

# Meeting God Face to Face

by Neil Rhodes

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*God's heart is for reconciliation and He desires to walk with us, but we need His power to overcome the flesh and restore what is lost.*

**Duration:** 1:00:25

**Scripture:** Isaiah 61:2, Isaiah 63:1-7

**Topics:** "Reconciliation With God", "Divine Restoration"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the theme of reconciliation that runs through the book of Isaiah. From chapters 40 to 66, God is portrayed as desiring reconciliation with his people and wanting to walk with them. The speaker emphasizes that God never abandons humanity to the consequences of their sin and folly, but instead intervenes, changes, and restores. The sermon also mentions the role of a watchman, referencing Isaiah 62:6, and how the prophet Isaiah sees himself as a watchman standing on the walls of Jerusalem, observing and speaking on behalf of God.

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## Transcript

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Let me pray. Father, we thank you tonight as we just raise our hands towards heaven that Lord Jesus, you are here meeting with us because you want to speak to our hearts. Lord, I acknowledge tonight my total dependency upon you that Lord, your word stands alone.

And God, our words fall to the ground, but yours are eternal. They are powerful, and Lord, they change lives. Now tonight I'm asking that you hide me behind the cross and let your eternal word do its work in every heart tonight, I pray.

In Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated. Turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Isaiah.

And I had a title for this, and I hope they got it changed, but I changed it when I went to go and get mic'd up. And I changed it to Meeting God Face to Face. I think it's more appropriate for what I want to share

with you tonight as God has been speaking to my heart all week, and I believe that God will just minister to us through his word.

Now, by the time, as I mentioned a couple of Sundays ago, when you get to the book of Isaiah, it's broken up into two sections. There's a lot of things going on in Isaiah. Isaiah is one of the clearest prophets that there is concerning Christ.

But when you go all the way through to chapter 39, it's on one segment, and he's dealing with idolatry. He's dealing with the nation. He's talking about the consequences of sin.

He's dealing with what is going to be taking place because of their sin and their rejection of God. But when you start from chapter 40 onwards all the way to chapter 66, you see a significant change. Yes, he still deals with some of the issues and the idolatry and things like that, but you see a significant change has taken its course.

And from 40 onwards, we see that the prophet begins to talk about the reconciliation that God has in his heart towards his people. So all the way through from 40 to 66, God is speaking clearly and concisely about reconciling to his people. This is the heart of God.

He doesn't want anybody to be estranged from him. It's his heart that he wants to be reconciled. He wants to walk with his people.

And sometimes it's the hardest thing in the world for us to understand that the God of the universe actually wants to walk with us. He wants to be with us. He wants to go with us into the workplace.

He wants to go with us to our homes. Sometimes it's the hardest truth to believe that God actually wants to walk with you, that he loves you and cares for you. How many tonight would put their hand up immediately and say, Oh, I know God walks with me and loves me and just I'm so confident in this.

Probably a few hands would go up, but there'd be probably a vast majority of us would put our hands up and say, Well, I'm not exactly sure whether I'm a favorite with God. I know he loves Pastor David and Pastor Carter, but I'm not sure whether he loves me. And see, there's a lot of people who haven't got that settled in their heart, how God loves them, meeting God face to face.

So when you get to Isaiah chapter 63, verse 1, down to just verse 6, let's just read it together. It's a strange portion of Scripture and people are varied in the understanding of it. I read several commentators on chapter 63, 1 through 6, and they've got their own thought lines.

But as I began to pray on this portion of Scripture, God began to reveal who this is. And we'll touch on this tonight as we get to meet God face to face. Isaiah 63, verse 1, Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Basra? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength.

Now, a lot of commentators speak about this as being Assyria, that this is the Assyrian nation. And probably historically, that could be correct, that this was the Assyrian nation coming in and taking Israel captive back into Assyria or Babylon. So we can see it could be the Assyrian people.

But let's keep reading here. I that speak in righteousness mighty to save, wherefore art thou read? So here's the person again who's asking the question. So the person again is asking, saying in verse 2, Wherefore or why art thou read in thine apparel? Why is your apparel so red? And thy garments like him

that treadeth in the wine vat.

He says, how come your garments are so stained? Why are they so red? It's so red like you've been standing in a wine vat. And in verse 3, the person who's coming towards him, as Isaiah sees it, he says, I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me. For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

See, these are the kind of scriptures that kind of befuddle the mind of the commentators. Well, is this Assyria? Are these the Babylonians? Is this the enemy coming in? Who is this speaking to us? For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redemption is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold.

Therefore my own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth. Now, let me make three statements before we get into this portion of scripture tonight.

Let me make three statements. Number one, God never abandons man or men to the result of his sin or his folly. You've got to understand what I'm saying tonight.

God never abandons us. Even when we sin, even in our folly, when we do dumb stuff, God never abandons us. You've got to put that down in your, if you're making notes, write those things.

These are the kind of statements that ultimately we don't believe. We believe that if we sin, that God is like a scared rabbit, He leaves us immediately. But I want to make three statements.

Number one, God never abandons man to the result of his sin or his folly. If He did, there would never be a Calvary. There'd never be a cross.

There'd never be a Savior. If He said, I'm just going to abandon you and just leave you to your sin and your folly, there would never be salvation that Jesus gave to us at the cross of Calvary. But see, the heart of God is that He doesn't want to abandon us.

He wants to walk with us in reconciliation. He wants to walk with us in a love relationship second to none. Number two, God will interfere, He will arrest, He will change, and He will restore that which was lost or stolen by the devil.

I believe that with all of my heart, that my God, He will interfere in my life. He will interfere. He's not going to just let me go on my way.

God will become like a mother-in-law. He will interfere in my life. He will arrest us.

He will change us. And He will restore that which was lost and stolen by the devil. That is the heart of God.

He says, I will restore that which the canker worm has eaten, that which the farmer worm has eaten. And He goes all the way through in Joel. He says, all these that have eaten.

God says, I will restore the years that have been eaten by the locust and the canker worm. He'll take any single life, and you can take a look at the past history of your life and see all the years that have been wasted. And God says, I will restore every single year that you've been lost.

And God will do it in a moment of time. And He'll restore it. He'll bring it back to your life.

This is the hope of Christianity. It doesn't matter what the devil has stolen from you. It doesn't matter how he's come into your life and made havoc.

God says, I will restore you. I will bring restoration back into your heart and life because I want to walk with you. See, this is all in God's heart.

He says, I'm not going to abandon you. And number two, I will interfere. I will arrest.

I will make changes. And I will bring restoration to the soul, even when we are not walking with Him. Folks, I want to tell you the greatest thing about God.

He is determined to interfere with your life. It's a tough thing to come to the gospel of Jesus Christ because the moment you come to Jesus, you are finished. He will interfere and work on you.

He'll give you the Holy Ghost, miserables. He will do anything that He needs to do to arrest your life from where it's going. Then number three, and I love it, number three, He will then request men and women to participate with Him.

See, beloved, when God does that work in our hearts and lives, it's not just to get us to heaven. It's not just to get us cleaned up from a life of sin. But God says, I want you to participate with Me.

There is a walk with Christ that He will come and anoint us. God is no respecter of persons. He will raise up a woman.

He will raise up a man. He will take any person anywhere, restore them, and then give them an invitation to work with Him. And God can take your life and through you can touch thousands of people.

Listen, we are not touching thousands of people because we are so myopic. We don't believe that God will do it through us. But I want to tell you that He gives you an open invitation tonight to join Him in ministry and to touch people's lives because it's His heart.

He wants to touch men and women. Like I shared with you tonight, we're just going to a dentist appointment, sitting in that chair waiting for Him to finish His last patient who came out looking like death. And I've got to go in there.

But here is this woman just sitting in the chair next to me. She's got to have a tooth pulled. But beloved, it might be a tooth that needs to be pulled, but God loves her.

And God wants to reach her heart. It just takes somebody to see that. You just pray.

I just sit there and I just start talking. It's okay. I just start sharing and talking.

I don't have to push Jesus on anybody because they ask the questions themselves. If it is a God moment, this is how you know. If it's a God moment or you're pushing it into someone's face, it's real simple.

You travel along, they ask you the question. At the very second, I've always determined in my heart, if somebody asks me a question, they're going to get an answer. I mean, how simple is that? I mean, that's the most profound thing you're going to hear all tonight.

Someone asks you a question, they deserve an answer. Amen? All right. So those are the three questions.

God never abandons man to the result of his sin of folly. He will interfere, arrest, change, and restore that which is stolen. And God will then request of a man or a woman to participate with him in eternal purposes.

So here we see this scripture here. Now Isaiah is referring to this person as a watchman. In chapter 62, verse 6, it says, I've set a watchman upon my walls.

And so the person who is seeing this is a watchman. So he's standing on the walls of Jerusalem and he's looking out, as it were. And so Isaiah is talking as though he was a watchman standing upon the walls of Jerusalem and he's looking out.

And as he looks down the hills and the mountains and the valleys of Jerusalem, he looks down and he sees someone is coming. Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? Now, Bozrah is the capital of Edom. The word Bozrah there is the capital city of Edom.

Now, Edom, as we know, is the lineage of Esau, whom God hated. Esau is the type of the flesh. Edom is that, listen to Psalm 108, it says, who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom? Edom has always been a type of the stronghold of the flesh.

So here we're seeing that Isaiah is saying, who is this coming from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? Who's coming from the capital city of Edom? This word Bozrah literally means stronghold. It can either be sheepfold or stronghold. But we understand from the context here that it is talking about the stronghold.

Who is this coming from the very stronghold of the flesh? You see, God wants to take us, Psalm 108 verse 10 says, who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom? In other words, the psalmist is saying, then verse 13 of Psalm 108 says, through God we shall do valiantly, for it is He that shall tread down our enemies. So the psalmist is saying this. Now understand what Isaiah is saying.

The psalmist is saying, who will take me into the strong city? Who is strong enough, in other words, to take us into those areas of our life that are too strong for me to overcome? Who will take me there? Who's going to take me into those areas that are so big or maybe so painful? Those areas that are so deep that you will not visit yourself. Who is it that can take me there? Who is it that can take me to those areas of the flesh that are like walled cities? And you'll have them. Every last one of us sitting here tonight, there are areas in our lives that we do not allow God to go near.

Strongholds. So the psalmist is saying, who is it? Well, Isaiah is saying, there is somebody who's come from Bozrah. There is somebody who's coming from the very stronghold, from the very city of Edom itself.

See, the magnificence of Isaiah 63 is this. The psalmist has said, Edom, from days, from Esau's day. Esau, have I hated? Why? Because he was a man of the flesh.

He was a man who God hated because he didn't desire the things of God. He's always linked to the things of the flesh. And so when the psalmist picks it up, he's recounting this.

And he's saying, this Edom is such a walled city. It's those areas that hold us captive that we cannot escape from. But Isaiah sees something different.

See, the psalmist says, who can take me there? Isaiah says, there's somebody coming from the capital city of the flesh. There's somebody, I see, coming out of the very center, the capital, the very center of the flesh. I see somebody coming from Edom and from the capital itself.

The very stronghold of life. Who is this person? This is what Isaiah is saying. This is why Isaiah chapter 63 is probably one of the most exciting chapters in the whole book of Isaiah.

We've got some exciting chapters that we understand. But this particular chapter is one that is saying, I see somebody who is coming from the very capital of the city of the flesh called Edom. Somebody's coming out of that place.

Who can take me there? See, the question in Psalm 108, who can take me there? This is so strong in my life. There is no freedom from some of the strongholds in our lives. Sometimes our personalities are so strong that they hold us captive.

Who can deliver us? So the psalmist is asking, is there anybody? Well, Isaiah sees someone coming out of the very center of the very capital of Edom called Bozrah. And he's dyed his garments from Bozrah. He says, look at this, in this glorious apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength.

So in other words, here is somebody that Isaiah is saying that somebody has come out of this capital of Edom and coming out in strength. Most of us, when we are captivated by the power of the flesh, we come out in weakness. When the flesh gets a hold of our lives, it destroys us.

It breaks us down. We feel discouraged. We want to serve God.

It's like the apostle Paul. He says, when I want to do good, I really want to do good. But I find myself always doing wrong.

The very things that I don't want to do, I find myself always doing them. See, when we come out of the flesh, we're weakened. We don't like it.

How many of you have got into intense fellowship with somebody in your family? Here you are, the Christian in your workplace. And you've been giving this great testimony of smiling every day because I'm a born again believer. And you've got this big old mug, coffee mug on your desk that says Jesus saves.

And you've got this great testimony. And all of a sudden something happens and you just get so angry, so mad. And you fly off the handle and you let them have it.

How do you feel? You come out from the stronghold. When you come out of the stronghold of the flesh, you come out miserable, defeated. You come out discouraged.

The flesh is always ugly. There's never a time that you, it's never a win-win situation when you get into the flesh, folks. Never a win-win situation.

It's always ugly, it's always hurtful. Somebody gets hurt and you walk away with condemnation as big as the world on your shoulders. See, this is what he's talking about.

Who can take me into the strong city? Who can take me into the strong city and bring deliverance? I've tried. I can't. And beloved, none of us can.

We can't come out of this in our own strength. We can't do it. The flesh likes to sleep, never get up and pray.

The flesh likes to read quickly. If you're on a reading program, we see how fast we can read it. We don't meditate on what God is speaking because we're on a time.

Read this chapter. We've done our devotions. Praise the Lord.

Let's go on our job. God protect my day. Hallelujah.

Glory to God. And the next thing, someone bumps us. Hey, what are you doing? And then by the time we get on the job, we're discouraged.

The devil is there. He's yelling at you. And you're just saying, yep, this is me.

But see, Isaiah, Isaiah, he's a watchman. And he's standing on the ramparts of Jerusalem, which is symbolic of life and the presence and the glory of God. And he's the one that's looking out.

He's saying, hey, I see somebody. I see somebody coming out of the, not just out of the area of the flesh, but coming out of Bozrah, which is the very center, capital of the flesh. I see somebody who's been in there and coming out.

Nobody comes out victoriously out of the flesh. Nobody. But I see somebody who is coming out, coming out in strength, in greatness of his strength.

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. So here is somebody who is coming out of this place in absolute victory. So Isaiah, who's emulating this watchman on the watchtower, looking out over this whole thing that's taking place, it's like the Song of Solomon.

Who is this that's coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved? Song of Solomon saw, it was this wedding feast as the watchman saw, looked out into the desert places as they made their way up to Jerusalem. And the writer of the Song of Solomon says, who is this coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved? Obviously the natural was Solomon with his bride and this entourage of all these people. It was a huge big venture as Solomon was coming up to Jerusalem with his bride.

But the writer says, who is this? But for us spiritually, it's Christ. He's coming up out of this wilderness. It's Christ and we're leaning on Him.

You can't come out of the wilderness in your own strength. You can't come out of the captivity of the flesh in your own power. You can't do it.

So who is this coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on His beloved? It's us. And so this is what Isaiah sees. He takes a look at this.

He says, so he's asking the question as the watchman one more time. He says, wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine vat? He says, I don't understand it. You're coming out of the very center of Edom, Basra, the capital of the flesh.

You're coming out. But why are your garments all red? It's like you've been standing in the wine press. It's like somebody who got into the vat and been squeezing the grapes, trampling on the grapes.

Your garments are all splattered. Why are thou red? And in verse 3 he says, I have trodden the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with me. And I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in my fury.

Now you see, when you read this and you take it just historically, you've got to understand that the Assyrians came in. And there was a slaughter. There were people that were killed.

And the garments were splattered with blood. Yes, that's true historically. But when we understand it now that we're looking this side of the cross, we begin to understand that he's talking about Christ.

He's talking about Christ. He's talking about the wine press of sin. Beloved, the picture of this is so amazingly powerful.

He says, I have trodden the wine press alone. In other words, this person went into the very center of humanity, into the very capital of the flesh of self. Jesus came from heaven and he came and dwelt among us as a man.

He came into the very center of all humanity. And the Bible says that he trod the wine press alone. Now, the wine press in those days, it was, they would hew this big old vat.

It would be about this deep, maybe a little bit deeper, about a foot and a half to two feet deep. But they would dig it out, a huge round part, and they would dig it out of solid stone. And so this would be rock.

It's not made out of wood or anything like this. This is cut out of solid stone and then it's made with a little angle and then a little spout. And then it goes down into another vat that they dig into deeper rock.

And that's going to be a little bit deeper to capture all of this juice that's coming out. And so what they would do, they would bring all these baskets of grapes, all these big red juicy grapes, and they would just dump them into this huge, the first one, the big round one, dug out of stone. And then what would happen is that they would wash their feet and then these men and women, they would climb into this dugout area called a wine press.

And in order to get the juice to come out of the grapes, they had a trump on these things. And as they trumped on them, the grapes would burst and splatter onto the garments. And so this is what Isaiah is seeing.

He's saying this garment that you're wearing is looking like it's been splattered with the juice of grapes. It looks like you've been walking in this vat that they've just dumped all these grapes and you've been trampling down all of these grapes. And see how important it is, is that every, the life is in the grape.

And so all the juice, unless that thing is trodden down and all of that stuff is broken down, the juice doesn't run out, but then the juice goes down into the second vat. Let me tell you what Jesus did for us, beloved. This sounds like a history lesson, but let me tell you what Jesus did.

The world came along and he took the basket full of grapes, every sin known to mankind, and they dumped it into this big old wine vat. And this is what is being declared in Isaiah 63. This is exactly what he is saying.

He said, I tread it. He said, I have trodden the wine press alone. So there was no help.

But every sin known to mankind was dumped into that one vat. And he said, every single one of them, I began to trample them underfoot. I began to break every grape down.

You see, you only get juice when the foot is placed upon the grape. And that thing is crushed and all the juice begins to run out. And see what Jesus is saying, that every single sin known to mankind was underfoot.

I was trampling every single one of them. There is nothing where the life of that thing can continue to hold you. See, this is what he is saying.

He said, I trampled, I got into that wine press alone, and every stamp I took and walked around, everything that would hold any body captive, I crushed that thing underfoot. And all of its juice, all of its life ran out into another place, never to hold you captive again. See, that's what he is talking about.

He says, that's what I've done for every single human being. It's so hard to even begin to believe that that's what he would have done. But this is what he has said.

This is what Isaiah is saying. Who is coming out of the very center of life, where the stronghold is, with his garments dipped in blood, he says, in red, he says, I have gone in and I have trampled every single sin that can be named, everything. There is nothing left that I haven't crushed, destroyed, and the life of it has run out and gone into another place, never to hold you captive again.

Beloved, that's what he's done for us. This is what Isaiah is seeing. This is what he sees when he sees this man coming out, and when he says, and I will tread them in mine anger.

See, you've got to understand that God sent his son, and in anger. It's not just anger against people. We're not talking about physical warfare yet.

He says, God was so, Jesus was so angry that any single sin would hold you captive. He said, in my anger, in the wrath of God. He said, I was going to take the wrath of God on every single thing that can be destroyed in your life.

You've got to see that the emotion of God is to come against everything. You might think God doesn't care, that he hasn't dealt with these things in your life. The Bible tells me that in his wrath and his anger, he trampled them in his fury.

When Jesus walked upon this earth and was upon that cross, it was in the fury of God. He says, I will destroy everything that comes against my people. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. There is, God has an anger towards sin like you wouldn't believe. And he said, and the blood shall be a sprinkle upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed has come. Now listen to what he goes on to say. Look at verse 7. I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord and the praises of the Lord.

So here he comes at the end of this. He's talking about, I tread down in verse 6, all the people in my anger, meaning all the sin. He's brought it down to nothing.

Now verse 7, this is Isaiah stepping back and he says, I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord and the praises of the Lord according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us. What has he bestowed on me? What is he talking about? What is the loving kindness of God? What are the praises? What has he bestowed upon me? He says, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel. What is this? That not one single solitary grape or sin will remain behind undoubted by Christ.

Every single thing. That's the goodness of God. Isaiah steps back when he gets the revelation of who's this coming out of Bozrah with his garments all in red.

And then he says, I've trampled out every single grape. I trotted alone. And he's giving them the hope.

He says, this is the goodness of God. That he will place it upon us and give us his life and his goodness. Great goodness towards the house of Israel which hath bestowed on them according to his mercies and according to the multitude of his loving kindness.

Out of absolute mercy now, I come and bestow upon you freedom. Absolute freedom. That God says, I declare you totally free because of my mercy.

For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie. So he was their savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted.

And the angel of his presence saved them in his love and in his pity he redeemed them. And he bared them and carried them all the days of old. So this is the vision that Isaiah sees.

Freedom from the power of sin. Isn't that awesome? You sound really excited. You don't have to get too excited here tonight.

But that's the truth. That's what he saw. And it thrills the heart.

God never abandons man to the result of his sin and folly. God always interferes, arresting and changing and restoring. Then he calls men to become a participant with him.

Now I was telling Elder Bill a little while ago, I was walking with my two grandkids home when they were up here during the Christmas time. And I had one umbrella and they had another little umbrella and one was underneath there. And the little girl was under mine.

Bronwyn was under mine. Broderick had his own umbrella. And we were walking and the rain was coming down.

And so I had the umbrella really there. Now understand why I want to give you this illustration. God never abandons man to the result of his sin and folly.

He won't abandon us. It's in the heart of God to fight all of our enemies. It's in the heart of God to interfere in our lives until we come and we know him in the capacity that he desires and he calls us into ministry with him.

It's always been the heart of God. So here I am walking now, kids close to me, and I'm holding the umbrella real close. And all I can see is a few feet in front of me.

And if I see some people walking to me, I can see if they're going to walk to the left or to the right. And then I move the kids whichever way they're moving to let them bypass and we can keep ourselves under the umbrella. And so I'm walking back to the apartment and down the street here on 50th and I'm walking down with them and we're just singing a song and we're just talking and having great fun and watching.

And suddenly I see some feet coming towards me. And I'm checking this out to see, are they going to move to the left or to the right? They're not moving any which way. And so suddenly they're coming real close.

And I thought, these people, this person is not moving to the left or to the right. I don't know which way to move the kids. And so I lift the umbrella like this, straight up.

And here is a guy, absolutely demon possessed. He was in the air already. By the time I lift this thing up, this guy is in the air.

He's diving over my umbrella. He's going to just dive upon us. I don't know what he has in mind at all.

But I got these two little grandkids with me. And I lift the umbrella up like this and the guy goes flying by. And he turns around, he swings around, he looks at me with evil like I can tell you only comes from the devil.

He looks at me with all this evil in mind. And I looked at that man and I thought to one second, you come close to these kids, buddy. I might be a pastor at Times Square Church, but I'm telling you, you come close to these kids.

And there's going to be another person who's going to react and respond. Something else is going to take. I'm not a pacifist when it comes to my grandkids.

Touch my grandkids, you're touching me. And I'm not saying I was going to fight him or anything like this. I might have just rebuked him in the name of Jesus.

And the Holy Ghost would have come down upon him. And angels would have thrown him on the ground. And a yellow cab would have rode over him.

And something like that would have happened. A miracle would have happened. I wouldn't have had to touch him.

But I'm telling you something. Everything inside of me got stirred at the thought that he can do anything to me. I don't care.

But don't touch the kids. That's the heart of God. See, this is the heart of Almighty God.

He says, don't touch my kids. And this is the fury. This is why he went against every power that holds us captive.

He went against that thing with a fury to set us free. This is the heart of God. This is why David, when he says, I hate them with a perfect hatred.

He says, I hate them that hate you. I hate them that hate you. And I hate them with a perfect hatred.

Listen, we're told not to hate. How does David get away with writing the Psalms that says, I hate them that hate you with a perfect hatred. He's not talking about people.

He might have been talking about his enemies, yes. But that's not for us. He's talking about every single thing that is against Christ.

He says, I hate. And we should come to the same place. God, I hate anything and everything that doesn't like your way.

Anything inside of me. And you've dealt with it, God. You have got the victory over every enemy in my life.

Everything that hates Christ. You have given us the victory over that. Hallelujah.

Now listen. Turn with me to Jonah. I'll take a couple of minutes in Jonah.

Let me tell you real quick. Jonah. Jonah.

Jonah chapter one. Running from God. Jonah chapter two.

Running to God. Jonah chapter three. Running with God.

Exactly what I said to you. God never abandons man to the result of his own sin of folly. So here we have Jonah in chapter one, running from the very face of God.

He says this in verse one, verse three. But Jonah. You got to find Jonah.

It's after Obadiah. And it's between Micah. And Mike goes by Nahum and Nahum I got a marker so I know how to get there fast If you can't find it go to the front of your Bible, it'll tell you what page it's on Jonah chapter 1 He's running from the face of God He's running from the presence of God says this in verse 3 Jonah But Jonah rose up to flee and to Tarshish from the very presence of the Lord and went down a job now beloved It's in it's within every single one of us Don't think of Jonah as this man called just to go to Tash and go to Geneva Don't think of him as a cold man at this moment.

Just think of Jonah as Every single one of us you see when God begins to touch something in a heart we flee from his face But God wants us to meet with him face to face He wants us to meet with him, but Jonah he says he rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord now The word presence there literally means in the in the original language. It means face It means the attitude the sentiments or the feelings it means looking into the face of someone who will reflect something to you See Jonah isn't just running from Well, we came to Times Square Church, and we felt the presence of Jesus now I'm running away because I don't want to stay in his presence. No, no, no He's not talking about the presence of God that we enjoy here at Times Square Church where we sense the Holy Ghost here The literal Hebrew translation is saying this I'm fleeing from looking God in the face because I don't want to see what he is saying to me because I don't want him To deal with something in my life That's what he's saying.

So when he's saying he fled from the presence of the Lord. He is fleeing from looking God face to face It's an amazing thing the face that is hard Jeremiah 5 3 says is defiant So you always know somebody who's walking in hardness towards the things of the Lord because their face is a defiant look It's defiance. That's what the scriptures tell us in Jeremiah 5 3 says don't be afraid of their faces.

It's a defiant look The hard face is also impudent and proud It's also a ruthless looking face the face that is shining Shows joy, you know, it's when you come into someone's presence if someone's likes you it's like the other day my two little grandkids They three and gonna he's gonna be two and these little guys love their Papa I Love the grandma, but they love the Papa a whole lot more That's because I've always got candies. I've always got marshmallows. They love marshmallows I've always got marshmallows at my house.

I can always get my grandkids on my side I always have just pick up a packet of marshmallows and I they are sold So, yeah, we got these these grandkids now listen They Fiona is three years old and and little Hayden is two They know nothing of my background They don't know what I make they don't know what I do They have some kind of understanding They just know when they come to Papa's house and they call me Papa because that's what they just know That's what we've said. Call me Papa Papa Papa, so they say Papa so they don't know anything more They see us occasionally and we have Fiona for three days at a shot. She doesn't cry when she leaves her mother She loves coming to her house.

She'll spend three days with us and never asked for her mother or her father and I love that and She comes and she stays with us and it's awesome Well the other day we were on the 25th floor and the other day my daughter-in-law Was dropped off by my son and she she called up and she said Meet me at the bottom and you can help me with the kids and all the luggages they came up upstairs. And so I Said okay, but I was on the phone and and And I was late so I rush out and I get the elevator down but they caught the elevator up and we missed each other up on the up and down and So I went to the doorman and the doorman said oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, I saw a lady with all these kids Yep. Yep.

Yep. Lots of luggage and off they went so I get back the elevator and I go up I am like on the 22nd floor going up and I can hear them yelling On the 25th floor. I hear them screaming My daughter-in-law says she has never heard the kids yell so loud in all their life and they were just yelling There was screaming for me and then when I opened the elevator opened up and I stepped out These kids just Jumped for joy and ran to me and I had to pick up this one and pick up this one in my arms and carry them in as they were Papa Papa Papa, you see I Share this with you because I love my grandkids But I share it with you because there's an importation.

They don't know anything about my background They don't know where I come from. They don't know what I do. They don't know what I make They don't understand hardly anything, but there is something that emanates from me to them that they know And I want to tell you that that is the heart of God that regardless of your struggle You might be calling out Papa He is just as eager to meet you and a hold you in his arms and there is an impartation of God to you It's by the Holy Ghost.

You see beloved when you come by faith to Jesus It's not always do ten things and he's gonna minister to you or touch your life there's an importation of God to us by the Holy Ghost just because he loves us and There's something and if you run into his arms, you see when you read Isaiah I say it tells you what he's done for us And then he says he gives that to us and bestows that goodness upon us just by his mercy And so there's something that happens when you come into the friends now This is what Jonah's running from he knows that if he comes face-to-face with God, he's gonna find the God is merciful He hates the Assyrians He doesn't want God to be merciful on these horrid people. He doesn't like him He's racist in his heart He's got a problem with these people rightly so because these people have hurt and damaged and killed and destroyed They were wicked people. They have no conscience.

They they they torture they killed a man without Any conscience at all and I and Jonah knows this He knows what these people are like. He knows that they don't deserve God They don't deserve God's love God's nothing. They know no, I'm not going there.

I Can't go into his presence because if I come into the presence of God, I'm gonna see his face And his face is gonna reflect mercy and love There's gonna be an impartation of God to me and I don't want it You see this is what he's running for when you understand most people run from God not because they think that he's gonna punish them But because he's gonna be merciful to those that we don't want him to be merciful to How many of you want a spouse to pay the price you see mothers always know I Remember as a kid. I could lie to my dad. I could lie bold-faced to my father my dad He was a clerk all of his life and he used to on the weekends fix automobiles in those days they didn't have computer chips and things like this and you could you could fix those things manually and so he used to fix cars for other people just as a hobby and and So he would do this and he wouldn't charge them.

He'd just do it for fun And so he'd fix these cars on the weekend and he'd park him there and sometime during the week These people would come get their car But he didn't know that when he fixed these cars I would hotwire these things I used to hotwire those things and go driving I was like 12 13 years old He's a hotwire the car and then just to go off drive you get with my friends in and we used to drive erratically just Drive these things couldn't change gears great them constant John's just drive down the road And then I would spray all the yard with water so they wouldn't see the tracks. I Was an expert liar and I could cheat my dad I tell you I could he could say did you take did you did you drive the car? Did you drive that car today? I could bold life face him in the face and lie here lie to him Baldy He would he wouldn't know whether I'd he wouldn't know nothing But I could never lie to my mother For some reason mama's just know They just know And you know what it was you know why I couldn't lie to my mother because in her face I would see disappointment I Would see something in her that always confronted me with my wrong I saw in my mother something always stirred me, so I I'd lie to my dad, but I don't want to see my mom Because in her face. I would see something.

I don't want to deal with Does it make sense That's why Jonah is running from God. He doesn't want to deal with it. He doesn't want to deal with the God who's ultimately merciful loving caring graceful full of tender compassion This is what he sees And see this is why he runs He doesn't want to deal with it because in his heart There's something that he's holding on to he knows God's dealt with it, but he's holding on to it So it's better not to come into his presence because in his presence.

I will see something Face to face you know Jacob Jacob he writes in Genesis well Moses writes it actually About Jacob and and writes there, and he writes about Jacob. He said you know Jacob met God face to face and The end result of that meeting with God face to face Jacob says My life was spared My life was spared meeting with God means My life gets paid Moses spoke to God face to face Jonah Runs from the presence of God because he doesn't want to see the compassion of God Touch something in him That he doesn't want to deal with himself There's something in the heart You see beloved That which is in the heart is Bosra. It's the capital city of the flesh But there's somebody who's gone into the capital Destroyed it and is now walking out in strength And I want to tell you that Every single thing that was a weakness in you That was something that would destroy your life and bring you down to a place of weakness Discouragement condemnation Somebody went there for you, and he is coming out in strength He's not coming out discouraged.

He's not coming. Yes. There's red stains on his garments, but he's coming out in strength This is what Isaiah sees he's coming out in strength And he's not coming to condemn you He said but if you will meet with me face to face If you meet me face to face I'm not gonna condemn you I'm not gonna say to you what a wicked person you are you already know that But when you come face to face That's what Isaiah says He says what's bestowed upon me when I meet God face to face His grace His mercy Loving kindness Jacob says when I met God face to face I came away with life My life is spared.

I didn't die My life is spared face to face You meet him you look upon him and You will see the love the compassion and the grace He's strong I'm weak I Look upon him. I walk in his strength And he bestows upon me Amen Love kindness goodness For the areas that you are struggling with Come look tonight I'm giving you an invitation simple invitation you come to this altar. I Invite you to not run from God But come and look at him Doesn't matter what you've done Doesn't matter what's got a hold of your heart You come and you look him face to face and You'll see the tenderness and the mercy and the grace amen Let's stand don't move out of the sanctuary just stand straight up where you are and let me pray Lord Jesus I made three statements tonight You never abandon us But you do interfere in our lives You stir us you corner us You allow things to happen All for the purpose That you can meet us face to face The Bible says you prepared a whale For Jonah you prepared it whether it was in a miraculous event.

I don't know, but you prepared it and in that whale In that whale in that circumstance in that dark place in that moment of fear beloved This week has been a very soul-searching week for me God has touched something very deep in my life And I thank him for it, but we're afraid to let God touch us because there's fear There's anxieties There's concerns But tonight I Know that you're struggling the Holy Spirit has shown me so clearly You want the blessing of God we heard about the blessing on on Tuesday night, and we want it But we don't feel we deserve it because there are things in Basra the strong city That we can't deal with pains hurts difficulties sins Captivated by the enemy But I want to tell you tonight You come look in the face of Jesus tonight and You are gonna see love Forgiveness and mercy Now father I believe that you're gonna do this in Jesus name. Amen God spoke in your heart step right out and you come you come to this altar tonight Just step right out you come on down and come meet Jesus face-to-face. He's gonna meet you tonight Not with anger He was angry at some He's gonna meet you with tenderness and care and love you come tonight in Jesus name Let me just go back to one illustration I can't explain I Don't give much hold my grandchildren theology.

I don't go into the depths of Calvary with them they three years old and two years old I don't go into great depths of all the the deep Theological discourses that belong in the scriptures. I don't do that But something they know something that when they come close to Papa Something comes from my heart to them and they feast on it. I can't explain it.

I can't explain What is transferred from my heart to them? That's what Jesus took up a little child They came into his arms and There was something that emanates from God and it's it's the work of the Holy Spirit tonight We can't explain the work of the Holy Spirit I can't explain how it works I can't explain this is what's gonna happen, but I know one thing for sure That as you come into his presence tonight, which you have done There's gonna flow from God something so supernatural to you into your heart that he's gonna start to remove the pain He's gonna remove the anxieties and you're gonna see love. You're gonna see grace. You're gonna see forgiveness.

You're gonna see God just giving and imparting to you man can't give it to you We can't we can shake your hand. We can say I love you. I'll pray for you God bless you, but that's that's the limitation of who we

are and what we can give to you But God gives you so much more when you come into his arms now now listen to the scripture I've got several here, but let me read some scriptures to you and I want to want to ask you to do one thing I want you to close your eyes and I want to just read some scripture to you And I want you to see the face of God as I read scripture because God reveals himself in his word And as you close your eyes, I'm gonna read scripture to you And I want you to see that this is God speaking and imparting into your heart something tonight Exodus chapter 19 verse 4 says you have seen what I did unto the Egyptians and How I bear you on Eagle's wings and brought you unto myself John 10 says this and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand My father which gave them me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand I and my father are One listen to Psalm 48 According to thy name.

Oh God, so is thy praise unto the ends of all the earth Thy right hand is full of righteousness Listen to Psalm 16 verse 11. Thou will show me the path of life in thy presence or face to face is fullness of joy and at thy right hand There are pleasures forevermore Listen to Luke 11 20, but if I by the finger of God cast out devils No doubt the kingdom of God has come upon you listen to Deuteronomy chapter 33 the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath of the everlasting arms and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee and shall say destroy them Psalm Isaiah 42 says this I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and I will hold my hand and will keep thee Listen to Isaiah 46 verse 4 and even to your old age. I am he and Even to the whole hairs, which means the gray hairs.

Will I carry you I Have made and I will bear even I will carry and Will deliver you Isaiah 40 verse 11 is the last verse. I'm going to read He shall feed his flock like a shepherd he shall gather the lambs in his arm and Carry them in his bosom He shall gently lead those That are with you Lord Jesus tonight These scriptures or your face and Lord tonight we look into the face of God in the Word We see the glory of God Corinthians Paul writes to the Corinthians and says you see the glory of God in the face of Jesus He's the one who's come out of Bozra Strong now pray this with me Lord Jesus. I look into your face, which is your word and Tonight I see no condemnation.

I See love Kindness Forgiveness Gentleness I give you my son and all my struggles And I receive your mercy and your grace and I know tonight Above everything I'm loved and I receive it In Jesus name Now let me pray for you Now Lord, I don't know How it all works. I don't understand it, but I don't think you want us to know how it works You want us just to enjoy it You want us just to receive from your hand That's What Isaiah said when he comes to the end of verse 6 He says all the loving kindness and the mercy of God. He became a recipient Of what you've done for us Lord I don't know how it's important.

I don't know how the Holy Ghost works in every heart at the same time But I know one thing as we look into your face tonight We're forgiven We free we loved we clean We have found mercy and We leave tonight blessed and like Jacob We can say when I looked in his face my life was spared and I give you thanks in Jesus name amen Just give him thanks This is the conclusion of the message

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