

Title: "True and Rational Words" (Part 2)
Text: Acts 26:1-8, 24-29
Date: September 13, 2026

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at mercyhillchurch.org.



Big Idea

Christians are called to be ambassadors for Christ in this life (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20). We're to reach others with the gospel that's reached us. But a lot of times we don't know how to do it. We can learn a lot by watching the Apostle Paul. Here in Acts 26 we see that he shares his faith in a way that is both *logical* and *historical*.

Layer #3: Logical (v. 8)

As you go back through the book of Acts and look at the various times these early Christians are attempting to share the gospel, you'll notice they are always emphasizing the resurrection of Jesus (e.g. Acts 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 10:39-41; 13:30-33; 17:30-31). This is *the* central issue for them. And it makes sense. For if, on the one hand, Jesus is not raised from the dead, then he's certainly not the Christ, and we need not give much if any of our attention to him at all. He's just another dead man in a tomb. But if, on the other hand, God did raise him up from the dead—as a vindication of his message and ministry, as a display of his triumph over Satan, sin, and death—well, then it changes everything . . . and we ignore him to our own peril.

In v. 8, Paul is inviting his listeners to evaluate their own line of reasoning and set of personal beliefs for logical consistency. If, on the one hand, you believe there is a God, then you have to say it's possible for a man to be raised from the dead. Why? *Because clearly God would be capable of it.* Yes, he is the giver and sustainer of natural law, but he also transcends natural law and can work, in that sense, outside of it. But if, on the other hand, you don't believe there is a God, then you too have to say it's possible for a man to be raised from the dead. Why? *Because you have no logical basis for denying it.* You can't dispose of God without also disposing of natural law and the clear rationality of the universe. And if you dispose of natural law then the uni-

verse is open, random, ungoverned, absurd . . . and anything can happen—even a resurrection. So either way you slice it, you can't close yourself off to the possibility of it.

Layer #4: Historical (v. 26)

How do we make a case that the resurrection of Jesus isn't just *logically possible* but *historically true* today?

1 Historical Fact

We know without a doubt that the church is here. But where did it come from?

"Christianity is inexplicable apart from the assumption that virtually all early Christians . . . did indeed believe that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised bodily from the dead." - N.T. Wright

2 Pieces of Evidence

The first is the empty tomb (cf. Luke 24:5-6). The second is the many appearances (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3-8).

3 Common Pushbacks

- Pushback #1: Mischief
- Pushback #2: Mistake
- Pushback #3: Myth

"The Christian church rests on the resurrection of its Founder. Without this fact the church could never have been born, or if born, it would soon have died a natural death." - Philip Schaff



Reflection Questions

- Why do you think the resurrection of Jesus is so central in the preaching and evangelizing of the apostles? How might this influence the way you share your faith with others?
- If you personally reject the idea that Jesus was truly raised from the dead, how do you account for the origin and ongoing existence of the Christian church? What do you think makes the most sense of the facts?
- How does the rational case for the resurrection of Jesus encourage you? In what ways does this strengthen your faith, peace, hope, and joy?

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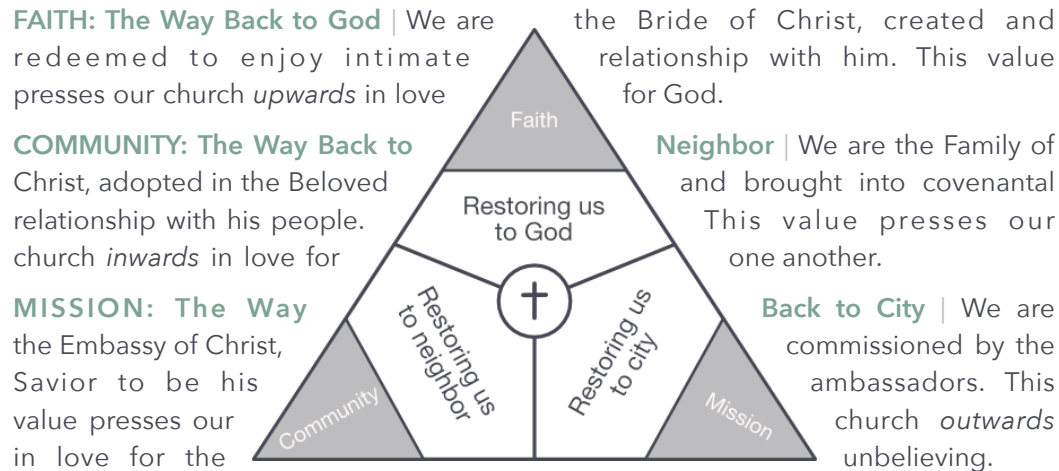


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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Fall Kickoff!

Throughout the next few weeks (beginning Sunday, August 30th), we will be encouraging you to consider ways you might **plug in** (e.g. via Home Groups, DNA Groups, etc.) and **pour out** (e.g. serving on a team, etc.). We're not doing this to pressure or manipulate you. We're not trying to make your full schedule even more overloaded than it already is. We're after your flourishing and your joy. We truly believe that if we want to be healthy followers of Jesus (and healthy humans for that matter) our meaningful involvement in a local church is not an option. It's essential. We trust you believe that as well. In light of this, here are a few things you can look forward to in the weeks ahead:

- On Sunday, August 30th, one of our pastors will deliver a special message revisiting the mission of Mercy Hill (check it out online!).
- Throughout the weeks, we will be sharing stories and spotlighting different ways you can plug in and pour out.
- We have created a Fall Kickoff Follow-Up Form that we are encouraging everyone to fill out. We'd be so appreciative if you would!

Thanks already for your meaningful participation in our church family. Here's to even more!

To learn more, scan the QR code below.

Allen at Steinbeck Gardening Project - October 10th!

Covenant Membership Class - Open Registration!

Scan the QR code below for more info and clickable content!

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