



# Morningside Church

## Sermon Discussion Guide

**Title: Life on Mission**

**Date: March 2, 2025**

**Scripture Text: Acts 17:16-33**

### **Notes:**

Have you ever met a missionary? Have you ever been on a mission trip? Many times, we view the ‘mission field’ as something far away in the deepest darkest parts of Africa or Asia. We may be faithful in giving to missions at Christmas and Easter, but have you considered the culture around you as a mission field? God has called us to go to all the world teaching them to obey God’s word ([Matt. 28:18-20](#)). We each have our own mission field. It could be the place we work, our neighborhood, or where we go shopping. This approach to lifestyle evangelism is often called; ‘Life on Mission’. Let’s look at an example from the life of the Apostle Paul while he was in the city of Athens and how he lived his *life on mission*.

#### **I. Realize the Place You are Doing Life (Acts 17:16)**

Paul arrived in Athens after leaving Berea unexpectedly, leaving Silas and Timothy behind. While waiting for Silas and Timothy to arrive from Berea, Paul looked around Athens. He saw that it was full of idols. Athens was a beautiful city with many magnificent buildings and other monuments, most of them related to pagan worship (e.g., the Parthenon). The city was also a center of intellectual, philosophical, and religious discussion. All this deeply troubled Paul as a person who knew the one true God.

- Paul’s arrival in Athens was probably sooner than he planned, and his missionary partners had not arrived yet. But that didn’t deter Paul from his dedication to living life on mission. His first order of business was to get to know those around him better.
- What are areas in your life that could be considered your mission field?
- How well do you know the people there?
- The pagan lifestyle Paul observed in Athens troubled him. How troubled are you for those you know who don’t know Christ?

#### **II. See the People Around You (Acts 17:16-21)**

After getting a feel for the place, Paul engaged the people. Following his custom, he went to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue. Next, he moved on to conversing with the Epicureans and Stoic philosophers. By his intentional engagement, he was invited to share among a larger audience. Paul was able to leverage their interest in new things to introduce them to Jesus Christ.



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- From this passage, what are things Paul did that indicated he had an interest in knowing the people of Athens?
- What are similar things you can do to show others in your ‘mission field’ that you have an interest in them?
- List 3 people in your mission field you can live life on mission for.

### **III. Be Willing to Proclaim the Gospel (Acts 17:22-34)**

Paul appealed to the Athenians’ religious leanings; drew upon observable information from nature to discuss the attributes of God, and quoted from pagan poets (Aratus, 315-240 BC). He identified God and the need for people to repent in preparation for the day in which God will judge the world in righteousness through Jesus Christ, whom God raised from the dead. He referenced an alter he saw with the inscription “To an Unknown God” and was able to speak to them about God and the personal relationship he had with Him.

- Paul was able to tie in what he knew about the Athenians and relate it to the gospel message. What are examples of him doing that?
- As Paul engaged his audience, he did not introduce religious terms that they would not have understood. What are examples of religious terms people today may not understand?
- After Paul finished speaking there were some who mocked him. But there were others who joined him and believed. It was not Paul’s job to save them. He was just sharing the good news.
- Not everyone you share the gospel with will accept and believe. As with Paul, it is not your job to save them, just share the good news. It is up to them if they accept or reject what you’ve shared.
- Share the gospel in your own words, without using ‘churchy’ language.
- What are changes you can make to live *life on mission*?

“We live in a day of religious pluralism. We live in a day of “spiritual but not religious.” We live in a day of an individualized, privatized cafeteria approach to picking and choosing what we “like” from different religious, political, and philosophical worldviews, often in ways that contain no logical consistency. We live in Luke’s version of Athens. Paul’s Areopagus speech, then, offers a helpful analogy for how the church should live in this new day. Simply saying the church is in but not of the world may not be enough.”

O. Wesley Allen, Jr.