

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Fully Alive

PART

34

TITLE

While You Have The Light...Believe!

SCRIPTURE

John 12:27-50



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Good morning. It's good to be with you this morning. If you are a guest or a visitor and you slipped in since the last time, we welcome you. We want you to be welcome to this gathering this morning. We're glad that you're here with us. Also, as always, special welcome to those of you across the hall or joining us via the live-stream we're recording. Glad to have you with us, as well.

John, chapter 12, is where we're going to be this morning. I invite you to grab a Bible and open up to John, chapter 12. If you don't have a Bible, you should be able to find one in one of the chairs in front of you. There's a little rack underneath and you should be able to dig around and find one, or snuggle up with a neighbor and get over to John, chapter 12, because that is where we're gonna be this morning.

This text today marks an important transition in the book of John. We're actually going to watch Jesus' public ministry come to an end. He's gonna move into seclusion for a few days of discipleship and then He's going to emerge and we're gonna see Him give His life for the sins of the world. Such an important text, such a pivotal transition, not just in this book but in the life of Jesus. I think God has many things for each of us in this text. Let's ask Him for it with a word of prayer.

God, we come before you as needy people, even those of us in here that have had a good week, maybe even a great week. We still have needs. God, you tell us in your word that if you were to withdraw your word from us, then we would cease to exist. We exist by the word of your power. Father, we thank you for your word in this moment. We ask that you be gracious and that you would work and you'd do many things for your glory and for our good. We ask for it in Jesus' name. Amen.

John, chapter 12. We are going to start in verse 27 and read to the end of the chapter. John 12:27 to the end of the chapter. This is Jesus speaking. He says, "Now is my soul troubled. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from Heaven. 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd that stood there heard it and said that it had thundered. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to Him!'"

"And Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' When He said this to show by what kind of death He was going to die, so the crowd answered Him. 'We have heard from the law that Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?'"

"So Jesus said to them, 'The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake 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.' When Jesus had said these things, He departed and hid Himself from them. Though He had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in Him 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? Therefore, they could not believe, for again Isaiah said, ‘He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart in turn, and I would heal them.’ Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in Him. But for fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess it so that they would not be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.”

“And Jesus cried out, ‘Whoever believes in me believes not in me, but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees Him who sent me and I have come into the world as light so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him, for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge. The word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day, for I have not spoken of my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment what to say and what to speak. I know that this commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.’”

These words are the last words that Jesus spoke in His public ministry. It might help us to grasp these words if we would first consider famous, maybe even infamous, last words that people have spoken before their death. Many of us know William Wallace. I actually found out that’s not William Wallace. That’s a guy playing William Wallace, but go figure. William Wallace, famous last words, “Freedom!”

Some of you might know of a guy named Balthasar Hubmaier, an Anabaptist theologian who was preparing to be burned at the stake. We get a lot of our theology from this guy. We are really who we are as Baptists because of this guy. He believed that baptism meant that you actually submerged someone beneath the water and that we do that as believers in Jesus Christ. Hubmaier, when he was being prepared to be burned at the stake, his executioners were rubbing gunpowder into his beard. He said to these guys, “Salt me and salt me well!” For asking brothers and sisters to pray for him that he would honor the Lord as he endured a martyr.

Many of us have also heard of a guy named John Sedgwick, Union Army general. Walking around the camp, the people under his command would look at him and say, “Hey, listen, bud, you really need to get down. They got sharpshooters out there.” This guy walking around says, “They couldn’t hit an elephant from this distance.” Apparently, they could.

Henry Ward Beecher, congregational evangelist, social reformer known for having a huge hand in the abolition of slavery in the States, right before death says, “Now comes the mystery.”

Maybe even Elvis Presley, American singer, actor. Press conference a couple hours before his death, last thing he said is, “I hope I haven’t bored you.”

It's interesting to think about last words, isn't it? It's interesting because day's gonna come for each and every one of us where we're gonna say something for the last time. As I was thinking on this over the last week, it really started to work on me, man. The way we even say goodbye to each other should really be marked by that eventual reality, shouldn't it? Eventually we're gonna come in this room or another church somewhere and we're gonna hear a sermon for the last time. Have you thought about this?

People who preach God's word to you eventually, Lord, not today or this week, they're gonna preach their last sermon. 'Cause every birth certificate has an expiration date that we just can't see. Jesus, in this text, is speaking His last words to His followers and His disciples. It's a fascinating text. There are three distinct sections that we can observe.

Would you look at verses 27 to 36 with me? This is the final account of Jesus' public ministry. Then in verses 36 to 43, John, the narrator and the author, he tells us how we ought to understand His ministry. Jesus finishes teaching, and then John comes in with an explanation for how we ought to understand this teaching and the last three and a half years of ministry. Then we have this really interesting thing going on in verses 43 to 50. Jesus, He's back. But John just told us He's in hiding. With no context, Jesus cries out, and we'll look at this at the end, but this certainly seems to be the thesis of His ministry.

This is it. This is an incredibly important text in the book of John. After this, there is discipleship, there is the supper, and there is the sacrifice. These are the final words marking a really important transition, and with that I wanna share with you three truths and one conclusion regarding Jesus' last words.

First truth I want you to see is this. Jesus is the light of the world and people live in darkness. Jesus is the light and we need Him because we live in darkness. Jesus no doubt felt the darkness if you could see right there in verse 27. At the end of his ministry, at the end of all of the talking, at the end of all of the miracles, at the end of all of the crowds, and all of the interactions, you have these words. "Now my soul is greatly troubled." He's troubled for many reasons.

Jesus is troubled because He's about to be lifted up. He's about to be hoisted up on the cross at the end of the week. He's probably also troubled because He's just labored for three and a half years, yet many people among Him still do not believe in Him. Trouble in His soul. I want you to see Jesus as a man who is emotionally moved by all of this. Yes, Jesus is God but Jesus is fully man, as well. He was emotional. He saw things that weren't the way they were intended to be. He saw things that could only be reversed by a sacrifice on the cross and they made Him emotional.

Jesus is the faithful high priest who can empathize with us in our weaknesses because He was made like us, Hebrews 4:15 tells us. Jesus prays a heartfelt prayer to God. The shocking thing is that God answers Him from on high. We pray before we preach the sermon. We pray before we gather around a meal. We pray when we get together to fellowship. Can you imagine next time you pray God answers the prayer on the spot? That would be incredible.

That's exactly what happened. It's crazy to think about this. This isn't the only time that God has spoken to Jesus from Heaven. The beginning of His ministry began with a public affirmation from the Father upon His baptism. "This is my Son whom I love and with whom I'm well pleased." His ministry ended with this declaration, as well. "I have glorified my name, Son, and I will glorify it again." What you see in verses 30 to 35 is that the crowd doesn't understand this.

We're not gonna understand the things of God unless God reaches into our minds and He turns the switch and He allows us to understand. What you see in verses 30 to 35, Jesus say that He is going to die in order to cast out the ruler of his world. The crowds don't understand this because they've actually heard a little theology. Maybe they rolled up on a sermon or they listened to a podcast and they actually heard some things about this religion here. They said, "We thought the Messiah's gonna last forever. How are you gonna die if you're the guy?"

This is what we've seen so many times, isn't it? People looking right in the face of God and they can't even tell it's Him. Because if we're gonna understand the things of God, God is gonna have to work in us. Across this room, any knowledge that we have of God, this isn't an opportunity for us to puff ourselves up and say, "Look at me! Look at my knowledge!" This is cause for worship all across the room. "Look at that. God did that. Look at that. God did that." All across the room.

The point for now is that Jesus isn't the kind of king that they're looking for because they don't know, really, what kind of king they're searching for. Jesus ends His ministry with an invitation in verses 35 to 36 for people to come into the light, for people to come and to trust Him. When you think about Jesus, you need to know this is the last thing that He left the crowds with. After all the talk, after all the confrontation, after all the confusion, this is where it ends, with a humble and with a gracious invitation.

Right now you have light. You need to step into the light so that you can become children of light. This is where it ends. Light of the world. It's a massive theme in the Gospel of John. It's a big theme about Christmas, as well. We've been seeing this theme develop all throughout the Gospel of John and this is where Jesus chooses to end it. John 1:9-12 says that "He is light. He is the light of the world, but His own people did not receive Him." John 3:19 says, "This is judgment, that the light has come but people love the darkness more than they love the light." John 8:12 says, "I am the light of the world." John 9:5, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

The light has come into the world but His own people did not receive Him. But the people that He came to show Himself to, the entire world, not everyone's believing. It's a paradoxical way to end this incredible ministry. People don't believe Him because people walk in darkness. That's why Jesus came as light. So, a great theme throughout the Gospel of John, unless God gives us eyes to see, we will never be able to see Him.

Then as we look at each other, as we see people that are trusting God, and as we get in these hard places in our hearts where we wonder, "God, where are you? God, what are you doing?" look around and see people who are trusting Him and see the fingerprint and evidence of God. In 12:36, Jesus departed and He hid Himself. That's it. Public ministry is over. The crowds, they're going to see Him again, but they're going to see Him later in the week when He's hoisted up on the cross. It's interesting to consider why John would leave us with this. We'll get to that in a moment, but before then, let's find a point of application in all of this.

Let us walk in the light, especially when the darkness is overwhelming. The great reality for us is that some people can't wait for Christmas to get here, and other people can't wait 'til Christmas is over. There's something about this time of year that has a way of bringing up all kinds of emotions and bringing out all kinds of stuff from our past and in our history. Maybe a timely word for us in all of this is to hear the kind word of Jesus. Listen, the light is here. Step into the light. Be healed. Become sons of light.

It needs to be said that the last few weeks in this faith family have been hard weeks for some, 'cause even while we think about these last words of Jesus, there are family members in this congregation that have had other family members speak their last words to them. The hardness of this world is intended to produce a humility in our spirit. Let's walk in the light. Friend, in seasons, maybe even especially in this week and in the next few weeks, yeah, we got red cups and peppermint mochas and lights up in trees and all the rest. We know what it's like to have a sinking feeling in our hearts, don't we? Let's walk in the light, especially when the darkness is overwhelmed.

Nothing's gonna help you do that like seeing Jesus right here, seeing Jesus emotionally moved by His context and the problems that He faced. You need to see Jesus as someone right here and in the road before Him is the salvation and safekeeping of our souls. Seeing him as someone who got emotional over that but did not go past it, but He gave Himself to the work, seeing Him as someone who went through that for us, that'll help us to be encouraged when things are hard.

Second truth I want you to see, moving out of the public ministry and now into an explanation, the second truth I need you to see is this. Jesus is the glory of God. People love the glory of man. That's what you see in verses 36 to 40. Let's think about what's happening right here. The public ministry of Jesus is over, right? Why would you include verses 37 to 43? If the public ministry is over, if Jesus has said all that needs to be said, why include this bit? There's a sense to where Jesus' ministry might actually feel like a failure.

John 1:11 says, “The light has come into the world, but His own did not receive Him.” There’s a sense to where that could feel like a failure, isn’t it? Jesus’ life began with an announcement of His rejection and now His teaching ministry is going to end with an explanation of that rejection. It’s as if the author, you can almost feel it with John, it’s as if the author probably felt the need to explain the unbelief of the people.

Don’t we feel a little bit of this, as well? If this is God’s Son, if this is Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, we’re gonna get down to the end of three and a half years of ministry and there’s gonna be people that are still skeptical? There’s gonna be people that still don’t believe in Him? We need to hear what happens next and you need to know that it’s incredibly sad. It’s incredibly sad because it speaks to the unbelief of a group of people. We need to frame this sad moment with a reference to the Christmas story.

You see, when Jesus was six weeks old, His parents took Him to the temple. There was a man hanging out at the temple who had been waiting on Jesus a long time named Simeon. Simeon looked at Jesus and said, “Behold, this one right here is appointed.” Do you remember what he said? “For the rising and falling of many.” He looked at Mary and said, “The pain in this one is going to cut you to the heart,” and it probably did as a mother had to watch a son crucified on a tree.

This is sad. People don’t believe in Jesus and in this text, we’re given the reasons why. They don’t believe in Jesus because they love darkness more than light and they don’t believe in Jesus because they love the glory of man more than the glory of God. While this is sad, we need to lean into this because Jesus and John, they don’t tell us sad things to leave us in our sadness. No, the dark things are spoken for the sake of light. The painful things in Scripture are spoken for the sake of comfort. The sorrowful things in Scripture are spoken for the sake of our joy. The conflict is mentioned for the sake of peace.

Here’s the sad point. They didn’t believe in Jesus because they loved darkness more than light. They loved man glory more than God glory. This is given to us for our protection and for our joy. There’s nothing more important than the glory of God. As Jesus prayed in this text, He prayed that God would glorify Himself in His own life. We hear God answering from on high. “I have glorified my name in your life and I’m going to do it again.” At the end of this week of discipleship in John 17, Jesus is gonna pray the same thing again, this theme of glory. What does it mean?

In the Old Testament, it means supreme importance. It means weightiness. It means matter. It means substance. Yet in the New Testament, we add more ideas to it. We see absolute and ultimate authority. We see praise and wonder and brilliance. It leads us to consider: which glory do we love? Do we love the acceptance and praise that we get from each other? Or are our lives ordered in such a way where we ultimately love the praise and acceptance and word and affirmation from God?

Unbelief is what's here. Unbelief is sourced in the fact that we love the glory of man more than the glory of God. John 12:38 and 40, he's going to quote from Isaiah twice. He's gonna quote from Isaiah twice. In Isaiah 12:38, he makes reference to Isaiah 53, the description of the suffering servant of God, of Jesus Christ, a prophecy that was given long, long ago about who the Savior of the world will be. Isaiah 53:3 says this is who Jesus is, but as you keep reading in Isaiah and it says, "And they're not gonna believe you, Isaiah."

Isaiah prophesied a suffering servant who would be rejected by the people. This was prophesied. It was even planned in advance. He had no form, He had no majesty, so Israel rejected Him because they didn't want Him, because people aren't naturally looking for this kind of a king. People are looking for a strong man. People are looking for somebody with might. People are looking for somebody with force. People are looking for somebody with attitude. People aren't looking for this. They're not looking for meekness. People aren't looking for humility. If there has been a moment in your life when you can look back and you can recall the day, maybe even in this moment, when meekness and humility was beautiful to you and you trusted in Christ, you need to know God did that in you.

These big things about God, yeah, they might bring up questions like, "What about this person? What about that person?" But the first and great thing they do is bring us to a place where we worship, don't they? John 12:40 goes on to quote from Isaiah. He specifically quotes from Isaiah's commission. This is at the start of Isaiah's life. He's in the temple and he sees God high and lifted up. In sight of God's holiness, he knows his own sin and God comes over and the angel atones for his sin, touches the coal to his lips. His sins are atoned for. Then God issues the question. "Who's gonna go for us?" Isaiah says, "Here I am! Send me!"

Just a few verses later, He says, "Okay, you're gonna go and they're not gonna believe you. You're gonna go. You're gonna tell them this is what I'm doing, and they're not gonna believe you." What's really incredible is we learn in verse 41, right here in John 12:41, is that when Isaiah was in the temple, Isaiah didn't just see God. He actually saw Jesus Christ. That vision of Jesus Christ is what led him to endure 60 years of hard ministry. Vision of Jesus Christ is the only thing that's gonna help you and me endure, as well.

It doesn't matter how much we pump ourselves up. It doesn't matter how many pep talks we give each other. Real vision of Jesus Christ is the only thing that could ever sustain us. God has revealed Himself to us in His word and we can come to His word and we can read His word and we can discover Jesus and we can see Him in His fullness and His magnificence and His glory over and over and over again. But why won't they believe? They won't believe because they don't want someone who is that holy. They don't want someone who is ultimately focused on Himself before He's focused it on the needs of other people.



No, they want somebody that's gonna be all about them. "Tell me how great I am. Tell me what I've never done wrong. Stroke my ego. Make me feel good." They loved the glory of man. I told you, this is spoken for our joy and for our benefit. As you see that, watch what happened at the very end of this in verses 42 and 43. Some people did believe, but they wouldn't confess it. They wouldn't confess it because they loved the glory of man more than they loved the glory of God.

This is John's explanation of Jesus' ministry. Jesus finishes with an invitation. "The light is here. Step into the light that you may believe." Then He's gone. He's out. Isaiah feels the need to come- Isaiah. John feels the need to come along and to quote Isaiah to help us understand this ministry and this activity. Here's what we're driving at in all of this. If someone believes in God, that's on God, not on them. Jesus didn't come along to condemn the world, but to save the world.

In John 3:18-19, this is what we see. "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the Son of God." Verse 19. "And this is judgment, that the light has come into the world and the people love darkness rather than light because their works were evil." What does this mean for you and me in Raleigh today? It means that Jesus has come to set people free. God in His providence and in His sovereignty, He puts this message right here before believers time and time again. He puts it up before us for us to see this is who God is. This is who I am. Do I believe in God or not?

In this moment, is God beautiful to you? Do you see God as someone who is gracious and who is loving to reveal Himself to us and to invite us to Himself? If we do, the winds of mercy are already at our backs and He's already at work in our lives. Here's the conclusion. Here's John's conclusion for the end of Jesus' public ministry. Here comes the conclusion. Jesus did not fail.

Gets to the end of the ministry, three and a half years of labor, there's still people who don't believe, and Jesus did not fail. His glory did what it was meant to do. His word went forth and did what it was meant to do because His word will never return void. The Puritans had a phrase for what we're talking about right here. They would say that the same sun that melts the ice, it bakes the clay. What is happening in this moment is God's word goes out over our hearts, does God become sweeter or more distant to us in this moment? The invitation is on. Light is here. Step into the light. It's on us. Step into the light and believe.

See, God is sovereign over belief and unbelief and at Christmastime, we love singing songs about joy to the world. But if we're not careful, we'll forget the fact that the only way that joy got to the world is because first joy was rejected by Jesus' own people. Israel rejected Jesus and that rejection led the Gospel to us. Who are we to question God and His plans and His ways? He leads us to a point of application where we affirm. Let us celebrate God's sovereignty over belief and unbelief.

See, friend, God has a thousand reasons for doing every single thing He does. Jesus Himself was appointed in order to be opposed. Israel's rejection of Jesus led to our salvation through Jesus. Romans 11 goes on to teach that they rejected God. God did not reject them. They rejected God. His ways, as we learn in Isaiah, His ways are higher than our ways. This mystery of mercy and how all of this works, this should lead us to worship. This is where Jonathan Edwards said God's glory is seen not only in being seen, but being rejoiced in. This is what God would have us do.

When we get into these incredible deep truths and we have this incredible interjection by John where He's quoting Isaiah to explain the three and a half year ministry, it's worship. We get down to the end of all of this and it gets us to a place where all we can do is affirm He is good. He has saved us. He is in control. He's given us the Gospel and put us in a city of need. It's wrong of us if we start reading this and thinking, "Well, what about these people that are on the outside of it?" That's the wrong question. What about us who have the Gospel and are in the city and are in the world and they need it? That's the question. That's what Jesus has for us.

Third truth. Jesus is life. This is where the whole thing is going. Jesus is life and those who believe in Him will be fully alive. The end of John 12 is the end of the public ministry. In verse 36, Jesus issues the invitation, "Believe in the light and you will be sons of light." Then Jesus departed and hid Himself from them." Here's what we gotta get. We don't know where He went. We don't know how long He was there. We don't know who He was with. We do know that the author, John, is talking from verse 36 to verse 44.

But then in 44 down to 50, with no description of the setting, we read these words from Jesus. Think about it. We don't have any context. We don't know who He is talking to. There's a great sense to where John could have clipped this out of all the sermon audio of Jesus. He could have clipped this and put it right at the end as a thesis of Jesus' ministry of who He was and what He was all about. Jesus' ministry summarized in three statements, in verses 44 and 45. "If you have me, then you have the Father. If you know me, then you know the Father. Deny me, then you deny the Father." This is what Jesus was all about.

What you do with Jesus is what you do with God. Evidence of what you believe about God is what you do with Jesus. Take heart, Christian. If you believe in Jesus, then God is your God. He is for you. He has your back. He is watching over your life and He is with us in our situation. Verse 46. "I have come as light to bring people out of darkness." This is perhaps the massive theme right here, the true light which gives light to everyone was coming into the world, is what John told us in the prologue at verse nine.

“Everyone who believes in Jesus passes out of darkness and into everlasting life.” Verse 47 to 50, Jesus says, “My words are life.” The final summary in all of Jesus’ teaching and public ministry, we’re about to have discipleship for a couple of days, the final thing is an emphasis on His word. The words are the window through which we get to have the light come in and we get to enjoy fellowship with Jesus. We know Jesus, we know the Father, and we are saved through the word of God. It’s impossible to draw near to God without the word of God to help us. There’s no way to embrace Jesus without the word.

It’s an implication for us. We gotta think creatively. How do we get this word to every single person on the planet? Starting at home, what does it look like for us to teach this word to people that we know? Let’s give our lives for this book. Let’s die for the sake of the truths in this book. As an application, let us remember that the cradle was intended for the cross. See, Jesus was born to die. He was born to die for us. His salvation is intended for our joy, and we need to remember this Christmas season that celebrating the birth of Jesus ultimately leads us to the Easter season when we remember that He gave His life for us in death.

I told you this is almost a heavy word, but this is what God has for us. If Jesus was appointed to be rejected, it would be foolish of us to think that that’s not a possibility for us in our own lives. But we go into those moments confidently, knowing that Jesus has a thousand reasons for doing everything that He does. We began our time thinking about the last words of Jesus and returning to that thought, I close with this.

These are the last words of Jesus’ public teaching ministry, and yet this is not everything. From within this seclusion, Jesus is going to say more things to His disciples and then He is going to emerge for the sacrifice. He is going to go public again. He will be lifted up on the cross. On the cross, we see the light being extinguished to bring us out of darkness. On the cross, we see the glory of God on display to crush all man-sized ideals about what’s good. On the cross, we see Jesus losing His life so that you can me can be made alive. On the cross, we hear Jesus’ true last words in His life before resurrection. We hear Jesus say the words, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Then it’s almost like He was whispering, this was the last breath, we hear the last words, “It is finished.”

This is where He’s going and this is what it’s all about. Then Jesus would rise from the dead and He would spend His last days walking around the earth proving to people who He is and what He is all about. Then one day, the last word that He gave us is when He went up on the mountain and He said, “All authority in Heaven and Earth has been given to me. Go therefore into all the earth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I’ve commanded you. Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.” This is the last word of Jesus and His last word goes our first word in life.

It’s an incredibly joy to be a part of a church family where we get to witness live obedience to the word of God and this morning, we get to do just that as we get to watch a brother who has been made fully alive by the Gospel, Antonio, be baptized.

Dave Owen: Providence, it is a great, great joy to be able to, in light of all that Thomas has taught us this morning, of hearing Christ's last words, to see the opportunity to, we as a church, adhere to those last words, to be able to baptize and be able to teach. This morning, Antonio Cannis is with us this morning. Antonio, I'm so grateful to God for what He has done in your life.

Antonio is from Italy originally and then New York, back to Italy, to Raleigh. A little journey there. Unfortunately, through grief, Antonio found grace through a divorce. Antonio literally went to churches in our city and knocked on their front door trying to find an answer, trying to find hope. Those doors were locked at the times that he knocked and God led him to Google the word "voice" and the word "Divorce Care" came up.

As he began to look at that care group, it was offered at many churches through our city but the one that he could attend and work out was the one at Providence. As he came and learned about the grace of Jesus, Antonio was saved by Jesus and came to know Him and trusted in Him. He said just a few minutes ago as we were sitting back here listening, he leaned over and whispered to me. He said, "I've learned more about Jesus in the last year than the previous 30 years."

He's a great Savior. He's a great Savior. Antonio, based on your trust in the finished work of Christ, and the way He has saved you, it is our privilege as a family of faith this morning to be able to baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Let's pray. Father, we love you. Thank you that in you we have life. Thank you, God, for this great word that has been brought. God, help us to be a people, to be a people who live in such awe of who you are, what you have accomplished that we could not accomplish. Thank you for the death, burial, and resurrection of your Son. God, thank you for Antonio. We lift him to you and his sons that are here this morning. We're grateful for them, and just pray that you would sustain our brother, that the vision that Isaiah saw, that you would continue to give that vision in some sense, in some way, through your word by your Spirit to Antonio to help him to endure to the end. Father, we are grateful people and we love you. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.



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