

## **EPISODE NO. 312**

### **Acts 17:13-34**

#### **Persecution Coming from Thessalonica**

13 When the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was also telling God’s message in Berea, they went to Berea, too. The Jews from Thessalonica made the people in Berea upset and they caused trouble. 14 Then the brothers quickly sent Paul away to the sea-coast, while Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea. 15 The believers who went with Paul took him to the city of Athens. These brothers carried back a message from Paul to Silas and Timothy. It said: “Come to me as soon as you can!”

#### **In Athens**

16 Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens. Paul felt deeply troubled, because he saw that the city was full of idols. 17 So, in the synagogue, Paul debated with the Jews and the Greeks who worshiped the one true God. Every day, he also debated with some people in the business district of the city, with people who just happened to be there. 18 Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also argued with him.

Some of them said, “This man doesn’t really know what he is talking about. What is he trying to say?” (Paul was telling them the Good News about Jesus rising from death.) So, they said, “He seems to be telling us about some other gods.” 19 They got Paul and took him to a meeting of the Areopagus Council. They said, “Please explain to us this new idea which you have been teaching. 20 The things that you are saying are so strange to us. We have never heard these things before. We want to know what this teaching means.” 21 (All the people of Athens and the people from other countries who lived there always used their time to talk about or listen to any new idea.)

22 Then Paul stood before the meeting of the Areopagus Council. Paul said, “Men of Athens, I can see that you are very religious in all things. 23 I was going through your city and I saw the things you worship. I found an altar which had these words written on it:

‘TO THE GOD WHO IS NOT KNOWN.’

You worship a God you don’t know. Therefore, THIS is the God I am telling you about! 24 He is the one true God who made the whole world and everything in it. He is

the Lord of the heavens and the earth. He does not live in temples which men build! 25 This God is the One who gives all people life, breath, and everything else. He doesn't need any help from human beings; God has everything He needs. 26 God started with one man. He made all the different people in the world to live everywhere. God decided exactly when and where they must live. 27 He wanted the people to look for Him — the one true God. Perhaps they could search all around for Him and find Him — He is not far from any of us: 28 'In Him, we live, we walk, we are.' Some of your own poets have said:

'For we are God's children.'

29 "Therefore, we ARE God's children. So, we must not think that deity is something like what man imagines or makes out of gold, silver, or stone. 30 In the past, although man didn't understand God, the one true God ignored this, but NOW, God commands every person in the world to change his heart. 31 God has set a day when He will judge the whole world. He will be fair, using a man to do this. He chose this man a long time ago. God proved it to everyone by raising that man from death!"

32 When the people heard about Jesus rising from death, some of them began to laugh at Paul. Others said, "We will hear more about this from you later." 33 Paul left the meeting. 34 However, some of the men did believe Paul and joined him. One of them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus Council. Another was a woman named Damaris. There were some others, too.