



## Provoking the gods

Acts 17:16-17 (ESV)

*Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.*

Acts 17:22-25 (ESV)

*So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.*

Acts 17:29-34 (ESV)

*Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. <sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." <sup>32</sup> Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." <sup>33</sup> So Paul went out from their midst. <sup>34</sup> But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.*

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV)

*He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*

- Idolatry is always, first and foremost, an inner, spiritual sin of the heart that involves selfishly lusting after things of the world instead of supremely loving God.

### The Four Root Idols:

- I. Power
- II. Control
- III. Comfort
- IV. Approval

I. The Power Idol (John 3:30)

"I have worth and value only when I have influence, recognition, and fame."

II. The Control Idol (Matthew 6:31-33)

"I'm only content if things are occurring according to my plans and desires."

III. The Comfort Idol (Psalms 16:11)

"I'm not content unless I experience a certain quality of life or a particular pleasure."

IV. The Approval Idol

"I'm not content or at peace unless I am loved or accepted by a particular person or group of people."