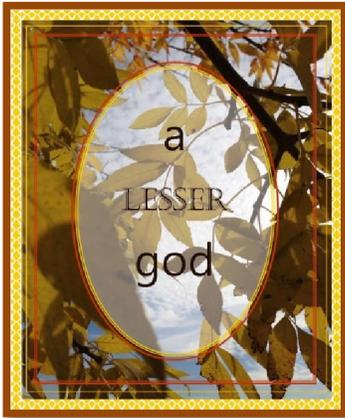


A lesser god (Exodus 21:1-3; Acts 17:22-31; Romans 1:22-32, Job 38:4-13)



*When we begin to pick and choose what we believe about God, when we decide which of the scriptures in His Word we like, and which we would rather discard, we become as those mentioned within it's very pages - those creating a god of our own making.*

That is the truth that woke me in the wee hours. As I lay there and wrestled with the thought, how do I try to shape God into a lesser god?

We know of the Ten Commandments, with the first being, **"You shall have no other gods before Me."**<sup>1</sup> And, although we may not have sat down lately to create a golden calf, have we somehow tried to fashion God into a lesser god by our own life and choices?

I know this - He is not an ala carte god whom we can add to or take from. We must either choose to accept ALL of Him as God, or we end up designing a lesser god who is really no god at all. Like those whom the Apostle Paul mentions in the book of Acts who were **"very religious"** making gods of their own out of **"gold, silver or stone,"** images **"formed by the art and thought of man"**<sup>2</sup>, stop and think, do our thoughts design a god we can live with? Do we, as mentioned in Romans, become those who **"exchanged the truth of God for a lie..."**, do we become **"fools"** having a **"depraved mind"**<sup>3</sup>?

With our sinful nature, we are apt to do as Eve did when she changed God's words in answer to Lucifer in the garden to make it suit her desires. We do it when we think the Bible is outdated and doesn't really apply to our current culture or generation, and certainly not to our situation. Like Israel (the people God chose as the nation to bring forth the Savior) chose lesser gods continuously, making images with their own hands to worship. I remember reading that as a child and thinking how silly and foolish to create something and then worship it as if it created you. But every time we decide to take His love and grace, and push aside His call to holy and righteous living, we make a lesser god. When we choose to accept God as a loving father but leave out the part that He disciplines His own, or the fact that judgment is also His, we have designed a lesser god. When we choose to accept the promises of the Bible and leave off the dire warnings within its pages to live holy, we make Him a lesser god.

Like those in Athens that Paul speaks of, many of us are believe there's a God, but what kind of god have we tried to make Him to be? Has His word become inconvenient to read so we really don't know Who He is? Do we let the world define God? Like the Athenians, do we pray to the "UNKNOWN GOD"?

For generations now we have been taught that we can have what we want, in fact, we can have it *all*, we deserve it, we are worth it, we should have it, and somewhere along the way, the shift of thought (maybe even from the beginning of creation) has been that *it's all about my desires. I have choices. I have a mind of my own and know how to assert it. I have my likes and dislikes, and you can have yours too (as long as they don't mess with mine.)*

I see this same thought process playing out in our belief of God: *I can live how I want.* Of course there are some socially accepted moral boundaries that we will straddle, but ultimately... we think we can live our life under this umbrella of an overall generous God who is far above us, like a doting father who doles out blessings to His children, and we are so good with that, as long as He doesn't try to cramp our lifestyle. In social media, we hear others say that the Bible is no longer relevant, its archaic. It doesn't fit our culture. But, did you know there is nothing new under the sun? (That's in

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the Bible too, Ecclesiastes 1:9) Sin has been prevalent since the fall of mankind, and although we are very aware that the world is in a downward spiral, God has been dealing with the sin of man since He made the first sacrifice to cover Adam and Eve in the garden. It was God, the omniscient one, who knew sin would happen and had already laid out a plan for a Savior. It was God, the Almighty one, who maneuvered it into place so that the Messiah could not be thwarted. It was God, the patient one, who didn't just obliterate the whole world and start over with a smarter version, a more obedient version. It was God, the longsuffering one, who set principles in motion and allows man to live out life until the day He returns for us. Yes, He is also loving and merciful (praise His name!) but He is not to be weakened, or made less than He is. He is GOD. Creator of all. Giver of breath and life, and can take breath away. He is Judge over all. He is sovereign, Lord of lords and King of kings. There is no greater being than Him, and our thoughts cannot even rise to the same level as His lowest thought.

In Job 38, God speaks to Job and says, ***"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, who sets its measurements? Since you know, or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who enclosed the sea with doors when, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; When I made a cloud its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, and I placed boundaries on it and set a bolt and doors, and I said, 'Thus far you shall come, but no farther; and here shall your proud waves stop'? Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, and caused the dawn to know its place, that it might take hold of the ends of the earth..."***<sup>4</sup> And on He goes to describe His acts of creating things that mankind could not dream of, because we are the created not the creator. Like Job, we cannot fathom all that God is, but we can certainly know all He is not. He is not lesser than God Himself.

*Father, may we never try to diminish who You are by lifting our own thoughts above Your own. May we always remember that You are God and we are not. Help us to never settle for a lesser god, designed and thought of by our own convenience or desires, for You alone are God. THE God. Our God. Forgive us when we try to take away any of who You are, or diminish the words You have spoken to us. Help us to bow our knees before You, and in faith live according to Your word. You are the unfathomable God, no lesser god can compare. Lead us by Your Spirit, as we come in the name of Christ Jesus to live focused on You as God of all. Amen.*

Scriptures for your reading:

<sup>1</sup>Exodus 20:1-3

<sup>2</sup>Acts 17:22-31

<sup>3</sup>Romans 1:22, 25, 28

<sup>4</sup>Job 38:4-13