

2. Note Paul's methods of making Jesus known to them. (1) He discussed the matter with the Jews in the synagogue. (2) He conversed in the market daily with all kinds of people, always telling them what his mission was. What impression did he make? He was something more than a "babbler" (v. 18) to the most of them, or they would not have gone to the trouble of taking him to the Areopagus (see Exposition). (3) The sermon on Mars' Hill (or, as some think, in the market-place, with the crowds forming a great fringe to the Council of learned men). This was a new sermon. Paul could not preach his old sermons, those preached to the Jews at Berea and Thessalonica, with the Old Testament for a text. He must get a new text and preach a new sermon. He found his text on an Athenian altar, v. 23. The sermon was a revelation of this unknown God. It is a sermon full of great thoughts. What are they? How many new thoughts? How many old thoughts?

3. The measure of success attending Paul's preaching that day, vs. 32-34. Three classes. It was rather discouraging on the whole. When Paul departed from the Areopagus, he does not seem to have known that he had influenced anybody for good. This is the experience of many a preacher and teacher. Note the bit of encouragement in the word "Howbeit". After leaving the Council, Paul learned that he had not labored altogether in vain. A man of high distinction and a woman well enough known in the city to be mentioned by name, and some others, had been won to Christ. Some may be influenced for good that the preacher and teacher know nothing about at the time, but it is more encouraging to know that we have helped somebody to live better.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The missionary aspect of this Lesson should be made prominent throughout. At many points there will be opportunity for the application of its teachings to the mission work of the church to-day.

Begin with the text of Paul's speech before the Areopagus (see Exposition), namely the altar inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN

GOD". The apostle's purpose was to make the true God known to the Athenians, as our missionaries seek to make Him known in heathen lands. Let the conversation and questions follow the points of the address:

1. *God is the Creator of all things.* Contrast this teaching with that of the Greek philosophers, for example, the Epicureans, who taught that the world came into being by chance, and the Stoics, who held that it was the product of blind fate. (See v. 18.) Now, if God made the world and all it contains, clearly He has the right to rule over it as Lord and King. And the work of missions is just to establish His kingdom in all parts of the earth. Nor can the God who made all things, need anything that man can give to Him, such as altars and images for His worship or a temple for His dwelling place, such as heathen use (see vs. 24, 25).

2. *God made all peoples of the same nature.* Even some of the Greek poets, Paul says, had spoken of men as God's children. The missionary point is quite plain here. Since all men are children of God, they are all brothers, and it is our duty to share the blessings of the gospel with those who do not possess them.

3. *It is only in Jesus Christ that God can be fully known.* Paul speaks of "the times of this ignorance" (v. 30), that is, the long period before Jesus came, during which people had such wrong ideas about God. He had been full of mercy and compassion for those who went astray because they did not know any better; and, in due time, sent His own Son to reveal Himself to men.

4. *Jesus Christ is to be the Judge of all men.* Make it clear, in talking with the scholars, that the more knowledge people have, the more will be expected of them. Show that much more will be required of us who live in Christian lands than of the heathen. But these also will be judged, for they do not do even the right that they know. Here again, we see our duty to send them the gospel, which can change their hearts, and make their lives better.

5. *All who hear the gospel must decide for or against Jesus Christ.* Note the conduct of three classes amongst Paul's hearers, vs.