



Sermon Notes, 1 November 2020

Term Autumn 2020

Series Acts: manual for a scattered church

Gatherings 11.00 & 6.00

Title Acts 15:22 – 17:34, Making it easy for those seeking God

Preacher Paul Langham

Reading – Acts 16:6-10 & 17:16-34 (but looking over Acts 15:22 – 17:34)

Key verse: *'... It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God ...'* Acts 15:19

Key question: How can we make it easy for those seeking God today?

Questions

What is my strategy for evangelism? Have I found my rhythm of witness? Share ideas of good practice in the workplace, the family, with friends etc.

What are the defining marks of our culture? What are the chief characteristics of the society within which we live?

In Athens, Paul was fortunate to discover that gathering in public to hear his ideas was considered a fun day out. Where are the natural places in our society for discussing spiritual matters? Where can we go to meet people where they are prepared to listen to what we might have to say?

We may not hear much from the Stoics or the Epicureans today! But what are the world views which shape our society? Whose are the voices to whom the people of our City listen? What do they teach?

How well do we know the arguments and the sources of the people who present an alternative or competing faith? Have you read Dawkins & other voices which shape thought about faith and spirituality today?

What disturbs you about our City? In what sense is idolatry alive and well in Bristol?

If you were to begin a public talk with the words, "People of Bristol..." how would you continue? What could you compliment about our society?

Paul brilliantly turns the subject to Jesus – how we can do the same today?

What aspects of the culture can we use to convey the truth of the gospel? How far can we travel in company with the world views around us?

Paul quoted the poets of the culture to speak to its people. Which 'secular' voices today can we quote to support what we believe?

How can we use the Bible in our evangelism when it is not accepted as authoritative (or even known) by today's society?