

The Greatest Revelation Ever Given to Mankind

by Gayle Erwin

The sermon emphasizes God's deep love and grace for humanity, as revealed through His relationship with Moses and the attributes of His character.

Duration: 1:01:43

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:17

Topics: "Gods Nature", "Christian Salvation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the greatest revelation given to mankind, focusing on the compassionate, gracious, and merciful nature of God as revealed in Exodus and 2 Corinthians. It highlights the transformation that occurs when we submit to God, the simplicity of the gospel, and the assurance of God's love and forgiveness for all who come to Him.

Transcript

I want to share with you the greatest revelation ever given to mankind. Now maybe you didn't know this was the kind of thing that was going to happen today, that you were going to hear the greatest revelation ever given to mankind, period. This better be good, isn't it? So I'm going to take you first to the 33rd chapter of Exodus of all places.

There, you know, Moses seemed to be in a constant argument with God. It was a fascinating thing about that guy. He had a relationship with God that he could argue with God and lose most of his arguments.

But he won this one. This one was like winning the lottery. It was better than winning the lottery, actually, because it didn't destroy his life.

By the way, you know, the lottery has been big news lately. And finally, the guy who won from Arizona has not gone public, but he has kind of now claimed his prize. And he's asked that they let him be anonymous.

And he's told them what I'm going to do with my money, is there are some favorite church things and charities that we want to give it to. And did you know that they've done studies on lottery winners? And everyone who thought, now I'm going to have a blast and spend this on myself, it ruined their lives. And there have been, up until now, only two people whose lives prospered out of it.

And they were people who gave it away. You know. So now how many of us pray, Lord, help me win the lottery so I can give it away? No, we don't do that.

Oh, my. Exodus 33, just to sort of shorten this, in chapter 33, verse 17, God relents. God declares Moses the winner of the argument.

And it was like winning the lottery, really. And Moses had no idea at that point that he was just about to hear the greatest revelation ever given to mankind. So I need to warn you ahead of time that I try to dramatize the scripture, you know.

So cut me some slack on that, all right? I may, as one guy put it when he was describing me, he says, you always make it more, but you never make it different. I said, yeah. So I may make it more this morning, but I'm not going to make it different.

So here's what happens. Verse 17. So the Lord said to Moses, okay, here you see I'm playing with the words.

I'll do what you ask. Or here's what it reads in the New King James. That's kind of an oxymoron, isn't it? New King James.

But anyway, he says, I will also do this thing that you have spoken. Okay. What he's saying is you win.

You win Moses. I'll do what you ask. How would you like to hear God say that? What do you want? I'll do it.

I'd be thinking, Hawaii. If I were Moses, I would, because man, he needed some rest. Those people, just be glad.

You know, we elected a president, but nobody would run for president. For Israel back then, Moses was going to get out of the job. You know, they wear me out, but I'll do this thing that you have spoken.

Okay. What did he do? What did he spoken? We'll talk about that in a minute. For you have found grace in my sight.

Now, what God is saying is, Moses, I like you. How would you like to hear God say that? One of the things I've discovered in my 35 years of life is that it's the miles is that many, if not most Christians actually think that God's not very happy with them. They really think they're kind of on probation, you know, and God's going, if I had known, you know, but I want to tell you something that please hear this, this morning, if you haven't heard this before, I'm speaking in behalf of God to you.

He is crazy about you. He likes you. He loves you.

You may think, well, he must not know me very well. He knows you better than you know yourself. Well, how in the world can he like me? He's God.

And that's the way he is. We don't value each other adequately. You know, I think if we really understood who each other was, just tell you a little story.

Some of you may remember these two names together, Charles and Diane. Remember that, you know, future king of England, which I forgot once when I was over in England preaching and I said, man, I feel

sorry for England. The prince of Wales is going to be their king someday, you know, and I thought, oh no, I'm in England.

And I stopped immediately and apologized. I said, I'm sorry, folks. I didn't mean to say this about Prince Charles.

And you know, that church with one voice said, we feel the same way. But they made a royal visit to the United States many years ago. And I couldn't believe what I was seeing all over our country, man, men were bowing, women were doing that, you know, and I thought, I don't believe this.

We fought a war 200 years ago so we wouldn't have to do that. But it, you know, it didn't have the same meaning and I thought it was, it's okay, you know. But then I thought, you know what, they are nothing royally compared to the person you're seated next to.

Why don't you just look at each other and say, I see royalty. You haven't done that lately, you may as well. Now, if we understood, you see, it was a real help in my marriage.

And by the way, my wife and I celebrate, at least I celebrate it. On Thanksgiving Day, we got married on Thanksgiving Day, 55 years of marriage, you know. Thank you.

I'll tell her you were happy about it. But I realized at one point, and this did some changing, that she was God's kid before she was my wife. And I'm thinking, okay, that makes her pretty important, doesn't it? See, I was kind of, I don't know, I don't even want to talk about what I was like, but I figured that her role in life was making me happy.

It's a guy thing. Until, you know, God got hold of me and I could hear him saying, Gail, this is my daughter. I love her so much.

Would you take care of her for me? And Gail, yes, sir. I'm coming back. Okay, okay.

But if we really understood who each other is here, I mean, if we really understood, when we have that eight-minute break, this time it was, that's supposed to be 30, but I don't know what happened. There'd be more of this and this going on around here, because we didn't recognize who each other is, really. And I want you to hear, please hear today, God say to you, I really like you.

I'm crazy about you. Now, you need to know that I'm God's favorite, but you're pretty close behind, don't worry. So he's saying to Moses, Moses, I like you.

I like you. And then, and most interesting thing, this is like, wait a minute, what's going on here when he says to him at the end of that verse, and I know you by name. What? You know, I'm thinking, wait a minute, God, you having memory problems? Wait a minute, don't tell me I know.

Oh, yeah, Moses, right? What in the world would it mean, like, God doesn't know people by name? Let me tell you this, because this is very important. Name back then was far more important than it is to us today. You know, I can't go by your name, because how many Bobs are there? How many Mike's are there? I heard a guy who was trying to make, get a loan, and his name, unfortunately, was John Smith.

And that poor guy had to listen while they read, were you the John Smith that lived here, that lived here, and no, no, no, no, no, no, there must have been 500 John Smiths he had to claim, I'm not, before they would give him the loan. But we don't know each other legally by name. We have to have a number, isn't

that amazing? But God doesn't say, hey, I know your number.

You know, we may think he's got our number, all right, but no, he knows us by name. Now, names had meaning back then, so that if you knew a person's name and the meaning of that name, you knew the person. See, we don't do that now.

My parents named me Gail. Pray for me. Some places it means a big wind, but I don't go there.

So what Moses, what God was saying to Moses, and hear this, because this is going to become important in just a moment, really important, is that Moses had been so totally open with God, he had hid nothing from God, so that God knew him fully. And he says, I know you, I know your name, I know the meaning of your name. That's what he was saying.

And my heart then says, God, have I been that open with you? Now, do not, I'm going to tell you something here that you probably never thought about, but you will now, but I warn you, do not go home and probe this. When you love someone, the more you love them, the more you tell them your secrets, but you never tell all of them. There's always a little bit of us that we think, oh, I can't, oh, man, it's embarrassing, I can't, you know.

And so we hold that back. Now, you husbands and wives, do not go home and say, all right, what are you hiding from me? I'll pray that lightning will strike you if you do that. But the fact of the matter is, our spiritual health and welfare is dependent on our being totally honest with God.

God hears the whole thing from my lips about me. This is me. I am embarrassed, but I ask you to forgive me.

Now, that will become one of the greatest secrets of your life that you will ever have that will set you so free. I'm going to prove that in scripture. By the time we get to the end of this message tomorrow, you will be, you will be wanting to do cartwheels when you leave here, because I quit.

Anyway, so he says, I know you by name. Now, okay, that's the opening salvo. Now the ball is in Moses' court.

What is he going to ask for? What an incredible thing God has just said. I give up. You win this argument.

I'll do what you ask. I like you. I know you, man.

I know you by name. Interesting, by the way, Jesus said to the apostles in, I believe, the 15th chapter of John, he says, I no longer call you servants because a servant knows, doesn't know what his master is doing. Now I call you friends.

Why? Because I have told you everything. Isn't that great? Jesus doesn't hold things back. Well, I don't know.

I'm in a bad mood today. I don't want to talk about it. You know, he lets us know him intimately.

It's awesome. Anyway, the ball's in Moses' court. What is he going to ask for? What is he going to say? And he says, show me your glory.

In other words, God, I want to see you. Now that lets me know he loved God. See, when you love someone, you want to see them.

Phone calls are wonderful. Letters are great. Texting is terrible.

But when you love someone, you want to see them. He's saying, I want to see you, God. Can I see you? Show me your glory.

Well, now, I've got a problem here. God says, well, let me read it to you, and then I want to explain it. He says, then he said, I'll make all my goodness pass before you.

Now, I wonder how much goodness that is. Now, think about this. I'm going to make all my goodness pass in front of you.

How long do you suppose that'd take? You ever thought about that? Take sandwiches, Moses. You're going to be here for a while. Oh my goodness.

Wow. And I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. Oh, now this is interesting.

You want to see my glory, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to preach my name. I am literally going to define my name for you, so you will know me just as well as I know, in fact, better than I know you. Oh.

Now, here's something that's happened right here. God has attached his name and his glory together so that they both have the same meaning. When he defines his name, he's also going to be defining his glory.

You want to see my glory? You want to see who I am? I'm going to preach or define or proclaim or explain my name. Now, this means that we will really know him simply because back in that day when you knew a person's name and the meaning of the name, you knew the person. Now, just a little fun thing.

In this, you will notice in your scripture the word Lord, to proclaim the name of the Lord before you. In your Bible, is that word capitalized all the way through, Lord? Now, modern printings have a big first capital and then what editors call small caps, but they're still capital letters the rest of the way through. Well, I need to tell you something, and I'm sorry I have to tell you this, but I need to, and it's a complaint on my part, that's not the word that's there.

What? No, it's not the word that's there? Well, then what's going on? Well, the word that's actually there is what theologians call the tetragrammaton. Doesn't that sound real sophisticated? You know what that means? Four letters. So, there are four letters under there.

Why don't they call it four letters? Because it doesn't sound sophisticated. I mean, if you're going to get a theological degree, you may as well say tetragrammaton, you know, make them think I've got a good degree. PhD, piled high and deep.

Underneath that are the four letters Y-H-W-H, which almost all, I guess 99% of the guys who are smart enough to know this, say it's actually pronounced Yahweh, which also means that Jesus' name was not Jesus. Boy, here I'm going to mess with everything today, but don't think, no, no wonder my prayers aren't answered, I've been using the wrong name. No, no, no, no, God knows when you're talking to him.

Jesus' name was actually Yahshua, which means Yahweh saved. We squeeze it through the Greek and it becomes Jesus. See, when your name changes, changes languages, it's going to change sounds.

If you're Peter and you go to Mexico, it becomes Pedro. If you're Paul, it becomes Pablo. If you're Gale, forget it.

And so his name, Jesus' name was actually Yahshua, which means Yahweh saved. Then why do we put Lord here? Well, Orthodox Jews will not pronounce that word. They think, oh, this is the great memorial name, and they decreed the powers that be back during the 400 year period between the Testaments, this name must not be spoken, even under penalty of death.

So an Orthodox Jew will read, and he said, and compromising with them so they could read it verbally, we put the word Lord there, simple as that. So from now on, when you read along and you see the word Lord and it's capitalized, I want you to peel it up in your mind and say, well, I know what's under there, but now we're going to find out what is the meaning of what's under there. And we sang about it this morning.

I loved it. Oh, my message was on the screen up there. Did you know that? I could just go on home now.

You know, we worship your name. Now some people think that means you've got to spell it right and so forth, you know, and some people get all upset, and they won't even write the word God out. It's G-D, you know, or church is C-H-C-H, or Jesus is, I don't know, J-something, you know, because they're up uptight about that pronunciation, and that's a waste of time, because the thing that you really need to be concerned about is the meaning, because when you are, for instance, baptized in his name, now you'll know what you're actually baptized into.

It's important to know that. And so, you know, God has a few little rules. He says, I'll tell you what though, Moses, there's a rock near me, and there's a cave in that rock.

What I want you to do is to come up here. I'll cover you with my hand there. Oh, by the way, I want you to take two tablets and see me in the morning.

I mean, this is the original prescription. See, this is the second time Moses went up that mountain. The first time he went up, he took tablets that he had hewed out, and God wrote the Ten Commandments on them, and Moses had an anger problem, you know, and when he comes back down the mountain, and he'd only been gone 40 days, 40 days, that's nothing.

How long have you been here? 30 years? You deserve a 40-day, you know, vacation, fully paid, and oh, you've already had it? Oh, okay. Anyway, anyway, God said, Moses, you better get back down. And he left his church with his brother Aaron, who said, you know, the leader of the priesthood.

He said, no. God said, you better get down the mountain. Things are not well.

And Moses made that last turn, and he saw them, and there they were, dancing on every stage of debauchery around that golden calf. We still do that. If gold is involved, here we come.

And Moses saw that, and boy, he became furious, and he took those tablets, and threw them down, and shattered them, and in one second broke all Ten Commandments. So this time, God says, we better package these better. I want you to go buy FedEx and get a box or something.

Let's package this one better. And that was the beginning of, not the final part of what we then would call the Ark of the Covenant. Now, when Moses went up on that mountain, God said, I'll cover you with my hand, and I'll pass by, and I'll preach my name.

And when I get by, I'll move my hand and let you get just a glimpse of my back. But you can't see my face, because if you do, you'll die. I don't want you to die.

Man, he said, I don't want anybody on this mountain but me and you. The first time he went up with an entourage, but this time, he said, I don't even want any cows on this mountain. He didn't say anything about chickens, so you can eat more chicken, being facetious.

I don't think he slept that night. Man, I'm going to see God. I'm going to find out the definition of His name and His glory.

So finally, he's up there. I can see him as he puts those at the mouth of that cave, and he backs in, and he waits. Oh, man.

And sure enough, here comes the hand of God across that opening. He's looking at the fingerprints of God, and God passes by. And now I'm going to take some liberties here by mixing some versions of the Bible to come up with the list of how God defines His name.

And I do this because, first of all, it is theological permissible in this case, and it also helps you to remember it better. And so he passed by, and he proclaimed His name, the Lord, the Lord, or Yahweh, Yahweh, or, you know, the modern version is Jehovah, Jehovah. That's only 400 years old.

That's a modern name. When Jehovah's Witnesses visit me, I have fun. And so he passes by, and he defines His name, and he says, the Lord, the Lord, or Yahweh, Yahweh, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving wickedness, forgiving rebellion, forgiving sin.

You like that? It's too good, isn't it? God can't be that good, can He? But this is the definition of His name. Think of this, compassionate. Compassion is pity moved to do something about it.

God isn't up in heaven looking at us saying, whoo, I feel sorry for you. No, He is moved with compassion. He is, I call Him a benevolent interferer in our lives.

Now, one thing I have discovered is that sometimes His interference in my life, I don't realize it's benevolent. To give you an example, this is a simple example. I could give you some far more, you know, intense examples, but I'm a guy that likes green lights.

I don't like red lights. I live down in Southern California in the Coachella Valley. I live in the town where the poor people live who work for the rich people.

But this is the time of year when the Canadians come down and all the rich people from Truckee, both of them. You didn't know there were two even, huh? So a lot of retired people, you know, and their second homes down there and so forth, and none of them are in a hurry. And they think at two miles an hour they might get a ticket for speeding.

And I get behind them. Come on. The light's changing.

He makes it. And I don't. And I'm grouching there.

I could have made that light. Now, I know you never have that problem. But finally, the Lord got through to me.

I could still hear Him whispering to my heart, Erwin, knock it off. I just saved your life. If you'd have made that light, you'd be dead right now.

Oh, well, thank you. In fact, why don't we take the 60 seconds that you're going to be waiting and just talk to each other, okay? Well, now, that's a nice thought, Lord. You know, and I realize that sometimes when I don't think He's being benevolent, He really is.

He saved my life. I could spend the rest of the day talking to you about places where I know I had evidence that that's what happened. So, He's a benevolent schemer.

And even the difficult things that happen to us, down the road, you'll say, oh, man, God, I didn't realize that you were being so kind to me, so kind. I talked to the man yesterday, and I told him, I think, about my father's injury when I was six years old, which virtually destroyed him. He was a very successful pastor, a wonderful man of God, and now he's crippled.

His left side is paralyzed. His brain is damaged. When he died, we found out that half of his brain had been dead for 32 years.

And I came to the understanding, you can serve God with half a brain, folks. You don't have to. But his injury changed us deeply in ways that I wouldn't know until, down the road, God said, I want you to write a book called The Jesus Style.

You had a laboratory of being a servant for your dad when you were a child. You know how to write the book. And by the way, I have some over there on my table, and everything on my table, you ready for this, is absolutely free.

Now, don't leave right now. I have a box. I can replenish some of those, so please take advantage of it.

If you don't, I'm hurt. It hurts my feelings, and you don't want to do that. But God is a benevolent interferer in our lives.

Oh, by the way, I also have some posters over there and bookmarks that I want you to take. They're free. And this is, I think, the most important one on the nature of Jesus.

Here's the outline for my message today. Don't read it yet. And then here's the fruit of the Spirit on this one.

These make great gifts if you've got grandchildren or people that have messed up your life. Frame these and give it to them. You know, they're looking at the nature of the Father.

And you know, God the Father gave himself a name. I mentioned that, Yahweh, and Jesus had the name Yahshua. But do you realize the Holy Spirit didn't have a name? He was just, well, I don't think that's fair.

So I've given him a name. We have Yahweh, Yahshua, and Yahoo! And free bumper stickers over there and bookmarks. Please take them anyway.

What? Can we be saved if we don't read the book? No, if you want to go to heaven, you have to read the book. That's just the way it is. And gracious.

You know, you've heard your pastor say, grace is when God gives us what we do not deserve. I want to just share a little bit of my heart with you. I'm a crazy guy, and I see things a little differently.

And some people get really upset over Christmas. You know, it's ungodly. He wasn't born then.

I don't care when he was born. Christmas is every day for me. Easter's every day for me.

Thanksgiving's every day for me. And Santa Claus. I wrote a guy back, and I said, you know, isn't it wonderful that there is at least one person left in our traditions that is unreservedly gracious? Never thought of that, had you? Because don't count on me.

I'm anyway. But God is gracious. He gives and he gives and he gives.

You know, at Christmas time, we give gifts to our kids, even though they don't deserve it. Not a one of them deserve it. We've taken away the tradition of coal or a bundle of switches.

I used to have to cut my own switch. But you know what we're like? And I'm not talking about you here. I want you to understand this.

I'm talking about people in Texas. We're like the kid who on Christmas morning has opened his 1000th gift. And what does he say? Is that all there is? Then he proceeds to play with the boxes.

And this is and yet we still lavish on them the next year and so forth. And that's the way God is, even though we don't fully give him credit for it. And he knows that, you know, I just blessed the daylights out of you and you're just going on your way.

Don't even get if we really understood every time we took a breath, we'd go. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you. We get a stethoscope. You don't get.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you.

And he's like, he gives and he gives and he gives and he gives. I think that's part of his being a benevolent schemer. He's thinking, oh, man, I can't wait to give them this gift and that gift and so forth.

You know, as I mentioned, my wife and I have been married for 55 years. That woman is spoiled. I have to plead with her.

Tell me something you need. She doesn't need anything. I want to get you something.

You know what she wants for her birthday, which has already passed. You old folks know what I'm talking about. Come with me and buy your gift.

She wants to go to the mall. Okay, I'll take you to the mall. But I just love giving that lady gifts.

I really do. It's just I can't. What we had as our 35th anniversary, we went to Lake Louise up in Canada and we just love it there.

And we were there for a week in the middle of right around Christmas time. And she didn't know that I had packed a gift for each day for her. It was all I could do to wait.

I wanted to give her all of them at one time. But that was the most fun thing, man. I'm going to give her a gift every day.

She doesn't know it. And I think God looks at us that way. Oh, I'm going to bless them today.

They don't even realize it, but I'm going to bless them. I hope they'll notice. He's gracious.

In fact, one thing about this is his thoughts for us are good. Isn't that interesting? Most of us think his thoughts are, are you ever going to improve? I've told you a million times, and he probably has, and that he's upset with us. He is not upset with you.

He likes you just where you are right now. He's crazy about you right where you are. And he has these good thoughts for us.

And his thoughts are like the sand. Now, I heard a guy trying to figure that out mathematically. And I majored in chemistry when I was in college because I was planning to be a brain surgeon, actually.

So, be thankful. And so, I had to take calculus. Actually, calculus took me.

But I learned just enough about it to know that he was doing a good job as he was doing this. And he came to the conclusion that God had seven good thoughts per second for each of us. I can't even think seven thoughts in a second.

But just think of this. Even as I'm speaking to you, God's thinking these good thoughts about you. Seven, 14, 20, 28, 35, 42, careful there, 49, 50 something.

I get lost for a long route there. And he's constantly thinking these good thoughts about us. Just think of that.

He's gracious. And he's slow to anger. Aren't you glad? There are amazingly large numbers of people who really think God is this white-haired old man sitting somewhere up on a cosmic rock, and he's pretty ticked off, just looking for a human being.

There's one. Zap! And then we think Jesus comes along and says, hey, look, I know Dad has moods. But you stick with me, and I'll get stuff for you.

But that can't be because Jesus said, when you've seen me, you've seen the Father. I mean, the devil has really messed up our minds about God the Father. This is why this is the greatest revelation ever given to mankind.

Now you're going to know. He is slow to anger. And he's untouchy.

If we say, our Father in heaven, he doesn't go, what? I was busy. No, he is slow to anger. And he's merciful.

He abounds in mercy and faithfulness or truth. Now that means he's always the same. But mercy is when God does not give us what we do deserve.

Aren't you glad? You know that if we got what we deserved, we'd be little piles of ashes here right now. If there's one thing that we all walk with, it's guilt. There was a really famous guy in the 1800s named Freud who really did some unique and creditable research into humanity.

He came to the conclusion, by the way, that humanity was on a train ride to hell. He said, we're hopeless. But he said, the worst thing about human beings is the feeling of guilt.

So he developed psychiatry to try to get that feeling away from us. Well, that's where he made his error because guilt isn't just a feeling. You know why we feel guilty? Because we are.

We just live with it. I'll show you what I mean. Let's say you're driving your car.

It's 50 mile an hour zone and you're doing 40. But you see a policeman. What are you going to do? Slow down.

Why? Because you're afraid he saw you five blocks back. Because you walk with that guilt. In fact, it so permeates our human.

The Chinese have a proverb that says, whip a child at the end of the day. If you don't know why, he does. And people just have this sense that sometime I'm going to get it for this.

Look at it this way. Don't raise your hands because I know how you feel. God just blesses you out of your mind.

And then what do you start thinking? Now he's going to have to balance this out. That was so good. Now he's going to have to balance and do something bad.

The other shoes got a drop. No, he is good. And his mercy.

Now, it doesn't strain him to give mercy. I mean, if we show up, he doesn't say, weren't you here yesterday? You think this grows on trees, don't you? Which it does. By the way, any of you have a dog? Okay, does he bark? Did you have to send him to bark in school? It's natural.

It is more natural for God to issue mercy than it is for your dog to bark. It's just the way he is. I have a little, you know, I get on certain kicks that are different, sorry about that, different kicks from other people.

In that the Bible doesn't call itself the Bible. Did you know that? The word Bible means library. But I want to give it a name.

I want to call it the mercy book. You know, I teach the mercy book because that's what it's about. And not only is he a bounty, oh, one little story I'll tell you about that.

I'm an Oklahoma farm boy and I can remember in times of real prosperity and bumper crops, they couldn't get it distributed fast enough. And I can remember seeing down Main Street of Woodward, Oklahoma, they would pile wheat as high as they could down that Main Street waiting for railroad cars and the like to get it distributed. And I couldn't help but think that's like God's mercy.

He's got so much mercy he doesn't know what to do with. He's stacking it in the streets looking for a way to get it distributed. His problem is we're the distributors.

One of the things that I have found is people don't automatically think mercy when they see me coming. But I want them to, you know. And mercy to thousands.

Now, don't misinterpret that. That sounds like, you know, well, just a thousand, a few thousand people. That's no biggie.

That literally means mercy to the thousands generation. Now, if a generation is 40 years, and that's totally a guess, there's no real evidence in Scripture, it's 40. God doesn't say.

Some think it's over 100 years. It's okay. I don't care what.

But let's say 40. A thousand generations would be 40,000 years. Thousands would be at least 120,000 years.

Let me tell you, your relationship with God has begun at least 120,000 years of blessing. Whoa. If you ever feel useless, look at what you started.

And then forgiving. Wickedness. I like that word, wicked.

It sounds like what it means, wicked. Iniquity. I like words that sound like what they mean, wicked, iniquity.

You've got to look it up in the Bible this way. It's a long list. It's all bad.

And He forgives. Does it ever bother you that God loves people that you don't like? Bothers me. But you see, He's in the forgiving business.

And not just wickedness. If you think, well, I really wouldn't think of myself as being wicked, that's okay. He's got you covered.

Forgiving rebellion. Oh, well, okay, you're getting closer. But even if you think, well, I really wouldn't think of myself as being rebellious, He's got you covered.

Forgiving sin. Yep, you got me there. Think of this.

You like this so far? Okay, now here's what I want you to do, because it is extremely important that you remember this today. I'm not just dropping the bomb and getting out of the fallout area. I have arranged for God to haunt you with a holy ghost.

So for you to remember this, because you're going to see how you use it now, it needs to be coming out of your lips. That'll help you. So I want you to repeat this list after me.

Ready? Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving wickedness, forgiving rebellion, and forgiving sin. Now, you're going to want to go back to the concordance in the back of your Bible, concordance in the back, and look up the word name and look up the word mercy. Look up the word glory and reread the scripture.

And you will now see it more than it ever was before. Some trust in chariots, some in horses. We will remember the name.

And you'll say, I know what that means. Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. We will remember the name of the Lord.

Lord, I know what that means. Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy, forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Of the Lord our God.

God, I know the meaning of that. Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger. The name of the Lord is a strong tower.

The righteous run to it and are safe. Oh, yeah, the name. I know the meaning of the name.

In the Ten Commandments, God said, thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Now, I can remember when I was a kid, that worried me. And I asked everybody that I thought should know, what does that mean? And you know the only answer I got out of them was, well, it means don't cuss.

Well, yeah, it does mean that, but it's far more than that. So, what do I need to do? If I am going to put his name on me, take his name on me, then I need to be compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to the thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin, or I've taken his name in vain. If I'm going to put his name over my door inside, I need to be compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to the thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin, or I've misused his name.

If I'm going to have an organization that I put his name on, it better be compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving, wickedness, rebellion, and sin, or I have misused his name. I don't know in the past if you've ever been inside a church that had his name over the door, but you couldn't find him inside. And yet you think, but Jesus said where two or three are gathered, how? In my name, there I am in the midst of them.

You see, we can't just go by the count. The question is, if we're just two or three of us, are we gathered around being compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving, wickedness, rebellion, and sin? Because if we're not, we are not gathered in his name, and we've misused it. Let me take you to the New Testament.

You know, there's all kinds of things floating around about prayer, and you know, I don't read those books, I'll be honest with you, because, you know, you read them and you think, basically they're telling me that if I'm not out and on my knees in the snow at 4 a.m., God won't listen to me. I heard a pastor say that at a conference kind of thing, and then he said, I was out this morning at 4 a.m., you know, and I thought, you turkey. But I saw the people wilting, and I happened to be able to get up and speak right after him, and so I said to them, you know, I was up early this morning talking to God, it must have been 11 a.m. And you just heard him go, oh, thank you.

But Jesus gave us a pattern for prayer. I like it. And what does he say at the beginning? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

You'll never say that prayer the same again, because you will, because I have this agreement with God, he'll stop you and say, now, what are you honoring? Oh, yes, that your compassionate graces slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy of a thousand, forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Oh, by the way, when you realize that, then if you pray, thy kingdom come, you know what his kingdom's

like. It's like the king.

And when you say, thy will be done here on earth as it is in heaven, John tells us that this is the confidence that we have in him if we ask anything according to his will. He hears us. We know that if he hears us, we have the petition we desire of him.

When you know what he's like, and have asked him to dominate you, and you submit to his kingship, and you know what his name is, you're able to pray a prayer much more in keeping with his will, and you see miracles. Simple as that. Well, where am I? Oh, yeah.

One of my favorite things, Joel and his prophecy about our day. We call him a minor prophet. Now, that doesn't mean he was under 21.

It only means his book was short. That's all. But he says, in our day, whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Isn't that wonderful? Now, that doesn't mean, okay, tell me what his name is, because I don't want him to strike me dead if I mispronounce his name. See, the Jews back then thought he would. No, you just need to know what you're calling on.

You're the compassionate, gracious, and slow to anger, and abounding in mercy, and faithful one, and forgiving one. You call upon that name. Wait a minute, Erwin.

What about Jesus? You're telling me this is the greatest revelation given to mankind. Are you short sheeting Jesus? No. Let me quote Jesus.

I'm going to paraphrase him. I only do what I see the Father do. I only say what I hear the Father say.

My food, my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me. I and my Father are one. When you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

Jesus didn't come to preach something different. He said, I'm here to reveal the Father to you. He sent me here.

I'm going to represent Him. Some people think the Holy Spirit is different, you know, that, okay, you've heard from God the Father and Jesus, but wait until you see me, man. I got stuff like, no, no, no, no.

His job is to make sure I see Jesus clearly and represent Him properly, simple. Some people think, oh, if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, He throws you on the floor and you bounce around, and you bark and you barf. It is not the job of the Holy Spirit to humiliate God's people.

His job is to make sure we see Jesus clearly. So simple. So simple.

Well, how do you receive the Holy Spirit? You just ask. Come on, that's too easy, I know. God's that way.

Jesus said that. If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father, we know what He's like now, give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? Wow. This is too easy, isn't it? But that's the way He is.

I'm convinced that the gospel needs to be presented so that a child will understand it. I have some thick theological books in my library, you know, I look at them and I read the first couple of pages and I realize, I

can't do this, I don't understand it. One of the little strange things that we pay no attention to, John the Baptist came and the prophecy was every mountain shall be made low, every valley shall be lifted up, make it straight in the desert a highway.

What's that about? Well, it's about a bunch of things, but it's saying, I want you to make the road to Jesus so straight and smooth that nobody will even stumble on it or get lost. And so whenever, I think if you can't make something simple, it means you don't know it. Anybody ever try to explain atomic energy to you? If he can explain, a guy that can write it so a child can read it is somebody that knows it.

You got to know it to make it simple. And so Jesus came to make it so simple. He said, I want you to look at me.

I want you to watch what I do. I want you to hear me because when you do, you'll see how simple it is. God is so good and He's crazy about you.

Now, perchance, you might not actually know Him. I always am amazed at how often even in church I meet people who, they like God, you know? But they can't really submit themselves to Him because they're afraid of Him. They think that He's going to demand of me what I cannot give.

And God doesn't do that. If there is something that you can't do, He does it. Like you can't change yourself.

Did you know that? He does it for you. You know? Isn't that great? That's why I love a friend of mine who said, repent and relax. It's a kingdom of God, man.

And Jesus said, my yoke is easy, my burden is light. I give you rest. I used to think He was going to put us under pressure like we've never been under before, spiritual pressure.

You're going to be afraid you'll miss a lecture or afraid you're demon possessed or afraid you've committed the unpardonable sin. I used to be afraid of all of those because nobody ever told me I would make the rapture. When a teenager, you know, teenage is a good time to manipulate people because they got all these new things flowing in there, you know, and it's evil according to a lot of preachers.

No, it's teenage. Anyway, God is so good. He knows our incapacities and He makes arrangements for them.

Now, I told you that I was going to share with you some incredibly good news and here it comes. I'll take you there in my quoting to 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verses 17 and 18. Now, the earlier part of that chapter beginning with verse 7 deals with Moses and the fact that when he received the revelation which came with glory and his face glowed so much that he had to put a veil over his face.

Now, it is Paul there who tells us why. So the Israelites would not gaze at him while the radiance was fading away. And that's a horrible thing to see your leader fade away.

But he says, we're not like Moses. We're not like Moses because we have a glory that doesn't fade away. We have a glory that so surpasses that old glory that this is incredible.

And then he takes us to, he says, because only in Christ is the veil taken away. Now, I'm leaving out too much stuff here but only in Christ is the veil taken away. What does that mean? That veil is very significant and symbolic because like I said, there are parts of us we never reveal because we don't know we can

trust people until we see Jesus and we realize I can trust him.

I can be absolutely honest finally with the one person whose love and care. So we, well, let me read verse 17. Now, the Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty or freedom and we who with unveiled faces, see, God hears the truth about me, all reflect what? The Lord's glory.

It's a reflection. We don't generate it. And oh, folks, here's goosebumps territory, are being transformed.

Now, that means it's happening to you, you're not doing it. It doesn't say you now are transforming yourselves. I can't do that but I am, you are being transformed into what? Into his likeness.

You like this? With ever-increasing glory. Now you know what his glory is, compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, a bounty of mercy and faithfulness, mercy to the thousands, forgiving, wickedness, rebellion, and sin. And he shines that on you when you tell him the truth about yourself.

This is why confession to him is extremely important and it shouldn't wait until next Sunday. Immediate. God, oh man, obviously, I'm having trouble here and I can't handle this, God, I need your help.

He says, I know that and I'm going to show you what my forgiveness and my grace and confession is all about. So you see, I just solved all your problems right there. Oh, I'm not as good as I ought to be.

Big deal. None of us are. I'm not as good as I want to be.

None of us are. I mean, I'm better than I was. How'd you get there? I don't know.

I just told the Lord about it and he changed me. So what is left for us to do? Just love God. Love people.

Oh, come on, Erwin. It's too simple. Yeah, I know.

That's when we have trouble believing it. It's so simple. So if you are not a follower of the Lord, you know, I assume you're interested because you're here and I also assume you're intelligent because your eyes are open to being facetious again.

But if you've listened, you know there really is no reason to resist him. I mean, there's no reason to do anything but say, please, Lord, come into me, take over my life, forgive my sins. You do with me what you want to do because I want to live for you.

You know what? I can guarantee you, now, the world's guarantees I don't trust, but I trust this one. I'll be there, I'm there. Whoever comes to me, I will not cast out.

Pretty good guarantee, don't you think? It's not call now, limited supplies. Will you do one more thing with me? Let's talk this, let's say this list again because I want you to remember it. Ready? Compassionate.

Compassionate. Gracious. Gracious.

Slow to anger. Slow to anger. Abounding in mercy and faithfulness.

Abounding in mercy and faithfulness. Mercy to thousands. Mercy to thousands.

Forgiving wickedness. Forgiving wickedness. Forgiving rebellion.

Forgiving rebellion. Have fun going through the Scripture knowing this now. It will amaze you.

I don't have time. I'll just tell you. My favorite racist in the Bible is Jonah.

He hated Menelau with a passion. God says, you're my man. I have the sermon just for you.

Go to Nineveh and tell them I hate them too. Forty days and they're dead. You'd think he would jump up and rush there but no.

He had a secret. He knew something that caused him to run away. And you know the story.

He ends up as Whale Puke and then he decides that'll send you somewhere. He decides I think I'll better go to Nineveh now and he preaches his favorite sermon. And the one problem was Nineveh got saved.

He didn't like that. And you can miss this if you don't read it slow and watch. In chapter 4 he says to God, that's why I was angry and I didn't want to come because I knew you.

I knew that you were compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, mercy to thousands, forgiving wickedness and rebellion. I knew you were going to do this. He was a racist.

But you know what? He was one of the biggest jerks in the Bible and God used him to have the biggest revival you have ever seen. Folks, there's hope for us. In fact, in my newest book over there which is called Not Many Mighty, I basically prove that God only uses jerks.

Isn't that encouraging? It encouraged me. Not many mighty are chosen. Not many noble.

God has chosen the weak things of the world to confuse the mighty and the foolish things to confuse the wise. You know, no one ever names their church after that, Weak and Foolish, Calvary Chapel. I could go there.

Please don't leave today without settling accounts with the Lord. He doesn't require anything from you but a decision and a submission. Isn't that great? You can do that.

Don't leave here without it. Amen. Thank you.

Amen. Thank you, God.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/3GbzNN7W6kQ.mp4>

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