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Resurrection Leads Us To Repentance; Acts 17:29-34

GPBC

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Introduction – Last week we walked by the cross. Christ gave Himself as the perfect and final sacrifice for the sins of all who would believe in Him. What appeared to the unbelieving eye as defeat and shame was in fact victory and salvation. He took our sin and gave us His righteousness. He took our death and gave us life. He took our place so that we might dwell with Him forever in His place. Substitutionary atonement. The cross, the ultimate display of sin's consequence, became the ultimate demonstration of God's salvation.

But how do we know that the Bible's view and theology of the cross is true? How do we know Jesus is our substitute, that He is the final sacrifice for sin? How do we know that His death satisfied the Father's just wrath against our sin? How can the cross be verified as the means of our salvation and forgiveness and hope of eternal life? The answer is the resurrection. When Christ accomplished our salvation through His suffering in our place upon the cross, He cried, "It is finished!" When God raised Christ from the dead three days later, all doubt was removed.

In today's passage we find Paul in Athens preaching the gospel to any who is willing to listen. In v30 Paul issues God's command for all people everywhere to repent, and then he argues through the end of v31 why repentance is our necessary response to the gospel of Christ. V31 ends with the resurrection. So Paul traces the need for repentance to the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection then is the foundation of Paul's plea for his listeners to repent.

In our study today, we're going to begin with the foundation, the resurrection, and work our way back to repentance, in order to see and grasp and embrace Paul's gospel invitation.

- I. Resurrection Yields Assurance
 - a. "and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead." So one fundamental implication of the resurrection of Christ is that it yields assurance.

- b. In other words, the resurrection guarantees the work of Christ. The resurrection yields certainty to the message of the gospel. The Bible's message, the gospel message, that salvation is in Christ, and Christ alone boils down to the cross. In the same way, the assurance of the gospel, that salvation is in Christ and in Christ alone, boils down to the resurrection.
 - c. Do you want to be saved? To be forgiven? To be made new? To have the hope of eternal life? Trust Christ. Cling to Christ. Give your life to Christ? Why? Because He died for you.
 - d. Do you want to know, do you want to be sure, do you want to have confidence in your faith in Christ that life and salvation are found in Him and Him alone? Look to the resurrection.
 - e. If He were only a man, if He were a false prophet who could not save, if He was nothing more than an ego-maniac who preyed on the weak, or a delusional madman who only wanted a following, He would still be in the ground!
 - f. But He was raised. Death could not defeat Him or keep Him because death's power and authority come from sin. The wages of sin is death. If you sin, you die. If you sin and don't have Christ, you die forever. But if you have not sinned, death has no hold or authority over you.
 - g. You can lay the lifeless body of Christ in a tomb. You can cover it with a great stone. You can seal it and guard it with a league of Roman soldiers, but you cannot keep the Son of God in it. He was sinless. Prisons exist because criminals exist, but if you are proven innocent, you are released from prison. Death exists because sin exists, but if you are sinless, the shackles of death are broken.
 - h. On the cross Jesus dealt with our greatest problem, our sin. In the tomb Jesus dealt with the penalty for our sin, death.
- II. Assurance is Centered in Christ
- a. "by a man whom He (God) has appointed; and of this He (God) has given assurance to all by raising Him (Christ) from the dead"
 - b. Christ is the man appointed by God the Father – we can know this with absolute certainty because it is Christ who was raised. Resurrection yields assurance and that assurance is centered on Christ. It is Christ. Jesus is our hope and salvation.

- c. The Father appointed the Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. The Father appointed the Son to live a sinless life and earn a righteousness that would be credited to us. The Father appointed the Son to be the sinless, substitutionary sacrifice. The Father appointed the Son to be raised, to ascend to His right hand, to return in glory, to defeat His enemies, to bring His people home, to reign forever. History is the unfolding of the Father's plan for the salvation of His people through the life, death, resurrection, return, and reign of His Son. Crown Him with many crowns – He is worthy of all praise!
 - d. Peter's sermon at Pentecost – Acts 2:22-24
 - e. Peter's defense before the Council – Acts 4:10-12
 - f. Our assurance is not grounded in our works, our performance, or our righteousness – our assurance is grounded in Christ – He is the One appointed by the Father to be our salvation and our life.
 - g. Since Christ was raised we can be assured of salvation in Him, but we can also be assured of His return.
- III. Christ is Returning One Day
- a. "because He (God) has fixed a day on which He (God) will judge the world in righteousness by a man (Christ)..."
 - b. You can be assured if He was raised and ascended, He will return to settle all accounts. His salvation is not figurative language of spiritual fluff. It is literal. He literally died. He literally rose. He will literally return.
 - c. Just as there was a certain day for His birth, a certain day for His death, a certain day for His resurrection, there is a certain day for His return.
 - d. And it is fixed. It is coming. It is certain. It can't be delayed, postponed, cancelled, skipped, or bypassed. There exists a day in the future of this world that will be the last day of this world.
 - e. Jesus said in John 14 – if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am you may be also.
 - f. The angels said in Acts 1:11 – why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.
 - g. When He comes, He will judge the world in righteousness. What does that mean? He will judge everyone with a perfect just judgment. If

Christ returns to judge the world in righteousness, then everyone will be found guilty and condemned to the judgment of God, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and there is none righteous, no, not one – Romans 3.

- h. There is only one escape from the righteous judgment of Christ – it is the righteousness of Christ. 2 Cor 5:21 – For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.
- i. All who are covered in the righteousness of Christ through faith in Him will be saved and all who remain in their own sin will be condemned. And that brings us to repentance.

IV. Judgment Day Compels Us To Repent

- a. Christ has been raised – He is the One appointed by God – He will return to judge the world – so repent and believe in Him now – do not delay – the day is coming – Christ is coming – and He will be your Savior if you love Him or He will be your judge if you deny Him.
- b. 1 Thess 1:9-10

Conclusion – 3 ways to respond to the resurrection of Christ. (1) you can walk away unchanged (2) you can put off repenting and believing unconvinced (3) or you can believe and repent and be made new today