



SERIES: Believe

SPEAKER: DAN COKE

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

Scripture: John 5:25-29

TITLE: Discerning the Voice

John 5:25–29 (ESV): “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.”

Again, we have another one of those “double-amen” statements coming from Jesus. Boy, is He trying to warn these guys that they are in big trouble. This whole conflict has to do with these religious leaders judging Jesus and concluding that He’s no good for the nation of Israel. Jesus, on the other hand, flips the script on them. He says, I’m the one with the real authority to judge.

This scene reminds me of the way children can argue and fight over authority. If an adult sends a kid to pass on a command to another kid, it can be really hard for the kid to hear and receive that command. Why? Well, kids, especially siblings, don’t like being bossed around by other siblings. So they immediately assume their sibling is trying to usurp power over them. These religious leaders are treating Jesus like this.

But here’s how I’ve taught my kids to think about these situations. First, if your sibling comes to you in my name, you need to hear him or her out. Secondly, what you’re listening for is consistency with how me and your mom operates. Finally, if it’s not something sinful or harmful to you or others, you ought to think long and hard about the message the passed on to you.

The first problem with the religious leaders here is that they have no idea what the character and nature of God is like because they’re sold out to their own traditions and understanding. In a later teaching, I’ll come back to this point.

But the second problem that the religious leaders have, which is their biggest problem, is that they have forgotten that they are sinners who need a savior. They have forgotten that they will face judgment, and either be raised to eternal life or judgment. Jesus appeals to them, mercifully, not desiring that any of them would perish. Unfortunately, they cannot discern the voice or the

message or the ways of God. Like hard-hearted little children, they ignore the messenger and the message, which means they're storing up judgment for themselves.

Interestingly enough, Jesus speaks of the dead hearing the "voice of the Son of God" and living. This is definitely an appeal to Genesis 1 and John chapter 1 where we learn that God created everything by the power of His word. Jesus is the Word made flesh. And everyone who responds to the preached Gospel ultimately hears the voice of Jesus calling them to life. When you hear the Gospel preached, do you hear your Savior's loving plea to sinners?