

“The Authority of Jesus’ Voice”

September 15, 2013

Text: John 5:24-30

In today’s text, Jesus says=> “He who *hears* My word, and *believes* Him who sent Me, has *eternal life*.”

What is the word that Jesus speaks which brings eternal life?

It is certainly the word of the gospel, & of salvation.

But ultimately, Jesus’ life-giving “word” is Jesus Himself.

As we read in John 1:1=> “*In the beginning was the **Word**, & the **Word** was with God, & the **Word** was God.*”

We saw, when we studied that, that the “*Word*” John meant was Jesus X—the very personification/embodiment of the gospel.

Jesus was God’s word/message from heaven, that He intended to save man from his sin, & establish a relationship with him in which we could enjoy eternal life in His presence forever.

- * Jesus was a message of hope for the human race.
- * He was an expression of God’s compassion for lost people.
- * He was God’s way of saying, “I am not indifferent to the eternal disaster you’ve brought on yourselves w/ your sin.”

In Jesus, God Himself took on our humanity, lived a perfect/holy life, then gave Himself up to die, that we might have life.

He let sinful men arrest Him, take Him to Pilate's Hall,
mock Him, spit on Him, slap Him in the face, and
nail Him to a cross like a criminal & kill Him.

There, the wrath of God, caused by our sin, was poured out
on Him, that the justice of God might be vindicated,
and the scales of His justice be brought back into
balance.

And at the same time, He opened a way for man to be
delivered from his spiritual death of sin, when man
identifies w/ X by faith, as his Substitute on the cross.

**Only a man who had God's own nature/character could have
accomplished these things.**

In John 5, Jesus began to reveal to the religious leaders of Israel
that He did have God's nature/character, as the Son of God.

He explained to them that God the Father had granted Him
authority to do things that only God could do=>
give life, & judge all mankind.

Jesus had just told them this about His God-given
authority=>

*"Just as the Father raises the dead & **gives them life**,
even so the **Son** also gives life to whom He wishes. /
For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has
given all judgment to the Son, / so that all will honor
the Son even as they honor the Father" (Jn 5:21-23).*

In today's text, X will further explain Himself, and describe what impact His, and the Father's, authoritative voices, have on others, including=>

- * Those who hear & believe Him
- * Those who are spiritually dead
- * Those who are physically dead
- * Jesus Himself.

*** Those Who Hear and Believe (His Word)**

[John 5:24]=> *“Truly, truly, I say to you [this is important, so really listen], he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”*

Here X states the great principle of believing unto

salvation=>

Eternal life results from hearing X's word, and believing.

As I said earlier, Jesus' *“word”* is Jesus Himself—the living message from God that reveals eternal life in His Son.

No one becomes saved w/o hearing that message about X.

Rom 10:17=> *“Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”*

Someone said on cable TV the other day, that whether/not you believe in Jesus, if you live as good a life as you can, you'll be OK when you die.

By contrast, Jesus Himself said, *“He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, [he] has eternal life.”*

Implication=> He who doesn't hear/believe, doesn't have it.

W/o eternal life, nobody is going to be OK in eternity.

So seek out places where you'll hear the most truth about Jesus, and ask the Lord to open your spiritual ears to really hear/understand what is said, embracing it by faith.

Hunger/thirst/pant for the gospel, assuming your desire for it is evidence of God's grace already at work w/i you.

But just hearing about X isn't enough—we must hear/believe.

1st that means we must wholeheartedly acknowledge as true what the Bible tells us about Jesus, & what He taught us here=>
* That He is man's Savior from sin, who gives eternal life.
* And that He will be the one who judges all men in eternity.

2nd it means entrusting our own souls and our eternal welfare, into His gracious care, repenting of the sins we have loved, and asking Jesus to become the Lord of our lives.

It also means repudiating any other hope for salvation, including the false notion of becoming acceptable to God by virtue of our own moral goodness, or "spirituality."

3rd it means that when we find certain ideas in God's Word difficult to accept/understand, we stop resisting them, & open our hearts to accept them anyway.

This week our Tuesday discipleship group came to such an idea=> That the Infant in Mary's womb was 100% man, but also 100% God (the "hypostatic union").

Our “hearing” of the Word—if it is to save—must be active, not passive.

It is a hearing that leads to repentance/faith, which, as we know, are gifts of the H.S.

But that doesn't mean our own will as sinners is not fully engaged/involved in both our repenting/believing.

We must repent ourselves—the H.S. will not repent for us.

He has nothing to repent of; our sins are our own, & our repentance must willfully put them away.

And we ourselves must believe—again, the H.S. doesn't need to believe, & He won't believe for the sinner.

Actually, Jesus said we are to believe in God—who sent X.

But, as we've seen in the context of John 5:19 & 23, the words & deeds of God the Son, are also the words/deeds of the Father as well.

So faith in Jesus the Son of God, is faith in the Father too.

We believe in God, who provided redemption from sin through the blood of His Son, raising Him up from death for our justification.

In the last part of verse 24, we find that in addition to eternal life, believers also receive immunity from God's judgment.

Jesus said the believer=> “*does not come into judgment, but [to the contrary] has passed out of death into life.*”

Eph 2:1 says that before he believed, he was spiritually dead in his sins.

His whole life was characterized by sin/death.

For that reason he constantly lived under God's judgment.

In addition, Jn 3:18 says=> *"He who does **not believe** has been **judged already**, because he has **not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

Q: What is spiritual death?

It is analogous to physical death, in which a person's soul has departed from his body, leaving it w/o any animating power, totally helpless/powerless, unconscious/insensitive, & w/o protection from all the life-consuming, putrefying forces of nature.

That is physical death.

Spiritual death is its equivalent, in the realm of the soul.

A spiritually dead person doesn't look dead, but, in fact, might enjoy great physical health, even climbing mountains, reveling in his strength, delighting in the sight of all the life in a green meadow below.

He may feel very much alive & totally connected to all the various life forms in the world around him.

But whereas a believer senses these things & thanks his Creator for the abundance of His good gifts, the nonbeliever, dead in his sins, perceives no such thing & feels no gratitude to God.

This person is so dead to the perception of spiritual truth that he has no sense of God's presence, bending near with armfuls of His gracious favors, the overflow of His infinite goodness/kindness/love.

The spiritually dead man never thanks God, or feels any love for Him at all.

In fact, he has absolutely no sense of God's existence.

The spiritually dead may even go to church, sing hymns, bow their heads in prayer, & listen to the teaching/preaching. But inwardly they're itching to leave, wishing it were all over.

Those sitting next to them may sense the warmth of peace and joy as the Spirit opens their hearts to the Word, enabling it to do its wondrous work w/i them.

But if they were to describe what they're feeling to the spiritually dead, they would sense no connection w/ the real believer's experience.

They have no capacity for such experiences w/i themselves.

Because their spirits are dead.

Spiritually dead people are attuned to the things of this world.

They talk excitedly about the newest kinds of electronic device or entertainment, and you can see the excitement in their eyes. But any talk of eternal realities, leaves them cold, feeling nothing but disinterest/boredom—Why? Their spirits are dead.

You could describe Hell's horrors in vivid terms for them,
or the glories of God's heaven, & their pulse
wouldn't change a beat.

They care nothing for any of it, in spite of the fact that
these are the most important issues in a man's life,
determining his eternal destiny.

It's all because they are as dead spiritually as a corpse
lying on a cold table in a morgue, is dead, physically.

Is there any help for such seemingly hopeless people?

Jesus said there is=>

*"He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me,
has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has
passed out of death into life."*

Hearing/believing X's word, they can pass from eternal death to
eternal life.

So the 2nd impact of X's authoritative voice is on=>

*** Those Who Are Spiritually Dead**

[Verse 25] (Jesus)=> *"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is
coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of
the Son of God, and those who hear will live."*

**This is a change that takes place here/now in this world (as X
resurrects the spiritually dead).**

We know that, because of the words=> *"...an hour is coming and
now is."*

Already during Jesus' own ministry, the hour had come &
some of the spiritually dead were hearing X's voice,
w/ their hearts a/w/a their ears.

They were the ones receiving eternal life.

But the hour of a new dispensation was coming, beginning with Pentecost, which would be the full expression of this new era, when spiritual life would flourish in the Church though the H.S.

We are now living in this new era, when X's voice speaks life into the spiritually dead who will really hear & listen to Him.

They are the ones mentioned in verse 24, who receive eternal life.

Jesus' voice is still heard today by those whose hearts God has prepared.

He speaks through His Word, & thru the preaching of His Word.

He speaks by His Spirit to every soul that becomes saved, giving His Word divine energy, & the power of life.

He doesn't speak audibly, but through the Spirit's convicting power & testimony about Jesus to people's hearts.

And His voice gives spiritual life to dead souls.

The voice of Jesus reveals to the hearts of men/women that they are spiritually dead, but that if they'll believe in Him, they will have life.

He calls out to people's souls=> *"Come.... Come.... Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost"* (Rev 22:17).

The obvious question I must ask is this=> “Have you heard X’s voice in your heart calling you to come? And have you responded?”

In verse 24, Jesus talked about those who *“hear & believe.”*

Have you heard/believed, or have you just heard, & heard & heard again, w/o ever believing?

Jesus said=> *“My sheep **hear My voice**, and I know them, and they follow Me;”*

There’s no way for you to know for sure that you’re really one of Jesus’ sheep, unless you follow Him, in a life of obedience.

That alone is reliable evidence that you truly know Him, and that He truly knows you.

I Jn 2:3=> *“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.”*

[Verse 26]=> *“For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; /*

Here we see very clearly the power/authority behind Jesus’ voice, to give life.

He has, w/i Himself, the same life-giving power the Father does.

God the Father has made His Son the dispenser of all life.

He gives eternal life to those who believe in Him.

John 1 says=> *“In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men” (1:4).*

This is why the voice of X has the power to call sinners out of spiritual darkness/death, into eternal life.

Those who respond to Jesus' voice by believing in Him receive the abundance of eternal life which is described in Jn 17 as personally knowing the only true God, and knowing Jesus whom He has sent (Jn 17:3).

Eternal life is a personal life-giving relationship w/ God the Father, and God the Son.

Those who refuse to respond to Jesus' voice will remain spiritually dead, and sadly, the final tragedy of 2nd death awaits their souls, after they die.

**This brings us to the other aspect of X's authority in vs 27=>
His judgment of all mankind.**

[Verse 27]=> *“and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the **Son of Man.**”*

In Jn 5:22 Jesus said the Father has given *“all authority to the Son.”*

Jesus said He has received the authority to judge mankind because He is the *“Son of Man.”*

1st that means He is especially qualified to judge men because He is a man Himself, & can sympathize w/ our human weakness.

He too has been tempted in all things as we are yet w/o sin (Heb 4:11).

2nd, this title *“Son of Man”* alludes to Dan 7:13-14, where it is given to Messiah, as He receives the Kingdom of God from the Ancient of Days.

In His awesome power, as Messiah, Jesus the King of kings & Lord of lords, exercises God's own authority, as He judges/determines the final destiny of every man. When man/women die today, it is Jesus (not St. Peter) who meets them to judge/determine whether they enter Heaven, or their souls are consigned to Hell.

That's because "*all judgment*" has been given to X.

When the Jewish religious leaders accused Jesus of taking too much authority on Himself by violating the Sabbath, they had no idea of exactly how much authority He actually had.

So He explained to them that God has given Him all authority to give man eternal life, or to condemn men to eternal death.

The 3rd impact of X's authoritative voice will be on=>

*** Those Who Are Physically Dead**

At this point in Jesus' discussion, the Jewish leaders must have been dumbstruck by what they viewed as His audacity, in claiming so much authority for Himself.

Verse 28 says they were "marveling."

Not only did the Jewish leaders marvel that Jesus said He had God-given authority/power to give life, & pass judgment on people's souls, but also that He was going to judge them on the basis of whether/not they had believed in Him as God's Son.

He now responds by saying, in essence, “If you’re marveling that I claim the authority to give spiritual life/death in this dispensation, wait till you see Me giving people physical life through resurrection in the next dispensation.”

[**Verses 28-29**] (**Jesus**)=> “*Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming [“& now is” not added this time, because X is describing the dispensation to come], in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, / and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.*”

X is saying that, at the command of His voice, the bodies of all the dead will come out of their tombs, & be resurrected.

Not just reanimated—rather, their souls will be reunited w/ new bodies that are now like X’s body, after His resurrection.

Those who have done good deeds will find that their new resurrection bodies match the kind of life their souls already enjoy—eternal life.

Paul compared the mortal body w/ a resurrection body=>

“It is sown [buried in the ground] a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; / it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; / it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body” (I Cor 15:42-44).

Any way you look at it, our resurrection bodies will be superior to our present mortal bodies.

According to X's judgment, believers, who received eternal life, having become born again will be characterized as people who have done good deeds.

Someone: What kind of good deeds?

E.g. loving the brethren (I Jn 3:14)=> *“We know that we have passed **out of death into life**, because we **love the brethren**. He who does not love abides in death.”*

Those good deeds will be both the evidence/result of their regeneration, not its cause (which is God's grace alone).

They are the people who received spiritual resurrection and new/eternal life back in vs 25, when they were saved.

Now their dead bodies will be raised/transformed to live out a life of both physical/spiritual resurrection by doing good deeds, & thriving on the joyous freedom from condemnation that has been theirs ever since they first believed in Jesus.

On the other hand, those who are judged to have done evil deeds will be the unregenerate, in whom the H.S. has never dwelt, enabling them to do good deeds, because they have never believed in X.

Their evil deeds will have reflected their hearts' condition.

But they too will be resurrected in new/eternal bodies.

Instead of becoming a blessing, those indestructible, eternal, resurrected bodies will be a curse to them in Hell.

They will be resurrected to stand before X at the Great White Throne, where they will be condemned, & forever consigned to Hades, in bodies that can never burn up—ever!

There's a principle here that deserves mentioning=>

Those who think this life is all there is—that you live/die and that's it, w/ no eternal aftermath or consequences—are making a grave/serious error.

What we believe/do in this short life will absolutely determine the nature/character of our lives in eternity, forever.

Equally mistaken are those who say, "I've believed in Jesus, & because I am now under grace, I'm free to indulge in all the world's vile corruption."

No, we will be judged by X, based on our deeds=>

* evil deeds that prove we are unsaved,

* good deeds that prove we are saved.

At the voice of Jesus X, the dead will come out of their tombs.

* For believers, this will happen at the time of the Rapture.

Our resurrected bodies will be re-inhabited by our souls, we will meet our Lord in the air, & we'll return w/ Him to heaven.

There we will stand before Him at the Bema Seat to receive rewards for the good deeds we have done.

* For nonbelievers, their Resurrection will take place right after the end of the Millennium, & it will be immediately followed by the Great White Throne Judgment, where God's books of their deeds will prove them to be unregenerate.

The final impact of the divine/authoritative voice is seen on=>

* **Jesus Himself**

[Verse 30] (Jesus)=> *"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."*

Jesus' judgment will be perfectly just because everything He says/does is in perfect union w/ the Father's will/word.

As we saw in verse 19, when X said, *"I can do nothing on My own initiative,"* He wasn't saying that He has no power to act on His own;

Rather, He has neither the will/desire to do so, due to His divine nature and His love for His Heavenly Father.

There is absolutely no room in Jesus' heart for selfishly seeking His own will, apart from the Father's will.

Nor is Jesus saying that at the Judgment, the Father would continually whisper to Jesus how He should judge in particular cases, leaving X to simply announce His Father's verdicts.

Although He is in complete/voluntary subordination to the Father, His judgment on the Last Day will be His own.

But it will match the Father's judgment perfectly, because both Father/Son share the divine attribute of perfect justice/righteousness, & both their thoughts reflect that perfection in every situation.

Rom 2 says that in the Judgment=> “

*“There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, / but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. / For there is **no partiality with God**” (Rom 2:9-11).*

His judgment is completely w/o partiality—
just/righteous/objective.

X's judgment is based on complete knowledge of the Father's thoughts, because, as a Man, He had been taught by God. His Father's thoughts/judgments had become His own.

Jesus said, *“As I **hear**, I judge.”*

Just as we hear our Savior's voice, He hears the Father's voice;

Jn 16:13 says the Spirit too speaks what He hears from the Father, not on His own initiative.

In verse 19, X said *“The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He **sees** the Father doing.”*

Both His seeing/hearing are figures of speech, which express the union & the communion between the Father/Son/H.S. w/i the Trinity, the Father always taking the lead role as Initiator, & both the Son/H.S. always in heartfelt submission to the Father.

The main thing for us to take out of this text for ourselves

right now, is that Jesus gives spiritual life to dead souls.

It may not be as visible or seemingly dramatic as His resurrecting dead bodies physically out of graves in the future will be; But it's just as real, and just as miraculous.

And it's happening all around this world right now as

people are hearing about X in sermons life this one, & are believing in Him.

Jesus is constantly raising the spiritually dead who

hear/believe in Him; He is giving them eternal life, and shielding them from judgment.

His voice speaks w/ the power/authority of God, either to give life; or to judge/destroy in hell forever.

Do you listen for it, because you are one of those about whom

Jesus said=> *“My sheep **hear My voice**, and I know **them**, and they follow Me;/ and I give **eternal life** to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand”* (Jn 10:27)?

Or are you one of the people about whom X said=>

*“You do **not believe**; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. / But you do **not believe** because you are **not of My sheep**”* (Jn 10:25-26).

I hope & I pray that if you are of that 2nd group, God our Master will enable you to hear/believe X's voice calling to you today.

And that you will call out to Him, seeking forgiveness and eternal life.

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Text: John 5:24-30

1. Jesus was God’s word or message from heaven, that He intended to [10 save] man from his sin.

Jn 1:1

2. He explained that God the Father had granted Him authority to give [10 life] and judge all mankind.

Jn 5:21-23

In today’s text Christ will describe what impact His and the Father’s authoritative voices have on others, including...

*** Those Who Hear and Believe**

[John 5:24]

3. Jesus’ “*word*” is Jesus Himself—the living message from God that reveals eternal life in His [8 Son].

Rom 10:17

4. Just hearing about Christ isn’t enough, we must hear and believe; that means entrusting our own souls and our eternal welfare into His [18 gracious] care.

Jn 5:19, 23

5. In the last part of verse 24, we find that in addition to eternal life, believers receive [18 immunity] from God’s judgment.

Eph 2:1; Jn 3:18

6. Whereas a believer thanks his Creator for the abundance of His good gifts, the nonbeliever—dead in his sins—perceives no such thing and feels [6 no] gratitude to God.

7. Spiritually dead people are attuned to the things of the [12 world].

*** Those Who Are Spiritually Dead**

[Verse 25]

8. Jesus' voice is still heard today by those whose hearts God has prepared; He speaks by His Spirit to every soul that becomes saved, giving His [10 Word] divine energy and the power of life.

Rev 22:17

[Verses 26]

Jn 1:4

9. Those who respond to Jesus' voice by believing in Him receive the abundance of [16 eternal] life.

Jn 17:3

[Verse 27]

Heb 4:11; Dan 7:13-14

10. The Jewish religious leaders accused Jesus of taking too much authority on Himself; He explained to them that God has given Him to authority to give man eternal life, or to [16 condemn] men to eternal death.

*** Those Who Are Physically Dead**

[Verses 28-29]

11. Christ is saying that at the command of His voice the bodies of all the dead will come out of their tombs and be [24 resurrected].

I Cor 15:42-44; I Jn 3:14

12. Those who are judged to have done evil deeds will be the unregenerate in whom the Holy Spirit has never dwelt because they have never believed in Christ; their evil deeds will have reflected their [16 hearts'] condition.

*** Jesus Himself**

[Verse 30]

13. Jesus' judgment will be perfectly just because everything He says and does is in perfect union with the Father's [10 will] and word.

Jn 5:19; Rom 2:9-11

14. Jesus is constantly raising the spiritually dead who hear and believe in Him, and He is giving them [16 eternal] life.

Jn 10:27; 25-26