

## **ATHENIAN HEATHENISM**

The Greek word for heathen is *ethnos* usually translated Gentile. Vine defines *ethnos* as “a multitude of people of same nature or genus, a nation, people.”

Webster English Dictionary defines heathenism as “an unconverted member of a people or nation that does not acknowledge the God of the Bible.”

**Theological definition** emphasizes the rejection of God-consciousness and/or the rejection of gospel hearing results in heathenism whether individual or national.

(2 Thess.1:8) “Dealing out retribution to those who do not know (me tois oida of horao/ **perf.ptc.dolm/ Rom.1:18-32)** God **and** (kai/ adjunctive conj. joining ptc) to those who do not obey (me tois hupakouo/ **p.a.ptc.dplm/**) the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

Based on this theological definition, it amazes me that two great cities and nations of Jesus and Paul’s ministries would be classified heathen: Jerusalem-Israel and Athens-Graeco-Roman.

Unless the **Christian Church of America** awakens to the ministry of ambassadorship of the gospel of grace salvation, this great nation under our generational watch will become classified heathen (Rom.1:13-17; 2 Cor.5:17-21).

### **This lesson will study four aspects of Athenian Heathenism.**

1. **Over the years of my ministry, one question is asked consistently, “What about those who live in the remotest parts of the earth who have never heard the gospel?”**

**Remote to whom?** Certainly not remote to the sovereign omnipresent God. There are no more remote places or people in the world to God than to you in your house.

(Acts 17:26-27) “And **He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,** having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should **seek God,** if perhaps they might **grope for Him and find Him,** though He is **not far from each one of us.”**

(John 14:6) “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

(Luke 19:10) “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.” [Jesus to Zacchaeus]

2. **Because of passages like 2 Pet.3:9, we understand that God acts responsibly to Positive Volition (PV) at God-Consciousness (GC) to give Gospel Hearing (GH) wherever to whomever.**

(Acts 10:34-35) “I most certainly understand now that **God is not one to show partiality** (prosopoleptes) [respector of persons], **but in every nation** the man who fears Him and does what is right is **welcome to Him.”**

Scriptures teach that God brings the gospel to the people with PV at GC or brings the people to the gospel.

**Example:** On 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Evangelism Trip (MET), **God sent** Paul to pocket of people with PV at GC in Asia Minor (Acts 15:36-18:22). **Then** while in Asia Minor, **God sent** Paul to pockets of PV at GC in

Macedonia-Achaia (Acts 16:9-10). **Then God sent** Paul to Athens (Acts 17:16). While in Athens, **God sent** Paul to Hebrew synagogue and market places. **Then God sent** Paul to Mars Hill (Acts 17:31-34).

“**Some** began to sneer, but **others** said, ‘We shall hear you again concerning this.’ “But some joined Him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius and the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

**3. The plan of God decrees that every generation of mankind since Adam receives God-consciousness on basis of grace (Acts 17:26-27).**

PV at GC brings you to gospel hearing and to a choice to be saved or not to be saved. On 2<sup>nd</sup> MET, Paul was put in prison to give the gospel to the Philippian jailer who had PV at GC who believed the gospel of grace salvation (Acts 16:22-34).

**PV at GC will not save you.** “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.” (James 2:19)

When sent to the mission field, it is not necessary to teach PV at GC (Rom.1:19-20). It is not necessary to teach that God exist but why God’s existence is relevant to their lives. However, the clarity of gospel message and mechanics of grace salvation is the main issue of ambassadorship.

**4. Personal rejection of the truth of God-consciousness or gospel hearing of grace salvation results in personal heathenism (Rom.1:18-32/ 1:21).**

**“God gave them over”**

(Rom.1:24) \_\_\_\_\_

(Rom.1:26-27) \_\_\_\_\_

(Rom.1:28-32) \_\_\_\_\_

**“They Exchange”**

(Rom.1:23) \_\_\_\_\_

(Rom.1:25) \_\_\_\_\_

(Rom.1:27) \_\_\_\_\_