

This Is Jesus IV: “To the Ends of the Earth”

Tolerant Intolerance

May 6, 2018

Worship Song – Jesus
Announcements – Shannon

Feature – We Believe

Good morning everyone.

As Shannon said, we have finally done it. This morning we are completing the five-month mega-series called *This Is Jesus*.

All the way back in December, I told you why I thought it was important to invest so much time in gaining a deeper understanding of Jesus. I said that I was very concerned that most Christians (and pastors) focus so much on all those wonderful things we believe *about Jesus*, such as ...

- The miracle of His birth.

- And the significance of his death and resurrection.

... that we tend to overlook and minimize what He was doing in his life. For a lot of Christians (and pastors), it's almost as if that doesn't matter or, at least, is only of secondary importance.

Unfortunately, the result of that minimization is threefold.

- First, the Christian faith has all too often *become disconnected* from Jesus; so much so that His followers often act in ways that are exactly opposite of what He Himself did and taught us to do!
- Second, Jesus has become, for many people, little more than an eternal fire insurance policy. “Just believe in what He did for you on the cross, and you'll get to go to the good place instead of the bad place” ... which IS true, technically, but misses the point. If you

don't want to do what He says now, why would you want to spend an eternity under His rule?

- Finally – and this might be the saddest consequence of minimizing the life of Jesus – is that this world *needs* what He taught and modeled in His time on earth. It needs people who know that way and try to live by it themselves.

So, back in December, I said that I wanted us to learn more about the Jesus who not only died and rose again for us but the Jesus who came to teach us and lead us in the way of life.

- Who was He?
- Where did He come from?
- How does He fit into the overall scheme of world history?

- What was He trying to accomplish in His time before the cross when He walked the hills and valleys of first-century Palestine?

But before we could get into that, I said that we need to address a few issues related to the origins of Jesus.

What We Learned

ORIGINS

So we took the three weeks leading up to Christmas to do a little bit of intellectual groundwork.

Specifically, we addressed the about two most common “defeater beliefs” – two assumptions that have the power to shut down any discussion of Jesus before it even begins – and one logical conundrum that makes it very challenging to understand what Christianity claims about Jesus.

Defeater belief #1 claims that “science proves that God doesn’t exist, so to believe in God is irrational. And since Christianity claims that Jesus is God in the flesh and there is no God, it’s therefore pointless (and also irrational) to talk about Jesus. End of discussion.”

Defeater belief #2 claims that “history tells us that Jesus of Nazareth probably didn’t exist – at least, not as Christians think of Him. Therefore, anything you might say about Him is pure speculation. So, to continue this discussion is, again, pointless and irrational. Game over.”

And in those first two weeks, we saw a lot of video clips of really smart people who know a lot more about these things than any of us do; really smart people who were able to provide logical, rational and reasonable responses that serve to deconstruct these defeater beliefs ...

... with the bottom line being that you are not

crazy or blind or deluded to believe that a God exists and that Jesus of Nazareth existed and that what we are reading in the New Testament about Jesus is based on actual historical events.

Then we looked at that logical conundrum – specifically, the claim that Jesus is fully human and fully divine at the exact same time, which we saw *also* leads to the doctrine of the Trinity – that the One True God is actually three-in-one (and Jesus is one-of-three) yet all are separate but of the same essence.

And again, using lots of video clips of really smart people, we saw that even though it's not easy to understand, what Christians claim about Jesus does make sense logically.

So, with those preliminary concerns addressed (at least at some level), after the first of the year we began to investigate exactly what Jesus was trying to accomplish in his life.

DAWN OF A NEW DAY

We called that series “Dawn of a New Day” because that’s exactly what was happening as Jesus of Nazareth traveled about ...

- Preaching and teaching
- Healing the diseased
- Embracing the outcast
- Exorcising demons
- And even raising the dead.

God was doing something new in that place and time; something that, centuries before, through the Hebrew prophets, He had promised would happen.

And we saw that Jesus believed that He was at the *center* of that promise; that He was the *fulfillment* of that promise ... the promise *that one day God Himself would become King over Israel.*

... which why Jesus went around saying

things like ...

“The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near! Repent and believe the Good News!” Mark
1:15 (NIV)

And I point this out on several occasions (and will do it again this morning): whenever Jesus talked about “The Kingdom of God” or the “Kingdom of Heaven” He did *not* mean an invisible place where spirits of the righteous dead spend all of eternity strumming harps and singing worship music.

Instead, He was talking about an earthly reality ... which is exactly what the Jewish people were expecting.

However, *Jesus’ vision* of that reality turned out to be very different from theirs, so we spent several weeks looking at those differences.

For example:

- Whereas they expected the Messiah to destroy the enemies of Israel (meaning the Romans and Samaritans along with “tax-collectors and other notorious sinners”) ... Jesus had a different plan. He loved *them* and taught that, in God’s Kingdom, *that’s what you do with your enemies*. You don’t hate them; you love them and pray for them!
- Whereas they expected a political Kingdom that would displace the Roman Empire ... Jesus said that wasn’t really necessary right now, for God’s Kingdom can exist right alongside and often in spite of the kingdoms of this world. It’s possible to be “in this world but not of it.”
- Whereas they expected the Messiah to assume power by taking control of the religious, economic and political institutions ... Jesus acted like none of those institutions mattered all that much. Instead He laid out a plan that is completely

independent of and totally at odds with how the world runs – a plan that turns the values of this world upside down.

As you might expect, all of these differences in expectations proved to be terribly traumatic which is why Jesus went to great lengths to reassure people ...

... saying things like ...

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock.” Matthew 7:24-25 (NIV)

... things like ...

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full.”
John 10:10 (NIV)*

... things like ...

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” *Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV)*

And some did come to Him but many more were disappointed and offended.

THE UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM

At that point, we dove deeper into what Jesus taught about what it looks like when God is King and when His will is done on earth as it is in Heaven.

We called the series “the Upside-Down Kingdom” (from Donald Kraybill’s excellent book of the same name).

And in that series we looked at some of the most challenging upside-down teachings of Jesus, specifically ...

- That those who have power should not use it to serve themselves but to become humble servants of all.
- That those who have money and abundance should voluntarily move *down* the economic ladder through radical generosity to the people and causes God loves
- That those who are fortunate enough to have the knowledge of God should not mistake their knowledge for righteousness, but be ready to admit their own sinfulness. And they should welcome – and not exclude – the “tax collectors and other notorious sinners.”
- Jesus taught that whenever those who follow Him are wronged, they should not

demand their rights or insist on “personal justice” but instead be willing to suffer so that the cycle of contempt and violence might end.

- And most importantly, He said that those who have become wise in the ways of the world (i.e. all of us really smart people) must become like *children* – open to changing their paradigm of how life is supposed to work (which Jesus called “repentance”).

Then, to close out that series, we talked on Palm Sunday about why Jesus had to die – how that, in order to defeat the curse of sin, under which all of us are captive, He had to take the its full effect into His body ... which is what happened on the cross and in his death.

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

At that point, we began our final mini-series called “To the Ends of the Earth” because that’s

where Jesus told his followers to go with the message and life of the Kingdom. And we discovered one bizarre and several amazing things about how they did it.

The “bizarre thing” we talked about on Easter Sunday. 20 years after Jesus was crucified, his followers were out causing riots and civil unrest all over the Roman Empire.

And what were they doing to cause such a ruckus?

Luke tells us the charge:

“They are all defying Caesar’s decrees; they are saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.”

Acts 17:7 (NIV)

... which is not only a strange claim to make but a dangerous one because it could get you and anyone who listens to you killed (hence the riots).

The only way you make that claim is that you

truly believe that Jesus is no longer dead because you've seen him alive and talked with him and touched him and eaten dinner with Him ... which was exactly the testimony of his first followers.

And in the weeks that followed we saw the amazing things they did, including ...

- First of all, dramatically applying Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom by creating little upside-down communities of faith (called "churches") marked by compassion & generosity, grace & authenticity. So much so, that people of other religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds wanted in ...
- And they let them in (which was the second amazing thing) because they understood that citizenship in God's Kingdom was bigger than any other "identifier." In fact, this is why followers of Jesus were called Christians – there was nothing other than Christ unifying them.

- The third amazing thing was the founders of the faith – Jewish believers – laying down their Jewish cultural traditions (like circumcision and keeping all of the 613 Laws of Torah) so as not to make it more difficult on Gentiles who were coming to Jesus ... which, as we saw, has had a dramatic effect even on how we do church here at NHCC.

I don't know about you but for me, all of this has reminded me just what an incredible person Jesus of Nazareth was and is.

By the way, if you've missed any of the messages in this series, they are all available via our app, website or podcast where you can watch, listen to and even read them.

Paul & Pagans

Of course, the question is (at this point): “what now? What are we to do with all of this information?”

To answer that question, I want us to look at one more event that took place during the initial spread of the Way of Jesus; an event which turned out to be one of those “defining moments” for Christianity in general; an event that has truly had a direct and powerful impact *on what we’re doing right here* in our ministry as a church.

And not just ours, but all other churches that have a passion for seeing the message of Jesus continue to spread to those who have never heard it or who don’t truly understand it.

If you’re curious, the details of this event are recorded in Acts chapter 17.

(map) At this point in the story (about 20 years after Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection), the apostle Paul and his companions are a long ways from the

origins of Christianity – Jerusalem and its decidedly *Jewish* culture.

They are 800 miles northeast as the crow flies, after having traveled 1,800 miles over land and sea through the heart of the decidedly *pagan* culture of the Greco-Roman world: from Antioch to Troas to Philippi to Thessalonica and now, at last, into what was probably the most “spiritual” and “religious” city of all – Athens.

The Roman historian Pliny wrote that in the time of Emperor Nero (who came to power not long after this eventⁱ), Athens had over 30,000 public statues honoring various “gods” in addition to countless numbers of statues in people’s homes.ⁱⁱ

In fact, the fixation with “the gods” led another Roman author, Petronius, to remark that it was “easier to find a god than a [human] in Athens. Every gateway or porch [has] its [own] protecting god.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Athens was also a center for art and athletics,

featuring one of the world's largest stadiums and it was the site of the original Olympics.^{iv}

Last but not least, Athens was the intellectual and philosophical capital of the world, home to Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, and Euripides.^v In fact, the author of Acts, Luke, at one point writes that people who lived there “spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.”^{vi}

So this was a very heady and cosmopolitan place!

And what is about to occur in our story is significant, I believe, because *the culture of Athens was very much like our own.*

You and I live ...

- In a heady and cosmopolitan place
- Where fine arts (like music and movies) and athletics occupy much of our time and energy
- And where spirituality of all kinds abounds.

Anyway ... into this city and this environment walks a converted-to-Jesus former-Jewish-rabbi – Paul – and his friends.

The first thing Luke tells us is that ...

*He was greatly distressed to see that
the city was full of idols. Acts
17:16 (NIV)*

... which is a reference to those 30,000-plus statues
...

... and which, by the way, is yet another example of how biblical historical accounts are confirmed by what we know from secular historians (although, to be accurate, there is no such thing as a secular historian. Everyone has some sort of spiritual bias).

So Paul arrives, makes a mental note of the overwhelming display of spirituality and then does what he has done in every city so far.

- First he goes into the synagogue to talk with native-born Jews and Yahweh-fearing Gentiles about Jesus of Nazareth.
- Then he goes into the secular marketplace and does the same with anyone who will listen.

And because Athens, again, is an intellectual, philosophical place (in addition to its spirituality), Luke tells us that a group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers *hear him and begin to debate with him*. And apparently, not too kindly, for he is accused of being a “babbling” or an “empty-head.”

But because Athens is, again, a city where people like to listen to and talk about all the latest ideas, Paul is invited to the Areopagus to present this strange “new teaching.”

Now, the Areopagus (which was also known as Mars Hill and also as the Hill of Ares – representing both a Greek god and goddess), was a place where citizens of

Athens would gather for these kinds of presentations.

If you've ever been to Red Rocks Park outside of Denver, it's kind of the same setup. The Areopagus is a large natural amphitheater at the base of the Acropolis and Parthenon – the temple of the gods – overlooking the city about 400 feet below.

So Paul stands up to speak and he begins by saying ...

“People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘to an unknown god.’” Acts 17:22-23 (NIV)

Now, when Paul says this, there are two things going on in his mind.

First of all, he is expressing a burden for the people of Athens.

Earlier we read that he was “deeply distressed” at the sight of so many idols – all those “god statues” – he had seen upon his arrival.

Paul was distressed – he was burdened – because each idol revealed that these men and women had a great capacity to know the One True God. Every statue signaled their awareness that there was “something more” in this world than what meets the eye and they were seeking after it.

But each one also testified that they had not yet found it; that their desire and capacity had instead been twisted, distorted and sabotaged.^{vii}

So when Paul begins speaking about their spirituality it is with the burden that they might be set free from darkness, fear and deception and come to the knowledge of the truth. That’s the first thing that’s going on.

The second thing happening here is that

Paul is building a non-judgmental bridge to where they currently are.

He doesn't say "you guys are just stupid, blind and spiritually insensitive. Just look at all these useless idols you have." He's not arrogant or condescending or condemning in any way.

Instead, he starts with where they are: the spiritual awareness and hunger *represented* by those idols ... *and ...* that one special statue to "the unknown god" – the statue by which they themselves are admitting "you know, we might have missed one."

... which is exactly where Paul goes next in his introduction.

"You are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you."

Acts 17:23 (NIV)

It's a brilliant approach.

“You all know you’re missing one. So, I’m going to tell you who it is. I’m going to start with where you are and tell you about the God you do not know.”

And this (as I said earlier) turned out to be another “defining moment” in the spread of Christianity; specifically, the value of building a non-judgmental bridge to those who come from a completely different spiritual background or no spiritual background.

Paul understood that the “echo” of God’s creative presence is everywhere. So, one way to build a bridge to people who are not yet believers is to find that echo in the things they love – like fine arts and athletics and philosophy and science and expressions of spirituality – and then explain how those things actually point back to Him.

Here at North Heartland that idea is has been a key component in how we’ve designed pretty much every service in our history.

- It's why we decided from the beginning that whenever possible, we would use secular music that pointed in some way to the need for God. We're not trying to be cool whenever we do that. We're trying to build a bridge.
- It's also why, when the Royals won the World Series in 2015, I did a message series about it, illustrating how our collective response to them and what they did was actually an indication of a deeper longing for God. (Still on our website by the way).
- And it's why pretty much every year (and this will happen again two months from now), we use current and recent movies to illustrate various aspects of the Gospel.
- It's why we've done the Celebration of Christmas show for three years now and will do it again this Christmas.

We try to start where people are and then use those things to point to God ... which is what Paul does next in his speech.

“That unknown god you’re aware of,” he begins ...

“The God who made the world and everything in it ... is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything.

In other words, “the God you do not know is the Maker not the made. He is the giver not the receiver” which was completely opposite from their way of thinking.^{viii}

“Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations that they should inhabit the whole earth and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.”

“God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.”

In other words, “the true God is not like the supposed gods who live on Mt. Olympus, remote and protected from interaction with humans. Instead the true God is actually inviting us to draw nearer to Him.”^{ix}

And then Paul says something amazing.

“For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’” Acts 17:24-28
(NIV)

And what’s amazing is that Paul’s first sentence there is a quote from a song written about Zeus six centuries before. And the second sentence was a line in a poem called (FAINO-MENA) *Phainomena* written by a Stoic writer three centuries before.

... which means that Paul is actually using the secular fine arts of that culture to build the bridge to where they are ... which also means that if anybody ever tells you that “NHCC is weird” because we use movies and secular music, you just point them right to this verse. We’re in pretty good company.

Anyway ... now that Paul has built the bridge, he is ready to walk over it.

“Therefore,” he says ...

“Since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone— an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance. Acts 17:29-30 (NIV)

In other words, “it’s great, it’s cool that you all have made all of these statues. That’s your innate spirituality at work. And God has been patient and

tolerant of your limited understanding.”

“But now,” Paul continues ...

“... *but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.*”
Acts 17:30 (NIV)

... which probably needs a bit of explanation because that word doesn't mean what most people think it means. Most people think “repent” means “stop sinning and clean up your act.”

But Paul isn't saying anything at all like that to the Athenians because the word “repent” in the original Greek language describes “a fundamental change in *thinking*; a transformation of *the heart*”^x ... which sometimes *does* lead people to stop doing some of the things they're doing. But that kind of decision would be *the fruit* not the root, so to speak.

The *root* of repenting is to rethink your paradigm

and maybe even to feel a little bit of regret that you've been wrongheaded and wrong-hearted.

And *that's* what Paul is telling these folks they need to do: "The One True (and unknown) God has been patient and tolerant with your spiritual ignorance, but it's time for you to change your thinking because of what He has done."

And then Paul tells them what He has done.

"For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead." Acts 17:31 (NIV)

... which points back, again, to that seemingly bizarre claim of the first Christians ...

- That Jesus of Nazareth is God's appointed King (and not Caesar or any other power or any other god).

- That the upside-down Way of His Kingdom is the way that leads to peace and fulfillment, not just for individuals but also for entire people groups and nations.
- That, as King of all, it is to Him that all are ultimately accountable.

“And the proof of all of this,” Paul says, “is that Jesus was crucified on a Friday afternoon and raised from the dead on the following Sunday morning.”

To which ...

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed.

Acts 17:32, 34 (NIV)

... which really does, at long last, bring us to the

conclusion of this mega-series.

Responding

Earlier I said that this story would help us understand what we need to do with all of this Jesus information we've received over the past five months. And this response to Paul illustrates pretty well what people typically do.

Whenever people hear the story of Jesus – when they discover what He was doing in His life; and discover what He taught; discover the meaning of His death, and they hear the case for His resurrection ...

- Some people mock it and anyone who believes it.
- Others are intrigued and curious enough to want to hear more.

- Still others hear it and believe it. They accept what God was doing in Jesus and become His followers.

And I'm pretty sure that, during this series, all three of those responses have occurred.

1. Some people have checked out altogether and they're no longer here. Some of you may be thinking about taking that option right now.
2. Others – again, maybe some of you here in this room or watching online – have had their eyes opened where Jesus is concerned because they've had their paradigm shaken.

You've discovered over the past five months that *He is not who you thought He was*. He's way more interesting; way more relevant; way more challenging than you've ever imagined.

And there's something oddly attractive about that and you're thinking, "Wow, this whole

thing might be true.” But you just need a little more time to think about it.

I want to affirm you for opening your mind to the possibility of repenting – of truly rethinking things and reordering your life around Jesus and His Kingdom.

And I want you to know that you are welcome to continue hanging out with us for as long as wish.

But I also feel compelled to share the advice of another of Jesus’ apostles who wrote:

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. Hebrews 3:15 (NIV)

If you are sensing in your heart a thought like “don’t make excuses, you have enough information – it’s time to get off the fence” – that is God speaking to you and you need to move, because *not* moving will eventually

harden your heart. And God's voice will begin to fade from your hearing.

And you will join the first group. You'll check out, too.

3. But then, finally, there are those who respond in the third way. You've been here or watching online and you don't need any more information. You've heard what you need to hear and you've made up your mind. *You believe.*

You believe in God the Father, you believe in Jesus Christ.

You believe in the crucifixion, you believe in the resurrection.

You believe He is coming back again to remake the whole world for good.

You believe He died to atone for your sins, that

it's not about how good you are but about how good He is

You believe that the upside-down Way of Jesus is the best way to live and you want to follow in it.

You believe in Jesus and you are ready to join up and become part of His Kingdom.

So how does one do that?

Technically, the fact that you have come to believe means that you are already a part of the Kingdom. When Cornelius heard Peter explaining the story of Jesus, at some point, they believed what he was saying and the Holy Spirit entered into them, filled them, saved them, translated them from the “kingdom of darkness” to the “kingdom of light.”

Once you believe, you are joined and you are part of the Kingdom.

The problem, though, is that the experience can be pretty nebulous which is why pastors will often say something like “pray this prayer with me that expresses belief” or “just walk down this aisle here and I’ll pray the prayer with you.”

And there is certainly nothing wrong with either of those approaches. I’ve used both of them myself at times.

But Jesus actually taught his first followers a much better way to accomplish the same thing.

He told them ...

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
Matthew 28:19-20 (NET)

And that’s what they did.

Luke writes:

When people believed Philip as he was proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:12 (NIV)

And that's why, today, we have our baptism pool set up.

Anyone who wishes to say; anyone who needs to say "I believe in Jesus as the savior of all and the King of all. And I want Him to save me and I want to be part of His Kingdom. I want to learn from Him and follow in His way" ... anyone who wants to say that is invited, for lack of a better term, to *prove it ...*

... by doing exactly what Jesus said to do: *to get in the water and be baptized* just as millions of other believers have done for centuries.

Baptism Explained

Now, as to why He told us to do that, I'm not really sure. But, it doesn't really matter does it, if He truly is the King?

What I can say for sure is that the act of baptism doesn't wash away our sins. Jesus – and our faith in Him – does that. Instead what baptism does is to visualize that:

- When a person stands in the water and then goes under the water, it's a way of visualizing there is nothing they can do to save themselves; nothing they can do to make up for even the least of their sins.
- And when a person comes up out of the water they're saying, "In the same way that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead, he has raised me from spiritual death. By my faith in who Jesus is and in what He did, I

have been made clean and holy and perfect in His sight. I have been given a new life that begins now and will continue for all of eternity.”

Now, this morning we have several people who told us in advance that they have come to believe in Jesus. And they’re already down front and we’re going to baptize them in just a few minutes.

But I am certain that there are some here today who have *also* come to believe in Jesus, yet who have *not* been baptized – at least, not of their own choosing. Maybe you were baptized as an infant. I was baptized as an infant. That’s a great thing.

But the value of you and I making our own decision to be baptized cannot be overstated. It’s an experience that you can always look back on and say, “Yes, I did come to the point of trusting Jesus as my savior and my King. And then I did the very first thing that He instructed new believers to do. I got in the water. And I was baptized.”

That's why, whenever we baptize these days, we always throw open the door at this point and say "if you need to be baptized this is your opportunity."

- We've got the water
- We've got extra towels
- We even have extra clothes of all sizes for both men and women to change into for getting wet.
- We have all the personal grooming items you will need for afterwards.
- You can even bring your family and friends down to the pool with you and they can stand up here next to you!

There simply is no reason why you cannot be baptized right here and right now.

And some of you ... that's exactly what you are hearing from God right now. So don't harden your

heart. Don't make excuses. There are none to be made.

During this next song, you need to get up and move to the door right away. Don't delay – we don't have a lot of time left.

And when you get to the door, the people there will help you get changed. Then they'll bring you back in and we'll baptize you along with everyone else while the band plays and we all sing together.

Now, we do have one qualifier – if you're younger than high school and you haven't signed up ahead of time, we want to ask you to wait until next time when we have a baptism class. We've found it necessary to make sure one-on-one that our kids really understand what baptism is all about.

Ok, we're all going to stand and sing. And if you need to come for baptism, move right away.

Worship Songs – What a Beautiful Name / Great

God Who Saves / Jesus

CLOSING COMMENTS

1. Offering @door
2. Next week – Mother’s Day / greatest relational principle ever

Endnotes

ⁱ in A.D. 54

ⁱⁱ A.T. Robertson, quoted at <https://www.ucg.org/beyond-today/archaeology-in-acts-part-2-the-message-spreads>

ⁱⁱⁱ Word Pictures of the New Testament, notes on Acts 17:16

^{iv} From J.D. Gear, SENT#19, Starting Where People Are

^v <https://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/acts/athens-versus-paul>

^{vi} Acts 17:21

^{vii} www.raystedman.org/new-testament/acts/athens-versus-paul

^{viii} Steadman

^{ix} *ibid*

^x [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metanoia_\(theology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metanoia_(theology))