

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: hope for ultimate justice (Acts 17:30–31; John 5:22–24, 27–30)

Mankind senses the need for justice. In fallen mankind it may be a distorted sense of justice, but even in the Bible there is the cry for justice. A day is coming when there will be perfect justice, and God has assured us by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Jesus will judge the world in righteousness.

I. *By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Father has assured us that Jesus will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:30–31).*

1. Speaking to the Athenians in the Areopagus the apostle Paul proclaimed to them that a day was coming when God would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he had appointed. He was referring to Jesus Christ, and stated that the resurrection assured all of this future judgment by Christ. Many mocked at the idea of resurrection, a concept equally unimaginable today to those who reject the existence of an all-powerful Creator-God.
2. Disbelief in the resurrection will not change the fact that Jesus will judge. Actions, words, and even thoughts will be judged by God's standard of right. The standard and the manner will be right. Therefore, God calls all people now to repent, to avoid that future judgment.

II. *By the resurrection of Jesus Christ God assured us of the truthfulness of what Jesus Himself claimed concerning future judgment (John 5:22–24, 27–30).*

Jesus' actions at an annual festival (healing on a Sabbath) and His words (claiming God as His own Father) increased the opposition for Jewish leadership. In this context Jesus explained the authority given to Him, the Son, by the Father.

1. *Jesus claimed that all judgment had been given to Him (John 5:22, 27).*

The Father has appointed Jesus as the judge because He is the Messiah (cf. Daniel 7:13; Mark 14:62–63), God become man, who gave His life as a ransom for sinners. His role as judge, given by the Father, demands that all honor Jesus with the same honor as the Father. If these claims were not true, they would have been blasphemous. But the resurrection assures us of their truthfulness.

2. *Jesus stated that all would be judged justly (John 5:28–29).*

The "world" that will be judged is all people, living and dead. Death is no escape from judgment (cf. Daniel 12:2). The judgment will be just because Jesus perfectly submits to the Father, seeking His will fully. For this reason the Father has exalted the Son (cf. Philippians 2:9) and all will kneel before Him, the perfect Judge. The resurrection assures us that this is true and that Christ will accomplish perfect, righteous judgment.

3. *Although the world will be judged, the living and the dead, not all will be raised to a resurrection of judgment. Some will be raised in a resurrection to life (John 5:24, 29).*

All sin and sinners must be judged, but future judgment can be escaped through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believers have had their sin judged on the cross in Christ. Believers have passed from death to life and will not come into the future judgment. The resurrection of Jesus Christ assures the world that God will judge and has appointed Jesus Christ as that judge, and assures the believer that the believer will not come into future judgment.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is therefore the basis for the believer's hope for justice, but to the world a threat of divine justice. God will judge by Jesus Christ according to His standards, not mankind's. Hope for justice in this world; rejoice and rest in justice having been done for you by Christ when you have placed your faith in Him.

Questions for further thought and discussion:

- How does a person's acceptance or rejection of an all-powerful, all-wise Creator-God affect how they understand the miraculous in the Bible? What ramifications do you see for what we teach in our families and for how we testify to our faith to others?
- Explain how certain judgment, both future and at the cross of Christ, relates to Psalm 2:10–12.
- For whom is justice primarily important? Why?