**Sermon transcript**

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**Ewald Frank**

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Praise be to the name of the Lord for his presence. God is already present. Those who are sensitive to it can feel it.

We are here in the name of the Lord. And he has given the promise, ***"where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*** [Mt 18:20]

He said that, and he keeps his promises. We can rely on him.

Thank God that there is still something, for example, God's Word, the Lord, things that one can rely on, of which one knows for certain, this is how it is, and it cannot be otherwise.

We have but one desire, that God has his way, that these three things, the blood of the Lamb, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God, may be effective within us. For thus it is written, ***"there are three that bear witness, the water, the Spirit, and the blood."*** [1 Jn 5:7–8]

And we are here to take a bath by the washing of water by the Word. [Eph 5:26]

We are here to experience the redeeming and liberating power of the blood of the Lamb. And we are here to receive the Spirit of God.

May this be a time of consecration, a time, as has just been mentioned, in which we are nourished. There are after all people who are hungry every day and who eat daily. I do not know if you are among them, but most of them do indeed feel a fresh hunger every day, even in the earthly realm. And in the spiritual realm, it is just the same. We have a hunger for God. And what more could we wish for than to be able to see that he draws near to us, not only in his Word, but also in his power.

I thought of the Sermon on the Mount, when the passage was read, "come and take freely". It is found in Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5 verses 3 to 6. Matthew 5, verses 3 to 6.

[3] ***Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

A comparison was just made. There are people who want to prolong their lives at any cost. At any cost. And we have heard it, particularly in connection with the

heart transplants. Those who have a lot of money get priority over others who do not have as much. And they want to live longer. Even that one prince… well, why not? God does not prolong our earthly life. God grants us eternal life, and that by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord. And if we may receive it freely, it is only because the price has already been paid. And it was a high price, a costly price, the price of the blood of the Lamb. For so it is written in the Epistle of Peter, ***"that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious, costly, and holy blood of the Lamb."*** [1 Pet 1:18–19]

I shall read verse 3 once more.

[3] ***Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

[4] ***Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.***

[5] ***Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.***

And now it comes:

[6] ***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.***

We simply have a hunger that God has placed within us. During the last hymn, the second stanza, I simply had to wonder whether there might still be some who hesitate, who perhaps merely watch others experience God without having had their own experience with him.

Hymn number 169, stanza 2 says,

*What good is your hesitation, oh soul?*

*The time of grace is swiftly passing,*

*none but Jesus can save,*

*to have him is eternal gain.*

That is why Paul could say, ***"for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."*** [Phil 1:21]

May God, as has already been said, be with us and bless us. Speak to us. Move our hearts. Win us over completely to himself, so that we do not listen with half a heart, or with only one ear, but may belong to those who have dedicated their whole lives to the Lord and love him, as it is written, ***"with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind,"*** [Mt 22:37] and thus also love his Word and receive him, and love one another in the divine love, which must be poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Beloved, when we speak of the end times and place the prophetic Word in its biblical context, that is a wonderful thing. And we are grateful to God for it. But do you know what this means for us? If all the other things, which will for the most part

take place after the rapture, are already unfolding so visibly before our eyes, how near must the rapture be? And we know exactly what is required to be raptured. The Bible says: ***"without holiness, no one will see the Lord."*** [Heb 12:14]

The Bible says, in Matthew 25, that the foolish virgins did not have enough oil, they ran out, and they could not enter the marriage supper. [Mat 25:8-10]

The Bible gives us insight into everything. And what we all truly need is a clear, doctrinal understanding of biblical concepts, but also a clear experience of the things the Bible promises us, and which others have experienced before us.

If I were to ask today, what does sanctification mean, I wouldn't know how many answers I would get. Anyone with a Catholic spirit would say, if someone remains single and does not approach the opposite sex, that might be holy. That may be holy for a cleric, but not in God's eyes.

Last weekend, I attended a wedding near Zurich, at which brother and sister Amman, who by the way are here today as well, they sang some wonderful songs. And there… and now please, hold on tight… Oh, brother Russ says "they're all sitting." There was a wedding, but the bride and groom weren't exactly spring chickens. The bride was 65, and the groom was 75. And it was a wonderful wedding. Both of them already have very large families, and they invited them all. And both had just one wish, that I should preach the gospel. They already knew what life is like. And lo and behold, tears were shed by those who heard the Word.

What I simply wanted to say is this: Let us act and live in every respect in a sober, clear, and normal manner until the Lord comes. Let no one tread on thin ice and think that now, since it is really near, there's nothing left to do. Whoever wants to get married, let him do so soon, and whoever wants to do anything, let him do it also soon, for soon it will be too late. Someone actually said to me, "Brother Frank, if it really is the case that the Lord's coming is so near, then I have decided not to remain alone any longer." This happens too. These are clear decisions that we can only welcome.

Beloved, but this morning is about much more than that. This morning is about us coming into our own in the presence of God, and about the Spirit of God descending upon us and resting on us.

As already indicated, if we have seen or continue to see the times in which we live, and that Bible prophecy is indeed being fulfilled around us, and we have the word of prophecy as a bright light shining in a dark place [2 Pet 1:19], then let us take care that we have not merely heard, but have experienced what God has promised us. And if we all truly hunger and thirst for God today, then he will satisfy our hunger ***"and make us drink of the river of his pleasures."*** [Ps 36:8]

Thus it is written. ***"And we will be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house."*** [Ps 36:8]

The New Testament begins with a supernatural working of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. And I would like to tell you plainly that this is how it will end, with the power of the Holy Spirit manifesting in the bride of the Lamb, who has become one with the bridegroom, and who bears the Word of the hour, possesses his nature, and so on. But I would like to read a few scriptures on this, so that it is always biblically grounded. Luke, Luke, chapter 1, Luke chapter 1, verse 35. Luke chapter 1, verse 35:

[35] ***And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy one which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.***

I am reading this verse for a very specific reason. When the Holy Spirit comes upon a person, something is created within that person. The Holy Spirit is not wind. The Holy Spirit is the active power of God in those who receive him. And then it happens, when the Spirit of God comes upon a person, a product is brought forth. There is conception, and after conception comes birth, and then divine life emerges. One simply has to state this so clearly, to understand what is meant when the Bible speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the active, begetting, creative power of God in action, at work. Not merely an object lesson, but the actual, active, manifesting, begetting, creative power of God within the person upon whom the Holy Spirit comes. And that is precisely what we need in these days. Many can clap their hands and cheer and shout for joy too, and I have no objection to that. I wish that this would happen in our midst as well. Brother Russ, who is after all able to put things into words in a special way, he put it so beautifully. We are not at a funeral here. We have indeed died, have already been buried with Christ, and have risen with him to a new life. And we want this divine resurrection life to be revealed in our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit, so that Christ might become our life.

In Luke 21, in connection with the end times and what is happening, the Lord tells us the following. Luke 21, verses 34 to 36. Luke 21, 34 to 36:

[34] ***And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.***

[35] ***For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.***

[36] ***Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be receive strength to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.***

To receive strength to escape all that is to come upon the earth. We have heard it often enough in the sermons, that the church will be caught up before the outpouring

of the bowls of wrath, and before the great and terrible time of tribulation and distress. And that is true. But in order to be raptured, we must receive strength. This power of God takes effect. It transforms the body and lifts us up. And that must not merely be a wind of doctrine. It must be divine reality. One may well be able to explain the matter correctly from a doctrinal point of view, without people having experienced it. And I have said it often enough in this place, the difference in the preaching ministry or the office of preacher between profession and calling is huge. This is not about the exercise of a spiritual profession. This is about the proclamation of the everlasting gospel by virtue of divine calling. And we would like, as Paul said back then, to ensure that all attain perfection in Christ. [Col 1:28]

And belong to those who on the day the Lord has made already possess the power to be taken from this earth, to experience the transformation of the body and thus to stand before the Son of man before God's judgments come upon this earth. As for the power, it is always the Spirit of God, the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts chapter 1, verse 8, we are told:

[8] ***But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.***

You can see what this is all about. There was a rushing sound. There was the blowing of a mighty wind. Wonderful. But not only that, there was more. A rushing sound from heaven like a mighty wind. Tongues of fire, wonderful. But there was more. There was God's life-giving power that had come into the hearts of the believers. They were of one heart and one soul. [Acts 4:32] They believed God. But when the day of Pentecost came, power from on high came upon those who had become believers.

Beloved, I'm happy to say again, we do not want merely to meditate on the Word in this place. We want to experience what God has promised us, and what is necessary to take part in the rapture. I really do not know how I would appear before God if the preaching had not been such that everyone had the opportunity to truly experience God. I would like to add that it cannot be because of the preaching. God's plan of salvation cannot be proclaimed more clearly, more truthfully, more comprehensively, more profoundly than it is proclaimed in our time. Now it is up to us as listeners to really get down to business and say, Lord, if things are already taking their course, and we can even see it, then please help now and let it succeed.

And if we raise our voices together to God, will he not answer? Oh yes, he has promised, ***"when my people who are called by my name gather together and look toward this place where I have put my name…"*** [2 Chr 7:14], you all know the prayer from the dedication of Solomon's temple.

And when we look today to Jesus Christ, in whom God has revealed himself and his name and his salvation… you know we were in Zurich for three days last weekend. And Friday, it is the Muslims' holy day. And lo and behold, there were many books

on display. They had a gathering there, also in a Volkshaus, in a hall. And one headline read, "There is only one God and his name is Allah."

We have come to recognize it differently. There is only one God. And to that, we say yes and amen. But this one true God has become Emmanuel, God with us. And his name in the New Testament is Yashua, the Greek form Jesus, Yahweh Savior.

Beloved, we are grateful that God has opened our eyes; grateful that he has given us light, indeed, revelation; for without revelation, we too would have seen nothing and heard nothing.

So, it is about receiving the power that can also bring our mortal bodies to life. And how often have we said it: first the power of God must transform us before it can then bring about the transformation of our bodies.

The following is said of our Lord Jesus in Acts chapter 10, verse 38.

Acts chapter 10, verse 38:

[38] ***How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.***

Beloved, this too is part of it. We need an empowered church in which all who are overcome by the devil are set free. I have not spoken much about this, but I have made my observations, and am deeply saddened that even believers are often led by the nose by the devil, and that he plays his games with them. God's children should consecrate their lives wholly to God, and the devil should be cast out, and all demons should forfeit their claim upon those who belong to the blood-bought flock.

You know, this was indeed the ministry of our Lord here on earth. He went about doing good, setting free people who could not free or help themselves. And lo and behold, once they had been set free, they served the Lord with joy. He even cast seven demons out of one woman, and that is quite a number. And lo and behold, she served him together with others to whom he had done the same.

Beloved, the times are very serious, and we must all ask ourselves together whether God has already taken his rightful place in our lives. I have not merely passed on this question; it is addressed just as much to me, to all who preach the Word, to all who hear it, and to all who believe it.

Has God come into his rightful place in our lives? Has he been able to do what he promised? And if we are then sincere and realize that we are not yet there, then the Spirit of God comes upon us. Repentance comes, contrition comes, a longing comes: 'O God, if it is not yet so, let it be so, that you may have your way in us and through us!'

How often have we heard it: God in Christ, Christ in the church. The word Christ means the Anointed One, anointed with the Holy Spirit, equipped and empowered

by the power of God. And so we have read it here in Acts chapter 10, verse 38:

[38] ***How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.***

"***For God was with him.***" Now, the next verse goes on to say:

[39] ***And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem...***

Where something happens, it is seen, it is heard, it is witnessed. Jesus did say, "***Ye are my witnesses.***" [Acts 1:8] But he also said, "***Wait in Jerusalem until ye are endued with power from on high.***" [Lk 24:49] Just as the New Testament began with the active power of God, with the power of the Holy Spirit, whether with our Lord or with the church at Pentecost. It was not the great sermon that came first; first came the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the equipping with God's power, to carry out and perform the ministry to which the church was appointed.

I ask you: do we not need a double portion of the power of the Holy Spirit in this age? Has there ever been such unbelief? So many atheists, those who deny God, scoffing, and whoever they may be on earth, as there is in our days? Oh, that we might believe it, and thereby honor God, that he indeed will once more shake heaven and earth and pour out his Spirit once again in a mighty way.

I read to you the Word from the prophet Zechariah, which speaks of this in connection with the working of the Holy Spirit and the setting of the capstone amidst the shouts: '***Grace, grace unto it!***' Zechariah chapter 4, 1 of the most beautiful images in the entire Old Testament concerning the church of the New Covenant: Zechariah chapter 4, verse 2, and then from verse 5:

[2] ***And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof.***

Here we have the New Testament period before our eyes: a bowl of oil, a seven-branch lampstand, and seven pipes flowing down from this one bowl of oil to the seven lamps of this golden lampstand. This means, throughout the seven stages or eras of the New Testament church, the seven church age messages, the Holy Spirit is at work anew upon the earth. And we are after all living in the final church age, that is 100% clear and true. But even there, there is a flow of oil, of the Spirit, as described and shown to us here in this image.

Then it continues from verse 5:

[5] ***Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.***

[6] ***Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.***

Verse 7:

[7] ***Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain:***

And now it comes:

***... and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.***

Here we are speaking of completion, not of the beginning. Christ is both the cornerstone and the headstone. He is Alpha and Omega. He is the first and the last. [Rev 22:13] But here in this prophetic Word, the focus is on the headstone. You know, that is the last stone beneath the ridge of the roof: the first when construction is to begin, and the last when the building reaches its completion.

So, at the end of the time of grace, through the power of the Holy Spirit, something very special will happen in the church of the living God. And just as the builders of that time rejected the cornerstone, so too will they now reject the capstone. But as we read yesterday evening, there is a divine remnant, an election [Rom 11:5], who take God's side wholeheartedly and can believe from the heart, and will thus experience what has been promised to us in the Word of God.

We do after all sing in the chorus: *God's Spirit is at work once more.* And we do not merely believe this; I think I can say that it is already the Spirit of God who has begun to work. That it is the Spirit of God who has taken the Word and revealed it to us, the Spirit of God who has already led us into the truth and continues to reveal it to us.

From Romans chapter 1, I would like to read the following with reference to our Lord, and let us not forget, he is the Son of God, we are sons and daughters of God. We are, and this must be proclaimed anew time and again, begotten from the same Word seed, from the same Spirit. When it was said back then, "***Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee.***" [Ps 2:7] If we have been begotten and born of God, then it is through the same Holy Spirit. And as there is only one Father in heaven, and Jesus said, "***I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.***" [Jn 20:17] Those are his words. And we have indeed become children of God, even though it has not yet been revealed how and what we shall be on that day. We shall see it then, when it comes to pass.

So, in Romans chapter 1, verse 4, our Lord tells us:

[4] ***And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:***

[5] ***Through him, our Lord Jesus Christ, we have received grace and apostleship, to work obedience to the faith among all nations for his name:***

[6] ***Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.***

This Word applies to us today. We, too, are part of this. We are still living in the church age. Since we've just touched on this, there is a question regarding what Brother Branham said, and we will, of course, have a few more questions to answer. We simply ask that you ask them; we do have a few more meetings to come. In any case, everything must always be viewed in a biblical context. Some so-called experts have actually found a passage where Brother Branham said "Revelation 10 is being fulfilled in the time when the 7th church angel is on earth." And with that, they say that then the Lord came down as the Angel of the Covenant, and set one foot on the land and sea. And they fundamentally forget that we are still living in the same time today, namely in the last church age of Laodicea, but they lack discernment. They take a term or a statement and do not place it within its biblical context. And already the matter is skewed.

I'm very grateful to God that he has granted us the grace not to seek our own direction or offer our own interpretation, but simply to follow the divine path on which we have walked from the very beginning, without in the slightest presenting things differently or rephrasing them.

In this Word here, we have read: "***and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.***" That concerns him. But as for us, we've also read: "***Through him, our Lord Jesus Christ, we have received grace and apostleship, to work obedience to the faith among all nations for his name.***" And then, one step further: "***among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.***" Have we fully embraced this in faith? Have we realized what a grace God has bestowed upon us, that in this age, we may be numbered among those who not only believe, but believe as the Scriptures say?

In Romans chapter 15… Romans chapter 15, we read verse 19: Romans 15, verse 19:

[19] ***Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and roundabout unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.***

Elsewhere Paul says: "***The Word or the gospel did not come in words alone, but in power.***" [1 The 1:5] And the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God for everyone who believes. [Rom 1:16]

Have you read that? So it is written in Holy Scripture: it is the power of God. I read it from Romans chapter 1, verse 16, familiar to us all. Romans 1, verse 16:

[16] ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also***

***to the Greek.***

…and to everyone who wishes to believe. What is this about? It is about God having a church at his disposal through which he can once again be at work on earth. And then we must all move forward together in the same direction, in the same Spirit, under the same teaching, and accept in faith what God has promised.

I would like to read on from 1 Corinthians… 1 Corinthians chapter 2, verse 5. 1 Corinthians chapter 2, verse 5:

[5] ***That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.***

Words of men and wisdom of men have no standing before God. And Paul writes: "***You received the word we preached as what it truly is, namely the Word of God.***" [1 The 2:13] And this Word of God is confirmed by the power of God in those who receive it in faith. And that is why it says: "***that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.***"

Time and again, as we hear in this service, it is the power of God. Not about what you or I can do or cannot do; it is about the active power of the Holy Spirit in the members of the body of Jesus Christ, our Lord. And it is written in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 12 and 13, that "***we have all been baptized by one Spirit into one body.***"

In the Old Testament, kings and priests were anointed, and after they were anointed, or during the anointing, the Holy Spirit did indeed come upon them. Here we have specific examples, one of which is David. Let me read it to you, because this concept from the Old Testament was then carried over into the New Testament as well. In 1 Samuel chapter 16, we read verses 1 and 13. 1 Samuel 16, verses 1 and 13:

[1] ***And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.***

And then comes the description of what took place. Everyone was there except the one God wanted. He was still with the flock. He hadn't even turned up. The six were there, but the one who mattered most was not there.

In verse 13 we read:

[13] ***Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.***

"***And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.***" You all know, in the Old Testament, Saul and David provide us with a very good description of the one

whose life was not renewed, who harbored hatred and all manner of evil within him, even though he was anointed, and the other whose heart was transformed.

You know how wickedly Saul sought to harm David, how he persecuted and hated him, and tried to stab him with a spear against the wall, and here, what David, a man upon whom the Spirit of God came, said later.

2 Samuel 9, verses 1 and 2. 2 Samuel 9, verses 1 and 2:

[1] ***And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?***

David asks whether anyone remains of the house, of Saul's house, of those who persecuted him, who made his life difficult, "***Is there anyone left? I will show him mercy.***"

***"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."*** [Mt 5:7]

Beloved, there are characteristics in the life of a believer that cannot be ignored or overlooked. And then, it goes on here:

[1] ***...I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake.***

[2] ***And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.***

Listen what it says in verse 3.

[3] ***And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul...***

And listen what it says now:

[3] ***...that I may show the kindness of God unto him?***

First, "***I will show him mercy.***" And then, "***Is there not still someone left, that I might show him God's mercy?***"

One must receive from God if one wishes and is able to pass it on, whether mercy, whether love, whatever it may be. But here, it really comes down to this:

With the anointing came the Spirit of God. And with the power of the Holy Spirit came the transformation of this man. And it did not bother him that he was being persecuted, on the contrary, as we see, he wanted to show mercy. He wanted to pass on the mercy he had received from God to the household that had persecuted him.

Did not our Lord say, ***"Bless those who curse you, pray for those who persecute you."*** [Mt 5:44]? What about us? What about us? Have we received God's mercy? Then let us pass it on. Have we received God's love? Then let us pass it on.

I would like to quickly read one or two passages from 2 Peter chapter 3, 2 Peter chapter 3, in connection with the end times, with the day of the Lord, with the promise of the return of Jesus Christ. In 2 Peter 3, a great deal has been said.

But then we are told here, in verse 11, 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 11:

[11] ***Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,***

[12] ***Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?***

We have understood what has already been emphasized: not merely to know that the time is near, and that the day could dawn at any moment, but preparation of the church of the living God, preparation for this glorious day of the return of Jesus Christ.

And I would like to read the well-known passage from 2 Timothy chapter 4, to encourage us even more through the reading of God's Word. 2 Timothy chapter 4, perhaps verses 7 and 8.

[7] ***I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:***

[8] ***Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:***

and now listen to this:

[8] ***...and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.***

There are people on Earth who long for the Lord to return, and the bride and the Spirit will cry out at the end, saying, ***"Come quickly, Lord Jesus!"*** [Rev 22:17]

Here, this is actually a passage we sometimes use at funerals when someone is taken from us. But Paul was able to say in life what we often say about others after they have died.

How often have I myself read these words at funerals? Even during his lifetime, Paul had certainty in God. He knew and understood his standing in Jesus Christ, our Lord. For him, death was merely a transition from time into eternity.

He was able to say during his lifetime, ***"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course..."*** [2 Tim 4:7] Let us also fight for the ***"faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*** [Jude 1:3]

Let people think of us what they will, speak and write as they please, that is entirely up to them. But let us fulfill the task of holding fast in union with God and God's Word to what he has promised us.

I've been thinking about this over the last few days. I briefly looked it up for the first time in a long while, the history of the Bible's compilation, when chapters were divided, when verse divisions were introduced, and so on. And how many translations exist, in how many languages.

And then I thought to myself: whatever David did wrong, millions of people all over the world have heard about it. They can read it all for themselves. And I thought, poor David! It's actually a shame that it's all been written down like that.

And we sometimes feel uncomfortable in our own skin when we think people have seen or heard something. The Bible is so true that it reflects both the light and the dark sides.

And yet, we have nothing to fear after all, everything has been written down.

And even if something is sometimes said or even written about us, only very few people find out about it compared to what they have now learned about David and all the other men of God in the Bible.

So, if we have died with Christ, then let us continue on in this new life with him and finish our course of faith.

And if I were to ask now, who has the certainty, as Paul writes here, ***"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"*** [2 Tim 4:8]?

So, he belonged to the multitude of overcomers who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and for the sake of the Word of God and who did not love their lives unto the death. [Rev 12:11]

He therefore belonged to those who, even during their lifetime, had the certainty that the crown of righteousness was laid up for him.

But he had this certainty not only for himself, but also for all of us who are waiting for the appearing of our Lord and rejoice that he will come again to take us to himself.

For he did say:

***"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*** [Jn 14:2-3]

Let us summarize: God works through his Word, through his Spirit. He works in a supernatural way in those who believe his Word, and especially the promises given in the Word.

We have said it time and again: The Spirit of God came upon Mary for the sake of the promise of the Word. There was divine substance. The Word as seed was there as a promise, and the Spirit came upon that seed, not merely wind, as mentioned

earlier, but the Spirit as the power of God came upon the Word of promise to bring it to life.

The same thing has happened time and again and is happening in our own day:

There is a bride who has been set apart from the denominations, who makes herself available to Christ, to receive his revealed Word of promise, and then to experience the quickening, creative power of God coming upon us, to bring about this new divine life within us.

Do we long for this that the power of God may come upon us now?

And when it comes, new life will spring forth, for ***"it is the spirit that gives life and the Word of God is spirit and is life."*** [Jn 6:63]

Let us give God the glory in faith and say, "Lord, just as you have spoken to us, and given us the Word of divine promise, intended for these days, and we have received it in faith, come now upon us with the power of the Holy Spirit. Create divine life within us."

Shall we pray this? Shall we believe this and take God at his Word?

This is how it began with the New Testament, and this is how it will end with the New Testament church.

The power of the Holy Spirit at work in the church of the living God, to make the heard Word a divine reality. Just as Christ was the Word made flesh, so the word of promise must become divine reality through us.

And we have the assurance: ***"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts, it shall be done.***" [Zech 4:6]

But we must open ourselves to the working of the Holy Spirit.

This, too, was said to us in the opening word: We must open our mouths in praise so that God may truly fill us.

Only an open vessel can be filled.

Oh, that we might find grace before God, open ourselves up, and that each of us might forget the other and seek fellowship with God until we receive connection with him and embrace and glorify him, and that the Spirit of God might truly descend and create new divine life in us all, to the glory and praise of the name of the Lord.

Can we all believe biblically? Can we truly believe that God will bring his begun work to completion?

Let us be among those who simply have the certainty of faith, because God has given it to us.

We also heard the terms "unbelief" and "disobedience" last night.

Let us believe as the Scripture has said, and then the rivers of living water will flow [Jn 7:38]

***"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."*** [Heb 13:8]

John proclaimed:

***"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."*** [Mt 3:11]

May the holy anointing, the holy fire of God, may the Spirit of God, the power of God, come down upon us and truly revive us anew, and work within us all that we need to serve the Lord whilst we are here, and which we shall also need when our mortal bodies are to be transformed into immortality.

May this resurrection power of Jesus Christ, according to the words of the apostle, ***"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection..."*** [Phil 3:10] may it become a divine reality indeed, our personal experience of God by grace. Amen.

Let us stand and give thanks to the Lord. Let us bow our heads and pray together.

Lord Almighty God, some have come to the front, not to meet a person, but to have an encounter with You.

O Lord, You know the different needs, the requests and concerns. We bring everything to You, faithful Lord. You are still the same today. You save, You deliver, You heal, You baptize with the Spirit and Fire.

You are present to confirm Your word to those who have believed it.

Beloved Lord, we should all come to You, lifting up our hands and our hearts to You. O God, we have never needed You as much as we do at this time. Lord, we need You. We need You, Lord. Have mercy on us.

Forgive all guilt, all sin, all disobedience, all unbelief, every transgression.

Wash us in the precious blood of the Lamb. Cleanse us, O Lord, that we may become as white as snow, as though we had never sinned. We give thanks for the power of the blood, in which lies our redemption and forgiveness.

We give thanks for salvation in Jesus Christ, our Lord. We give thanks for Your revealed Word. We give thanks for the power of the Holy Spirit, who even now descends to create new life and bring forth the Word that has been heard.

We thank You. We worship You and praise Your wonderful Name.

Beloved Lord, once again I ask You, grant to all who have come to the front what they have asked for, O God.

Confirm Your Word to them as true, that they may leave here joyful and free, redeemed, blessed and healed, praising You and giving You the glory.

Hallelujah! Lord our God, together we give You all the glory. In Jesus' holy Name. Amen.