

The God who made us

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[0 : 00] Okay, put up your hands if you understand what I just said. No one, no one. Okay, for those listening on the recording, I was trying to preach without using words.

I wanted to experiment what it was like, and it didn't really work, did it? I did that to demonstrate the importance of these little things that we call words, that we tend to take for granted, don't we?

They come off our lips every day without us thinking, but they are powerful little things. What would life be without words? And they're powerful because words enable us to do something amazing.

Words enable us to transmit our thoughts to each other. Think about that. Words enable us to take what is in our mind and transmit it into someone else's mind.

In fact, that's what the power is. They allow you to create thoughts in other people's minds. Think about that. Your words literally have the power to create.

[1 : 03] Your words have the power to create ideas in someone else's brain that wouldn't have been there if you didn't speak. That is the power of words. And from that, from the ideas that you create with your words, that causes all kinds of things to happen, doesn't it?

Words can make or break relationships. Words can start and end wars, we've seen in history.

Donald Trump's words got him elected as the President of the United States this last week.

And when he takes office, his words are going to change the course of nations. That's the power of words. Words make things happen, these little things that come off our lips every day. But now, if you think our words are powerful, they're nothing compared to the power of God's words.

You know, our words might be able to create ideas, but God's words create entire worlds and galaxies and material things. God's words cause material things to come into being that weren't there before.

That is the power of God's words. And if you don't believe me, listen to the creation account from Genesis. Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep.

[2 : 13] And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, Let there be light. And there was light. And God said, Let there be sky.

And there was sky. God said, Let there be land. And there was land. God said, Let there be creatures. And there were creatures. Something out of nothing just because of words. God's words cause creation to come into being.

That's what the Bible teaches. And it's an amazing teaching to think that words can create something out of nothing. Now scientists say that everything began with a Big Bang.

And maybe they're right. But have you ever wondered where the Big Bang came from? What caused the Big Bang? Well, we find out in Genesis, God's words did. Which means that God's words are actually the most powerful force in all of nature.

When God speaks, a word from God is more powerful than the biggest nuclear bomb. Think about that. A word from God is the most powerful force in all of creation. No wonder John starts his gospel with the phrase, In the beginning.

[3 : 18] Was the word. It's an interesting way to start your gospel. But that's what John says. Because he recognizes the most powerful force in the universe is God's word.

That started everything. But then he goes on to say something incredible, does John. He says that this powerful word of God is actually a person.

In verse 2 he refers to the word of God as he. Did you notice that? He, the word of God is a he.

Which means that, think about that, the ultimate power that exists behind everything is not some impersonal force like in Star Wars.

It's a person. A person. And so the most important activity that you are as created beings could ever engage in, in our life, is to get to know this person called the word.

There is no more important thing that we can do in the little time that we have on earth than to get to know this word, this person that is behind everything. Because he is where your life comes from. [4 : 26] And so to ignore him, this word, would just be foolishness. And so that's what I want us to do this morning. Because we discover at least two things about this person in this morning's passage.

We discover who this person is and we discover what this person does. So let's have a look at those two points. Firstly, who? Who is this person? Well, we're told this person called the word was in the beginning.

That's the first thing we're told about him. We find out before anything was created, this person existed. In other words, there was never a time he didn't exist. He was before everything. In eternity past, before the stars, before space, before time even existed. This person called the word was there. He existed. He's eternal. That's the first thing we find out about him.

Secondly, we read this person existed with God. Now that's interesting. Because it means he's distinct from God. God, there's this person, the word, who existed with, along with God in the beginning.

[5 : 31] But then immediately we go on to read the word was God. Okay, so, wait a minute, John. You just said he was with God.

That is distinct from God. But now you're saying he is God. Or which is it? Is he with God? Or is he God? Well, the fact is, according to the Bible, both are true.

The God of creation, the true God, who was before all things, is one God made up of distinct, different persons.

And we find out elsewhere, not two, but three. The Father, the Word, or the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct persons. But they are all one God.

Now, this is a fact about God that boggles the mind. And it's a fact that we couldn't have made up. You know, it's a fact that we needed to be revealed to us. In our Bible studies this last week, we try to talk about this.

[6 : 32] We try to understand it. But we couldn't. That's pretty much what most of the Bible studies were about. Trying to understand how God can be three persons but one God.

And it just boggles the mind. And that's why it needed to be revealed to us. We couldn't have made it up. Because either people tend to think of God as one God, like Jews or Muslims. Or they tend to think that there are many gods, like Hindus or many ancient religions.

You know, like the Norse religions with Thor and Odin and all of the pantheon of gods. Or the Romans or the Greeks for that matter. But nobody throughout history has ever conceived of a God who is one God but consisting of different persons.

Because our minds just can't understand it. We saw again in our Bible studies that there's nothing in all of creation that can truly be one thing and three things at the same time. And so we have no way of comparing God to anything.

We have no way of conceiving of a being like that. And yet, that is how God reveals himself in Scripture. Whether or not we understand it. As I said in our Bible studies, if we could understand God, then he wouldn't be God.

[7 : 39] And now this series is called Getting to Know God. And so what we discover about God from this passage this morning is the astonishing truth that God is not an individual.

God is a community. That is probably the best way of describing this God who is one but three persons. He is a community. That is the core nature of who God is.

He is defined by relationship. God has never been alone. There was never a time in all eternity past when God was alone. Before anything else existed, God was always in community.

He was always in relationship. God's never been lonely. And so for humans, this is how it affects us, this knowledge of God. For humans to be made in God's image, which the Bible says we are, means that we are also made for relationship.

If God is relationship and we are made in his image, we are made for relationship. We are not meant to be alone. God says it is not good for man to be alone. Because we are made for relationship.

[8 : 47] We are made for community because God is a community. That is the first truth that we understand about ourselves from understanding this about God.

We were made for community. And that is why, following from what Paul said earlier, there is no such thing as an isolated Christian. A Christian who has no interest in church. That can't exist. Because if you are truly a Christian, if you are truly striving to be who God made you to be, you must be striving to be in community with other Christians. Because God is community. That is what he made us for.

That is what he redeemed us for if we are Christians. And the church should be where we practice community. That is what God gave us the church for, as Paul said earlier.

As the body of Christ, we are all different members and we all practice community together. And so, just from this fact about God, that he is a community and therefore we are meant to be community, let us put that into practice.

[9 : 47] Let us practice community in our church. Let's not just make church about Sunday. Think of ways that you can practice community outside of Sunday. Share life together. Go on hikes together.

Let's do that. Let's have a picnic together. Whatever you can think of, let's do it. Let's practice community because this is what God has given us his church for. Because in eternity, there will only be community.

And so, we better get used to it now, in this life. And because God is all about relationship. God is about relationship. God is defined by relationship. And so, we must be, too, as his people.

Now, that's the first fact about God that I wanted us to just meditate on this morning. But I want to move on in this passage. And to do that, I want to change tack and give you maybe a little bit of a mental break.

And I want you to picture something. I want you to imagine that as I'm talking now, the doors in the back of the church burst open and a bunch of armed gunmen come in. And they don't fire. They don't shoot anyone.

[10 : 46] But they order us to all. They tell the preacher to go sit down. And I'm sitting in the congregation. And they stand up here. And they order us to stand up and file out the back where there's a waiting truck with its doors open.

And they push us all into the truck. And they close the truck's doors. There's no windows. And we feel the truck moving. We're all sitting in this truck. And we don't know where we're going. And there's a long, long journey. And after a long time, we feel the truck stops.

And then it reverses. And we hear the, you know, dee, dee, dee. And then the doors open. And we find ourselves inside this very strange room. It's like a hall.

And we all get pushed out of the truck. The doors close. And the truck goes away. And the big doors close. And we're trapped in this room. And we don't know where we are. We have no clue where we are. Now, it's this church community, right?

We're all sitting there in this big room. All being kidnapped. And we don't know where we are. And after a while, people start to come up with ideas. Because everybody wants to know where we are.

[11 : 45] So people start to come up with ideas of where we are. What's outside the room. So Adrian pipes up and reckons, well, he reckons we've been taken underground. And what's outside is just thousands of meters of solid rock that we're covered by.

There's no escape. And then Sylvia says, no, Adrian, you're talking rubbish. We're underwater. We're in the ocean. We're on the ocean floor. But then Irvin disagrees.

And Irvin thinks, no, we're in a lion enclosure. And outside are ferocious lions that are getting ready to eat us. But then George, at the back of the room, he says, no, no, no, no. Guys, you've got it wrong.

You know where we are. We're in space. And there's nothing outside except a cold, dark vacuum and death. And we all wonder, maybe George got a knock on the head on the way in. But the truth is, you know, we can come up with ideas until we're blue in the face.

No one actually knows. Do they? We're all in the same position. We're all trapped in this big room. And there's no way of knowing what's outside. There's no way of knowing who's right. All anyone can do is guess.

[12 : 45] Well, you know what? That's exactly what religion seems to be in our world. That's how it is with religion. Some say God is like this. Some say God is like that. Some say there's an afterlife.

Some say there's nothing beyond this life. But because we're all in the same position, none of us can know for sure. Right? All we can do is guess. Just as much as nobody trapped in that big room

can know for sure what's outside.

Unless, wait a minute, unless, picture this. We're all in this big room and a hatch suddenly opens from the top. A hatch opens from the top and a ladder descends. And someone actually comes in from outside.

Then everything changes. All of a sudden. Right? Because then we can ask that person what's outside. And we can finally know for sure. The guessing game stopped.

Because suddenly someone has come from outside. And we can interrogate them. Well, you know what? Listen to the words of John 1 verse 14. The word, the word that we've been talking about, is what John says.

[13 : 49] Is what the Bible says. The word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us. You know what that means? That means that this word, this person who was with God in eternity past, came from eternity.

Put a ladder down and entered into our world as a human being called Jesus Christ. To tell us what's on the other side. To tell us who God really is.

And so from the moment that Jesus entered into our world, the guessing games about God can stop. Finally, we can know God as he really is. And that's why I said at the beginning, there's no more important thing for you and I to do in this life than to get to know this person called the word. And he came to earth. And he is revealed in the Bible so that we can do just that. And that's why we read the Bible, by the way. That's why we study the Bible in Bible study.

That's why we read the Bible at home, in our personal lives. That's why we read the Bible at church. Not to get to know things and facts.

[15 : 00] But to get to know this person, this word. The Bible is a means to relationship with this word that made us. The Bible isn't a textbook or a rule book.

It is the way that God has given us to get to know the person he sent. And if you're not reading it for that reason, to get to know this person in relationship, then it's quite pointless.

You know, when I studied at Bible college, there's many academics who have degrees and doctorates in the Bible. I'm not saying in our college, but around the world as you study all these different people.

And many of them know the Bible back to front, but they have no personal relationship with this word who God sent. And that's really pointless because God gave us the Bible to be in a relationship with the word.

And so that's who the word is. And that's how we get to know who the word is. But what does he do? That's the second thing I want us to see this morning. And this is really the important part I want you to take home.

[15 : 59] Look at verse 3. Through him, this is the word, through him all things were made. Without him nothing was made that has been made.

Okay, so we've already seen back in Genesis how God's word made all things that exist. But now that we've discovered who this word is, it takes on a whole new significance, doesn't it? I mean, think about it.

It means that the man Jesus who walked this planet 2,000 years ago created the planet that he walked on. Okay? And he created all the stars that he gazed up on at night.

He made them. And the air that he breathed that filled his lungs only existed because he created it. No wonder he could calm a stormy sea with a word.

No wonder he could heal incurable diseases. No wonder he could make a man born blind see for the first time because he created that sea. Because he created that man.

[17 : 02] And in fact, all those miracles that Jesus did prove to us that he is who he says he is. All those miracles that are historically recorded for us prove to us that he is who John describes him to be.

That he existed in eternity past, billions of years before he took on flesh. And that that is who Jesus really is. And that's incredible, isn't it? To think.

To think that he walked our planet. That he wore sandals. That he ate food. That he spoke to people. You know, that if you were living at the right time of history and you were in the right place, you could have shaken his hand.

You could have shaken the hand of the word of God that made the universe. Isn't that incredible? Well, that's true. But then, if you think that's amazing, we go on to read something even more

amazing in verse 4.

It says, In him was life. And that life was the light of all mankind. And so, not only did Jesus create everything, but he gives life to everything as well.

[18:10] This strange phenomenon called life. Again, another thing that we take for granted. Life that makes our hearts beat. And that makes seeds sprout when you put them in the ground.

It's got to come from somewhere. Where does it come from? I mean, why is your heart beating?

Have you ever thought that? Your heart right now is beating. Just like that.

Everyone. I mean, here, we've got about, what, 70 people? We've got 70 hearts. And if it stopped, you would die immediately. Why does your heart carry on beating? How do you know it's going to beat tomorrow?

Let's hope it is. But, what makes it beat? Well, you'll say, well, I know what makes it beat. I'm scientific. It's electrical impulses in your brain that cause your heart to carry on beating.

Okay, fine. But where do those electrical impulses come from? They've got to come from somewhere. Well, we discover here they come from the Word. They come from this person who is behind all creation.

[19:11] He exists right now and He is keeping those electrical impulses telling your heart to beat. If He ceased to exist, we would all stop living instantly.

This person, Jesus, sustains life every day. It certainly changes how we think about Jesus, doesn't it? He's not this historical figure anymore.

Hopefully, if nothing else, what this passage will do this morning is it will make you take Jesus much more seriously in your life than you currently do. Because let's be honest, we tend to treat Jesus like a pet most of the time.

When we get home from work, it's nice to see Him. We give Him a bit of a pat. We tickle His tummy. Maybe spend some time playing with Him on Sunday. But then we send Him off to eat some biscuits and get on with life, don't we?

That's how we treat Jesus. But no, if Jesus is really God's Word and He really created everything you see and He's the reason you have life and He's the reason your heart beats and He's the reason you woke up this morning, you can't treat Him as something secondary.

[20:18] You can't treat Him as some add-on to your life. You can't treat Him like the family pet. No, you need to make Him the most important person in your world because He made your world. Okay, let's take Him seriously.

I want to read you two things that Jesus said when He walked on this earth. They'll appear behind me. He said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

And He also said, I have come that you may have life and have it to the full. Now, Jesus is appealing to you here. I'm the source of life. If you want life, I'm the only place you can get it from, Jesus says.

And He says, Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness. You know what that means? That means if you don't follow Him, you will walk in darkness. If you don't orient your life towards Jesus, and if you don't make Him front and center, if you don't make Him more important than work or hobbies or family or money, if He's not more important than all of those things, if He's not the most important thing in your life, then you will never have life.

You will never have life to the full. Because He is the source of life. No life can be had apart from Jesus. And real life, true life, abundant life, the life we all yearn for deep down inside.

[21:44] You know, I think deep down inside, every human knows they want life. There's more to life than this. Don't you feel that? You don't have the life that you really, really yearn for deep down inside.

Well, you know why? Because that life is to be in relationship with the God who is relationship, the source from which all things come. And Jesus came on earth to give us that relationship when He died for our sins on the cross, to purchase our forgiveness so that we can experience life, not just now in this life, in relationship with God, knowing that our sins are forgiven, but life in eternity, the life we were made for.

God didn't make us to die. God made us to live. God made us to have abundant life. God made us to live in eternity. And Jesus is the source of that life. And so will you follow Him?

Will you follow Him today? Will you follow Him tomorrow? Will you follow Him for the rest of your time on earth? Do you realize this morning that He is the source of all life? And He is your only hope of experiencing any kind of life in this world and in eternity? Will you stop treating Him like your pet? And will you start treating Him as your Lord and Creator and Life-Giver every day?

[22 : 57] Because that is who Jesus is. Let's pray. Yes, Lord Jesus, Creator, we are amazed when we discover who You really are.

You are the source of our life. Lord, help us to take You seriously. Help us to realize that there is no life in the things we might chase after.

Money and sex and alcohol and all the things that we look for to give us happiness never find it.

Lord, help us to realize that You and You alone are the source of true life.

Help us to follow You, Lord. Help us to take You seriously. Help us to give our lives to You who gives us life every day. And we pray, Lord, that as we gather, as a community, a church, we would encourage each other to do this.

We would spur each other on to love, to love one another, but to love You as You deserve. So change our hearts. Capture us. And may You be glorified.

[24 : 03] In Jesus' name. Amen.