

Acts 3 v 15

by David Norman Jones

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Prince of Life, absolute sovereign in the realm of life and conqueror of death, who has delivered us from the fear of death and has given us new life in Him.

Duration: 44:24

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 2:19, John 5:39, John 20:9, Acts 3:14-15, Acts 5:30

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher's main focus is to present Jesus Christ as revealed in the scriptures. He emphasizes that his purpose is not to share personal opinions or the opinions of others, but to lift up Jesus and display him as he is portrayed in the Bible. The preacher highlights the power of Jesus' voice, referencing instances such as when he raised Lazarus from the dead. He also emphasizes the importance of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus in the preaching of the apostles, as they consistently linked these two events in their message. The sermon concludes by pointing out that Jesus himself spoke of his own resurrection, using the metaphor of the temple being destroyed and raised up in three days.

Transcript

Well, it's certainly a change to preach to such a large congregation. I'm used to preaching to a very small congregation Sunday by Sunday. I must confess that I'd rather be there now than here.

But, in other respects, the large congregation does uplift you when you come to preach the Gospel here at this school, thinking it does help. Of course, that's what I'm here for tonight, to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what I've been asked to do.

And you must never think of the Gospel in terms of some simple formula, some split-and-easy recipe. And neither must we identify the Gospel with some complicated, systematic theology. When we think of the Gospel, we should always identify it with a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So what I'm here to do tonight is to draw your attention to this person. He's to be found, of course, in the Scripture. Isn't my duty tonight to tell you what I think about the Lord Jesus Christ or what other men think about Him? But simply to raise Him up before you and display Him to you as He is revealed in the Scripture.

And that's what I wanted to do tonight. Of course, I realize that because of time and because our finite human minds are not able to display Him in all His glory and majesty and perfection, the whole of the Scriptures tell us what He is like and who He is. I can only give you but a glimpse of Him tonight.

But that is what I hope to be able to do under the help and assistance of the Holy Spirit. In order for us to touch, as it were, a glimpse of this glorious person, the Lord Jesus Christ, I'd like to draw your attention to the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the 15th verse. The third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the 15th verse.

And I want us to take just a portion of that verse as our text tonight. To find there in that verse a title which is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. As far as I understand, it's the only place where you find this particular title applied to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me put it in its immediate context by reading verses 14 and 15. You remember the apostle is preaching here, preaching the gospel. And this is what he says in the course of his sermon.

Addressing his congregation, he says this to them in verse 14. You notice there the title which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Sandwiched, as it were, between the two greatest events in human history.

The crucifixion and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. And time and time again in the apostolic preaching, here in the Acts of the Apostles, you find these two great events tied by some part of the one great salvation event. In the second chapter, just back a few pages in your Bible, you remember the apostle Peter standing up on the day of Pentecost.

Preaches to the congregation in a similar manner there in verse 22 of chapter 2 of the Acts of the Apostles. He again charges the congregation with their sins. As ye yourselves also know.

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the chains of death. Because it was not possible that ye should beholden of it. You have crucified.

God hath raised him up. Just over a few pages in the fifth chapter. Again you remember when the apostles are brought before the council.

And again they are given an opportunity to preach the gospel. You find them again preaching it in a very similar manner. Drawing the people's attention to these two great events.

The crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. There in verse 30 of Acts chapter 5. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour.

For to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Time and time again you find these two great events joined together. Inseparable in the preaching of the apostles.

And here in our text tonight you find exactly the same thing. These two great salvation events. These two great aspects if you like of the one salvation event.

Joined together in this title which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ. You denied the holy one and the just. Until the prince of life whom God hath raised from the dead.

I want us to consider together tonight the significance of this title. Because there is a significance to it of course. There's bound to be a significance to this title.

It's not an empty title. It's not an honorary title. You know people are given honorary titles aren't they? Just to think of one that comes to mind at the moment.

I'm not trying to make a political point. You'll understand what I mean when I say this. But think of the title prince of Wales.

It's a title. It's an honorary title. But it's an empty title in one sense.

In the sense that the prince of Wales does not govern or rule Wales in any sense at all. He is a sort of figurehead. He has been given the title.

There are historical reasons for it. I'm not making a political point. I'm just trying to illustrate something.

But the point is this. It's just an empty title. It doesn't mean very much.

But not this title. When we refer to the Lord Jesus Christ as the prince of life. We're not just playing with words.

We're not just keeping empty honors upon him. We're not trying to flatter him in any way. This title is full of significance.

And full of meaning. And what I want us to do together tonight is simply this. To try and understand what is the full significance of this title.

As it is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the prince of life. There are four things that I want to say tonight in connection with this title.

First of all, I want to impress upon you that the Lord Jesus Christ is the prince of life. Because he is absolute sovereign in the realm of life. He is absolute sovereign in the realm of life.

Now he says that himself. In that reading that we had together at the beginning of our worship tonight in the book of Revelation. You have that glorious, majestic picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is described there as the one whose countenance is shining like the sun in its full strength. You have this picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as the king of the church. And there at the end of that passage in verse 18.

You hear this great sovereign speak it. And these are the words that he speaks. I am he that liveth and was dead.

And behold I am alive forevermore. And I have the keys of hell and of death. I have the keys of hell and of death.

I live, I was dead, but I am alive forevermore says the Lord. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Now nowhere is this better illustrated than in the testimony and in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

If you turn for example to the gospel according to Saint John. And the second chapter of that gospel. You remember the incident there when our Lord heard the temple.

And afterwards he is confronted by some of the people. Some of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And there at the end of chapter 2 of John's gospel.

You find him saying these words. Jesus answered and said unto them. Destroy this temple.

And in three days. Jesus answered and said unto them. Destroy this temple.

And in three days they will raise it up. Then said the Jews. Forty and six years was this temple in building.

Will thou wear it up in three days? They thought he was talking about the temple in Jerusalem. They misunderstood what he was talking about. So what was he talking about? He goes on to tell us.

At least the author of John's gospel tells us in the very next verse. But he speaks of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead.

His disciples remembered that he had said this unto them. And they believed the scripture and the words which Jesus had said. Destroy this temple.

This body of mine. And in three days I will raise it again. You read on in John's gospel.

You come to chapter 10. And there in verses 17 and 18 you find similar remarks. Similar claims.

In verse 17 of John's gospel. Chapter 10. The Lord Jesus Christ turns to his disciples and he says this.

Therefore does my father love me. Because I lay down my life. That I might take it again.

No man taketh it from me. But I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down.

And I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father. Now my friends you can't say that.

I can't say that. But he can say it. Because he is the prince of life.

Because he is absolute sovereign in the realm of life. I lay down my life. And I take it again.

But not only does he say it. He demonstrates it. In his ministry.

In the gospel record. If you turn for example to the fourth chapter of Luke's gospel. And to that incident in Nazareth, his hometown.

You remember our Lord had returned to the village of Nazareth. And had been preaching in the synagogue. And had been preaching very clearly about the doctrine of election.

Illustrating it from the Old Testament. You find that the congregation as very often seems to be the case. Got rather incensed about this.

And were rather annoyed. And you come very close to a scene of mob violence. In Luke chapter 4 verse 28.

We're told there that all day in the synagogue. When they heard these things. These things that our Lord had been talking about.

And preaching about. When they heard these things. They were filled with wrath.

And rose up. And thrust him out of the city. And led him under the brow of the hill.

Whereon their city was built. That they might cast him down headlong. But listen.

But he passing through the midst of them. Went his way. What majesty.

What dignity. Here they were. Losing their tempers.

They couldn't take what he was saying to them. They had worked themselves up into a frenzy. It was a scene of mob violence.

Crowd violence. And here he is the prince of life. What did he do? He walked calmly and serenely and majestically through them.

They want to throw him over the top of the hill. They want to put him to death. But they cannot.

Because they haven't got the power to do it. He is in control of his life. You see it there in John's Gospel again.

In chapter 8 of that Gospel. When our Lord had been making some tremendous claims for himself. You remember.

He claimed equality with God. In chapter 8 of John's Gospel. You remember he had said to the Jews.

And they were amazed at what he was saying. Before Abraham was. I am.

He took unto himself the divine name. He acquainted himself with Jehovah. Before Abraham was.

I am. And you remember they were amazed at this. And they began to question him.

And they began to say things to him. How can this possibly be so? You are not yet 50 years old. How can you possibly know anything about Abraham? But it is obvious from the context here in chapter 8. And from the end of that chapter.

That they understood only too well what he was talking about. Because we are told there at the very end of chapter 8. In verse 59. Then took they up stones to cast at him.

But Jesus hid himself. And went out of the temple. Going through the midst of them.

And so passed by. Don't you see the picture? They took up stones to throw at him. They were going to put him to death.

Here they were. The religious authorities. With all the power and authority that was vested in them.

As leaders of Judaism. Here they were with all their regalia. They were going to put him to death.

And he just stood up and walked to them. Why? Because he is prince of life. He is in control of his life.

But the point I want to get over to you tonight my friends is this. He is not only prince of his life. He is not only the one who is in control of his own life.

He is prince of your life. He is sovereign. And what is true about him and about his life.

Is true about your life as well. Your times are not in your hands. They are in his.

Your life is not yours to do with as you please. You are not the master of your destiny. He is.

He is absolute sovereign in this matter. He is the prince of life. You are his.

By creation he created you. The earth is the Lord. And the fullness thereof.

The world and they that dwell therein. You are his by redemption. If you are a believer here tonight.

You are his. Your life is not yours to do with as you will. Your life belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You are only subject in this realm. He is sovereign. Whether you are a believer or an unbeliever here tonight.

It does not matter in this respect. Your life, your times are in his hands. It is the Lord who gives life.

And it is the Lord who takes life away. And you cannot add a day to your allotted time. Neither can you subtract a day.

He is sovereign. He is prince in the realm of life. But there is something more here than just this general truth.

Which we find on the surface of the text tonight. He is prince of life in the first place. Because he is absolute sovereign in the realm of life.

But in the second place. He is prince of life because he is conqueror of death. He is prince of life because he is conqueror of death.

Look at the context here. I have already pointed it out to you. This title is the only place it occurs in the whole of scripture.

It is to be found between these two great salvation events. Look at verse 15 again. You have killed the prince of life.

Whom God hath raised from the dead. You have killed the prince of life. Whom God hath raised from the dead.

This title prince of life. Is obviously connected in a very close and significant way. With the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And indeed nowhere is this title more clearly manifest. And more clearly vindicated than it is here at Calvary. In the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is prince of life in the second place then. Because he is conqueror of death. Now one of the best passages of scripture to illustrate this.

Is found in the epistle to the Hebrews. You turn to the second chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. You find a very clear statement to this effect.

In Hebrews chapter 2. And reading from verse 9. The apostle has been speaking about the angels and the creation. He goes on to speak about the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what he said in verse 9. But he said we see Jesus.

Who was made a little lower than the angel. For the suffering of death. Crowned with glory and honor.

That he by the grace of God should take death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things and by whom are all things. In bringing many sons unto glory.

To make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified. Are all of one for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Saying I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again I will put my foot in him.

And again behold I am the children which God has given me. And these are the verses I want to draw your attention to. Verses 14 and 15.

For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood. He also himself likewise took part of the same. That through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death.

That is the devil. And deliver them who through fear of death. Were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Do you see the picture here? It's exactly the same picture. It's exactly the same person who is being displayed to us. The prince of life.

Look at the description there in verse 9. We're told that he is crowned with glory and honor. We're told in verse 10 that he is the captain of our salvation. We're told there that it is by him that all things consist.

That all things exist. The picture that we have here is the picture of a sovereign. The picture of a captain of a prince going into battle.

The point I want you to notice here is this. He associates himself, he identifies himself with his people. He doesn't fight this battle from a distance.

He doesn't fight it from his palace. He doesn't fight this battle from an office behind the front line. Sending out instructions and telegrams to his generals.

No, no, we're told here that he associates himself. He identifies with his people. He puts on the uniform of his people.

He is not ashamed to call them brethren. He takes upon himself, we're told, flesh and blood. He is clothed in the likeness of sinful flesh.

He is like us, but without sin. He is associated with us. That's the meaning of his incarnation, of his virgin birth.

He identifies himself. He puts on the uniform of flesh and blood. And he goes right to the very front line of battle.

And he steps right into the arena of battle. He steps right into the very territory of the enemy himself. That by his own death he might destroy him that had the power of death.

Let me give you a glimpse of what's going on here. In this battlefield. If you turn to the Old Testament you have some sort of a perspective on this great battle.

In the third chapter of the book of Zechariah you have this picture. We're told there in verse 1 that Joshua the high priest was to be seen standing before the angel of the Lord. And Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Here is the picture. Here are these two persons. Joshua the high priest.

You know very well that the word Joshua in the Old Testament is the equivalent of Jesus in the New Testament. And the Joshua of the Old Testament is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. This prince of life that we're speaking of.

This great high priest. And here is Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord. And here is Satan the archenemy of God.

And they're both standing before the angel of the Lord. And there's an argument going on. There's a battle going on.

What are they arguing about? They're arguing about God's people. And Satan is saying I have a right to them. They deserve death.

They deserve damnation. They deserve eternal separation. And Satan has an argument.

He has a certain power to his words. He can turn to God and he can say to the Lord look at your own law. Consider your own attributes of holiness and justice.

These people have sinned. And the soul that sinneth it must surely die. These people deserve death.

They deserve to be destroyed. They deserve to be eternally separated from God. The Lord Jesus Christ comes.

Our great high priest. Do you see what he does? He enters right into the argument of Satan. He enters right into the very midst of the battlefield.

And there in our place he takes upon himself the penalty of our sins. He throws himself under the sting of death. And he extracts from it all its poison and venom and pain.

I like to think of the picture here. I'm told that there are certain insects. Certain creatures which continue but once.

And once they've stung you it means the end for them. There are other insects as you know only too well that can sting over and over again. But there are certain insects that can only sting you once.

And once that sting has come out. And once it is in your hand or wherever it is. The insect crawls off and perhaps after a few hours dies.

That's the picture we have here. This great captain of our salvation. This great prince of life.

He has entered into the very stronghold of Satan. And he has himself subjected himself to the sting of death. He himself has thrown himself as if we are under that sting.

He has extracted it. And look at Satan now. He's still around.

Crawling around but his days are numbered. The Lord Jesus Christ by his own death has destroyed him that hath the power of death. The apostle Paul in the epistle to the Corinthians puts it like this.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 15. And in verse 54. Death he says is swallowed up in victory.

O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He has made a show of principalities and powers.

He has spoiled them. He has made a show of them openly. Triumphant over them in his death.

He has taken the spoil from the enemy. That life. That eternal life.

That quality of life of fellowship with God which we forfeited in Adam in the garden. He has won it back. He has entered into the arena.

He has destroyed him that hath the power of death. He has led Satan captive. He has won the victory.

You have a picture of this in the Old Testament again. In the book of Isaiah. The prophecy of Isaiah chapter 63 in verse 1. Listen to the words of the prophet there.

Who is this that cometh from Eden with dyed garments from Bodra? This that is glorious in his apparel traveling in the greatness of his strength. Who is this? I that speak in righteousness mighty to save. Who is this that comes out of that tomb on the third day? His garments stained with blood.

His body bearing the marks of crucifixion. Who is it? I that am mighty to save. I who have destroyed the prince of death.

I who have taken upon myself the punishment of the sins of my people. I who have purchased an eternal salvation. The prince of life.

That's who it is. You see how appropriate this title is then to the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only is he absolute sovereign in the realm of life.

But he is conqueror over the realm of death. But in the third place. He is prince of life.

Because he is bestower of life. He is bestower of life. I am come says the Lord.

That they might have life. And that they might have it more abundantly. Now it is the prerogative of a king.

To distribute gifts. To dispense grace. To give life.

And this is what the Lord is saying here. He gives it sovereignly. He gives it to whom he pleases.

He has mercy upon whom he will have mercy. But as a king. As a sovereign.

He says. I am come. That they might have life.

That they might have it freely. And graciously. They can't earn it.

But I will give it to them. I will bestow it upon my people. I am come that they might have life.

And they might have it more abundantly. Now you have an illustration of this again. In the gospel of John.

In the eleventh chapter of that gospel. You remember the story of Lazarus. It was a real story.

Don't misunderstand me. I am going to use it as an illustration tonight. But it really happened.

These people were real people. Lazarus was really dead. He was physically raised from the dead.

This is a real historical event that we are looking at. And yet at the same time there is an illustration here. There is an object lesson as it were.

And our Lord meant it to be an object lesson to us. You remember the story. You read there in John chapter 11.

That when our Lord came to the tomb of Lazarus. We found that there was a cave and a stone lay upon it. And Jesus said take ye away the stone.

Martha the sister of him that was dead saith unto him. Lord by this time he stinketh. For he hath been dead four days.

Jesus said unto her. Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe that thou shouldest see the glory of God. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said. Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always.

But because of the people which stand by I said it. That they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken.

Listen. He cried with a loud voice. Lazarus come forth.

And he that was dead came forth. Bound hand and foot with grave clothes. And his face was bound about with a napkin.

Jesus saith unto them loose him. And let him go. Lazarus come forth.

Here is the voice that wakes the dead. Here is the voice that spake the word. And the universe sprang into existence.

Here is the voice which is going to judge the earth. Here is the voice that is going to open the graves on the last day. Here is that voice that word of a king.

Which the prophet or rather the preacher in the book of Ecclesiastes tells us. Where the word of a king is. There is power.

Here he is at the mouth of that grave. The prince of life. The king of kings and the lord of lords.

And he hath but to speak the word. And Lazarus comes forth. And so it is my friends in the realm of grace as well.

And in matters concerning the gospel. Here is Lazarus. He is dead in the tomb.

He has been there four days. He stinks says Mary. Says Martha.

Corruption has set in. It is hopeless. My friends I want to tell you tonight if you are not a Christian.

You also are in a similar situation. You are dead. Not asleep.

Not dozing off. But dead. Do you know what death means in the scriptures? It does not mean annihilation.

It means alienation. Because of your sin. Because of your natural iniquity.

Because of your nature. You are dead towards God. You have been to the dentist.

You know what it is to have a local anesthetic. You know what it is to have the gum numb and deadened. So that you feel nothing.

My friends this is the effect that your sin has had upon you. It has deadened you. It has numbed you towards God.

There are no feelings there. As far as God is concerned. The spiritual world and the spiritual realm.

It is a closed world to you. The things of the spirit of God. They are foolishness to you.

You are insensitive as far as God is concerned. You are dead. But there is worse than that.

If that were all that would be enough. But it is worse. You are not only dead.

You are not only insensitive towards God. But corruption has set in. You are dead in your trespasses and sins.

Even as we heard this morning. In the sight of God you stink. There is at the very fountain.

At the very heart of your nature. A fountain of pollution and filthiness. Which is abhorrent to God.

Which causes Him to turn His face away from you. You are dead in your trespasses and sins. You find a picture of this in the prophecy of Isaiah.

In the first chapter. A description of the sinner by nature. Listen to the way in which the prophet describes the sinner there in verse 5. Why he says should he be stricken anymore.

The whole head is sick. The whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even unto the head.

There is no soundness in it. But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. They have not been closed.

Neither bound up. Neither mollified with ointments. There you are.

Dead in trespasses and sins. Corruption has set in. You are in a hopeless and a helpless condition.

And even the very grave clothes. Which you try to cover your nakedness with. Even your righteousness says the prophet Isaiah.

Is rotting away. It is like filthy rags. It is useless.

That is your condition. Before God tonight. But there is good news.

And it is a person. The prince of life. He can come into this meeting.

I believe he is in this meeting tonight. Through the preaching of his word. He can come to you through your heart.

And he can speak the word. And you can be raised from the dead. He can cry out Lazarus come forth.

And you can be quickened by his spirit. And you can be raised to life. Why? Because he is sovereign in this matter.

He is prince of life. And he can do it. He is able to do it.

And he is willing to do it. He is able to save to the uttermost. Those that come to the father through him.

Let me ask you then by way of application tonight. Have you heard this voice? Have you heard the voice? That wakes the dead we heard last night. About the gospel.

We can hear it time and time again. But what I want to ask you my friends tonight is this. Has it come to you with power? Has Jesus come to you in his word? Has this sovereign.

This king. This lord. This prince of life.

Has he spoken personally to your soul? Has he raised you from your death? And from your depravity? He is sovereign. He is prince of life. Because he can bestow life freely.

Upon whoever he chooses. Upon whomsoever he will. Have you received the gift? Remember it's a gift.

Corpses don't earn anything. Have you received the gift of eternal life? From the hands, the gracious loving hands. Of this sovereign.

But fourthly. And very quickly. The lord Jesus Christ is the prince of life.

Not only because he is the sovereign in this realm of life. Not only because he is conqueror of death. Not only because he is the one who bestows life.

Just as he will. But fourthly and finally tonight. The lord Jesus Christ is the prince of life.

Because he is the sole representative. In this realm of life. Now there's been a lot of trouble fairly recently, hasn't there? About certain members of the royal family.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm certainly not being political. This is an illustration which comes up.

And we're dealing with this sort of thing. But recently you remember with Princess Margaret. There were certain questions raised.

As to whether she was performing her duties properly. As a member of the royal family. What do we expect from members of the royal family? Well we expect that they represent the nation.

It's about the only thing that's left for them to do these days. They have no real power. But they can represent the nation.

And normally they do a very good job of it. They go to important meetings. If there's a parliament being opened.

Or some special occasion. Or a funeral or something of that nature. Then the sovereign or one of the members of the royal family.

They go and represent this country. They represent us. And under normal circumstances.

Probably we're very happy to be associated with the monarch. And the monarch to be associated with us. It is one of the duties of a monarch.

To represent his country. So it is with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the sole representative.

Of this realm of life. Look at the way in which the Apostle Paul puts it. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

And in verse 21. This is what he says. Look at that verse again.

Because people sometimes misunderstand it. The Apostle isn't preaching universalism here. What he's saying here is this.

As in Adam. All who are in Adam die. And that's all of us.

So in Christ. Shall all who are in Christ. Be made alive.

Adam. Christ. Thomas Goodwin.

One of the old Puritan writers. Puts it like this. There are he says but two men.

That are seen standing before God. Adam and Jesus Christ. And these two men.

Have all other men. Hanging at their girdles. There are but two men.

Seen standing before God tonight. Adam and the Lord Jesus Christ. And these two men have all other men.

Hanging at their girdles. Let me ask you my friends tonight. By way of application.

Which realm do you belong to? Who is your representative? Who is your covenant head tonight? Who do you most closely resemble? Who are you most happy to be associated with? Is it Adam? Are you still God? That old sinful nature? Are you still in the darkness? Are you still in a state of rebellion against God? Are you in Adam? Or are you in the Lord Jesus Christ? Becoming by the Spirit's power. Increasingly conformed. To the image of God's Son.

Where are you tonight? Which realm do you belong to? Who is your representative? Are you still under sin? Under wrath? Under judgment? Or have you entered into the covenant? Have you entered into covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ? As your Lord and Savior. Or to put it another way. In closing.

Where do you stand in relation to this glorious person. Who we've been speaking about tonight. This Prince of Life.

Are you a subject of his? Or are you a traitor? Go back again to the context of this verse. This is precisely what the Apostle is charging his congregation with. Listen to him again.

You, he says to this congregation. You denied the Holy One and the just. And desired a murderer to be granted unto you.

And you killed the Prince of Life. Whom God hath raised from the dead. Do you realize who you are? He says to this congregation.

And I'm saying it to you tonight my friends. Do you realize who you are and what you are? You are traitors. You are rebels.

Against the authority of heaven. You have denied the Holy and the just one. You by your sin.

And by your waywardness. And by your refusal to submit to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. You by your sin.

Have committed treason against the throne of this King. You are traitors and you are rebels. But I want to tell you tonight.

That there is forgiveness with this King. There is free pardon to be found with him. He is no harsh tyrant.

He is a loving King. And there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared. And you don't have to be afraid in approaching him.

Remember Joseph in the Old Testament. Remember how Joseph was sold into slavery and went into Egypt. And later on when the famine came his brothers were sent to Egypt.

And what a surprise they must have had when they came across their brother Joseph. Of course they didn't recognize him at first. Because he had been exalted to such a great position in the land.

Clothed with vestments. Prime Minister of Egypt. And here were his brothers.

They had to come to him. They had to ask him for food. And remember how they treated him.

How they must have shrunk from that. How they wished when they realized who it was. The ground would have opened them up perhaps and swallowed them.

How could they who had sold their own brother into slavery. How could they now come to him and ask him to grant them a favor. But they could.

Why? Because although he had been exalted to a position of unparalleled honor and majesty in that land of Egypt. He was still their brother. And the Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to be a Prince and a Savior.

But he is still a friend of sinners. And although he is seated upon a throne tonight. Remember my friends it is a throne of grace.

You can approach him. He is a sympathetic high priest. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

And even though he never sinned. And precisely because he never sinned. He is able to sympathize with you in your weakness.

You can come to him. You can come to him. You know where he is tonight.

If you were in Arborista you would have difficulty getting to him. For the crowds you would have to jostle. But he is not there.

Instead he is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. And you can all come to him at once. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to him.

You can come to him tonight. You can come to this glorious Prince and Savior. You can find a welcome at this throne of grace.

You can come to him confessing your sins. Throwing yourself upon his mercy. He is seated upon the throne of grace.

He has been exalted to be a Prince and a Savior. To grant repentance and forgiveness. For his name's sake.

Amen.

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