

# The Nature of Jesus - Part 2

by Gayle Erwin

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*Jesus teaches us that to be great in the kingdom, we must be servants of all, humble, non-deceptive, unthreatening, and willing to pass through this world without being tied down.*

**Duration:** 55:30

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:1-4, Matthew 20:16, Matthew 20:25-28, Matthew 23:1-3, Mark 9:33-35

**Topics:** "Nature Of Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker tells a story about a man who was carrying ten boxes on top of a bus. Despite his exhaustion, the man was fixated on counting the boxes and watching people get off the bus. The speaker uses this story to illustrate the idea of traveling light and letting go of worldly distractions. He then references Matthew 18:1-5, where Jesus teaches that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, one must become like a little child and humble themselves. The speaker emphasizes the importance of keeping our focus on Jesus and not getting distracted by other 'lights' in our spiritual journey.

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## Transcript

I guess you could call these times that we are together the nature of Jesus. That's a pretty good title, I think. And the last time we got together we looked at four of those parts to the nature of Jesus, but let me just march with you through some specific scripture tonight that I think will help us sort of get it together before we look at the final parts of the first half tonight.

Matthew chapter 18 beginning with verse 1 says, at that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Then Jesus called a little child to him, set him in the midst of them, and said, assuredly I say to you unless you are converted and become as little children you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in my name receives me.

And in Matthew chapter 20 verse 16 is well almost thrown in it seems. So the last will be first and the first last for many are called but few chosen. Verse 25 of Matthew 20, but Jesus called them to himself and said, you know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and those who are great exercise authority over them yet it shall not be so among you.

But whoever desires to become great among you let him be your servant and whoever desires to be first among you let him be your slave. Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to

give his life a ransom for many. And then in Matthew chapter 23 beginning with verse 1, then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to his disciples saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

Therefore whatever they tell you to observe that observe and do but do not do according to their works for they say and do not do. And then jumping down to verse 11 and 12 verses, but he who is greatest among you shall be your servant and whoever exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Now go with me to Mark chapter 9 and in verse 33 beginning there in Mark chapter 9, then he came to Capernaum and when he was in the house he asked them, this is the Apostles that he's asking, what was it you disputed among yourselves on the road? But they kept silent for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.

And he sat down called the twelve and said to them, if anyone desires to be first he shall be last of all and servant of all. He then took a little child and set him in the midst of them and when he had taken him in his arms he said to them, whoever receives one of these little children in my name receives me and whoever receives me receives not me but him who sent me. In chapter 10 of Mark beginning with verse 42, but Jesus called them to himself and said to them, you know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones exercise authority over them yet it shall not be so among you.

But whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant and whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all for even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. Now go with me to Luke chapter 22. If this sounds repetitious it's because it is.

Verse 24, now there was also a dispute among them. I love these apostles. As to which of them should be considered the greatest? And he said to them, the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors but not so among you on the contrary he who is greatest among you let him be as the younger and he who governs as he who serves.

For who is greater he who sits at the table or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the one who serves. Now there are other scriptures to bear this out but now we have basically all the words that we are going to need in order to complete our list. The last time we got together as we began looking at what Jesus said about himself in his greatest in the kingdom teachings which I believe very well described who he is because he was greatest in the kingdom.

He says he that is greatest must be servant of all. Well we talked about that last time and then we looked at how he compared himself with the kingdom of the world or the Gentiles and he said you must not lord it over others so I'll just write that out here and then he compared himself with the religious kingdom or that of the scribes the Pharisees those who sit in the seat of Moses or the seat of authority or corollary the greatest in the religious kingdom and he said they love to lay heavy burdens on others but they themselves will not lift a finger to carry the load he says do as they say but don't do as they do. So the only way we can lead in the kingdom of God is by example.

By the way in John chapter 13 which later we will look at Jesus uses this very word and then the fourth thing he that is greatest must be humble. Now that's where we got to last time. Now humility of course we discovered to be not putting ourselves down or having some hang dog attitude but it's being honest about ourselves.

It's being what you see is what you get transparent living without pretense without hypocrisy. Now you'll notice that as we were reading the scripture tonight one of the additional words that we heard was as a child so let's write that down as number five here. He that is greatest must be as a child.

Now one of the things I noticed about children is that they're rather humble. Let's just draw a little line up and put an arrow there. Children are rather humble aren't they? Well a small one at least.

Have you noticed that a small child is if they're happy they can't pretend they're sad. Have you noticed that? And if they're sad they can't pretend that they're happy. Wasted words to a crying child is don't cry.

My children were never able to pretend that they like spinach. Poison I'm gonna report you. So a child tends to be who they are.

I always enjoy watching parents trying to get their children to do certain things especially small babies you know that they like to say wave to the people you know and a child and I tell them I wouldn't wave at me if I were you either child don't worry about it you know. But a child tends to be who they are. Now another thing about a child that and it's the same thing as humility actually but I want to pull it out separately here is a child is unable to deceive.

You ever seen a two-year-old trying to learn how to play hide-and-go- seek? They don't quite have the concept. Whoever is it counts to 50 and says here I come ready or not turns around and there's the two-year-old right there I don't see you you don't see me. In fact my own children would sometimes say to me daddy I'm going to go hide in the kitchen you come find me okay.

I love it. They don't know how. In fact my son when he was about five saw a magician somewhere and decided he wanted to be that but it never worked for him because you see magic is totally dependent on deception and he didn't understand deception.

He tried. Daddy I'm gonna play a trick on you okay okay son I've got a rock in my hand daddy and I want you to tell me which hand it's in okay ready I'm ready son ready yeah he just didn't know how to deceive. My children were never able to understand how I always knew when they had done something they shouldn't do.

It's because guilt came out of every pore in their body you know. If they came home innocent they just came home but if they came home guilty they came home innocent. I would say what have you done how did you know.

I wonder what would happen if we didn't know how to deceive. Have you ever thought about that? What would happen if we really didn't know how to deceive each other? It would change things wouldn't it? You recall of course that Adam and Eve when they sin in the garden began to hide. They became children of darkness and relationships began.

All of the deception that we have suffered under for centuries. But we're children of light. It's hard to hide things in the light.

Have you noticed that? You just tend if you're going to hide something to hide it in the dark. The child is unable to deceive. I think when Jesus calls us to be his children one of the things he's calling us to be is a non-deceiving sort of person.

The kind of person that has no hidden agendas. Well it's similar to humility isn't it? To be what you see is what you get. Jesus was a very open person.

I'm amazed at him. He said he was the light of the world which also he said of us by the way. And he said of us that we were a city set on a hill.

The scripture says of him that this was not done in a corner. This was right out in the open you see. In him was no darkness at all.

Amazing. So a child is unable to deceive and I think God calls us to being undeceptive sort of people. The kind of people when when the world says oh you're a Christian you're one of the honest ones.

The undeceiving ones. The open ones. Well if we're not deceptive how are we going to protect ourselves? Well that's God's job see.

That's God's job. Well can we trust him? Of course we can. We should try it sometime.

Another thing about a child that I really like is a child is very unthreatening. Just looking you over I don't see any of you men that I would want to meet in a dark alley at midnight. But a little child? No threat.

Isn't that amazing? They don't scare us. Has it ever occurred to you that no one was afraid of Jesus? I'm amazed at that because he had all the power of the universe coursing through his veins you know. This incredible power that threw billions of galaxies out in space man.

This power that created this earth. But nobody was afraid of him. Amazing.

The Sanhedrin did not arrest him not because they were afraid of him but because they were afraid of the crowd. And Jesus even sends the Apostles out and says I send you out as lambs among wolves. Well that sounds exciting.

Can you hear the wolves going oh no here come the sheep. Now if you're going to go out as a lamb among wolves you learn quickly don't go in your own power. One of the things that troubles me as I journey around is it seems that we've been training some attack sheep.

Lambo I guess you would call it. We can get them can't we? Baa. Throughout scripture though this has been God's approach to the world.

He takes something that was not and speaks a universe into existence. He takes a people who are not a people and he makes them his people. God has always done that.

Throughout the Old Testament he takes the children of Israel when they are weakest and wins the greatest battles. He takes them when they're trapped and destroys an Egyptian enemy. You see an old army.

Even Joseph said the most interesting thing to his brothers as the whole family was moving down to Egypt now to eat. Joseph had become the number one and one half man in all of Egypt you know. And he says to his brothers now when you come to the border he says I'm going to ask you who you are and why you're coming here.

He said don't tell them that you're my brother. Just tell them the truth. Tell them that you're a bunch of cattle herders because we despise cattle herders.

That doesn't make any sense does it? Look if the president was my brother you'd probably know by now. But he is saying don't do that. Don't do that.

When you come to the border just tell them the truth. Tell them that you're cattle herders because we despise cattle herders. So they get there and they say who are you? Well we're nobody.

We're just coming down to eat. That's a bunch of cattle herders. I said oh cattle herders.

You're no threat to us. We despise cattle herders. Come on in.

In fact we'll give you our best land, the land of Goshen. And the rest is history. You come to the New Testament and you hear Paul saying not many mighty, not many noble are chosen, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

The weak things to confound the mighty. That's us. We're the weak and the foolish here and the world can't figure us out.

I like that. It's the way God has always operated. Paul the Apostle says something else.

He says, it's un-American to me. He says when I am weak, then am I strong? See I would have put a question mark there. But it's a declaration.

He says his strength is made perfect in my weakness. How strange. But that's the way God operates.

It really is a lot of fun when you stop and think about it. It's the thing that makes life such an adventure for us. Because the world can't figure it out and frankly we can't either.

But boy is it ever an adventure. In fact you come into modern time and you find it so. In 1978 I met a Christian leader from the country of Nepal.

Now at that particular point, Nepal was perhaps the most closed country in the world to the gospel. Some things have changed just recently. And it's better.

But it was very, very difficult back then. And he said to me, he said, please pray for us. He said the birthright of every Christian in our country is seven years in jail.

He said if you get baptized, they throw you in jail for seven years. If you do the baptizing, he said they throw you in jail for 14 years. So he said pray for us.

I'll be honest with you. I thought pray for you. Forget you.

But I discovered later that the church in Nepal for years doubled in size every year. How did they do that? Elementary, my dear Watson. Someone gets baptized, they throw him in jail.

The other prisoners ask him, why are you here? Well, I became a Christian. What's that? You really want to know? So other prisoners become Christians and when they are released and go home, their family would ask them, what kind of rehabilitation program did they have in that prison? He said they didn't have one. Well, why are you so different? Well, I became a Christian.

What's that? You really want to know? For years, that country built prisons as fast as they could just to house the church. 1948, when Mao Zedong took over China, they could only find about 250,000 Christians there at that point. They weren't welcome.

At first, they thought they would kill them all. They decided that might be a bit messy. One of the Politburo members, I am told, said, I know something about these Christians and I know they have to meet with each other all the time.

So if we can separate them from each other, they'll die out. So they started looking for places where there were no Christians and they would send one there. At that point, Mao Zedong became the director of the world's largest missions agency.

And I understand that in some parts, when they would get them into these villages, they didn't want to give them an important job because after all, they are Christian. So they would give them what amounted to the lowest job on their particular ladder. Postman.

They paid him to go house to house. Way to go, Mao. And now when the door opens up again, or at least it did for a while, where we could do some surveying, we discover there are millions and millions of Christians there.

Well, how could they do that in Nepal and in China? They were so weak. All they had was God. Not a bad thing.

A child is unthreatening. And when we approach life in that way, we lean on God. And what begins to happen then is beyond anyone's understanding, isn't it? Let me tell you a story.

I was serving a church once where on Thursday mornings, the ladies would come for a prayer meeting and would put their preschool-age children in the church nursery and have their prayer meeting, to which I was not invited, even though my name is Gail. But I loved those children, and I would take about 30 minutes on those Thursday mornings just to go and play with them. I'll never forget the first time I did it.

You know how church nurseries are, this double-door prison that we built? I opened the top half, leaned over with proper pastoral pose. Hi, kids, Pastor Irwin here. Let's play.

One of them ran in the other room terrified. The rest of them just went about their business. Well, they didn't seem to understand who I was.

So I opened the bottom half, walked in, and stood among them with proper pastoral pose. Hi, kids, Pastor Irwin here. Let's play.

Another one ran in the other room terrified. The rest of them just walked around like, did you hear a noise? By now my ego was involved because the nursery attendant who was watching all of this was beginning to go... I wanted to grab one of them and shake him and say, you're going to play with me, kid, and you're going to enjoy it. Then the Holy Spirit helped me remember what life was like for me when I was that size and how adults looked to me.

Giants, man. My world was kneecaps. And immediately I knew what to do.

Without saying another word, I just got down on the floor, and in 30 seconds, every one of them was right on top of me. All right, we're going to play. My hair went one direction and my dignity went another.

Neither have returned. But at that point, at that point, I learned something about what we call the incarnation. God becoming man in Jesus.

And in a sense, getting down on our floor where we can look him in the eyes and say, all right, it's party time in the kingdom. Well, let's go to number six. He that is greatest must be as the younger, we found out.

Now, that meant far more in that day than it seems to mean to us in our day. To be elder or younger in a household now is of really little significance. But it was very significant back then.

The elder brother got the birthright, and with it, the majority of the inheritance. In fact, in some of those Mideast countries, the elder brother would inherit everything. And the younger brother then lived at the benevolence of the elder brother until elder brothers were not known for benevolence.

So the younger brother was the disadvantaged one. He was the one for whom the system was not a friend. The status quo was never on his side.

The way things were, were his enemy. Indeed, the elder brother came to be known stereotypically as the establishment man. And the younger brother as the rebel, if you please.

Interesting. Jesus says, I want you to live as the younger. Now, what that means first is I want you to know that the system will never be on your side.

In this world, the way things are will always be your enemy. So don't expect your government or the system of the world to ever become the vehicle by which the world will be won. No.

Don't count on it. Don't count on it. In fact, those great pilgrims of faith declared themselves to be pilgrims, didn't they? They said, here we have no enduring city.

Interesting. No system, no place here that will last that we can say this is ours. But we look for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Ah. So we'll never have our permanent place, our rested system here. That's one of the things he was saying.

But another thing he was saying by being as the younger is I want you to realize that you're a pilgrim. You're just passing through. Travel light.

I travel a lot. And one of the things I've learned about traveling is the joy of the journey is inversely proportional to the amount of luggage that I take. The more luggage, the less joy.

The less luggage, the more joy. Heaven is carry on. I think Jesus is talking something about that.

He's saying we're to be pilgrims passing through. I used to hear a song. Don't hear it much anymore.

Hadn't heard in a long time. You might remember it. Some of you says this world is not my home.

I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. The angels beckon me from heaven's open door and I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

I think I haven't heard it much lately because I don't think I can honestly sing it much lately. I'd now have to sing this world is now my home. I'm not a passing through.

My treasures are laid up on Moonlight Drive in Cathedral City, California. The angels beckon me from heaven's open door and I can't go right now. I'm polishing my Rolls Royce.

I don't have a Rolls Royce. I sold it to a TV evangelist. No, no, no.

Not so. Not so. I'm kidding.

But what happens, the more things we get. I am amazed. I once thought I was pretty free from all of that.

You know, I really did. Until about four years ago, my wife and I moved twice in one summer. Everyone ought to do that once.

They say two moves is as good as a fire. I couldn't believe how much stuff we had. I thought we'd pack the night before we moved.

My wife was wiser than that. And hour after hour of those weeks, boxes began to crowd us out of our rooms. I couldn't believe.

Where is this coming from? And when the day arrived and I had hired this big truck and I'm carrying box after box up that ramp. Man, and my back's going out. And finally, I picked up this heavy box and I carry it up.

I say, honey, what is in this box? She says, it's written on it. Stuff. She says, oh, that's garage sales stuff.

We'll sell it for 50 cents when we get over there. And I'm killing myself carrying it up there. And I realize I'm into stuff.

I'm into things. In fact, when we were packing up, we discovered this. See, I had lived down here for about six years and where we were for nine years.

We found boxes that had not been opened in nine years. We really needed it badly, didn't we? But we found one box. And I looked at it and it just said stuff.

Just like I was saying. And I thought, man, I remember this. We opened it.

It was garbage from the house we had down here. We'd kept it for nine years. I'm a collector.

I'm a pack rat. I have doodads, thingamajigs. I've had them for 30 years.

I don't know what they are, but they look very interesting. And I know that when I throw them away, the next day I'm going to need them. I can't believe how I accumulate things.

Jesus dealt with a man about that. One of the most interesting stories in Scripture because it was coming together so well. This man really seemed to have his act together.

You begin reading this story and you think, this is going to be an awesome story of the kingdom. The man was intelligent because he knew who to come to. He came to Jesus.

That's intelligent. And he knew the question to ask. You see, some people come to God and ask really stupid questions.

Whose wife will she be in the resurrection? Stupid question. Should we pay taxes to Caesar? Stupid question. Can you make an object so big that you can't move it? Stupid question.

This guy knew the question to ask. He said, good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Ah, right question. Smart guy, intelligent.

And Jesus listed a few rules and he said, you know these. And then the man said, yes, and I have kept them since my youth. Wow.

This man was not only intelligent, but he was holy. And he had one more thing going for him. He was rich.

We call him the rich young ruler. My kind of man. Intelligent, holy, and rich.

I'd love to have him on my board. And the Bible records that Jesus loved him. It's a beautiful story.

See, everything's coming together. And Jesus said to him, and I shall paraphrase slightly here. You're doing great, man.

In fact, you only lack one thing. Hey, that's called good news. See, I would expect Jesus to say to me, well, let me see when you lack 743 things.

But I can hear this man. Just one thing? What is it? I'm a can-do man. I'll do it.

And Jesus says, and I continue to paraphrase slightly here. Well, boy, you're doing so good. There's only one thing I can see that has you in bondage still.

Why don't you go sell everything you've got and give it to the poor? Then come follow me. Ah. The Bible says he went away sad because he had a lot of stuff.

So sad, man. If he ever had just one bicycle, he'd have said, big deal, take it. But he said, you don't understand, sir.

I have 100,000 bicycles. How many of those can you ride at once? Well, that's beside the point. I've got 100,000.

Rich young ruler was sad. Jesus was sad. The apostles were sad.

They were probably thinking, why didn't he tell him to sell it and give the money to the Apostolic Evangelistic Association? I would have thought of that. And then Jesus said, boy, it's tough for a guy like this. In fact, it's harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

Wow. Now, I once taught that the eye of the needle was a gate in the Jerusalem Wall, so small that a camel could only go through on his knees with nothing on his back. It's really a great illustration.

Until one day I decided to check it out to see if it was true. It isn't. There is never any such gate in the Jerusalem Wall.

So when Jesus said a camel through the eye of a needle, he meant a camel through the eye of a needle. I don't know if you've ever tried to push a camel through the eye of a needle. It can be done.

But you have to grind him up real fine first. It doesn't look the same when you get through. And he really feels all strung out.

There's not a big market for ground camel that I know of. One of the things that I discovered is that as I accumulate, it doesn't put me at rest. It's a funny thing.

I saw the best illustration of that I think I have ever seen once when I was taking an all-night bus ride in India. Everyone ought to do that once in their lives. And somewhere in the trip, this man got on the bus.

It was a crowded bus, and he had about ten boxes that he wanted on. But they don't go inside the bus. They go on top.

And so with great output of energy, because he didn't seem to get anyone who could help him. I wasn't sure he wanted any help. He finally got all ten of them on top.

And he got into the bus. He was exhausted, but not too exhausted to nearly start a fight so he could get a window seat. I thought, at last this man can get some rest.

Do you know what he did? For the rest of the trip, he had his head out the window counting boxes. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

And when people would get off, he would watch them very closely. And I realized that's what happens when I get it. Now I got to count it.

Jesus says, in essence, I want you to travel light. Oh, by the way, I do believe, I want you to know this, that you can have things and make it to heaven. I believe it.

But I also believe you need to see these things the same way Paul the Apostle saw his things. If you'll let me paraphrase him slightly. He says, I consider all these things to be dung.

You're not offended by that word, are you? Manure? Manure. Now if you can see your things that way, you're not going to get too attached to them. Can you see me? If Jesus were to say, hey, Gail, come over here and work for me.

And I were to say to him, I can't do it right now, Jesus. I'm guarding a hundred tons of manure. Expecting another load any minute.

See how absurd that begins to sound? Now if you can see your things that way, then they will not corrupt you. And you can live life as the younger. Is this clear now? To be as the younger means you understand that you can't count on the system of this world.

You'll always be the disadvantaged one. But that means you have to lean on his power, of course. And it means to travel light.

Well then he says, he that is greatest must be as the least and as the last. Which doesn't mean I want to be least and last to show you how least and last I am. If I ever come to you and say, you be first, I'll be last.

Since I'm the greatest. Get sick right there. No, remember, this is an others-centered thing.

You recall when we were discussing servant last time we were together. One of the working definitions for it is to be others-centered. And if I see you the way Jesus sees you and love you the way he loves you,

then I'm going to want to put you first.

And I really won't be noticing that I was last, see. I won't be saying, did you see that Jesus? I had a last. Do I get points? No, this is an others-centered thing.

Well here you have then the eight things Jesus says about himself in the Gospels. Now the next time we get together, we will look at six more that we bring in from the epistles. But that will be another fun gathering.

When I first saw this though, I had two reactions. My first reaction was, Boy Jesus, I love you now more than I ever have before. I'm glad to follow you.

Then I had another reaction. Have you noticed that, remember that old carnal nature that you got some help getting away from? But it had habit patterns, didn't it? That sort of thought patterns. Every once in a while they'll zing through.

One of them, zing! For me. You know what I found myself thinking? Oh, come on, Irwin. You can't do that.

You're having a rough enough time being a Christian now. You'll never be able to do that. Ah, but I have some good news.

I can't let you go without sharing some good news with you. I like good news. The first bit of good news is this.

This is the way Jesus is toward us. That is good news. There have been times, for instance, in my sharing the gospel with individuals, that I'd offer them the opportunity to follow the Lord and they would say no.

And a few times I had the presence of mind to ask them, Would you mind describing God as you understand Him? Boy, when they got through describing Him, I wouldn't have followed Him either. They didn't know that this is the way Jesus is. How can you say no to this? This is good news.

This is the way He is toward us. The other item of good news comes from Philippians 2.13, which says, For it is God who is at work in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. In other words, it's God who's at work in you to make you want to do His will and to enable you to do His will.

In other words, you're God's fault. Ephesians tells us we are His workmanship, His poem, His work of art. Awesome.

I best understood this. Some years ago I worked in a place where on Tuesdays and Thursdays the men of the department would go across the street to a gymnasium and during lunch hour play basketball. Now, basketball is not my best game.

Sometimes they'd confuse me with the ball. And sometimes when we would choose upsides, they would get down to me and say, Look, we had Irwin last time, it's your turn. So I was playing basketball for the fellowship and the exercise, but there was one guy there, his name was Dave, and he was about six feet thirty inches tall.

He could play basketball. I loved to get chosen on his team because we would always win. By the way, I saw this guy just a year or so ago for the first time in many, many years, and he tells me, he says, I'm most famous because of this story you tell, Gail.

When they find out that I'm the Dave, oh, yeah, we know you. And he says, I tell people that I'm not as good as Irwin said I was, but Irwin's as bad as he said he was. But I loved to get chosen on his team because we would always win.

Now, on his team, I only had one job. Get the ball to Dave. So I'd bring the ball inbounds, you know, and I'd lob it over to Dave, and he'd turn around, and the other team would go, and they'd miss half of their shots.

And it would be my turn again. I'd bring the ball back inbounds, and by now I'm feeling my Cheerios, so I'd do a few globetrotters to make you think I know what I'm doing. And if the ball got stolen, it would be when I was showing off.

Then I'd lob it over to Dave, and he'd turn around, and the other team would go, and then I would say, aren't we good? We? There's no we to it. It was all Dave. I only had one job.

Get the ball to Dave. Now, this is the way it is with us. We're on God's team.

Let me tell you another story in the middle of this story. When I was in high school is when the first big-name sportsmen first started becoming Christians. And they would come by my high school.

It was a secular high school, and we'd have an assembly, and they'd give their testimony, and kids would come to Christ. It was awesome. Now, these guys, their hearts were right, but their heads didn't always have their theology figured out.

And I remember this one big football bruiser that came by, and he says, in football, we have a first team, and we have a second team, and then we have scrubs. I thought, that's me, I'm a scrub. But he says, nobody wants to be that, so what we do is we get out there, and we run 500 miles a day.

And we eat 15 beef steaks an hour. And we lift 150 tons of weight a day, and we put on our pads, and we run headlong into brick walls to make ourselves tough so we can be on the first team, because nobody wants to be a scrub. And then he applied that spiritually, and that's where he got off just a bit.

He said, that's the way it is with God. God's got a first team. He's got a second team.

And then he has scrubs. I thought, that's me, I'm a scrub. But he said, nobody wants to be that, so what we do is we go to church 500 times an hour.

And we read 15,000 scriptures a minute, and we witness to 6,000 people a second. And we give 150% of our income, so we can be on God's first team, because nobody wants to be a scrub. But folks, that's not the way it is with God at all.

He's only got one team, and he calls it a body. See, I would never come to you and say, is that your first team nose? Well, of course it is, Erwin. It's the only one I've got.

Well, that's the point, you see. So we're on his body, in his body. We're on his team.

And we've got one job. Get the ball to Jesus. Jesus said, without me you can do... Nothing.

How much is nothing? All right, we got that solved, okay? So I bring the ball in bounds, and I lob it over to Jesus, and he turns around, and Satan goes, and he misses half of his shots. And I bring the ball back in

bounds, and by now I'm feeling my spiritual cheerio. So I do a few spiritual globetrotter stunts to make you think I know what I'm doing.

And if the ball gets stolen, it'll be when I'm showing off. And I lob it over to Jesus, and he goes, and Satan goes, And then I say, Aren't we good? There's no we to it. It was all him.

I only had one job. Get the ball to Jesus. Without me you can do nothing.

In fact, the Scripture reveals to us, looking unto Jesus, the author and the... finisher of our faith. Incredible. Not the author and abandoner of our faith.

When he starts, he has the power to finish. Isn't that great? Finisher. I am the author of the unfinished job.

My wife gets a little upset about it. I have these unfinished jobs around the house, little piles of tools and parts, and I'm saying, Just waiting on a part, honey, and I'll finish this. But God, oh.

He who has begun this work in you will be faithful to? Complete it. It's not he who has begun this work in you will really get tired of you after a while and say, Okay, you're on your own. Complete it.

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling. Who is the him that it's unto? You? No. Jesus.

So I have learned in my old age, as I have experienced and watched all kinds of different theologies, to hold on to them very lightly. But to hang on to Jesus for dear life, man. Looking unto Jesus.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus. I have a brother three years younger than I who's an expert sailor. And every time I go and visit him, we go sailing.

Now this has brought about a certain tradition, a legend almost at our house. My mother goes into immediate intense prayer. And she calls the coast guard and says, Gentlemen, start your engines.

The Irwin boys are on the ocean. Now the reason for that is, we always go aground and have to be rescued. Now the reason for that is my brother turns the helm over to me.

And he says, It's real easy, Gale. Just go toward that red light that flashes red once every two seconds and we'll be okay. No problem.

But there is a problem. It's not the only light out there. And anyway, the top of the ocean looks pretty much the same everywhere.

Have you noticed that? And I see another light. Oh, now that's red. And it's flashing twice a second.

Now that's easier to follow. I'll follow that one. And then I see another light, man.

It's got some action to it. And it's moving too. Okay, now we'll really get somewhere, you see.

And sure enough, after a while, thump, thump. And my brother comes running back. Gale, what happened? What happened? I don't know, Jay.

I'm just following this light. What light? This light. Wrong light.

That's what happens to us spiritually sometimes. We see the light of the world and we begin to follow. And we discover, well, there's some other lights out there, aren't there? Look at that one.

That one's flashing a lot faster. Hey, there we go. We can go that way, yeah.

Then we see another one that's got pizzazz to it, man. And it's really moving. Now we'll get somewhere, yeah.

But sure enough, after a while, spiritually, thump, thump. What happened? Just got our eyes off of Jesus, that's all. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus.

Now I'm telling you, and I wanted you to see this too. Not so it can put you under some burden of, oh boy, look at what I have to do now. No, I want you to see what He's doing in you.

This is like the pattern He writes on you and says, now I want you to see what I'm going to make you to become. Oh, what a goal. Beats any goal I've ever seen.

And my heart cries out, yes, Lord Jesus. Oh, you are so good to us. And our hearts do go up to you in worship.

We thank you. Oh, we thank you. And on behalf of myself and I think these people, I say to you, Lord, work on us.

We open ourselves to you and ask you to make us like you. Work out your will in us. Draw us to you and to your likeness.

Fill us with the knowledge of you and your will. And I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Amen. [www.servant.org](http://www.servant.org)

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