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**Unstoppable: The Book of Acts
Advent in Athens**

**4 Corners Church
December 7, 2025**

Advent isn't just a "Christmas countdown." It's a heart check.

Acts 17:16-21 ¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

1. Paul's Spirit Is Provoked: Advent Starts with a Feeling of Conflict (Acts 17:16–21)

Everywhere he looks, people are worshiping created things instead of the Creator.

So what does Paul do?

- He reasons in the synagogue with religious people (v.17).
- He goes into the marketplace with secular people (v.17).
- He engages the prevailing cultural ideas of his day —Epicureans (pleasure seekers) and Stoics (self-disciplined moralists) (v.18).

Acts 17:22-25 ²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not

live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

2. The Unknown God Is the Generous God (Acts 17:22–25)

Paul says: “Let me introduce you. He’s not unknown. He’s made Himself known.”

- God doesn’t need anything from you.
- God is not a taker. He’s a giver.

Acts 17:26-29 ²⁶ *And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’ ²⁹ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.*

3. Advent in Athens confronts idols, our fears, and our heart ... where our treasure is (Acts 17:26–29)

- God is not far. God has drawn near.
- God has placed you where you are in this time on purpose... so that you would seek Him.
- Acts 17 and Advent together ask: “This December, are you worshiping the God who gives everything... or the gods of self, comfort, control, and consumerism?”

Acts 17:30-31 ³⁰ *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”*

4. The Command of Advent: Repent & Receive the Ultimate Gift (Acts 17:30–31)

- First coming: He came in humility—incarnation, manger, cross.
- Now: He commands everyone to repent—turn from idols to the living God.
- Future coming: He has fixed a day of judgment—Jesus will return as Judge and King.
- Advent is not just sentimental; it’s urgent.

Acts 17:32-33 ³² *Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.” ³³ So Paul went out from their*

midst. ³⁴ But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

5. How Do You Respond?

- The mockers: God calls you to repent. Patient now but He IS coming soon.
- The curious: Keep listening, keep asking... the Lord has already drawn near.
- The believers: Respond in worship with your whole heart.
- He IS coming again.

The Goal of Advent: From Unknown God to “Abba Father.”