

When God Walked in the Room

by Jim Cymbala

Jesus is the image of the invisible God and is characterized by his humility, kindness, compassion, and patience.

Duration: 33:03

Scripture: Colossians 3:12

Topics: "Zacchaeus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of kindness, compassion, and patience in our interactions with others. He encourages the congregation to be compassionate and patient instead of judging and criticizing. The speaker reminds the audience that Jesus is the image of the invisible God and exemplifies kindness, compassion, and patience. He urges the listeners to reflect these qualities in their own lives and to be a good advertisement for Jesus by showing kindness, compassion, and patience to others.

Transcript

We're reading through the New Testament with a different kind of New Testament, no words added, no words taken away, but a different sequence, one that makes a lot more sense to me. And right now we're going through all of Paul's letters that he wrote. We learned about him in the book of Acts, that he persecuted the church, he was called Saul of Tarsus, hated Christians, hated Christ, and then he was converted and became a great apostle.

And now we're looking at the letters that he wrote back to churches. What's different about the book that we were mostly reading this week, or letter, remember New Testament books are mostly letters, what's strange about this letter is he's writing to a church that he never went to. It was in a town called Colossae, and while he was at Ephesus, he was there three years, he sent a man named Epaphras, who was one of his converts, it seems, and Epaphras went, and what a man of God he must have been, he went to Colossae and started the church.

So Paul has learned about what's going on at Colossae, and now he's writing to the church. And he's heard that there's movements in other religions that are trying to invade the church, just like positive thinking, Scientology, all these different things in our society, they try to invade into Christian thinking. So it's not biblical, it's Bible mixed with a lot of other stuff, and we can never do that, you can't add or take away from the word of God, amen? So he's writing there, and he's heard about these foreign elements, and what he's trying to do is prove the supremacy of Jesus Christ, not only his uniqueness, but the fact

that when you have Jesus, you have everything.

When Christ lives in your heart, it doesn't matter what day you worship, it doesn't matter if you're circumcised or not, it doesn't matter what someone's teaching is about angels and principalities and different things, you have Jesus, you have everything. So nowhere in the New Testament does it ever warn people that they're making too much of Jesus, because Jesus is God. Nowhere in the New Testament do the writers say, now look, slow down with this Jesus thing, you're overdoing, never, that's never said.

You can overdo it on people, pastors for sure, church names, branding, singers, praise and worship songs, you can overdo all of that, but you can never overdo Jesus. So now Paul, where we're going to break in, is making a Christological statement, which is doctrine. He wants to tell them, this is who Jesus is, in case you just think he was this man who lived in Galilee and died around 33 years old.

No, no, no, no, no, no, no. He existed way before that, he had no beginning, and here's who he is, because he's the end that all the earth is moving towards. The whole world, they don't know it, they're moving toward a rendezvous with Jesus.

God is going to honor him so that people are going to either be collected by him as his children, or they're going to have to deal with all those who have rejected him. But everything is centered around Christ, whether you believe it or not, whether I believe it, whether people mock him, it doesn't matter. This is a doctrinal statement that a lot of people think, oh, doctrine is so dry, I don't want doctrine, I want something more exciting.

So let's see what we can do with this doctrinal statement about Jesus, okay? The son, Jesus, is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created, notice not by him, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, but in him, or through him, all things were created. He has everything to do with the creation, things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible.

What would be invisible? Principalities and powers and everything, angelic beings. Whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through him and for him. Everything was created for him, to worship him, Jesus.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He not only is the originator, he's the one who has everything cohere, and he is the head of the body. We learned that last week, right? The church, the church is likened to a body with many members.

He's the head, that means intelligence, will, sending directions. The body then has to be healthy enough to carry it out. Notice here that the church is not an organization.

The American concept has been degraded into like, this is the church, what's the Brooklyn Tabernacle? Well, we get together on Sunday and you get a membership card and all that. It's an organization, there has to be a corporate board and New York state has to approve of it, and it's a 501c3 and all of that. No.

He says, no, the church is a spiritual organism made up of born again people who function now, everybody having a different thing to do, and Jesus is the head. Notice if the body is sick, if the body is paralyzed, if the body is weak, now the head can be giving directions, but how can the body carry it out? Can't. This is why the most important thing in the world is the condition of the Christian church, because God can't do, he's chosen to do it this way.

Jesus cannot work effectively in the world except through his body. How can I do something separate from my body? Can't do it. That's why people say, oh, God is on the throne and God can do that.

I know God can do all those things, but God almost always works through his body, just like you. He is the head of the body, which is the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him. So we have all these grandiose things said about Jesus, and then look how we slide quickly to the human, and through him to reconcile, bring back into relationship to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, whose blood? Jesus's blood, shed on the cross. What a trip that is.

He is the image of the invisible God. He's before all things. All things were created through him and for him.

He is the ultimate supreme ruler, king of kings, lord and lords, and the way he saved us is by shedding his blood. He reconciled us by shedding his blood on the cross. Wow.

This is the incarnation, God, man, existing always, supreme, the image of the invisible God as a human who stooped to death on a cross for our sake. This happens all the time in the New Testament. There's this grandiose picture of who Jesus is, and then there's the lowliness of Jesus, that he became a human, that he died, that he shed his blood.

Without the shedding of blood, there's no forgiveness of sin. These things are existing in a tension which no one can understand. How could he be God but man? How could he get tired? How could he wear a crown of thorns if he always existed? Look at the condescension of God to save us.

He sent his son who left all his glory to be limited to a human body and give up the powers that he had to be everywhere at once so he could only be in one place at once, and then even humbling himself to taking our place as the substitute so God would punish, he would be punished for my sins and your sins. What we learn here about Jesus is two things that I want to use to go somewhere. I want to talk today, the name of this message is, When God Entered the Room.

He is perfectly God. He's not part God. He's not, the son is not one-third God.

In the mystery of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all equally God, and yet existing in a relationship we don't fully comprehend. No wonder we have finite minds and God is infinite. So he is fully God.

His name shall be called Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Jesus was there, God, when you bumped into him, that was God in human form. Just think of that.

God himself walked with two feet on this earth. He is the image of the invisible God. What is that telling us? It's telling us since God is invisible and incomprehensible, God wanted us to know what he's like, so he sent his son in human form so we humans could say that's what God is really like.

So I want to remind all of you, you can't take a verse here and then a verse here and then concoct some image of what God is like, because some people have done that and justified slavery. Some people have done that and justified racism, white or black, black Jesus or white Jesus. Some have done that and just justified all kinds of weird things.

You have any question about God at any time? Just go to the word and look at Jesus, because he is the image or the exact representation of who God is. He's not just the son. He's not just God in the flesh.

God sent him so that you and I wouldn't be bewildered and say, you know, who are you, God? Look at Jesus and you'll know everything. So now let me get to the point when God walked in the room. I want to take you back 2,000 years ago and let's go to Zacchaeus's house.

I was reading again about Zacchaeus. He was this short little dude who wanted to see Jesus, but the crowd would be too big, so he ran ahead and he climbed a what? A tree. Oh, someone said sycamore tree.

That's good. He climbed up on a tree and then Jesus just stopped and knew who he was and said, Zacchaeus, I'm going to eat with you today at your house. So of course, Zacchaeus invited his friends.

So now you're one of the friends. I'm one of the friends. In fact, we're all friends.

Zacchaeus had a big house. He could fit all of us and now we're all there and now we're waiting for Zacchaeus to come. See, they sent the word.

We're all in the house and now Zacchaeus is going to come with Jesus and now the door opens and you don't, I don't know from anything. It's 2,000 years ago. God's going to walk through the door.

Did you hear what I said? Almighty God is going to walk through the door. He's the image of the invisible God. So just like you and I, when we meet a stranger, you check them out.

Do you not? So Jesus would come in and I want you to check them out with me. First encounter, God in the flesh, the image of the invisible God. What would strike you about him? Now, it's interesting that in the Bible, it's never spoken about anything concerning Jesus's physical appearance.

We don't know the color of his complexion. We don't know how tall he was. We don't know what he weighed.

We don't know the timber of his voice. We don't know anything. The color of his hair, the color of his eyes, the length of his stride.

Did he walk kind of close or did he take long strides? But I want you to watch with me, knowing from scripture what we know, what would strike you about Jesus? The first thing that would strike all of us about Jesus is his humility. Although God, he wasn't full of himself. He was likened to a lamb in the Bible.

He wouldn't make everything about him. He would make it about you. If there was a cluster of us, me and some of the altos, and we'd be sitting together and he would join us, he wouldn't push his way in and say, hey, Jesus is here.

Can I tell you where I've been lately? No. He would walk in, he'd be unassuming. He would be humble.

He would be humble. Just think, some of us are proud. He was the son of God, but he was humble.

That's enough to make you think for a day just about humility and pride. No, he was humble, very approachable. The second thing that we would be struck by is his kindness.

The word that's used of him and of God in terms of kindness is actually sweetness. He had a sweet disposition. The words he said were always kind words.

One day I was coming into the church with some people. What was it up on the right? I forgot where it was, but you know in certain cultures where people have no social filter and they just say whatever they think without thinking how it would affect someone else. So this woman said to this other woman here in the church, in my hearing, which embarrassed me and everyone, he said, hi, how you doing? Boy, you're getting fat.

Jesus would never say that. How many are happy to say amen? Jesus wouldn't be picking up your faults because Jesus was kind. That's what would strike us.

His humility and his kindness, his words were kind. They were always constructive to build you up. His disposition, his look, his voice, everything was sweet about it.

That's what struck everyone. That's why he drew people. He was called a friend of sinners.

Why? Because he was so kind. The religious types judged everybody. We know that.

If you have the spirit of a Pharisee and when you meet someone, let me see what I can find wrong with this person. That's the way we tend to be, not Jesus. Jesus was kind.

He was approachable. He was sweet, disposition, his words. Another thing, I think the third thing that would strike us about him as he walks in with Zacchaeus is he's not only humble and he's not only kind, but as we engage him in a conversation, we find out that he is overwhelmingly compassionate.

That word speaks of he has pity on your situation. He feels pity, even if you did it to yourself, even if you're messed up because you're messed up. The Bible says he had these, just a heart of compassion.

This is what people were drawn to him by because instead of judging everyone, as I said, he would look at you and he would try to understand what you're going through, how you got there, what you're secretly feeling, the pain that you cover. Jesus would see through all of that and he would be looking at ways to say something to help you. Now notice, in his kindness and his compassion, he wouldn't hold back anything you needed to hear, even if it was a word of correction.

If you were going the wrong way, his kindness would not make him a yes man. I'm okay, you're okay. No, that is not kindness.

Not kind to people when you lie to them. When someone's going wrong, you're not kind to say, they're going wrong, but I'm not going to say anything. One time when I first started in the ministry, I didn't know much about Puerto Rican food, and I went to eat at a place on Fifth Avenue here in Brooklyn, and I didn't know back then you don't order pasteles from a restaurant that you don't know.

A pasteles is a Puerto Rican dish. So I ordered it, and it probably had been made three or four years earlier than when they brought it out, and they gave it to me. And as I was eating the pasteles, as I was eating it, my body was telling me, yo, this is nasty.

But I, stupido, I kept eating it. I'm going to put this thing down, okay? And I was sick, and I got me some hepatitis from that pasteles. The church had maybe 30, 40 people in it at the time, and I got through preaching, and I was feeling woozy, really woozy, and I finally made it through.

I had to cut the sermon short. I didn't know what was wrong with me, and suddenly a lady comes up, and she goes to hug me, and she goes, your eyes are yellow. You're yellow.

She wasn't being unkind. She was being kind. She was warning me.

If you have friends, don't think you're being kind by never speaking to them about their condition and the way they're living. That's not kind. What kind of doctor would be kind if he examined the patient and knew there's some lumps and cancer or whatever, and said, you're good to go, because I don't want to say anything that would hurt you or upset you.

I mean, that wouldn't be nice. You wouldn't come back. I won't make a living.

No, what do doctors do? They tell you the truth, hopefully in love, because why? They want you to get better. So Jesus was kind and compassionate, but he never fudged over anything. No, no, no, no.

But the way he said it to you, you know, the way he would talk to you, he would feel what you're feeling. He wouldn't be all into himself, even though he had stuff ahead of him like the cross, which you and I back then wouldn't have understood. And even though men were plotting to kill him, even while he visited the house we were in, he would look at you as if you were the most important person in the world.

And he would try to see into whatever you're going through, and he'd try to like penetrate, and he would, he might even weep over you, because we know he wept over people and cities, situations, and he's the image of the invisible God. Humble, kind, beyond belief, full of compassion, feeling pity, not blaming, not saying, okay, you made your bed, you sleep in it. That was a famous saying I heard growing up.

My mom's here, but all due respect, I heard that in the house a lot. Had you ever heard that one ever growing up? Maybe it's said in a different way, in different cultures. You make your bed, you sleep in it.

Although there is a sowing and reaping law in the Bible, Jesus was full of compassion. This is why people were drawn to him. This is why he contrasted so differently with the religious leaders of the day.

This is why people have such a bad image of Christianity many times in this country, because if they could just see Jesus, they would be drawn, but they see sometimes Christians who are acting the opposite of Jesus. Lastly, the Bible tells us that he, as the image of the invisible God, was so patient. That word patient means he never got tired of forgiving people, never got tired of hoping for the best, and he never got tired of loving them.

When Peter would mess up, time after time, and the other disciples, Jesus never once went, that's it. Get me a new 12, because this 12 is going into the junk heap. How did I ever get you guys? No.

The patience that we would notice in him, that even though you messed up, doesn't matter how you mess up, when you come to Jesus in the right way, he never gets tired of forgiving, of hoping, and of loving. You know, some people love you until there's a line, and then they go, that's it. There's no that's it with Jesus, and he's the image, as I close, of the invisible God.

You want to know about God? Look at Jesus. God is kind, God is full of compassion, and God is patient. How many have found that in your own walk with the Lord, that he is kind, compassionate? Lift your hand high.

Kind, compassionate, and is he not patient? Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Now, Satan, why I preach this here, and you listen to me on the webcast, Satan is going to try to give you a different picture of God than the face of Jesus. I can tell you that.

He's done that for 2,000 years. Ever since Jesus has come, he tries to paint a picture of God from this little verse, that little verse, that little Old Testament thing, and the next thing you know, you don't know who God is, and like Martin Luther, the reformer, before he saw the light, he said, I hate God. Pray to God.

Love God. Trust God. I hate God.

I hate God, because all that God is is a judge, and all I do is see my faults, and he's the angry judge who's going to wipe me out. Just a mess. So he ended up like to do penance, he made himself his own little whip with a little metal in it, and he would beat himself unconscious, and they would find him in his monk cell at five in the morning in a pool of blood, trying to atone for the mess-ups instead of in front of an angry God.

I am so happy today that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Can we put our hands together and thank God that this is who we're dealing with? This is our Father. Come on, let's thank God.

This is our Father. Kind, compassion. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.

I forgot another verse in Colossians. Oh, alas. Look what it says here.

To us, therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness. Say it out loud. Patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another. If any of you have a grievance against someone, forgive as the Lord forgave you. You know, Brother Dennis, there's a verse in the Bible that stumbles you sometimes.

It says, written by Paul, be imitators of God. How are you going to imitate God? He's everywhere at once. He has all power.

He knows everything. How in the world could Jim Simba imitate God, and yet the Bible says be imitators of God? It's not talking about those attributes. It's talking about that.

Can't you today be kind to someone? When we walk in a room, can't we speak of the humility of Jesus Christ? He was humble though he was the Son of God. If you and I would just think of our sins and what it costs God to save us and all the mess that he's cleaned up, how could any of us walk proud? I mean, pride is like insane. That's why the Bible says God resists the proud.

It doesn't say that about anyone else, but people who have sinned and it costs God his Son to save them, and now they're going to walk around like they're all that? They're not all that. All we like sheep have gone astray. So can't we imitate God by being humble today? I'll tell you how in a second.

Can't we be kind? Can't you say something kind to someone? Instead of making it all about you, can't you be kind and try to minister to them? Can't you try to feel what they're going through? Can't you find a way to try to help them? Maybe they're short on something. Maybe you could slip a little money. Maybe you could do something kind.

Just do a kind word. Offer them a drink of water. The Bible says anyone, Jesus says anyone who even offers a glass of water in kindness to someone, they'll not lose that reward.

They will have a for a glass of water because God is into kindness. Can't we be compassionate instead of judging everybody and seeing what's wrong with them? You know, when people even go to a church, can I say this? You can go to church two ways, especially if you travel. You can sit there and judge what goes on, or you could worship God and be compassionate and patient.

If you see false in me or anyone else up here. So what's the big thing? We all have false. Can't you have a little compassion? No one's perfect.

Look in the mirror. Am I right? How can I be? And that's what happens a lot of people lose a blessing because they go to a church, they don't go to receive, they go to judge. Don't have compassion.

Don't see what's wrong about the person. Yeah, that's easy to see. But why are they wrong? What are they going through that brought them to that? Look at that unbelief they have.

It's like the cross dresser who came here for a while and a guy dressed in black dress and high heels and the whole thing. And he came for a few weeks. So they brought him up to my office.

I wanted to meet him and talk to him. So I said, tell me about your life. And he had two names.

He had a female name and a male name. I call him by his male name. And I said, tell me about your life.

And then he started telling me about the uncles who raped him when he was nine and how this and that and that and that. And if you would have heard his life, you would have done what I did. I started to cry.

I'm not justifying that what he's doing is according to the Bible. No, that's wrong. But compassion.

My father-in-law used to say, Jim, don't just look at people what they do. Try to understand why they do it. Not condoning.

We're not bleeding heart liberals that justify wrong. That's not what a Christian is. A Christian knows it's wrong or right.

But have compassion. There but for the grace of God goes you. I said, there but for the grace of God goes you or me.

If you knew Donna's background, maybe you would have been on a ledge. You never know. And we can be patient and forgive again and again.

You know, someone might be here right now. Someone's let you down so many times. On purpose, they hurt you.

Forgive them. Even as God has forgiven you. Oh, you only made one mistake.

Oh, you're different than me. Oh, I didn't know that. You've only made one sin and God forgave you and you're happy.

I've made a whole lot over a whole lot of years. Aren't you like me? Is there anybody here like me? Just say amen. And what did God do? Did he run out of mercy? Did he run out of patience? No, I'm still here

kicking because God is patient.

There's another verse in Colossians that I don't have on the screen. I close with it. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

See, that love is already inside of you. You just got to ask God to release it. That kindness is in you.

Oh, Jim Symbol? He'll never be kind. It's impossible for Jim Symbol to be kind because Jim Symbol is a wretch. If he wasn't a wretch, God would work with me and try to get me kind.

He doesn't. He passes me by and he says, you're gone. He gone.

No, I'm putting my own spirit, the spirit of my son Jesus in him and in every believer so that as they yield and follow his direction, they can be kind and compassionate and patient and people can know what I'm like. A minister told me, he said, Pastor Symbol, the worst marketing campaign, the worst billboards in the world are the ones we have for God. Christians are the billboards that turn so many people away from Jesus.

Because the way we talk, the way we act, the way we fuss with each other. Just talk to a pastor, the church is going through their fourth split. People fussing and fighting over the color of the carpet.

People are going to hell in a handbasket around them. You think they're concerned about that? No, they're fighting over, do you do hymns or praise and worship songs? Generational fighting, all kinds of fighting. Then we're going to show the world, come on and join us.

We're serving Jesus. I don't think too many are going to buy into that. How many want to be a good advertisement for Jesus? Just lift one hand.

Let's pray. God, make us like Jesus. Make us kind.

Let your kindness come out through us. Make us compassionate. Replace our hearts of stone and our judgmental attitudes and our know-it-all-ness, our arrogance with humility, compassion.

Help us to be patient. This world is filled with so many irregular people and so much sin and humanness that every day we have a laboratory where we can exhibit your patience. Every day, every day, every day, every single day, there will come a moment where we can be sweet and patient rather than irascible and short-tempered.

Forgive us our trespasses. Thank you for your word to us today that we can be imitators of God. By doing that, we can live lives that are pleasing to you.

Do away with all friction, grudges, backbiting, nasty talk. Do away with all of it, Lord. Help us to resemble you individually and corporately so that people will fall in love with you through what you've done in our lives.

Lord, as we dismiss today, help us even in our greeting one another, hugging. Let there be kindness, compassion, encouragement, patience, humility, making the other person more important than we are. Bless every ministry that we have in this church that we can reach more people, more lost sheep who have gone astray.

We pray this in the name of Christ, the Good Shepherd, and everyone said, Amen. The agenda is now this. Everyone stand and hug about 10 people.

Come on, choir too. Give somebody a hug.

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