

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 177 – June 26<sup>th</sup> – Acts 17:1-34

### Works frequently referenced in these notes on Acts

Bruce, FF, *The Acts of the Apostles*, London, 2nd ed. 1952

Polhill, John B, *Acts: The New American Commentary*, Nashville, 1992

Stott, John R W, *The Message of Acts*, IVP (The Bible Speaks Today), Leicester, 1990

#### Acts 17:1

Διοδεύσαντες δὲ τὴν Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ τὴν Ἀπολλωνίαν ἦλθον εἰς Θεσσαλονίκην, ὅπου ἦν συναγωγή τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

διοδεύσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl  
διοδεύω go about, travel through

"The road was the Via Egnatia, which ran from Neapolis to Dyrrhachium through Philippi and the three towns mentioned in this verse... The highways of Empire became for Paul the highways of the Kingdom of Heaven." Bruce. Each of the cities mentioned is about a day's ride apart by horseback.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

Thessalonica was the capital of the province of Macedonia

ὅπου adv. where

#### Verse 2

κατὰ δὲ τὸ εἰωθὸς τῷ Παύλῳ εἰσηλθεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐπὶ σάββατα τρία διελέξατο αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν,

εἰωθὸς Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s εἰωθα  
pf. with pres. meaning) be accustomed to;  
το εἰωθὸς custom

Cf. 13:5,14; 14:1.

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three  
διαλεγομαι discuss, debate, address,  
speak  
γραφῆ, ης f writing, Scripture

#### Verse 3

διανοίγων καὶ παρατιθέμενος ὅτι τὸν χριστὸν ἔδει παθεῖν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὃν ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν.

διανοίγω open, explain  
παρατιθέμενος Verb, pres midd ptc, m nom s  
παρατιθεμι put before; midd. point out,  
prove

Bring forth evidence.

ἔδει Verb, imperf indic, 3 s (impers) δεῖ  
impersonal verb it is necessary, must  
παθεῖν Verb, aor act infin πασχω suffer  
ἀναστῆναι 2 aor infin ἀνίστημι 2 aor rise

νεκρός, α, ον dead

Cf. 1 Cor 15:3ff.

καταγγέλλω announce, proclaim

Polhill suggests that Paul's stay in Thessalonica was longer than might first appear from Luke's brief account. "It was long enough for a church to be established and leadership appointed (1 Thess 5:12). It was of sufficient duration that Paul received financial support from Philippi "time and again" while in Thessalonica (Phil 4:16). Evidently he took up his trade and supported himself as well during this period (1 Thess 2:9). Most of Paul's converts in Thessalonica seem to have come out of paganism, judging from 1 Thess 1:9, which would indicate a more extensive Gentile witness than one might gather from Luke's highly compressed account."

#### Verse 4

καὶ τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπίσθησαν καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Σιλᾷ, τῶν τε σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος πολὺ γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι.

ἐπίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl πειθω  
persuade

"I.e. of the Jews, presumably including Jason (ver. 5) and Aristarchus and Secundus (20:4)." Bruce

προσεκληρώθησαν Verb, aor pass dep indic,  
3 pl προσκληροομαι join, join company  
with

σεβομαι reverence, worship  
πλῆθος, ος n crowd, quantity, number  
πολυ n nom/acc πολυς much

γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι "Either 'many of the chief women' (cf v.12) or 'many of the wives of the chief men' (cf 13:50)" Bruce

**Verse 5**

ζηλώσαντες δὲ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ προσλαβόμενοι τῶν ἀγοραίων ἄνδρας τινὰς πονηροὺς καὶ ὀχλοποιήσαντες ἐθορύβουν τὴν πόλιν, καὶ ἐπιστάντες τῇ οἰκίᾳ Ἰάσονος ἐζήτουν αὐτοὺς προαγαγεῖν εἰς τὸν δῆμον·

ζηλω be jealous of

Cf. 1 Thess 2:14.

προσλαμβάνομαι gather, take along  
ἀγοραῖος, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς  
about the market place

πονηρὸς, α, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς  
evil, bad, wicked

ὀχλοποιεῖω gather a crowd

θορυβεῖω set in uproar

ἐφίστημι come up to, approach, appear

προαγω lead or bring out, bring before

δῆμος, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς  
people, crowd

"As Thessalonica was a free city, its citizen-body (δῆμος) discharged legislative and juridical functions. As at Pisidian Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, it is Jews who try to stir up Gentile authorities against the missionaries. Roman law depended on voluntary prosecutors (*delatores*) to set it in motion." Bruce

**Verse 6**

μη εὐρόντες δὲ αὐτοὺς ἔσυρον Ἰάσονα καὶ τινὰς ἀδελφοὺς ἐπὶ τοὺς πολιτάρχας, βοῶντες ὅτι οἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες οὗτοι καὶ ἐνθάδε πάρεισιν,

συρω drag

πολιταρχῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς  
city official

A title for a magistrate in Macedonian cities such as Thessalonica. There were five or six such officials in Thessalonica. The use of this term here shows Luke's accurate and careful reporting.

βοῶ call, cry out, shout

οἰκουμένη, ἡς ἑξ ἑκ, ἡς ἑξ ἑκ  
world, inhabited earth

ἀναστατώσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl

ἀναστατω agitate, stir up, incite to

revolt

Compare 16:20

ἐνθάδε here, to this place

παρεῖμι be present, come, arrive

**Verse 7**

οὓς ὑποδέδεκται Ἰάσων· καὶ οὗτοι πάντες ἀπέναντι τῶν δογμάτων Καίσαρος πράσσουσι, βασιλέα ἕτερον λέγοντες εἶναι Ἰησοῦν.

ὑποδέδεκται Verb, perf midd/pass dep indic,

3 s ὑποδεχομαι receive, welcome

ἀπέναντι over against, contrary to

δογμα, τος ἡ rule, law, decree

πρασσω do, practice

βασιλέα Noun, acc s βασιλευς, εως ἡμερῶν  
king

Compare the charge levelled against Jesus before Pilate Lk 23:2; Jn 19:12.

"For a summary of Paul's teaching at Thessalonica cf. 1 Th. 1:9f. It is clear from 1 and 2 Th. that it contained a prominent eschatological emphasis, which may have lent colour to the accusation." Bruce

**Verse 8**

ἐτάραξαν δὲ τὸν ὄχλον καὶ τοὺς πολιτάρχας ἀκούοντας ταῦτα,

ταρασσω trouble, disturb, frighten, stir up  
πολιταρχῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς, οὐ μὴ ἰδῆς  
see v.6

**Verse 9**

καὶ λαβόντες τὸ ἱκανὸν παρὰ τοῦ Ἰάσονος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπέλυσαν αὐτούς.

το ἱκανὸν security, bond

"Ramsay suggests that Jason and the others were bound over to send Paul, the alleged cause of the disturbance, away from the city and prevent his return, and that this policy, while it lasted (it probably lapsed when these politarchs demitted office), is the hindrance referred to in 1 Thess 2:18...

"We gather from 1 Th 2:13f., 3:3, that the Jews continued to organise persecution against the Thessalonian believers; perhaps those who 'fell asleep' so soon (1 Thess 4:13) were victims of this persecution. The church in Thessalonica became a centre of evangelisation (1 Thess 1:8). It included not only Jewish believers and 'God-fearers', but former idolaters (1 Thess 1:9)." Bruce

**Verse 10**

Οἱ δὲ ἀδελφοὶ εὐθέως διὰ νυκτὸς ἐξέπεμψαν τὸν τε Παῦλον καὶ τὸν Σιλᾶν εἰς Βέροιαν, οἵτινες παραγενόμενοι εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀπήεσαν·

νυξ, νυκτος ἡ night

ἐκπεμπω send out, send away

Timothy probably accompanied them (cf. v.14).

"When the three missionaries left Thessalonica, they also left the Egnatian Way, the route they had been following since they first landed in Macedonia at Neapolis (16:11). This main east-west highway went north-west of Thessalonica to Dyrrachium on the Adriatic. It was the main land route to Rome. At Dyrrachium travellers would take a boat across the Adriatic Sea to Brundisium in southern Italy and from there north to Rome. It has been suggested that Paul might have entertained the idea of taking this route to Rome even as early as this point in his missionary career. In his letter to the Romans (15:22) he spoke of his 'often' been hindered in coming to them. The hindrance at this time may well have been the news that the emperor Claudius had expelled all Jews from Rome (18:2). Whatever the case, Paul headed in another direction at this time, going southwest to Berea and well off any man thoroughfare." Polhill.  
Berea was about 60 miles from Thessalonica.

ἀπήεσαν Verb, imperf indic, 3 pl ἀπειμι go, come

The prefix ἀπ has lost its significance here.

### Verse 11

οὗτοι δὲ ἦσαν εὐγενέστεροι τῶν ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη, οἵτινες ἐδέξαντο τὸν λόγον μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν ἀνακρίνοντες τὰς γραφὰς εἰ ἔχοι ταῦτα οὕτως.  
εὐγενέστεροι comparative from adj εὐγενής, ες of high or noble birth, noble

Here the meaning is 'more free from prejudice'.

προθυμία, ας f willingness, eagerness  
καθ' ἡμέραν daily  
ἀνακρινῶ examine, judge, evaluate  
ἔχοι Verb, pres act opt, 3 s ἔχω

"The classical use of the optative replacing the indic. in an indirect question in historical sequence: see on 21:33." Bruce  
εἰ ἔχοι ταῦτα οὕτως a classical construction meaning, 'if these things might be so'

### Verse 12

πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπίστευσαν, καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνίδων γυναικῶν τῶν εὐσημῶν καὶ ἀνδρῶν οὐκ ὀλίγοι.

Ἑλληνις, ιδος f Greek or Gentile woman  
εὐσημῶν, ον gen ονος respected, of high standing

### Verse 13

ὡς δὲ ἔγνωσαν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης Ἰουδαῖοι ὅτι καὶ ἐν τῇ Βεροῖα καταγγέλη ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, ἤλθον κάκει σαλεύοντες καὶ ταρασσόντες τοὺς ὄχλους.

καταγγέλη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

καταγγελλῶ proclaim

κάκει (καὶ ἐκεῖ) and there, there also

σαλευῶ shake, disturb

ταρασσῶ see v.8

### Verse 14

εὐθέως δὲ τότε τὸν Παῦλον ἐξαπέστειλαν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ πορεύεσθαι ἕως ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν· ὑπέμεινάν τε ὃ τε Σιλᾶς καὶ ὁ Τιμόθεος ἐκεῖ.

τοτε then, at that time

ἐξαποστειλλῶ send out, send away

ἕως ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν as far as the sea, i.e. to the coast

The Western text states that Paul went to Athens *by sea*.

ὑπέμεινάν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ὑπομένω  
remain behind  
ἐκεῖ there

"For the movements of Paul and his companions from this point on we must compare the information in 1 Thess 3:1ff. The following reconstruction of the sequence of events is taken chiefly from Lake:

1. Paul leaves Silas and Timothy in Beroea and goes to Athens, whence he sends them a message to rejoin him at once (17:14f);
2. They rejoin him in Athens (cf. 1 Thess 3:1);
3. He sends Timothy to Thessalonica (1 Thess 3:1f) and Silas elsewhere in Macedonia (cf. 18:5), probably to Philippi Ramsay suggests;
4. He goes on to Corinth (18:1);
5. Silas and Timothy return from Macedonia to Corinth (18:5; cf 1 Thess 3:6);
6. From Corinth he writes the two epistles to the Thessalonians." Bruce

### Verse 15

οἱ δὲ καθιστάνοντες τὸν Παῦλον ἤγαγον ἕως Ἀθηνῶν, καὶ λαβόντες ἐντολὴν πρὸς τὸν Σιλᾶν καὶ τὸν Τιμόθεον ἵνα ὡς τάχιστα ἔλθωσιν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐξήεσαν.

καθιστημί and καθιστανῶ accompany  
ἤγαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl ἄγω  
Ἀθηναί, ον f Athens - note that this proper name is always plural

ἐντολή, ης f command, order, instruction  
τάχιστα adv (superl of ταχεως) ὡς τ. as soon as possible

ἐξήεσαν Verb, imperf indic, 3 pl ἐξείμι go away, depart, leave

**Verse 16**

Ἐν δὲ ταῖς Ἀθήναις ἐκδεχομένου αὐτοῦ τοῦ Παύλου, παρωξύνετο τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν.

Athens had been the classical centre of Greek culture and remained the cultural and intellectual centre of the Roman empire. The Attic dialect of Greek spoken at Athens had become the basis of Koine, the lingua franca of the first century. It was one of the three leading university cities (the others being Alexandria and Tarsus) and had the status of a free city within the Roman Empire.

ἐνδεχομαι wait for  
παρωξυνομαι be greatly upset, infuriated

A very strong word. The word from which we get *paroxysm*.

θεωρεω see, observe  
κατείδωλος, ον full of idols

Here alone in the NT.

**Verse 17**

διελέγετο μὲν οὖν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν πρὸς τοὺς παρατυγχάνοντας.

διαλεγομαι discuss, debate  
σεβομαι worship; ὁ σ. (τον θεον)  
worshiper of God (Gentile who accepted the one God of Judaism and attended synagogue but did not follow all the Jewish law).

ἀγορα, ας f market place  
παρατυγχανω happen to be present

**Verse 18**

τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἐπικουρείων καὶ Στωϊκῶν φιλοσόφων συνέβαλλον αὐτῷ, καὶ τινες ἔλεγον· Τί ἂν θέλοι ὁ σπερμολόγος οὗτος λέγειν; οἱ δὲ· Ἐένων δαιμονίων δοκεῖ καταγγελεὺς εἶναι· ὅτι τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο.

Ἐπικουρίων Epicurians followed the philosophy of Epicurius. They believed that pleasure was the chief end in life – a pleasure consisting in tranquillity and the absence of pain, passion and fears.  
Στωϊκῶν The Stoics were followers of Zeno. They laid great stress on the rational over the emotional and stressed individual self-sufficiency. They regarded it as proper to commit suicide when life could no longer be supported with dignity.

φιλοσοφος, ου m philosopher, lit lover of wisdom

συμβαλλω discuss, confer, debate  
θέλοι Verb, pres act optative, 3 s θέλω  
wish, will

σπερμολογος, ου m one who picks up scraps of information

Athenian slang. One who puts together ideas from a number of sources but who lacks any coherent philosophy or understanding.

ξενος, η, ον strange, foreign, unusual; ὁ ξ.  
stranger, foreigner

Ἐένων δαιμονίων strange gods, in the Greek sense of the term 'gods'

δοκεω think, seem  
καταγγελευς, εως m a proclaimer, herald  
ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection

The Epicurians believed in no existence after death, while the Stoics believed that only the soul, the divine spark, survived death. Hence they may have thought that he was speaking of new gods – resurrection (Anastasia) being one and Jesus another.

**Verse 19**

ἐπιλαβόμενοι τε αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον Πάγον ἤγαγον, λέγοντες· Δυνάμεθα γνῶναι τίς ἡ καινὴ αὐτῆ ἢ ὑπὸ σοῦ λαλουμένη διδαχὴ;

ἐπιλαβόμενοι Verb, aor midd dep rtc, m nom pl ἐπιλαμβάνομαι take, take hold of, sieze

Ἄρειον Παγον "Short for ... the Council of the Areopagus, so called because it met in early times on the Areopagus or Hill of Ares [Mars], west of the Acropolis... the most venerable Athenian court... it had supreme authority in religious matters and seems also to have had the power at this time to appoint public lecturers and exercise some control over them in the interest of public order." Bruce Paul does not seem to have been 'tried' in any formal sense. It seems more of an informal hearing.

ἤγαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl ἄγω  
γνῶναι Verb, aor act infin γινώσκω  
καινος, η, ον new  
διδαχη, ης f teaching

**Verse 20**

ξενίζοντα γάρ τινα εἰσφέρεις εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς ἡμῶν· βουλόμεθα οὖν γνῶναι τίνα θέλει ταῦτα εἶναι.

ξενίζω appear strange  
εἰσφερω bring in, carry in  
ἀκοη, ης f hearing  
βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan

Cf. 2:12 τι θελει τουτο ειναι;

**Verse 21**

Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ πάντες καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι  
εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἠὲ καίρου ἢ λέγειν τι ἢ  
ἀκούειν τι καινότερον.

Ἀθηναῖος, α, ον Athenian  
ἐπιδημεῶ sojourn, dwell  
εὐκαίρως spend time, occupy selves  
καινότερος comparative from καινός new;  
τι καινότερον the latest thing

"Luke's remark is quite ironical. The Athenians had accused Paul of being the dilettante (v.18), an accusation much more pertinent to themselves. Their curiosity had a beneficial side, however. It set the stage for Paul's witness." Polhill

**Verse 22**

Σταθεῖς δὲ Παῦλος ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἀρείου Πάγου  
ἔφη· Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κατὰ πάντα ὡς  
δεισιδαιμονεστεροῦς ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ·

ἰστημι stand  
μέσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the  
middle, among  
Ἀρείος παγός see v.19.

The sense here is 'in the midst of the Council of the Areopagus'. Bruce says "in the first century A.D. the council met in the Agora."

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say  
δεισιδαιμονεστερος, α, ον adjective  
(comparative of δεισιδαιμων, ον) very  
religious

Probably intended to be heard in a complimentary sense rather than (as AV) derogatory. It was customary in oratory to seek to win over the hearers by beginning with a compliment – a *capitatio benevolentiae*. Nevertheless, Paul seems deliberately to have chosen an ambiguous term.

θεωρεῶ see, watch, observe, notice

**Verse 23**

διερχόμενος γὰρ καὶ ἀναθεωρῶν τὰ  
σεβάσματα ὑμῶν εἶδον καὶ βωμὸν ἐν ᾧ  
ἐπεγράπτο· Ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ. ὃ οὖν ἀγνοοῦντες  
εὐσεβεῖτε, τοῦτο ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν.

διερχομαι pass through, go through  
ἀναθεωρεῶ observe closely  
σεβασμα, τος η object of worship, place of  
worship  
εἶδον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω  
βωμος, ου m altar  
ἐπεγράπτο Verb, pluperf pass indic, 3 s  
ἐπιγραφῶ write on or in  
ἀγνώστος, ον unknown

There appear to have been many altars in Athens to 'unknown gods', some where sacrifices had been made in the attempt to halt a plague. Paul may have changed 'gods' to 'God' for the sake of his argument (so Jerome and Didymus) or there may well have been an altar dedicated exactly as Paul here describes (Bruce).

ὁ ... τοῦτο "Note the neuter (cf. το θειον, ver. 29); Paul starts with his hearers' belief in an impersonal divine essence, pantheistically conceived, and leads them to the Living God revealed as Creator and Judge." Bruce

ἀγνοεῶ be ignorant, fail to understand  
εὐσεβεῶ worship  
καταγγέλλω proclaim, make known

**Verse 24**

ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν  
αὐτῷ, οὗτος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὑπάρχων κύριος  
οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ

ὑπαρχῶ be (equivalent to εἶμι)

"As at Lystra, Paul begins with the revelation of God in creation (cf. Rom 1:19ff.)." Bruce  
"Paul began with the basic premise that ran throughout his speech: God is Creator. He referred to God as the maker of the 'world' (κοσμος), a term that would be familiar to every Greek. The concept of God as absolute Creator, however, would not be easy for them to grasp. For them, divinity was to be found *in* the heavens, *in* nature, *in* humanity. The idea of a single supreme being who stood *over* the world, who created all that exists, was totally foreign to them. This was indeed an 'UNKNOWN GOD'." Polhill

χειροποιητος, ον made by human hands

Cf. 1 Kings 8:27; 7:48.

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary, inner part  
of Jewish Temple  
κατοικεῶ live, settle, inhabit

**Verse 25**

οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρωπίνων θεραπεύεται  
προσδεόμενός τινος, αὐτὸς διδοὺς πᾶσι ζωὴν  
καὶ πνοὴν καὶ τὰ πάντα·

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power  
ἀνθρωπίνος, η, ον human, characteristic of  
mankind  
θεραπευῶ heal, cure; serve

"Here are combined the Epicurean doctrine that God needs nothing from men and cannot be served by them, and the Stoic belief that he is the source of all life (see on v.28). Paul consistently endeavours to have as much common ground as possible with his audience." Bruce

προσδεομαι need, have need

"Paul's qualifier 'as if he needed anything,' would particularly have resonated with them. It was a commonplace of Greek philosophy to view divinity as complete within itself, totally self-sufficient, totally without need." Polhill

διδούς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s διδωμι  
πνοη, ης f wind, breath

ζωην και πνοην "Intentional assonance. The attention paid to style in this speech is marked, as one might expect under the circumstances." Bruce

Cf. Isa 42:5; Ps 50:7-15.

### Verse 26

ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων  
κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντός προσώπου τῆς γῆς,  
ὀρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροῦς καὶ τὰς  
ὀροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν,

ἐξ ἑνός "'from one man' (i.e., Adam)... the unity of the human race as descended from Adam is fundamental to Paul's theology (cf. Rom 5:12ff). This primal unity, impaired by sin, is restored by redemption (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11)." Bruce

The Greeks, and Athenians in particular, considered themselves racially superior to the surrounding 'barbarians'.

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people

προσωπον, ου n face

ὀρίζω decide, determine, appoint

προστεταγμένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc  
pl προστασσω command, order

προστεταγμενοι καιροι designated times,  
ordained seasons.

"To what do the 'times' (καιροι) refer? They could either refer to the seasons or to historical epochs. The same ambiguity exists in the term 'exact places where they should live.' Does this refer to the habitable areas of the planet or to the boundaries between nations? If Paul was talking of seasons and habitable zones, he was pointing to God's providence in nature. If the reference is to historical epochs and national boundaries, the emphasis is on God's lordship over history. In either instance Paul's point would be the same – the care and providence of God in his creation." Polhill

ὀροθεσια, ας f limit, boundary

κατοικια, ας f place in which one lives

Cf. Dt 32:8.

### Verse 27

ζητεῖν τὸν θεὸν εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν  
καὶ εὔροιεν, καὶ γε οὐ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς  
ἐκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα.

ἄρα thus

γε particle adding emphasis to the word with  
which it is associated

ψηλαφήσειαν Verb, aor act optative, 3 pl  
ψηλαφαω touch, feel (pass ptc able to  
be touched), feel around for

"In ψηλαφαω we may see the idea of groping  
after God in the darkness, when the light of  
His full revelation is not available." Bruce

εὔροιεν Verb, aor act opt, 3 pl εὔρισκω

μακρὰν far, far off, at some distance

ἐκάστος, η, ον each, every; ἑνός ἐκάστου  
each one

### Verse 28

ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν,  
ὡς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν  
εἰρήκασιν· Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.

κινεω move, shake, remove, stir up; midd  
move

ποιητης, ου m one who does or carries  
out, doer, poet

The reference seems to be to Epimenides of  
Crete, the poem also including a reference to  
Cretans always being 'liars, evil beasts, slow  
bellies' which is also quoted by Paul in Titus  
1:12.

εἰρήκασιν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s λεγω  
γενος, ους n family, offspring

From Aratus who may be quoting Cleanthes'  
*Hymn to Zeus*, Stoic poets.

### Verse 29

γένος οὖν ὑπάρχοντες τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ὀφείλομεν  
νομίζειν χρυσοῦ ἢ ἀργύρου ἢ λίθου, χαράγματι  
τέχνης καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ἀνθρώπου, τὸ θεῖον  
εἶναι ὁμοιον.

ὀφειλω owe, ought, must

νομίζω think, suppose

χρυσος, ου m gold, gold coin, gold image

ἀργυρος, ου m silver, silver coin, money

λιθος, ου m stone, precious stone

χαραγμα, τος n mark, stamp, image,  
representation

τεχνη, ης f craft, trade, artistic ability,  
craftsmanship

ἐνθυμησις, εως f (inmost) thought, idea,  
imagination

Cf. Ps 114:4 (LXX 113:12); 135:15 (LXX  
134), also Is 40:18.

το θειον the divine (essence or nature)

An idiomatic Greek touch.

ὁμοιος, α, ον of the same nature, like

**Verse 30**

τοὺς μὲν οὖν χρόνους τῆς ἀγνοίας ὑπεριδὼν ὁ θεὸς τὰ νῦν παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντας πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν,

χρονος, ου m time, period of time  
ἀγνοια, ας f ignorance, unawareness  
ὑπεριδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s  
ὑπεροραω overlook, pass over

Cf. Rom 3:25f. "Judgment was suspended until God's righteousness was demonstrated and vindicated in the Cross." Bruce

παραγγελλω command, instruct  
πανταχου everywhere

Cf. 24:3; 1 Cor 4:17; 2 Cor 9:8; Eph 5:20; Phil 1:3.

μετανοεω repent, turn from one's sins

Cf. 2:38.

**Verse 31**

καθότι ἔστησεν ἡμέραν ἐν ἧ ἔμελλει κρίνειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὤρισεν, πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν ἀναστήσας αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

καθοτι because, for  
ἔστησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἴστημι set, establish, fix

Cf. Rom 2:5,16; 1 Cor 1:8; Phil 1:6,10; 1 Thess 5:2,4; 2 Thess 1:10; 2:2; Amos 5:18; Isa 2:12.

μελλω be going, be about  
οικουμενη, ης f world, inhabited earth, mankind  
δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness

Cf. Ps 9:8 (LXX 9:9); 96:13 (LXX 95); 98:9 (LXX 97). "The words in their OT context refer to the Messianic reign, but Paul applies them to the judgment with which that reign is to be inaugurated." Bruce

ὀρίζω decide, determine, appoint  
πιστις used here in the sense of assurance, proof

παρασχων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s  
παρεχω act & midd cause, bring about  
ἀναστήσας 1 aor ἀνίστημι raise  
νεκρος, α, ον dead

"For the connection between resurrection and judgment cf. 10:41f.; Jn 5:25ff.; 1 Thess 1:10." Bruce

**Verse 32**

Ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν οἱ μὲν ἐγλεύαζον οἱ δὲ εἶπαν Ἀκουσόμεθά σου περὶ τούτου καὶ πάλιν.

ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up  
γλευαζω sneer, make fun of

"The idea of the immortality of the soul was perfectly familiar to the Greek mind, but their philosophies had no room for the idea of the resuscitation of dead bodies." Bruce

ἀκουσόμεθά Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 pl  
ἀκουω  
παλιν again, once more

**Verse 33**

οὕτως ὁ Παῦλος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν.

**Verse 34**

τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν, ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς.

The inclusion of Damaris later in the list suggests that ἄνδρες is here (as elsewhere in Acts) not gender specific – it should be translated 'people' rather than 'men' (NIV).

κολληθέντες Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom pl κολλαομαι unite oneself with  
Ἀρεοπαγιτης, ου m Areopagite (member of the court of Areopagus)

"Some later writings under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite exist, but these are the product of a fifth-century Christian monk writing pseudonymously under the name of the New Testament character." Polhill