



March 27, 2016

Pastor Chris Hill

- Everything has a \_\_\_\_\_ point
  - Your \_\_\_\_\_ has a starting point as well.
  - Perhaps you developed a \_\_\_\_\_ for faith

“... many of us have been left stranded with an incoherent concept of God. We learned about God at about the same time as we were told about Santa Claus. But while our understanding of the Santa Claus phenomenon evolved and matured, our theology remained somewhat infantile. Not surprisingly, when we attained intellectual maturity, many of us rejected the God we had inherited and denied that he existed.”

Karen Armstrong, *The Case for God* (p. 320)

- Adults often need a \_\_\_\_\_ starting point

<sup>16</sup> While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly **distressed** to see that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> A group of **Epicurean** and **Stoic** philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babblers trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating **foreign gods**.” They said this because Paul was preaching the **good news** about **Jesus** and the **resurrection**. <sup>19</sup> 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? <sup>20</sup> You are bringing some **strange ideas** to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” ...<sup>22</sup> 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**. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> “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. <sup>25</sup> And he is not served by human hands, as if he **needed** anything. Rather, he himself **gives** everyone life and breath and everything else. <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ <sup>29</sup> “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. <sup>30</sup> In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but **now** he commands **all** people everywhere to **repent**. <sup>31</sup> 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**...

- Proof moves us from \_\_\_\_\_ so to \_\_\_\_\_ so.

...by **raising him from the dead**.” <sup>32</sup> 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.” <sup>33</sup> At that, Paul left the Council.  
**Acts 17:16-20, 22-33 (NIV2011)**

The starting point for the Christian faith is a \_\_\_\_\_.

- Who is \_\_\_\_\_?

### My Next Step Today Is To...

- Read about Jesus by reading one chapter of Mark each day.
- Give thanks for my faith in Jesus which has sustained me and for those who helped me find and renew that starting point throughout my life.
- Confess that my faith hasn’t held up well under the rigors of life and so today I’m asking God to help me rediscover Jesus, the starting point.
- Admit my questions and doubt while being willing to explore if there really could be a starting point of faith for me.
- Believe and receive Jesus, the risen Savior, admitting that I need him to take my broken life and make me new.