



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

November 10, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

EVERYBODY WORSHIPS

People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.

Acts 17:22

READ Acts 17:24-32

I recently visited Athens, Greece. Walking around its ancient Agora—the marketplace where philosophers taught and Athenians worshiped—I found altars to Apollo and Zeus, all in the shadow of the Acropolis, where a statue of the goddess Athena once stood.

We may not bow to Apollo or Zeus today, but society is no less religious. “Everybody worships,” novelist David Foster Wallace said, adding this warning: “If you worship money and things . . . then you will never have enough. . . Worship your body and beauty. . . and you will always feel ugly. . . Worship your intellect . . . [and] you will end up feeling stupid.” Our secular age has its own gods, and they’re not benign.

“People of Athens!” Paul said while visiting the Agora, “I see that in every way you are very religious” (Acts 17:22). The apostle then described the one true God as the Creator of all (vv. 24–26) who wants to be known (v. 27) and who has revealed Himself through the resurrection of Jesus (v. 31). Unlike Apollo and Zeus, this God isn’t made by human hands. Unlike money, looks, or intelligence, worshiping Him won’t ruin us.

Our “god” is whatever we rely on to give us purpose and security. Thankfully, when every earthly god fails us, the one true God is ready to be found (v. 27).

By **Sheridan Voysey**

PRAY & REFLECT

Father, forgive me for placing wealth, beauty, politics, or other things first. I take them off the altar of my heart and place You there instead. Amen

What other “gods” do you see society worshipping today? What do you rely on to give you purpose and security?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

We often use Paul’s interaction with the people in Athens as a model for evangelism: know your audience and tailor your message to them. The apostle observed the religious behavior of the Athenians and demonstrated his knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and the life and work of Jesus. But we also see that Paul’s speech was a refutation of the Athenian approach to religion. In a place where they had many idols to which they offered sacrifices of food and drink, the apostle asserts that there’s only one God, and He doesn’t live in temples and doesn’t need to be served by humans. —

By **J.R. Hudberg**

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