

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a



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THE GOD QUESTIONS	EXPLORING LIFE'S GREAT QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD GROWTH GUIDE	Handout: 02/24/2019 Study: 03/03/19
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Is God Real?

In Acts 17, Paul arrives in Athens, the citadel of the many Greek gods. In that city was the Areopagus, or Mars Hill, where a council of civic leaders met. This council, also called the Areopagus, had charge of religious and educational matters in Athens.

While in Athens, Paul was provoked by the many idols he saw. As was his custom, he went to the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles. He also preached to those in the marketplace. That is when he encountered the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, who were always looking to discover something “new” to discuss. The Epicureans were followers of Epicurus (341—270 BC), who taught that happiness was the ultimate goal in life. The Stoic thinkers regarded Zeno (340—265 BC) as their founder. He was noted for promoting the rational over the emotional. Both Epicurus and Zeno believed in many gods.

Hearing Paul teach about Jesus, the philosophers had Paul come to the Areopagus and asked him to tell them about this “new,” strange teaching he was proclaiming. Standing in the midst of the Areopagus, Paul tells those gathered that he realized Athenians were very religious, having seen their many objects of worship. But one altar among the many caught his attention. On it were inscribed the words “TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.” In their ignorance, the Greeks had erected an altar to whatever god they might have inadvertently left out of their pantheon. Paul masterfully uses this altar as an opportunity to share the one true God.

Since the Greeks obviously didn’t know who this god was, Paul explains that this “unknown god” was the biblical God, the Creator of heaven and earth, who does not dwell in temples made with hands. Actually, God is the Source of life for all nations, and He is really the One they were unwittingly seeking. Paul says God is near; in fact, “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:27–28). The Greeks, however, were unable to find the true God on their own, so God came searching for them. He calls all men to repent and accept Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead and will judge the world in righteousness.

Paul’s mention of the resurrection brought a varied response from the philosophers. Some sneered outright. Others said they wanted to hear more from Paul (Acts 17:32). Praise the Lord, some believed. One of the members of the Areopagus, named Dionysius, exercised faith in Christ, and several other Athenians also became Christians that day.

The “unknown God” desires to be known. That is why He has spoken to us through His Word; that is why He sent His Son into the world (Luke 10:22). God can be known through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9).

Source: Gotquestions.org

KEY VERSE

Acts 17:23 (NKJV)

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 to you:

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Acts 17:15-34

Introduction

1. As we begin the God Questions series, what are some questions you have about God?
2. From today's Bible reading, what questions do you think people in Athens may have been asking about God? How does Paul answer them?

Tuesday: Acts 17:24; Psalm 19:1-4

Reality Of Creation

3. In Psalm 19:1-4, what aspects of the world does the psalmist (David) mention specifically? What aspects of the world are you most amazed by?
4. In what ways does the world around us point to God?

Wednesday: Acts 17:25-29; Psalm 139:13-16; Psalm 50:10-12

Reality Of Sovereignty

5. The gods of the Greeks were distant and generally unconcerned about the lives of men. According to today's Bible passages, how would you describe God's involvement in the world?
6. What are some areas where you have experienced God's sovereignty in the world and in your life?

Thursday: Acts 17:30-31; Hebrews 1:1-3; I Corinthians 15:3-8

Reality Of The Resurrection

7. Why is it important to the Christian faith that Jesus was resurrected?
8. What can we learn about God from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?
9. Why is it significant that Jesus appeared to so many people after His resurrection (I Corinthians 15:3-8)?

Friday: Acts 17:32-34; Hebrews 11:1-2

Choices To Make About God

10. Did you notice that the people hearing about Jesus from Paul in Acts 17 were at different states of readiness and gave different responses? Which of their responses can you relate to?
11. What doubts or questions do you still have about the existence of God? What do you need to understand or have answered in order to believe in Him?
12. In Acts 17:27 Paul writes that God is "not far from each one of us". If you believe in God, what are some ways you have experienced His closeness in your life?
13. How does understanding the evidences for the existence of God motivate you to tell others about Him?