

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

John 5:25-29
November 14, 2021

Always stand in awe of the word of Jesus and live.

- *Amen* is such a part of our language and culture, even among the Biblically illiterate
- *Amen!* - a strong affirmation of what was just said or just happened
 - ♦ A response that says, *That's right! How true! You said it!*
 - ♦ A Christian response to a prayer or a confession. *This is most certainly true.* Luther
- *Amen* in Hebrew means *solid* or *firm*. Thus solid reliable reality - truth
- *What I am about to tell you is most certainly true. A time is coming and is here now when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who listen will live.*
 - ♦ Did you catch that? Whose voice spoke these words? The Son of God!
 - ♦ Jesus tried to get their attention so they would listen and live. Sadly they didn't.
 - ♦ The question is: **Will we?** Will we listen every time the Son of God speaks?
 - ♦ This proclamation of truth exhorts us to...

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- ❖ The word that raises the dead to life
 - *A time is coming and is here now when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who listen will live.*
 - ♦ His voice raised Jairus' daughter, the young man of Nain, & Lazarus
 - ♦ The voice of the Son of God will raise every human on the Last Day
 - ♦ But notice! Jesus' voice raises the dead to life **here and now** - those who listen!
 - ♦ ²⁴ *Amen, Amen, I tell you: Anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He is not going to come into judgment but has crossed over from death to life.* John 5:24
 - Jesus' word works new life in people so they trust God the Father, their Creator.
 - God is not just the Source of life. **He is life.** ²⁶...*the Father has life in himself,*
 - Those in the Living God have life. Separation from God = no life! **DEAD!**
 - The word of Jesus brings us into God - into fellowship with him - into life.
 - Jesus' word, when listened to, raises us from spiritual death (our sinful nature).
 - ♦ It converts the hostile heart into the heart of a child/follower/saint/servant.
 - ♦ When heard, it continues to deal with our dead old self replacing death with life.
 - ♦ The chief character of faith: **It loves the voice of Jesus, listens, and says Amen.**
 - *The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you — they are full of the Spirit and life.* John 6:63
 - *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.* John 6:68
 - *"If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (from sin's death reign)"* John 8:31-32
 - *My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.* John 10:27
 - *You are my friends [since] you continue to do the things I instruct you.* John 15:14
 - *So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through the word of Christ.* Romans 10:17
 - *...I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes ... "The righteous will live by faith."* Rom. 1:16

- ◆ **Stand in awe of Jesus' word!** It **always** raises those who listen from death to life.
 - What comfort, hope, and joy for those who delight to hear Jesus' word.
 - *We should fear (revere) and love God so that we do not despise preaching (the proclaimed voice of Jesus) and his word. But regard it as holy (sacred) and **gladly hear and learn it.** Why? **It produces resurrection** - draws into the Living God.*
 - What does this reveal about *Christians* who **don't listen to Jesus' voice**?
 - They are lukewarm at best in danger of being spit out (expelled) by Jesus Rev. 3:16
 - Stop making excuses! It's a **Code Blue**. The living listen to Jesus. Dead don't!
 - Reach out to fellow believers who no longer long to listen to the Living Lord.
- ❖ The final word - the perfect judgment
 - *the Father has life in himself, so also he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.*
 - ◆ *Son of Man* - Dan 7:13 - the Father gives him dominion over all - Divine Messiah
 - ◆ *authority to execute (God's) judgment* - **speak the final word of truth**
 - Jesus declares what is true - at each person's day of death - then at the Last Day
 - ◆ His judgment is final. There is no appeal - no threat of changed status.
 - ◆ To those made and kept alive by his word: *You are alive in God & with him forever.*
 - Freed forever from the sinful nature and corruption - confirmed in righteousness
 - So fully transformed by God's grace through the gospel that there is no danger of God's people falling back into sin. **Secure in life.**
 - ◆ To those who didn't listen to God: *You are dead - separated from God & life forever.*
 - Getting what they said they wanted: *God, leave me alone. Let me be me.*
 - How sad - but right, just, and fitting - their self-imposed wretched state.
- ❖ The word that spotlights the evidence of life and death
 - To demonstrate that his judgment is not arbitrary, but just - he cites the evidence.
 - *Those who have done good will rise to live,*
 - ◆ Notice: Jesus does **NOT** say they live **because** they did good! We can't be that good.
 - ◆ The life of those who have faith's new life is characterized as **have done good**.
 - ◆ Their life is full of fruits of faith, putting God's word into action - lives of loving forgiveness filled with God's mercy and grace. They listen. His word produces life.
 - ◆ Jesus notes this about those he reclaimed by faith in the Sheep & Goats account Mt 25
 - *I was... and you gave me. ...Just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.* Living out Jesus' word out of faith in and love for him.
 - *...but those who have practiced evil will rise to be condemned.*
 - ◆ Evil, not what people think is *evil*. Evil by God's definition. What is truly evil.
 - ◆ It is evil to steal all of God's blessings - life, health, talents, relationships, community, every blessing and use them as you want. Making yourself the authority and rejecting God's rightful claim to be your god, glorying in self. That's **profound evil**.
 - ◆ Evil is making yourself your own lord. What a lie. What arrogance! How ungrateful.
 - ◆ People like to reserve hell for the people **they consider evil**, but not themselves.
 - What blind arrogance. Believers know their own evil and reject it. A life of repentance is a life that turns away from evil - not practicing it or flaunting it - to put on Christ.
 - The dead make their evil ways their life, their good, their god. It condemns them.
 - **Jesus, spare us from letting my way be my life.** Let me be yours, living out your word.

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