

## **The Unknown God Part 2**

### Study thru Acts of the Early Church Chapter 17 Part 5

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

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (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.)

#### **Paul Addresses the Areopagus**

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 anything, 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 everywhere 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.

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

- Last week we started on this journey to know the unknown god that possessed an altar in the city of Athens.
- Paul was disputing with anyone who would speak to him about Jesus
  - The Sacrificial Lamb for sinners
  - The resurrected Savior for saints
  - This “new doctrine” intrigued many of those who loved to sit and talk new disciplines and doctrines of philosophical nuances and of Greek paganism
  - Paul is now being taken to the man at that time that the philosophical world had deemed to be the main man

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- Paul is speaking to people who simply are unfamiliar with the Works of God...
  - one may say they had no idea what real Grace looked like.
  - They had Altars.
  - They had Devotions.
  - They did not know God.
  - Paul called them Superstitious, in ALL things.
  - I want to list some Baptist superstitions...
    - If we obey God we will be blessed in all we do.
      - This is truth, but not in how many devote to it
      - This is what we call a prosperity gospel in how many view it
      - Many believe that God owes them success by their definition when they obey His Word
    - If you don't dress right, you can't be right
      - The Bible deals with modesty for both genders
      - The Bible deals with looking like respective genders
      - There is no scripture for dressing to the "9's" for church in order to be a better Christian
      - It's not wrong to dress nice
      - It's wrong to feel dressing nice makes you nice
    - Come out from among them and be ye separate
      - This is just Bible!
      - But most don't take it to the Spirit of God's Law but the letter
      - Separation is about who we are IN Christ
      - It is not about staying away from the World
      - It is about going out into the World looking and being like Jesus
      - Separation is about our dying to self and living IN Christ
    - "Mark Them" that don't do it our way
      - "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" is the verse (Romans 16:17)
      - Mark - be aware of

- Avoid - don't pursue what they teach, but reject it
- Doesn't mean that you ostracize them and treat them as if they have leprosy
- We are not their judge
- We cannot obey God if we don't love them as He does
- We just cannot allow them to speak into our lives
- We just don't do it that way
  - Or if you don't do things according to my preferences, you are "marked"
  - How on earth can we allow dress, music, decorations, order of service, methodology, or anything like these cause us to be so contrary to Christ?
- These are just the ones I had in my heart for too many years...
- I'm sure we could list more things but I hope you get the point...
- if any of these struck a chord with you...
- you are TOO SUPERSTITIOUS
- YOU DON'T KNOW THE GOD OF THE BIBLE
- WHATEVER YOU'RE WORSHIPPING IS NOT HIM
- **God's Word makes His Person known.**
- That is why Christ is the Word, the Truth, and He is Life.
  - I know Paul was talking to people who had no idea who Jesus was,
  - who Jehovah was,
  - or who Paul was,
  - but what about those of us who do?
    - It is a sad thing that so many professing Christians don't really know God.
    - They go to church to worship a deity they are simply unfamiliar with.
    - They may carry His Word into His House but it does not dwell in His Tabernacle.

- There are some who may even get into His Word on a daily basis yet never seek His Spirit,
- only seeing the Letter of the the Law,
- denying the power and liberty that only come from seeking Him in Spirit & Truth.
- **There is only one way to know God.**
- **Only one way to know Christ.**
- **Only one way to know His Spirit.**
- **That is to on purpose seek Him,**
- **desiring Him to make Himself known to you,**
- **accepting that it will change you to be more like Him.**
- For a child of God to be ignorant of God's Person is not Worship
- It is not devotion
- It IS TRAGIC

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 anything, 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.

- This is one sentence that Paul speaks to explain the “unknown God” that the Grecians had made an altar to.
- One sentence with 10 straight up facts!
  - He is Creator God!
    - He made the world
    - He made everything in the world
  - He is the Ruler of the Universe!
    - He made it so He makes the rules

- This means creation is subject to Him
- He doesn't live in a house like us
  - No temple you make will do
  - No place you subscribe Him will hold Him
- He doesn't need anything we have
  - He created everything out of nothing
  - Why does He need our trinkets?
- He Gives and defines life!
  - There is no breath or life without Him
  - We are all the same in light of Who He is!
- He is Sovereign!
  - He put the waters, mountains, and plains where He wants them
  - He set time in motion and supersedes it
  - He made places perfect for His creation to live
- He put an innate desire to know Him in each of us
  - We all seek to know and lean on something bigger than us
  - We look for it our whole lives until we accept He is it
- He is waiting to be found!
  - He is right around the corner of your life
  - He has placed everything in your life where it is to turn you towards Him
- He is Life!
  - Once you find Him, you've found life
  - He is our identity!
- You know this!
  - These are not foreign things to your ears
  - They are just things you've rejected, being too good to be true
  - So...

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 everywhere 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.

- We are created in His Likeness and Image (Gen. 1:26)
  - God is not someone to be held in our hands
  - We are to be in His
- God understands when we don't, but
  - God reveals Himself to us through His Word
  - Even Creation shows He is God!
- God won't wink at your sin when it's time to stand before Him
  - He will judge sin
  - But only the sin that Jesus didn't pay for
  - The sin of unbelief
- Jesus died for all sin's except the one you don't believe He died for
- Jesus lives that we might know Him and walk in Him

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

- Don't mock at what you don't understand
- Just walk in faith, knowing God is God, Christ is Christ, and You are His