

## Would You Still be a Christian?

For those of you who were, if you had not been raised by Christian parents, or influenced by a Christian spouse, would you have become a Christian by yourself? Really think about this. If your family (parents, grandparents, cousins, spouse, whatever) had not taught you the Truth, would you have obeyed the gospel on your own? Where would you be, and what would you be like, if not for the godly influences exerted upon you by your family or friends?

**Text: Acts 17:16-34** (The Athenians surely were people whose parents, relatives, and friends had not influenced them to believe in, worship, or obey God.)

While the answers to our introductory questions are difficult to determine (or accept!), perhaps some additional questions will help...

**Do you feel the *universal need to worship something higher than yourself*, vv.16-23?**

Surely, this need can result in *misguided* attempts (idolatry), as these verses and history testify, but throughout time man generally has worshipped some *deity* even in the absence of knowledge of the true God.

Or, do you buy into the concept that you, as a member of mankind, are “master of your own universe”?

**Do you see a *Creator by His creation*, v.24a?**

From where does even the concept of “God” come from, if not from the realities of life itself, cf. Heb.3:4 and Rom.1:20?

Either God created man, or man created God. Which does the Universe proclaim, Psalm19:1-6?

**Do you, because of these things, discern a *need for seeking God*, vv.24b-28?**

It is not that *God needs man* (or his worship), but that *man needs God* (both His provision and to worship Him).

God created and controls all things, not the other way around!

**Do you think *man was made in God’s image*, or *God was made in man’s image*, v.29?**

This will determine whom we obey and worship, Phil.3:19.

**Are you now, when shown Truth that you previously did not know or understand, willing to change, vv.30-34?**

This, probably more than anything else, answers the question, cf. Acts 9:1-20;

**Additional *helpful* questions:**

**Do you whole-heartedly believe the Bible to be the Word of God, Acts 17:1-2?**

**Are you willing to look at, and accept, the explanations and evidence given by the Scriptures, Acts 17:3-4?**

**Do you search the Scriptures for *truth*, or to *justify your own prejudices and conclusions*, Acts 17:11-12?**

**Conclusions:**

These things show the importance of:

1. Being the parents God wants you to be for the spiritual sake of your children; and,
2. Marrying a partner who will not only help you go to heaven, but also help your children go to heaven.

But they also provide at least a potential answer to the *what if* question of our title. It is surely impossible to know with certainty what kind of persons we would be without the influences we’ve had in our lives. Two things come from this:

1. Be ever thankful to God for those influences, and be thankful to them also!
2. Continue to be the kind of person that led you to believe and obey God in the first place, Col.3:1-2!