

# The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Jan 9, 2011



## In The Midst Of Mars Hill

by Preston Silcox

Opposite the western end of the Acropolis in Athens, Greece rests a massive rock, named for the false god of war, Ares, and formerly used for the seat of the Greek Council. Nearly 2,000 years ago, the perceptive apostle Paul ascended the hewn steps of that famous rock and in the midst of Mars Hill proclaimed to a curious crowd of philosophers one of the most skillful sermons to have ever flowed from the lips of man. As one opens his Bible to Acts 17:16-34, allows his mind to travel back in time, and stands with Paul atop that ancient place, a number of significant items and interesting occurrences can be witnessed in the midst of Mars Hill.

### The Perceptive Preacher

While the average visitor to the city of Athens might see only the glory and grandeur of one of the world's most intriguing metropolises, the apostle Paul could not get past the fact that the city was "wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16). The stirred spirit within Paul recognized that false gods filled the streets of the city and, no doubt, occupied the hearts of the citizens. Armed with the Truth and motivated by a love for lost souls, the apostle set out to reason with the inhabitants of that ancient place (Acts 17:17).

Sadly, many complacent Christians become so mesmerized by the temporal things of this world that they cannot perceive the desperate plight of their fellow man. Instead of seizing opportunities to teach the lost, those equipped with the Truth...

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*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).*

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## VISITORS, WELCOME!

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

5:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for all ages & Pew Packers on 1st & 3rd Sundays at 4:15 p.m.

P.O. Box 321

2008 Hwy. 306

(1.2 miles east of I-55)

Coldwater, MS 38618

(662) 622-7951

coldwaterchurch@  
bellsouth.net

### ELDERS

Billy Bland

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

Jim Jackson

### DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

### PREACHER

Clifton Angel

...too often refuse to see the horrible end of unprepared, eternity-bound souls. May God grant unto all His people the perception of Paul!

### **The Curious Crowd**

As a result of Paul's proclamations in the market place, the curiosity of certain philosophers was aroused. The Epicureans and Stoics, who were generally pleasure-seeking atheists and fate-oriented pantheists respectively, viewed the apostle in two ways: either he was a plagiarizing teacher pawning off the doctrines of others as his own for profit, or he was a declarer of foreign gods (Acts 17:18). Wanting to know more about his "new doctrine," the curious crowd took the apostle to the Areopagus. The entire multitude that gathered on the famous hill were not only made up of the philosophers, but also included at least one member of the Areopagite court and, no doubt, other interested individuals from the market place (Acts 17:34).

It is wonderful to encounter individuals, even skeptics, who desire to hear more about the doctrine of Christ. While the motives of inquirers may not always be pure at first, sparking genuine interest in the minds of such people is always a hopeful possibility. Those possessing the perception of Paul will clearly see a curious crowd as an opportunity to skillfully proclaim the Truth to lost and hungering souls.

### **The Skillful Sermon**

From the moment Paul boldly began his sermon to the second he was irreverently interrupted, every sentence of his inspired discourse met the needs of the hour. The apostle of Christ pointed out vital differences between the false and lifeless gods of the Athenians and the true and living God of heaven. In doing so, he clearly contrasted the vain philosophies of the Greeks with the powerful Truth of Christ.

With such distinctions in mind, Paul discussed the need for man to search after and obey his Creator Who shall judge all men by the risen Christ (Acts 17:22-31). Let there be no question, the sermon proclaimed by Paul in the midst of Mars Hill that day was a masterpiece.

While modern teachers of Truth are not miraculously guided to preach perfect sermons, the discerning disciple vividly understands the needs of his audience and possesses a working knowledge of the Bible, which beautifully fulfills those needs. May every child of God determine to courageously and competently proclaim the...

...whole counsel of God to the whole creation.

## The Revealing Responses

Sadly, Paul was not permitted to complete his discourse on Mars Hill. Upon mentioning the resurrection, some interrupted the sermon with an outbreak of derision (Acts 17:32). Such a reaction displayed a sense of insincerity in the curiosity they earlier portrayed. Still though, others were honest in their interest, for they desired to hear more on the matter of the resurrection (Acts 17:32). In fact, so open were some to the Truth that they united with Paul in belief (Acts 17:34).

Reactions to Truth shall vary as long as the earth stands and the Word is proclaimed. Hearts are, no doubt, pained when individuals reject the only hope that shall ever be made available to them. But heaven and the righteous rejoice when men and women respond to the Gospel in a positive fashion. May those with the perception of Paul, who skillfully proclaim the Truth to those who are curious about it, ever be encouraged by proper responses to God's Word!

As one journeys back to the city of Athens and studies the events of Acts 17:16-34, numerous significant items and interesting occurrences can be witnessed in the midst of Mars Hill. Thank God for His Word and its ability to enable modern man to assemble in such ancient audiences and profound places to observe the power of the Gospel.

Article can be found at [www.gospelpreceptor.com](http://www.gospelpreceptor.com).

### *Sermon Review*

#### **Something New**

- I. SOME THINGS NEW WHICH WE DO NOT NEED
  - A. NEW REVELATION
  - B. NEW ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATION
  - C. NEW HERMENEUTIC
- II. SOME THINGS NEW WHICH WE DO NEED
  - A. NEW TESTAMENT
  - B. RENEW OUR MINDS
  - C. NEW LIFE

#### **The "Alternative Lifestyle"**

(Matthew 7:13, 14)

The "Alternative Lifestyle" of SIN is...

- I. A CHOICE
- II. Not CHEAP
- III. CHANGEABLE

# NEWS & NOTES

## Please Pray

**Caleb Baker** was sick Sunday with the flu.  
**Elizabeth Baker** is scheduled to have surgery January 12 for a recurring problem.  
**Andy Ratliff** was sick Sunday.  
**Wiley Tuggle**--Continuing to recover well from surgery. Good to see him Sunday.

**Cathy Thompson; John Stephens; Joyce Stephens; Kinney Family; Thomas & Carolyn Davis**

For the Bible studies and correspondence courses that are on-going, and the students & administrators of the studies.

**Tim & Lynn Wilkes** have arrived safely in Hawaii and classes have already begun. Let us pray for their safety and the success of this great work.

## Sympathy

**Brown family**--Jared had an uncle and cousin to die recently. Let us pray strength & comfort through God's Word for this family.

## Family & Friends

**David Angel** (Clifton's father)--he is recovering well from surgery thus far.

**Dunn Family**--Recent accident and financial needs.

**Joe Culbreath**--several serious health issues.

**James Angel; Steve Angel; Doyce "Doc" Hunt; Dave Leonard, Sr.**

**Let us not forget to pray for the works being done through Fishers of Men and the Far East Missions.**

## January Birthdays

1/5 Cash Jackson	1/10 Elizabeth Baker
1/6 Mindy Moore	1/25 Jeffrey Ferrell
1/7 Tucker Johnson	1/30 Stephanie Bayless
1/9 Claire Easley	

*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, **Lift up your eyes**, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest (John 4:35).*

## Get Involved!

**Bible Bowl--January 8**  
10:30AM at the Looxahoma building.  
**STUDY Matthew 10-12!**  
See [www.thebible.com](http://www.thebible.com) for quizzes.

**Sunday Night for the Savior**  
February 6 after PM Services.  
Bring Contacts and Finger Foods!  
There are also several things that we are wanting to get done around the building.  
See Jason Bayless for more details.

**Nesbit Lectureship -- January 28-30**  
1 Corinthians 1 - 8

## Privileged to Serve

### Wednesday, January 5

Song Leader	Jared Brown
Prayer	Andy Ratliff
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Shane Staten

### Sunday, January 9

#### Morning

Prayer Before Class	Jeffrey Ferrell
Announcements	Jerry Davis
Song Leader	Jared Brown
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Jeremy Moore
	Johnny Bayless
Assist	Payton Jackson
	Jason Bayless
Opening Prayer	Jim Jackson
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Johnny Bayless

#### Evening

Song Leader	Jared Brown
Opening Prayer	Billy Bland
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Jason Bayless
	Payton Jackson
Closing Prayer	Caleb Baker