

The God Who Made the World

Acts 17:24-25

All spiritual reality begins with the recognition that there is a God who rules the affairs of men and nations, and that He is truly God and we are truly not.

I find it very instructive that Paul begins by introducing his hearers to the concept of the true and living God. He doesn't assume they know who God is. To the contrary, he assumes they know nothing about the true God. This is crucial for us to consider. Sometimes we mistakenly assume that the unsaved know what we mean when we use words like God, Son of God, sin, salvation, justification, and eternal life. All too often they either don't have a clue or their ideas are entirely wrong. We must begin where people are. We must not force them to begin where we are.

I. The Creator of All Things

"The God who made the world and everything in it." This is Genesis 1:1 all over again. You might say that Acts 17:24 is the New Testament equivalent of the first verse of the Bible.

II. The Lord of the Universe

"The Lord of heaven and earth." Paul next draws the logical conclusion that if God is the Creator, He must also be the Lord of the Universe. Because He is the Creator, He owns what He has made, and therefore is the absolute Master of all things.

III. The God Without Limits

"Does not live in temples built by hands." I'm sure we don't feel the force of these words like the men of Athens did. After all, they lived in a city with 30,000 altars to 30,000 gods—deities of every variety springing up on every corner.

IV. The King Without Needs

"He is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything." This is a remarkable statement. The word "needed" in Greek is *therapeutei*, from which we get the English word therapeutic, which means rendering service to a sick person. How does that apply in this verse? Answer: God isn't sick!

Let me suggest two important implications from this truth:

- A) He doesn't require any help from us.
- B) He doesn't profit from anything we do for Him.

If you doubt that statement, consider the words of Psalms 50:9-12.

V. The Source of All Life

Paul's final description of God touches the core of human existence: "He himself gives all men life and breath and everything else." There are three categories here that would appear to be entirely exhaustive of the human experience.

- A. Life—the fact that we are alive and not dead.
- B. Breath—that fact that we continue to be alive moment-by-moment.
- C. Everything else—anything else we could ever need.