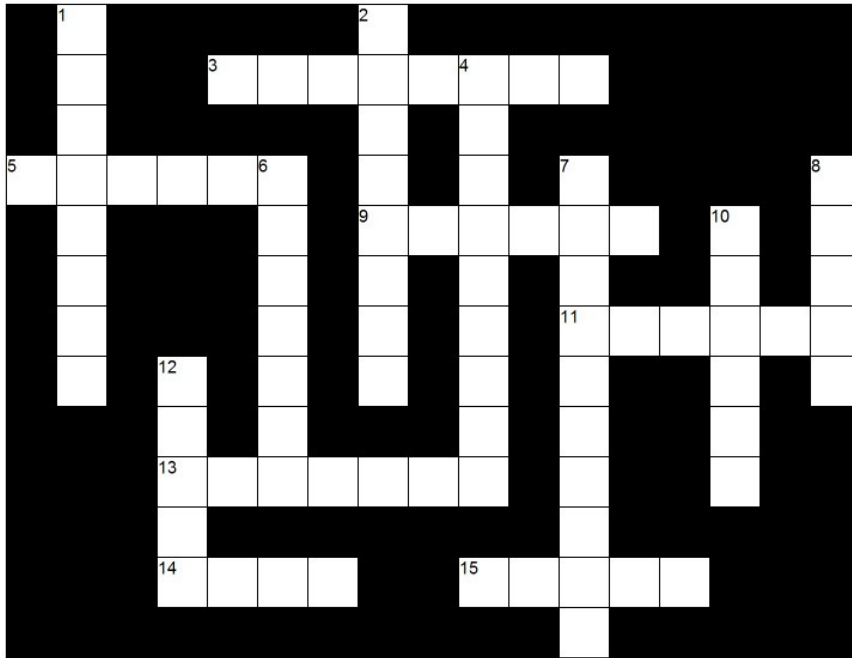


A Bible Crossword: The Book Of Acts, Part 5

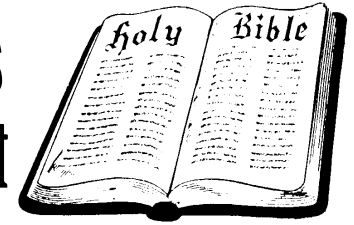


Across: 3. Saul received letters from the high priest to pursue disciples in this town. 5. Saul was let down through the wall in one to escape the Jews. 9. Peter healed this paralyzed man in Lydda. 11. Peter fell into one and had a vision of a sheet descending from heaven. 13. This disciple was sent to Saul. 14. He was breathing threats and murder against the disciples. 15. Peter asked if anyone could forbid this, that those he was teaching should not be baptized.

Down: 1. Saul stayed at the house of Judas on the street with this name. 2. He brought Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem. 4. The centurion of the Italian regiment. 6. Her name is translated Dorcas. 7. Peter told Cornelius the God does not show this. 8. The number of days Saul was blind. 10. Simon of Joppa had this occupation. 12. Jesus told Saul it is hard to kick against these.

—All answers can be found in Acts 9-10, NKJV.

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Just Be Good For Goodness Sake?

The holiday season has long been considered a “Christian” time of year, but groups devoted to atheism and humanism are no longer letting that be taken for granted.

In Washington, D.C., the American Humanist Association began a bus ad campaign this month questioning belief in God. Their advertisement says, “Why believe in a God? Just be good for goodness sake.”

A pro-atheism sign in Washington State reads, “At this season of The Winter Solstice, may reason prevail. There are no gods, no devils, no angels, no heaven or hell. There is only the natural world. Religion is but myth and superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds.”

It is curious that those who deny God ask for reason to prevail. God Himself told the Israelites, “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

God wants us to reason together. Belief in Him is the true response of reason. Why is it reasonable to believe in God? Psalm 19 provides reasons.

Evidence In Creation

The Psalm begins, “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). The

heavens tell us that there is a God and that He is glorious. Paul makes the same argument in condemning the Gentile world in Romans 1. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:18-20).

The existence and order of the creation speaks of the necessity of an all-powerful creator.

Evidence In The Bible

Psalm 19 continues, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (7).

The Bible was composed over a 1,500 year period by some 40 writers from vastly different walks of life, but it is perfectly consistent. How can this be? Peter tells us, “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20-21, NIV).

The Bible is perfect because it was written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Evidence In Mankind

Psalm 19 discusses a third evidence of God, evidence that is found within man. The Psalmist asks concerning man, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults” (12). These questions highlight man's moral nature.

The theory of evolution postulates that a species adapts, devel-

oping traits to aid in survival while abandoning traits that would hinder survival. Human beings clearly violate this theory. Though higher on the evolutionary ladder than “other” apes, human beings are physically weaker. Moreover, human beings have something within them that cannot be explained by evolution—a conscience.

In Romans 2:15, Paul explained conscience in describing the Gentiles, “who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them.” The conscience excuses you when you do what's right, and it accuses you when you don't do what's right.

It is because God has given man a conscience and a moral nature that man experiences guilty. Like the Jews on Pentecost who were “cut to the heart,” the knowledge of sin cuts us to the heart and drives us to God. He alone can forgive sin, removing guilt and cleansing the conscience.

The Reasonable Conclusion

Is it reasonable to reject God and just be good for goodness sake? Certainly not, for without God, we cannot even define goodness, much less pursue it. God said, “Be holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). Apart from God and His word, good and evil are meaningless concepts with nothing but the opinions of men to define them. Without God, there is no goodness.

God created all things to testify of His existence. God inspired the Bible to tell us how to serve Him. God gave man a conscience so man would feel guilt and turn to Him. Acknowledging God and serving Him is the only reasonable thing we can do (Romans 12:1-2). —RAB

Prayer List

Keith Copeland	Herman McKenzie	Faye Seiler
Dennis Depew	Louise Moore	Gene Shannon
David Depew	Sara Nance	