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Acts 17:22-31 ESV

“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,^[a] **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,

28”for in him we live and move and have our being’;

as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we are indeed his offspring.’

29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. **30** The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people 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 by raising him from the dead.”

Degree of Difficulty: 5

Classical Christian Speech Meet

Colossians 2:6-15 ESV

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, **7** rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. **9** For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, **10** and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. **11** In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, **12** having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. **13** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, **14** by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. **15** He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Ecclesiastes 3:1-12 ESV

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-12 ESV (Continued)

9 What gain has the worker from his toil? **10** I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. **11** He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. **12** I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live.”

Degree of Difficulty: 2

Ephesians 4:1-15 ESV

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3** eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **4** There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. **7** But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. **8** Therefore it says,

"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men."

9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? **10** He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) **11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ"

Degree of Difficulty: 5

Galatians 5:16-25 ESV

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.”

Degree of Difficulty: 4

Classical Christian Speech Meet

Hebrews 12:1-11 ESV

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Do Not Grow Weary

3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. **4** In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. **5** And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reprovved by him.

6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. **9** Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? **10** For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. **11** For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

Degree of Difficulty: 5

Isaiah 53 ESV

“Who has believed what he has heard from us?

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

2 For he grew up before him like a young plant,

and like a root out of dry ground;

he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,

and no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by men,

a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;

and as one from whom men hide their faces

he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he has borne our griefs

and carried our sorrows;

yet we esteemed him stricken,

smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

and with his wounds we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have turned—every one—to his own way;

and the Lord has laid on him

the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53 ESV (Continued)

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?

9 And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Isaiah 53 ESV (Continued)

11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see^[i] and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.”

Degree of Difficulty: 5

James 5:13-20 ESV

13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. **14** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. **16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.[a] **17** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. **18** Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

19 My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, **20** let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Matthew 6:25-33

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

I Peter 1:3-12 ESV

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **8** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully.

11 inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. **12** It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Degree of Difficulty: 5

2 Peter 1:3-11 ESV

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. **5** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, **6** and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, **7** and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. **8** For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. **10** Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. **11** For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Degree of Difficulty: 4

Psalm 15 ESV

“O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?

Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

2 He who walks blamelessly and does what is right

and speaks truth in his heart;

3 who does not slander with his tongue

and does no evil to his neighbor,

nor takes up a reproach against his friend;

4 in whose eyes a vile person is despised,

but who honors those who fear the Lord;

who swears to his own hurt and does not change;

5 who does not put out his money at interest

and does not take a bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things shall never be moved.”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Psalm 33:1-12 ESV

“Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous!

Praise befits the upright.

2 Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre;

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!

3 Sing to him a new song;

play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

4 For the word of the Lord is upright,

and all his work is done in faithfulness.

5 He loves righteousness and justice;

the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,

and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;

he puts the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord;

let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

9 For he spoke, and it came to be;

he commanded, and it stood firm.

10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

Psalm 33:1-12 ESV (Continued)

11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Classical Christian Speech Meet

Psalm 96 ESV

“Oh sing to the Lord a new song;

 sing to the Lord, all the earth!

2 Sing to the Lord, bless his name;

 tell of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the nations,

 his marvelous works among all the peoples!

4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

 he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

 but the Lord made the heavens.

6 Splendor and majesty are before him;

 strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

 ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

 bring an offering, and come into his courts!

9 Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;

 tremble before him, all the earth!

10 Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns!

 Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.”

11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

 let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

Psalm 96 ESV (Continued)

12 let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

13 before the Lord, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness,

and the peoples in his faithfulness.”

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Proverbs 4:13-27 ESV

“Keep hold of instruction; do not let go;
guard her, for she is your life.

14 Do not enter the path of the wicked,
and do not walk in the way of the evil.

15 Avoid it; do not go on it;
turn away from it and pass on.

16 For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong;
they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.

18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,
which shines brighter and brighter until full day.

19 The way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
they do not know over what they stumble.

20 My son, be attentive to my words;
incline your ear to my sayings.

21 Let them not escape from your sight;
keep them within your heart.

22 For they are life to those who find them,
and healing to all their flesh.**23** Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 4:13-27 ESV (Continued)

24 Put away from you crooked speech,
and put devious talk far from you.

25 Let your eyes look directly forward,
and your gaze be straight before you.

26 Ponder the path of your feet;
then all your ways will be sure.

27 Do not swerve to the right or to the left;
turn your foot away from evil.”

Degree of Difficulty: 4

Classical Christian Speech Meet

2 Timothy 2:14-26 ESV

14 Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. **15** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. **16** But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, **17** and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, **18** who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. **19** But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. **21** Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. **23** Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. **24** And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, **25** correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will."

Degree of Difficulty: 5