

A Foolish Question

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Date: 20 July 2008

Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 00] Let's turn back to the chapter we read, 1 Corinthians chapter 15, and turn again to verse 35, page 115.

1 Corinthians 15 and verse 35. But someone will ask, how are the dead raised?

With what kind of body do they come? You foolish person. What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or some other grain.

But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body, for not all flesh is the same. For there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. And so on, right down to that whole, the end of that whole passage that ends in verse 49, where we left off.

[1 : 10] Some of the younger ones this evening will have recently left school. And if you think that by leaving school you are never going to have to ever again sit in a classroom, I've got bad news for you.

There are very few people who leave school and never have to sit in a classroom again. Those of you who are going to university, I'm afraid you're going to have to spend the next at least three years sitting in a classroom listening, not to a teacher but to a professor.

And even if you're not going to university, chances are you'll probably have to go to a course of some kind. If you're doing an apprenticeship, you'll be sent on a course. Even if you aren't, if you go and work somewhere, chances are you'll have to sit some health and safety course or whatever.

And that will involve you sitting in a classroom listening to someone else. And sometimes you think back to your school days and they weren't so bad after all because the someone else is a lot more boring than your teachers used to be.

That's very often the case. Have you ever sat in a classroom though? I don't think there's anybody here tonight that hasn't sat in a classroom. Have you ever sat in a classroom and listened to somebody and you're dying to ask a question because you don't quite understand what the person is saying.

[2 : 28] You're dying to ask a question and you're dead scared to ask the question in case it's a stupid question. I'm sure every one of us has gone through that experience. I certainly have.

You're sitting in the class, you're trying desperately to understand what the person is saying. And you're saying, I just wish I could ask this question. But I'm afraid to. I don't want to ruin my pride and my credibility because I'm afraid everybody's going to laugh at me.

And even worse, I'm afraid the teacher's going to laugh at me. And it's going to show me up for not having listened or whatever. You're dying to ask that question. Let me give you a wee piece of advice. Next time you're in that situation, you ask the question anyway.

Because someone told me once, there's no such thing as a stupid question. No such thing as a stupid question. And the chances are also that if you're thinking of the question, then everybody else, or at least most people in the room, are going to be thinking of the same question.

That's why it's important to ask the question anyway, even if they laugh at you. Even if some people are laughing, at least you've got an answer to the question. And you go away a bit more knowledgeable. Now here is a stupid question.

[3 : 35] Verse 35. I don't know if it's the only instance in the Bible of a stupid question. But it is a stupid question. Because Paul tells us it's a stupid question. And he says, in verse 35, someone will ask, how are the dead raised?

With what kind of body do they come? And then he says, you foolish person. In other words, you fool for asking that question.

I don't think I would like to be that person. But I'm sure glad that they asked the question. Because Paul, after telling the person he was a fool, went on to explain the answer to the question that's here for us in the word of God.

And I believe that when Paul says, you fool, he wasn't really talking about the question itself. He was talking about the motive behind the question, which was unbelief.

You see, the problem is, let's go back to the reason that Paul wrote this chapter. The church in Corinth was a young church. It hadn't been around for very long. And as such, they didn't really know very much about God's promises.

[4 : 50] Besides, what was happening was that wrong teaching was creeping into the church. We always have to be aware of wrong teaching. Not everything you hear on the TV or read about in books and magazines is always the truth.

You have to always be aware. And especially in the very first century, there was wrong teaching had crept in. There was a group in the church and they were doubting. They were skeptical about whether it was possible for the dead to be raised.

And this teaching was spreading and people were becoming addicted to this teaching. And more and more people were falling for it. And Paul had to say something about this very dangerous situation that had arisen in the church in Corinth.

And then he says, okay, let's go back to the beginning then. If that's the case, if there's no such thing as the resurrection, then that means that not even Jesus rose from the dead.

That's the logical conclusion to what's being spread about in the church in Corinth. If there's no such thing as the resurrection, then not even Jesus has been raised from the dead. Now, let's stay with that for a few moments.

[5 : 59] And think about the logical conclusion to that statement. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, and you can read back into the chapter, we read it previously, then our preaching is useless.

We have completely wasted our time preaching the gospel to you. Furthermore, your faith is meaningless. It's a waste of time. Your faith is non-existent.

Furthermore, we, when we told you that Jesus rose from the dead, we were liars. So the whole thing is up in the air. You can't believe a thing we said we've been telling, if we've been telling lies in one respect, we must be telling lies in every respect.

You can't trust us. Then, it's even worse than that, because you are still in your sins. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then his death on the cross was not a sacrifice for sin.

And the only way that we can know for sure that it was a sacrifice, the sacrifice for sin, is that we can go back to the tomb, and we can know for sure that he rose physically from the dead.

[7:06] And then he says, lastly, you, those who have died believing in Jesus, have perished. The whole thing is a complete waste of time if there is no such thing as the resurrection from the dead.

So there's the stupid question. Now, here's the stupid question. It comes after that, verse 35. What kind, how then, move on from that, move on from the argument as to how we know for sure that the dead one day will be raised when Jesus comes again.

We know that because Jesus rose again. You can elaborate on that. You can see how Paul elaborates on that in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. You can do that in your own time. But then Paul, he takes this as a springboard, and he then explains the answer to this very important question, which is a question which I guess we've all asked if we're thinking people.

And I hope that none of us have even come here tonight without being prepared to ask the right questions. If we're going to talk about the fact that the dead are raised, then there are all kinds of questions that are going to arise.

Will we still be the same people that we were if we are going to be raised from the dead? Will we look the same? Will we be raised one day and will we die 30 years later or 70 years later?

[8:28] Will we still live in the same place? What does the resurrection mean? What does it mean that people will... What about those who haven't believed in Jesus? John chapter 5 gives the answer to that.

You can go and read it at home. Those who have died believing will rise to go with the Lord. Those who have died as unbelievers will also rise and go forever to be away from the Lord.

That's the awful truth of John chapter 5, the words of Jesus. You can read it for yourselves. But then the question itself, how are the dead raised? How? What kind of body will they have?

Of what kind of body do they come? And Paul replies by saying three things in the verses that follow. And I'd like us to look at these three things. Some of them are very difficult, so I hope you'll stay with me.

Because this is a very difficult passage. But who says that we've got no right to look at the difficult passages as well as the easy ones? And who says that we're not going to get something, at least something, from looking at the difficult passages, the complex passages in the Bible?

[9:32] The Bible is not always an easy book. And this is one of those passages which isn't easy to get our heads around. Paul says three things in the verses that follow between verse 35 and verse 49.

First of all, he talks about an analogy. The second thing he says is that there's a reality. First of all, there's an analogy.

That's when you liken one thing to another. And here he likens the resurrection from the dead to the sowing, the planting of a seed. As we expect that that seed will be transformed into a plant in due time.

That's an analogy. The second thing he talks about, the reality. This is not just a wishful thought. But then the third thing he talks about is the theology of the resurrection.

First of all, the analogy. Secondly, the reality. And then the theology of the resurrection. The theology of the resurrection is, I must admit, where it gets a little bit more difficult.

[10:31] But don't be afraid of that word theology. It's just, theology is simply, is the extent to which we know about God. Theology. Theology. It's the extent to which we know our Bibles.

And we're able to try and understand the Bible. All Christians should be theologians. All Christians should have at least some knowledge about the Bible. And that's what theology is all about. And I hope it will try and make it as clear as we possibly can.

The analogy, first of all, is the first thing he talks about. Now, what you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare seed.

Perhaps of wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen. Now, I want us to notice, first of all, that at no point does Paul even attempt to explain how it's possible, physically or scientifically or any other way, for God to take someone of the body of someone who has been dead for thousands of years.

And that body has been decomposed for thousands of years to nothing. And reconstitute, bring together the component parts of that body once again, to the extent that that body comes to life.

[11:55] At no point does Paul attempt to explain how that is possible. And here is where you have to face the problem of the miraculous and the supernatural.

You face it from day one in the Bible, from Genesis chapter one. You face the challenge, am I going to believe that this world was created by God himself?

Am I going to believe that when I read that Moses stretched out his hand, he did so because he was commanded by God to do so. And when he did so, by the power of God, by some unknown scientific process, because God is sovereign over all scientific things, God parted the Red Sea.

He changed the water into blood. He brought the frogs. He brought the hail. He brought the darkness. Everything we read about in the Old Testament all the way through. If you're going to start throwing out the Bible, every time you come across the miraculous or the supernatural, then you can throw out the whole book.

The whole thing is a waste of time if you don't believe the supernatural. It's of no use whatsoever if you don't believe the supernatural. And it's the same when it comes to the resurrection of the dead.

[13:06] When we talk about the dead being raised, what we mean is this, that people who have been dead, whose bodies have been destroyed and explosions and fires and whatever other way that they have come to death, that God will somehow or other raise them to life once again.

I know how impossible that is. Everyone knows how impossible. It was just as impossible for Paul. He didn't live in a scientific age like we do.

And yet for him, he knew perfectly well. That's why when he preached the resurrection of, when he preached about the resurrection in Athens, the people just laughed at him. They started laughing, started mocking him, saying, what is this babbler trying to say?

That's what they said. The kind of thing that we would be accused of today. So some things don't change. The resurrection is a completely absurd prospect. It is totally impossible.

And yet it's promised in the Bible. And so here's where we face, we come face to face with the Bible, and we say, I know how difficult it is to believe.

[14:12] I know how impossible it is. And yet I believe it because God has said it. And tonight I stand here, and I truly believe that one day, wherever my body is laid, it will come to life again.

A day will come. An hour will come. I don't know when that will be. It could be thousands of years from now. It might not be. When the bodies of those who have died will rise.

But what Paul does not do is try and explain how scientifically that's possible. He doesn't know how God is going to do it.

That's not his problem. God will do it because he said so. But then he says, they said this, I believe in this so, I'm absolutely sure that this is going to happen.

And the reason he was so sure was what we said before, that he was able to look back 50 years or thereabouts to when Jesus rose from the dead. And he was able to, on the basis of that fact that had taken place, he was able to look forward and know for sure.

[15:30] And such was his certainty that he said this, look, every time you see someone, a friend or a family member being placed in the grave, you think about it from now on as sowing seed, a farmer sowing seed in the ground.

But when someone sows seed, you know perfectly well that what is produced out of the ground is not the same as what went in. It's completely different.

And then he says this, that if you extend the whole idea, if you extend what I've just said, that there are all kinds of different bodies, all kinds of different beings, that God has created one in one environment, like up in space, where there are the celestial bodies, says Paul.

There are some swimming about in the depths of the ocean. There are some creeping around in forests, eating grass and climbing trees.

Oh, there's a diversity in the creation, in the universe, where God has created one thing to perform one function in one environment, and another thing to perform another function in another environment.

[16:48] Don't limit God. God has created everything in its own time, for its own purpose. Such will be the case with the resurrection. The second thing that Paul goes on to talk about is the reality.

This is not a wish as far as he's concerned. He's absolutely convinced that this will take place. But the reality also is that there's a huge contrast.

There could not be a greater contrast between what is placed in the ground at the time of someone's death and burial, and what comes out of the ground at the time when Jesus comes again and will raise the dead.

And here's the way that he goes on to describe four, in four ways, four contrasts, how the resurrected bodies, and now we're talking about those who have lived and died believing in Jesus Christ.

Here is the contrast between how these people will be buried and how these people will rise again.

[17:59] First of all, he tells us that, in verse 42, that what is sown is perishable, but what is raised is imperishable.

That's the first contrast that he made. What is sown is perishable, and what is raised is imperishable. Now, there were times in the apostle's life when he talked about his ailments.

We're all conscious of our ailments, those of us who are getting on in years, are more conscious of our ailments than those of us who aren't. The young ones, I suppose, you don't really think very much about what's wrong with your body because there probably isn't very much wrong with your body.

But as you grow older, you get more and more conscious that the body is decaying. It's kind of like the kind of food that we buy in, I was going to say Tesco, but say the co-op for the moment.

there's a sell-by date. And they tell you not to buy it after the sell-by date. I'm not quite sure how accurate that is, but everything, everything has its sell-by date.

[19:15] You wouldn't find a single thing, a single edible thing in any of these shops that doesn't have a sell-by date on it, after which the product begins to corrupt and fade and begins to rot eventually and smell.

It's not what it was. It's past its best. It's the same with us. I don't know what time that, I don't know what our sell-by date is. It's probably something like about early twenties or late teens or something when we're at our best.

And then things begin to all slowly but surely decay. Paul himself said this. You read 2 Corinthians in chapter 4. He said, the outward man perishes.

All he had to do was look in a mirror and he could see the difference between what he was then compared to what he was 20, 30 years ago. Same as you and I. The outward man perishes.

That's the way we are. Because we live in a fallen world and because death has crept into the world because of sin there is the aging process and it's a process that we'll have to where we'll have to meet all kinds of sickness and disease.

[20:23] Some of that disease we'll be able to get over we'll be able to recover from and others we won't. That's the kind of world we live. That's what it means to be to be confined to the kind of bodies that you were perishable.

And the very fact that the body is dead is the ultimate proof that it has perished. It's come to the point where its faculties have packed in and are not able to function anymore.

It doesn't matter if people can spend thousands as they do on nips and tugs. They can spend thousands on Botox and anti-aging creams and all of these kind of things.

But ultimately whatever these things can do for us you'll never win will you? Never ever win. It's always going to catch up with us the aging process.

And eventually as Paul says the burial takes place perishable. But look at what he says the contrast is.

[21:29] When the resurrection takes place when Jesus comes and when he by his own word by his own command when he commands the resurrection of the dead here is how the resurrection body will appear imperishable.

no longer susceptible to aging. I don't know what age people will be at the resurrection. I don't know what apparent age they will be.

I don't know whether they look like young people or teenagers or children or perhaps a little bit old. I don't know. Strange isn't it that we know we can ask all these questions.

It's good to ask these questions you don't know. But one thing we do know is that never ever again will we be susceptible to the aging and the corrupting process that we are susceptible to in this life.

You look in the mirror one day and it will be exactly the same as a thousand years from then. And there will be no defect. Absolutely no defect.

[22:39] Everything will be perfect. God prepares pairs for his people is nothing short of perfection. That's the first thing he says.

And then he tells us he gives us another contrast and he says it's buried in dishonor. It is sown verse 43 it is sown in dishonor.

Here's another feature of the decaying process and the kind of world the kind of fallen world that we live in. You know people talk about a dignified death and we know what they mean by that.

I'm going to maybe make a kind of a controversial statement. I don't believe there's any such thing as a dignified death. You can argue with that if you want. I don't think there's any such thing.

All death is undignified because death was never meant to come into the world in the world that God created in any case. And however much we try and dress up the process of death and we try and hide from it and try and colour it in all kinds of things, it's monstrous.

[23 : 59] It's awful. It's fearful. There's nothing glorious and nothing dignified about it. It is sown in dishonour.

And you know when you think of human achievement and the way in which those who have become great in this world, you know, if you look, I'm reading a history book at the moment, it's quite fascinating.

It's one of these books that gives you a whole overview of the entirety of British history from day one all the way up to the present age. And it gives you the chance. And of course, when you begin to read a book like that, so much of history depends on the great people, the people who ruled and reigned.

And you know, there's so much glory amongst the greats, isn't it? You can imagine people like Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great, and how much reverence and respect that these men were given.

People who have been kings and rulers and who have commanded thousands of people and people have bowed down to them and they would think nothing of killing you if they didn't like the look of your face or if you frowned at them in the wrong way.

[25 : 10] These men were glorious in their own way, powerful in their own way. People would go anywhere just to get a glimpse of some of these kings and they stopped at nothing.

And they all came to the same end. people who were who were who were in this life, no matter how great they were in the eyes of individuals, their countries and their people, they all came to the same end.

As weak and as helpless, even more so than a newborn baby having to be carried, people who wielded swords and shields and who people thought were invincible, they have to be carried to the grave and buried.

Isn't that solemn? And all they could do was, and that's why people today, the current trend of course amongst funerals is not to mark the death of someone but to celebrate the life of someone.

And whilst I fully agree that we should be thankful, that when we have a funeral, that part of it should be a remembrance of the person, a thanking the Lord of what that person was to their wives and to their families and to their husbands and to their relatives.

[26 : 38] Sometimes I think that our modern trend is just escapism, just trying to escape the reality, trying to escape having to cope with the reality of what has happened.

There is nothing glorious about death that is sown in dishonor, but, he says, it's raised in glory.

Glory. Glory. You know, there's going to be something glorious about the resurrection of every child of God. Some people, you get the impression, don't you, that if you just let your mind wander and you think, well, if there's going to be a resurrection, there's going to be so many people, isn't there?

There's going to be all of these people are going to be raised at the same time, the same moment. It's going to be chaos. It's going to be thousands of people all crowded together in one place. How will that work? That's because we always try and we're always so insistent on thinking in terms of this world.

You can't do that. you've got to always remember that God is going to do things in his own way and it might be completely different from the way.

[27:53] When I read these words, I'm almost tempted to think that every single individual resurrection of a child of God will be an event in its own right.

When it says we'll be raised in glory, do you know what glory is? Glory is, when you look at something and you say wow, that's what glory is. The wow factor, that's what glory is.

When you go over the Christian on a lovely day and a lovely morning and you see this gorgeous sky and you see the mountains before you and the valleys and all their splendor and there you're face to face with the creation of God in you, it takes your breath away, doesn't it?

You don't even have to go 30 miles to have evidence of the glory of God, God's creation and you go wow. And here we have, here we have it's sown in dishonor, it's raised in glory.

There'll be no chaos at the resurrection. There'll be only wonder and praise and order and joy.

[29:01] Every single, every single person who's raised from the grave in Christ, Christ, there'll be an event in itself. There'll be no insignificant members.

There'll be nobody left out on the wings, on the signs. There'll be no just people who are numbers. Every single person, every single child of God will be raised in glory and everyone else will go, wow.

I truly believe that. I truly believe that. I don't know how it's going to happen, but I truly believe that that's what's going to happen because the word of God tells me. And then lastly, it's sown in weakness.

And again, closely related to what we said before, you know, when you think of the power that humankind likes to attribute to itself, our achievements and our might, when you think of what an athlete will do, how many years he'll spend to build his body to the best possible peak of physical fitness in order for him to go into the Olympics.

You look at, those of you who are going to follow the Beijing Olympics, you look at some of these runners and these men and women did not just turn up and decide to run.

[30:26] These men and women have been at it for years and years and years, for hours and hours every day building their body up into the most powerful. You look at some of these wrestlers, you look at some of the people who are at the peak of physical fitness.

There's nobody like them, they're the strongest and the fastest and the fittest people in all the world and yet they're only a step away from being laid in the grave, isn't it? Isn't it solemn?

That's what the Bible tells us because at root we're really nothing. Our bodies are just a step away and that's what Paul says, it's sown in weakness but it's raised in power.

The kind of power that again is indestructible, the kind of power that we can't even go into tonight because the Bible doesn't even explain the kind of power that we will have.

I believe that there's a sense and I know that you don't misunderstand me here because when we use the word superhuman, we think of Spider-Man or Superman.

[31:43] Clear your head of all these things. But the real superhuman humanity that God is going to create, it will be a superhumanity.

I believe that. it's raised in power. There will be a power to the human body, the glorified human body that we have never experienced in this world.

I don't know what kind of a power that will be because Paul goes on to talk, do you notice that he emphasizes that the body will not be essentially physical, it will be essentially spiritual.

So he's talking about a power that we've never experienced and we've never seen before. But it will be a power nonetheless. Four ways, four contrasts in which he contrasts the way that Christ will raise the dead compared to the way in which the manner in which they have been buried at the end of this life.

Again, you can let your imagination run riot, but the important thing to do here is to root your thinking on the Bible and only, only go by what is written in the Bible.

[33 : 05] These are the promises. The glory, the power, the honor, the strength, the certainty. That's what the Bible says. we will still be human beings, the Bible tells us.

We will still be ourselves, the Bible makes clear. But I believe we will be elevated to a realm that we've never known before in this life, a new plane, a new dimension, recreated, renewed, rejuvenated, refurbished.

Created anew, God's new creation, which will be perfect. Just let me spend two minutes then on this last theme that Paul brings up, the theology behind this.

And it's important for the apostle to describe this in terms of the whole Bible and the purpose of God for the human race. When he talks about the first, he goes on to talk in verse 45, another contrast between what he calls the first Adam and the second or the last Adam.

And it's important for us to make clear right away who he means by the last Adam. We all know who he means by the first Adam. The first Adam was the first human being that God ever created in the new world that he had created in Genesis chapter 1.

[34 : 44] The first man was Adam and the first woman created for him by God to be his partner and his wife, his companion, was Eve. So the first man was Adam.

But who does Paul mean when he talks about the last Adam? Because that's the key. If you don't understand who the last Adam is, you'll never understand the passage.

The last Adam is very simply Jesus. How do I know? Because go back in the passage, go back in the chapter to verse 20. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For, verse 21, as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Here's Paul introducing us to the idea that as that we all died and fell by our relationship as part of the human race with the first man.

[35 : 57] Because he died, because he fell, we all fell in him. That's why sin and death came into the world. He was our representative before God and because he failed, we also have failed as a human race.

Now, there and then, God, it could be said that God could have destroyed the human race there and then because of our failure, but he didn't. What God did was something utterly extraordinary in order to save us from our sins.

He himself took human nature and entered into our world. You know, sometimes we say that, but we don't really take it on board what it means.

For God, in order because God, the Bible puts it this way, God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son. But because his son was God himself, God entered into our world in the person of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, so that when people saw the person of Jesus, when they saw him, in the street, they were looking at God, God in the flesh, God as a man.

But the strange, marvelous thing is this, that where you would expect that this man would be invincible as God, he wasn't. He was weak. He was prone to tiredness, prone to thirst and hunger, and eventually when he was arrested and tried and when he was crucified, he laid down his life on the cross at Calvary.

[37 : 34] the Bible tells us that three days later he rose from the dead, triumphant over the dead, having fully obeyed God's command to him, and having paid the price of our failure.

This was God's way of reversing the failure of the first Adam by sending the second Adam into the world in order to reverse that sinfulness by himself becoming sin for us, and by being raised on the third day, he is the second Adam.

The Bible goes on to tell me that if I have faith in him, then I become united to him. just as I was once united to Adam, the first Adam, I become united to Jesus, and in his death and resurrection, I can be set free from sin, and God gives me the gift of everlasting life, life that shall never end, and the promise that even though one day that I too face the prospect of burial in the grave, that one day we shall rise to newness of life and go forever to be with the Lord.

That's why it was important to contrast the two Adams. Will you please remember the contrast between the two Adams? The first Adam in whom we all fell and became guilty, and the first Adam who brought death and destruction and guilt into the world, but the second, the last Adam, who coming into our world from heaven, he paid the price of our sin, rose again on the third day, so that by believing in him, by trusting in him, and I hope that if you don't have him this evening, as we've been talking about the future, the certainty of the future that the Bible promises for each one of us, there are only two futures, one is to rise and go forever to be with the Lord, the other one is to, as I said before, is to rise and never be with the Lord, in fact, to go to a place of punishment, a place of suffering, and if tonight you're asking, well, how can I make sure that I am safe in Jesus, and that when it comes to that day when the dead will rise, how can I make sure that I am in

Jesus? The answer is faith. Faith. Faith is what links us with Jesus.

[40 : 39] Nothing else. Faith. You try and add your own efforts, your own goodness, your own respectability, it's useless. Not do you any good at all.

faith alone. Come then, come to him as you are, and ask him tonight to have mercy on you, and to bring you into his kingdom, and to make you into a new person.

And he tells us that when we ask, you shall receive, and you seek, you shall find, a knock, and the door will be opened to you.

Let's pray together. Father in heaven, we have been looking together at your word.

Some of it has been difficult, perplexing. some of it has been impossible. We know, Lord, that God is the God of the impossible, that what to us is impossible, nothing is impossible with you.

[41 : 58] Lord, we pray that you will give us the faith to believe, not only that the day will come when you will raise the dead, but that to believe in Jesus, who is the way to God, the only way to God, because he is the one who took our sins upon himself, and who died for our sins, and he is the one who is God himself, and who will come again, and he is the one who has promised to raise the dead.

And so, our Father in heaven, we pray that with our defective knowledge and understanding of your word, that you'll bless it to us. We pray, Lord, that we will go home, perhaps even read the chapter again, and try and understand it more and more, because this is the most important message in all the world.

Keep us from being distracted. We pray that you, by your spirit, will speak powerfully to each one of us, in Jesus' name. Amen.