

Behold the Lord - Part 1

Luke

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Bible Text: Luke 7:11-17

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I want to ask you, please, to turn to the gospel of Luke chapter seven. We come in our study of Luke's gospel to the 11th verse of this seventh chapter and we are going to read down to verse 17 and spend our time here this morning and this evening. The word of God says:

Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.¹

Let's go to our God together in prayer.

Father in heaven, it is good to be together this morning. We delight in worshipping you. We take joy in singing songs of praise and I thank you this morning for the music that has encouraged my heart and ministered to me. Lord, we thank you for the privilege we have now to open your Word together. And we know, Lord, what we are and who we are, that you have been kind to us. You have been good to us. We deserve nothing. And yet you have showered blessings upon us. And, Lord, when it comes to the task of preaching your Word, I can't do a thing. There is no power in me to do anything that would affect anyone for the sake of eternity. Without my Savior I can do nothing. Just flesh, just mere breath so that, Lord, now we look to you, your ability. We trust the working of your Spirit in this hour. We ask that you would take your powerful Word and in your hand and deal with our minds and hearts in a way that is unforgettable to us, in a way that brings

¹ Luke 7:11-17.

forever change in our lives. We know, Lord, that in all likelihood there are spiritually dead men and women, young people sitting in this place right now. And yet there is hope because your Son has the power to bring dead men to life. And so we pray for salvation.

Strengthen us, Lord, to be able to receive your Word. Work in the hearts of each one of us that we might be able to receive what you have for us today. We will thank you for what you accomplish in Jesus' name. Amen.

Who you say that Jesus of Nazareth is? Who do you say that Jesus is? There is not a more important question than that one. Your eternity depends on your answer. Salvation is by faith in Christ and you cannot have faith in Christ, you cannot have faith in the true Christ without an accurate perception of who he is. You can't believe on him whom you have not heard of. You can't believe on him whom you have no knowledge of. Who do you say that Jesus is? And Jesus demonstrated the importance of that question by quizzing his own disciples. Matthew 16:13 says:

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."²

A mixture of superstition and a gross underestimation of who Jesus actually is.

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."³

Simon Peter got it right. You are the Christ, the son of the living God and what Peter said was exactly true. And he got it right because God gave him that light. Do you have that light? Do you see that Jesus is not merely a man, though through the incarnation he became a man? Jesus is not merely a prophet, though he is the prophet, the greatest prophet who ever lived. Do you see, do you believe that Jesus is God come to earth? Do you believe that Jesus is God incarnate?

Now what that means when you understand that truth is that Jesus is the clearest revelation of God that men will ever receive. Do you want to know who God is? Do you want to be able to see God accurately, to perceive the true God for who he is then? Look at Jesus and look to Jesus. Look at Jesus and you will see God. Look to Jesus for fellowship with that God.

² Matthew 16:13-14.

³ Matthew 16:15-17.

Isaiah was given a vision of God. He saw the Lord high and lifted up, Isaiah chapter six. Moses received revelations of God. Abraham received revelations of God, but all of those were limited and all of those pale in comparison with God in human flesh, God standing before men as the God man.

This is what Jesus explained to Philip, John 14:6.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."⁴

You have seen the Father. That is what Jesus says.

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves."⁵

What a statement. No mere man could ever say it. If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.

This is what the write of Hebrews declared. Hebrews 1:1 says:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.⁶

You know it well, but I want you to look at it with me. Put your Bible marker here and go over to John chapter one. Let us look at Jesus this morning. Let us be reminded of the glory of our Savior. John chapter one beginning with verse one.

⁴ John 14:6-7.

⁵ John 14:8-11.

⁶ Hebrews 1:1-3.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.⁷

You see, Christ has exegeted the Father. Christ has explained the Father. When you see Jesus you see the Father.

Now I want to ask you. Is that your view of Jesus? Because if that is not your view of Jesus, you do not have salvation. No one has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ who doesn’t have that view of Jesus. No one has eternal life who would deny this.

1 John 4:1.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.⁸

You say that Jesus was just a man? You say that Jesus was just a prophet? You say that Jesus is some lesser god created by God? You say that Jesus is one of many gods? You

⁷ John 1:1-18.

⁸ 1 John 4:1-4.

reveal what spirit you speak from. You represent the spirit of antichrist. That is not the spirit of God speaking. That is not the true view of who Jesus is.

1 Corinthians 12:3 says:

“Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says ‘Jesus is accursed!’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit.”⁹

Who gives this view that Jesus is Lord? Who reveals the truth that Jesus is God incarnate? That is the work of the Holy Spirit. No one can truly say, no one can sincerely say, no one can believingly say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit.

Now get this. To know Jesus like that means justification. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to receive the righteousness that comes from God through him as a gift. It is to receive his very righteousness as a gift on the basis of faith. It is to justification to know Jesus. But it is also sanctification. Hidden in this one is all of the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God according to the book of Colossians chapter two so that we progress in the Christians faith the same way we entered the Christian faith. We progress in the Christian faith as we look to Jesus, as, we know Jesus, as we walk and have fellowship with Jesus. This is how you grow. And this is why the Holy Spirit on the pages of holy Scripture, this is why he is given to us picture after picture after picture of our Savior, that we might know God. You see? That we might have a growing knowledge of who our God is as we have a growing knowledge of who Jesus is.

What is going on here in Luke chapter seven? We are not only coming in contact through our reading and our study with a picture of the sheer power of God as Jesus is going to raise a man from the dead. We not only come in contact with the sheer power of God. We are going to come in contact with the personality of God. We are going to learn from these verse about the mind of God, the heart of God, the personality of God. We will see God as we see Jesus. To this point Luke’s account has given us clear indications of the deity of Jesus. We have heard him teach as no one ever taught before him. We have seen him do what no one ever did before him. He has cast out demons. He has healed the sick. He has declared himself to be the fulfillment of biblical prophecies, Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. He has just healed someone, not only by touch, but now we have seen he is able to heal someone by command from a distance, not even in their presence. But now in these verses we meet with the climactic demonstration of his deity. This is the clearest view of all, because now he is going to raise someone from the dead.

Have you been to a funeral lately? Have you mourned the loss of someone you love lately? You know that when you attended that funeral, you know when you were at the bedside of that loved one there was no hope in that immediate moment of their being raised from the dead. Not in that moment. Future resurrection, it is certain, but not in that moment. There is no greater demonstration of Christ’s divine nature than the fact that he was able to raise people from the dead. And he will do this three times before his earthly

⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:3.

ministry is finished. He does it here then in the case of Jairus' daughter. Then in the case of Lazarus. And as he does it, we see the personality of God. In Christ we see the Father.

Now this morning and this evening we are going to see several things about our God, but this morning we are going to focus on just one, divine sovereignty. Look at verse 11.

Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her.¹⁰

There is nothing more true of God that you could say than to say that God is sovereign. What does it mean to be God? It means that you are sovereign. And to say that God is sovereign is to say that he rules over everything. He is king over all things? And this means not only that he has the final say over everything, it is also to acknowledge that he has a purpose in everything that he does. In everything going on in this world right now there is a divine purpose being worked out and God's purpose is because he is God and because he rules over everything, because he possesses all authority and all power and all knowledge and all ability, his purposes are never thwarted. God knows all things. He has a plan for all things. Things are not just happening to God. God is not just reacting to anything. He is not making it up as he goes along. And when you look at Jesus of Nazareth you see in him that sense of divine purpose. He is in control.

Now he is a real man. God took to himself, the second person of the triune God took to himself a real human nature. He is living as a real man on the earth. And he has voluntarily yielded up to the Father his right of—if we could say it this way— independent exercise of divine attributes. He is now living his life submitted to the Father, living his life as a man in the power of the Spirit dependent on the Father, but his perfect knowledge of the Father, the access that he has to all that the Father knows results in this majestic sense of calm and purpose. There is never any panic in Jesus, is there? Do you ever see him panic? There is never any sense of rush. There is this supernatural knowledge about him, this knowledge of what has to be done and when it has to be done. And the New Testament is full of testimony about this.

When he meets with the Samaritan woman, the woman at the well in John chapter four, do you remember how the Bible describes it in John 4:4? Just look there real quickly, John chapter four verse four. We won't read the whole thing, but I want to point something out there. John chapter four verse four. What does the Bible say?

“And he had to pass through Samaria.”¹¹

Now why did he have to pass through Samaria. You can't explain that geographically, because it was very common for the Jews just to go around Samaria. He didn't have to

¹⁰ Luke 7:11-12.

¹¹ John 4:4.

pass through Samaria except for this reason. You see, he had an appointment there. There was a woman that he must meet there. Salvation must be brought there. Christ is not just doing things. He is not just making decisions on a whim. He is on this divine set of marching orders and step by step, day by day, event by event, he is calmly, majestically, peacefully, purposefully marching down that road and accomplishing this divine purpose. He must pass through Samaria.

When he meets with Zacchaeus you see the same thing, Luke chapter 19 verse one.

He entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature.¹²

I like Zacchaeus.

So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”¹³

There is that same language. Why, Jesus? Why must you stay at this man’s house today? Verse six.

So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”¹⁴

What is that, folks? That is repentance and faith.

And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”¹⁵

You see, that is why he must go to Zacchaeus’ house that day. It is the day for that man to be saved. It is the day for that man to be redeemed in the sense of taken out of the world and brought to God.

¹² Luke 19:1-3.

¹³ Luke 19:4-5.

¹⁴ Luke 19:6-8.

¹⁵ Luke 19:9-10.

You see this same sense of divine calmness when Jesus performs miracles in nature. Matthew 8:23:

“And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves.”¹⁶

Get the picture? Storm blowing. The boat is being overrun with waves.

...but he was asleep.

And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.”

And he said to them, “Why are you afraid,¹⁷

Just stop there. Really? Why are you afraid? He says:

“O you of little faith” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”¹⁸

I will tell you who he is. He is not just a mere man. He is the God man. He is the creator and the sustainer of the universe. Matthew 17:24. I love this.

When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the tax?”

He said, “Yes.”

And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?”

And when he said, “From others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself.”¹⁹

It is a temple tax. He is the Son of God. He is not taxed. He is a Son. But so as not to give offense, Peter, I will pay your tax and mine and there is going to be a fish that you catch that has the needed money in its mouth.

¹⁶ Matthew 8:23-24.

¹⁷ Matthew 8:24-26.

¹⁸ Matthew 8: 26-27.

¹⁹ Matthew 17:24-27.

What kind of a man is this? This is the man who is also God come to earth. And here in our verses we see that same majestic sense of purpose and timing.

We ask: Where is Nain? And why is Jesus going there?

Verse 11 begins soon afterward, that the timing of the event, we don't know exactly how long, but it is soon after he has healed the centurion servant with a command, with a word. He is going to a town, verse 11, called Nain and he is going there with his disciples and a great crowd, you see? Now the fame of Jesus is continuing to spread. And crowds are following him in large number. And they are going to this place called Nain and Nain was a small village about 25 miles south of Capernaum, 25 miles from where he had been. That is a full day's journey by foot. That means that Jesus would have begun this journey with this great crowd of people, some time in the morning. He travels all day. And he arrives at Nain which was a small village.

Alfred Edersheim, in fact, described it as it would have been desolate, a little small place. When it says that there was gate there, it wasn't fortified city, so this gate is more like symbolic. It is kind of like when you drive into a town and you see the little, you know, stone thing that says, "Welcome to Tomball or wherever." It is kind of that. It is just a symbolic place where business would have been conducted. It lets you know you have arrived at Nain.

And so late afternoon or into the evening of that day Jesus arrives at Nain. Why are you going to Nain? What business do you have in Nain? Well, it is this business. Verse 12.

"As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold..."²⁰

Luke adds this word, look.

"...a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her."²¹

This was his business in Nain. This is why he gets up early in the morning and begins a journey. This is why the crowd is travelling along with him. What possible business do you have in a little out of the way village? Answer? He is about to raise someone for the first time from the dead. And it is going to be a sign.

Look down in verse 18. We will get there eventually.

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying,

²⁰ Luke 7:12.

²¹ Ibid.

‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’” In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight.

And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”²²

Jesus has made a fully days journey and get this, arrived at the very time when the funeral procession is headed out of the city which means they are on their way to the burial.

The Jews did not keep a body overnight. They did not embalm. So in all likelihood this young man died somewhere early in the morning along the time when Jesus was traveling. This young man has died. His hair would have been cut. His nails would have been cut. The body would have been washed. Spices would have been applied. He would have been wrapped in clothes. He is being carried out on what we would view like a platform or a stretcher. He is lying... the body is lying on the back. It may have been that the face was left unwrapped, because they would do that at times. And just as they are headed outside the city which is where they would have buried the body, just as they head outside the city, Jesus is coming in. The timing is impeccable. Christ had to get up in the morning and leave at just the right time to arrive just at this time.

From a human point of view it is amazing. That is why Luke says behold. Look what is coming outside the town.

But from God’s point of view, what is this? This is his sovereign control over all the events taking place in this world. This is God’s providence on display.

And, by the way, folks, providence is more... in many ways it is more miraculous than a miracle, because in a miracle God just basically interrupts things. Boom. There it is. He just intervened. But when you talk about the providence of God, God is working together all of the events of all the people living on the planet all at the same time, their thoughts, their decisions, all these things God works it all together so that his perfect will is accomplished. Is that not amazing?

And then there is no greater display of sovereignty than to be able to raise a man from the dead. This is no mere man who is Lord over death. This is no mere man who has the power to give life.

We will talk about this more tonight, but real quickly look at John chapter five. Look at verse 18.

This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own

²² Mathew 17:21-23.

Father, making himself equal with God. So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.”²³

What is that? That is sovereignty.

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father.”²⁴

Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”²⁵

In what sense is the hour now when the dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live? Well, in the sense of what Jesus does with this woman’s son and what he does with Jairus’ daughter and what he does with Lazarus. We see examples in his lifetime and we see it now where the power of resurrection is on display. But I say to you, those words go beyond physical resurrection. The hour right now is such when the dead hear the voice of the Son of God and are brought to life because he has the authority to grant life to whomever he wants. What is that? That is salvation life.

The Bible declares in Ephesians two we were all born dead in our trespasses and sins. Salvation is nothing less than a spiritual resurrection. It is dead men coming to life where they hear the voice of the Son of God through the preaching of the gospel. It is when God himself who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” says in a heart, “Let there be light.” And then there is a clear view of the glory of God in the face of his Son Jesus and where Jesus is seen he is loved and trusted in and where he is trusted in, there is justification. There is salvation. There is forgiveness. There is liberty. There is life. The dead hear the voice of God’s Son today and live where God grants sovereignty sovereignly where he grants faith.

²³ John 5:18-21.

²⁴ John 5:22-23.

²⁵ John 5:23-29.

That is what God is doing even today. And then one day, the last day, Jesus will call all the dead out of the graves. Some to a resurrection of life, some to a resurrection of judgment. How does he do it? Well, he is God. He is sovereign.

So let's stop there this morning with a few questions. Do we realize there are dead men here today? We have the dead in our midst right now. There is someone in this room, probably multiple people in this room who are still in your sins. You have never been forgiven. You do not have fellowship with God. You may be religious. You may be a Baptist. You may know the gospel backwards and forwards. You may even profess that you have believed it, but your life is telling the true story if you will just pay attention. You are a slave to sin. You have no love for God. You have no delight in the worship of God. You have no desire, perhaps, even to be here. Someone brought you, perhaps a parent, perhaps a wife, perhaps a husband. The reason why you have no desire for these things is that you have never seen Jesus for who he really is and you don't love him. You know about him, but you don't know him. Do you realize it is no accident that you sit in this room right now? God has sovereignly, providentially brought you here on this day in this hour that you might hear the good news that if you will look to Christ for life, you will live forever.

Have you heard the voice of the Son of God through the preaching of the gospel today? Would you renounce your sins today? Would you relinquish your selfish, stubborn, prideful will today and look to God's Son with all humility, with all sense of need and look to him and what he did on the cross, dying for sinners and look at an empty tomb? He has been raised from the dead and realize the living Lord walks in the midst of his churches. He is here with us this morning. Would you look to him and live?

And then I would ask the believers here this morning: Do you really believe in the sovereignty of God? Do you believe things are just happening? Do you think God is just reacting? Or do you believe God is sovereign? If you believe God is sovereign, would you say amen? Then I want to ask you something. Why do you act like he isn't? Why do we act like he isn't? Do you believe in the perfection of God's timing? Have you seen past evidences of God's loving sovereignty in your own life where his timing was impeccable? Oh, you may have wished he would have been earlier, but he wasn't. He was right on time. And I want to ask us: Why do we forget these things? Why do we panic? Why are we like those disciples when the wind is blowing and the waves are coming into the boat? Why should we receive the rebuke? Why are you afraid? Oh you of little faith. What is faith. It is not faith in faith, is it? It is faith in truth. It is believe in the truth. Do we not know the truth of God's sovereignty?

Do you believe that Jesus is this same Lord? Do you believe that when you see Jesus you have seen the Father, that the clearest revelation of the true God you will ever get is the Son of God? Will you trust him then? Will you trust him with your past? You need forgiveness. Has he provided as sovereign solution for that? Has he made a way for you to be forgiven? Will you trust him with your present? Will you rest in him? Will you submit to him? Will you repent? Will you do what Zacchaeus did? Will you repent from your sinful ways and give your life to him? And then will you trust him with your

future? Would you this morning say, “You know, Lord, all that I want is to walk in the center of your will for my life. Let me learn that my ways are empty, but your ways give pleasures that are forever. My way is loss. Your way is richness. Let me simply by your grace walk in the center of what you want from my life.”

And I want to say to any mourner in this place, anyone who is heart broken, anyone who has recently lost someone you love, if they were a believer and you are a believer, you will see them again. Jesus will call us all from our graves and we will have a new body that matches the new us and we will live forever and ever body and soul in the presence of our God, because he is the Lord.

Let's bow together for prayer.

Father, thank you for this picture we have of your Son our Savior. We give you praise that you are sovereign. We are so thankful that there is nothing just happening in this world, that there is no such thing as chance or luck or a victim of circumstances. But, Lord, your purposes are perfect and are sure. They are never thwarted, because you alone are God. I pray for those who came into this place dead in their trespasses and sins. Oh, Lord, may they hear your sons voice even now and be set free. Grant them a heart that turns from their sin to embrace your Son. And I pray for myself and my brothers and sisters. Lord, let us in a proper way be ashamed of what little faith we have. We say you are sovereign, but our fears and our anxieties and our panic says that we don't really believe that. Lord, you know we are small. You know we are but dust. We thank you that you have patience with our little faith, but, Lord, we ask that you would grant us greater faith. We say, Lord, that we believe. Please help our unbelief. Strengthen us to give you greater glory through greater trust. And we ask for this in Jesus' name. Amen.