

# The Unknown God

Acts 17:15-34; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 231-242

**H**ave you ever pretended that you don't hear your mom the first time she calls you? Sometimes we pretend that we can't hear someone. Especially if they want us to do something we don't want to do! A long time ago Paul tried to tell some people about the good news of Jesus, but many of them didn't want to listen.

**T**hank you so much for coming with me to Athens!" Paul said to his friends from the city of Berea. These people had just recently learned about Jesus. They had followed Paul to Athens so he could teach them more as they traveled.

"Please send Silas and Timothy this way just as soon as you can!" Paul waved as his friends left to go back home to Berea.

Paul was lonely in Athens. There was not a single person there who knew about or believed in Jesus. "Dear Jesus," he prayed, "show me how to share Your love with the people of this city!"

Beautiful statues, buildings, and artwork surrounded the people of Athens. Expensive temples filled with all kinds of idols seemed to be everywhere. Athens was known as a city overflowing with intelligent people. But as Paul walked around, he felt sorry for these people. They thought they knew so much. But they really didn't know the most important thing. They didn't know Jesus.

Paul started talking to people. Soon his words began to make people think and ask questions. They wanted to hear what he had to say about Jesus. One day, someone invited

Paul to speak at the Areopagus on top of Mars Hill. The Areopagus was a special place where philosophers met to talk and listen to the latest ideas. Such men were considered to be very intelligent and wise. It was an honor to be invited to speak there.

"Friends," Paul began, "I can see that you are very religious. Everywhere I look I see statues and altars to different gods. On one statue I noticed the words: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. I'm here today to tell you about Him!

"The true God of heaven made the world



## The Message

I serve God when I tell others about Him.

## Memory Verse

“God . . . is not far from each one of us”

(Acts 17:27, NIV).

and everything in it. It is God in heaven who gives life and breath to everyone.” As he continued speaking, many of the people listened carefully. Then Paul told them about the resurrection of Jesus. Some of the people said, “You’re crazy! This is just a bunch of nonsense!” But there were a few who said, “We want to hear more.”

Not very many people in the city of Athens believed in Jesus. They thought their own wisdom was better than God’s wisdom. But there were some who became Christians. Dionysius (*dee-on-oo’-see-os*), an important man in the city government, and a woman

named Damaris gave their hearts to Jesus.

Paul was able to talk boldly to the intelligent people of Athens because he knew God himself. What can you do to get to know Jesus better? Do you really want to know Jesus so you can tell others about Him?



# S A B B A T H

**DO** Studying nature is one way to know God better. If possible, take a nature walk with your family. Try to learn something new. Plan to tell a friend, or someone who doesn't know God what you learned. Find a quiet place and read your Bible lesson story together.

**READ** Read Acts 17:24-27 together. Your memory verse is part of verse 27.

**SING** Sing about God's love, and then pray together.

# M O N D A Y

**READ** Read Acts 17:19-23 with your family. How did Paul share the good news about Jesus? Write here what was written on an altar in Athens:

**THINK** What would you tell others about the true God?

**DO** If you have a telephone answering machine, record a happy greeting, using song, humor, or rhyming words to introduce people to the good news about Jesus. Pray for those who hear it.

**DO** Make up a tune for your memory verse.

# T U E S D A Y

**READ** For worship today, read the rest of Paul's sermon to the Athenians in Acts 17:24-31. What is your favorite part?

**DO** Have you given away the "Good News Book" you made in Sabbath School?

**DO** Unscramble your memory verse by using the code below: Gzd is nzt fqr frzm yqch zny zf xs (Qcts 17:27). CODE: q=a; z=o; y=e; x=u

# S U N D A Y

**READ** During family worship, read and discuss together Acts 17:15-18. How can your family share the good news about Jesus with other people? Write two ideas here:

**DO** Make a "Good News Letter" about your family. Write about good things that have happened to your family. Tell about the best news—Jesus. Decorate with pictures. Give copies to your friends and relatives. Pray for each one you give it to.

**DO** Say your memory verse together.

People who study old things found the words "to the unknown god" on a statue in Pergamun, Greece.



# W E D N E S D A Y

**READ** If you gave away your "Good News Book," tell about it during family worship. With your family, read Acts 17:32-34. How did the people of Athens react when Paul told them the good news about Jesus?

**THINK** Which four Bible books come before Acts? They are called the four \_\_\_\_\_ . (Ask your family.)

**DRAW** Say your memory verse. Draw a picture of what it means to you. Thank God for always being near you.



# T H U R S D A Y

## READ

With your family, read the three Bible texts below. Find something about Jesus that you could share with others.

1 Peter 5:7    Matthew 7:9-11    Matthew 6:25

## SHARE

Make three bookmarks. Put each text and the sentence that goes with it on a different one. Decorate and give them to friends.

## PRAY

Thank God for the Bible.

# F R I D A Y

## DO

During Friday evening worship, act out your lesson story. Say your memory verse. Tell about sharing the good news this week. Who else enjoyed telling the good news about Jesus?

## DO

Play some Christmas music while you read Luke 2:8-14. Write Luke 2:10 and a joyful message on a postcard. Decorate it and mail it to someone who needs encouragement. You can celebrate Christmas any time!

## SING

Sing about God's love, then pray together.

## The Unknown God

# PUZZLE

Directions: To find the item that inspired Paul for his speech on Mars Hill, draw a line from dot to dot, beginning at 1.

