

# Introducing the 'Unknown' God

Acts 17:16-34

PART THREE

## Introduction

The *Reasoning* of a Donkey: Numbers 22:26-30.

- I. ATHENS – The Place (vv16-18);
- II. AREOPAGUS – The Platform (vv19-21);
- III. ADDRESS – The Presentation of the 'Unknown God' (vv22-23);
- IV. ARGUMENT – The Powerful Creator God (vv24-25);
- V. APPLICATION – The Purposes of God (vv26-34)

## v28

Isaiah 42:5

Luke 20:38

Colossians 3:3-4

**v29** Here Paul squarely addresses their idolatry.

Romans 1:22-23

IDOLS OF THE HEART

v22 *"Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious."*

What qualifies as *very religious*?

*"as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship..."* v23

*"worship"* the essential concept in Scripture is 'service.'

2 Peter 2:19

*"overcomes"* Gk *hettao*; that to which you succumb; that which defeats you; to *that*, you are in bondage.

**The foolishness of Idolatry: Isaiah 44:9-20**

An idol is something that does not serve you, *you serve it*.

**Idolatry is whole-heart *self-worship*.**

It's not the object itself that is the idol, but what it promises to deliver to me – *how it can serve me*.

*don't rely on biblical sin categories when attempting to understand and identify idolatry.*

The heart's functions take on the characteristics of the idol.

Psalm 115:4-8

The question then becomes: *who or what are the controlling influences of our hearts?*

**Heart Diagnostic:**

- 1) what are we believing? *'I deserve'*
- 2) what are we craving? *'I want'*
- 3) what then are we seeking? *'I must have'*

**The Penitent Heart and God's Offer of Forgiveness**

**v30**

*"The times of ignorance God overlooked"*

Romans 3:25

*"forbearance"*

Romans 2:4

*"patience"* This is God's common grace extended to those yet unreconciled.

Psalm 145:9

**The Perpetual, Universal Call to Repent**

*"he commands all people everywhere to repent"*

*"Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand"* John 3:2

*"Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand"* John 4:17

Why should we?

**v31**

Next time, Jesus comes back as the vengeful Almighty Judge!

**v32**

*"We will hear you again about this,"*

**v33** *So Paul went out from their midst.*

**v34**

**The Gospel Charge to all True Christians**

Our primary call is not to evangelize, it is to *make disciples*.

Matthew 28:19-20

*"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*

There is no disciple making that does not involve conversion.

“Go therefore...” ‘while you are going, you must make disciples.’

You’re to engage them, teach them, with intentionality. Everywhere you go you are to be making disciples.

“Christianity without discipleship is Christianity without Christ.” D. Bonhoeffer

Matthew 4:19, “Follow Me (conversion), and I will make you fishers of men (commission).”

“disciples” are any and all true Christians.

Ecclesiastes 11:4-6