The Book of Acts Lesson 33

Acts 17:1-34

“Responses to the Resurrection”

# Paul used the scriptures to give proof of a resurrected Messiah .

1. The Jews expected a king who would come in and sweep off of their enslaved feet.
2. They were captives to the Roman Empire.
3. The current situation led them to desire a political and military deliverer.
4. It was not yet Christ’s time to reign as king, and instead chose to die on the cross.
5. God’s plan for the redemption of man required a sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 9:22 *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*
6. Paul reasoned from the Scriptures that Christ rose victorious from the grave.
7. The resurrection is the assurance of believers that the gospel of Christ is the true work of God.
8. Vs: 3, 18, 31

Transition: Paul did not ask for blind faith in something that he had invented or was proposing, he reasoned and gave logical proof from the Word of God that the message he preached was genuine. But in spite of this people rejected although their cultures led them to reject in different ways.

# Unbelieving Jews incited violence.

1. As their custom was, the unbelieving Jews became jealous and sunk to moral depths to force Paul off the scene.
2. They sought the help of lewd men. Vs. 5
3. The reason they went after Jason is because he had received Paul. Vs. 7
4. The accusation of the Jews was similar to what they used against Christ, treason against Caesar and the Roman Empire.
5. In verse 9 the phrase “taken security” refers to a practice similar to releasing a prisoner on bail.
6. We will encounter this sometimes in the form of militant atheists or members of a cult. In many countries Christians face the threat of violence from neighbors and government.

# The Athenians scoffed at the supernatural and mocked Paul.

1. The Greeks were know for being thinkers and Athens would have been one of the centers of intellectuals from this country.
2. Athens was regarded as the Empire’s “Intellectual Metropolis”.
3. A dominant theme in Paul’s message to them points out their ignorance concerning the true God. Vs. 23, 30
4. When they heard about the resurrection they had enough and abruptly ended their meeting with Paul.
5. Many people will write you off as soon as you mention church or Christ. To accept Him is to admit ignorance on their part.

# IV. The Bereans were driven to the Word of God in search of truth.

1. The Word of God is what provided the substance of Paul’s preaching.
2. It was not Paul’s personality, eloquence, persuasiveness, or education that affected the Bereans. It was the Word of God.
3. People may want to be entertained or impressed, but all we have to do is share the simple gospel and let God do the rest.
4. As Christians we ought to search the scriptures like the Bereans.
5. When we are faced with intimidating intellectuals, deceitful priests, or mean mockers we must remember that God’s Word is the tool that God has given us to use to reach them .
6. It is through the Bible that the Christian is equipped to clarify and correct man’s misinterpretation of God’s general revelation (creation, nature, etc.)

# In all of the places Paul reasoned about the resurrection people were saved.

1. Although Paul was rejected and even despised by many, behind him he left people who heard and received the message of our resurrected messiah.
2. Verses: 4, 12, 34.
3. The best and most effective soul-winners are also those who face rejection time after time.
4. We must do our best to reason with those in our community about the gospel.
5. The Word of God must provide the substance of our message.
6. This will require that we put our minds to work to grow in our understanding of the gospel.
7. This does not mean getting into arguments, but preparing ourselves for the opportunities we may have to share God’s plan of salvation.

Conclusion: *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen form the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.* I Cor. 15:19-20 The resurrection of Christ is the proof of the power of the gospel. When men are confronted with this they will either rejoice and accept it or they will reject it. These are the only two options, one cannot choose not to choose. To say I’ll think about it later is to say no. We have the same task that Paul fervently labored in. None of us will have the same abilities as the apostle Paul, but we can all learn and develop as a people who are able to reason and convince men of the truth of God’s Word. We may not understand it all, but we have been given more than enough reasons to confidently trust the hope of our salvation. Commit to preparing yourself to share the gospel with others and to endure the rejection that is sure to come. If you do this it is sure that you will find some who will join with us, rejoicing in the resurrection.