this Christ-less culture, we have a Savior who meets the needs of your friend, neighbor, work associate or fellow student, beginning with her immediate and felt needs and moving all the way into her eternal and ultimate needs for forgiveness and life forever with God. And in his task, Paul was called also to...

➤ **Succeed in a different way**

No doubt many continued to see Paul as a drifter who happened to wander into Athens as an itinerate "babbler," someone who was always delving into the novel and untested. To their way of thinking, Paul was a loser who would be forgotten soon after his departure. He was invited to speak to the Areopagus Council more as a curiosity, deserving to be sneered at and scorned rather than respected as a guest lecturer (32). The members of this council were professionals at reviewing all the latest philosophical fads and ideas (21). But for others, namely a man named Dionysius, a member of this august Areopagus Court, and a woman named Damaris and "a number of others," Paul made sense (34). His message was something that rang true. And believing it served to confirm its reality and viability in their lives. They had come to believe on Jesus and now had begun a personal relationship with him.

Because his numbers weren't impressive to the outside world of observers, he wasn't considered successful (even by some Baptist preachers, who categorized Paul's ministry in Athens as a failure). And for the secular world, and to a lot of evangelical Christians, numbers and impressive statistics continue to be the true measure of success and drive the strategies of numerous mission organizations. But if we are to think as Jesus thinks and measure success the way he and Paul measure success, we will think of success more in terms of...

- *Being faithful*

Paul left the council, not as a defeated but rather as one the Lord regarded as faithful (33). Just as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, it didn't matter to him how he might be judged by a human court. His conscience was clear as one accountable to God, and as one who had been faithful in his assignment to declare the message of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:1-5). Paul learned the secret of handling criticism, by keeping his focus on what God thought of him and not the majority opinion of others. He no doubt was aware of Jesus' parable of the talents, where the master commended and rewarded the "good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:14ff). Paul's commitment was to be faithful before God and not successful in the eyes of others.

Here in this setting also we must realize that God has placed us here to do the unique task required for this place, this Christ-less culture. We need to ask what we must do, not to be successful, but what we must do to be faithful to God who has called us and placed us here. To be faithful in this context demands that we live in step with the Spirit and covered with the armor of God in order to deflect the constant attacks of the world, the flesh and the devil (Ephesians 6:10-20). It may be that some of us are called here to plant the seed of the message of Christ and that after we are gone God will bring others behind us who will water the seed. And maybe it will be the third wave of newcomers who will be privileged to harvest the fruit of our labors (1 Corinthians 3:5-9; Matthew 13:1-23).

If we are faithful in godly living and Spirit-led witnessing, then our faithfulness will result in our...

- *Being effective*

Although Paul didn't have great numbers to show for his witnessing in Athens, he didn't leave empty handed. A few became followers and believers, including Dionysius, one of the twelve Areopagus Council members, "a woman named Damaris, and a number of others" (34). Had Luke been a Baptist, he would have not only *recorded* the number, but he would have *reported* the number, perhaps even with embellished statistics, to the world-wide Baptist Press. But Paul was content with and no doubt very grateful for the results of what God did through him in Athens. He had no long-range plans for Athens. He simply happened to be passing through there and saw God was at work around him and he obediently linked up with God's purposes. And then God used his faithfulness in an eternally significant way.

And this must be our focus as God's people living in a Christ-less culture. In our ministry here at IBC we may not have the statistical results and accumulative growth as experienced in the fast-growing churches of North America. In fact,

we continue to experience the regular departure of our people whose jobs return them to their home countries or to other assignments after a few years. We also have smaller numbers of those who come to faith in Christ and follow him in baptism and commitment to his church. But in this regard I am greatly heartened because I see a greater level of commitment to Christ on the part of new converts here within our ministry.

In our former churches in the US, there were greater numbers of “decisions” *for* Christ but often we were disappointed to find many of these people demonstrating little evidence of a real conversion *to* Christ. On the other hand, we are excited to see here at IBC people from all over the world coming to Christ out of other world religions and even from atheistic backgrounds. Currently the largest ethnic group enrolled in one of our Alpha courses is Chinese.

Conclusion:

Paul left the city of Athens a different place than it was before he arrived. That’s the prayer I have for my life and work in this place—that God will use me to make a difference in this Christ-less culture. I must keep in mind this example from the life and ministry of Paul in Athens. I too need to see this culture differently, to see it as one that is desperately in need of the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. I must live in the spirit of prayerful dependence on God to open the eyes of the spiritually blind and to let the light and love of Christ be seen in me and his truth be heard from me. I must be ready at all times to share the message of Jesus with respect and deep compassion. I must continue to try to understand these people and this culture so that I can speak their language; not only Dutch to the Flemish, but to be able to understand the way they think and what and who have influenced their thoughts and values.

I must pray and witness against the many false and life-stealing idols of this culture and of the expatriate culture as well, such as the strangle-hold of materialism and the addictions of sex, drugs, alcohol, gambling and so forth. I need to be aware of a worldview that has no hope for this life or the life beyond and realize the vacuity and Satanic influence of New Age beliefs and occult practices and promises. To live faithfully as God’s children in a Christ-less culture means that we must be under God’s protection from the power of temptation and spiritual darkness that could overwhelm us if we are relying on the strength of our flesh. We must keep ourselves covered by the full armor of God, walk in step with the Spirit, and keep our thoughts on “things above” (Ephesians 6:10-20; Colossians 3:1ff). We must seek to encourage one another and be encouraged by our worship and fellowship in the Body of Christ (Hebrews 10:19-26).

We must also realize that our witness and Christ-like concern for others will not always or even usually be met with appreciation and acceptance. Often we will

receive ridicule and rejection, as did Jesus, Paul and the many faithful witnesses down through the centuries of the church. But we must take heart that God will use our faithfulness and he is at work, even if secretly and yet significantly (Matthew 13:31-32). We must seek to stand firm and let nothing move us, always giving ourselves fully to the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).

We must also realize that living in a Christ-less culture we are absolutely dependent on God's spiritual protection and the power and encouragement of the Holy Spirit. We are not surrounded by the usual support-systems that surround Christians in North America. I received a phone call from a sweet young lady in the US whose husband was being offered a job here in Belgium. But they had heard from their pastor that Belgium is a spiritually dark place and they might find this a tough place for their family with young children. (The pastor no doubt wanted them to remain in his church!). She said, "I've even heard they don't have many Christian radio stations over there!" I assured her we don't have Christian television like in Tennessee and I then began to advise her that perhaps this might not be the best place for them after all.

But for those of us whom God has planted in Belgium, the challenge is before us to be his faithful people in a Christ-less culture.

Thoughts and questions for personal reflection and/or group discussion:

1. How do you think evangelical believers are perceived and characterized by your surrounding unbelieving/secular culture?
2. What are some of the perceptions of Christians that are negative and possibly detrimental to the witness of evangelicals?
3. Based on our text, how do you think Paul perceived the Athenians? How did they perceive him?
4. What were some of the factors that enabled Paul to relate to the Athenians in his witnessing and preaching?
5. What are the basic truths about God that Paul presented in the Areopagus? Why would these truths be important to share in the secular culture of this (your) country?
6. What are some of the idols (gods) worshiped in this (your) culture?

7. What would constitute your being a successful witness for Christ? How might you become more successful in God's sight?

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