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Series: The Gospel of John
Message: Darkness and Light

Transcribed Message
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John 12:34-41

One of the most familiar and often repeated images in the Bible is the imagery of darkness and light. It's literally all through the Scriptures, as we'll see. It is a reminder to us of something that is very familiar, very obvious. All we have to do is close our eyes and we can be in the darkness. I encourage you to open them again here as we go on. But it's easy to visualize it, it's easy to think about it, it's easy to understand that there's at times a somberness about the truth that we're going to look at. And there's also times of great joy regarding this. I mean, light is something that we simply can't live without. Light is something that we need. And it's easy to take it for granted, isn't it? The first thing we do when we walk into a dark room is we reach over and we find the switch and we turn on the light, never realizing that when we leave that room, we can put that switch back down and it goes to dark. But light is just something that we are constantly in need of. It's rather amazing to realize that light, as we know it and enjoy it, hasn't always been a part of the experience of much of human history. The reality is even in our own country and as late as the 1960s, there were homes that had no electricity. So light is something that we relate to, it's something that we easily understand. It's a truth that God brings to us in so many different ways.

John does that again in his gospel. In this 12th chapter of the gospel of John that we've been working our way through; he returns to this imagery of darkness and of light. He is, of course, speaking not of physical light, but he's speaking of the spiritual imagery that is involved with that. And he will show us what I just said that there are some somber things about this and there are some joyful, which is reflective of our big idea this morning, which I think we'll understand more as we get into the passage. But the Bible at times says some hard things. Sometimes the Bible says some hard things, but hard things can become good things. When we step into the truth of God's word, when we walk by faith and not by sight, when we trust him and believe him, put our faith in him, even the hard things can become good.

So, a quick look back at what we've seen a couple weeks ago when we were in the chapter just before this one. Remember those four things? Jesus was troubled in his soul. The closer he came to the cross, the more intense the battle became. And as he looked towards the cross, he said his soul was deeply troubled, knowing that he would soon become the sin bearer of the world. His overriding desire in all of it, as in all of things, was that he would bring glory to the Father. His declaration, his second now, as John records it in this passage, the first being, now is my soul troubled. Now is the time of judgment. That judgment looked forward, of course, to the cross. It's easy for us to think of the cross as being simply about our salvation, and of course it is about our salvation. To think of the cross being about salvation and the second coming of Christ being about judgment. And here John makes it clear in the words of Jesus that it is both a time of judgment at the cross, even as it will be a time of judgment at the Lord's return.

And then that last one, Jesus foretold his death. In verse 32, when he said, if I be lifted up, he was clearly talking about the passage in Numbers when the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness and everyone who looked at it was saved, even though they had been bitten by a serpent. Jesus uses that picture to speak of his own being lifted up.

And then that verse 33, he said these things because he was in fact thinking about the death that was to come. With that in mind, we look at the greatest question that comes to us in this passage. And the greatest question is asked by the crowd: who is the Son of Man? Who is the Son of Man? If they had only come to understand and answer that question in the right way, they too would have walked in the light.

But let's look at this matter, first of all, of confusion in the midst of clarity in verses 34 to 36. And it starts off with clarity in verse 34. This is the very first part of that verse. So, the crowd answered him when Jesus said, if I be lifted up, I will draw all men to myself. And he said these things concerning the death that he knew he would die. The crowd responds back to those words and they say to him, we have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever.

We just start by reminding ourselves of who the crowd is. And the crowd is 99.9% Jewish, right? They have come by the thousands, by the tens of thousands, by the hundreds of thousands to Jerusalem for the Passover. And when they refer to the law, they're probably

talking about the whole of the Old Testament. They have heard it all their lives. They have listened to it. They have heard it read. They have memorized it, right? They reference the law that they are so very familiar with.

And what they say about the law and about the Christ is good. It's good to have knowledge about the Word of God, isn't it? They had this knowledge, but knowledge by itself is not enough. And we're going to see that as we go forward in this. And I think it should cause us to step back and consider the very same thing. Whether we're an adult, whether we're a young adult, whether we're college, whether we're a teenager, whether we're children, you know, having Bible knowledge is good. Knowing what the Bible says is good, but it's not good enough, is it? When we are teaching our children, whether we're teaching them Bible stories or Bible content, we want them to understand those things. We want them to know the "what", but we want much more for them to know the "why". We want them to know the "who". We want them to know who it is that is behind all these things, don't we? We want them to know God, in other words. And that is what we see here.

What they get right is the linking together of the idea of the Christ. Notice, we have heard from the law that the Christ, the Christ is the Messiah, Messiah and Christ, the anointed one, the one that was promised from the Old Testament. He remains forever. And then they link it to that phrase, the Son of Man, that familiar phrase we've mentioned many times that Jesus uses only of himself. Seventy times in the Gospels, Jesus talks about himself as being the Son of Man. Seventy times. And of course, when he did that, he was going right back to Daniel 7. And the great prophecy in Daniel 7 of the one who is called the Ancient of Days. Daniel is looking prophetically to the future, to this coming one, this Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah, right? And they put together rightly the idea that the Christ, the anointed one, the Son of Man are one and the same.

Their problem is the Old Testament spoke, Isaiah 52 verse 13, about this one who would be lifted up and who would reign forever. So, they're putting together the right things, and it seems at this moment that they may be getting it and then it turns to confusion. Look at the end of verse 34. I'll just read the whole verse again. So, the crowd answered him, we have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. Okay, that's good. They understood what

they had heard, at least on that level. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? The Messiah was going to come, and he was going to save. I mean, that was the very first message, wasn't it? The angels said to the shepherds, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord. When Peter was asked by Jesus, who do men say that I am? Peter said, you are the Christ. You're the Messiah. You're the anointed one. You're the Christ, the Son of God. And so you have this understanding that Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of Man was going to come, and he was going to save.

But the problem they're having, the confusion that they're having is how can he be both the one who is lifted up and the one who's going to reign forever? How can he speak of his death as being the one who is lifted up and speak about the death he was going to die and at the same time put together what the law said about the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed one who would rule and reign forever? And so that's the problem they're having. How can Messiah be both?

It wasn't something that was unknown. When Peter speaks in 1 Peter 1, listen to what he says in verse 10. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. So, there it is. Peter's grappling with it. The sufferings of Messiah, the sufferings of the anointed one, the sufferings of Christ, and on the other hand, the glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you and the things that have now been announced to you that through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven things into which the angels long to look. Y

You see what's going on. They understand Jesus is putting himself forward as the Christ, the Messiah. They understand from the Old Testament law that the Messiah, when he comes, is going to rule and reign forever. They're having trouble putting together how it is that Jesus can talk about the fact that he's going to die, that he's going to be lifted up with their understanding of who the Messiah is.

So where are we? We're right back where we have been a hundred times before in the Gospel of John, right? Their understanding, their expectation of who the Messiah was going to be and what he was going to do was flawed. And so here we see this again. Back to clarity then. Thirdly, in verses 35 and 36, look how verse 35 began. So, Jesus said to them, the light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtakes you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become sons of light.

It's almost when you start off verse 35 with the word so, it's almost like Jesus is saying, so you don't quite get it yet. So, you're still grappling with how is it that this one called the Son of Man is going to be lifted up and yet he's also going to rule and reign forever. So let me shed some light. And what Jesus does in verses 35 and 36 is he gives them a wonderful word. A wonderful word. Just look at this. You notice that Jesus doesn't answer their question directly, does he? They say as they're grappling with this issue, who is the Son of Man? We can't put this together. We're confused about these two seemingly contradictory things. You're going to die, but you're going to rule and reign forever. How is that even possible? He doesn't answer the question directly, who is the Son of Man?

I think he does indirectly. I think maybe the reason that he doesn't is he has, in fact, answered that question so many times, but their understanding and their expectation of who the Messiah is going to be, as I just said, is so flawed that it's almost like how many times can I say this to you? I think it's also, as you get into this verse, as we will, I think it's also a foreshadowing. There's a truth in these verses that's a foreshadowing of the darkness that is coming upon them.

Let's look at this. Jesus shifts from what it means as to who is this Son of Man, and he wants to shift to their relationship to him. He is, as you look at verses 35 and 36, he is the light. Notice four times in these verses, every time you have the word light, you have a definite article in front of it. Jesus is pointing to himself in this way, and he shifts to who is the Son of Man, and he wants them to understand what it means to be in a relationship with him.

Let's look at the imagery here. Four things regarding this wonderful word. The first one is simply that this is a word picture all through Scripture. That's why we started off at the very

beginning saying this imagery of darkness and light literally is all through the Scripture. Open your Bible to Genesis chapter 1 and verse 1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was what? It was void. It was covered with darkness, and God said, let there be light. So, the first three verses of the Bible bring the imagery of darkness and light right before us. You get to the second book of the Bible, Exodus, and what do you have? You have the Shekinah glory of God, the children of Israel being guided every day by the pillar of the cloud that signified the very presence of God, and at night, the pillar of fire, the Shekinah glory. You get into the Psalms, and the Psalms are filled with imagery of light. The Lord, the 27th Psalm says, the Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, and then, of course, when we come to the gospel of John in the first chapter, we're going to refer to it in just a moment, but that's the way John begins his gospel. You go all the way to the end of the Bible, Revelation 21. John writes there, there'll be no need for a sun. There'll be no need for a moon because God is present with us. He is the light, right?

So, what you have, first of all, is this picture, this imagery all through Scripture. Secondly, this is a wonderful word because it reminds us of who Jesus is. It reminds us of who Jesus is. John, as I just said, begins his gospel. In the beginning was the word. In the beginning was the logos, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was what? In him was life. So, there's logos, there's word, there's life. In him was life, and the life was what? The life was the light of man. Immediately, even in John's gospel, this is brought to the forefront.

I just want to go back and read from the first chapter, beginning at verse four. Just listen to what John says in his introduction. 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 he came to bear witness about the light. What do you have when you get to John chapter 8 and verse 12 at the great feast? Jesus stands up against the backdrop of all the lights that were used at night. And what does he say? I am the light of the world. I am the light of the world. I am God. If you have seen me, you've seen the

Father. Jesus doesn't directly answer the question, who is the son of man? But very much he is answering that question by pointing them to who he is and their need for them to have a relationship with him.

Thirdly, notice it's a word with a challenge and a warning. It's a word with a challenge and a warning. The challenge is to walk in the light. The challenge is to believe in the light. I think he's saying the same thing in just two different ways. To walk in the light is to believe. To believe is to walk in the light. But there's not just a challenge here. There's a warning, isn't there? You won't always have the light. Darkness is coming. Chapter 9, when Jesus healed the man who was born blind, a man who had literally walked in darkness his entire life until Jesus opened his eyes. That man not only saw light for the first time physically, he saw light for the first time spiritually. You have that picture, right?

And then what is the contrast to that? The contrast to that is the religious leaders who said, Jesus didn't really do this. This man really wasn't born blind, and they hated him so much they decided they wanted to kill him. This is the contrast that we have here. This picture of light but also of a progression into darkness. Alexander McLaren says at this point, rejected light is the parent of the densest darkness. Rejected light is the parent of the densest darkness.

Notice, finally, it's a word with a promise. Verse 36, why is this a wonderful word? Well, look at the beginning of verse 36. While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become sons of light. I mean, there is no more wonderful word than that in all the Bible. You and I can become sons and daughters and children of the light. That's just John using language that Paul will later speak of regarding adoption into God's family. You're brought into God's family by faith in Christ. You're made his sons, you're made his daughters, you're made his children. There isn't any better news than that. There isn't any more wonderful news than that. Paul will speak in 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 5 of being children who walk in the light. He'll say the same thing in Ephesians 5, 8. Be children who are walking in the light. There's so much here regarding the imagery and the picture and the contrast between walking in the light and believing and walking in the truth and walking in darkness and the darkness that is coming.

Now, notice we have this wonderful word, and it's followed by a dreaded word. Look at the end of verse 36. When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.

This is literally an acting out of the judicial judgment of God upon these people. Rejected light becomes the parent of the densest darkness. The end of verse 36 is a picture of that. Jesus departed from them. He won't be seen again until his arrest. This is the last of his public presence. He's saying to them, darkness or light, you have to choose. You have to decide. Are you going to walk in darkness or are you going to walk in the light? To walk in the light is to believe me. To walk in the darkness is to reject me.

Now, the response of unbelief is what we come to secondly. The rest of these verses, 37 to 41, we have the response of unbelief. It is somber, it is sober, it is sad, it is tragic. And it is a hard truth that we're going to look at. John's commentary begins in verse 37. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him. Now, what you have beginning at verse 37 all the way to the end of the chapter could be called John's commentary.

Next Sunday, Lord willing, we'll look at these last verses of the 12th chapter, and it seems as if Jesus is speaking publicly again, but I don't think he is. I think it's John giving us a summary of the words that Jesus has spoken. And in summarizing his ministry, there's a positive and there's a negative, isn't there? John's gospel is built on signs. He tells us in the 20th chapter, all these signs that I have put before you, I've put before you for one purpose, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing you might have life in his name.

But he tells us in that 37th verse, though he had done so many signs, amazing things, not the least of which was Lazarus being called out of the grave after four days. And yet so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him. They had seen the miracles. They had heard Jesus teach and they did not believe.

It was back in the 70s and the 80s, a man named John Wimber, a name you might have heard. John Wimber was a pastor in California. He founded and started the Vineyard Church Movement. There are still hundreds and hundreds of Vineyard churches across our country and across the world. John Wimber believed that since Jesus did miracles and signs and the apostles did miracles and signs, that all of us should be doing miracles and signs as well. And he wrote a book called *Power Evangelism*. And the thesis of the book of *Power Evangelism* is because Jesus did signs and the apostles did signs, we should be doing signs. And if we were doing signs and

wonders, and if we were doing miracles, people would see that and they would believe. The only problem is, yes, you can point to times in the gospels when Jesus did a miracle and people believed. We saw that with the 11th chapter when Lazarus was raised from the dead. Many believed.

But the storyline of the gospels is summarized in verse 37. And that is simply to say, miracles by themselves are never enough. Miracles never convince people about the gospel. Miracles by themselves never convince people about who Jesus is. He's standing right before them. He changes water to wine. He heals the nobleman's son. He heals the man by the pool. He walks on water. He feeds 5,000. He gives sight to the blind man. He raises Lazarus from the dead. All these signs, John says, I've put before you that you might believe, but they didn't believe. They rejected the Christ.

What is John going to do with this? What is John going to do with this? This is a large-scale, catastrophic failure on the part of God's people, the Jewish people, to believe that God sent His Son, Jesus, as the Son of Man to be the Savior of the world. They're not believing it. They're rejecting it. Some believe, but the vast majority, as we've read the gospel of John, are not believing. So, what do we do with that? What do we do with that catastrophic failure on the part of Jesus Himself coming? And John, in helping us understand this hard truth, goes back to Isaiah's prophecy to explain it.

Here's the amazing thing. Get this, Isaiah writes his prophecy 600 plus years before Jesus ever came. John is going to go back 600 years before Jesus came to help us understand how is it that the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah when He came and He did all kinds of signs and wonders, all kinds of miracles, taught with authority as no one had ever taught before, and yet they did not believe. How does Isaiah help us understand this? Well, the first thing he does, Isaiah tells us that this is not a surprise to God. This did not take God by surprise. God did not go, man, I cannot believe that I sent my Son, and they're not believing Him. No, not at all.

Look at verse 38. So that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. Lord, who has believed what He heard from us and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? The most quoted prophet in the New Testament is, in fact, Isaiah. Isaiah 53 is where he is

quoting from in this first one. It's one of the most familiar chapters in all the prophecy of Isaiah. It's the prophecy of the suffering servant. It's the one that speaks of Jesus. Listen to what Isaiah says regarding this one who would come. And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? John quotes that.

But this is what he says in verse two. For He grew up before Him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And as one from whom men hid their faces, He was despised and we esteemed Him not. What is Isaiah telling us? 600 plus years before the Messiah came. What does he tell us? He's not the Messiah they wanted. He's not the Messiah they expected. He didn't meet the qualifications they were looking for in a Messiah. I mean, after all, He rode a donkey into Jerusalem at the triumphal entry. We want our Messiah to ride a white steed. We want Him to be big and bold and handsome. We want all those things that the human heart naturally gravitates towards. And Jesus wasn't any of those things. And so they rejected Him, Isaiah says. Israel's failure to believe was not a failure on the part of God's purpose, plan, or scripture. In fact, it fulfilled it.

Look at this second thing. John tells us even more. He tells us that this is a picture of divine judgment. This is where it even gets harder. Isaiah chapter 6 is now where he quotes. Isaiah 6 is equally familiar to us. It begins with Isaiah, remember, seeing this incredible display of the glory of God. He is high and lifted up in the temple. Isaiah, remember, sees the seraphim standing around the throne, shouting out, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God almighty. And this glorious vision that Isaiah starts with, and he is told later in this sixth chapter: Isaiah, here's the deal. I've got a message for you to take to my people. But here's the problem. They're not going to believe you. They're not going to listen to you. They're not going to want what you have to share. Now, how would you like to be a prophet and be told, here's your message, take it to these people, and they're not going to believe it. They're not going to want it, and they're not going to listen to you. That's what happened to Isaiah. He was told that they would not believe, they would not listen.

Look at what he says in verse 39. Therefore, they could not believe, for again, Isaiah said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes and understand them, understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them. My friends, this is a picture of divine judgment.

Notice in verse 37, what does it say? He had done many signs. They still did not believe him. Drop down to verse 39. Therefore, what? They could not believe him. They could not believe him. It reminds us of the story in Exodus, doesn't it? When God puts on display before Pharaoh the greatest miraculous display over the shortest period of time that the history of our world has ever seen, and Pharaoh sees this display of the majesty, power, and the glory of God. He hardens his heart, doesn't he? He hardens his heart against it, and that's what we read for the first few of the plagues. Pharaoh hardened his heart ... Pharaoh hardened his heart ... Pharaoh hardened his heart. Then suddenly something changes, doesn't it? And what changes? And then we begin to read, and God hardened his heart, and God hardened his heart. Rejected light is the parent to the densest darkness. What Isaiah foresaw was not a failure on the part of God's plan. It was, in fact, God's plan. It starts with man's choice, if you will, and it ends with their inability to respond.

Now, before we get to the hard stuff, look at verse 41. Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. What did Isaiah see? He saw his glory. Who's the pronoun? Whose glory did he see? He saw the glory that John speaks of in the first chapter in the 14th verse, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory. The glory is of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John tells us, I believe, that Isaiah, 600 plus years before Jesus came, saw the pre-incarnate Christ and the glory of Christ on the throne of God, a picture of what was to come.

Now, let's bring this together under just the title, A Hard Truth, because there are hard things in this passage regarding what it is that God has said about his people. Verse 40, he has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart and turn and I would heal them. In Matthew 13, Jesus suddenly starts teaching in parables and his disciples say to him, Lord, why are you teaching in parables? These things are hard to understand. We don't get it and I don't think any of these people are getting it either.

Why are you teaching in parables? The answer to that question is, what comes before Matthew 13? Matthew 12. What happens in Matthew 12? Jesus, in healing a miraculous work, has that miraculous work attributed to Satan on the part of the religious leaders. They look at the miracle and they say, he did that by the power of Beelzebub. This man is satanically empowered. He's doing a miracle and that's the line of demarcation. That was the point of divine judgment. Jesus quotes Isaiah 6, the very same passage that John quotes that I'm teaching in parables now lest they hear and understand, lest they see and understand. No, they're not going to be able to do that any longer.

I just want to say four things regarding this. First of all, the Bible clearly teaches God is sovereign and man is responsible. We don't have time to turn there but you can go to Acts 4:27 where it speaks of the cross and it speaks of God having predestined that which would take place at the cross while also allowing for the human choices that brought us to that place. God is sovereign; man is responsible. God does not cause man to sin and then tell them there's no salvation. God somehow in this divine mystery of sovereignty and human responsibility tells us that both of these truths are true and there's a point at which we just have to be at peace with a mystery that we cannot fully understand. I don't think our puny brains can grasp the infinite immensity of God. If we have a problem with that, then we have a God-problem and we need to humble ourselves before God and say I don't understand this, but I believe it because it is in your word and you teach it. If you can explain it, your God's too small, right?

Secondly, God's judgment is not toward the innocent but the guilty. God's judgment is not towards the innocent. Somebody always brings up well what about the innocent person in the middle of nowhere who never hears the gospel? Are they going to hell? Well, what's the flaw in that logic? There are no innocent people in the middle of nowhere going to hell because they never heard the gospel. There are only guilty people in the middle of nowhere who have every day the witness of creation speaking to them of the glory and majesty of God which they see every day and which they reject. It's not a matter of innocent or guilty. God's hardening the hearts of people is not capricious. It's not manipulative. He's not condemning innocent people. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Thirdly, God's sovereignty is cause for hope. If God is not sovereign over all of the details of life, then why would we pray? Why would we pray for family members? Why would we pray for neighbors? Why would we pray for coworkers? Why do we ask God to bring into their life people who love Jesus? Why do we ask God to bring into their life the opportunity to hear the God? Why do we pray about any of those things if God isn't sovereign? But thanks be to God, he is sovereign and we appeal to a sovereign God to do what only he can – which is to open the heart of the lost and give them understanding of the gospel by means of the work of the Holy Spirit.

And then finally, John and Paul agree. We can take the rest of today and tomorrow to talk about John and Paul agreeing, right? Regarding this matter that is before us here. Paul deals with this same exact thing in Romans 9, 10, and 11 as he's trying to discern and figure out why is it that the Jewish people have rejected their Messiah and the Gentiles are believing. And the thing that John concludes and the thing that Paul concludes is they draw from the Old Testament scriptures. This was the plan of God from the ages past. God used the rejection of the people of Israel to open the door of the gospel to the Gentile world. Praise be to God as Paul comes to the end of the 11th chapter. He says, oh, the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

What do we take away? Sometimes, my friends, the most dangerous place we can be is in church listening to the word of God being taught. That's really the story of this passage. People seeing the light, hearing the light, hearing the truth, hearing the word, and turning away from it in unbelief. God, give us ears to hear and hearts to believe and to obey.

My friend, if you're here this morning and you've never trusted Jesus as your personal savior, you've never recognized before God that you have sinned and fallen short of 100% perfect righteousness, which is every one of us. I implore you today, I call on you today, step from the darkness into the light. Believe who Jesus has said he is, the Son of God. Believe that he came to this earth to die on the cross for our sins. And if you will believe that today, God will forgive you, he will give you eternal life, and he will give you the promise that you will be children of light.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, we're so thankful for our Lord and Savior Jesus. We're thankful for his life. we're thankful for the fact that he was lifted up, and being lifted up, he calls all of us who will believe to himself. Lord, we pray that as we encounter your truth as your children, that we will do so with open hearts to hear. As we listen to the voice of your Spirit, we will believe and trust and obey even in the hardest things that life brings to us. I pray, Father, this morning for anyone listening, if they have never put their trust in Jesus as their savior, that they would do that right now in these closing moments, simply agreeing with you that they have sinned, agreeing that what Jesus did on the cross was all that needed to be done, trusting that you will give to them eternal life as you have promised. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.