

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday August 23, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

In **Acts 17:22–31**, Paul introduces the people of Athens to the living God who created them, sustains them, and calls them to respond to Him. God is not asking us to earn His favor, bargain for His blessing, or simply try harder; He is inviting us to turn from whatever has taken His place and trust Him. We may not bow before physical statues, but it is easy to build our lives around comfort, success, approval, possessions, or even our own understanding. The gospel calls us to recognize those substitutes and continually turn our hearts back toward Jesus. Repentance is not merely feeling bad, it is turning from one direction and turning toward Christ in faith.

Main Passage:

Acts 17:22–31

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Who Is This God?

READ ALOUD

Acts 17:22–31

Opening Question: What is something you once thought would satisfy you more than it actually did?

- What does Paul say about who God is and what He gives to people?
- What words or phrases in this passage communicate urgency?
- Why do you think Paul connects the call to repent with Jesus' resurrection?
- What are some things people today are tempted to trust, pursue, or worship in place of God?

APPLY

- Where are you most tempted to treat God like someone you bargain with, “If I do this, God should do that”, rather than the One who already gives you life and breath?
- What is something in your life that may be receiving more trust, attention, or importance than it should?
- What would turning from that and turning toward Jesus in faith look like practically this week?

RESPOND

- What is one specific step of repentance or obedience you can take this week?
- Who is one person you could pray for or graciously talk with about Jesus this week?

DIGGING DEEPER *(optional)*

Acts 17:32–34

- What different responses do you see when people hear about the resurrection?
- Why do you think the same message produced such different reactions?
- Which response in these verses challenges or encourages you most, and why?

PRAY

Give everyone a moment to quietly reflect on anything God may be showing them that needs to change. Invite the group to ask God for help turning from sin, misplaced trust, or anything competing for their hearts. Pray for courage to trust and obey Jesus and for opportunities to speak about Him with both truth and grace. Thank Jesus that forgiveness and new life are possible because He died and rose again.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

ACTS 17:22–31

- What does Paul tell us about who made the world and everything in it?
- What are some things God gives us every day?
- What does it mean to repent or “turn back” to God?
- What is one way our family can choose to trust and obey Jesus this week?

For younger children: Help your child see repentance simply: when we realize we are going the wrong way, Jesus invites us to turn around, trust Him, and follow Him.

For older kids or students: What is something that can easily become more important to you than Jesus, and what would it look like to put Him first?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- **Day 1:** Acts 18:1–4
- **Day 2:** Acts 18:5–8
- **Day 3:** Acts 18:9–17
- **Day 4:** Acts 18:18–23
- **Day 5:** Acts 18:24–28

What's Going On?

Paul arrives in Athens after preaching Jesus in Thessalonica and Berea. Surrounded by idols and people eager to debate new ideas, he begins with something familiar to them, an altar dedicated “to an unknown god”, and explains the God they do not yet know. Paul presents God as the Creator and giver of life, not a deity contained in a building or dependent on human offerings. He then brings the conversation to its central point: God calls people everywhere to repent because Jesus has risen from the dead and will one day judge the world.

This moment also shows the gospel continuing to move into new cultures and worldviews. Paul does not change the truth about Jesus, but he begins where his listeners are and helps them see why the living God is different from everything they already worship.

A Bit of Background

Athens was known for philosophy, debate, and the pursuit of new ideas, but it was also filled with temples, shrines, and idols. Paul directly challenged the assumption that a god could be contained in something people built or needed something humans could provide. Instead, the true God is the One who created everything and gives every person “life and breath and all things.”

That makes Paul’s call to repentance especially significant. The people of Athens were accustomed to trying to change someone’s mind through philosophical arguments; Paul tells them that the deepest change they need is to turn from their old way of thinking and living and turn toward the living God revealed through Jesus Christ.