

# The Word of God

by Erlo Stegen

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*The sermon emphasizes the significance of the Christ child as the creator of all things, the light of men, and the message of salvation, and encourages listeners to respond to him by bowing before him, worshiping him, and proclaiming his message.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:23, John 1:1-14

**Topics:** "Salvation Message", "Gods Plan"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the longing of people for salvation and the coming of the Messiah to save them from sin. The sermon also mentions a video about a person named Hansi Kronio who was bribed by bookmakers in India to provide information about a match. The preacher reflects on the responsibility of proclaiming the message of salvation and wonders how long it would take for the angels to spread the message compared to humans. The sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting the message of peace and becoming children of God, even though some may not hear or accept it.

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## Transcript

Let us read now according to the Gospel of John, the first chapter, from verse 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it or accept it. We're going to continue, but maybe we should just stop there for now and see how far we get.

A few days ago was Christmas, and we were reminded of the sun that we received. And we spoke about Caesar who reigned over the earth. And we shared how God has everything under control, holds it in his hand.

Even Caesar passed a law so that all the people were forced to go to their city of birth to be registered there. And it coincided with a time where the child was to be born. And Mary was pregnant at that time, and she walked 20 miles, not kilometers, miles.

It was difficult, but God kept his hand over her. And God intervened. He kept her from many things that could have gone wrong.

You know, in that time, it was a terrible thing for a young girl to fall pregnant out of marriage, and the penalty for it was death. And the man as well, they would both be put to death. But God kept his hand over her, and he kept her from many things that could have gone wrong.

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And this is something they did not know. There are many things happening that helped them. They were spiritual, and that is why they fell.

And these things are yet to be seen. There may be a time where you should remember, but not now. Now is the time that all people have to be pure and independent.

For they will not fall into sin. and he gave her someone who was a believer like she was, to care for her, to support her and help her in this difficult time. But he was with her, but he didn't touch her, for she was with child, bearing the son of God, and he had such a respect for this godchild that he didn't have anything to do with her, because he had such respect for this child.

And so it is, if someone has the Christ child in him, there should be that respect for it. And everyone who has this Christ child in him or her, should also have this respect for it, and say, I cannot do what I want, I cannot live immorally, I cannot tell lies, I've got to live a pure life because of this child within me. Where we say, we say we cannot take drugs, we cannot drink alcohol, because of this Christ child within us, and we that we act like Joseph and have that respect and reverence for this Christ child, because he's within us.

I remember when we were still children, often there would be something happening, the circus, or there'd be something exciting happening, we'd say to our mother, mother let's go, and she said well I can't go because I've got a child to look after at home. And we'd say, but mother just take the child along, take the little brother or sister along. She'd say no, it's late now, it's getting dark, it's cold, it won't be good for your little brother or sister if I take him or her along.

For the sake of this child I cannot go, even though I'd like to, but for their sake I cannot. And if you claim to have the Christ child in you, but you just go where you like, do what you like, then I say you don't have the Christ child in you, it's some ghost or even a demon. You with people who talk filthy things, who'd say the wrong things, and you associate with them, that's your company, those are the ones you are with.

You're a liar if you say you have the Christ child. Or you say no, you just don't understand, look this is a traditional thing for us, we've always done this thing, so you must just understand, such people also don't know the Lord Jesus. Now let's return to this child.

Now it had been many years, thousands or thousands of years that it had been prophesied that the Messiah would come, and he would come to save all people from their sin, and all peoples, all nations would be helped through him. So they were waiting in expectation for the Messiah to come, even Cain when his wife brought a child into this world, he thought maybe that could even have been the Messiah already. So for many many years they were waiting, expecting this child to come that would trample on the head of that serpent, but he didn't come.

Whenever a child was born, they thought could this be the Messiah? Many children were born, thousands, millions, now how would they recognize the Christ child? People at that time living their lives, many of them in sin, many of them not knowing how they can get free from sin, how would they recognize the

Christ child when he did arrive? People longing for salvation, longing for the Messiah to come, to save them from their sin, this burden of sin that they couldn't get rid of. And he was tempted. At night he couldn't sleep.

Because of this money. If you put money in front of people, if you put money in front of people, even if they're on their way to heaven, many would turn their backs on heaven and go to hell for it. If you think of Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve who had been promised twelve thrones in heaven to rule with the Lord, he was one of them, but for thirty pieces of silver, not even a lot of money, enough just to buy a slave.

The love of money is the root of all evil. Many people even forsake their calling because of money. Even people who have been called, who have heard the Lord calling them, they will suddenly change their mind and say, no, we're going to study, we're going to pursue another career now.

They get distracted. They get distracted like Judas. Other people, when they're at work, money tempts them, they put it in their pocket like he used to do.

And the Lord Jesus said, you won't enter heaven until you've paid the last farthing. Or maybe you work in a shop and you're responsible for money and you do IOUs for people without the owner of the business even knowing about it. You do this in secret, but it bothers you.

Your conscience doesn't give you any peace. People start noticing it. Your wife says, but what's wrong? What's happened? They notice it.

Now he confessed his sin, but others, they continue with their sin and they eventually die in their sin. And in that time as well, there they were in this great need and they were saying, when will the Messiah come? So generation after generation, they waited for the coming of the Messiah. And one generation passed after the other, and he hadn't come.

Aren't we privileged that we live in this time where he has come already? It's all dished up for us. We just need to sit down at the table and enjoy the meal. So how will one recognize that this is the child? When the Messiah comes, how will you recognize him? If you read the Bible, when you read the Bible, the prophets, they prophesied that it would be a descendant of Abraham.

God had promised Abraham, he said, Abraham, through you, all the nations of the earth will be blessed. He said, go out and look at the stars, see how many there are, so will your descendants be, and they will be blessed because of you. So there is the first thing we'll recognize him by, that it's a descendant of Abraham.

Secondly, a son of David. And amazingly, Joseph and Mary are descendants of David. That's why he was born in Bethlehem, because it's the city of David.

Thirdly, he will be born of a virgin, one who has never had contact with a man. So these were some of the signs by which the Messiah would be recognized. And as God had said, he would be born in Bethlehem, not in Jerusalem or another city, but in Bethlehem.

And that's why when God realized, because Joseph was in Nazareth, and the child couldn't be born there, he touched that heathen Caesar, that king, to pass this law that everyone should go to their city to register. And that's how they got to Bethlehem. And they were forced to go to Bethlehem.

There are certain things, even in the Christian life, which you maybe can make a choice or not, but there are other things where you have no option. You have to do it. Like in this case, they had to go to Bethlehem.

Like some people, they say, well, I was sick. I wasn't feeling so well, or I just had some friends visiting me, so I couldn't get there. They have excuses.

Or you say, oh, my child was still too small and too weak. Now, there are certain things which are not optional. You have to do them.

They're compulsory, whether you feel like it or not. Whether it's easy or not, you have to do it. And woe if you don't.

Or you say, oh, no, well, my parents didn't allow me, or my husband didn't allow me. And yet, there are some men who can't do things because the wife sits on their head. But then there are the mothers as well, where the children just wrap them around their little finger.

But then there are other things like these, where you have no option. Woe to you if you don't obey when it comes to something like this. So off they went.

And so God even cared for Mary and saw to it that she had someone to be with her, to support her, to help her. Because God had said to him, take her as your wife so that you can care for her. Because there are these earthly concerns that one can easily be held up with, like a young person who says, well, I'm not married, who will look after me when I'm older.

There are things like that which you can just leave in God's hand. He will care for you. So off they went to Bethlehem.

When they got there, Bethlehem had no space for them. Eventually, they were helped out to that stable where the animals stayed. And so God said to them, take her as your wife so that you can care for her when you're older.

So off they went to Bethlehem. When they got there, Bethlehem had no space for them. Eventually, they were helped out to that stable where the animals stayed.

Eventually, they were helped out to that stable We know the older people, they also had high regard for the cattle crawl, to the point that even the children that were born, they did it on cow dung. And of course, many children died because it was unhygienic. And they don't do that anymore today.

Nowadays, it's done in hygienic conditions. So Bethlehem had no place for them. And eventually, they ended up in this stable.

There where the cattle were, also in this dirty place. But we say God's grace is great. And there where he was lying, there in the manger, in a poor state, poverty, you could see they were poor people just wrapped in these swaddling clothes.

And the Bible says he became poor, that because of his poverty, we would become rich. Especially spiritually. We can speak a long time just about his poverty.

He became poor for you and for me. Yet at the same time, he had riches like no one else. He was small and had to be nursed by his mother.

He was small, yet he was great. The son of God, God himself, who became man, the creator of heaven and earth. Just see how great he is.

He was the creator of all things, and is the creator of all things. And yet he was prepared to be created, to take on flesh, to become like we are. And even though he is poor and small here, yet his glory and his grace are great.

We heard at Christmastime how the heavenly hosts, the angels came. They came down to sing praises. They were thousands upon thousands, millions of them.

And for the first time, they came down to sing praises. And for the first time, that message was proclaimed. The heavenly hosts and their millions came.

They couldn't stay in heaven. They had to come to proclaim this wonderful message, the good news. So that was the first time that angels preached.

I wonder what would happen today if the Lord Jesus had to let the angels go and say, just go to Africa to proclaim the message in Africa. I wonder what would happen. What do you think? How long would it take the angels to proclaim that message throughout Africa and throughout the world? But today he doesn't send his angels.

He's sending you to go out with the message to proclaim it. Just think for a moment if God would send the angels today and say, Michael, Gabriel, all you heavenly hosts, go to the world and tell them the Savior has come. How long would it take them? But now he's given us and told us to do it.

How long does it take us? What have we done about it? The angels were rejoicing. They were praising, singing glory to God. And peace on earth.

And joy among mankind because of it. About 60. About 100.

About 200. About PCC. About Sulamani.

About Tugula, Amatuta. Amatuta said, Last night I heard that violence had broken out there in Israel, in Bethlehem, where the Arabs and the Jews were fighting each other and many have been killed already. And then I think of this message, peace among men.

And you say, where is this peace? But the problem is, very often the peace is proclaimed, but some don't seem to hear it. Others hear it, but don't accept it. What do you do with it? John said Jesus came to his own, but his own received him not.

But those that received him, he gave them the power to become the sons of God. They are born again, not according to the will of the flesh, but according to the will of God and of God. Can you imagine it? This message was proclaimed so long ago, and yet you find today, very often in a home there is no peace.

There is no peace between husband and wife. No peace between parents and children. Won't the angels condemn you one day and say, didn't you hear the message? This message was brought by the angels themselves, and yet people don't seem to take note.

The message is proclaimed even today. How often don't you hear a message, but you find young people don't listen. They just do their own thing.

They don't take note. But when the shepherds heard this message, they made haste. They didn't waste any time.

They ran to Bethlehem, to that stable, fell down before that child, bound low, before this child, before their creator. They were experiencing the greatest wonder that the Messiah had come. And in spite of all that, even today there are people that haven't taken note of the message.

They're living in their old lives. There are even people still worshipping the ancestral spirits. But the shepherds made haste.

They bowed before the child. And when they went from there, they couldn't keep quiet. They spread the message from door to door.

Since you've heard the message, since you've experienced this Christ child, can you keep quiet? Have you shared it with others, telling them about what you've seen and what you've experienced? Now let's return to our text. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him. And without Him, nothing was made that was made. In Him was life.

And the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness did not accept it. Now why is He referred to here as being the Word? The Word was God.

All that was created was created by and through the Word. And the Word was with God. And the Word became flesh.

And He stayed among us. The Word is Christ. And Christ is God.

And He was in the beginning. He existed throughout eternity. Why is He referred to as the Word? Had the Word not existed, we would have known nothing about Him.

The heavenly truths God has revealed to us through the Word. The heavenly truths God has revealed to us through the Word. Had it not been for the Word, we would have been lost in our sin.

The Word is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Covenant. The Word is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Covenant. The Word spoke on Mount Sinai.

The Word went with the children of Israel as they went through the wilderness. The Word was the rock that went with the children of Israel. The Word is Christ.

He speaks to us and reveals God to us. Isaiah the prophet referred to the Word and he said it is Emmanuel, God with us. The Word is God, God with us and if He is with us, who can be against us? Micah the prophet.

He said He is. He said He is from everlasting to everlasting, has no beginning and no end. How wonderful, from everlasting to everlasting.

That's this child that is born. Jeremiah said Jehovah is our righteousness. Because and through this child we receive righteousness.

And you don't get it through your own efforts and through your good deeds. You get it through this child. John the prophet.

And John says He is God Himself. God eternal and life eternal. And God reconciles man with himself through this child.

And Jesus was with His disciples. Philip said to the Lord Jesus, Lord show us the Father, show us God. He said, Philip I've been with you so long, haven't you realized yet? He who sees me has seen the Father.

A person who doesn't accept the Lord Jesus, who turns Him away, He is the greatest fool on earth. Like a man, how can a man say, well wife, you and the children, you can go to church, I'm going off to have some beers. So the angels lost no time to bring this message.

And then the shepherds made haste. Neither did they waste time. They went to bow before this child.

To worship the child. To see His glory. If you've gone and you've bowed before the Christ child.

You will experience a glory that will change your life. And others will see it too. You'll never be the same again.

And if you were ashamed of Him before. If you've experienced Him like that. You will no longer be ashamed of Him.

And no matter where you are, where you meet Him. It will change your life forever. Great is this child.

But then there was Herod. Who also wanted to see this child. But he had other motives.

He didn't want to worship the child. He wanted to kill the child. Can you comprehend the heart of man? The heart of man is wicked.

And the heart of man is evil. Could it be that there's one or maybe two in our midst. That have the heart of Herod.

When the wise men of the east. Went to Herod and said. Where's the child? He was shocked.

He felt nothing for the child because his heart was full of envy and jealousy. And then he called the Pharisees, the scribes, those who knew the scriptures. And he said, where will the Savior, where will the Messiah, the Christ be born? And they could tell him, they said, well, in the Bible it says he will be born in Bethlehem.

Because it said, Bethlehem, you're not just a small city, you're great, because the Savior will be born in the city. But even though they had the knowledge, they knew the child would be born in Bethlehem. And though they knew it, not one of them went to bow before this child.

It's tragic when you know the truth, you have the knowledge, it's just in your head, but your life doesn't show it. You are no better than a signboard, like a road sign. It points to Durban or to Johannesburg, but that signboard never ever gets to Durban or to Joburg.

It just stands in one place, doesn't move. Are there signboards in our midst? You point the direction, you tell people that's the place to go, that's what you must do, but you don't do it yourself, you're a hypocrite. The Word has come, God Almighty has come, our Creator has come, but you don't go down to bow before Him and to say, Lord, here's my life.

I want to ask you to search your life, because it would be sad if you get to the end of your life and it comes to light that everything that you knew and said was just in your head, it wasn't really your life. You know it's Christmas time, but Christmas is not in you. And then when the Christ child is in you, that you act accordingly and that you then carry out the message and proclaim it.

And I shared with some of those people there at Ellen's Crown, I remember when and how some people got converted. There was one man, he was like a madman. When his wife got home after the service, he would beat her up.

And he said to her, you are never allowed to go to church again. And she said, but I cannot forsake the Lord. He said, I'll kill you.

He said, I'll kill you. And he said to his wife, I'll kill you if you go to church again. So she went, she got a block of wood and she put it in front of her husband and she took an axe and put it next to the block of wood and then she lay down and put her neck on the block of wood and said, husband, now you can kill me.

Rather kill me, I cannot forsake the Lord. Chop off my head. And he spat on the floor.

He said, ah, you woman, you don't know anything. But she overcame. From then on, she could always go to church.

And then you hear of women who say, well, I cannot be a Christian. My husband makes life so difficult. He doesn't want me to be a Christian.

Learn from that woman that was a heathen that got converted. The Messiah is greater than a husband, even greater than a child. He is the greatest.

Is he in your life? He's even greater than food itself. Now here's the Messiah. He is the greatest.

He should be the greatest also in your life. May this Christmas time be real Christmas to you, where your life has changed, where your husband says, but wife, I don't know what's happened to you. You've changed so much.

What has happened to you? Why? Because the Christ child has come in. And now that the Christ child has come in, you will act differently. Because you don't want that Christ child to suffer in any way, to get sick.

That's why you don't just go anywhere and do anything. You act as if that Christ child is in you. Not like some people.

They accept the Christ child, but he's died in the meantime in their lives. There's no life. They have lost that life.

He is life, the eternal life and light, but they've lost it. Let us pray. Let us stand.

Let us pray. Lord, work through your Holy Spirit in our midst. As you worked in Mary's life and the Messiah was born.

So also work in our lives, that the Messiah may be seen in our lives. That he'll be greater than all things. That it's obvious that God is with us.

And if God is with and for us, who can be against us? Then money will no longer be important or anything else. All that will be important is the Messiah. We thank you, our Heavenly Father, that you sent the Messiah.

You sent him to us, according to all the prophets had said. And we saw him as the only begotten son of God. We thank you, Lord.

Be with us always. And grow in our midst. May you be made great.

Amen. We were created in God's image. God is a Trinity.

And so man was created in his image. So the Triune God, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Three in one.

And so man was created in his image. And so we are also created with spirit, soul and body. Three and yet one.

The body is not the spirit or the soul. And neither is the spirit the soul. And yet it's those three things.

Take one away and then you are dead. If you have your body and your soul but the spirit isn't there, you are dead. And so even if your body then dies, yet the spirit, the soul lives on.

Now Christians, if you call yourself a Christian, let us see the Messiah in our midst. That your children will see that our mother in her lives the Messiah. And if the Messiah isn't in your life, then you are living with the devil.

Thank you.

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