

John 5:25-31

This has been a hard week for many. I have gotten to the point that I don't even want to watch or hear the news anymore.

It's been a hard week because of the violence that has happened in our own backyard. Last weekend, there were what, five shootings that happened on one day. A few shootings happened in the Conway area. Some of you were not far from where those incidents happened. If the timing were right, some of you would have found yourselves right in the thick of it.

What is happening in our county is taking place sometimes on a greater scale. The terrorists attacks of recent weeks and even in our own homeland give us the sense that there are no safe places anymore.

The violence and the turmoil in public square are bad enough. There are adverse things happening in some of your personal lives. Some are getting over surgeries. Ann Blow received news that she did not want to hear. It's not good. Others are grieving the loss of people you love and care for. In recent months, we experienced the loss of Ann Hucks, and Buddy Norris. Our deaf community lost a friend and brother in Christ, Austin.

Tomorrow, one of our families of our church will gather to bury a sister-in-law and aunt.

I am sorry y'all are going through what you're going through. I hurt for you.

I'll tell you something that has affected me lately. That is the spiritual state of our nation and our community. Our nation and our community are in conflict, racially, politically, and spiritually. Back in the first part of May, some participated in National Day of Prayer. One of our leaders prayed, asking for strength and courage in the face of persecution. That bothered me. This past week, I was listening to some of the sermons from Moody Bibl Institute's Pastors Conference. One pastor explained things in a way that helped me understand what is going on. He stated that our nation is in a state where there are conflicting worldviews. He said on the one hand there are the atheists who deny the existence of any God. This group wants God completely out of the public exposure. There is a second group that is the extreme opposite of that. Pluralism is the view that there are more than one god and therefore more than one way to heaven. They want all gods to be recognized and they want the teaching that there are many ways to heaven to be accepted. Some have inserted Jesus into their teachings in ways that try to make Him who and what He really is not. This particular pastor stated that these two extremes have two things in common. First, they are enjoying the protection of political correctness. Second, they have joined together as a force against Biblical Christian faith.

One of their ways of attacks is to infiltrate their views into church settings. They have been successful. Be careful who you listen to and what you listen to. You and I need to know this book so that we can know when something is wrong according to the Standard of the Bible.

If you go back with me in the time of Jesus, He faced the same thing. Two completely opposite belief systems that conflict one another had join forces against Jesus. This was beginning to happen in John 5.

Read with me how Jesus responds to one of the groups, the leaders of the established Jewish religion.

John 5:25-29

25 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. 26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 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.

I think the key word in these verses is in verse 27. Jesus has been given authority.

Sovereign authority that is given to Jesus by His father is absolute and universal. Throughout His ministry, Jesus demonstrated His authority over various aspects that we as humans experience.

He showed authority over disease and sickness. He showed authority over demons, over sin. He demonstrated power over the forces of nature. In this passage is the claim of the greatest authority, the authority of resurrection. That is so vital. That is so important. Since He has authority of resurrection, then everything we are going through is small compared to eternity that is in resurrection. If there is no resurrection, we are hopeless. There is nothing beyond our suffering.

In this passage, I believe two resurrections are referred to. The first is a spiritual resurrection. The second is a physical resurrection.

Authority to give spiritual resurrection

Look once again at verse 25. "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour comes and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

Where is the authority? It is in the fact that Jesus is Son of God.

The fact is that all of us are born into sin. Because of sin, we are spiritually dead to that of God. Ephesians 2:1ff teach us that.

We were dead in trespasses and sin. Verses 2 and 3 give more detail of what that means.

Paul goes on in that passage to tell how life comes to us. In verses 4 and 5, But God rich in mercy raised us up with Him (Jesus).

It is through Jesus that God raises us up. The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear and obey will live.

Some years ago, Street Reach was in their second location. They didn't have the nice kitchen as they do now. In those days, the guests who came for supper had to listen to the message from the visiting preacher before they got the meal. One night, we came early. I went to the big room where the preacher was going at it. I had to put some supplies there in preparation for the meal. I noticed some of the guys there. They were a blank wall. The preacher was going at it, but it seemed that nothing was penetrating their hearts. It was as if they were saying, "I only have to endure this for a little while longer, and then get the meal." I went back to talk with the disciple who was helping us. I said, "Are those guys hearing anything that is being said? It seems like a worthless effort." He said, "I was them at one time. I came for the meal. One day after 5 months, it was like something woke me up. I heard the message and responded to Jesus Christ.

Something or better someone? That's what Jesus is talking about. The result for this young man is life, eternal life. His life was never the same again.

Jesus speaks to us by the Holy Spirit. Those who hear and obey will live. That is the authority of Jesus under the name of Son of God.

Authority to give physical resurrection

The purpose of the physical resurrection will be to give judgment.

Look at verse 28. "Do not marvel at this for an hour is coming, 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 a resurrection of judgment.

All may not experience the first resurrection. For many will not hear and obey to receive life. But all will be resurrected. Those who experienced the spiritual resurrection will receive life hereafter.

Those who reject Jesus will hear, "Depart from me, I never knew you." On what basis will Jesus judge? On the basis that He is Son of Man. He is God and He is Man. He judges as God because of receiving our judgment upon Himself as man. He bore our sins upon Himself. He took on the judgment that was due us. As we trust in Him, hear Him, obey Him, we are put in the place where judgment was already meted out.

You are on a grassy area. All around you is dry grass. You look out in front of you and see the smoke that is sign that a wildfire is coming your way. What do you do? You can take stand against the fire. The result will be bad. Or you can get in a space where fire has already burned. Doing so, you will live. Fire won't burn a second time where it already burned. That's how it is with God's judgment. Why face the fire of judgment when you can trust where judgment has already taken place, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the message of hope for us. Resurrection is reality.

That is the hope on which we stand with all that we face and continue to face.

What are we to do in our conflicting culture? What did Jesus do? He proclaimed the gospel.

Acts 17 Paul was in Athens with two groups identified as Stoics and Epicureans. These two were conflicting towards one another. Yet, when Paul came on the scene, they united against him. What did he do? He preached the Gospel.

In our day when the conflicting culture seems to rise against us, what are we to do. Follow Christ and preach the gospel.

I want to share two verses as we close.

Philippians 2:9-11

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Every tongue, every person will confess Jesus as Lord. He is the Lord of authority who will save and will judge. Which one will you choose? You have to choose one or the other.

Matthew 28:19 Jesus made the statement, *“All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples.”*

You have family members who face death and illnesses differently than you do. You have Christ. They don't. Share Christ with them. You don't have to yell and scream. Share how Christ is making a difference in how you face that situation.