Living on Mission pt. 1 **7.11.10**

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 hold of 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. 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. Acts 17:16-23 ESV

Living on Mission is about being OPEN.

"while he was waiting for them…" Mission is not something we turn on & off.
"his spirit was provoked..." lit. 'greatly distressed,' 'disturbed,' 'mortified'
"as he saw that the city was full of idols" possibly as many as 30,000.

Open Your Eyes (v.16)

The temples in our day look different (Office buildings, Gyms, Sports arenas, Malls, etc.) but the idolatry is the same.

Those in my Family who Need Jesus: _____

Those at my Work who Need Jesus: _____

Those where I live who Need Jesus: _____

Those in our "Activities" who Need Jesus: _____

Those "as you go" who need Jesus: _____

Are your eyes open to the spiritual need around you? If not, what needs to change? How can your community group support you as you seek to reach those around you.

Open Your Heart (v.16)

What Does it Take for This to Happen?

1. Personal understanding of the Gospel.
   a. Our experience with the Gospel must be a "present reality" to us.
2. Appropriate understanding of the spiritual "state of affairs" around us.
   a. It's "not o.k." that the city is filled with idols.
3. Appropriate understanding of the weight of eternity.
   a. There is no hope apart from Christ.
4. Prayer that God would so grip our hearts that this would be so.

Is your heart disturbed by the spiritual condition of those around you? If not, what needs to change?

Open Your Mouth (v.17)

"reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews…" The "religious" people.
"…and in the marketplace…" The "irreligious" people. Different groups of people call for different methods of communication.

*We need to be careful to speak the language of our audience. *"If you want your neighbors to be around, speak as if they are around and eventually they will come around." – Tim Keller*

Is my mouth ever opened about the Gospel? If not, why not? What needs to change?

Reasons Why We Don't "Open Our Mouths" :

1. Fear.
   a. Of man. Of rejection. Of repercussions. Of "not knowing enough."
2. The Gospel addresses all those fears.
   a. Of man—(Matt. 10:28).
   b. Of rejection—(Eph. 2:19)
   c. Of repercussions— (Prov. 16:9, 16:33, Jer. 10:23, 29:11)
   d. Of "not knowing enough"— (Jn. 9:25)

Am I trusting in God to work within me to overcome those fears? If not, what needs to change?

Open Your Mind (v.18-23)

"Stoics…Epicureans…" Varying philosophies of the day. Also, there are always a variety of responses to the Gospel being proclaimed.
"…Aeropagus, saying may we know…" Counsel of men, possible business opportunity.
"…all the Athenians…" They loved to sit and talk about ideas.
"Men of Athens…" The ways Socrates began his addresses. This showed respect and a knowledge of their audience.
"I perceive that in every way you are very religious." He was careful to affirm what he could.
"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." He moves from affirmation to proclamation.

When we open ourselves to Jesus, He enlists us in and empowers us on Mission with Him.

Works Consulted: Radical Reformission by Mark Driscoll, Message on Acts 17 by Mark Driscoll, Word Pictures by A.T. Robertson, Various resources from the Acts 29 Network Website.