False Ideas Of God

Intro. As a basis for our study notice, Acts 17:23 “For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” The Athenians were very religious (KJV—superstitious) people. Yet, they held many false ideas concerning God and thus their worship was ignorant. Sad to say we still have many false ideas of God.

I. SOME THINK GOD’S POWER IS LIMITED TO EVOLUTION.
   A. This is inconsistent. If God could create anything He could create everything.
   B. But God tells us how He created everything.
      1. Gen. 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”
      2. God, through Moses, said that He spoke everything into existence (not evolved) in a period of 6 days consisting of an evening and a morning (24 hours).
      3. Exo. 20:11 “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

II. SOME THINK GOD IS AN AMERICAN GOD.
   A. We act and think as if Americans are God’s chosen people.
   B. God is a God for all.
      1. Acts 17:26 “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;”
      2. He loves the whole world; John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
      3. Christ died for the whole world; Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
      4. God will judge the whole world; Acts 17:31 “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

III. SOME THINK GOD IS PHYSICAL, AND LOCAL.
   A. God is not the material creation as many have thought.
   B. God is spirit.
      1. John 4:23-24 “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
         a. Notice the context.
         b. The place of worship; John 4:20 “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”
         c. God can be worshipped any place because God is spirit; John 4:21, 23-24 “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father…” 23But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
         d. God is not a tribal deity; not the creation of men’s hands.
e. God cannot be confined to a specific locale; Acts 17:24 “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;”
   (1) Mt. Gerizim or Jerusalem (Mt. Zion).
   (2) Not a church building today.

f. God is a God for all people and places; Psalms 139:7-10 “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

2. Luke 24:39 “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”
   a. The fact that you cannot see or feel (touch) etc., does not mean that God does not exist.
   b. You cannot see pain, electricity, love, but no one questions their existence.

IV. SOME THINK GOD CREATED MAN AND THEN LEFT MAN WITHOUT ANY INSTRUCTIONS AND IS NOW AFAR OFF.

A. Some believe that, “God is dead.”
   1. That He created man and then left him on his own (deism).
   2. This truly would not be reasonable.

B. Instead it would be reasonable to believe that God has instructed us and is with us.
   1. God instructs us; 2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
   2. God is with us.
      a. Acts 17:27-28 “That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”
      b. God is so big that He is everyplace and so little He can dwell within my heart.

V. SOME THINK GOD IS A GOD OF CONFUSION.

A. That God has called one man to deny what He has called another to affirm.
   1. That God sends the Holy Spirit to two people who speak opposite things.
   2. This is the view Pentecostalism is driven to.
   3. 1 Corinthians 14:33 “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

B. Phi. 3:16 “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.”
   1. That same rule is the faith.
   2. Eph. 4:5 “One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”
   3. Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”
   4. The faith will produce the unity that Christ wants.
      a. John 17:20-21 “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
VI. SOME THINK GOD IS RELUCTANT TO SAVE.

A. This misconception gave rise to the mourner’s bench type of religion. Pleading with God to save.

B. We do not have to plead with God to save.
   1. God desires to save.
      a. 1 Tim. 2:3-4 “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ‘Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’
      b. 2 Pet. 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
   2. This is the very purpose God sent His Son John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

C. Instead we must plead with man to be saved
   1. Acts 2:40 “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”
   2. 2 Cor. 5:11 “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

VII. SOME THINK THAT GOD IS TOO GOOD TO CONDEMN.

A. It is true that God wants us to be saved and has done His part to save us.
   1. 1 Tim. 2:3-4 “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ‘Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’
   2. John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”
   3. Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

B. God is supremely holy.
   1. There are more passages that speak of God’s holiness than any other part of His character.
      a. Psa. 111:9 “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”
      b. Psa. 145:17 “The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.”
      c. The seraphim; Isa. 6:3 “And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”
      d. 1 Pet. 1:15-16 “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
      e. Rev. 4:8 “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”
   2. Being a God that is holy, He cannot condone, tolerate or associate with sin.
a. Isa. 59:1-2 “Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

b. Hab. 1:13 “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?”

c. 1 Pet. 3:12 “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

C. God is also just or righteous.
1. Psa. 145:17 “The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.”
2. 1 John 3:7 “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
3. God, being righteous, must punish sin.
   a. Rom. 3:5-6 “But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) ‘God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?’
   b. 2 The. 1:6-9 “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”

D. Man condemns himself.
1. Man sins which brings spiritual death.
   a. Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
   b. Rom. 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
2. When man will not avail himself of God’s law of pardon, he condemns himself.
3. Acts 13:46 “Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”

VIII. SOME THINK GOD IS LIKE MAN.
A. Psa. 50:21 “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”

B. Hiding.
1. Man hides from man.
2. Man mistakenly thinks he can hide from God. Gen. 3:8 “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.”

C. Deceiving
1. Man often deceives other men.
2. Man thinks he can deceive God. Acts 5:1-10 “But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. 3But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6And the young
men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. 7And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. 9Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. 10Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.”

D. Religion.

1. Man believes one religion is as good as another.
2. Man thinks that God feels the same way.
   a. God does not.
   b. Mat. 15:9, 13-14 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men…. 13But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. 14Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

Conclusion: When we have an improper view of God, nothing will be right in our life.