

“Reaching People Today Right Where They Live, Think, Move, & Have Their Being!”

Acts 17:22-31

Then Paul stood up in the midst of the **Areopagus** (on **Mars Hill**) and said, “**Men of Athens, I Perceive (Discern)** that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of **Your** worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘**To The Unknown God**’. Therefore, the **One Whom You** worship without knowing, **Him I Proclaim (Preach & Teach)** to **You** (now). **God, (the Trinity) Who Made (Created)** the **World** and **Everything in It**, since **He Is Lord of Heaven and Earth**, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is **He Worshiped** with men's hands, as though **He** needed anything, since **He** gives to all life, breath, and all things! And **He (the Trinity)** has **Made from One Blood Every Nation of Men** to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that **They** should seek the **Lord**, in the hope that **They** might grope for **Him** and find **Him**, though **He** is not far from each one of **Us**. For in **Him (the Trinity)** ‘**We live and move and have our being**’, as also some of **Your Own Poets** have said, ‘**For We** are also **His Offspring**.’ Therefore, since **We** are the **Offspring of God**, **We** ought not to think that the **Divine Nature** is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God (the Trinity) overlooked, but now (He God The Father) commands all men everywhere to Repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will Judge the World in Righteousness by the Man (Son of Man - Jesus) Whom (Son of God - Christ) He (God the Father) has Ordained (Chosen & Anointed) [by the Holy Spirit]. He (God The Holy Spirit) has given assurance of this to all by Raising Him (Jesus Christ) from the Dead [completely: Body, Soul, and Spirit].”

Acts 17:22-31 (NKJV)

LET'S REVIEW

Q

“What Does Paul Do Immediately After Entering A New City Or Region?”

A

Paul Looks For an Opportunity To Preach & Teach The Full Gospel Message To Both Jews & Gentiles Alike Whenever Entering A New Territory Or City!

Q

“What Is Added To This Divine Desire To Share The Gospel?”

A

Paul Is Provoked By God's Spirit In His Spirit, With A Greater Desire & A Greater Urgency!

“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, His spirit was provoked within Him when He saw that the City was given over to idols.” ... Acts 17:16

Paul later Wrote This, “What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, & I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.” 1st Corinthians 10:19-20

REMEMBER

Paul Always Uses A 4-Part Formula When Sharing The Gospel of Good News

1) OT Kerygma

Central Story of Deliverance & Salvation of God's People According To God's Plan & Promise

2) NT Kerygma

Central Story of Deliverance & Salvation of God's People Fulfilled In Jesus Christ

3) Support With Various Scriptures

**Use The Scriptures Read In The Synagogue / Church Meeting That Day
&/Or Use Supporting Scriptures From The Bible**

4) Exhort & Encourage

The Audience To Go Further In Their Thinking & Understanding Of The Past & Their Lives
Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said,

“Men of Athens, I Perceive (Discern) that in all things you are very religious”...

Acts 17:22

Q

“Was Paul Trying To Be Sarcastic, Sly, Or Was He Looking To Segway To His 4-Part Formula?”

A1

Commentators Throughout The Centuries Have Had A Wide Array Of Opinions!

A2

Paul Chose His Opening Phrase Very Carefully As A Powerful Segway

To “Reach His Unique Audience Right Where They Live & Think!”

NOTICE

Paul Finds A Common Ground Even In The
Midst Of Their Pagan Beliefs, Philosophies, & Teachings

This Is Vitally Important To Consider, Notice, & Comprehend,

Where Your Audience Is Living & Thinking,

When You Present The Gospel Message To Them!

NOTE

Paul Observed A Minimum Of 30,000 Gods, Statues, Sanctuaries, & Temples

All Around Him From the Agora (Marketplace) to the Areopagus (on Mars Hill)

& Upon The Summit of the Acropolis (Mountain of Worship).

Paul Starts With Their Worldview of Many Gods in Mind

& Segways to Their Own Admonishing Ignorance: *“One God They Do Not Know”*,

With the Hope of Leading Them to Come to Know the *“ONE TRUE GOD”*

“For as I was passing through and considering the objects of Your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To The Unknown God’. Therefore, the One Whom You worship without knowing, Him I Proclaim (Preach & Teach) to You (now).” Acts 17:23

Q

“Who Is This Unknown God?”

... *“God, (the Trinity) A1 Who Made (Created) the World and Everything in It, A2 & A3 since He Is Lord of Heaven and Earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He Worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, A4 since He gives to all life, breath, and all things!” A3...*

Acts 17:24-25

A1

This God Exists As A Godhead: *Triune In Nature*, But *One In Being*.

Denoted By A Special Word: *“Elohim”*

A Pluralism Within A Singularity Existing Eternally Without A Beginning

“In the Beginning God (‘Elohim’) Created the heavens and the earth.” ... Genesis 1:1

A2

The God Of All Creation (Time, Space, Matter, Energy, & Life)

Created *“Out of Nothing” (‘Ex Nihilo’)* According To A Divine & Eternal Plan

“In the Beginning God Created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” ... Genesis 1:1-2

“For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

Exodus 20:11

A3

The Only Eternal & Necessary Being – All Other Beings Are Created & Contingent

“For in Him (the Trinity) We live and move and have our being,
as also some of Your Own Poets have said, ‘For We are also His Offspring.’”

Acts 17:28

A4

God Is Spirit & Those Who Desire To Worship Him, Must Do So In The Spirit

The (Samaritan) woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet. Our Fathers (Samaritans) worshiped on this mountain, and You Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ‘You (Samaritans) worship what You do not know’; We (Jews) know what We worship, for Salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the True Worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and Those Who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” The (Samaritan) woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah Is Coming (Who is called Christ). When He Comes, He will tell Us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I WHO speak to you AM HE!”

John 4:19-26

Q

“Are There Evolutionary Or Superior Races Of Humanity?”

A - NO!

God Created All People As One Race – The Human Race!

“And He (the Trinity) has Made from One Blood Every Nation of Men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.”

Acts 17:26

Q

“What Was The Purpose For Which God Created Us?”

A

For An Eternal Personal Relationship With HIM!

“So that They should Seek the Lord, in the hope that They might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of Us.”

Acts 17:27

Q

“Is This Personal Relationship & Fellowship With God Necessary?”

A - YES!

God The Only Eternal & Necessary Being Created Us Contingent For Physical & Eternal Life!

“Since He gives to all life, breath, and all things ... * “For in Him (the Trinity) ‘We live and move and have our being’, as also some of Your Own Poets have said, ‘For We are also His Offspring.’” *

Acts 17:25b & 28

[* See APPENDIX *]

Q

“What Does His Offspring Imply?”

A

That We Are Made In His Image & Likeness!

God (the Trinity) said, “Let Us Make Man in Our Image, According to Our Likeness; let Them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So, God (the Trinity) Created Man in His Own Image; in the Image (Likeness) of God He Created Him; Male and Female He Created Them.”

Genesis 1:26-27

And the Lord God Formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and Breathed into His Nostrils the ‘Breath of Life’; and Man became a Living (Eternal) Being.

Genesis 2:7

Q

*“If We Created In **His Image**, & Likeness – “**His Offspring**”
Does That Mean We Are Just Like **God**?”*

A – NO!

Even Though He Gave Us Some Of His Attributes & Abilities – God Is Still “WHOLLY OTHER!”

*“Therefore, since **We** are the **Offspring of God**, **We** ought not to think that the **Divine Nature** is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.”*

Acts 17:29

Q

*“So, What Does God Desire For His Creation To Know About
Him, Ourselves, This Physical Temporary Life, Reality, & Eternity?”*

A

Remember Our Mission

*“Reaching People Right Where They Live,
Think, Move, & Have Their Being!”*

Our Mission Is To Inform People Of The Reality Of

Our Fallen Separated State, Sin, Death, Salvation, Repentance,

Redemption, Sanctification, Resurrection, Final Judgement, & Eternity!

*Paul Continued, “Truly, these times of ignorance **God (the Trinity)** overlooked, but now (He God The Father) commands all men everywhere to Repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will Judge the World in Righteousness by the **Man (Son of Man - Jesus)** Whom (Son of God - Christ) He (God the Father) has Ordained (Chosen & Anointed) [by the Holy Spirit]. He (God The Holy Spirit) has given assurance of this to all by Raising Him (Jesus Christ) from the Dead [completely: **Body, Soul, and Spirit**].”*

Acts 17:30-31

*“Let Us Truly Be God’s Chosen, Redeemed, & Holy People
Sharing The Good News Of His Gospel of Grace,
Healing, Mercy, Salvation, Repentance, Redemption,
Holiness, New Life, Resurrection, Judgement, & Eternity!”*

*“Let Us Truly Meet People Right Where They Live,
Think, Move, & Have Their Being.*

For They, Like We, Are God’s Offspring.

For We Were All Meant to Be His Children!”

*** APPENDIX ***

*“For in **Him (the Trinity)** ‘**We** live and move and have our being’,
as also some of **Your Own Poets** have said, ‘For **We** are also **His Offspring**.”*

Acts 17:28

Paul Is Quoting Two Ancient Greek Philosophers

1) Epimenides of Crete (600 B.C.)

*“They fashioned a tomb for thee, O holy and high one,
The Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, idle bellies!
But thou art not dead; thou livest and abidest forever,
For in thee we live and move and have our being!”*

2) Aratus of Cilicia (310 B.C.)

*“Let us begin with Zeus. Never, O men, let us leave him unmentioned.
All the ways are full of Zeus, and all the marketplaces of human beings.
The sea is full of him; so are the harbors.
In every way we have all to do with Zeus, for we are truly his offspring!”*