

Jesus Speaking From the Cross

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

Take your Bible, go to John chapter 19. We're in a powerful chapter. Obviously, the Lord Jesus is dying on a cross for us. And there is so much for us to see and learn here.

And tonight I want to talk to you about him speaking from the cross. He speaks seven times. I don't know if we can get all those, but I'd like you to read with me if you would start in verse 23.

And we're going to just read. I think it's good for you just to read what he says and what the Bible is and let it sink into your heart. The Bible says in verse 23, Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts to every soldier apart and also his coat.

Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. And they said, therefore, among themselves, let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be, that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, they parted my raiment among them.

[1 : 09] And for my vesture did they cast lots. These things, therefore, the soldiers did. Can I get you to stop? And I probably am going to preach a whole message on it. But would you underline the scripture might be fulfilled?

Would you underline that? Do you understand what's going on here? You're watching Jesus die. And you might be led down the Hollywood path to believe that some accident is happening.

And you might be like, well, you know, look what happened. But as Jesus, even as he is dying and John and the other apostles know it, they know that God already told them this was going to happen.

You serve a magnificent, wonderful, all-powerful God of the universe. And Jesus is dying. And even as he's dying and they're talking about his clothes, John stops to say, do you understand?

Everybody reading this, you understand what's going on, don't you? The reason they say that is because the Bible says that and it's just coming to pass. God's word always comes true.

[2 : 13] You say amen right there? Go with me to verse 25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas and Mary Magdalene. And when Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, woman, behold thy son.

Then said he to the disciple, behold thy mother. And from that hour, that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, said, saith, I thirst.

I want to ask you to underline in your Bible in verse 28, all things were now accomplished. All things were now accomplished. You need to realize that God had a plan. And we'll look at it just a little bit briefly tonight, but God wrote a plan of salvation.

The plan of salvation that we preach and teach the gospel will take to other parts of the world and the places our missionaries go and preach is not a gospel or a plan or an idea that the apostles came up with. And it's certainly not a Baptist idea.

And it's certainly not an evangelical or Protestant idea. It was a plan written by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He's the author and the finisher of our faith. And he's on the cross. And look what he says.

[3 : 26] And so everything gets accomplished. All of it has been accomplished. Amen. My salvation is bought and paid for. I don't need to add anything to it.

And that's a magnificent thing because I have failed it. So many things. I don't know of anything I don't mess up on. But guess what? All things were accomplished that he was to do on the cross that he was to do with his wife, with his life.

And then he said, underline it again. The scripture might be fulfilled. He even speaks from the cross so the scripture will be fulfilled. And he said, I thirst. Verse 29.

Verse 29. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar. And they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it upon a hyssop and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Let's bow our heads for a word of prayer if you would. Father, I love you. I thank you so much for your word. I thank you for your salvation. I thank you for the Holy Spirit who is moving and working in our lives.

[4 : 26] I thank you for your people that have gathered here tonight because they love you and they want to worship you and they want to thank you and they want to magnify you. And I pray now that you take Bible truths and drive them into our hearts and help us love you and magnify you more.

Help us be better witnesses. Help us be better servants. Help us bring forth fruit that would honor you. God, do a work in our life through your word. And I'll give you praise in Jesus name. Amen. I am going to deviate from John 19 and we're going to go through all the seven sayings.

And so if you would go with me first to John or to Luke 23, 34, open your Bibles to Luke chapter 23 and verse 34. And Jesus speaks seven times from the cross.

And these won't be his last sayings because he is going to die and be buried and raised again and he will speak again. So he's not these aren't his last words, but these are words that he spoke from the cross.

These are words that he spoke while he was nailed to a cross for six hours hanging there. And he spoke some wonderful words that ought to speak great things to us. Luke chapter 23, verse 34.

[5 : 29] The Bible says, then said, Jesus, father, forgive them. They know not what they do. And they parted his raiment and cast lots. Would you write this down somewhere?

Jesus showed mercy even from the cross to those that crucified him. He showed mercy. Just write down, showed mercy. He showed mercy. Verse 34. He said, father, forgive them.

They know not what they do. I'd like to just say two or three things to you. I will be extremely brief. I know preachers that preach whole week, seven weeks on this, but I want you to just see some things.

Some of you made comments about the Lord being forsaken. Like as though God and Jesus weren't on real good terms. And you, you know, you wondered about that. And there was even a question asked of me about if he forsook Jesus, how can I trust him not to forsake me?

Well, he didn't promise not to forsake Jesus. He and Jesus made a plan to forsake Jesus. So you wouldn't be forsaken. Can you say amen? And so he did that for us. But would you, would you look at this?

[6 : 29] Would you look at this verse? Look at what he does. He and he and the father on great terms. I mean, he's dying. He knows his father is so deeply in love with him.

He knows his father's about to want to jump off of the ramparts of heaven and come down and stop what's going on. And look what he said. He said, father, forgive them. Jesus asked for forgiveness because they didn't realize what they were doing.

And it was the father that would forgive. I just like to remind you a second. We are forgiven people and forgiven people forgive.

Could you repeat with me something we've said a lot of times? The forgiven forgive. Could you repeat that with me? The forgiven forgives. Could you say it again? The forgiven forgive.

I want you to open your Bible. If you would, Ephesians chapter six and verse 12. And while you go there, I want to remind you that our savior, our Lord, our master, God in human flesh on the cross while he's being crucified, calls on the father to forgive them.

[7 : 36] That is a tremendous lesson for me. Fact is, I am told that I ought to forgive others as a, just like Jesus has forgiven me in both Colossians and in Ephesians.

And I would just like to say sometimes God's people are some of the most bitter people in the world. We are bitter against a pastor that hurt us. We're bitter against a family member that hurt us.

We're bitter against life. We're bitter against God because our loved one died or we don't have the money we ought to have, or we think God hasn't treated us right.

And I just want you to just think with me for a second, uh, how much I ought to learn about forgiving from my savior. And here's the first lesson I want you to remember. Jesus looked at men that were crucifying him and knew that his battle wasn't with those men who had the hammer and the nails.

He knew it wasn't with the men with the spears and the sword. He knew he was asking forgiveness for them because they didn't know what they did. Do you realize that in the Bible, you're taught that when people do us wrong and when things go wrong, that we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

[8 : 43] Our battle is not against people. And we're often bitter at somebody who the devil used and didn't even know they were being used. And they ignorantly did wrong things. Look at Ephesians chapter six and verse 12.

If you would, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now, could I get you look this way?

Do you realize that Peter was walking down the road and he turned to Jesus and he said, no, you'll not go to Jerusalem. No, we won't. We don't want you to die. And Jesus said to him, get you behind me, Satan.

Jesus could look at Peter and realize it's not Peter doing the talking. It's somebody else doing the talking. He knew that tough thing else was happening. Now, most of us have had some rough treatment in our lives.

Most of us have had people hurt us. In fact, as if we could somehow be anonymous and not know each other, and you could be honest, we would have a blubbing crybaby session.

[9 : 39] And everybody would tell all the bad things that have happened to them. And it would go on all night long. And it would be the biggest weeping party you could ever imagine. And we're Christians.

And I'd like to remind you that Jesus forgave them. And he said, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they do. I'd like to remind you that the forgiven. I'd like to remind you that the forgiven forgive.

I'd like to remind you while you're on that, that, you know, you know, there were some men. We had a piece of property in Peru that belonged to our Bible college. And we had several acres, I don't know, 30 or 40 acres of land.

And one day, about 150 people charged across our fence. And they beat us up. They put 12 stitches on top of my head, sent nine of us to the hospital. They beat us up.

They tore down our buildings, burned our stuff. I mean, it was a pretty rough day. Do you want me to tell you the Bible story there? We wrestle not against Peruvians.

[10 : 39] We wrestle not against flesh and blood. And you've been hurt. But if you could realize there is a God in heaven. And you could look beyond the hurt. If you could get yourself out of the pity party.

And get yourself into the praise party. You'd change a whole lot of things. It's not how many hurt me. It is, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they do.

It is, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities. Paul said, these, Alexander may have spoken bad and may have caused me trouble. But my battle is not with a man.

My battle is with wickedness. I'd just like to show you this. And I will tell you the message I preached in Peru. That caused me the biggest trouble from the adults in our church.

I always worked with a lot of young people. Always had a lot of young men going to go into ministry. Much like we have here at our church. But I preached this and I got cornered right after church. I'm just going to read you the passage. We'll read it.

[11 : 34] I got cornered after church and they told me they did not like the message. They did not approve of the truth. They did not think I should have said it. And they thought I was out of place. Because forgiveness, that's pretty tough, isn't it?

Forgiveness is pretty tough. But the forgiven forgive. Forgive. Now look what he said to us in Romans chapter 12 verse 19. I just read these verses and mentioned them.

The Bible says in Romans 12 verse 19. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves. But rather give place unto wrath. That means get wrath out of the way.

For it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him. If he thirst, give him drink.

For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. I'm going to move on. But I'd just like to challenge you with this.

[12 : 35] Forgiveness. And most of us could make a list. We could make a list of people that we would like to see God kill. We could make a list of people we'd like to at least see God hurt.

We'd like to make a list of people and say, Well God, you don't have to kill them, but I sure wish you'd vindicate me and make them do right. I'm tired of the way they hurt me.

We are a vengeful people. Even Christians can be a vengeful people. We're like, I mean churches fight and split and bicker and battle over stuff.

And here's what he said in the passage. He said, Dearly beloved, I'm talking to you Christians. I'm telling you church members. I'm talking to you Romans that know Christ. Do not avenge yourselves. Don't avenge yourself.

Let God do it. Step out of the way and let God move in and let God do something. And if something needs to be taken care of, let God take care of it. He said, And you respond with kindness. And you respond with the right attitude.

[13 : 32] He said, So if your enemy gets hungry, feed him. If he gets thirsty, give him a drink. And you will show him how great your God is and how you learned a great truth about forgiveness.

Verse 21. Could I get you to read 21 out loud with me? And we'll move on. Would you read verse 21 out loud with me? You ready? Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

There's not a one of us in this room. Our parents hurt us. Our brother hurt us. Our sister hurt us. Our neighbor hurt us. A husband, a wife, a friend, a business person, even God.

Even God. We tend to think, Why did God do this to me? And we get angry. But you as a born-again Christian ought to know this. Jesus said on the cross, Father, forgive them.

They don't know what they're doing. Jesus forgave. Your battle's not with other people. You ought to not be vengeful. You ought to not let evil win. You ought to beat evil by doing good.

[14 : 35] The second thing he said from the cross, if you would, go with me to Luke chapter 22, verse 39. Luke chapter 22, verse 39. It's a beautiful thing to think about him forgiving people that were hurting him.

It's a beautiful thing to think about him forgiving people that were hurting him. I was raised in a society that said, If they hit me, I'll hit them back.

I can even remember as a young man hearing our pastor say, You ought to turn the other cheek. So you let them hit you once, give them the next cheek, and after that you can clean their clock. Take care of them.

But that's not the teaching Jesus had for us. We're born-again Christians. And the forgiven, forgive. Second thing, he spoke salvation. He spoke salvation to a new believer on the cross.

Look, if you would, at Luke chapter 23, verse 39. And one of the malfactors, one of the evildoers, one of the bad guys, which were hanged and railed on him, saying, That means he yelled at him, saying, If you be the Christ, save thyself and us.

[15 : 37] But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? You don't mess around like this.

Verse 41. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this man had done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. I want to tell you that in this little passage of scripture right here, And Jesus' words are, Verily I say unto you, Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.

But here's a really a complete picture of salvation. This is how you get saved. I want you to know this guy's guilty. He's on the cross. He knows he's guilty.

And he's dying for crimes that he committed. And I'll just go through this with you briefly. But did you know that if you got what you deserved, You wouldn't have a bigger house. And you wouldn't have a nicer car.

[16 : 38] And you wouldn't have nicer things. If you got what you deserved, You'd wake up in hell. If you got what you deserved, If you got what you had earned. The Bible says, For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

The Bible said, There's none righteous, No, not one. The Bible said, The wages of sin is death. And so if I got what I deserved, I wouldn't get better. I would get worse.

And this man's on the cross. There are two thieves. One thief says, One thief says, You ought to save us. If you're really who you claim you are. And the other guy says, I've caught on to something.

I wouldn't talk to him. I believe he's God. And so if you would go through, Maybe you can jot some notes and underline some things. The thief realized that Jesus was who he said he was.

Do you realize that? Because he says to him, He says to him in the verse, He says to him in the verse, He says, And I lost my place altogether. He says to him in the verse, Dost thou fear, Dost not thou fear God?

[17 : 38] Underline that. Fear God. He was being, Above his name is written the word, Son of God. He's being, Everybody knows who he is. He's been talked about everywhere. He's been the guy going about doing good things.

Raising people from the dead. And this thief says, Don't you fear God? Then the thief says this. He says, We deserve what's happening to us. Look at the Bible verse, Would you?

Look at the Bible verse, Verse 41. He said, Do you fear God, Seeing you're in the same condemnation? Or 41. We indeed justly, For we receive the due reward, The owed reward, What we earned reward, The wages reward of our deeds.

But this man hasn't done anything wrong. He said, I believe he's God. And I'm dying here, And I deserve it.

I deserve it. I'm afraid that much of southeastern salvation is not very real. And I'll tell you why I'm afraid of that. I'm afraid you got saved without ever realizing that Jesus is holy and righteous.

[18 : 43] And you were a sinner who deserved hell. And it with you, It's just like a flippant thing. You just prayed a prayer. And you just said, Hey, You signed a card, You joined the church, But you didn't really trust Jesus. You didn't realize that you deserve to go to hell.

This guy says, He hasn't done anything wrong. Then in verse 42, He turns to him and he says, Unto Jesus, Lord, Now that's a big word. You ought to circle that word. Doesn't mean much in our language.

In your mind, The word Lord probably means something like mister. It's like, Hey, mister. But that's not what it means. The word Lord, He's a king. And he looks at him and says, King. He looks at him and says, I know who you are.

I know you're not a regular guy. He's already recognizing God. Lord, God, In other words, Remember me when you come into your kingdom. Would you look at that? He knew he was Lord.

And he knew he was going to get a kingdom. How did he know he was going to get a kingdom? I mean, Jesus had talked about getting a kingdom. This guy knew he was getting a kingdom. Easily, He could have said, You'll be dead in just a few hours.

[19 : 39] It'll be over in just a few hours. And you're not getting a kingdom. It's all over. You're going to the grave. But this guy looked at him and said, Lord, When you get to your kingdom. When you get to your kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, Unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. That's a beautiful picture. Now, Just let me remind you that I'm going to read some verses with you. So you'll understand your salvation. Do you understand your salvation is when you realize that, And if you're already saved, You just need to know this.

You just get this straight in your heart. He's God. He is God. Can you say amen right there? He is God. And then, Can you realize this? We deserve to go to hell.

Our motto is this. I deserve better than this. I can't believe the way God's treating me. I can't believe the way things are going. This guy says, Hey, He's not done anything wrong.

And what was happening to us is what ought to happen to us. And that's where we got to be. We've got to come to the point that we say, Man, God, I am no good. There's nothing about me that ought to make you save me, But you are good.

[20 : 45] And he does that. And he believes he's God. And he calls on him. And he asks him to save him. And Jesus gave him a great promise. Today, You'll be with me. And by the way, He's given us great promises.

Let me give you a few that you ought to write down. Our sins are forgiven. There are no sins between me and the Father. Let me just stop and say this to you.

You know what happened to your past sins? They were put under the blood. Do you know what happened to your future sins that you haven't done yet? They're already under the blood and already forgiven.

You need to know that it is all him that saved you. It is all his power, all his person. That's where your security comes from. He saved us.

He forgave us. How about this promise? We will go directly to his presence when we die. Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 6. If you're standing on death's door, and you're looking out and wondering what's going to happen to you, you can take the Word of God and trust it.

[21 : 53] If you recall, right in the middle of this passage of Scripture, two times he said that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. And I don't know how to tell you this, but look at this before you read. Look at this with me just a second. This is the Word of God.

And you can trust what God said. And I got saved by knowing what it said and trusting it and believing it. I know what's going to happen to me tomorrow because I know what this book says, and I trust it and I believe it.

The only guarantee I got is what this book says. I trust it. And look what the Bible says. If death happens, if death happens to me, if death comes my way. 2 Corinthians 5, 6.

Therefore, we are always confident. Put a circle around that. Paul said, I am confident. I don't have any doubts. I don't have any concerns. I don't have any worries. I'm not thinking to myself, I hope this is like this.

He said, I am confident. We are always confident. That's pretty strong. Knowing that while we're at home in the body, we're absent from the Lord. And every one of us, not a one of us is seeing the Father face to face.

[22 : 55] Not a one of us are seeing the street of gold. Not a one of us are seeing all the magnificent, wonderful things that I have not seen. An ear had not heard, and neither has the heart of man ever dreamed of. Not a one of us are seeing that.

Because we're still here. We're still in the body. But look what he said. He said, We're at home with the body, and we are absent from the Lord, because we walk by faith, not by sight. I know this by faith.

I've not seen this to be true yet. We walk by faith. But look at verse 8. We are confident. Would you underline the word confident again? He said, In case you didn't gather, I said we's always confident.

In case, I know it's been a long time since verse 7, so let me say this. We are confident. And I say, Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

That is one of the most fantastic promises and truths that you can imagine. While I'm in this body, I am absent from the Lord. When I'm absent from this body, I will be present with the Lord if I'm a born-again believer. When we put my dad in the ground, and they began to throw dirt on his casket, I knew they weren't throwing dirt on my dad.

[24 : 00] And I've been to a lot of funerals. I've watched people scream and pass out. I've watched people have all kinds of spells. I've watched them try to pull their loved ones out of caskets, and they don't understand some great truths.

In fact, as we pray more to keep people out of heaven than we do to keep people out of hell, it's like our big thing, you know. He might have been a hundred, Lord, but please let him live another hundred. And we don't pray about lost people.

We pray about staying alive. But here's what the Apostle Paul said, and it wasn't Paul. I need to remind you, because I sometimes say things like that that are really kind of foolish. The Apostle Paul didn't say that. He wrote it.

God said it. These are the words of... These are the words of... And to be absent from... To be present in my body is to be absent in the Lord, but to be absent from my body is to be present in the Lord.

And when you die, before they ever come pick up your cadaver, you are going to be present with the Lord. You say, how confident are you of that?

[24 : 55] Well, I'm always confident, and I'm confident. I'll just say what the Apostle Paul said. Can you say amen? Second one. Go with me to Philippians chapter 1 and verse 21. One of my favorite passages of Scripture.

Philippians chapter 1 and verse 21. Philippians 1 and verse 21 says, For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Would you stop right there in just a second? Let me show you something. Are you ready? I don't believe hardly anybody in this room believes that. I mean, our thoughts are, for me to live is great, and to die will all stink.

Huh? I mean, for me to live is to drive my new vehicles. For me to live is to practice my hobby. For me to live is to be happy with my wife. For me to live is all great. And dying, you know you've heard the joke about the guy was in a bar, a bunch of guys were drinking, and some preacher walked in and said, do you know if you die today, you'd go to heaven?

Would you like to go to heaven? And the drunk looked at him and said, nope. He said, you don't want to go to heaven. He said, I thought you was getting up a load right now. He said, if you come back later, I might. Most of us don't want to go now. But look what Paul said.

[26 : 09] Paul said, for me to live is Christ. I only live because my life accomplishes something while I'm living. And if I'm not accomplishing something, I'm not really fulfilling my purpose.

For me to live is Christ. But then he said, but to die is gain. Would you put a circle around the word gain? And maybe you could write or draw a line over to the margin of your Bible and go get a dictionary.

Just get you a Webster's dictionary. Just get you any dictionary, any good English dictionary. Look up the word gain and figure out what it means. It doesn't mean loss. I mean, this is really deep.

You don't, when you gain five yards in a football game, you don't lose five yards. When you gain money, you don't lose money. Kyle thinks he's going to gain a wife.

I don't mean he's losing one. And Paul, maybe still nine days. I pray it. And she'll wake up. But you see what he said for me to live is.

[27 : 04] No, for me to live is Christ. For me to die is. Why do you use that word? I wonder, maybe that's a mistranslation. I mean, really?

You think dying is better than living? He did. We don't. But he did. Can I remind you? He didn't write these words. Cause you're going to wave here.

I can see you tonight on the way home. You're going to turn to your wife and say, that Paul was a nut. He sent me to live in Christ. Die is gain. I like Peter better. He didn't say anything stupid like that. No, no, no.

The Holy spirit said this. Say, man, these are the words of God. Look at the verse Philippians chapter one, verse 22. But if I live in the flesh, if I stay alive in this body, this is a fruit of my labor.

Yet. What shall I choose? I just don't know. I want not. You know what Paul said? He said, if I, if I stay alive in my body, if my heart keeps beating and my lungs keep working and my kidneys keep functioning, I'll have some fruit of my labor, but I'll be honest with you.

[28 : 06] I'm just not sure what I really want. Excuse me, Paul. You know, right now you'd be calling a psychiatrist. Get the Christian counselor quick. This guy's suicidal.

This guy said, well, if I stay alive, I'll have fruit of my labor, but I ain't sure what I want. What do you mean, Paul? Verse 23. I'm in a straight betwixt to having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

Let me put that in Tennessee hillbilly for you. Cause I'm in a fix. I really don't know what I ought to do here. He said, I really would like to leave and go on and be with Jesus. And that'd be far better.

I don't know if you notice this, but it's not just better. It's far better. Maybe you could draw a circle from far better, a line around circle, a circle around far better and a line from far better to gain.

Paul said, I'm in a straight betwixt to having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. My wife accepted Christ when she was 18 years old. A lot of things are pretty new to her about the Bible and real deep Bible study and Bible preaching.

[29 : 18] And at that time I was teaching through the book of revelation and prophecy after we got married. And you know, my wife spent over a year in our house and never made curtains. And so we hung sheets over the windows and my wife can sew anything.

She had, she had already made a tux for a guy. She would sew suit coats. She could make anything. And one day, finally, when I said, well, when are we going to have curtains? And she said, what's the use?

I'll make the curtains and he'll come back. No need in making the curtains. You can ask her to my line and I'm not lying. You know, maybe it'd be good if you took it that serious.

Maybe it'd be good if we were that naive as to think, maybe it is far better. Verse 24, if you would, nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. I just like to show you real quickly.

What a great promise. Because some of our family, our church family has family facing death. And that's a scary thing.

[30 : 15] Because we never been there before. But the Holy Spirit's been there. He lives there and he wrote a book. And it's a trustworthy book. And here's what he said.

To leave your body is to stand in the presence of Jesus. Jesus. I got cold chills. I really do. As long as you're in your body, you're not in the presence of Jesus.

Wow. That's what the Holy Spirit said. And the Apostle Paul, Holy Spirit writing through him, said this, Guys, I don't know what I ought to ask for in prayer.

Because if I had my choice, I'd just go ahead and go home. It would be far better. It's what I want. It's what I dream of. It would be great.

And the only reason I'll stay here is so I can preach more Bible to you. And I can disciple more of you. And I can do more for God here. I just think, you say, Where'd that come from with him saving that guy?

[31 : 15] It's a wonderful promise. He turned to a guy on the cross and said, Today you'll be with me in paradise. You want me to tell you when he was with him in paradise? That day. I've heard some of you say, Well, I'm not sure paradise is heaven. I don't care what you want to call it.

Jesus is there and it'll do good enough. I'd say wherever Jesus is, it is paradise. I'd say wherever he is, it is paradise. So I'd just like to remind you, we need to get prepared to die.

I'll stop here tonight and I'll go to the rest of them Sunday morning. But we need to get prepared to die. You need to know this. You need a different attitude than everybody else. It's so interesting. In 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 13, the Apostle Paul, Holy Spirit, speaking through the Apostle Paul, talked about those that have no hope.

They sleep and they have no hope. You know what he was saying, don't you? We have hope. We know what happens. You say, I've never been to the other side. You don't need to watch CNN or Fox News or the TV set to find out about some dingbat that died and saw heaven and came back.

We got somebody who lives in heaven who wrote a book for us and told us all about it. You got the word of God on it. Trust him. Let's bow our heads for a word of prayer if you would. Father in heaven, I love you and I praise you and I thank you.

[32 : 29] I pray that you would work and move in our lives. I pray that you'd magnify yourself greatly. I pray, dear God, that tonight you'd help your people to trust your promises. I pray you'd help us to forgive and I'll give you praise and honor for all that you do.

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