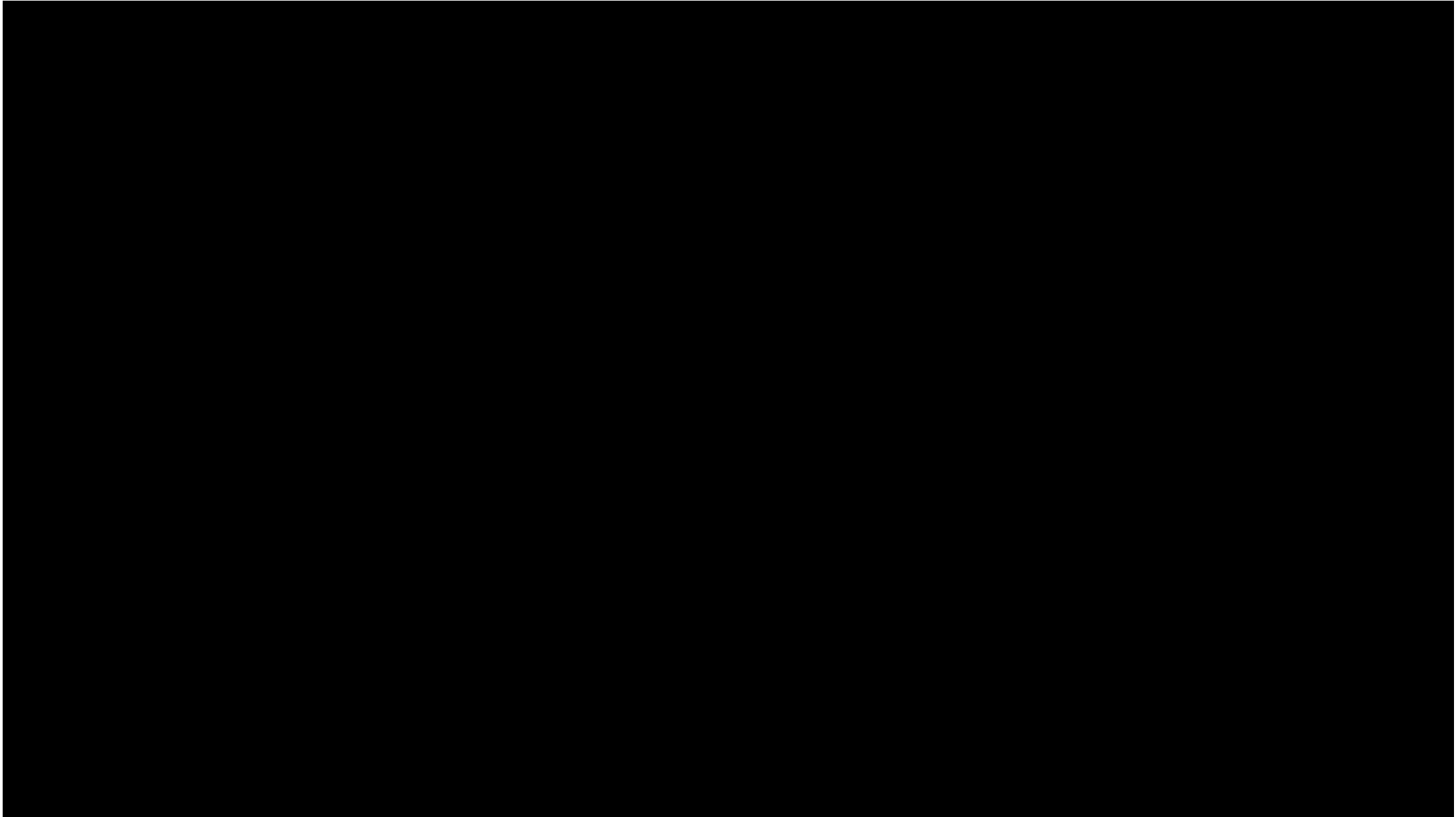




AN UNKNOWN GOD SENT

The Book of Acts







In a culture full of
competing visions of
life, God's vision is far
more compelling.

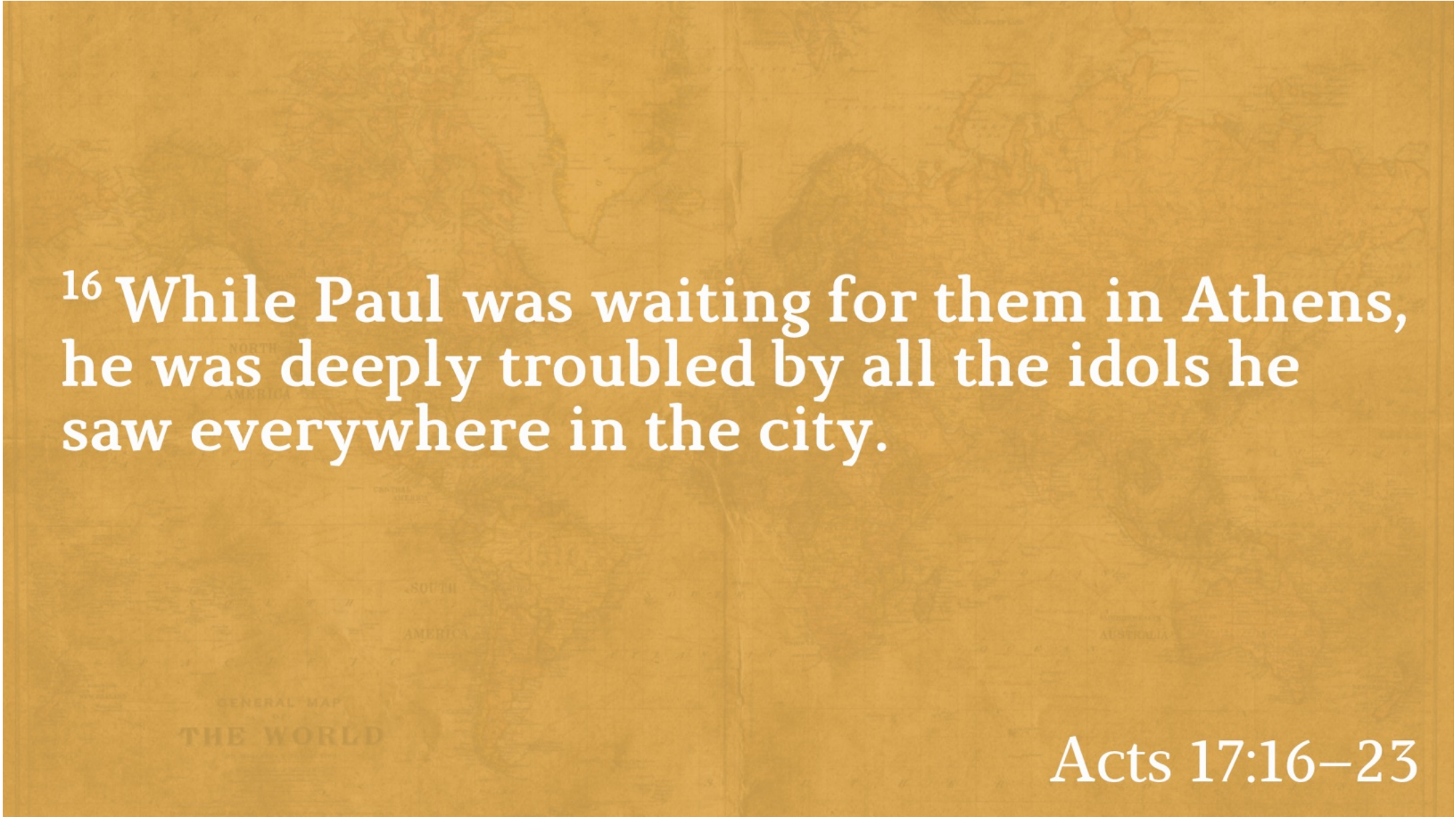


“...Culture’s greatest influence is in what it presents as being normal.”

John Stonestreet

ATHENS: INTELLECTUALLY RICH, SPIRITUALLY FRACTURED

Acts 17:16–31



¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city.

Acts 17:16–23

¹⁷ He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there. ¹⁸ He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, “What’s this babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he’s picked up?” Others said, “He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods.”

Acts 17:16–23

¹⁹ Then they took him to the high council of the city. “Come and tell us about this new teaching,” they said. ²⁰ “You are saying some rather strange things, and we want to know what it’s all about.” ²¹ (It should be explained that all the Athenians as well as the foreigners in Athens seemed to spend all their time discussing the latest ideas.)

Acts 17:16–23

²² So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: “Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, ²³ for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: ‘To an Unknown God.’ This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I’m telling you about.

Acts 17:16–23



‘An Unknown
God’



SEI DEO • SEI DEIVAE • SAC
SEXTIVS ET CALVINVS
DE SENATI SENTENTIA
RESTITVIT

God is *Lord*

‘An Unknown
God’



‘An Unknown
God’

God is *Lord*

He is *not far*



‘An Unknown
God’

God is *Lord*

He is *not far*

Turn to Him

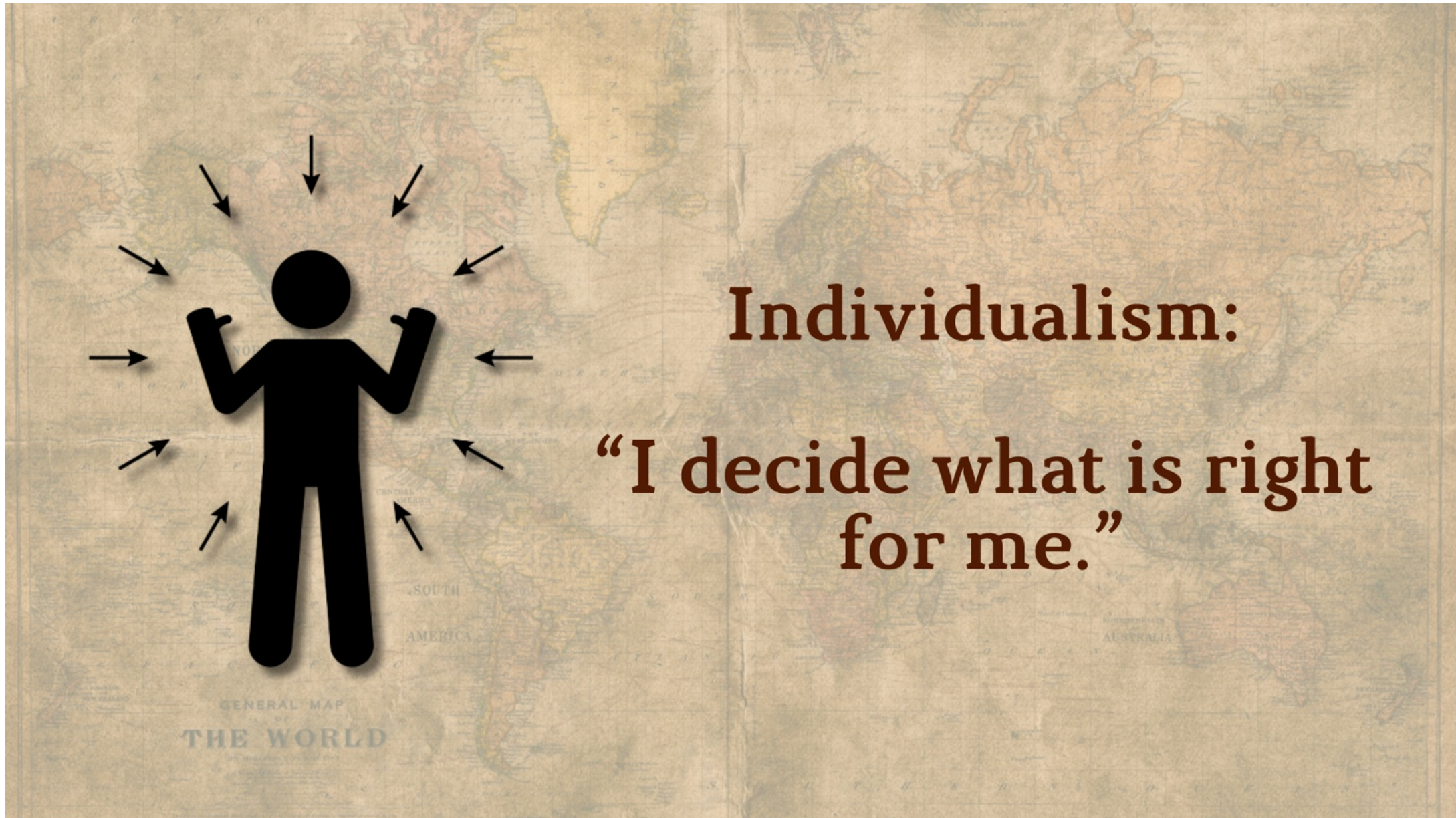




“Christian families and churches must see what they do as more than offering wholesome youth programs and teaching moralistic therapeutic Sunday school lessons. Our agenda for the next generation must be **whole-life formation, intentionally countering the dominant cultural vision of what life is about.** We must make sure our kids understand Christian faith as more than a set of beliefs and behaviours. Instead, they need to know that a competing vision of life demands their deepest allegiance and grounds their identity.” John Stonestreet



In a culture full of
competing visions of
life, God's vision is far
more compelling.



Individualism:

**“I decide what is right
for me.”**



**Materialism/
consumerism:**

**“More will make me
happier.”**



Self-actualisation:

**“My highest priority
is becoming my
authentic self.”**



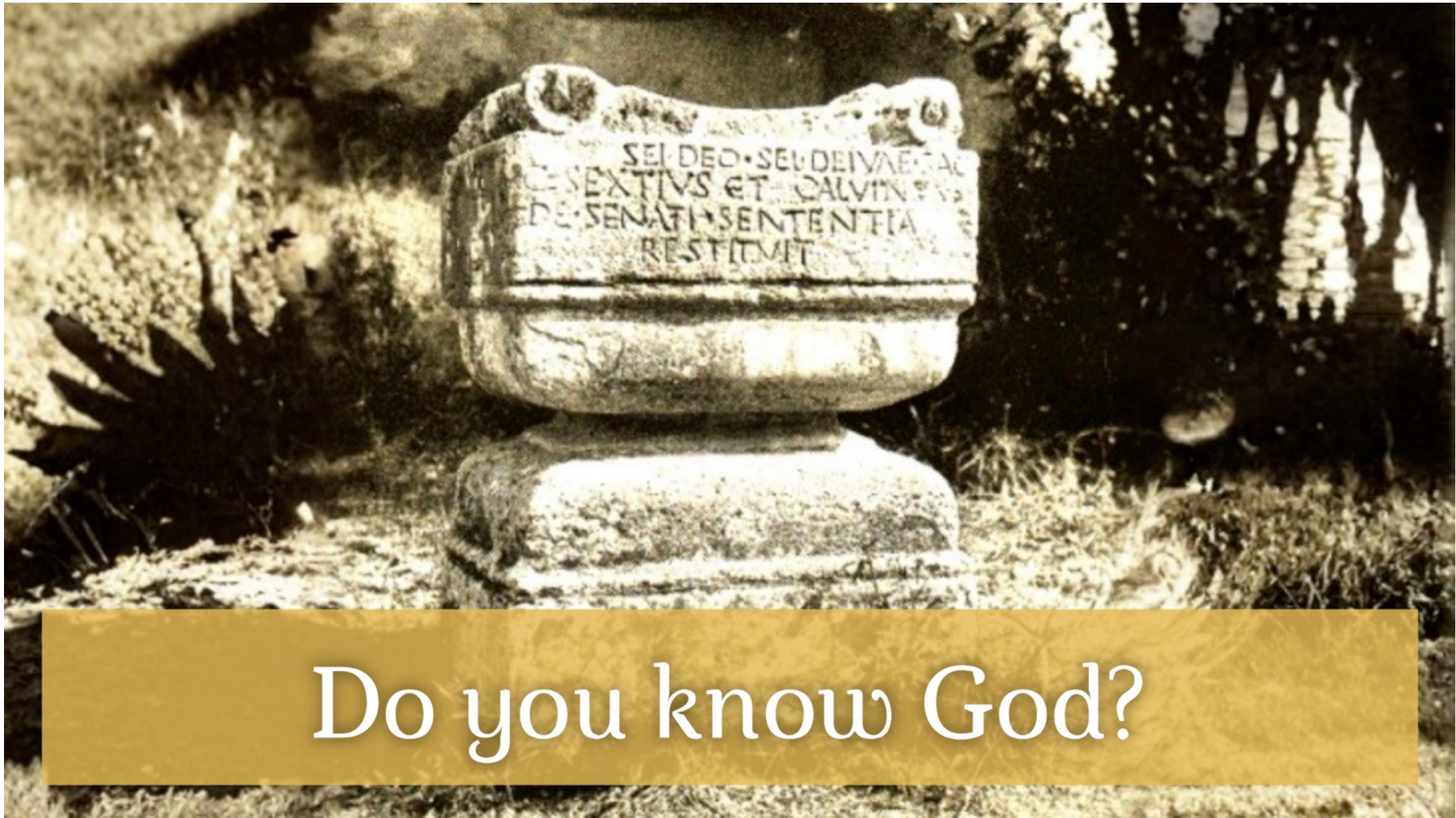
**Productivity/
achievement:**

**“My value comes
from what I
accomplish.”**

GENERAL MAP
OF
THE WORLD



‘An Unknown
God’



Do you know God?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SENT
The Book of Acts

- We are halfway through Acts! Share how you are engaging with the YouVersion reading plan, and what God's message is saying to you personally.
- Individualism, materialism, and productivity were briefly mentioned as modern 'cultural norms'. Can you think of any others in your generation? How do these present themselves as idols in our modern culture?
- Paul looked across Athens and saw many statues; amongst them an unknown God. In a potential 'moment of crisis', is God known or unknown to you?