The Gospel in the
Spiritual MarketplacePASTOR MIKE YODER• ACTS 17:16-34



While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.





those who happened to be there.

So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and Godfearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with





A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?"





about Jesus and the resurrection.

Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news





Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?





You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean."





the latest ideas.)

(All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to





Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.





For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.





by human hands.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built





And He is not served by human hands, as if He needed and everything else.

anything. Rather, He himself gives everyone life and breath





From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.





God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us.





'For in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are His offspring.'





that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone — an image made by human design and skill.

"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think





In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent.





For He has set a day when He will judge the world with this to everyone by raising Him from the dead."

justice by the Man He has appointed. He has given proof of





on this subject."

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again







Acts 17:33



Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.





Gospel Preparation



Relational Initiative (17:16–21)



Idolatry is the attempt either to *localize* God, confining Him within limits which we impose, or to *domesticate* God, making Him dependent on us, or to *alienate* God, blaming Him for His distance and His silence.

John Stott



The highest witness incentive of all is zeal or jealousy for the glory of Jesus Christ.





When we get close to people, see their lives, and yearn for their salvation, we realize afresh how vital the Gospel is for their salvation and we experience afresh the power of energizing for witness by the Spirit.

Ajith Fernando



Building Bridges (17:22,23)





why others think as they do.

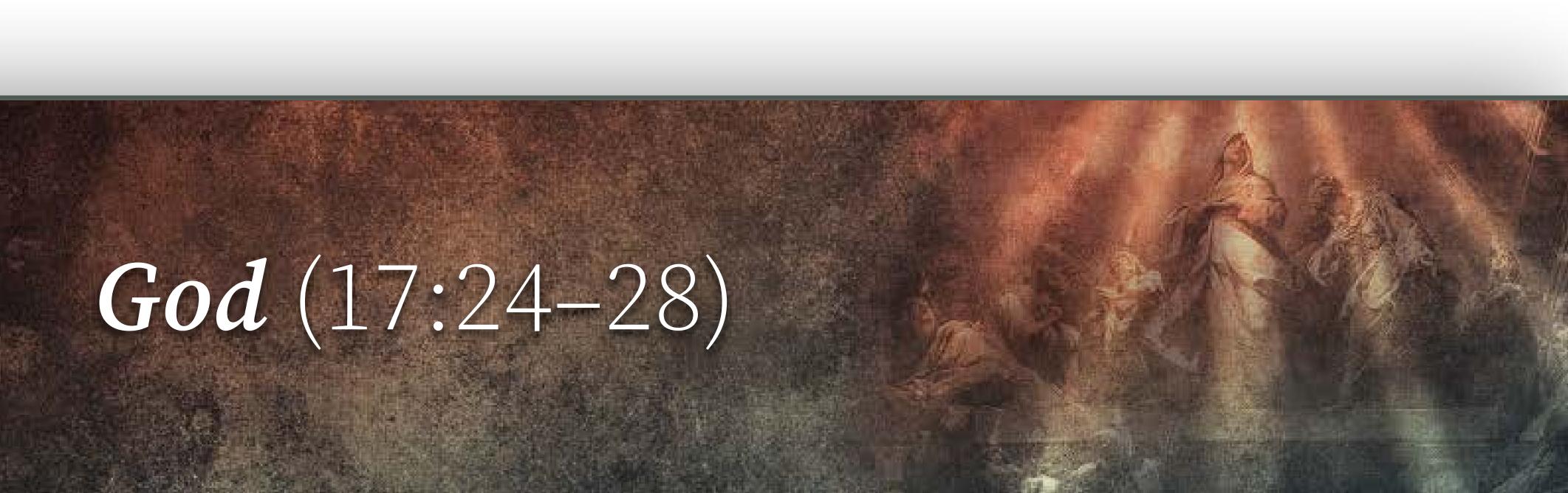
Paul knows his own message and the mentality of the people he evangelizes. Too many Christians know their own message but understand far too little about how and

Darrell Bock



Gospel Presentation





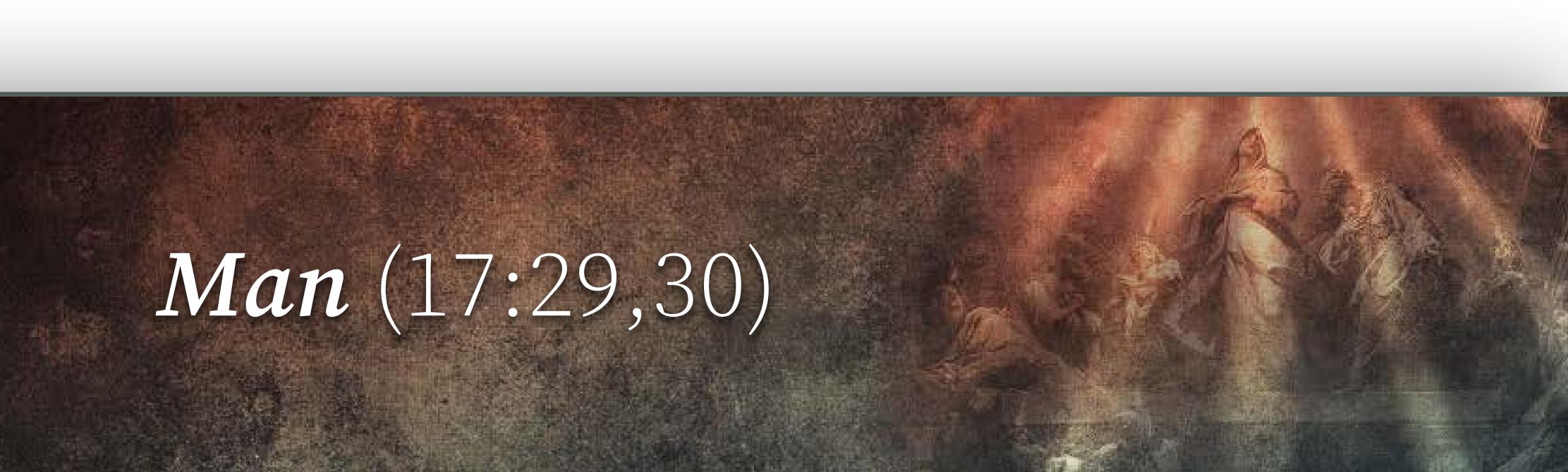
The further someone is from biblical Christianity, the more time we need to clarify the identity and character of God.

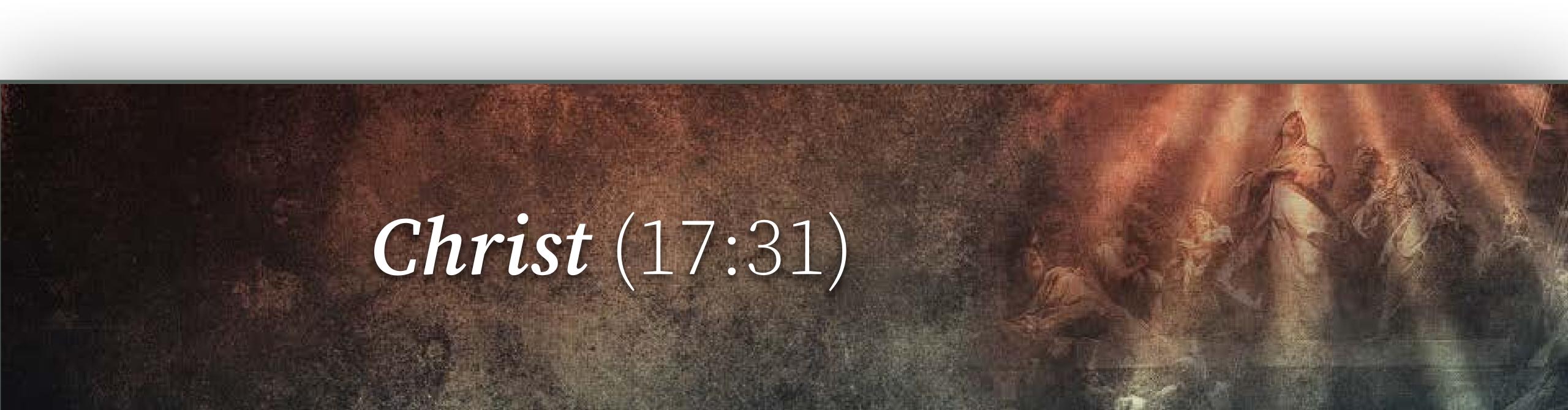


The central theme of Paul's address is that the one Creator God is real and true, unlike false idols, and that humans are responsible to Him as His offspring.

NIV Zondervan Study Bible







What put Christianity in the crosshairs of Caesar and the Roman authorities was this explosive combination of inclusivity and exclusivity — the little group of people who insisted on the exclusive claim...

Trevin Wax



that Jesus is the only way, not the idols of Rome, and also issued an inclusive call to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, to repent and believe and become part of a new worldwide family.

Trevin Wax







Why did all of this happen? Paul was connecting with people and talking about his faith. Then and now, evangelistic opportunities result.



Many people are rejecting our Gospel today not because they perceive it to be false, but because they perceive it to be trivial. People are looking for an integrated worldview which makes sense of all their experience.

John Stott



The Gospel is God's profound answer to humanity's most troubling issues.

