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The Gospel Promise and the Resurrection; Acts 13:26-41

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Introduction – A promise is a declaration, a vow, a pledge to take or not take certain actions. A promise is a verbal dedication from the issuer of the promise that his/her actions will fulfill the stated commitment. A promise binds the issuer to this verbal agreement to make good on the promise. It is meant to provide confident assurance to the one to whom the promise is made. We make promises all the time that range from the mundane to the crucial and critical. I promise to take out the trash. I promise to repair that item. When we sign a loan agreement we are promising that institution to repay the agreed amount. We promise to love and honor one another till death do us part in marriage.

A promise, though, requires more than simple words or desire or good intention, if it is to be worthwhile or believable. 1. A promise requires that the promiser be trustworthy. If the promiser has a history of not following through on his word, his promise is rather empty. 2. A promise requires that the promiser be capable of fulfilling it. That's why the loan officer at the bank looks for evidence that one is actually financially able to repay the loan before it is given. 3. A promise requires fulfillment. It is just words until it has been reinforced and proven by action. A promise is not complete until it is fulfilled.

The Gospel is a promise. The word Gospel means good news. It has three basic components. 1. An understanding of God. God is the Creator of everything and everyone. He is holy. He is eternal. He is good and perfect in every way. 2. An understanding of man. Man, created by God, has violently offended and rebelled against his Creator in every way. These infinite eternal offences are called sin. We have dismissed, rejected, and replaced God, and therefore man stands before God guilty and deserving of God's just punishment. 3. God, in His grace and mercy, has made a way for guilty sinners to be declared not guilty. He sent His Son, Jesus, to live a righteous life and die a substitutionary death on our behalf. Everyone and anyone who embraces Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior and turns from their sin to follow Christ will be pardoned of every wrong every committed, transformed into a new life that loves the Lord, and welcomed into eternal life. That's the promise of the Gospel.

A promise requires that the promiser be trustworthy. God is trustworthy and faithful. His promises never fail. A promise requires the promiser be capable of fulfilling his promise. Jesus perfectly fulfilled His mission to be the Savior of God's people. A promise requires fulfillment. And here is where the resurrection of Jesus reinforces the Gospel promise. When God raised Jesus from the dead it was His universal declaration to the world that His promissory note of the Gospel was complete. Fulfilled. Accomplished. The resurrection of Christ is God's verification and proof that He has made good on His promise.

Christ lived the perfect life that you and I could never live. Christ bore our sin in His body on the tree and thereby took our punishment upon Himself and died for us. Christ rose from the dead signifying that He alone is the Fountain and Source of everlasting life. Forgiveness of sin, abundant life, eternal salvation are for all who look to Him and believe in Him and love Him and embrace Him and follow Him!

The proof of the promise is the resurrection. It's how we know God is indeed trustworthy for the gospel promise. God is indeed capable of fulfilling the gospel promise. And God indeed fulfilled the gospel promise. As the saying goes, "The proof is in the putting." Concerning the gospel, the proof is in The Resurrection!

- I. God the Father Issued the Gospel Promise
  - a. Vv26-27 – God's gospel promise is right there in the Scripture.
  - b. Vv32-35 – Ps 2:7, Is 55:3, Ps 16:10
  - c. Vv36-37 – Even though David wrote these psalms and the promise is referred to as the blessings of David, the promise is not about David, and David knew that. The promise is about a son that would be born in the lineage of David.
  
- II. God the Son Fulfilled the Gospel Promise
  - a. Vv27-29 – those who plotted and schemed to have Christ killed thought to do away with Christ, but they were actually fulfilling God's plan and promise!
    - i. Isaiah 53:1-11
    - ii. His persecutors meant to silence Him, stop His message, and see Him disappear in history by having Rome crucify Him.

- iii. They had no idea that His death was actually why He came. Rather than silencing Him, stopping His message, and wiping Him from history, the cross gave voice to the gospel and the empty tomb put a megaphone to that voice that rings to the ends of the earth!
- iv. Their plan to silence Christ was God's plan to save His people!
- b. V30 – They did everything they could to put an end to Christ. They cowardly arrested Him. They falsely charged Him. They cunningly convinced Pilate to order His crucifixion. They approved His brutal torture. They applauded His excruciating crucifixion. They put His body in tomb, covered it with a large stone, put a seal on it and Roman guard around it.
- c. And then the unexpected and unanticipated and unstoppable thing happened – But God raised Him from the dead!
- d. The Resurrection! The Resurrection!
  - i. The Resurrection proved that everything Jesus said was true.
  - ii. The Resurrection proved that Jesus was indeed God in the flesh.
  - iii. The Resurrection validated the gospel promise.
  - iv. The Resurrection meant that life and salvation is truly and really and fully and completely found in Christ.
  - v. When the disciples encountered the Risen Lord, they suffered and gave their lives for the gospel because the Resurrection proved that the promise was true!
  - vi. When the tomb emptied, the gospel exploded! And the fires are still burning today.

### III. We Proclaim the Gospel Promise

- a. V26. V32.
- b. Vv38-39.
  - i. Everything. Everything. Every wrong we've done. Every wrong we've said. Every wrong we've thought.
  - ii. You see the law only has the power to condemn. The law points out all the things we've done wrong. The law proves us guilty – the gospel sets us free!
  - iii. Romans 8:1 – There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!

Conclusion – There are only two options when it comes to the gospel promise – issued by God the Father, fulfilled by the God the Son, and proclaimed right here this morning. There are only two options.

1. vv40-41. There is unbelief. Even though one tells you, you can reject and not believe. You can dismiss the promise of God. You can ignore the Savior. You can prefer to live your life without God. You can determine to develop your own idea about God and your life and salvation and heaven. You can twist the good news into dogmatism or old-fashioned religion or antiquated crutch for the weak. You can be just like those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers in v27, you can fulfill the truth of Scripture that many will reject the good news without even knowing your actually fulfilling the very Scriptures you reject.

2. There is unbelief, but praise be to God, by His grace, there is also belief – soul-saving, life-satisfying, eternal joy-giving belief in the promise of God. Vv 47-48.

God the Father has promised you life in His Son.

God the Son has secured that promise by His life and death.

We proclaim that promise today.

And the resurrection, the resurrection, proves that promise is true.

Believe in Him today!