

what we believe and why it matters

FOUNDATIONS



¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." [Acts 17:16-18](#)

¹⁸They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.¹⁹ 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?"²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean."²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.). [Acts 17:18-21](#)

²² 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. ²³ 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. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. [Acts 17:22-24](#)

²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ 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. [Acts 17:25-27](#)

²⁸'For in him we live and move and have our being.'
As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his
offspring.' ²⁹Therefore since we are God's offspring,
we should not think that the divine being is like gold
or silver or stone—an image made by human design
and skill. ³⁰In the past God overlooked such
ignorance, but now he commands all people
everywhere to repent. ³¹For he has set a day when he
will judge the world with justice by the man he has
appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by
raising him from the dead."

[Acts 17:28-31](#)

³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." ³³ At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴ 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.

Acts 17:32-34

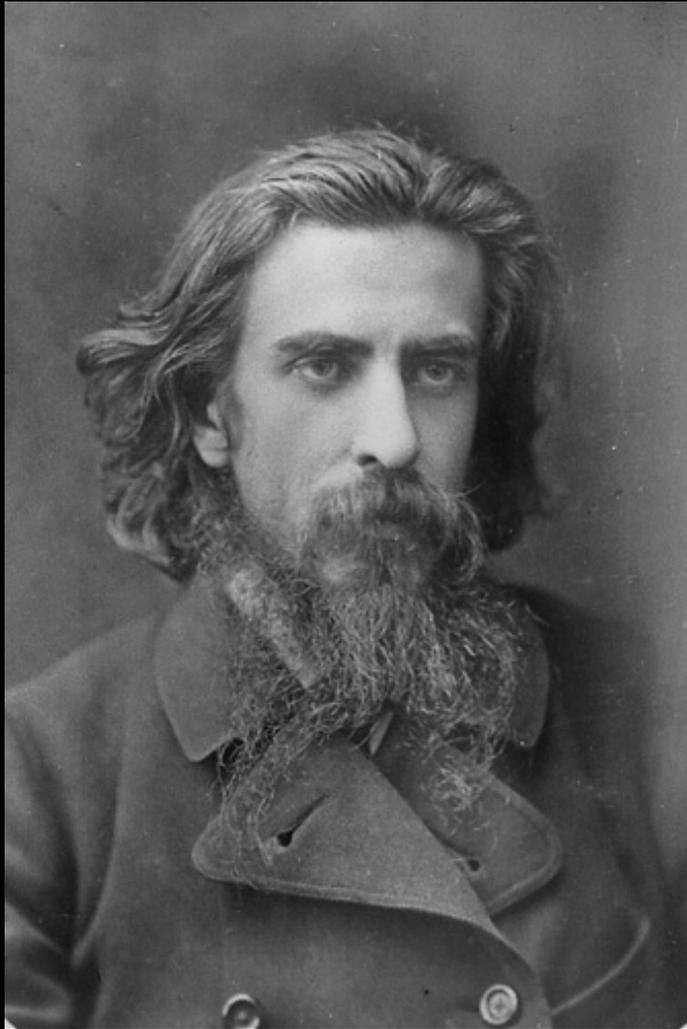
22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. Acts 17:22





He argues that a rational person should live as though God exists and seek to believe in God. If God does not actually exist, such a person will have only a finite loss (some pleasures, luxury, etc.), whereas he stands to receive infinite gains, as in eternal life with God and avoiding an eternity in Hell.





Valdimar Solovyov
Philosopher & Theologian

*"Man descended from apes.
Therefore, let us love
one another."*

We live in a secular Western society, which is the first society probably in history that doesn't believe it has beliefs. *"We're just being rational,"* people say.

What they don't see is that deep down they're living their life on the basis of faith beliefs that are no more empirically based than other religious beliefs.



¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

Acts 17:16-18

I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

1 Corinthians 9:22,23

23 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. [Acts 17:23](#)



24 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. Acts 17:24

25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 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. Acts 17:25,26

27 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. 28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' Acts 17:27,28

29 Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.

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

Acts 17:30

31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

Acts 17:31

32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." 33 At that, Paul left the Council. Acts 17:32,33

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

Romans 1:16,17

¹³ ...“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Romans 10:13,14

34 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. Acts 17:34



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