

Neighbor[ing]

Love where you live.

Part 1: Seriously?

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The Audience of Acts 17

Epicureans — Relativists

- Seek happiness through pleasure and hedonism
- Sexual freedom is the apex of human experience
- There is nothing after death so...
- Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die!

Stoics — Moralists

- Find happiness in serene detachment
- Find meaning in doing good and following moral rules
- Emotion is bad so disconnect from feelings and urges
- Afterlife is defined by you, but in the meantime...
- Suck it up

Famous passage:

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men 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. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.” – Acts 17:22-23

A section that caught my attention:

²⁴ “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 hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; **and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.** ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. – Acts 17:24-27

The Two Great Commandments

“...Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

– Mark 12:30-31

Some questions to consider:

Do I love God?

Do I love my neighbor like I love myself?

Do I take Jesus seriously?

Do I love Jesus seriously?

**If you love me, keep my commands.
- John 14:15**

Love God — Love others — Love others to God

Small Group Questions

- 1) What did you do to celebrate the new year?
- 2) Where did you live as a child? Did you live in a neighborhood? Who else lived there?
- 3) What relationship do you have with your current neighbors?
- 4) When Jesus says to love your neighbor as yourself, how can you practically do that?
- 5) Do you take the commands of Jesus seriously or do you find yourself making excuses or justifying yourself? What evidence would convict you of loving your neighbor as yourself?
- 6) How can we pray for you right now and throughout the week?