

## TIME OF IGNORANCE

This lesson is taken from Paul's second missionary trip (Acts 15:36-18:22). It is taken from [Paul's sermon on Mars Hill](#) (Acts 17:16-34). During the sermon from Mars Hill, Paul made a reference to the importance of the presentation of the gospel of grace salvation during the **TIME OF IGNORANCE**.

(Acts 17:30) "Therefore (men- oun) [contrast for emphasis] having overlooked (hupereidon/ a.a.ptc.nsm) the times (tous chronos/aplm) of ignorance (tes agnoia/ gsf), God is now declaring (apaggello/ a.a.ptc.nsm) to men that all people everywhere should repent (metanoeo)."

**Repent:** Change of mental attitude about source of salvation/ idolatry and works verses Jesus Christ and Grace)

<p><b>Four aspects of this Time of Ignorance and how important the presentation of the historical gospel of grace salvation is to it.</b></p>
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(2 Cor.6:2) "For He says, 'at the acceptable time I listened to you, and on **the day of salvation** I helped you: **behold, now** is the 'the acceptable time, **behold, now** is the day of salvation.'" (Isa.49:8) (LXX)

### 1. Note that the **Time of Ignorance** consists of two articulate nouns (Acts 17:30).

They refer to a specific period of time before the historical advent of Jesus Christ (Divine purpose of His Incarnation) (1 Tim.1:15; Rom.5:8-9; John 3:16-18).

God winked or overlooked (hupereidon/ a.a.ptc.nsm) (Acts 17:30-31) the Time of Ignorance regarding divine judgment (Noah to Second Coming of Christ) (2 Pet.2:5, 9; 3:5-13).

**Now** God declares all men everywhere to repent (metanoeo/ p.a.infin) (Acts 17:30). This repentance required a change of mind from idolatry works to faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ **as a source** of grace salvation.

**PRINCIPLE:** Clarity of both the message as well as the mechanics of the gospel of grace salvation is necessary for grace salvation as well as divine judgment (Acts 17:1-5, 12-13, 1731).

God has set a day of eternal judgment (GWTJ) (Rev.20). However, God's Righteousness is imputed to every person who believes the gospel of grace salvation (Acts 17:31).

(2 Cor.5:21) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

God's proof that the believer of the gospel of grace salvation will not be judged at the Great White Throne Judgement (GWTJ) is the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31).

### 2. The personal **Time of Ignorance** is between God-consciousness and gospel hearing.

The Devil is active during this Time of Ignorance. Jesus taught this doctrinal principle in the Parable of the Tares (Matt.13:24-30) (The Parable is explained in Matt.13:36-43).

Field	Tares	
Sower	Enemy	
Good seed	Harvest	
Reapers	<b>Ears</b>	<b>(Matt.13:9, 16b)</b>

Athens is an example of the Devil's activity during the Time of Ignorance. The Devil sowed tares in Athens some 500 years before Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Evangelism Trip (MET).

(2 Cor.4:4) "In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

### 3. **There were two different types of idolatrous tares sown in Athens: Epicureans and Stoics philosophies of Cosmos Diabolicus (worldly thinking).**

(Acts 17:18) "And also some of the **Epicureans and Stoic philosophers** were conversing with him. **Some** were saying, 'What would this idle babbler wish to say?' **Others**, 'He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities' – because he was **preaching Jesus and the resurrection.**"

(Acts 17:32) "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, **some** began to sneer, **but others** said, 'We shall hear you again concerning this.'"

**The Epicureans** taught there was NO life or judgment after death (Heb.9:27). They taught the only pleasure was fulfilling desires of the flesh (Luke 12:19; Eccl.11:9). Physical death brought an end to the pursuit from pleasures of flesh (hedonism) [lascivious trends of one's Old Sin Nature (OSN)]. They rejected immortality, the resurrection, and any eternal judgment.

**The Stoics** believed the same about immortality, etc. Their beliefs differed based on ascetic trends of OSN. They promoted a life of virtue, duty, law, and ethics. They would emphasize rational immortality over fleshly pleasures.

The gospel would seem foolish and unnecessary, and they viewed Paul as an Idle Babbling (Acts 17:18; 1 Cor1-3; Rom.1-2:16).

### 4. **Paul warned Athenians,**

(Acts 17:31-34) "All inhabitants of the earth would be judged" by the righteous standard of Jesus Christ declared by the gospel of grace salvation

We are reminded of the four types of hearers taught by Jesus (Matt.13:18-23).

Road side	GOOD	(Matt.13:23; Acts 17:34)
Rocky	Ears	(Matt.13:9, 19, 20, 22, 23)
Thorny	Hearers	(Acts 17:31, 34)