



## [John 5:24-29](#)

(24) 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (25) Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. (26) For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, (27) and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. (28) Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice (29) and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

*New King James Version*

*Hearing Christ's word and believing in [God](#) are not as simple as they appear; a single action or decision is not all it takes for these verses to apply. Even so, [Jesus](#) shows that the way is open now for some to avoid that eternal judgment of death and to pass from the state of spiritual death into spiritual life.*

Passing from death into eternal life is a result of the relationship that God draws us into. A person who has been called by God, who responds by hearing Christ's word (in the sense of obedience), and begins to live a life of trust in God, is one who is now spiritually alive. If he remains in that state of spiritual life until the end, he will be in the first resurrection and given immortality.

"The hour is coming, *and now is*" means that from the time of His preaching forward, some of the spiritually dead would hear His voice, respond to Him, and begin living spiritually. In that case, the dead He is talking about are the spiritually dead of mankind.

But then the focus changes in verse 28 to the future: "The hour *is coming.*" A time will come when *all* who are in their graves will hear His voice and rise in a resurrection. "All who are in the graves" refers to those who have physically died. God, in His mercy, will

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resurrect each person at some point, “each one in his own order” ( [I Corinthians 15:23](#)).

The fact that death is not the end is a major change from where things stood after Adam's sin. Each person will have the opportunity to live life spiritually, in union with God, because He “is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” ([II Peter 3:9](#)). He will, then, give everyone a chance to repent, to come out of his or her spiritual death, and to experience a life of reconciliation with Him. That opportunity could happen in this age, or it could happen in the resurrection to physical life that takes place after the Millennium (see [Revelation 20:5](#)).

— David C. Grabbe

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