Acts.

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to **make a defense** (apologia) to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but **with gentleness and respect.**

1 PETER 3:15 NASB2020

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

So he...

ACTS 17:16-17A NIV

See what is there...
idols.

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

ACTS 17:16 NIV

See what is there...
idols.

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

ACTS 17:17 NIV

A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, **“What is this babbler trying to say?”** Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. [19] 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?** [20] You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” [21] (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

ACTS 17:18-21 NIV

Discern the need...
empathize.

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

22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 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. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

ACTS 17:18A, 22-23 NIV

EPICUREANS

EPICUREANS

STOICS

Discern the need...
empathize.

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! **I see that in every way you are very religious.** [23] 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.** So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and **this is what I am going to proclaim to you.**

ACTS 17:22-23 NIV

What is missing...
God!

"The **God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth** and does not live in temples built by human hands. [25] And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, **he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.**"

ACTS 17:24-25 NIV

What is missing...
God!

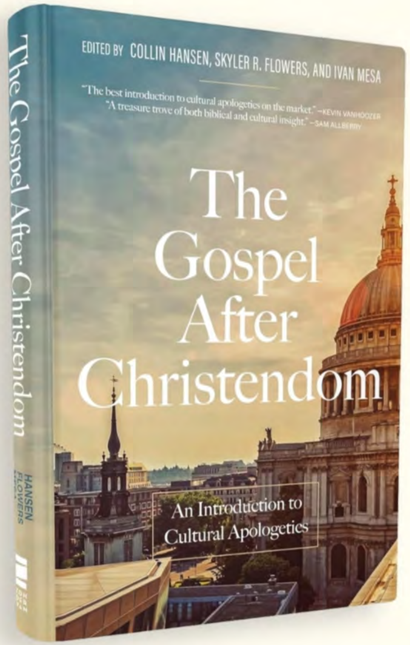
“From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 28 **‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’** As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”

ACTS 17:26-28 NIV

Point to Jesus...
His person & work

"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. [30] In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but **now he commands all people everywhere to repent. [31] For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."**

ACTS 17:29-31 NIV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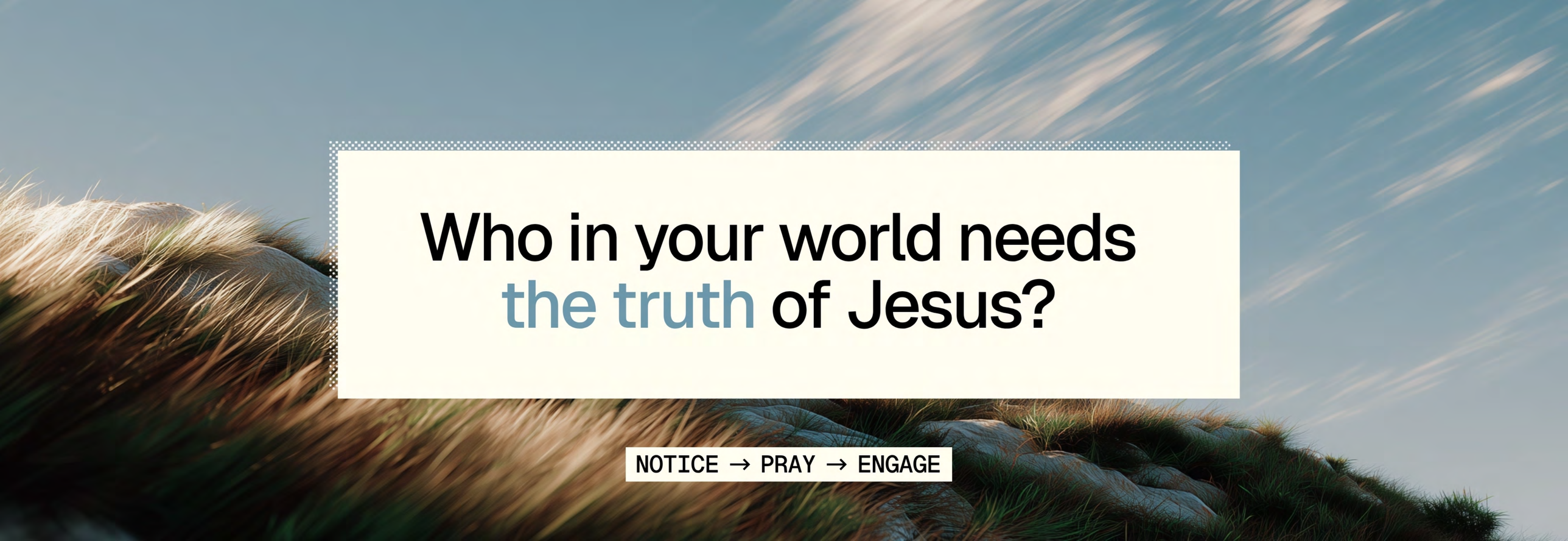
Expect varied responses...

leaning in vs. leaning out

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, **some of them sneered,** but **others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."** [33] At that, Paul left the Council. [34] **Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed.** Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

ACTS 17:32-34 NIV

See what is there → Discern the need → See what is missing → Point to Jesus → Expect varied responses


Who in your world needs
the truth of Jesus?
NOTICE → PRAY → ENGAGE