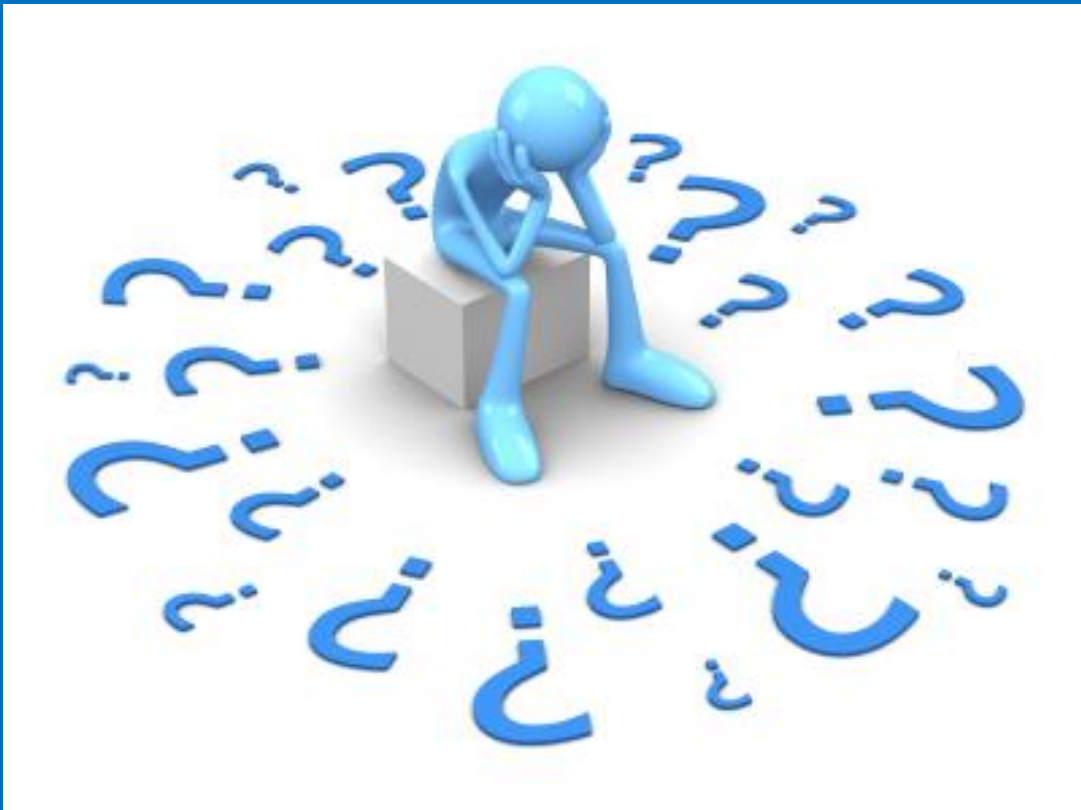


What's it all Mean?

Acts 17:24-28 (Topical Message)



The Coronavirus is exposing our

- 1. Priorities*
- 2. What we are Trusting In*
- 3. What we Idolize*

Definition (Idol) - An image or anything used as an object of worship in place of the true God.

Many of us have substituted an Idol in place of the God. We might **NOT** think of it in those terms, but many of us have. We worship our jobs, our children, a sport, physical fitness, money, fame, power, pleasure, sex, drugs, electronics, on line games, cars etc. You name it.

Whatever it is you replaced God with in your life is an idol. Our idols are something we believe we cannot live without, it's something we think we need and "**ONLY**" "this thing will only bring us joy & happiness in life.



Paul wanted to help the men of Athens to understand that they have been misled, and that they need to know the true and living God (Jesus Christ). He did this by preaching a sermon to the men of Athens. Today, I want to look at Paul's message, which is just as relevant today as it was then.

Paul had 3 main points in his message:

A. God Doesn't Dwell in Building

B. God Doesn't Need Man's Help

C. God Is the Answer to What Man is Seeking

Acts 17:24-28 (NASB)

²⁴ "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things; ²⁶ and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Background

Paul was invited to preach from a place called the Areopagus and share what he was teaching (Gospel Message). The Areopagus was a rocky hill about 370 feet high where he could address many people with a message. Paul noticed this about his audience as he traveled in Athens. They held to **(1) various philosophies, (2) they were curious people to know more and learn new things, (3) they were religious (activities, doing, rituals), (4) they had many objects of worship (idols), and (5) Paul found an altar with this inscription in Athens:**

“To an Unknown God”

Paul’s heart was for the truth of the Gospel to be known, so Paul starts his message with this statement:

“Therefore, what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you”

A. God Doesn't Dwell in Building

Acts 17:24 (NASB)

²⁴ "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands

The Coronavirus will change the way the church operates moving forward. Maybe, we will revert back to the way the 1st church in Acts met in homes. Why not have church in your home, and get a message streamed to your home every week. Why not meet, pray, learn and experience God from your home with your family and friends. Why not interact with your Pastor, or elders electronically instead of in person. Why does the church need to be in one geographic area? There are no boundaries to God, and there are no boundaries to the church. This is exciting, God is at work. Amen! We will see how God leads on this, but the Church will assembly differently moving forward.

Brothers and Sisters, God isn't in a building, He is omnipresent, and as a believer He is also in You. Amen!

B. God Doesn't Need Man's Help

Acts 17:25 (NASB)

²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;

Most of us don't understand this at all. We want to do something for God, serve Him with our self-effort, and expect Him to bless our efforts. What's Paul's point here, God doesn't need man's help. Man doesn't work for God; He works from God.

Brothers and Sisters – God isn't served by self-effort as though He needs our help is the point here. God wants us to serve Him with Him being our source. When we do this, He is living and expressing Himself through us, instead of us trying to produce something, that we don't have. We can only serve and produce dead fruit, when the source is ourselves, and not God. Paul tried and tried. So, do we, but when the frustrations and pressures of life came on Paul, He realized that he needed to trust in God, and not in himself. He needed to give up in trusting his flesh (self).

C. God Is the Answer to What Man is Seeking

Acts 17:26-28 (NASB)

²⁶ and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Seek Him

All men born since Adam are on a search for Spiritual Life in a physical world. They are searching for Love and Acceptance in a physical world that can't ever meet that need. The search end with Jesus Christ.

Jesus unconditionally loves man and will never leave them or forsake them. Jesus wants to give His Children His life, which is spiritual life.

I often describe this as the hole in one's heart that we are looking to fill. We are seeking something, and that something is God to give us spiritual life.

Grope for Him

The verse continues and says we are groping for Him. This word is also translated touching. We are wandering and searching, seeking and groping for something. Our hands are out trying to grab onto something that will fill the hole in our hearts.

Many of us grope and grab on to a substitute like the idols I described in my introduction. We think we need these things, but they are fake and will never substitute for the spiritual life we get from God.

Find Him (He is not far from each of us)

Some of us find Him. This means some of us by faith are raised to newness of life and are made Spiritually alive.

Some of us find what our hearts have been searching for. Some of us fill the hole in our hearts with Jesus Christ. Some of us live from our new source of life, which is Jesus Christ. Amen! Amen! Amen!

Brothers and Sisters – The Gospel message is what man is looking for, the Gospel message is the only means to fill the hole in one's heart. The Gospel message is the most important message in the world today.

We are seeking, groping and looking for something and that something is Jesus Christ giving us His life, and coming to live inside us.

²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

God isn't "Unknown" like the inscription Paul saw in the city of Athens. God is known, can be Known, and can be Known intimately.

What's it all Mean?

You have been placed by God into this time in History. You have been born with a hole in your heart. You have a hole in your heart that you are seeking to fill. You are looking for and groping for something. You have substituted idols for the true God being deceived by the world and the Devil. You are near to God. Your need is Spiritual Life. You need to live, move and exist in Him (Christ)

Receive Christ into your heart, Live & Move in Him, Get to Know Him!