



# The Footsteps of Paul

Septmeber 14: Athens

A Bible Study at St. John Lutheran Church

## Athens

The capital of Greece

Cradle of Western Civilization

Birthplace of Democracy

Origins in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century BC

The Acropolis, Parthenon, and Areopagus (Mars Hill)

How many missionary journeys did Paul make?



## Acts 17:15-21

What caused Paul great concern in Athens?

**Epicureanism** is a system of philosophy based upon the teachings of Epicurus, founded around 307 BC. Epicurus believed that what he called “pleasure” is the greatest good, but the way to attain such pleasure is to live modestly and to gain knowledge of the workings of the world and the limits of one's desires.

**Stoicism** is a school of Hellenistic philosophy founded in Athens by Zeno in the early 3rd century BC. The Stoics taught that destructive emotions resulted from errors in judgment, and that a sage, or person of "moral and intellectual perfection", would not suffer such emotions. The Stoics presented their philosophy as a way of life, and they thought that the best indication of an individual's philosophy was not what a person said but how he behaved.

How does Paul end up at the Areopagus?

Some of the philosophers called Paul a babbler. What do they mean?

## **Acts 17:22-18:1**

Paul is present in view of the massive Parthenon dedicated to the goddess Athena. How does his setting inform his speech?

What point does Paul make regarding their shrine to the “unknown god”?

Does Paul start with the order of creation or redemption?

Paul quotes from the ancient Greek poets Epimenides and Arastus. Why would he do that?

Paul points them away from idolatry and points them to whom?

What is the reaction of his hearers?

Where does Paul go next?

## **1 Thessalonians 3:1-3**

What is the historical context for this passage?