

# Believe The Word of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] So we're in John chapter 4, verse 41. We're going to read all the way through John chapter 5, verse 18.

Well, as you hear the word of God read, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, remember that this is his inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

When I'm done reading our sermon text for today, I'll say the word of God, and you'll respond, thanks be to God. Hear the word of our Lord, John 4, verse 41.

And many more in Samaria believed because of his word. They said to the woman, it is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.

The first time Jesus is called that, it's from the lips of the Samaritans. Now, verse 43, our sermon text. After the two days, this is Jesus spending two days with the Samaritans, he departed for Galilee.

[ 1 : 19 ] For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown. So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast.

For they too had gone to the feast. Verse 46. So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made water to wine. And at Capernaum, there was an official whose son was ill.

When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

So Jesus said to him, Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. The official said to him, Sir, come down before my child dies. Jesus said to him, Go, your son will live.

The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering.

[ 2 : 22 ] So he asked them the hour when he began to get better. And they said to him, Yesterday at the seventh hour, the fever left him. The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, Your son will live.

And he was, and he himself believed in all his household. This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

John chapter 5. After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there in Jerusalem, by the sheep gate, a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.

In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, Do you want to be healed?

The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going, another steps down before me. Jesus said to him, Get up.

[ 3 : 40 ] Take up your bed and walk. Now that day was Sabbath.

So the Jews said to the man who has been healed, It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed. But he answered them, The man who healed me, that man said to me, Take up your bed and walk.

They asked him, Who is the man who said to you, Take up your bed and walk? Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place.

Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, See, you are well. Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you. The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who

had healed him.

And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, My father is working until now, and I am working.

[ 4 : 46 ] Verse 18, This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal with God.

This is the word of God. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Let's pray. Oh Lord, your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and in love. And give us strength to follow on the path that you set before us. Through Jesus Christ we ask.

Amen. There are three differences between sheep and goats. Sheep feed on green pastures.

Goats feed on trash. A goat can eat an entire metal spoon and digest it. No problem. That's number one. Number two, Sheep, they live together.

[ 5 : 54 ] They stay as a herd, as a flock. But goats, they're loners. They survive all alone in the mountains, in the wilderness. But the most important difference is number three. Sheep follow their shepherd's voice.

A shepherd could start walking and call them, and one by one, all those that know the shepherd's voice will follow him. And if you have goats, you can try to call out and let their nose be as nice as you want to them.

They will ignore you, and goats will do their own thing. And that's what Jesus is bringing to attention in John chapter 10, verse 27. He says, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

In this passage that we read today, what we have is the kingdom of heaven, God himself, breaking into earth, a boy on his deathbed, and a dad who's not even a Jew, he's an official, having faith in the word Jesus gives him, and the giver of life, healing that boy off of his deathbed.

And we have a lame man, stinky, all alone, 38 years, in misery, helpless, hopeless, and the word of Jesus to that man brings life, and it creates faith in him.

[ 7 : 24 ] When is it that the lame will walk, and the dead will be rised again? It's when Christ returns. When Christ returns, that's what will happen. The new heavens and the new earth will be ushered in.

That's what the Bible teaches. And now the king himself is walking the earth, and he's showing now, the kingdom of heaven is breaking in.

And what I want to point out to you, is how he does this. Christ advances his kingdom, by his almighty word. And those who are sick are healed by faith.

So my message to you is very simple, but it's the most important message I can give you. Believe in the word of Jesus Christ, and be saved.

That's what's in focus. 15 times in the gospel of Mark, the word of God is elevated. 24 times in the gospel of Matthew, the word of God.

[ 8 : 33 ] 29 times in the gospel of Luke, upholding the word. But now we have the biggest concentration of this data, right here in the gospel of John, 44 times, and especially in the passage we just read.

The word of God, going forth with power. And what this should point out to us, is that the foundation for life in Christ, when Christ is ministering and ruling, it's his word.

That's the foundation for life in Christ. And in Acts, 59 times the word of God is upheld. So not only is the word of God foundational for you to have life in Christ, the word of God is foundational for our life as a church.

That's what the book of Acts shows us. But yet, for the same reason, the word of God has been attacked and undermined with every generation. And the church has had to wrestle with that.

The goats that come to dominate congregations and pulpits, they want to squelch God's word. They don't want God's people to hear it, the voice of the shepherd clearly from his word.

[ 9 : 39 ] That's why thesis number 54, one of Martin Luther's 95 thesis, says this, injury is done to the word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or larger amount of time is devoted to indulgences rather than to the word of God.

And if the Roman Catholic Church was taking the money from people in order to tickle their ears and give them a false assurance, well, we have a very different but the same kind of indulgence

going on still today, don't we?

It's a transaction where you're not coming to hear the word of the shepherd. Instead, it's a transaction to appease your conscience. But the sheep will know the voice of the shepherd and they will follow him.

In John 6, 36, we read that the words, Jesus says, the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. And that's the power we see them having in this text.

Now, I want you to put your eyes on a verse from our passage today. John 4, 41. Look at John 4, 41. Many more believed because of his word.

[10:51] It's Jesus spending time with the Samaritans, preaching to them how he is the savior of the world. And that's what they believe and confess. And now look, a little bit later, we're going to see this next time, John 5, 24.

Look at what Jesus says in 5, 24. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.

So we see this travel of Jesus from Jerusalem, where he talked to Nicodemus, up to Galilee, where he was baptizing on the way in the Israeli land, we'll call it.

Then he slips over into Samaria and then back into Israel land and Cana of Galilee. So the first miracle takes place there in that region for the official son. Then he travels all the way back down to Jerusalem and that's where he goes into the temple and he heals the lame man.

So that pattern is from Jerusalem to Israel land, slip into Samaria, and then back into Israel land and then back down to Jerusalem as he ministers. Every time he gets closer to Jerusalem where the established church is going to try to kill him, it's more concealed.

[12:00] Not yet. My time is not yet to be crucified. And then he backs away and goes back and every time he pushes back in, it's that power struggle because they know the king of heaven and earth will rule over all one way or the other.

So now look at John 4, verse 50. Jesus said to that man, Go, your son will live. And look at the response of this official who's not even an Israelite.

The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. So what I want to show you in these two miracles, these two signs, is that number one, you must hear God's word in order to believe and number two, you must respond to his word in order to be saved.

So first, you must come to know that you need a savior. That's what the Samaritans realized. That's why he preached the gospel to them. They were not trying to save themselves by self-righteousness.

Look at verse 41 again. The Samaritans heard Christ's word and believed that they needed him to be their savior. Verse 41, many more believed because of his word. Verse 42, they said, we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the savior of the world.

[13:14] They knew they were sinners. They knew they could not have a hope of being right with God unless they would be saved. You too must know that you need a savior.

Now John is developing the theme that he already hinted at at the very beginning of this gospel. Remember John chapter one, verse one, in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God.

All things were made through him. Verse 14, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory. Glory as the only son from the father, full of grace and truth.

So every time the word of Christ is proclaimed, when Christ gives his word in these stories, it's a word of grace and a word of truth. And all those that the father will bring to life, they will believe, they will respond, and they will obey him.

So Christ advances his kingdom on earth by his clear word. Number two, you must want to hear Christ, not just to see a sign.

[14:21] Look at verse 48. The Israelites in Cana of Galilee, they still needed his word in order to believe. So we read in verse 48, Jesus said to them, unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.

And he's talking about these people who had heard about his miracles down in Jerusalem. And Jesus is saying to them what Paul says later, that faith, it comes not by seeing a sign or a miracle. You're saved by faith, not by sight. And he needs them now to stop looking for a sign, look instead to the one, to Jesus Christ, who the signs are pointing to, and believe his word.

Now Jesus knew what was in the heart of man, we read, and as he was in Jerusalem, the crowds gathered and he goes back to Cana. They just knew him from being the miracle worker. And he knew what was in their heart and he would not give himself to them because he knew they were after more and more signs.

But now we have a contrast with these Jews that just wanted a sign with this official. The official, I think, is to show us, look, the gospel will go forth and it will work with power, not just for the self-righteous.

[ 15 : 34 ] In fact, it's for those who quickly know they are sinners. Look at verse 47. When this man, and this is referring to the official, most likely he worked for King Herod, non-religious, non-Jew, he lived down at Capernaum.

Capernaum was the city down by the lake. So picture a lakefront mansion. This man works for the king, for the official. But now this man has a son and his dear son gets a fever.

I mean, we think of how much sickness we've all had in our families these days and in ancient times a fever is going to be deadly. And this boy gets weaker and weaker and weaker. And the family, all the servants, the mother, the dad, everything stops.

He gives orders. Everything gets paused with work. It's all about his son's life now. This could be their final moments with their dear boy. And someone mentions to him, there is a man who is doing miracles down in Jerusalem.

And a father does what any father would do. He leaves everything. He starts hiking up away from the lake, back up to where Jesus is in Cana. And let's see what he says in verse 47.

[ 16 : 44 ] This man heard that Jesus had come to Galilee and he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son for he was at the point of death.

Verse 48, so Jesus said to him, unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. And that's exactly true of the people of Cana.

They wanted to see more signs and they wanted a miracle worker. But let's see if this man will have a faith in Jesus at his word without needing to see anything. Because Christ advances his kingdom on earth by his soul-searching word.

And that word put this man back to evaluate, do I need to see a sign or will I have faith and go trusting this man's orders? So we see in verse 49, the official said to him, sir, come down before my child dies.

Come down or going down toward the lake again. He says, come down and be with us. Just like the Samaritans had said, stay with us for a couple days. We want you. We want your presence with us.

[ 17 : 49 ] We don't want just a sign or a miracle. We want you. Your presence is what could heal him. But this also foreshadows how Mary and Martha said, Jesus, if you had only been here, then our brother Lazarus would not have died.

None of them had the faith that Jesus could also let that person die and then raise them from the dead. That's what he would do with Lazarus. And look in verse 50, Jesus said to this man, go, your son will live.

And we read that the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.

The application for us is that you must hear the word of God and then you must believe the word of God. Because Jesus is still speaking today and he's still speaking to you through his word.

Verse 51, as he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. Now listen to what comes next. This man was thinking about it.

[ 19 : 00 ] Okay, I walk there, it's about 20 miles from Capernaum to Cana. 20 miles, about a two-day trip and the whole way back he's thinking, I just left.

I did this whole big trip, I could have missed the final moments with my son. Will this actually be saving him or not? And as soon as the servants tell him the good news, he wants to now try to see if he can connect the dots.

He says, what hour was it? It was the seventh hour. That is when the Lord spoke the word to me.

The very moment he spoke the word. I didn't have to come back, I didn't have to do anything.

It was the word of Christ that healed my son that very moment. And so you see, we're told next, verse 53, he himself believed.

He believed and all his household. Now you see, that word that Christ spoke to him, it did two things at the same time.

[ 19 : 57 ] It made his son on his deathbed well. Just like the word of God brought creation into being, the word of Christ 20 miles away made that boy well. That's the first thing it did.

The second thing the word of Christ did is it regenerated this official Gentile. Gave him a new heart. He believed because the word of God was powerful.

Now I want to pause. We've all lost loved ones and Jesus came to proclaim salvation for your soul for all eternity.

And I see in this story that even if this man would have gotten back and his son was not healed, the word of Christ regenerated him. And the sign confirmed the faith that God had already put in him. This man encountered Jesus. And Jesus said, unless you see a sign, you won't believe. So this man was believing without even seeing the sign.

[ 21 : 00 ] And God did heal him. God did bring life to his son. But remember, salvation is by faith through the word of God, not by sight. And so the encouragement to you is that you must receive the word of God by faith.

And you must believe without seeing the promised spiritual realities, the truth of the Bible. You must believe in Christ by faith alone. So Christ's kingdom advances on earth through his faith-giving word.

Not only must you believe the word of God, you must also obey the word that the Lord gives you. Let's look, not only did this official believe and obey by going back and seeing it, look at the next story.

I think that's what it shows us. Chapter 5, verse 1. You must obey and respond to the word of God as you hear it. Verse 1 of chapter 5, after this, there was a feast of the Jews, and the Jews went up to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. Now, Jerusalem's in the mountains, and so every time you're going to Jerusalem, it's called going up or ascending, like the Psalms of Ascent. So Capernaum is down by the lake, we go down, so it's more geographic than north and south.

[ 22 : 20 ] Verse 2, there were in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, really two pools. In Aramaic, they're called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.

So the book of Nehemiah describes the rebuilding of the walls and the gates, and this would have been on the northeast entrance into the temple area, into Jerusalem, and it's a gate that was smaller, and it's where all the sheep could have been brought in, even from Bethlehem and from those pastures surrounding the city, they would be filing in, bringing in through the sheep gate, and what would they be brought into the temple for?

To be offered as sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins, and these pools, they're called Bethesda. Bethesda means house, remember Beth means house of Bethlehem, house of bread, Bethesda means house of grace, and we're told that there was this scene here, quite a scene.

Look at verse three, there lay a multitude, a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed. You've been to the Denver Public Library, you've been to Portland, you've been to other parts of the world, you know what that looks like, a multitude of destitute, poor, stinky invalids, the blind, the lame.

[ 23 : 48 ] I mean, it's a picture of hell. Picture the sounds, the cries, the agony, the misery, helplessness, and then yet here there are Levites and priests going, taking these lambs, serving all around the temple.

And Jesus had been taken to the temple throughout his whole life. His parents were taking him there because he was fulfilling all of the law of Moses. And we're told that these invalids would wait for the waters to stir.

And so how these pools were filled, do you remember last week we talked about the living waters that bubbled up from that spring under Jerusalem? That same spring, it would pass through minerals that were red and they would pick up a red color and they would feed into this pool. And the springs were not constant so there would be times where there would be more water spilling out, bubbling up, picking up more minerals, sweeping in this red color and causing the waters of these pools to stir.

So there's some wonderful imagery here. Can you picture it in your mind? The gate where the sheep come in to be offered as sacrifices, these red waters moving and bubbling up, the living waters filling these pools in the house of grace and yet the multitude of invalids and sick.

[ 25 : 07 ] And what is the purpose of the temple? It's so that the sick and the broken can be made whole, they can be healed and been brought into fellowship and communion with the Lord. Now I want to point out to you how you can trust the word that Jesus speaks to you because he sees the very least of these.

Now even though there was a multitude in verse three we're told there were blind, lame, and paralyzed. And then verse five, one man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. And out of all that multitude, look at verse six, when Jesus saw him. Jesus sees him as one individual, one person, a paralyzed man amid the multitude. And Jesus knew that he had already been there a long time. Now one person, Jesus Christ, he could have known this according to his divine nature, omniscient God. He could have also known that this man had been there a long time according to his human nature. Maybe as a boy, as a teenager, this scene broke his heart. And the compassion of the Father, knowing what the temple was for, his heart toward this man.

[ 26 : 21 ] Maybe he'd even talked to this man when he was growing up. That was a man he knew, had been there in misery for so long. And Jesus spoke to that man.

You can trust the word of Jesus when he speaks to you because he speaks to the heart. Notice what it is that Jesus says, verse six. Jesus said to him, do you want to be healed?

Do you want to be healed? Doesn't that seem like an obvious question? Don't you want to be healed? But think about how soul-searching this is.

This man, for 38 years, this is life. This is all he knows of life as I lay here. This man does not have a name. His name is the sick man.

That's his entire identity. And he says, there's no one to put me in the waters. And in fact, people cut me off when I think I have a chance. This man is helpless.

[ 27 : 24 ] And this man is hopeless. And Jesus asked the hopeless, helpless man, do you want to be healed? Jesus asks you today, is the life that you have now, is that really what you love?

Or do you want to be healed? Because the kingdom of God comes to heal you, not to leave you as you are. Jonathan Edwards in the 1700s pointed out how a human being, according to their free agency, will always do what they want most.

So for example, a man would not go rob a bank because he wants his freedom more than the high risk wealth. So you do what you want most.

And that's why the will needs to be converted. Your will needs to change. You will always want what is for you. You will always want that sin. That's why every single drug addict has not an addiction to a bunch of different drugs.

They have a drug of choice because that's what they want. They believe that drug will give them the greatest happiness. So they do what they want. And then they become, it's your chemical addiction to it.

[ 28 : 39 ] It's an identity. This is who I am now. And Jesus comes to reverse that. Do you want to be healed? So Christ, he advances his kingdom through his personal word.

Only he knows man's heart. He knows my heart. He knew this man's heart. And he knows your heart. Do you want to be healed by Jesus? Now, the next thing I want to point out is the order in which this happens, the sequence.

Jesus first has to heal the man. then the man has to obey. It's not the other way around. The man doesn't obey God and he's healed by obeying.

First, God has to heal you. And then you will obey. If you are truly healed, you will obey. Look at verse seven. The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me in the pool. When the water is stirred up, I am going and another steps in down before me.

He doesn't say, yes, I want to be healed. He makes more excuses. He needs to be healed to even know that this is what he needs, what he wants. So Christ's word is humbling. And look at verse eight.

[ 29 : 47 ] Jesus said to him, get up, take up your bed and walk. So he commands him on what is the thing he needs to do. But the man still does not have the power to do it until God heals him.

Look at verse nine. At once, look at the order, the man was healed, but it doesn't stop there. And he took up his bed and walked. So the word of Christ is authoritative.

His kingdom is coming. And he commands you, you must believe. You must repent. You must turn to the Lord Jesus. And his word is humbling.

Unless I heal you, you will never turn. You will always want the sin or the idol more than to be with me, your creator. So if you are walking with Christ, praise the Lord that he turned your heart. And praise the Lord that he's making Christ more and more of your desire, the healing of God more and more the thing you do want most in life by his grace. But you and I never get to put it back on God.

[ 30 : 55 ] Well, I don't have to believe because I'm not healed. No. His word is authoritative. You must obey him if you are to be saved. You don't get to just hear his word and ignore his word because then you've made your decision.

You have chosen to reject your God, the King of kings. So how do you obey the word that Jesus speaks to you?

Well, I want to show you in verse 14. Afterward, Jesus found the same man in the temple and Jesus had to remind him, see, you are well.

The man for 38 years lies on the ground in his filth with no one to help him. Now the man's walking around and Jesus has to point out the obvious thing to him. Man, look at yourself.

You're not the same as you were. You have been healed. And why is that so important? And why does Jesus, the good shepherd, whose voice they will always know, why does he care to tell this man that?

[ 32 : 03 ] Look at what Jesus commands him next. What are those three words? Sin no more. So how do you know if the word of God is working powerfully in you?

It's that you continue walking with him. You do not live in sin. And Jesus says, make sure that nothing worse may happen to you. And you might be thinking, what's worse than laying in a multitude of invalids for 38 years?

How could it possibly get worse on this earth? Jesus is declaring to live an unrepentant life is worse than being broken in the body.

You will have to face your creator one day. And he is most pure, most loving, most righteous. And the blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing that can heal your soul.

And just like the springs of living water bubble up, it's the blood of Christ that he will shed from the cross for the forgiveness of your sins. By his blood we are healed.

[ 33 : 15 ] Go and sin no more. Christ's kingdom advances on earth by his life-changing word.

word. It changed that man's life the moment he was healed. He picked up his mat and walked and obeyed. That initial step of conversion. But it's life-changing for the rest of your life.

Go and sin no more. It's the same power, the same authoritative word that converts a sinner. It's the same authoritative word that sustains that Christian, that saint in sanctification, becoming more and more like Christ.

Christ. Now, if you're like me, one of the scariest thoughts you have is that I know God saved me. I know it's the power of Christ that holds me.

Yet not I, but Christ in me is all that carries me. And one of the scariest thoughts is that what if I relapse or backslide or I fall into egregious sin?

[ 34 : 19 ] I know by my flesh I would still fall back into sin. I need Christ to sustain me every hour. And that's such a terrifying thought. Samuel Rutherford was a pastor in the 1500s in Scotland.

Tiny little church in the countryside. And he felt that. He said, it feels like I'm like a spider. And the only thing holding me up from, you know, from hell is this one thread of a web.

But the hand that holds that thread is the hand of Jesus Christ. He ransomed me. And we have the confidence that the same God who saves will sustain you by that same power every day because Jesus says, look at verse 17, God is working.

God is working and he will keep you. Verse 17 says, Jesus answered this man, my father is working until now and I am working. That's your promise that God who saved you will sustain you.

I want to give a couple words of caution and reflection here on the Pharisees are right mixed into the same story. And as I said at the beginning, what's happening here is the promise of heaven, the promise of a new creation, the dead will rise, the lame will walk, and Christ is breaking in the kingdom of heaven everywhere he steps his foot.

[ 35 : 43 ] life and these tastes because he just brings the power of God. It's happening. And the caution is that you could miss it just like these Pharisees missed it.

Thomas Watson said, none will find it more difficult to repent than hypocrites. They have juggled in religion so much that their treacherous hearts know not how to repent any longer.

And when you hear the word of God go forth, you must believe. How do you know you believe? You repent. You turn to Christ once again as your only hope in life and in death.

Watson said, hypocrisy is this. It's counterfeiting sanctity. The hypocrite pretends to a form of godliness like the Pharisees but denies the power of God.

2 Timothy 3.5, the hypocrite is a saint in jest, like an ape clothed in purple. Under his mask, a profession that he hides his plague sores.

[ 36 : 54 ] Isn't that an image? An ape in a purple robe? That's what hypocrisy is. He is seemingly good so that he may be really bad. The hypocrite seems to have his eyes nailed to heaven, but his heart is full of impure lustings.

He lives in secret sin against his conscience. Be careful to not be like the Pharisee. See, Jesus came to be the Lamb of God.

He became the gate through which his sheep would enter now to have fellowship with the Holy God. He spilled his blood. He brings healing by his word.

What is repentance and why is there so much freedom for us to live in continual repentance? Well, Charles Spurgeon in the 1800s quoted a children's hymn that was known at the time and it goes like this.

Repentance is to leave the sins we loved before and show that we in earnest grieve by doing so no more.

[ 38 : 01 ] Christ's kingdom advances on earth by his living and active word.

I want to make a connection here for you. The living word of God, it still goes forth today. Salvation is still by faith, not by sight today.

In Ephesians 121, we're told that Christ rules over all the earth now and he rules from above, from heaven above, over all authority and power and dominion, above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come.

And the kingdom of heaven is breaking in still by his word as is proclaimed through the church, through his people. So the ear, the body, receives the word of God. The soul believes and obeys and trusts in Christ for forgiveness.

And then from the soul, that life in Christ of the age to come works its way out in the body. So how do you know if you've been converted, if you have a new heart? It's like the drunk man that again with Charles Spurgeon, he was on the streets drunk again and Charles Spurgeon was walking by on his way to work.

[ 39 : 20 ] And this man said, hey, Pastor Spurgeon, I'm one of your converts. Converts. And then Spurgeon turned around and said, yeah, you must be one of my converts because if you were one of God's converts, you wouldn't be living like this.

Beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. So we pray now that like the hymn, Lord, haste the day when our faith will be made sight.

The clouds will one day be rolled back as the scroll. The trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend. And if you're in Christ, you can say, it is well with my soul.

You must respond to God's word if you are his, if you belong to him. To reject his word is to be a goat. And Jesus said in Matthew 25, Jesus will gather all nations and he will separate people, one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

One will go away into eternal punishment and the other, the righteous in Christ to eternal life. Be sure that you believe now and obey Christ, that you can have life in him.

[ 40 : 32 ] His kingdom is coming. It advances on earth by his word. So don't ignore the word of God. Confess that it is, it is everything that we've seen it to be in this passage.

His word is mighty. It works with power. It is clear. You can't say, I didn't understand that I need to have faith in Christ. His word will search your soul.

Put yourself under his word. His word is faith giving. You come to the Lord weak and ask him to work mightily in your heart to increase your faith by his word.

You'll see over and over in the word of God, God is merciful toward those who repent. So you can come to him just as you are. Don't try to clean yourself up first. And his word is personal.

He knows your heart. He knows where you need healing even today. Yes, his word is humbling and authoritative. But let's bow the knee to our Lord Jesus today because one day every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and confess that Jesus is Lord.

[ 41 : 40 ] Let's pray. Amen. Amen. from Isaiah 35. Lord, we read how the wilderness and the dry land will one day be glad.

We still walk in the desert and we feel the shadows deepen all around us. But we thank you, Lord, that spiritually you've inaugurated the kingdom of the age to come.

We pray, Lord, that you will blossom in our hearts and our souls and our families your abundant life, that we can rejoice with joy and singing. We pray that the glory and majesty of the new creation will be breaking in, that you will strengthen the feeble name.

Lord, those with an anxious heart even today, may we be strong in Christ. May we not fear your judgment because we know our sins are covered by your blood. We behold you, our God.

You will come with a vengeance to judge the living and the dead. But those who are united to you will leap like a deer. The lame will be healed and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy.

[ 42 : 53 ] You promise that the waters will break forth in the wilderness and the streams in the desert and the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water.

We praise you, Lord, that we can taste that now in Christ when we taste Christ and we can believe in you now through your powerful word. Amen.