



2023 4Q God's Mission My Mission Lesson 10 Mission to the Unreached Part 1

by Tim Jennings

Before we start this week's lesson, I want to follow up with a point we didn't get to from lesson 9, Tuesday's lesson.

LESSON 9 - TUESDAY

The title for the day's lesson is Witnessing to the Learned: Nicodemus

What is the key to witnessing to the learned, to those who are considered, by themselves and others, to be subject matter experts?

It requires a disruption in their current understanding, what we call cognitive dissonance. This can occur from:

- presenting something new and positive that intrigues them to study from a new angle and incorporate previously unconsidered evidence
- presenting evidence or questions that doesn't fit their current understanding and unsettles them enough that they can't simply ignore the issue or brush them aside
- or life experiences, typically painful ones, that their current understanding doesn't explain or resolve
- others?

But if a person doesn't have an interest in learning, if their minds are closed into a belief system that doesn't allow for questions, doesn't allow for growth and development, then truth is not received positively; it is received as a threat, as a challenge to their authority, security, reputation, or orthodoxy and new truth is often labeled as heresy and the ones bringing it are called heretics and are exterminated—either literally or structurally—i.e. disfellowshipped, disavowed, removed from office, slandered, and ridiculed.

One of the primary beliefs that prevents the learned from accepting greater light and truth is the belief that “We have the truth” and that idea typically results in setting up doctrinal litmus tests, a system of orthodox doctrines, a creed, or a set of fundamental beliefs, and any new truth that overthrows, expands, or redefines the current belief is considered heresy. The fear is that if our current beliefs are not 100% accurate then we were wrong, misled, deceived, and therefore our movement, our system, our church is illegitimate. So we must resist any changes, advancements, and unfolding truth for fear of being wrong.

But the pure of heart recognize that created beings are finite and only God is infinite and therefore we realize that His truth is unfolding and we never stop advancing in the truth, so we eagerly pursue new

truth that will correct any actual errors but or which will redefine our current truth with in deeper and more meaningful ways with greater insights and understandings toward ultimate reality.

An example would be moving away from metaphor, symbol, ritual to reality—a good example is the sanctuary service of the Old Testament being moved toward the heavenly sanctuary with our heavenly High Priest in Hebrews and then moving from symbolic understandings of events happening in books, to the reality of the sanctuary being the living beings where God dwells by His Spirit and Jesus working to cleanse people, not records, from sin.

But some have difficulty in moving past the symbolic to reality, of following the truth—the Jews had this problem and rejected Jesus and many Christians have this problem and reject the healing understanding of salvation and continue to teach legal mechanics in heavenly courtrooms.

So how do we witness to the learned?

The lesson uses the example of Nicodemus—did Jesus pursue Nicodemus, seek him out, go to his house, send him literature, invite him to a Bible study, email him links to sermons? Or did Jesus go about revealing, in the community, through His actions, the truth and allow that truth to reach Nicodemus and the Holy Spirit convict those truths in the man's heart which eventually led Nicodemus to search for answers himself, ultimately coming to Jesus?

Is there a lesson for us in this?

If we have a relationship with the learned, if they are our friends or family members, then certainly engage them in conversation and share materials with them and try and lead them into truths you are convicted they need to understand. But it has not been my experience that it is fruitful to seek out the professors and scholars to inform them of what they don't know if they are not seeking on their own.

With all of this in mind, let's read bottom pink section in lesson 9 Tuesday:

- Why must we be careful of the trap of thinking that because “we have the truth” (which we do), then the knowledge of this truth alone is enough to save us? How many souls will be lost who had more than enough knowledge, even of the three angels' messages, to be saved? (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 75).

Don't most people believe that they have truth? Does believing one has the truth mean one has the truth?

- Did Saul of Tarsus, before the Damascus road, believe he had the truth? Did he?
- What about Peter when Paul had to correct him, do you think Peter thought, “I know I am misrepresenting Christ and not presenting the truth” or do you think he thought he had the truth?
- What about in Luke 9:54 when James and John saw Jesus being rejected and asked if they should call fire down from heaven to destroy the people—do you think they believed their request was based on truth?

So, the lesson says that we have the truth and they specifically mention the truth of the three angels—but does our church present the truth of the three angels, or has the truth been replaced with a counterfeit?

EGW wrote:

- **It is a fact that we have the truth**, and we must hold with tenacity to the positions that cannot be shaken; but we must not look with suspicion upon any **new light which God may send**, and say, Really, we cannot see that we need any more light than the **old truth** which we have hitherto received, and in which we are settled. While we hold to this position, the testimony of the True Witness applies to our cases its rebuke, “And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Those who feel rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, are in a condition of blindness as to their true condition before God, and they know it not. (The Review and Herald, August 7, 1894).
- **Greater light shines upon us than shone upon our fathers.** We cannot be accepted or honored of God in rendering the same service, or doing the same works, that our fathers did. In order to be accepted and blessed of God as they were, we must imitate their faithfulness and zeal,—**improve our light as they improved theirs**, and do as they would have done had they lived in our day. **We must walk in the light which shines upon us, otherwise that light will become darkness.** (Testimonies for the Church 1:262).

What do these statements mean? Do you agree with them?

How can light become darkness? Was it light in AD 5, when Jesus was two years old, that the Messiah was soon to be revealed in Israel? That the Savior of the world was coming to fulfill the promises made to Adam and Eve and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Absolutely! Since AD 33, after Jesus’ rejection and crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven—is it still light, still truth, that the Messiah is going to be born in Israel, that the Messiah is yet to come, or has that truth now become darkness for those who do not advance in truth?

If you haven’t read our magazine [The Final Message of Mercy to the World: The Three Angels](#) I would encourage you to do so, for we go into great detail revealing what we understand to be the truth of this message, and it is quite distinct from what we have often heard.

And the root cause of the difference is how one understands God’s law. If one understands God’s law to be imposed rules like humans make up, then the interpretation of Scripture, including the 3 angels, goes down a legal path, a path that creates a god that functions like a creature, a false god, the modern-day Baal worship.

But when we return to worshiping the Creator and understand His laws are design laws, then one reads the 3 angels as they are supposed to be read—God’s final warning of how reality works and what happens to those who reject Him and His design laws.

The high points of the messages are:

- The central thread of the messages is about worship
- The first angel focuses on the eternal good news—which is the good news about God—that He is not like Satan alleged, He is the God of Creation, whose laws are design laws. We are called back to worship Him as Creator and to stop worshipping a creature in place of the Creator, and thus give glory to God for the hour in human history has come for people to make a right judgment about God.
- When we recognize the truth about God then we realize the system of imposed law with a punishing god is the fallen system of Babylon of confusion with over 41,000 different groups arguing this text or that text and come out of that way of thinking and functioning and return to worshipping our Creator by living in harmony with His designs for life.
- But if we don't do that then, by the law of worship, by beholding we are changed, and we become like the false creature-god we worship, and are marked in our characters (foreheads) and works (hands) to be like the beastly god we worship and
- Via the law of liberty we are set free to reap that which we have sown into our hearts, minds, and souls. As God gives people freedom and lets them go to reap the results of their own choices, He stops using His power to protect them from what sin does and this is know as God's wrath. And when God no longer shields people then they reap the suffering unremedied sin brings when
- Via the law of love and truth—when they stand in God's life-giving glory, the eternal fires of truth and love, they come into full awareness of their own selfishness, guilt, shame, when they can no longer hide from the reality of who they have chosen to become.

Nothing in these three messages are imperial, legal, or penal, they are all descriptions of God's character of love and His design law methods being worked out.

LESSON 10 - Mission to the Unreached Part 1 - SUNDAY

Read first two paragraphs,

- The city of Athens was “given over to idols” (Acts 17:16, NKJV). Knowing the history of his own people and their proclivity (despite the endless warnings) to idolatry, Paul was upset at all the idols he found in Athens, as well. No question, Paul was motivated by compassion for the Athenians, who would die in their sins if they did not learn of the true God.

Today, our cities are still full of idols, even though they are less obvious than what Paul saw. And unfortunately, many believers are fully capable of walking through a city without reacting in the least to its idols. Paul, though, was tuned in to the Holy Spirit enough to respond. Out of step with some other believers, who still didn't grasp that the gospel was for all the world, Paul knew that God wanted the Athenians to be saved along with everyone else. He understood that the global mission concept was to take the gospel to those who were entirely unreached,

including idol-worshipping pagans, as well as the philosophers who filled the streets of Athens. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 81).

What idols fill our cities today?

What is the original sin—Lucifer's sin?

- Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. (Ezekiel 28:17 NIV84).
- How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn!.. You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. (or the north) I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:12-14 NIV84).

What was Lucifer's original sin? Pride, self-centeredness, narcissism, self-worship.

What do you think is the root of all idol worship? Is it possible that all idol worship is all a form of self worship—that we make gods in our own image to idolize the power, attributes, longings we want to procure or perhaps the negative attributes of self we want to deny so we place them in some false deity and try to appease it?

The law of worship—by beholding we become changed (2 Corinthians 3:18). We become like that which we admire, watch, read, esteem, and worship.

As Jeremiah wrote:

- They worshipped worthless idols and became worthless themselves. (Jeremiah 2:5 GNT).

What happens when people worship anything other than God, including self?

Let's read Romans 1:18-32 and see if what Paul described there is happening today and see if we can understand the design laws involved:

- The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. (Romans 1:18-20 NIV84).

What is described in this first paragraph?

The truth about God, His character, His methods, His design laws are evident in nature because God is Creator and His laws are design laws. All one has to do is open their eyes to consider this evidence and they can learn truth, so no one has an excuse for not knowing it. But the wicked, those who don't love God or others, but who love self reject truth, deny it, do everything can to hide and suppress it and God surrenders them to their choices. They make gods in their own image, gods who make up rules and use power to inflict punishment on rule-breakers. He lets them go to reap what they choose, what they sow into their own hearts, minds, and characters, and this is known as God's wrath. Paul makes this clear in versus 24, 26, 28.

- For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. (Romans 1:21-23 NIV84).

What is described here? They make images with their own hands and worship this creature rather than the Creator and they become foolish, their thinking futile, they cannot figure things out because they don't know how reality works because they deny reality by replacing facts, truth, objective design laws with fantasy, make-believe, made up ideas, their own preferred way of understanding—like gender is a social construct. Purposeful and intentional choices to deny reality, facts, truth and lead people to live in a virtual world, a fake world, a world no longer governed by God but by the father of lies.

The Bible is making the case that idol worship corrupts the mind, perverts the character, makes one foolish, the thinking futile—why does idol worship do this? Because reality is replaced with fantasy, falsehood, imaginary virtual make-believe concepts and worldviews—and by the law of worship we are changed. Thus exchanging the truth for fantasy, for lies, minds become darkened, depraved, and futile.

We look at those who worship idols made of stone and metal as primitive, consider these words:

- Thousands have a **false conception of God and His attributes**. They are as **verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal**. Are we worshipping the true God as He is revealed in **His Word, in Christ, in nature**, or are we adoring some **philosophical idol** enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshipping the true God. (Faith I Live By 59).

Do you agree? What is being described? That the beliefs we hold exert power over us—if we believe lies, especially lies about God, we are damaged by those beliefs. And idol worship doesn't have to include physical idols, it can be conceptual ones, false ideas about God. And all who worship any false god, even if they call that god Jesus Christ, but believe lies, such that they actually are worshipping a god who is like Satan in character, then they become like that false god. Their mind becomes damaged, their thinking futile. They will be the worshipers who Jesus said would come to Him and

claim to have done all kinds of works in Jesus' name, but Jesus tells them, to go away, they worked iniquity and they were never His friends (Matthew 7:22-23).

Continuing on with Romans 1:

- Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. (Romans 1:24-25 NIV84).

What does God do to those who reject Him, those who reject the truth, prefer self and the lusts of this world? He gives them up or lets them go to do what they insist upon doing—and what happens when one breaks God's design laws for life? They damage themselves and they end up worshiping and serving a creature—the fallen angel known as Satan, even if they don't know it.

- Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women **exchanged** natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. (Romans 1:26-27 NIV84).

This is not talking about people born with various biological conditions that have occurred because of sin and cause same sex attraction. It is describing people who are born heterosexual but through lies, the rejection of God, false worship, including worshiping false philosophies, through porn, through propaganda, media influences, believing lies, and all forms of narcissistic adoration damage their natural desires and *exchange* their natural desires for unnatural ones, for desires they never had until they damaged themselves through perverted worship—through esteeming, valuing, choosing, and finding worthy of emulation that which is perverse.

Can a person with a blue shirt exchange it for a red shirt if they don't have a blue shirt? Paul is not describing the various conditions with which people are born but in which they had no choice—like the man born blind—neither he nor his parents sinned to cause the blindness. It was not sin for that man to be blind or live like a blind person. However, it would be sin to willfully choose to engage in activities that willfully caused blindness in those with good vision.

And this is what is happening in our society today. People are corrupting themselves by rejecting the truth about God and worshiping the created things, including self, and they are becoming inflamed with all kinds of destructive lusts. They deny the most obvious truths in nature such that there are males and females and men cannot become women and women cannot become men. They are so perverted in their thinking that some people now are seeking to become animals, what are called furies, others claim they are star people, people who are non-human entities living in human bodies. And this only happens as minds are disconnected from objective reality, truth, evidence, and facts. And what is happening in society? Listen to what Paul wrote:

- Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. (Romans 1:18-32 NIV84).

Do we see this happening today? The rejection of God, the teaching of godless evolution, that the strongest, those with the most power, cunning, ability to exploit others are the gods of this world and all who worship such false gods become ever more self-centered and corrupt.

And society divides into ever more disunity, hostility, conflict, and hate. The claim is made that this is due to racism, sexism, transgenderism—but all of these allegations are distractions from the truth. All the conflict and division in society today is driven by one core root problem—unrestrained selfishness, narcissism, the lack of love for others.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics the rate of white-on-white violent crime (12.0 per 1,000 white persons) was about four times higher than black-on-white violent crime (3.1 per 1,000). The rate of black-on-black violent crime (16.5 per 1,000 black persons) was more than five times higher than white-on-black violent crime (2.8 per 1,000).ⁱ

Did you know that people of your same race are the ones most likely to commit crimes against you, 4-5 times more likely than a person from another race—yet this is not the feeling, belief, or attitude that most have. Why? Because of propaganda, lies, misinformation designed to divide the people who, if they worshiped Christ would instead experience ever greater unity. But because God is rejected and self is worshiped people fear that which is not like self and believe lies that those different from them are their enemies. **We do not have a race problem in this country—we have a sin problem in this country and the world.**

Jesus, speaking about this time in human history, said:

- Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold (Matthew 24:12 NLT).

The apostle Paul said:

- There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:1–4 NIV84).

Recent studies have demonstrated that narcissism has steadily increased in the United States since the 1970s, with each subsequent class of college freshmen scoring higher on narcissism rating scales than

the class before.ⁱⁱ This rise in selfishness, this “me-first” mentality, is rife in society today and heralds the death of love for our fellow human beings.

So what is destroying love and increasing selfishness?

The Bible teaches that:

- There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love (1 John 4:18 NIV84).

Love and fear are inversely proportional; as love increases, fear decreases—and as fear increases, love decreases. The more fear we experience, the more quickly we see threats, real or imagined, and take actions designed to make us feel safe. Rather than searching ourselves to identify and overcome our deficiencies in character, fear focuses our minds on self-protection, making us look outward to identify potential threats. This can lead to the projection of one’s own shortcomings onto others and can cause greater division and loss of love for our fellow human beings.

Why is fear and selfishness rising and love declining, with its subsequent increase in violence? I would like to suggest several factors.

Historically, in America, the national consciousness focused on three other-than-self objects; these virtues were considered so vital that it was worth sacrificing self to defend. These big three were love for God, love for family, and love for country. These three objects—God, family, country—were promoted as being greater than self and worthy of our sacrifice to support.

But in society today, it is taught that there is no God; all families are dysfunctional and not to be trusted to raise children—it takes a village to raise children is the godless mantra and therefore the school system should decide for parents what is best; and our country, being an evil exploiter of minorities and the poor, cannot be trusted. Thus, a mindset of altruism, of love, of higher purpose is replaced with a sense of fear and isolation; when there is nothing greater than the self, and no higher power or institution can be trusted, fear increases and each person becomes an island to themselves, seeing threats all around them, frantically struggling to survive and breaking up from a united people living on common principles of civil and religious liberty, to racial, religious, political, and ethnic factions fighting against those different than they are.

This is further inflamed by social media isolation, fear-inducing propaganda, and the constant manipulation of events to incite fear—like manipulating energy prices, food prices and production, wars, creating man-made diseases, the made-up climate crisis, restrictions on various liberties and the list goes on and on.

When selfishness reigns and love dies, people exploit those around them.

So, understanding this, how do we reach people? What method can we use that will help us present the gospel?

This is where the truth about God and His design laws come in, teaching people how reality works, why things happen, and the predictable laws upon which life and health are based. God’s designs are the only path to life, health, safety, and security. Being able to present a coherent, reality-based understanding of the world and God’s design draws people. But if we go to the world trying to replace their fantasy world with a different fantasy it won’t work.

What happens when we present a god that has a law that works like the laws of every government of the world, who is the source of inflicted pain, a god that one must appease with the blood of a human sacrifice? Do such false god concepts result in the eradication of fear and the reduction in selfishness? No! Such religion incites fear and spreads selfishness. This is the problem with most religions of the world. Only the true gospel of Jesus Christ presents the truth of God’s character of love and His design laws for life and health.

MONDAY

The lesson asks us to read Acts 17:18-21:

- Certain Epicurean and Stoic teachers also debated with him. Some of them asked, “What is this ignorant show-off trying to say?” Others answered, “He seems to be talking about foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. So they took Paul, brought him before the city council, the Areopagus, and said, “We would like to know what this new teaching is that you are talking about. Some of the things we hear you say sound strange to us, and we would like to know what they mean.” (For all the citizens of Athens and the foreigners who lived there liked to spend all their time telling and hearing the latest new thing.) (Acts 17:18-21 GNT).

Epicureanism is a system of philosophy founded around 307 BCE based upon the teachings of Epicurus, an ancient Greek philosopher. It is a philosophy based on materialism and is reductionistic, all things being caused naturally. It’s primary motivation was the avoidance of pain and fear which is supposed to result in the experience of the greatest pleasure. It advocated for a simple life removed from politics and many societal struggles, seeking tranquility and avoidance of mental stress and bodily pain.

Stoicism is the philosophy which taught that virtue is the highest good and the practice of virtue is the means to experience a well ordered, healthy, and happy life. Stoics advocated for virtues such as courage and temperance and living in harmony with nature. Such things as wealth, health, power, position were only means upon which virtue could act to impact the world.

These were the two main mindsets Paul was facing in Athens—what obstacles might Paul face? Which group would naturally find more in common with Paul and which would be more likely to oppose him?

Wouldn't Paul's life, practices, and teachings be more closely aligned with the Stoics than the Epicureans?

But what would be the greatest obstacle for both groups? Moving away from self to surrendering self to an intelligence higher than their own. The obstacle being human pride and self-sufficiency.

When we face people of another belief system, what are effective ways to introduce the gospel?

Is it helpful if we get to know people first, to understand their current beliefs, perspectives, biases, assumptions so that we know what truths they currently hold, and what natural struggles they are having in living or understanding the world? If we know some of this, might we be able to offer ideas that interest them?

Another method is seen in how Jesus often appealed to everyday life experiences and the natural world, which operates upon design law. Common understood experiences that evidenced the principles of God's kingdom.

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph,

- Notice that Paul did not disparage the false religion or false gods of the Athenians. He gathered whatever points of good he could find, few as they were, and capitalized on them. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 83).

Did Paul use this method in all his interactions with others who held to different religious beliefs, or only with those unfamiliar with Scripture?

When dealing with those who were trying to introduce legalism into Christianity Paul wrote:

- I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! (Galatians 1:6-9 NIV84).

And Paul had religious critics who were not only misrepresenting him and what he taught but were teaching legalism and lies about the need for bodily circumcision, and Paul wrote:

- I wish that the people who are upsetting you would go all the way; let them go on and castrate themselves! (Galatians 5:12 GNT).

So while Paul did seek to avoid offending these pagans, did he avoid direct confrontation of the lies being circulated among the believers? Is there a difference between attacking a person and attacking the lies that are presented?

Read bottom pink section,

- What bridges and points of contact can you think of that would open opportunities for deeper conversation with others with whom you come in contact? (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 83).

I have found discussing the design laws that are applicable to a person's life to be helpful, law of liberty, exertion, worship, love—how reality works and connecting it to their current struggles and then lead them to the Creator who built reality.

What methods have you found helpful?

THURSDAY

After Paul does all that he can to build bridges and establish common ground, there comes the point when he introduces new ideas, truth, to lead them out of their current understanding into greater light.

However, that didn't happen, they rejected what he presented. Read the third paragraph,

- We know that some people will reject the gospel, but we must do everything possible to ensure that before they reject it, they understand what they are rejecting. Paul, by his method of working among the Athenians and his strategic use of what he had studied and learned of them, ensured that they heard with open minds that a God existed whom they did not know but who had created them. This God loved them and wanted to be known by them. He had been merciful to them in spite of their ignorance. But Judgment Day was coming. And if all of this sounded too unbelievable, there was verifiable evidence for it in the resurrection of Christ. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 85).

It is interesting how the lesson focuses upon judgment, but the protestations of the audience were about the resurrection of Jesus.

Let's read Paul's presentation as recorded in Acts 17, from The Remedy:

- So Paul took the stage at the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that you are very conscientious people who take your religious beliefs seriously. As I walked

through your city, I noted your points of worship, and I found an altar with this inscription: 'To an Unknown God.' It is this unknown God that I am here to tell you about. "The God who built the fabric of the cosmos, including this world and everything in it, is Master of heaven and earth and does not live in shrines built by created beings. Human beings do not provide for him—as if there was anything he needed. No! He is the source of all and gives of himself for our good. From him come life, health, and everything else. He created the human species in one individual, and from that one man, all human beings from all the nations in the world have descended. He provided the entire earth for us to inhabit, and created time and space for us to live within. He did all of this so that human beings would experience the joy of discovering him—actually reaching out and connecting with him, for he is near to each one of us. As some of your own poets have said, 'In union with him we live and move, and have existence. We are his offspring.' "So, since we are the offspring of God, how can God be an inanimate, lifeless object made by human beings out of gold, silver or stone? God didn't expect any better when you didn't know any better, but now God has provided the evidence — so you do know better — and calls all humanity to a renewed mind and unity with him. For he has set a time when all humanity will be accurately diagnosed, defects from his design will be permanently eliminated, and all creation will be set right by the Man whom he has selected to be the Remedy. He has proven it by raising this Man from the dead." When they heard him mention the resurrection, some scoffed, but others said, "We would like to hear more about this." With that, Paul left the meeting. A few people, including Dionysius, who was a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and a number of others accepted what Paul taught, partook of the Remedy, and trusted Jesus. (Acts 17:22-34 REM).

Why did they protest the resurrection? Why does the lesson focus on judgment?

ⁱ https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rhovo1215_sum.pdf

ⁱⁱ Twenge, JM, et al, Egos inflating over time: a cross-temporal meta-analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. *J Pers.* 2008 Jul;76(4):875-902; discussion 903-28. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2008.00507.x. Epub 2008 May 23.

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