

REACHING A CULTURE
THAT HAS
ABANDONED SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:16-34



IDOLATRY at ATHENS

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|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Introduction - | Context |
| 2. Inquiries of Intellectuals | 17:16-21 |
| a. Initiative of Paul | 17:16-17 |

PRINCIPLES

1. Be Spiritually Prepared
2. Take Initiative



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| a. Initiative of Paul | 17:16-17 |
| b. Interest of Philosophers | 17:18-21 |

17:18 And also some of the Epicurean 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.



Epicurus
(341–270 BC
followed Aristotle)

believed that
philosophy
could liberate
one from fears
of death & the
supernatural

PHILOSOPHERS

1st Century

Epicureans **Materialism**

Hedonism

(Happiness)

Stoics **Self-sufficient**

Pantheism

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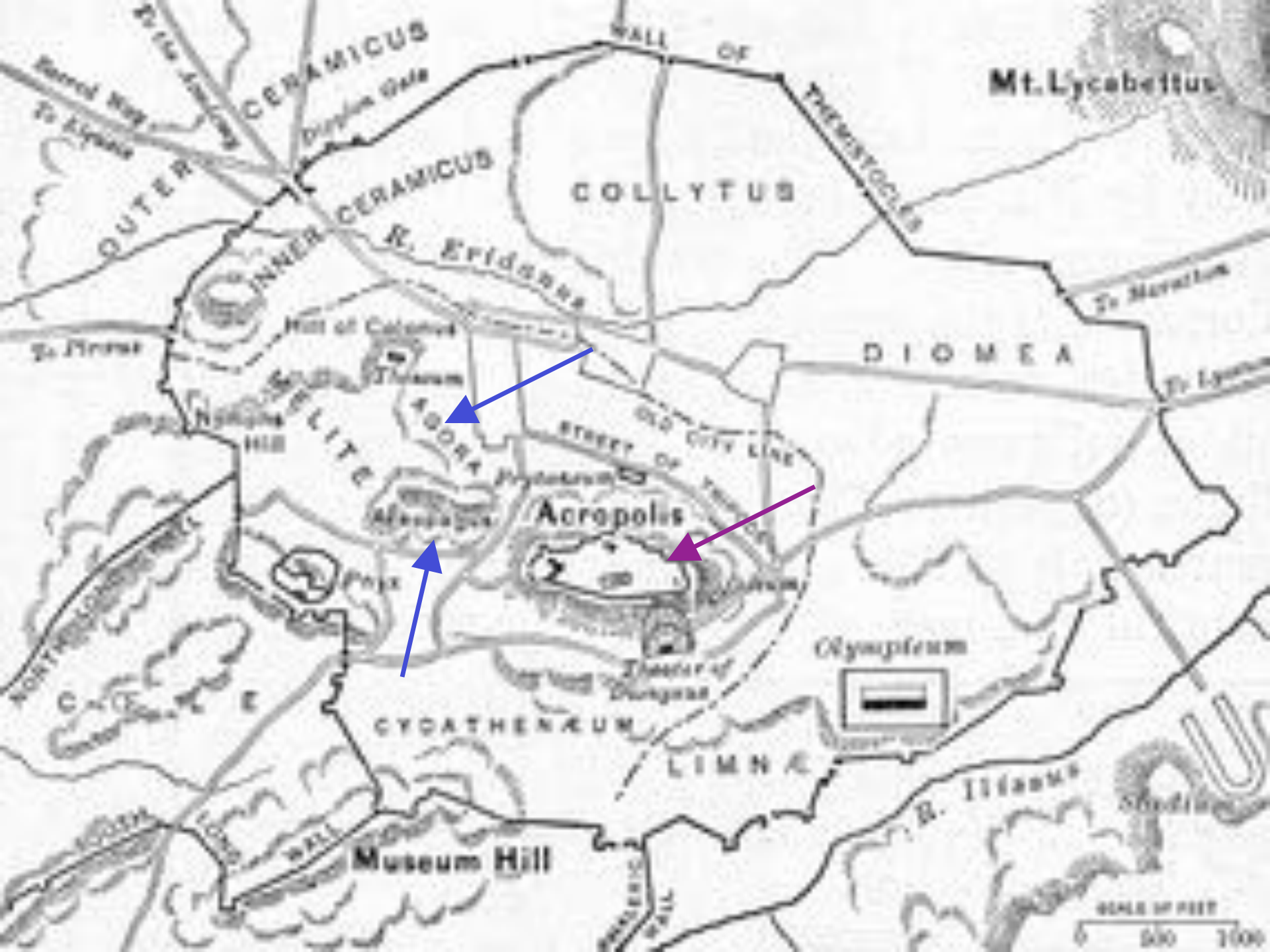
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Parthenon

ησους &
αναστασις

17:19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?”







**Areopagus
from Acropolis**

Agora



17:19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?”

17:20 “For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean.”

17:21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

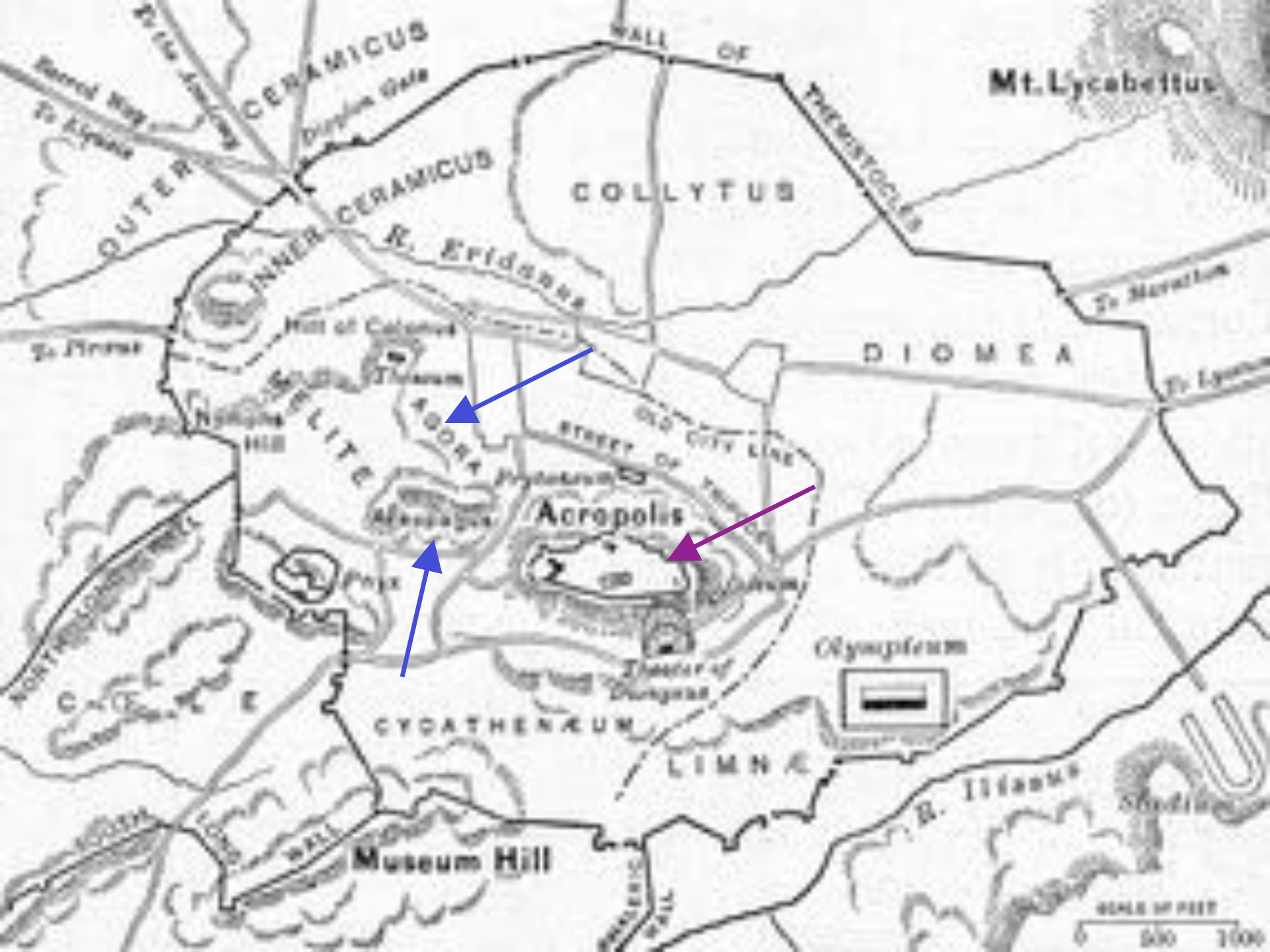
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| b. Interest of Philosophers | 17:18-21 |
| 3. Illumination of Paul | 17:22-31 |
| a. Ideology | 17:22-23 |

17:22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.



**Areopagus
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17:23 “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

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WORLDVIEWS

How you view the world around you and How you live life as a result.

Your Worldview determines how you live.

WORLDVIEWS



“... a conceptual system by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe & by which we interpret & judge reality.”

RH Nash

WORLDVIEW ELEMENTS

- **God - Theology**
- **Ultimate Reality - Metaphysics**
- **Knowledge - Epistemology**
- **Ethics - Morality**
- **Humankind - Anthropology**
- **Destiny - Eschatology**

WORLDVIEWS

Unbeliever

polytheistic

God

material realm

Ultimate Reality

reason

Knowledge

relativism

Ethics

good

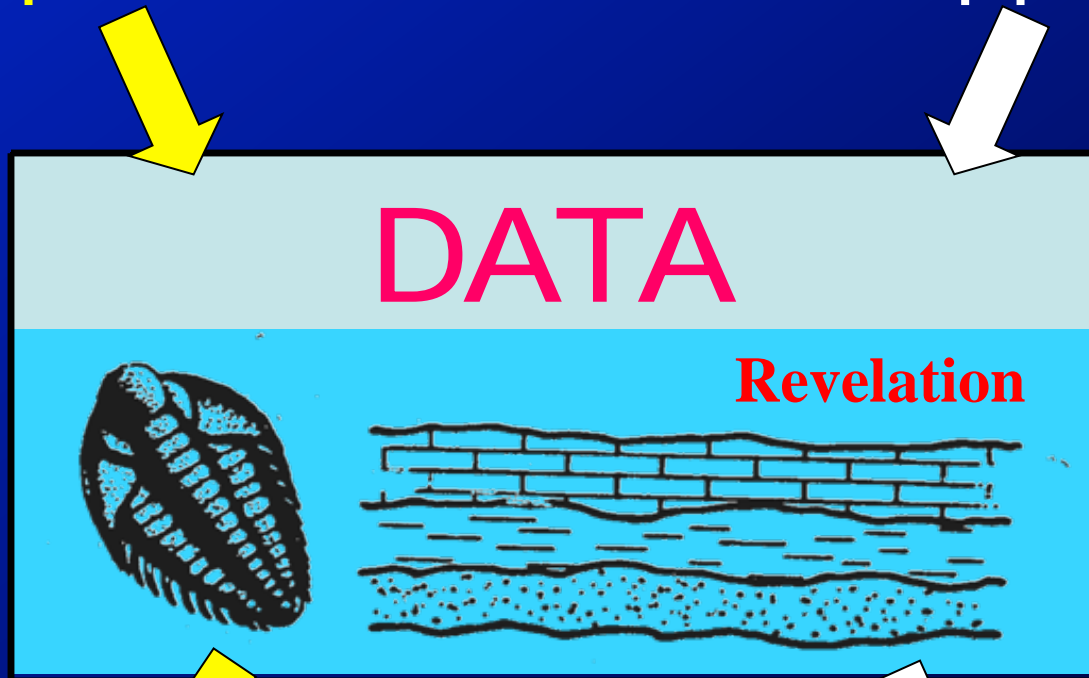
Humankind

varies

Destiny

Presupposition A

Presupposition B



Interpretation A

Interpretation B

PHILOSOPHERS

1st Century

21st Century

Epicureans

Materialism

Naturalism

Hedonism

Entertainment

(Happiness)

(Sensualism)

Stoics

Self-sufficient

Humanism

Pantheism

New Age

DEFICIENCY

- 1. Faulty understanding of meaning of Existence - polytheistic**
- 2. Limitations of Knowledge - unknown god**

17:23 “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

DEFICIENCY

- 1. Faulty understanding of meaning
of Existence - polytheistic**
- 2. Limitations of Knowledge -
unknown god**
- 3. Weakness of human Intellect -
ignorance**

PRINCIPLES

A nighttime photograph of the Acropolis in Athens, Greece. The Parthenon is brightly lit, and the surrounding structures and the city below are dimly lit, creating a dramatic contrast against the dark sky.

- 1. Be Spiritually Prepared**
- 2. Take Initiative**
- 3. Analyze Worldview**

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| a. Ideology | 17:22-23 |
| b. Instruction | 17:24-29 |

17:24-25 “The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 ...