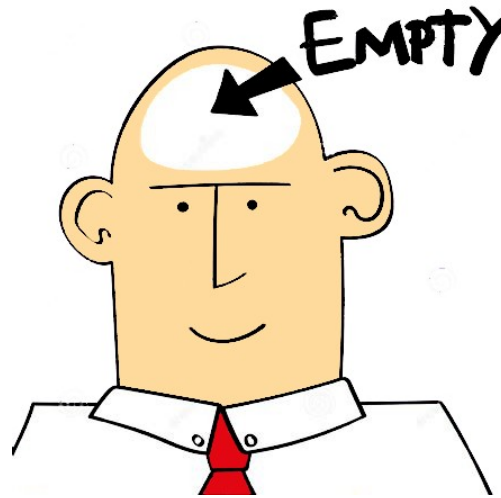


Sharing the Good News with people who have no idea about God



Acts 17: 16-23

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens,



While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.



Statue of Athena



Peterronius, one of the ancient historians, said that it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man!

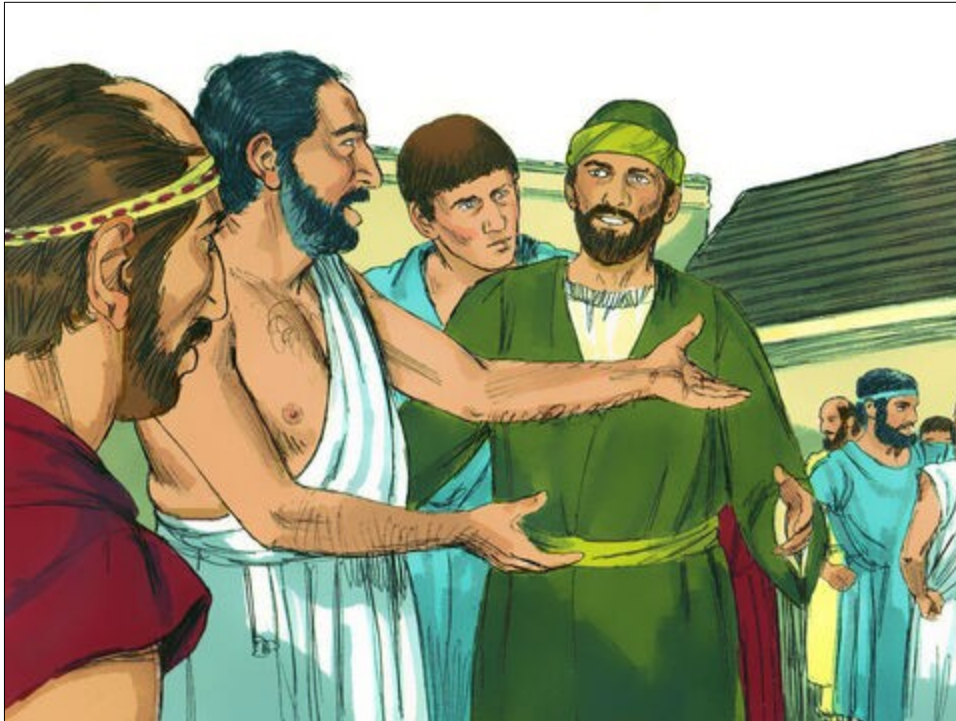
While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was **greatly distressed** to see that the city was full of idols.



The 12 main Greek gods!

- 1, God was being robbed of his glory
- 2, Satan had blinded so many people
- 3, The people were enslaved to hopeless superstitions.

So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

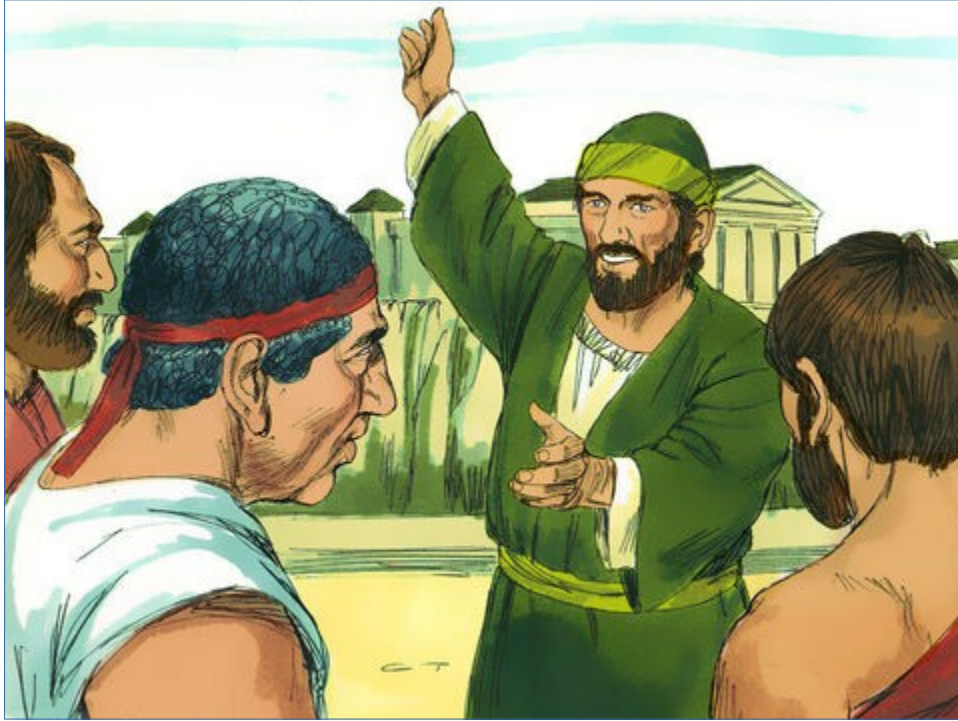


Paul started again with his own people – the Jews and the Greek people who had joined with them.

But there were many more he could meet in the large open-air marketplace.

Here we see Paul's burning desire to tell people about Jesus.

A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to converse with him.



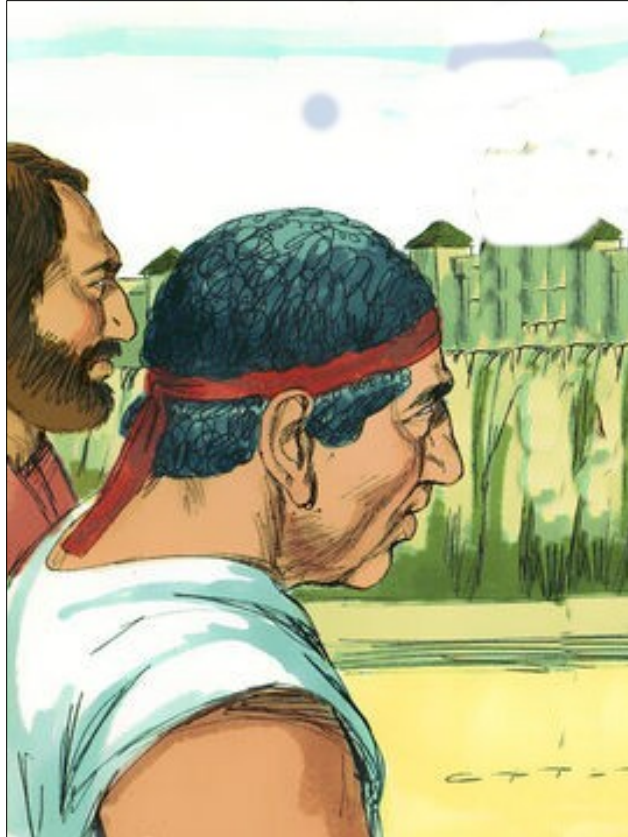
These were two groups of Greek 'thinkers' who would be interested in discussing Paul's 'ideas'.

Epicureans believed that life was about enjoyment.

Stoics held to the grin and bear it (stiff upper lip) philosophy

Both groups were basically atheists.

Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?"



Not a good attitude!

Those who think they are superior to others when they can't understand what someone is saying.

Paul's 'ideas' were foreign to them.

Luke is giving us the bare bones of Paul's discussion, keeping to the main points.

Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods."
They said this because Paul was preaching the good news
about Jesus and the resurrection.



Athena

Because the Greeks believed in multiple gods, both male and female , when they heard Paul speaking in Greek about Jesus and anastasia, they thought he was referring to two new gods. The Greek word 'anastasia' means 'resurrection'.

At least they got the idea that Jesus was a 'god'!

Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean."



Some were curious to know more and so went to the meeting place where they could discuss things better.

Paul got their interest and attention.

(All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)



This was not a compliment .

What would they have been like with today's social media?

There is the danger of thinking that “talking” is equal to “doing” something

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said..
"Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.

Paul began where they were- a very religious people. In fact all of life centred around keeping the 'gods' on their side.

We could interpret the word religious as 'superstitious'.



For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription.. TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.



This was a 'just-in-case-we-missed-one-or-more' altar.

However, it was Paul's opportunity to introduce them to the truth about the living GOD.

WE have a problem

The situation today is worse than it was for the Athenians.

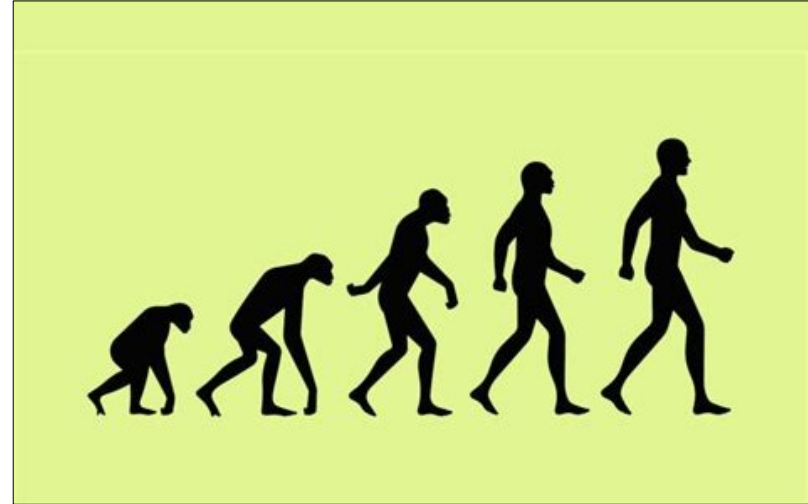
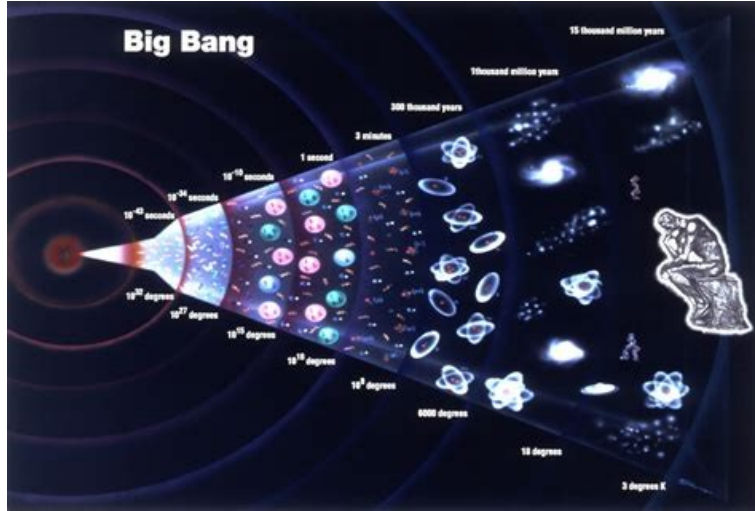
Most of them believed that there were gods. Which is where Paul started.



BUT Peter prophesies that a false view of creation would one day eventually arise. - It has arrived!

2 Peter 3: 3-4 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this `coming` he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

Now we have to deal with this modern view that claims—
it has all evolved.



Time and Chance has produced all we can see.

This view removes God out of the process.

This has had profound effects on people's view of
God, the Bible and Salvation in Christ.

Let's be clear

**the Bible account and the Theory of Evolution
are in complete disagreement
For example - about time.**

EVOLUTION THEORY

Long ages (millions of years)



THE BIBLE

a much shorter history starting in
about 4000BC (as calculated from
the Bible genealogies)



**We cannot go into details now but for fuller information visit
Creation.com**

Science gives us information about what can be measured but when we are discussing the past we don't know all the facts and so make **assumptions**.



A bucket under a dripping tap
contains 10 litres.

An hour later at 12 o'clock
when we measure the
volume, it contains 11 litres .

So when did the tap start dripping?



The different view on time has affected many areas such as:-

The age of the universe

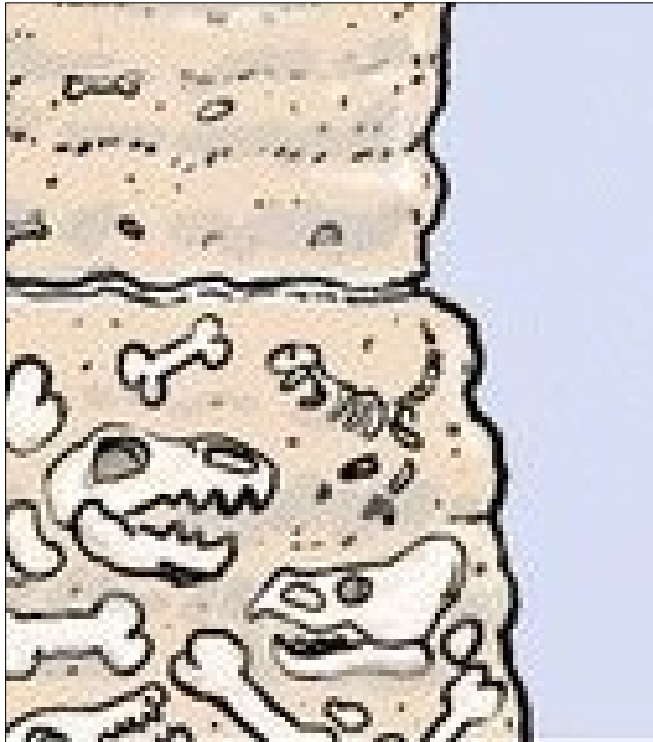
The view of the origin of fossils

The history of ancient peoples – cave man, Egyptians etc.

These are very different to a Bible based explanation.



The fossil record is not a measure of time but a giant graveyard. Every single fossil was a creature that **died** an unnatural death – drowned and buried in mud - millions of years ago according to evolution theory but recently (about 3000BC) according to the Bible

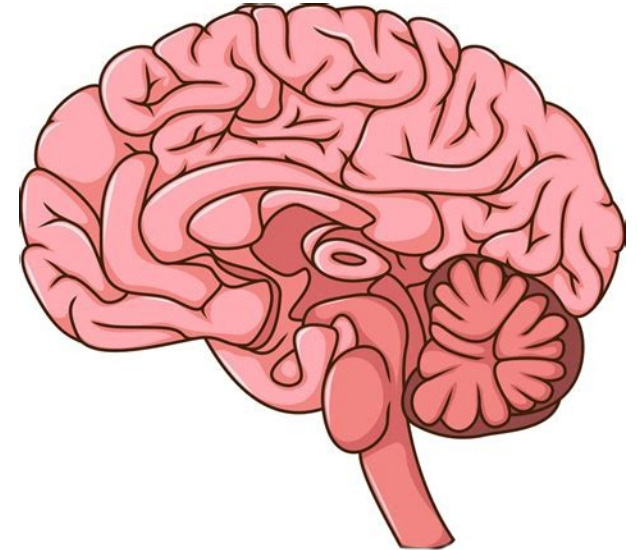
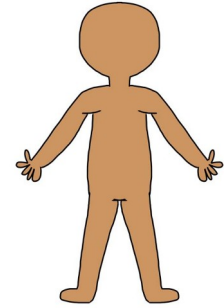


Chance couldn't do the job in biology.

In biology we are told that evolution by means of lots of accumulated mutations occurred and – voila! Here we are.

But the complexity and interconnected nature of so many of biological processes show that such a process is IMPOSSIBLE.

The most complex object in the entire universe (apart from the creator) is the human brain!



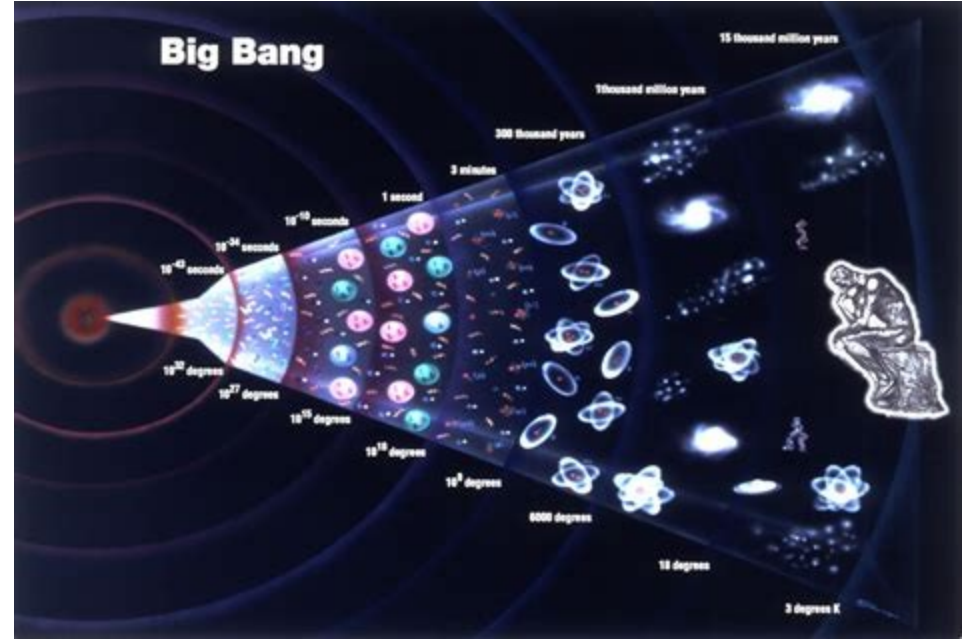
Chance couldn't do the job in physics.

The same problems arise with theories of the formation of the universe .

eg. the Big Bang theory states that

“Nothing” exploded
and produced “Everything”

Something that started as small as a
pin point **expanded** to to give us the
vast distances of objects in space.



‘When people don’t believe God, they will believe anything.’

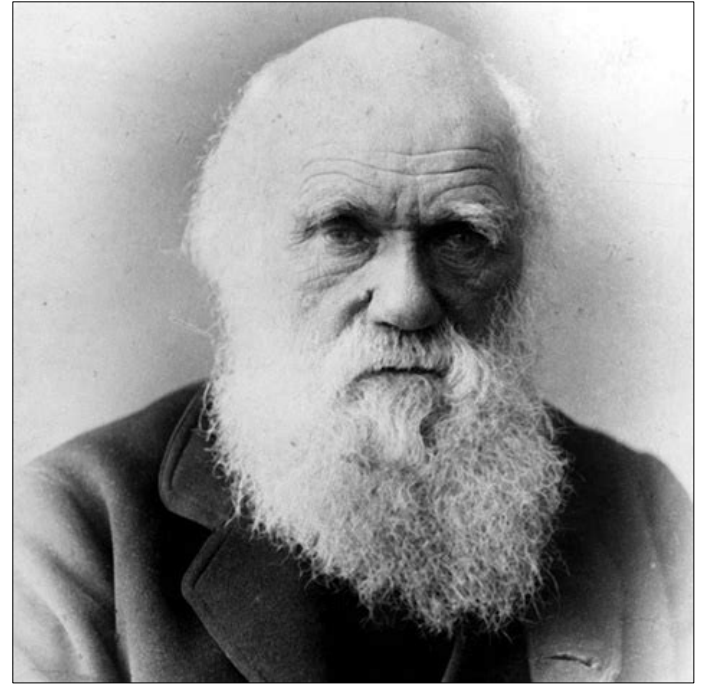
The spread of the theory of Evolution has been responsible for the loss of faith in God and the biblical account for many people.

Darwin's family was from a Unitarian background.
He trained for the ministry for a time.
He lost a precious daughter Annie aged 10.

“The more his theory took hold of him so more of the light went out of a kind and amiable soul”

He knew there were problems with the theory but he believed as more evidence came to light the more it would prove to be true.

It hasn't !



Charles Darwin

Perhaps the reason why the theory of evolution has been so successful in the world is that it seems to eliminate God from our lives. Just like Adam hiding in the garden after he had sinned, people don't want God 'interfering' in their lives. And evolution helps that idea.



Sadly those that believe they have evolved without God also believe that when they die that will be the end. Nothing more! What a shock to discover that they will have the eternal terrible realisation that they got it all wrong!

A dramatic landscape featuring a vast, layered mountain range under a sky filled with large, dark, and light-colored clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and long shadows across the mountain ridges. The overall scene is majestic and awe-inspiring.

Now we are at the position of Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Which then leads us to Psalm 8:3-4

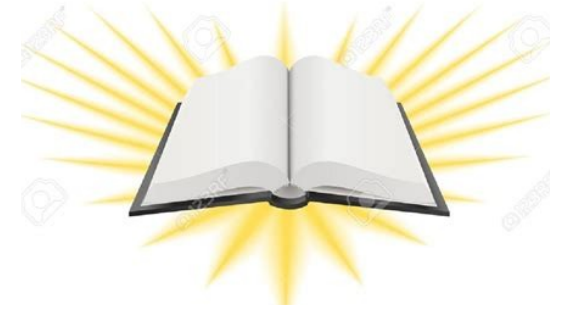
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?



But that leaves us with Romans 1:18-20

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

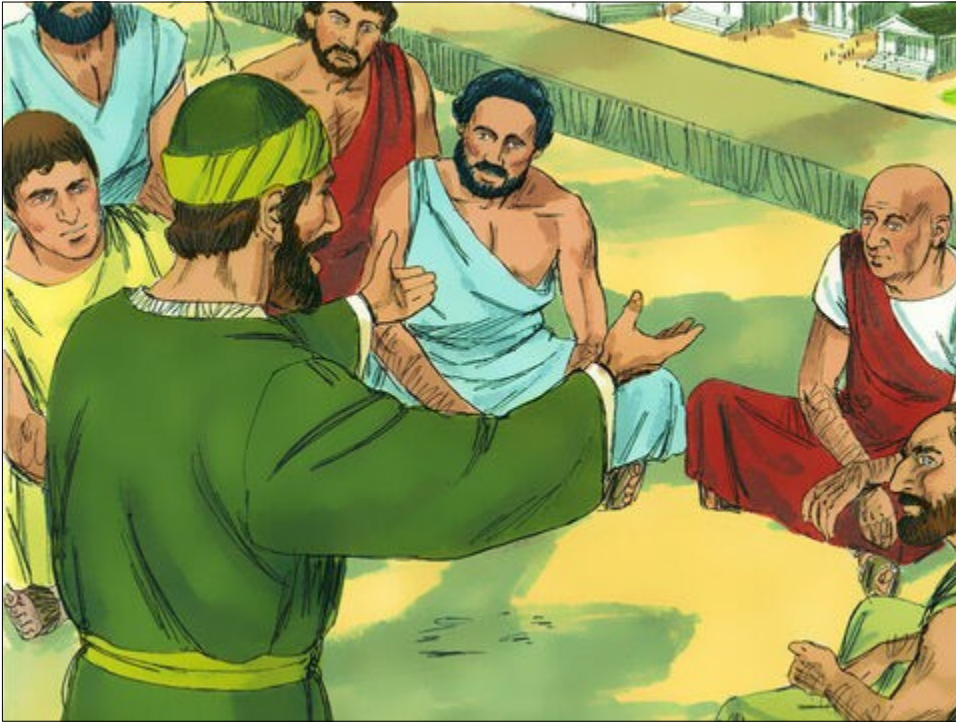
That is why we need Psalm 19: 7-11 God's revelation through His word



The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

Thankfully for Paul, he only had to discuss what kind of God the creator is.

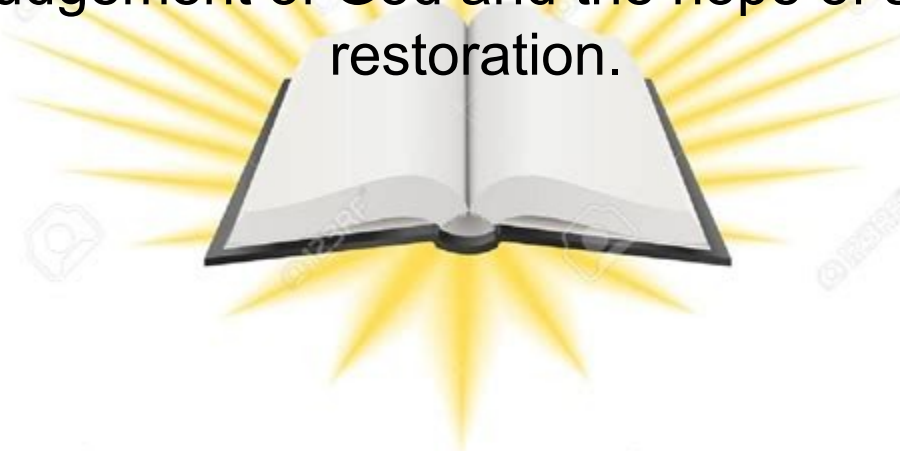
Now what you worship as something unknown
I am going to proclaim to you.



Now Paul was going to give them a basic starting lesson on who God is.

The teaching of the early chapters of Genesis are foundational to the message of the Gospel.

They explain the nature of humans, the problem of sin in man and its effect on the world, the origin and cause of death, the righteous judgement of God and the hope of salvation and restoration.



Jesus gave us his authoritative view on the Bible.

John 10:35 ... Scripture cannot be broken—