

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Filling the Empty Spot

Bill Brinkworth

Paul found himself in the world's seat of culture, Athens, Greece. As well educated and developed in the arts as the Athenians were, Paul saw something the people were doing that deeply troubled him. He saw, throughout the city, idols, and other signs that the city was immersed in idolatry. On approaching a hill where many judicial duties were performed, Mars Hill, he saw something that concerned him even more about the people there.

There on the hill he saw an altar constructed and labeled: "To the Unknown God." Here were a people who had much of what the world desired: money, education, and pleasures. In all this, they were not satisfied. There was something still missing in their lives. They tried to fill that void with worship of their own design. Still the worship of their created deities did not fulfill their needs. "What happens if we left out a god that we don't know about?" must have been their concern; as they created an altar to a "god," they did not even know about.

The Athenians of Paul's time are no different from many in our lifetime. People are not satisfied with who they are, or what they have. Most have an innate need that they do not know they have. Throughout their lives, they unconsciously try to satisfy that need. Pleasure with all its laughs and imaginations does not fill the "empty spot," nor do the degrees that come with their education. Money never fills an insatiable pit. It always seems, no matter how much is collected, that there is just not enough. The searching continues. They try this religion or that religion. All kinds of ways to please a God they do not really know are attempted. They remain "empty."

The "empty spot" that everyone has can be filled only by having a relationship and fellowship with the real Creator. When it is accomplished the way He requires, not our ways, He will be a part of our lives. God will be the direction our lives yearn for. He will be the comfort our troubled souls desire. He will be the supplier of our every need. God is the filler of everyone's "empty spot," when He becomes the Known God to us.

"No God; no peace. Know God; know peace."

Believe and Ask

Bill Brinkworth

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9

Next to John 3:16, Romans 10:9 is one of the most memorized and recited verses in the Bible. Within those 29 words is the message that has changed the lives of billions, and saved countless souls from an eternal hell. It contains God’s directions for being saved from punishment for our sins — an eternity in hell.

The most important step in salvation is confessing. “Confess” is to “own, avow, or acknowledge. To declare publically a belief in and adherence to” (*Webster, 1828*). We are to acknowledge that Jesus, God’s only son, is alive. He is not dead; He has risen from the dead. Because Jesus did the “impossible” by getting the victory over death, He also could make it possible for His death, burial, and resurrection to be the payment for all our sins.

Unlike other religious leaders, whose remains are still on this earth somewhere, Jesus did what no other man could do. Jesus died for our sins, and was buried. On the third day He was risen from the dead by the power of God. There were no remains of His body left on this earth. If the truth of His death, burial and resurrection is believed in one’s heart, that person is saved. He then can be assured of a home in heaven when he dies. Believing that Jesus paid it all is admitting there is nothing we can do that can earn us a way to Glory. It was something another did for us. Jesus paid for our sins with His blood and got the victory over death, hell and the grave.

Saying we believe in Jesus and still hoping our good works outnumber our bad deeds is not trusting in Jesus Christ’s work alone for our salvation. It is adding something to what He did. The devil believes in Jesus, because he has talked to Him; so just believing Jesus exists is not enough. What is “enough” is believing that Jesus got the victory over death, and that He is the payment for our sins. It is believing with our heart that Jesus is the only Way to heaven. He is our only hope. That is total belief in Jesus.

With this belief, we can be saved from what is due us; the penalty for our sins (Romans 6:23). Believe in you heart that Jesus died for your sins, confess Him before men, and you can have God’s promise of eternity with Him in heaven.

The world says, “Seeing is believing,” but Jesus says, “Believing is seeing.”

— *Barbara Brinkworth*

Whosoever!

C. H. Spurgeon

One time Martin Luther saw, in one of the Romish churches, a picture of the Pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars all on-board a ship. They were all safe, every one of them. As for the laity, poor wretches, they were struggling in the sea, and many of them drowning. Only those were saved to whom the good men in the ship were so kind as to hand out a rope or a plank.

Fortunately, that is not our Lord's teaching: his blood is shed "for many" (Mat. 26:28) and not for the few. He is not the Christ of a caste, religion, or a class, but the Christ of all conditions of men.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. 10:13

Look It Up!

Bill Brinkworth

In Romans 4, the doctrine of works versus faith is discussed. Paul said (vs. 3) no matter what biblical teaching is discussed or thought about, there should be one concern that must have paramount importance. That concern should be, "For what saith the scripture? ..." (vs. 3).

Your opinion or my opinion has little importance in the light of many topics, especially those concerning the things of God. Unfortunately, many's beliefs about spiritual things are not based on God's Word. Dr. Mickey Carter called that kind of belief "fireside religion." People give their opinion, and often that thought turns into a lifetime belief on the discussed subject.

There is one God, and one way to His Heaven. It is not anyone else's way, no matter how much education, money, or popularity he has. Those things do not matter one iota in God's mind, when man's philosophy does not line up with what He has said in His Word.

If this different opinion problem were not a reality, then there would not be different denominations and religions. Shockingly, many Christian denominations do not even line up with what God has said in many areas. Because the majority of people do not read and study the Scriptures for themselves, the only biblical knowledge they have is what has been expounded from the pulpit. They have assumed that the preacher went to college for biblical studies and must know what he is talking about.

Unfortunately, many that claim to know the Scriptures do not know them or even believe what they teach. I remember being horrified when a pastor many years ago remarked, "Oh yeah, I read the Bible once when I was in college." Here is supposedly a spiritual leader for hundreds of people, and he has read the Bible once in his lifetime! His lack of knowledge certainly must have hurt many, many lives.

A quick study and examination of most religions, and even denominations that are labeled "Christian," may quickly reveal that:

- Idolatry may be involved in their worship. Many may deny that they are committing idolatry when they stand before a statue and pray or do some "religious" activity before it; but in God's eyes, it is still idolatry.
- Jesus is not the only way to heaven according to their teachings. Unbiblical teachings often center around good deeds and works that do not please God. Good works will get no one into heaven.
- There are other people of the past that they pray to and get answers to prayers, help, etc., other than Jesus, or God. The Bible says there is only one person ("mediator") we should pray to, and that is Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5).
- Church teachings and writings have higher importance than the Word of God.

- They often do not know where the Word of God is. Leaders often present many different versions of the Bible, each teaching differently, and even use writings from other religions.

Many church doors would be closed shortly if attendees would simply question the leaders with the same question Paul asked regarding church doctrines. A simple, “I heard what you just preached from the pulpit. Show me in the King James Bible where what you just preached is written down, and I will gladly believe it.” A biblically-aligned church leader, or even one answering your query, should not be offended, when you earnestly seek “What saith the Lord?”

“If you have truth decay, brush up on the Bible!”