

**THE FUTURE OUTLOOK**

J. F. JOHNSON Editor & Publisher  
 MISS EMMA P. JOHNSON News Reporter  
 L. A. WISE Staff Photographer  
 MISS DIANE CLARK Secretary, Bookkeeper

Make all checks payable to and mail to:

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**Who Cries For Catfish Cole?**

By RICARDO RAFFLES  
 "Trouble Shooter"

How do you write an obituary for a man named Catfish Cole? What can you say about a K.K.K. Ambassador of Hate? A man whose tirades of terror aimed at putting fear of death in the minds of Negroes who didn't know their places. How many thousand Negroes who have heard or felt his words and deeds of hate say or pray, "Catfish, your day is going to come!" Yes, his day has come, "for vengeance is mine" sayeth the Lord.

Catfish Cole, a former leader of the United Klans of America met his maker and his judgment in a wreck, just outside of Greensboro, North Carolina. This man who called himself a preacher, preaching the word of God, ordained himself to judge colored people as an inferior race of God. God, in his opinion meant for the black man to be subservient to the white man and to always remain separate and UNEQUAL. Now he is dead but not gone for there will always be someone to take his place.

"Who will cry for Catfish? Who will shed tears for this mis-guided human being?" I shall cry for you Catfish. My tears shall flow, my heart breaks for you. I do not see Catfish Cole, the head of the K.K.K., as a man of hate. I can only see a baby born, a child of God, growing up and straying from the fold. A lost sheep, needing a shepherd and his staff to find him and bring him back to the fold of God. I see a child not knowing the meaning of hate or of color, black or white. I see a six year old boy laughing and playing with another six year old boy of another color. "Who taught this young boy to hate? Who told him that he was superior to the black race? Why are millions of young children taken away from the teachings of the Bible such as, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" to a new bitter frustrating episode of manhood and propaganda filled life of HATE BLACK MEN, hold them down, keep them back. Why? Why? Why?

Oh how senseless is it all! Oh how sorrowful and tragic to see lives wasted down the drain as Catfish Cole's! Yes, I cry for you, for God is my father and you are my brother, my prodigal brother. Yes, Jesus Christ cries for you, for he wanted so much to have you back in the fold. Didn't Jesus say, "I come to heal the sick and not the well." So before anyone can point a finger and judge Catfish Cole, let him instead give the compassion which he for so many, many years has been seeking to one who has fallen by the wayside. Let us return to God what has always belonged to him — Forgiveness and in turn we shall be forgiven. So rather than laughing and making jokes about a tragic loss of the life of a human being lost to God, give back the judging to God and let the vengeance always belong to God. Yes, let us say, "Catfish Cole, may our tears for you be not in vain. Amen."

Thus to all Catfish Coles, before your death and during the cross burning at Rev. Frank Williams' home, Rev. Frank Williams and many others were praying for you and forgiving you your tresspasses.

**Drive Sanely****This Week's Sunday School Lesson****THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD Purpose of Our Study**

To help audits understand something of what God is like as he is revealed in Christ and to learn what worship really means.

**Scripture**

Read the lesson from your Bible: Acts 17.

We print selected verses below:

**Acts 17:22-31**

22 So Paul, standing in the middle of the Are-op'agus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us, 28 for

'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your poets have said,

'For we are indeed his offspring.'

29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead." **Memory Selection:** The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything.

—Acts 17:24-25

**Introducing The Scripture**

Acts 17 continues the description of Paul's European mission. Verses 1-9 describe the mission to Thessalonica. Because Thessalonica was large enough to have a Jewish synagogue, Paul began his work there. But again the Jews were infuriated with Paul's success and stirred up agitation against these ambassadors of Christ. The charge against Paul and his companions is the greatest compliment ever paid to Christianity: "These men . . . have turned the world upside down." (Verse 6)

Paul and Silas slipped away from Thessalonica by night and went on to Beroea. (Verse 10) The Beroeans "received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so." (Verse 11)

Because of agitation by Jews

from Thessalonica, Paul was sent on to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy in Beroea to finish the mission there. At Athens, Paul dared to present the gospel at this sophisticated intellectual center. He shrank from no challenge—even the challenge of intellectualism.

**Interpreting The Lesson**

Men worship at many shrines; they have many altars. Paul found it so at Athens. "He saw that the city was full of idols." (Verse 16)

Now the great days of Athens were past—the age of Pericles, the age of the great philosophers. But Athens was still a great university town. Among its people one could find many theories and philosophies and all kinds of discussion groups. The people prided themselves on being intellectuals. They feasted upon a diet of speculation and argument. They considered Paul just another peddler of ideas, so they were not a very receptive audience for the presentation of the gospel. But Paul never shrank from an audience, no matter how 'blase' or sophisticated the audience might appear.

Paul knew that beneath the sophisticated veneer were spiritual yearning and unrest. He knew that the images, statues, and altars were symbols of a groping for spiritual reality. The Athenians were obviously searching for an answer that they had not found, whether they would admit this fact or not.

We see many evidences that our day, too, is a day of spiritual unrest and yearning. Many persons are worshiping false gods such as science, position, wealth, or power. But the worship of even these false gods reveals a deeper yearning for the true and living God.

What are the altars at which men worship, and what do they symbolize in terms of man's spiritual quest?

**TO AN UNKNOWN GOD**

The Athenians had many altars; however, one altar particularly attracted Paul's attention. It was an altar with this inscription, "To an unknown god." (Verse 23)

This altar could have been an evidence of human anxiety. Mysterious and uncanny forces exist in the universe. From ancient times men have been aware of these mysterious forces; they have known that some of these forces can bless and some can curse. Probably men very early hit upon the idea that it was safer to be on the good side of these mysterious forces.

The Greeks realized that although they had altars to many gods, they could possibly have neglected the worship of some god they did not know. So this altar, in effect, said: Just in case we missed any of you gods, here is an altar for you.

The altar, of course, could have been a symbol of human ignorance. Men did not know the nature of these mysterious forces around them. The god who controlled their destiny was largely an enigma.

Greek literature preserves a story of a plague in ancient Athens. Epimenides, a Cretan poet, instructed the Athenians to take black and white sheep to the Areopagus and turn them

loose. Wherever the sheep lay down, they were to be sacrificed to "the appropriate god." If a sheep was near no shrine, it was to be sacrificed to "the unknown god."

Thus the altar Paul found could have been an attempt to placate unknown powers.

At any rate, Paul saw this altar as a symbol of man's spiritual searching and unrest. Obviously the Athenians were dissatisfied with the old gods. The religious consciousness of Greece had somehow become separated from the objects of worship. The old symbols and beliefs had lost their meanings, and men had not found new ones.

In the anguish of our own times men often cannot accept the old religious symbols, but, at the same time, they cannot find new ones to take their place. They feel compelled to seek for the meaning behind the universe and yet feel also that it is impossible to find such meaning. They cannot give up the idea that some power behind the universe, some god, exists; but they cannot arrive at a satisfactory conception of this god.

**TO NO GOD**

Modern men have gone beyond the ancient Athenians; they have, in a sense, erected altars "To No God." They pretend that they feel no anxiety before the ultimate powers of the universe. They pretend that human will and ingenuity will conquer every problem. They pretend that they do not need God.

Some people even flaunt their atheism in the face of the world. They seem to be proud of their emancipation from superstition and religious beliefs.

Others who worship at the shrine of "no god" do not seem quite so happy and satisfied. They seem to be sad and lost, to have found no meaning in life. As someone has put it, this type of atheist has a God-shaped blank in his heart.

**TO A TOO-WELL-KNOWN GOD**

Another modern altar apparently bears the inscription, "To a Well-Known God." This altar reflects a sort of practical atheism. This kind of belief robs God of his deity by making him like one of us. God becomes chummy and manageable. He is a pleasing and comforting God. He is white or middle-class or Republican if we happen to be white or middle-class or Republican. He can always be counted on to bless America, no matter what America is or does. He is a safe God. Nietzsche said that churches were the tombs of God and that worshipers killed God with their belief—the wrong kind of belief.

Those who worship at this altar are at the opposite extreme from those who worship at the altar of the unknown God. These people take all the mystery out of God. They claim to know all about him and to be able to interpret his will for men. As a matter of fact, these people are more often interpreting events in the light of their own prejudices and simply putting a halo around these prejudices by using the name of God.

**TO THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD**

Paul proclaimed to the Athenians his gospel of the true and (Continued on Page 3)