

THE CLASH BETWEEN CULTURE AND THE GOSPEL

We are currently studying the importance of missionary evangelism during the Church Age. Paul's second missionary trip has taken him to Athens where a clash between culture and gospel takes place.

What makes this important for study is that the citizens of Athens prided themselves as a culture of freedom for open debate of difference views on subject.

They prided themselves with a democracy form of governing, especially when it came to religion (a city full of idols) (Acts 17:16).

(Acts 7:22) "I observe that you are very religious in all respects."

We will divide Paul missionary evangelism to Athens into two studies.

- (Acts 17:16-21) Market Place Evangelism
- (Acts 17:22-34) Mars Hill (areopagus) Evangelism

<p style="text-align: center;">Four aspects from Paul's market place evangelism that resulted in a Clash between Culture and the Gospel.</p>

1. Because of personal persecution at Berea of Macedonia, Paul was forced to leave quickly and left Silas and Timothy behind to confirm the converts in the faith (Acts 17:10-15).

Paul went ahead to Athens of Achaia to await their arrival.

(Acts 17:16a) "Now while Paul was waiting on them at Athens."

Question: How did Paul **redeem his time** (Eph.5:16) during a delay on this missionary evangelism trip?

Answer: He applied the doctrine of [Rom.8:28](#) and continued the mission work God called him to finish.

(John 4:34) "**My food is to do the will of Him** who sent Me and to **accomplish His work.**" (John 5:36)

(John 19:30) "Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, '**It is finished!**' And He bowed his head and gave up His spirit." (John 3:16)

2. However, on the third missionary evangelism trip (MET), Paul used the same reasoning to go against the details of the Directive Will of God.

God told Paul to go westward to the Gentiles (Acts 16:9-10). But,

- Like Jonah, **he chose** to go the other direction.
- Like Jonah, **he failed** to pay attention to the **details of the directive will of God.**

Listen to Paul's reasoning:

(Acts 20:24) "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to me, so that I may **finish my course and the ministry** which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God."

However, he **wouldn't listen to the truth** no matter how many spiritually mature believers told him not to go there (Acts 20:36-38; 21:4; 10-14) and who finally said to him, "The Lord's will be done!" (Acts 21:14)

How is this possible in the life of a spiritually mature, Super Grace believer?

3. **The spiritual war of the Angelic Conflict (Eph.6:10-17) attacks New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV).**

(2 Cor10:3-6) The result? Reversionism! (Heb.5:11-14).

(Rom.12:2) "And **do not be conformed to this world**, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your minds, so that **you may prove what the will of God is**, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

- **The hardest time for the pastor** is when spiritually mature believers leave the doctrinal church, fighting the good fight of faith in a geographical location, against the known Directive Will of God.
- **The hardest time for the congregation** is when a spiritually mature pastor leaves a doctrinal church on believers fighting the good fight of faith. (Acts 20:27-3) and becomes an ambassador in chains (Eph.6:20)

4. **Paul ministered the gospel through two open doors in Athens.**

(Acts 17:16) "So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present."

The religious intellectuals at Athens gave Paul two nick-names from **market place evangelism**.

(Acts 17:18) "And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, 'What would this **idle babbler** (spermologos) [seed-picker/like birds in market place] wish to say?' Others, "He seems to be a **proclaimer** (kataggello) **of strange deities**,' because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection." (1 Cor.15:3-4) [The gospel]