

We could deal forever with the question of the historical accuracy of Acts. There are entire books devoted to the problem and even to *aspects* of the problem, and different scholars come to different conclusions. My own view is that since Acts is at odds with Paul just about every time they talk about the same thing, that it is probably not to be taken as very accurate, especially in its detail. In yesterday's post I dealt with a couple of places where it's portrayal of Paul's *actions* seem to be at odds with what Paul himself says; in today's, my last post on the topic, I speak about Paul's *teachings/views* and come to the same conclusion. I'll pick just one example, and again, draw my remarks from comments I've made elsewhere in print.

Almost all of Paul's evangelistic sermons mentioned in Acts are addressed to Jewish audiences. This itself should strike us as odd, given Paul's own repeated claim that his mission was to the Gentiles. In any event, the most famous exception is his speech to a group of philosophers on the Areopagus in Athens (chapter 17). Here Paul explains that the Jewish God is in fact the God of all, pagan and Jew alike, even though the pagans have been ignorant of him. Paul's understanding of pagan polytheism is reasonably clear here: pagans have simply not known that there is only One God, the creator of all, and can thus not be held accountable for failing to worship the one whom they have not known. That is to say, since they have been ignorant of the true God, rather than willfully disobedient to him, he has overlooked their false religions until now. With the coming of Jesus, though, he is calling all people to repent in preparation for the coming judgment (Acts 17:23-31).

A lot of people (naturally) assume that Paul really said what the Book of Acts says he said. But did he? Keep reading. If you're not a blog member, you'll need to join first. You will bless the day you did so till you pass off your mortal coil.

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