



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

Acts 17:22-27 ESV

Paul Addresses the Areopagus

²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, 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 the 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 temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ **And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,** ²⁷ that they should **seek God**, and perhaps **feel their way toward him and find him**. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

[REVIEW]

[READ THE TEXT]

[PRAY]

[INTRO]

Falling in line with God being the creator and sustainer of all things is the next subsequent point in Paul’s sermon and that is **God is the Ruler of the Nations**. Now that statement right there catches people off guard, and so as a Christian you and I have to do a good job of **asking how come?** Why is it that you don’t like that one? I think it comes down to the fact that ‘lost’ people automatically look at the state of the world in all their worldly wisdom and they proclaim and pontificate that if there is a God: 1st He doesn’t know what He’s doing, or 2nd He is demented and plays favorites, or 3rd He is limited in power and can’t achieve much. **I think it’s safe to say that most people believe these things because most people DO NOT like the world in which they live in, and most people are NOT Christians.**



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

Now when people espouse such critiques of God, I find it **ironic**, because they are showing their cards and their foolishness in a lack of understanding based on their earthly wisdom outside of the Bible. Because those same 3 reasons are the EXACT same 3 reasons that they use in **political debates**.

It doesn't matter if you are on the left or right, the claims are the same: the person in office either doesn't know what they are doing, or they are just playing favorites, or they have no real power. So, if the guy you don't like is in office you work to get them out, but if they guy you voted for can't get it done you move onto the strategy that he just needs more power, which always gets you a bigger government and more forced compliance. So as the government grows, and as the problems of man increase, so too does the foolishness of man expand. Which too is the will of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18-20 ESV

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

¹⁸For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

And again...

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 ESV

¹⁸Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, **let him become a fool that he may become wise**. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness,"

God shows the foolishness of man BY allowing them to suffer in their quest to deny His existence and resurrect false power structures to get what they want while all the while never being able to really solve societies' problems.¹ **Our prayer for today is that we can start to figure out who really runs the show**

¹<https://www.gotquestions.org/foolishness-of-God-wiser.html>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

God or man because in that answer things for men get better. Could there be a better way to govern people with fairness, equality, and dare I say it, prosperity and NOT produce more regulation and control!? I say yes! And not only that but I believe that when we are obedient to God's Word, that we will discover the true intent of why God gave it to us:

²⁷that they should **seek God**, and perhaps **feel their way toward him and find him**. Yet he is **actually not far** from each one of us,

So again, in the spirit of Advent, the celebration of the Incarnation of Jesus the Christ into this world to make the unknown God knowable to all men, let's dive into Paul's next point of his sermon here at the Areopagus:

Acts 17:26 ESV

"And he made **from one man every nation of mankind** to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,"

Let's build this out here and establish Paul's 3rd point to his sermon outline in Acts 17:

3. God is the Ruler of the Nations.

Paul states that God made all men from one man and from that one man every nation of mankind, and determined for every nation their length, land, & limit over all the face of the earth for all time. You see in this verse Paul was removing the *imagined justification* for the belief that the Greeks were superior to their Barbarian neighbors.² If you have ever watched the movie [My Big Fat Greek Wedding](#) that attitude that everything comes from the Greeks and therefore the Greeks are the dominant race, that is a real thing. You see the Gospel though is the answer for any belief that there is a superiority among ethnicities or that there is any other race other just man.

**God predetermines there are to be different nations/nationalities
BUT just 1 Race.**

² Bruce, F.F., *The Book of Acts*, Revised, (William B. Eerdmans Pub; Grand Rapids, MI, 1988), 337.



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

Genesis 5:3-5 ESV

³When **Adam** had lived 130 years, **he fathered a son** in his own **likeness, after his image**, and named him Seth. ⁴The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and **he had other sons and daughters**. ⁵Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

There is only **one race** and that is the **human race**, and God wanted you to know that all come from one man, Adam (trailing from Seth to Noah then back out to all nations Gen 10). God DID desire that man would move and spread out (Tower of Babel Gen 11), so there are cultural and ethnic distinctions.

Deuteronomy 32:8 ESV

⁸When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
when **he divided mankind**,
he **fixed the borders of the peoples**
according to the number of the sons of God.

So, there is 1 race, man from Adam, with multiple ethnicities all having their beginnings with their heavenly Father/Creator God. BUT PJ what about the **current cultural argument over Racism** that has heated up over the last 3-4 years?

There is no such thing as racial discrimination for there is no racial distinctions by God. That is a man-made concept, and it is a false one.³ **Racial distinctions** were actually started by **Darwin (1859) and his University counterparts** to explain why people not of European descent, in their theories of evolution, looked different and acted different because they claimed they were related to different missing links.⁴

What is all the arguing over Race?

When people call someone a racist today that is simply a Westernized idea developed to promote tribal stereotypes, capitalizing on emotional exasperations, to gain influence and power in political/societal structures.

³ <https://answersingenesis.org/racism/are-there-really-different-races/>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2672903/>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

This is exactly why the **church should refrain** from using that term **RACISM/RACIST** because it's an atheistic invention that woke theorists use to demean others when in fact its' origins are faulty.⁵ Now treating people **AS LESS** based on backgrounds **that's being prejudice** and that is a sin (unequal measures and treating the sojourn fairly). My point is God doesn't see the theory 'racism' as a sin, that is a Westernized culture derivative, a man-made construct, but **He does see the one race, the race of men** through one descendent Adam.

But in seeing all men as one race, there is a **big enough problem** we all have to deal with, for **through one man all men have inherited death**, that is a much bigger problem than the perceived problem of racism and phobic slanders.

Romans 5:12 ESV

Therefore, just as **sin** came into the world **through one man**, and **death through sin**, and so **death spread to all men** because all sinned—

We, the church, need to stop fooling around with social justice issues because what causes a man to sin is not being born into systemic racist system, **we sin because sin entered into us by one man**, Adam, and it leads us all to death, making us all **equally intrinsically evil** (depraved). That's another thing that people use proposed theories of racism for, **it gives the sense of moral superiority that's called pride**, which is false because superiority cannot be built up by man, that was Paul's point to the Greeks. Paul - *Your wrong opinion from yourself comes from a faulty view of RACE!*

SO, if you really want to hear me say it, I will say it like this then: **Racism IS A SIN** because that is an atheistic concept that allows a person to deflect his/her sin onto society and blame others for what they do (**HAMAS**). BUT if we will stop blaming others for the sin we do, if we will take on the responsibility for how we act as an individual, then the Gospel offers hope!

1 Corinthians 15: 45 & 47 ESV

⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam (Jesus) became a life-giving spirit.

⁵ <https://twitter.com/howertonjosh/status/1732402596105814464>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

Because God views race the right way, then there is a chance for Salvation. All people came from one man Adam, and because of that they inherited the original sin, treason and its' consequences. But because there is only one race, a way for Salvation has also been made possible!

Romans 5:18-19 ESV

¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, **so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.** ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Because God sees man as **ONE RACE** with multiple nationalities that He preordained, He will save many through the one man, Jesus Christ! No one is superior to anyone else in this room, all come to God by GRACE for all have sinned, because of our shared lineage in ADAM! But all of us can be saved by our shared lineage in Christ. **That was Paul's message to the Athenians, it was the offer to stop seeing themselves superior to anyone and find their Salvation outside themselves in the work of Christ alone.** But Paul's need here is to get them to see that we all are just one big messed up family, there are now no distinctions in Christ but how does **the Gospel** do this?

God predetermines that nations/nationalities will ALL share ONE KING.

Let's go to a familiar place this time of year and talk about what is God's will for all men, on how we will share this one King.

Isaiah 9:6 ESV

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the **government** shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

So, a child, an only son, is given to the world (Jn 3:16) and on His shoulder is government. In Isaiah's day the sign of an office of government, whether it was a cord or shawl was placed on the ruler's shoulder. In light of Is. 9:4 this was the rod of the oppressor, the nations of the world, they (all nations) failed in righteous reigning. What we have here is a picture of a **Divine Christening**. In judgment, God removed the government from the shoulders of earthly kings and placed it squarely on the Messiah. Point is, no one has a say in this but God, and God does this as a part of His fulfillment to save the earth through one man, a New Adam, a new King, for the human race.

We should see this as a blessing for:

He is a **wonderful counselor**, He is the one with the secrets of how to inherit eternal life,

He is the **Mighty God**, Immanuel, God is literally with us,

He is **Everlasting Father**, He will be the extender of blessings to all men forever, and

He is the **Prince of Peace**, who will one day usher in an eternal time of peace conquering sin and the grave!

⁷Of the **increase** of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the **throne of David** and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The **zeal** of the LORD of hosts will do this.⁶

⁶ **government ... upon ... shoulder**—The ensign of office used to be worn *on the shoulder*, in token of *sustaining* the government (Is 22:22). Here *the government on Messiah's shoulder* is in marked antithesis to the "yoke and staff" of the oppressor on Israel's "shoulder" (Is 9:4). He shall receive the kingdom of the earth from the Father, to vindicate it from the misrule of those to whom it was entrusted to hold it for and under the Most High, but who sought to hold it in defiance of His right; the Father asserts His right by the Son, the "Heir of all things," who will hold it for Him (Da 7:13, 14).

name ... called—His *essential characteristics shall be*.

Wonderful—(See on Is 8:18; Jdg 13:18, *Margin*; 1 Ti 3:16).

Counselor—(Ps 16:7; Ro 11:33, 34; 1 Co 1:24; Col 2:3).

mighty God—(Is 10:21; Ps 24:8; Tit 2:13) HORSLEY translates: "God the mighty man." "Unto us ... God" is equivalent to "Immanuel" (Is 7:14).



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

“Of the increase of the government.” Well, I guess there is a time and place for big government but this one comes with no more false promises, no more bi-partisan debates, no more rigged elections, and no, **read my lips, NO NEW TAXES!** No, His reign will **forever be increasing**, the Kingdom is always growing, His subjects are always thriving, and His enemies shall forever gnash their teeth.

To fulfill all the promises in the beginning to David (2 Samuel 7), it will come through Israel, through the line of Judah, through the town of Bethlehem, BUT this King will be better! He has **perfected how to be a man after God’s own heart!** He has achieved what David never could, peace through the shedding of blood, His own. Saul has killed his 1,000s, David his 10,000s, but Jesus has conquered the WORLD! He will slay ALL giants, He will offer Justice to ALL men, and will impute His Righteousness to ALL God’s elect! And again, it all WILL HAPPEN because it will be the Zeal, the jealousy, of God to do it!

Daniel confers this truth at the end of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream where the statue was destroyed by a stone that grew into a mountain.

Danial 2:44 ESV

44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall **stand forever,**

everlasting Father—This marks Him as “Wonderful,” that He is “a child,” yet the “everlasting *Father*” (Jn 10:30; 14:9). Earthly kings leave their people after a short reign; He will reign over and bless them *for ever* [HENGSTENBERG].

Prince of Peace—(See on Is 9:5; Ge 49:10; *Shiloh*, “The Tranquillizer”). Finally (Ho 2:18). Even already He is “our peace” (Lu 2:14; Eph 2:14).

7. Of ... increase ... no end—His princely rule shall perpetually increase and be unlimited (Da 2:44).

throne of David—(1 Ki 8:25; Ps 2:6; 132:11; Je 3:17, 18 Ez 34:23–26; Lu 1:32, 33; Ac 2:30).

judgment ... justice—It is not a kingdom of mere might, and triumph of force over enemies, but of righteousness (Is 42:21; Ps 45:6, 7), attainable only in and by Messiah.

zeal, &c.—including not only Christ’s hidden spiritual victory over Satan at the first coming, but the open one accompanied with “judgments” on Antichrist and every enemy at the second coming (Is 59:17; Ps 9:6–8). Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 440). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

Friends this one of the most joyful images that you can ever have as a Christian is the initiation and the rolling out of the Kingdom of God, but it can also be a very scary and intimidating thing if you do not know Christ. This future holds blessings and curses, eternal life or eternal death, emancipation or damnation, and God has blessed us all with the hearing of the Gospel this morning so that if you don't know Him today you too can be saved! So, what must happen to ensure that when the Kingdom comes it is a joyful day for all in this place?

Galatians 3:26-28 ESV

²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, **through faith**. ²⁷For as many of you as were **baptized** into Christ have put on **Christ**. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

This is why Baptism is such an important ordinance in the church. Baptism is the demonstration of the act of dying to self and putting on Christ, Christ is a title that means anointed one, Messiah, or "**The King**". Our Baptism is the public declaration of faith in this King, whereby I take responsibility for my sin, I associate myself with God's view of one race in Adam, and I rely on the way God sees it as He provides one answer through Christ making me a Son of God. I take His reign in my life as rightful ruler believing what I am seeing in scripture, that God sees us all as one Race with many nationalities, with the need that all must bow a knee to this King if they desire to be saved.

God predetermines that nations/nationalities will play a part in establishing their King so they would all know He is for them too.

In Matthew Chapter 2 in the recording of the birth of Christ we see God's Providence, His day-to-day Sovereignty in the affairs of man, displayed in the coming of the Wise Men, or the Magi, as they came to crown a new king.

Matthew 2:1-2 ESV

The Visit of the Wise Men

2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **wise men from the east** came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is



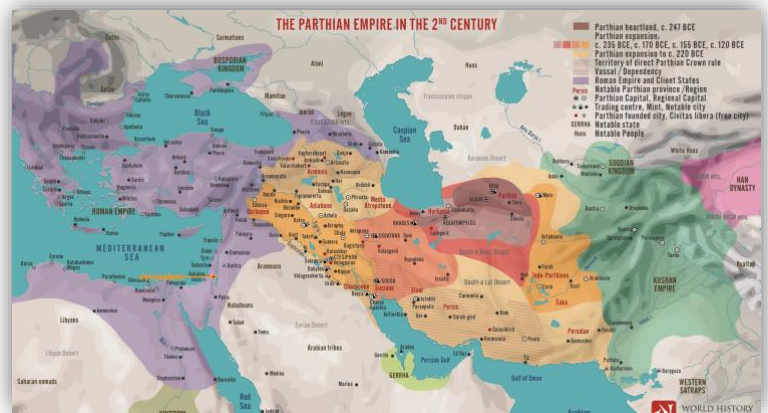
Acts – Can I get a Witness? Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3 By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

he who has been born king of the Jews? (Isaiah 9:6) For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

These Magi, or wise men, had been taught by the prophet Daniel, 538 years before Christ the signs to look for in stars as given by the Angel Gabriel (Daniel 9:25) to track the time of when the Messiah would come⁷ and they already knew where they could find Him according to the prophet Micah from somewhere around 700 BC.:

Micah 5:2 ESV

² But you, O **Bethlehem** Ephrathah,
who are too little to be
among the clans of
Judah,
from you shall come forth
for me
one who is to be **ruler in
Israel**,
whose coming forth is from
of old,
from ancient days.



O little town of Bethlehem is actually a speck on the map that sits in between the backwash of the two largest opposing world powers of that day. And

⁷ <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/was-jesus-s-arrival-accurately-predicted-in-the-bible>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

while God has made all the promises to the Jewish people that the Savior will come through them it does not mean that God is not using all the nations to bring about and point to the most important 33 years of the human existence. God wants to use all the nations so that that all know they are a part of the plan because they all get a piece of this king.

Now at the time of Christ, in the Parthian/Persian Empire, there was a ruling body called the Megistanes. This would be like the United States Senate. This ruling body was totally composed of Magi whose duty it was, to have absolute choice for the selection of a king. They were kingmakers. And it just so happened that at the time of the incarnation they were having some real problems with the king that they had. They, the senate of Magi, wanted to fight Rome and kick them back out of the middle east. But they had a loser for a king, Phraates the IV, who was poisoned by his wife and was basically a Roman spy sent there by Caesar Augustus, and it was her son that became king. All of that points to 'why' the Magi were looking for a new king, a new king of the east, a new king of the Eastern Empire who could come against Rome.⁸

The promise of a divinely-imposed world dominion at the hands of a Jewish monarch was more than acceptable to them if it got rid of Herod, pushed Rome out of Palestine, and united the east against the west. Their own Pers. and Medo-Pers. history was studded with Jewish nobles, ministers and counselors; and in the days between the OT and the NT some of the kings themselves were apparently partly of Jewish blood.

What we have in scripture is not 3 men riding in on camels we have a military force riding in on heavy calvary that was big enough to punch through any Roman blockade to get to Jerusalem, where this king might be. Mat. 2:3 says Herod is greatly troubled, yeah because he doesn't have the man-power to stay off an attack, he knows he's only a figure head for the Roman government that secured his throne with a bribe, and this may be his end.

⁸ <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/2182/who-were-the-wise-men>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

At the same time while dealing with all of their royal woes Augustus had become emperor and was conducting a census of the known world.⁹¹⁰

Luke 2:1-2 ESV

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

Augustus was in the middle of an industrious endeavor. He was not the first Caesar, but he was their first emperor, the Roman Republic was dead. After securing Palestine along with the Gaza Strip and Egypt, no thanks to his traitorous/adulterous brother-in-law Mark Antony and his betrothed Queen Cleopatra, he was refilling the coffers. Over the span of his life, he doubled the size of Rome and solidified all the roads like the Egnatian Way that would later lead to the Gospel reaching all the known world.

All of these events of the major powers looking to 'sure up' their reigns, their power, their kingdoms, that pressure though was all applied by God's Providence and by his direct intervention in human history **to point to the THE KING**. Then He acts ensuring the prophecy of only one Kingdom would not be fulfilled yet. The Magi were **"warned in a dream" (Mat 2:12)** a type of communication accepted by them for they were a deeply religious monotheistic people, expecting God's intervention to come supernaturally if He so willed it.¹¹

God has tirelessly been at work establishing the mega powers of that day, working all the political puzzle pieces for centuries to bring about the Messiah. The Magi show up, upon invite from Daniel over 500 years earlier, to

⁹ <https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-rome/emperor-augustus>

¹⁰ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/why-was-there-a-roman-census-at-the-time-of-jesus-birth.html> **Caesar Augustus** was the self-chosen title of a man by the name of Octavian, or Gaius Octavius. He was born in 63 B.C. and was adopted by his great uncle, Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar, dictator of Rome, famously attempted to set himself up as the supreme leader of the Roman Republic but was stabbed to death by the senators. Octavian took up Julius Caesar's mantle at the age of only eighteen and completed Rome's transition once and for all from the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire.

¹¹ <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Magi>



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

acknowledge the king had come. The work of Cesar Augustus, unbeknownst to him, fulfilled the prophecy of Micah ensuring Joseph would go home right when he was supposed to so that the Magi may find the child in Bethlehem. All of the events leading up to the Incarnation of Christ not only concerned the nation of Israel, but God worked the full cooperation of all the nations in the endeavor of bringing Christ into existence to show that this King was for the WHOLE WORLD.

Oh, the foolishness of men, to think they control the world, and that by using identity politics & psychological mind games they can manipulate people into growing their own thrones! Only to one day find out they have been working in the hands of God to bring about yet His biggest Revelation!

[CHALLENGE]

What is telling you that you may not be believing that God is the ruler of all nations, that He is working in them to bring about another prophecy, the return of the one true king? Zechariah 14, Revelation 16 - 19 all speak about the return of the Lord and His final victories. Because we can't see all the moving parts of history working towards this goal we often, as His people fall into despair. Often because of our lack of foresight and our lack of faith any time we see the political scene shift we begin to panic.

Let us today not believe the headlines of the news more than the headlines of the Bible.

Let us today be more concerned about sharing the news of Jesus more than our favorite political candidate.

Let us today dedicate a part of our everyday to prayer that God would forgive the sins of His people and fulfill His promises.

Let's start that off right, let's go to Him in prayer right now, and ask for the wisdom to see and appreciate His global domination, to pray for strength, and intercede for our neighbors.



Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 58 Getting to Know the Unknowable God Pt. 3
By Pastor Jody May 12/10/2023

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that has pre-ordained all of history so that He alone would receive the glory, as all come to see His plans unfold.

Go in the name of the Son, that is our King and the only King for this world, and to Him all will kneel one day.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes so we are not deceived by man, so we see the wisdom of God, so that we may put faith in Him, now go and share this good news with others.