



Decade of Availability Declaring God

The Book of Acts reveals that Spirit-led evangelism (speaking the Word) can be done in different ways for different cultures and people. However, the basic message of the Gospel does not change.

Introduction: vv. 22-23 Paul has arrived at Athens, the center of pagan thought and practice. He is taken to the great Areopagus and accuses them of being 'superstitious' (religious). This was not a compliment—but a challenge. They claimed to NOT know who God is. Paul then 'declares' who God is:

A. The Truth About God vv. 24-25

1. General versus special revelation: The Athenians had no knowledge of the Hebrew view of God. So Paul uses 'general' revelation to open his comments about God. See Rom 1:19-22. Later he will use 'special' or Biblical revelation regarding the resurrection.

2. What God is not: When speaking to the Jews in Antioch, Paul did not have to explain who God is or is not. Here, Paul must explain that God cannot be reduced to wood and stone and worshiped as an idol.

Superstition continues to reign: The root word for 'superstitious' (religion) in vs. 22 is 'daimon' or demon/devil. People continue to try and explain who God is or is not or just give up and say no one really knows. This is a work of Satan.

B. The Truth About Humanity vv. 26-29

1. We are all God's children: v. 26 In the sense that God created all humans through Adam (*Gen. 1:28-29*). He also determines where we live and how long a nation or people exist.

2. God shaped void: v. 27 All of humankind was created with a built-in need to find God. He is near to all.

3. In God we live: v. 28 All people are dependent on God for their very existence, life and breath.

4. More than a statue: v. 29 Statues and art works, as beautiful as they can be—cannot fully represent the fullness of man or God.

C. The Truth About Salvation vv. 30-31

1. Time to repent: v. 30 God was merciful and patient with the Gentiles and pagans in the past. But now that the Messiah has come and risen from the dead...it's time to repent.

2. That man: v. 31 Interestingly, orthodox Jews will not use the name Jesus but call Him, "That man." The 'resurrection' introduced a topic that the Greeks did not believe in. They believed the soul was immortal and the body of little importance. I Thes 5:23

3. The salvation message: v. 31 The clear salvation message was that God would judge the world but ordained a man (the Messiah Jesus) to die for all and raised him from the dead to assure that salvation.

There were three reactions to the message:

1. Some mocked Paul
2. Some said they needed more time to think about it
3. Some believed

Acts 17:22-34 (KJV)

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 any thing, 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 every where 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.



What is your reaction to God today?