

The Voice of God

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Date: 17 January 2010

Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 00] Now let's turn to Ephesians in chapter 2. Paul's letter to the Ephesians and the second chapter. Ephesians chapter 2. We'll actually take up the reading from verse 22 in chapter 1, the previous chapter.

And Jesus put all things under his feet and gave him as head. Sorry, I should have said, and God put all things under Jesus' feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace, you have been saved.

Last week we began to explore another world. And I took great pains to say that it wasn't another planet, but another parallel universe.

[1 : 45] And it's hard for us to try and grasp the fact that God has this parallel universe, because we, of course, are surrounded by what we see around us and what we hear around us, our lives, and the fact that this world is made, is all made of this particular atomic structure, which constitutes everything that we see and hear around us.

But the Bible tells us that there is another parallel universe, just as real as this universe, a place where Jesus dwells now in his exalted human state.

He is God, and he is man, he is real, and he sits at the right hand of the Father in a real place tonight. It's not just an idea. It's not just a nice thought. It's not just a concept. It's a reality.

And just as real, just as truly as Jesus came into the world in the first place, so he also left this world physically and historically. And he sat down, the Bible says, in a place where we believe he sits at the Father's right hand.

And this is the way it describes in Ephesians chapter 1. He is far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

[3 : 06] Let's stop for a moment and ask, what does that mean? That he is far above all rule and authority and power and dominion. Well, these are the things that we recognize as the great systems of the world, the great governments of the world.

In Ephesians, in Paul's day, it was the Roman Empire. Everything was dominated by the Roman Empire and the armies of Rome and the emperor of Rome and all those who assisted him and those who were in his council and all of these things that used to take place that coincided with the Roman Empire.

But in every age, there have been authorities and powers and dominions. Today, it's America, the USA. Today, it's Europe. Today, it's China.

Today, it's North Korea. And all the issues that are associated with all of these things, the kind of things that we hear daily if you watch the news. If you're a news 24 addict like I am, you're watching the different events as they take place on a day-by-day level.

And that's these, of course, apart from over the last three weeks when the news has almost always been dominated by the snow. If you get past all of these things, then the really important things concern the authorities and powers and dominions.

[4 : 25] The dominions are the great issues that face us, like global warming is today. Environmental issues, the tensions that exist between one country and another.

Did you know that there's real tension tonight between China and Taiwan? It's not reported very often, but it could easily erupt. There's always tension between India and Pakistan, which could easily erupt.

There's tension in Iran that could easily erupt. There could easily be another Iranian revolution tonight. We don't know. But these are the places where there are the seeds of all kinds of earth-shattering events.

These are the dominions. And it was the same in Paul's day. It's the same when he wrote, except, of course, that the Roman Empire dominated over everything. And your life was engulfed by the Roman Empire.

You were always subject to the emperor. Well, this is what it is. And then he says, above every name that is named. And again, it's interesting, isn't it, that the world is always defined by the names.

[5 : 29] The names. The names of cities. The names of cities. The names of people. The names of governors. And the names of celebrities. We live in a celebrity culture.

So we think of the people that we see on the front page of our newspapers. Are the Hollywood actors. And actresses. And the singers. The rock singers. The footballers. The sports personalities.

The names. That dominate our thinking and our world and our news. As well as the politicians. The Barack Obamas. And the Angela Merkels.

And the Nicolas Sarkozy's. Of this world. Names are so important. We talk about the Thatcher years, don't we? We talk about the hippie era in the 1960s.

We talk about the Reagan years. And all of these things that are associated with names. Names that many of us have lived through and have witnessed ourselves. But it was the same in Paul's day.

[6 : 26] Now what he's saying is this. He says it doesn't matter how great these men and women are. It doesn't matter what power they wield. And what influence they exert at any time in history.

He says it'll all come to nothing. And many of us who lived. My age and upwards who lived in the Cold War. We lived through many a time when we thought. That the Cold War would erupt into a real war.

And it didn't. It could have. But all of that has come and it's gone. The names that were associated with. And the tensions. And the situation back then. It was. It's all gone now.

And new issues have now emerged. The war against terror. That's the new issue. That's the great issue. Or one of them. That has. Well Paul says it doesn't matter what the issues are. God is greater than all of these events.

And systems and governments. Whatever this world can throw together. God is greater than all of these things. And that's where our focus should begin and end. And that's where our concentration should be tonight.

- [7 : 29] Where Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. Now if you're not a Christian tonight. Then you will not have much interest in the reality of Jesus seated at the right hand of God.
- God. You will probably. Chances are. Be thinking of something that occupies your mind tonight. Something more immediate. Something you're going to do. You've planned. Program on TV.
- Something you like to do. An event that's coming up this week. Because to you. That is your reality. But remember this. That all of that will come. And it will go. And a time will come. Very soon.
- It will all be gone. But I tell you this. What won't be gone. Is Jesus seated at the right hand of God the Father. That's the one thing that will remain.
- Heaven and earth will pass away. Says God. But my words. My truth. Will never pass away. So tonight. If you really want to focus.
- [8 : 25] On the realities of life. Then come with me. Look at what we're reading here. This is what's really real. Everything else is real. For a moment. But what's real forever.
- Is the truth that we're talking about this evening. Even although we can't understand it fully. Of course we can't. This is God we're talking about. It's the exalted Lord Jesus we're talking about.
- Who can understand heaven and its contents. We have to come by faith. And believe. That heaven is a reality. And that one day heaven will be occupied.
- Not only by Jesus. Not only by the angels. But by those. The people who have lived in this world. Have trusted Jesus. As their saviour. So if you really invest.
- Tonight. If you want to invest. Your life. In the future. Don't invest it. In this world's future. Because it has none. It will come.
- [9 : 20] And it will go. And it will disappear. And all the institutions. You think of all the. The great things. That were around. At the time when this. Letter was written. And they're all relics.
- You go and see them in the museum. You go to the London museum. And you see them. You go to the Louvre in France. And you see them. And they're all in glass cages. That's it. That's all that's left.
- Of all the powers. And the dominions. And the authorities. And the rules. Of the time. When the apostle Paul. Wrote these things. And there will come.
- When all that's left. Of our celebrities. And everything that happened. In this world. They'll all be in glass cages. And other people. In the centuries to come. Will be thinking. I wonder what these people.
- Were like in the 21st century. Aren't they dressed funny. They really look funny. Don't they. What's not funny to us. Will be funny. To a future generation. Be quaint.
- [10 : 14] Those people. Who lived hundreds of years ago. By the time will come. The Bible tells us. When the world will come to an end. And when Jesus will come again. That's the reality. Because it's the promise.
- Of God. Now we've been focusing. On up there. And of course I said. Last time. We don't know. That it's necessarily. Up there. But for our own. For our own information. I suppose it's easier.
- I suppose in our own minds. To think of heaven. As being. Dislocated. To a certain extent. From this world. But I'm not convinced. That it's that far.
- Dislocated. I don't want to go into it. In too much. I believe there's far more. Of a connection. Between heaven and earth. Than we sometimes imagine. That there is. But now. As Paul comes. To the end of chapter one. He stops.

Thinking about the other world. And he then concentrates. On this world. Now I was going to talk about. He's given him to be. Head over all things. To the church. Which is his body.

[11 : 10] But I'm going to skip that. That's for another time. Maybe. On another occasion. Altogether. I'm just going to follow the flow. Of what Paul is talking about here. He's now switching his attention.

He's coming down. To this world. And he's focusing his attention. On the people. To whom he is writing. People who were ordinary. Like you and I. Who were converted recently.

And they. A change has taken place. In their lives. I want us to examine then. This evening. For the time that remains. This great change. That God brings about.

In a person's life. When that person. Comes to faith. In Jesus. And I want us to see. That there are three things. In this passage. In this short passage.

That are entirely different. From the way. We normally. Think of them. First of all. Our condition. Before God.

[12 : 04] Is entirely different. To what we think it is. The way we are before God. Our state. Before God. Is entirely different.

The opposite. To what we think. It is. That's the first thing. The second thing. I'm going to say. Is that. God himself. Is entirely different.

From what. We normally. Think him to be. The third thing. Is that. The Christian faith. Is entirely. Different.

From what we think. The Christian faith is. Three things. And you start off. With our perception. Of what we think. Of these things. Or what the world. Outside thinks. Normally.

On average. People think. And you come to the Bible. And you discover. That it's not that way at all. And so. When we. As we open the pages. Of the Bible tonight. We discover. We discover.

[13 : 01] We discover. We discover. We discover. That we are. Frighteningly. The opposite. To what we think. We are. And we discover. That God is. Marvelously. The opposite. To what we think. He is.

And we discover. That the Christian faith. Is completely. Opposite. To what we think. It is. Let me explain. What I mean by that. First of all. Let me explain. How we.

According to the Bible. Are completely. The opposite. To what we think. We are. If I was to give you. A piece of paper tonight. And I was to ask you. Then please. Write. Your CV.

You know what a CV. Of course is. It's what you write. About yourself. If you are applying. For a job. You write all about. Your experience. And your training. And your schooling. And how many hires you got. And what your work experience is.

And whether or not. You have got a degree. And all the rest of it. And you write. As much as possible. Although you usually type it. You type as much. As you possibly can. About yourself. Because you are trying. To sell yourself.

[13 : 56] If I was to write. Don't bother about. Your technical experience. But just write. About yourself. The last thing. You would write. Is the negative. You would always.

Write the positive. About yourself. Because there is something. Within us. Of course. That likes to present. Ourselves. In a positive light. There are things. And you know this. About you.

That you would never. Put down on a piece of paper. Because they are too shameful. And because you would not want. Anyone else to know. You would not want. Anybody to find. That piece of paper.

And you wouldn't even want. Your best friends to know. If you were really going to be honest. So. So. While you're going to write. That thing down. About yourself. You're going to be selective. And you're not going to write everything.

You're going to choose. What to write. That's the way. That everyone. Would. Would. But of course. There would always be something. To write. And you would always find. Something positive.

[14 : 51] And that's the reason. Of course. I'm saying this. Is because. When we look at ourselves. We always concentrate. On the positive things. That there are. About us. That's of course. The way that.

The way that we think. Of ourselves. Is. But when. God. Comes to describe us. He could describe us.

In so many different ways. He could describe. About. He could describe. What we are physically. He could describe. Our blood system. He could describe us. In terms of. Our psychology.

Or our medical makeup. Or our bodies. Or everything. That is true about us. Our height. Our weight. Our color. And all of these things. He could describe.

Every condition. Medically. He could tell us. Things that we know. And he could tell us. That not even the best doctors. Of the world. Know. Anywhere in the world. But he doesn't. That's not the way.

[15 : 47] He describes us at all. There are many other things. That God could say about us. But when God. Comes to describe us. You know. He doesn't use many words. When Jesus described.

Zacchaeus. Who he met. In Luke chapter 10. He didn't use any words. At all. Apart from one. He said that Zacchaeus. Was. Lost.

There were many things. About Zacchaeus. I'm sure there were many. Many things. If somebody was going to describe him. His wife. I'm sure that she would have. Tried to list as many good. Points as she possibly could. But when Jesus came.

That's all he said. He said that he was lost. It's the same with the prodigal son. That's the way that God described him. He was lost. And he is now found. He was dead. And he's now alive again.

And that's exactly the word. That God chooses to use. About us. In our natural state. He says this. The opening passage. Here in chapter 2. This is the way that he's described.

[16 : 46] And you. Were dead. That's it. Dead. Dead. In trespasses. And sin.

Now why. Would God describe us. In such negative terms. You might think. Why would he choose. To use such a derogatory.

Awfully negative thing. To say about us. After all. He's the one who created us. In the first place. And if we have good qualities. And if we have. If we have faculties.

If we're. If we're. Physically fit. And if we're. If we've got all kinds of. Different. Aspects to our personality. Then surely. If anyone would choose.

Those things. To talk about us. Then it would be God. But he doesn't. And that's because God. Even although there are many. Aspects about. Our personalities. Which are commendable.

[17 : 43] To you. And to me. Today. Tonight. In this world. God. Bypasses them. Because as far as he's concerned. There is only one.

Condition. That he's looking for. And that is. Whether we're alive. Or whether we're dead. In relation to him. That's it. It's as simple. And as straightforward. As that.

We're either dead. Or alive. And he opens this passage. And he says. You were. Dead. In trust. And he was talking to a bunch of Christians. He was talking to the church. In Ephesus. And he's saying. Look back.

Never forget. What you once were. And what they once were. Is what many of us. Are tonight. Many of you are tonight. And there's no point. In dressing it up.

In all kinds of. Flowery language. The problem is this. That if you are dead. You are not going to believe me. Because a dead person.

[18 : 37] Doesn't believe. That he's dead. In fact. There's no point. In saying anything. To a person who's dead. Because that person is dead. Can't hear a thing. So that's the problem.

The problem is one. Of life. And death. And that's why. In a few moments time. I'm going to go all the way back. To John chapter 11. And describe. How Jesus. In raising Lazarus.

From the dead. Is a picture for us. A parallel for us. Of how the gospel works. In a person's life. To bring that person. To life. Once again. Now.

Let me just. But let me just. Follow on those three things. Before we go. Any further. If I was to ask you. To describe God. If I was to go. To Cromwell Street.

Or to Saki Hall Street. Or Princess Street. And if I was to. Pass around a questionnaire. Asking them to describe. Asking everybody. To describe God. I would get. A hundred different answers.

[19 : 32] That's because. God is. As you choose him. To be in today's world. He's your do it yourself God. He's the God. That you like. To think about. You know. Many people have said that.

Oh I like to think of God. As. Instead of saying. I wonder what the Bible. Tells me about God. People like to make up. Their own God. Don't they? Even to the point.

Where they read the Bible. And say. Well I don't like that. And I prefer. To hear. I prefer. And I would love. That if God was just. A little bit more kind. Or a little bit more tolerant.

That's the way. That they want people. They want God to be. Isn't it? Tolerant. And what that means. Is that. He'll put up with. Anything that is sinful. As long as it doesn't harm. Another human being. In the world's eyes.

But that's not the way. That God is at all. This chapter tells us. That God. Is righteous. And he's holy. Tells us that we stand. Before him.

[20 : 25] And every one of us. God has. As. He has. That power. In which he can see. Everything about us. In all. It's ugliness. But it tells us also.

That God wants to save us. That God's business. Is to clean up this world. Not by. Solving the problem. Of global warming. And the environmental issues.

That comes later. But. Solving the problem. Of the human heart. The problem. Of the heart.

This is what I heard. Somebody saying. The other day. The problem. Of the heart. Is the heart. Of the problem. Isn't it? The problem. Of the heart.

Your heart. My heart. Is the heart. Of the problem. You don't need to go to Iran. You don't need to go to Korea. You don't need to go to China.

[21 : 20] Or any other place. Where there's tension. And bloodshed. And hatred. You don't need to go to any of these places. To find. The problem. Of the heart. We're all. By virtue of the fact.

That we are human beings. Made in the image of God. Fallen human beings. We're all. The problem. And that means. That I needn't point the finger. At any other person.

This idea. That somehow. The Christian faith. Is a kind of religion. The same as. Buddhism. Or Islam. Or Sikhism. Or whatever it is. It's a religion.

In which we find our way. To God. By climbing up the mountain. And by doing certain things. And to make ourselves right with God. By our own efforts. And by. Our going to the temple.

Or by performing religious rites. And all of these things. That's what religion is. Now when you come to the gospel. It is entirely different. Because. According to the apostle Paul.

[22 : 13] In this chapter. The gospel is not about. Us finding our way to God. Because we can't find our way to God. A dead person. Can't find his way to anything.

Let alone God. A person who's dead. Is incapable. Of. That's the awful thing about death. That's the tragedy of death. That once a person has died.

There is a finality. All his functions disappear. All his senses disappear. He is dead. He's incapable. Of one single thing. So how can we talk about. Anybody finding their way to God.

By climbing a mountain. Or doing all the right things. Or whatever. He can't do it. Because he's dead. But the gospel. According to the Bible. Is this. That God has come into the world.

To where we are. And brought us. To life. Again. Miraculously. Just as miraculously.

[23 : 11] As that chapter that we read. In John chapter 11. I wonder if you would turn to it. With me please tonight. Because it's such. A marvelous. Marvelous. I deliberately stopped.

At the point. When Jesus was about. To raise. Lazarus from the dead. And command him to come out. To try. And give the sense. Of what's happening here.

The extraordinary sense. Of what's happening here. This is. The miracle. That defined. That was the defining miracle. And it meant. The difference between.

The continuation of Jesus ministry. And the death. Of Jesus. Because. It put people. On the spot. In a way.

I believe. That had never happened before. And I hope it does tonight. As well. I hope it puts us. On the spot tonight. Turn with me. To John chapter 11. To this extraordinary miracle. Every miracle.

[24 : 04] Of course. Is extraordinary. And every miracle. It. It. It. Tells us something.

About Jesus. But this miracle. I believe. Was. A defining miracle. It put people. On the spot. As they had never been put. Before.

War. And. Remember. Of course. That Jesus. Had arrived. At the scene. Of great sadness. And. Mary and Martha. Were friends of Jesus.

They had sent word. To Jesus. And for whatever reason. Jesus. Hadn't come. To. Heal. The brother. While he was still alive. Jesus. Stayed where he was. And by the time.

He got to Bethany. Lazarus. Had already died. He first of all. Spoke to Martha. And gave her this promise. I am. The resurrection. And the life. He said. Whoever.

[24 : 57] Believes in me. Though he die. Yet shall he live. And everyone. Who lives. And believes in me. Shall never die. Do you believe this? Yes. She said. Lord. I believe. That you are the Christ.

The son of God. Who is coming. Into the world. So the first thing. That had to happen. Was that Mary. And Martha. Had to focus their attention. On Jesus.

And who. He was. His identity. That's the all. Important question. Who is this? This man. But then Jesus said. Then he said.

Where have you buried him? And they took him. To where he buried him. Now it's a perfectly natural question. The same as. If you and I. If you lose a friend. You may very naturally say. Well where is his grave?

I want to go and see the grave. I want to go and stand. And reflect. Over what that person was. We've all done it. I'm sure. We've gone to the grave. Of a loved one. So. On first.

[25 : 51] First. Reading. I suppose. It was a perfectly natural question. But whatever. Natural question he asked. What he asked then. When he got to the grave. Was most extraordinary.

He said this. Take away the stone. There was a stone. Rolled over the mouth of the cave. Take away. The stone.

Do you get it? Do you get. This poignancy at this point. I guarantee you. That there wasn't. A single breath taken. You could have heard. A pin drop.

When he said that. It's like going to a grave. And I don't want to be. In any way. Disrespectful. But I just want to give it. It's like going to a grave. And asking for the grave. To be dug up again. That's the way it was.

It was not only extraordinary. It was grotesque. And yet it put them on the spot. It put Mary and Martha on the spot. To ask them.

[26 : 47] Do you really. By so doing. Jesus is asking Martha. You've said you believe. That I am the son of God. Do you really believe it? Do you really. I've just told you. That your brother will rise again. I've just told you.

That I am the resurrection. And the life. Now. Do you really believe this? And if you do. Then take away the stone. So you can see. He's testing her faith. He's testing her words.

To whether she really. Really believes. You see. It's easy enough to say. I believe in Jesus. As the son of God. But do you really believe him? Because to believe. Is to commit your life to him. And to live.

The rest of your life. In faith. That Jesus truly is. The savior. And your savior. It's one thing to say. That he's the savior. But is he your savior? Has he saved you.

Learn from your sins? Well here was the test. But I'll tell you. If that command was extraordinary. The next. Was absolutely. Unthinkable.

[27 : 44] Once they had taken. The stone away. Jesus lifted up his eyes. And said. Father. I thank you. That you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me.

But I said this. On account of the people. Standing around. That they may believe. That you sent me. When he had said those things. He cried out. With a loud voice.

Lazarus. Come out. Now that's what puts us on the spot.

Isn't it? Because either this man. Has completely lost his sanity. Or Lazarus.

Is going to rise from the dead. Can you get the picture. Of what's happening. And every person. Who stood around. That grave.

[28 : 40] Had to make a decision. Whether they were going to believe. That this man. Truly had the authority. To raise. Lazarus from the dead. Or not. And they're going to find out.

In a few moments time. It all depends. On one thing. Whether or not. Lazarus. Comes out. And he did.

The next thing they saw. Was. As it were. A dead man walking. There was the body.

That they had. Four days ago. Placed. In that cave. After pronouncing him dead. And after wrapping him. With the cloths.

The linen cloths. That were wrapped. On every dead body. Including his body. All over him. And his head. There was that. Very. Same. Body.

- [29 : 40] And it's now. Upright. Shuffling along. I don't suppose. That Lazarus. Would have been able. To walk very freely. Because the grave clothes. Were still on him. But I guess.
- It gave him enough room. To simply. Shuffle his way. Inch his way. Forward. But there was. Absolutely. No mistaking. Do you. Understand.
- What's happening here. Do you understand. The significance. Of what's happening here. This is not. Just some. Strange. Experience. In history.
- This is not. Just some. Figment. Of the imagination. There were people. Who saw this. Eyewitnesses. Stood around. With their own eyes. And they saw. This man.
- Coming to life again. And coming out. To where they were. And he was so alive. That Jesus said to them. He said. Take off his grave clothes. And let him go. Now apart from being.
- [30 : 36] A miracle. That proved. Beyond any doubt. Whatsoever. That Jesus. Was truly. Who he said he was. Which makes it. All the more strange. And unbelievable. That the very next day.
- That they plotted. To get rid of Jesus. Can you believe that. In the face of such evidence. That hatred for him. Was only increased. That's the most. Incredible thing.
- As you go along. In this chapter. You read. That some of them. Believed in him. But others. Met together. And plotted his death. So it's not about. Evidence. Is it. It's about.
- Our pride. Why was it. That they plotted his death. Knowing full well. That this was Jesus. The Messiah. The Son of God. He cannot be anybody else. Because nobody. Can raise anybody from the dead.
- It's absolutely impossible. God alone. Has the power. Over life and death. And if. If this man is alive. Who was dead. It had to be God. And yet.
- [31 : 32] Even in the face of that. Those people. They decided. To get rid of him. Because they wished. That Jesus wasn't there. That's. The seed. Of hatred. And enmity.
- Against God. Against Jesus Christ. And that's what's going to keep you. From believing in him. It's not a matter of evidence. It's you. That's the problem.
- You are the problem. And the only reason. Why you tonight. Are going to die. Outside of Jesus. If you don't accept him. Is. Because you. Simply refuse.
- To accept him. And that's it. Just the same way. As those scribes and Pharisees. You can't say. That they didn't know any better. They didn't know any better. Same as us tonight. We know better. And yet.
- You choose. To disregard. The plain. Facts. Of the gospel. Because you want to be. The controller. Of your own destiny.
- [32 : 28] Let me tell you something. You are not. The controller. Of your own destiny. Any more. Than the people. Of the Ephesians. Were the controller. Of their destinies.
- You were dead. In trespasses. And sins. Says Paul. At the time. That you walked. Following. The course. Of the world. Following the prince. Of the power. Of the air. The spirit. That is now. At work.
- In the sons. Of disobedience. You think you're free. Let me tell you something. The bible tells me. You're not free. You're an obedient slave. The problem is. You're a slave.
- To the wrong being. The being. Who wants to keep you. As a slave. Until the day you die. And then he will be jumping up. And down. In glee.
- Because there will be one more soul. Who will be lost. That's the way it is. That's the way it is. But for Lazarus.

[33 : 23] Having been dead. He heard. The voice of Jesus. That was the difference. To life and death.

For Lazarus. The voice of Jesus. Tonight. Is what you need. To hear. The only. Power. That's going to bring you. From being dead.

In trespasses. And sins. To coming. To being alive. For God. And in Jesus Christ. The voice of God. Is what makes all the difference. And that's why tonight.

John chapter 11. Is a parallel. It's a parable. That shows us. How God works. In the life. Of a person. Who's far away from him. If you read with me.

In John chapter 5. He tells you this. Truly I say. He talks about two resurrections. Truly I say to you. Verse 25. An hour is coming. And is now here. When the dead.

[34 : 16] Listen to this. When the dead. Will hear. The voice of the son of God. And those who hear. Will live. Those who hear.

Will live. He's not talking about the future. When one day he was. He would come again. And literally. Those who were in the graves. Would rise up. And go forever to be with the Lord. That's what he talks about. In verse 28. But in verse 25.

He's talking about. A spiritual resurrection. A something that happens now. Something that either. Has happened already. In your life. Or that is still to happen. And it will happen.

As you hear. The voice. Of God. Have you heard that voice tonight? Are you listening to it?

Have you been brought to know. The condition that you. Have been born in this evening. One in which we are far away. From the Lord. One in which we are separated.

[35 : 12] Because our sins. Have separated us from God. And in which we are incapable. Of doing anything right. For him. Nothing we can do in this life. Will please God. You can try as you will.

But you will not be able. To please God. This evening. Until that moment. That you listen. To the voice of Jesus.

Because the voice of Jesus. Is no ordinary voice. It is as powerful. As the voice. That said in Genesis chapter 1. Let there be light.

And there was light. And that same voice. Said to Lazarus. Lazarus. Come out. And he came out. And it's the same voice.

That we believe tonight. Is speaking here. Commanding. Commanding. And inviting you. To live. Are you hearing it?

[36 : 13] Are you listening to it? Will you come to him? And live. Forevermore. In the life that he alone.

Can give you. Can give you. Only by his grace. And by faith. In the Lord Jesus. He gave himself for us. Let's pray.

Father we give thanks. Oh Lord. For the word of God. The word that is so. Simple. So truthful. Give thanks tonight. That you have spoken. The truth to us.

In love. It's because you so. Love the world. That you have. Made our condition. Plain. Before us. We pray that. As you speak to us. Tonight. That truly.

Our hearts. Will be open. Pray for anyone. Who has a closed heart. Tonight. We believe. In the power. Of the gospel. We believe. That even if. They are not.

[37 : 15] Aware. Of what's happening. In their own hearts. That one day. They will be. Just as Lazarus. Possibly. Wasn't even aware. That he had been brought. To life again. At first. It was only afterwards.

That he. That he. Began to understand. What had happened to him. So we pray tonight.
That that process. Of resurrection. Will take place. In the heart.

Of. All of us. Tonight. Lord. We cannot help. But praying for. Every one of us. We ask.
Lord. That you will do. A great work. Amongst us. Bless your word.

Your word. The gospel. Is as powerful. Tonight. As it ever was. And we believe. In the
presence. And the effect. Of the Holy Spirit. We leave it.

In your hands. Oh Lord. Who knows. What you will do. In Jesus name. Amen.