

THE UNKNOWN GOD OF TODAY?

The God that you worship, what is He like? Just how much do you know about Him? Do you worship Him with understanding? Is your understanding of your God, first-hand or second-hand?

God's people today for the most part, **KNOW ABOUT** God but just how many really and truly **KNOW** God? Much of what passes as 'worship' in today's scene clearly indicates that the worshippers are ignorantly worshipping their idea of God — their idea of what He is like for they do not **KNOW** Him.

Acts 17: 22-31 ... The setting is at the 'AREIOS PAGOS' ... translated in the KJV as *Mars Hill*, but its true meaning is 'Rock of Ares' with Ares being the Greek god of war! Always ready to debate and if necessary, argue their point of view! (*My mind is made up, please don't confuse me with truth!* - scene).

(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* (too *religious!* ... see Strong's). Today, many are just too religious!

Ye are too superstitious is basically saying (Clarke's Commentary) *I perceive that in all respects ye are greatly addicted to religious practices; and, as a religious people, you will candidly hear what I have got to say in behalf of that worship which I practice and recommend.*

deisidaimonesteros: *deisi* = FEARFUL OR TIMID ... *diamon* means DEVIL from a root word meaning TO DISTRIBUTE FORTUNES. My rendering is that these 'men of Athens' (unsaved) were too religious and timid to make any change in their thinking just in case the devil was leading them astray!

WORSHIPPING THE UNKNOWN GOD

(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.*

Paul discerned that these religious 'leaders' had included an extra altar for the unknown god. They were covering their bases just in case they had missed one out and didn't want to receive any adverse effects because of such a lapse.

Paul goes on to show these sincere religious leaders, these 'unsaved' worshippers the true nature or character of the ONE TRUE GOD. He does not mention the name of Jesus Christ at this time, just God who is Lord.

(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; EL ELYON ... the Most High God is Lord of all, being the possessor of heaven and earth.* Jesus declared that *all power was given to Him in heaven and earth ...* by HIM (His Father, El Elyon).

- **Our God is the Creator of ALL things** (by the way, 'ALL' means all!).

- **He is Lord ... yes, of heaven** (the realm of spirit) **and earth** (the natural realm).

- **He dwells in us-temples** ... not buildings made by man (remember, when the 'service' in the building finishes, the 'CHURCH' goes home!

(25) *Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he gives to all life, and breath, and all things;*

- **Nothing that stems out of our skills can be included in true worship** — in praise, Oh yes! Our achievements and skills can be education, oratory, family, musical abilities etc. UNLESS they have gone through 'the cross', they will not be fully controlled by the Lord . . . for only then can He come forth as life.

- ALL things come from Him ... **so don't blame the devil for anything! The Devil is under His**

control — that is why our God is never taken by surprise.

(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 (=search for Him) after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:*

•**He has specifically appointed that all mankind everywhere will seek after Him** because He controls all things surrounding everyone ... working all things together for good of His great plan for the ages ... that plan is to have each man in His image and likeness (that was what He stated in the beginning and He hasn't changed it). It will happen for HE IS GOD ALMIGHTY and He IS close to each one . . . closer than you think!

(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.*

•**Paul declares these liberating truths to these 'unsaved' men of Athens.** Whether these men knew it or not, God was in control of their lives by being in control of their circumstances. (Ps.37:23) *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.* ('good' is not in the original — makes a big difference!). All mankind make up the visible expression on earth of the invisible God of the heavens. How could Paul say such a thing? Because he had received a revelation of who God was and how great He is ... Paul had received a revelation of the love of God and of the grace of God, so he knew deep within that because god is love, He cannot fail ... not even with one of His offspring. Our father takes full responsibility for His children, wayward or not! Don't forget that Psalm 82:5 declares that all men are the children of the Most High God!

(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.* God does not acknowledge as spiritual and helpful towards life, any image or statue or carving or sculpture ... absolutely nothing that is supposed to resemble Him in any way ... for nothing can replace the reality of knowing Him Who is Life. We need to cast down every imagination and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

(30) *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men every where to repent:*

•**God does not INVITE people to repent** ... HE COMMANDS them to do so. He is so in control of all men and their respective timings that He can declare, No man comes to the Father except He draw them. He being God, when He draws, one can't help but come and conversely if God is not drawing that one at this time, they cannot come ... until He does ... and He will!

(31) *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man (Christ-Jesus) whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

•**God will judge everyone through Christ** and it is a judgment unto righteousness (not punishment!). This one true God gives this assurance to all . . . *for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive* (1 Cor.15:22) ... the 'all' covers the same people!

(32) *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* Christ died and left a will and then came alive to see that the will was fully carried out even if some, like these in Athens, are not yet teachable by the Holy Spirit.

Let us list a few points to act as a reminder to some of who our God is so that they can forsake the God who was previously in their imagination.

- God is all-knowing (**OMNISCIENT**) ... thus the devil can never 'put one over' on God!
- God is everywhere present and not bound at all by time and distance. (He is **OMNIPRESENT**).
- God has ALL power (**OMNIPOTENT**) which leaves absolutely no power for the enemy!

Thus our God makes all things work together for good .. (Rom.8:28) ... to the FIRSTFRUITS first and then to every man in his own order. **If your God has been 'unknown' to you, we trust that as you seek Him, He will reveal/unveil Himself to you so that you can really KNOW HIM intimately.** §