



**Title** | Resurrection for Skeptics  
**Series** | The Church that Changed the World  
**Text** | Acts 17:16-34  
**By** | Bob Kerrey  
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# Sermon Notes

**Acts 17:16** Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. **17** So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. **18** Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbling wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. **19** And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? **20** For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.” **21** Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. **22** So 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, **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.” **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. *ESV*

## Big Idea:

**Acts 17:30** “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.” *ESV*

## For Reflection and Application:

### Monday:

Read Acts 17:16-34. In Acts 17:16, why is Paul “provoked?” How do you reconcile Paul being provoked with the humble, respectful way he converses with the people? Does it seem like Paul wants to scold the Athenians or save them? Why is this important?

### Tuesday:

In Acts 17:16-34, how many different kinds of people does Paul engage in conversation about Jesus? How can we follow his example?

### Wednesday:

In Acts 17:18, how would you characterize the response of the philosophers to Paul? Put yourself in Paul’s sandals; how would you feel? In light of what Jesus says in John 15:20, how should we view such persecution?

### Thursday:

Read John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5-6. To what extent is Paul’s message in Acts 17:24-31 consistent with the other verses? In Acts 17:31, how is Christ’s resurrection relevant to Paul’s argument? In light of Paul’s diverse, pluralistic audience, is his message arrogant, narrow-minded, intolerant, or hateful? Why or why not?

### Friday:

Read Acts 17:32-34. What are the three different responses to Paul’s message about Jesus? How does this compare to people’s responses today? Which one best describes your response?

### Daily Prayer:

Lord, thank you that Jesus is risen, and that his resurrection is our assurance that there is salvation in no one else.  
Amen.