

Stoicism



This topic has come up in N T Wright's *Magnus Opum – Paul and the Faithfulness of God* as one of the factors that would have been highly influential in the time of Paul, particularly in the Greek world.

Key foundations are logic, physics and ethics.____

The stoics are mentioned, along with the Epicureans, in Acts 17:18 and it is the Cilician Stoic Philosopher Aratus that Paul quotes when he says, "as some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'"

Stoicism was founded by Zeno, who found that Cynicism was too extreme. There is a story of Zeno being told by a Cynic philosopher to walk around with a pot of lentil soup – basically teaching by humiliation not to be bothered by social conventions. When Zeno tried to hide the pot under his cloak the philosopher broke it and the result was it looked like he had diarrhoea coming down his legs.

Marcus Auerlias was a famous Philosopher king who was a stoic. His work is highly thought of by many politicians including Bill Clinton.

Stoicism was used to fill a gap after some rejected Christianity in the 19th century. In particular certain imperialists such as Rhodes. For which it gave them a new drive, Empire and the like.

Another famous Stoic philosopher was Seneca who taught Nero rhetoric as a child, and later was an advisor to him. Nero eventually forced him to commit suicide.

For more info see:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p003k9fs>

