



THE
GOD
WHO CAN BE
KNOWN

Acts 17:22-31 KJV

[22] Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. [23] For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. [24] God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; [25] Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; [26] And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; [27] That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: [28] For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. [29] Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. [30] And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: [31] Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Athens past was visible as Paul walked through its streets. He saw a greatness that had slowly reduced itself to imbecility brought on by mankind relying on his own power of understanding. They created monuments to unknown gods just in case someone philosophized a brand new one at some point in the future. They loved philosophy but not because of a seeking out of truth, more because of the exercise of pondering. In one respect, it opened their minds to what Paul had to say about Jesus.

Acts 17:21 KJV

For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.

Solomon pointed out about the endless search for “new truths” as that there is nothing new under the sun. All new ideas are just leftovers from old ideas rediscovered by a new generation who thinks they’ve arrived at the idea first.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 KJV

[9] The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. [10] Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

3 Points Paul Raised to the People of Athens:

1. You are a Religious People

Religion does not make someone righteous before God. Tradition and ceremony does not remove sin. Sincerity or adherence does not make the religion truth. The “religion” tends to take on its own truth and veer away from the truth of God.

2. Idolatry is a Lethal Substitute for God

God made it clear he alone is to be worshipped, not representations. Idolatry is the elevation of the things created by God to a status that makes them more important than God. All things created by God are done point to the glory of God, not to become more important.

Exodus 20:4 KJV

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Exodus 20:3 KJV

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Isaiah 45:5 KJV

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

Idolatry is Deception

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 KJV

[3] But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: [4] In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Idolatry is Demonic

1 Corinthians 10:20 KJV

But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

Paul felt pain in his heart when he saw the foolishness of the people.

Acts 17:16 KJV

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 KJV

[4] As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. [5] For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) [6] But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

3. The True Almighty God can be Known

Paul pointed out that the one true God is the one who was unknown by them. Just because we don't know God doesn't mean God can't exist. The truth of God is bigger than our understanding. The disbelief reflects on us, not God.

There are only two types of people, the lost and the saved.

Acts 17:30 KJV

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Paul finishes by pointing out that all the achievements of Athens are impressive, but there can only be one truth, not multiple. And being endlessly open to "various truths" does not put one on the path of real truth, it only puts truth in a fog which eventually causes one to lose sight of it altogether.

Summarizing Paul's Speech:

God is the Creator.

God needs nothing from man, man needs everything from God.

God is sovereign over all mankind.

God is available to all who seek him.