

# Athens—the Price of Pluralism

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I. Introduction.

A. The influence of Athens extended around the world.

B. It influences us today.

1. Through architecture.
2. Through politics.
3. Through brilliant philosophers.

C. Text: Acts 17.

II. The thinking of the Athenians reflects much of the false thinking today.

A. Paul encountered Epicureans at Athens who were humanists, materialists and intellectual hedonists.

B. Paul also encountered Stoics who were seekers of the ultimate experience but also sought control of emotions. They believed a person could be made perfect by controlling his emotions.

III. Athenians were pluralists who left room for the unknown god.

A. Many people claim that all religions are ultimately the same today.

B. Paul took the opportunity to tell the Athenians of the one true God.

1. There is one doctrine of God.
2. There is one salvation from God.

IV. The price of pluralism is perishing.

A. Pluralists choose to use themselves as an authority and do whatever they please.

B. Our culture today reflects an attitude of pluralism.

**Application questions:**

1. How can our society be said to be a reflection of Athens? Explain.

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2. How does Christianity conflict with the philosophies from Athens?

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3. How would you respond to someone who says that all religions are essentially the same? Explain.

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