

# SERMON GUIDE

## Genesis: The Resurrected Man Will Judge the World

### Acts 17:30-34



3.31.2024

#### **SERMON NOTES:**

Good morning everyone! Welcome to TJC. We are so glad you are here with us on Easter Sunday. It's always such a special day. I pray the same is true for you and your family. My desire is for you to sense the presence of God here today, to hear from Him in His Word, and to have your love for Jesus increase (or initiated). My name is Erik Reed. I'm the Lead Pastor here at TJC. I planted this church in 2006 and now 18 years later, we're still here and watching God do incredible things.

**BIG IDEA TODAY: Jesus is the Judge of all the world and God proves this to us by raising Him from the dead.**

**STORY** -- Let me tell you a little history story that will tee up where we're going today. In the summer of 1918, the communist revolution erupted in Russia. It led to the execution of the Tsar (king) Nicholas II and his entire family (wife and 5 children). Their bodies were buried in a massive grave. But a couple of years later, a rumor began circulating that one of the children escaped and survived the massacre, the youngest child Grand Duchess Anastasia.

Many women over the course of decades came forward claiming to be the young Anastasia, but none more adamant or convincing than a lady named Anna Anderson. She arrived at a hospital in Berlin in 1920. She had no ID and refused to speak. When she finally started to talk she claimed to be none other than the Grand Duchess Anastasia. It captivated Berlin, and eventually the whole world. A family doctor of the Romanov family went to meet her to either validate or discredit the claim. He didn't know either. She knew things nobody else could know about the family. She eventually moved to the United States and married a professor in 1968. She died in 1984 at 87 years old. People debated her identity from 1920 until the day she died (and beyond). But in 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, most of the bodies of the Romanov family were located and exhumed from the mass grave. Sixteen years later, the rest of remains were found, DNA tests were run, and it proved that Anna Anderson was indeed NOT the Grand Duchess Anastasia. She was actually a mentally ill Polish factory worker (as some had originally claimed when the story went worldwide).

Now here's the point. She was able to make a claim, and for years, nobody could truly validate if it was true or not. But eventually her real identity emerged and disproved her claims to be Anastasia. But with Jesus, His claims to being God in the flesh and Savior of the world were validated by His resurrection. And as we're going to see in our text today: Jesus' resurrection is the assurance/evidence that He is the true Judge of all the earth.

**BIG IDEA TODAY: Jesus is the Judge of all the world and God proves this to us by raising Him from the dead.**

Our text is the end of a larger address Paul is giving. He is in Athens before the Areopagus. He's been given an audience to address his claims. People are saying he is preaching about foreign divinities (the Jewish Savior, Jesus). So Paul stands in the midst of the gathering and appeals to them about the "unknown God" they had an altar set up for. Paul says, "I know Him!" You're in luck!

Paul goes on to describe YHWH, Creator of Heaven and Earth. He speaks of the fact that He needs nothing. He's over all things. He created mankind, determined their eras of time and boundaries of their dwelling places. Therefore, every person in every nation is His offspring. He is the maker of them all. He transcends their ability to fashion images of rock, gold, or silver. He is larger than the imaginations of man. This leads us to our passage.

***V30 -- The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,***

God the Creator commands all people (not just Jews, not just Christians, not just people who believe in religious things) to repent. That means to turn from their sin and rebellion against their Creator. So the summons to repent goes out to all listening there in Athens, and it remains a call to all of us hearing here in America.

What's amazing about this message Paul is giving is that he tells them that the Creator they've sinned against is receiving those back to Himself who will repent. This is obviously connected to Jesus (which Paul is getting to and has indirectly set up).

Paul says the times of ignorance God overlooked. What does he mean? He means that even though God has revealed the reality of who He is through creation, their own consciences, and many other ways, they have denied Him, worshiping gods of their own making, and made themselves governing rulers of their lives. Not worshiping the true God is an act of ignorance.

Paul says God has overlooked their acts of rebellion done in ignorance. This doesn't mean there haven't been generations of eternal consequences. What Paul is saying is that God has not directly punished them for the rebellion as it truly deserves. Consider for a moment how bold of a statement it is that Paul defines what the Athenians have done for centuries as "times of ignorance." These are people proud of their intellectual prowess. This is the home of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander the Great. They consider themselves the hub of philosophy and wisdom. Paul says God has overlooked their ignorance.

But the key is "now," this time of overlooking ignorance has ended. They are called to repentance. They are to worship and obey the true God, their Creator.

**V31 -- 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."**

Why should they repent? Because there is a day appointed in which all human beings will be judged. There is an end of all things coming. Every person will be held accountable for everything we have said or done.

Notice Paul highlights that God has fixed this day. It is already determined and set. Only God knows the day, but it is set. He is going to "judge the world in righteousness," which is a judicial process. The picture is before a court. On that day, the offspring of God, which we all are, will be judged.

Now here is the reality. God is not judging based on emotion and feelings. He will judge according to His standard and Word. The standard is already in place, which is why we are not ignorant. God has written His law on our hearts, and He has revealed in His Word. That is what we will be judged by.

But here comes the haymaker of haymakers. This is the pinnacle moment Paul's entire address has been driving towards. Paul says that this judgment will take place before a man He has appointed. So God the Father has appointed/assigned a man to judge the world. Paul is referring to Jesus here. Now let me say this quickly before continuing...Paul's use of "man" doesn't mean "not God." In fact, Paul calls Jesus a man and God throughout his sermons and writings. He understood the two natures that constituted the one person Jesus. He was fully God and fully man.

Okay, back to the statement that God had appointed a man to judge the world. This man is Jesus. And Jesus understood this too. Paul isn't the first to highlight this. He's merely communicating what Jesus revealed in John 5.

**John 5:22-27 -- 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. 25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.**

Not only do we have Jesus saying this here, but in Matthew 25 He paints the scene of the final judgment, where all of humanity are separated into sheep or goats. He is the one doing the separating. All of it hinges on what people do with Him.

How do we know this man is the one appointed by God with the authority to judge all peoples of all nations? He was raised from the dead. Jesus is vindicated in all His claims by His resurrection. Paul points to the fact that Jesus is King of all the world and judge of all the nations as the God/Man who was raised from the dead.

Jesus' resurrection is a clear sign that He is not just a man. His defeat of death was not only predicted by Him, but was always the evidence that His work of atoning for sin as a perfect sacrifice was accepted. His resurrection proved His claims, validated His work, and positioned Him as the victorious King over Creation. He has all authority to judge both the living and the dead.

**Here is the implication: the One who rose from the dead will judge all peoples, but the same judge can be the Savior to those who repent and believe.**

Or as we said in the beginning: **Jesus is the Judge of all the world and God proves this to us by raising Him from the dead.**

***V32-34 -- 32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." 33 So Paul went out from their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.***

Now we see the reaction of the hearers. There are three responses the listening crowd makes.

First, some mocked him. Why? Because who in the world believes that a dead man came back to life?? This is a typical response. And I get it. We don't believe dead people just come back to life either. It's not that big of a stretch for us to understand people's unbelief. But here's the difference: this isn't a faith thing, it's a historical thing. Jesus really did rise from the dead. The evidence is overwhelming. There are even atheists who concede this point. They willfully ignore and deny the implications about who that means He is. But many have acknowledged that Jesus rose bodily from the grave. But some of these first-century Athenians mock Paul for such a claim. Dead people didn't rise from the grave then any more than they do now.

Second, some wanted to hear more. They were intrigued. They could tell Paul wasn't some crazy man or fool. They heard his well reasoned argument and while the idea of a dead man being raised was startling, they didn't immediately dismiss it. What if it's true? What if he's right? Who is this man appointed to judge the world, including me? They want to hear more.

There are many today who don't really know much about Jesus and when He is accurately portrayed and discussed, He is compelling. People are interested to hear more. When we put the real Jesus on display, He's pretty non-ignorable. Maybe some of you want to hear more too. I would invite you to come back next week. In fact, I want to go one step further. This is a day when a lot of people make the effort to come to church. Why? Belief in Jesus. Feelings of obligation. A sense of importance about the day. There could be many reasons. But whatever they are: you are here today.

Here is my challenge to all: I want to challenge you to commit to coming to church each Sunday for the rest of the year. I know there could be days you're out of town or sick. I'm not talking about that. But if

you're home and well: come to church. I want to make a promise to you: I guarantee your life, your family, your faith, and joy will all be greater if you do. I'm not promising you a trouble-free life. But I'm saying this: I guarantee if you come every single week you can, your life on the whole is going to be drastically better. If you take me up on this, and that doesn't prove true, then I'll give you a gift card to Chick Fil A that's only available to use on Sundays.

Third, some believed. They believed. They heard Paul's message and the Spirit of God opened their eyes and hearts to see it was true. They believed and joined Paul. I love that it tells us the name of two of them: Dionysius and Damaris. They went from spectators listening to Paul talking, to believers in the resurrected Savior Jesus.

I pray that will be some of you here today as well. Maybe you came in skeptical, indifferent, uninterested, or hurt from a church experience when you were younger. But I pray you here this: Jesus is who He said He was. He died for sinners like us and rose from the dead. He is alive. He will judge all peoples. Everyone will stand before Him to give an account. If your heart is opened today to believe it, like Dionysius and Damaris, then call upon the Lord and you'll be saved. Put your faith in Jesus and you need not fear standing before the man appointed to judge on that day.

Easter Sunday is a reminder that Jesus defeated death. And we will too because we belong to Him. Though we die, we'll live. Though our bodies will be buried in death, they will be raised in victory.

## LOOK BACK

- How was your week? What is one thing you're grateful for and one thing that challenged you?
- How did you GROW in obedience to Christ over the last week?
- Where did you GO to share the gospel or have a spiritual conversation with someone?

## BUILD UP

- **REVIEW:**
  - Read **Acts 17:30-34** and then have someone else in the group read it again, preferably from a different version.
  - What big takeaways did you have from the teaching?
  - Additional Scripture:
    - Luke 24:47
    - Acts 14:16
    - Romans 3:25
    - Psalm 9:8

- Acts 2:24
- Romans 2:16
- 2 Peter 3:9
- 2 Corinthians 5:20
- Acts 17:23-25
- Romans 2:4

- **REFLECT:**

- What does Paul mean by the “times of ignorance God overlooked”?
- How does God command people to repent today?
- How and by whom will God judge the world?
- What are the different reactions to Paul’s statement and why did people react that way?

- **RESPOND:**

- How do you feel knowing that you will be judged by Jesus one day?
- Who are you sharing the gospel with so they can repent and be declared righteous on the day of judgment?

- **MEDITATE:**

- Acts 17:30-31 -- *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.”*

- **MEMORIZE:**

- 2 Peter 3:9 -- *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

**SEND OUT**

- **GROW:** How will you abide in Christ this week and grow in your love and understanding of Him?

- **GO:** Who in your sphere of influence needs to hear this story or the gospel?

- **PRAYER:**

- Pray over any request from your group members.
- Senior Pastor - **Erik Reed**
- Ministry - **Knowing Jesus Ministries**
- **Pray for our long-term units on the field:**
  - The Wilsons
  - The Grays
  - The Starks
- **Pray for our mid-term sent ones on the field:**
  - Kaesi
  - Ethan & Dustin (May 16 - June 30)

- **Pray for our short-term teams:**
  - Asian Pacific Rim Team departing on April 27
  - London Team departing June 30
  - Southeast Asia Team #2 departing on June 15
  - Central Asia Team #2 departing on September 27

- **Pray for the lost - Unreached People Group (UPG): Punjabi in Canada**



- **Population in country:** 290,000
- **Global population:** 2,160,600
- **Christian Adherent:** 2.5%
- **Evangelical:** 1.50%
- **Primary Religion:** Hindu, Muslim or Sikh
- **Primary Language:** Punjabi, Eastern
- **Summary:** The Punjabi people are from the Punjab, straddling the border between India and Pakistan. This region has been host to some of the oldest civilizations in the world, including the Indus Valley civilization. There are a number of Punjabi emigrant communities scattered around the world, including Canada. They are traditionally Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. Most of those in Canada are Sikh and they are well-established in that country.
- **Prayer Focus:** There are believers among the Punjabi of Canada. Pray they would live lives that honor the Lord, being united in love around truth. Pray they would be salt and light to other Punjabis. Pray the Punjabi would increasingly hunger for forgiveness of their sins, found only through the finished work of Christ. Pray for a movement to Jesus to multiply among Punjabi families and communities.
- Want to keep up with other Unreached People Groups? Download the Unreached of the Day App <https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday/app>