

# Happiness is ■ Luke 10 17-24

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon emphasizes the joy and privilege of knowing God intimately, highlighting the importance of humility and openness to God's revelation. It explores the depth of knowledge between the Father and the Son, encouraging a teachable spirit to receive divine wisdom. The sermon also underscores the unique blessings and insights available to believers through the New Testament, the church, and the Holy Spirit, surpassing even the experiences of prophets and kings in the Old Testament.*

**Scripture:** Acts 28:3, Ephesians 4:11, Psalms 51:12, John 3:16, 1 Peter 1:10

**Topics:** "Intimacy with God", "Humility in Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Amen, so let's turn to the word and we're in Luke chapter 10, Luke chapter 10 and I'm going to read 17 through 24, Luke chapter 10 reading 17 through 24. Then the 70 returned with joy saying, Lord even the demons are subject to us in your name. And he said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them to babes.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in your sight. All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see.

For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and hear what you hear, and have not heard it. So remember the background. Jesus sends out the 70.

This is separate from the 12 that he sent out in chapter 9. He sends them out to preach and to heal the sick. It doesn't say that he sent them to cast out demons, but clearly they were casting out demons, because it speaks about the fact that demons were subject to them. They then come back.

We don't know a time frame. We don't know how long that was, but after a certain time they come back, and obviously they are rejoicing because the demons are subject to them. This is probably the most powerful thing that they could understand.

Preaching the gospel obviously doesn't produce any discernible results, or any immediate results. The fruit of the gospel takes a little bit of time to evidence. Healing, well, that has become commonplace to them.

But casting out demons, this was really sort of the peak of their kind of authority that they had. And clearly they're doing it in the right way. They're doing it in the name of Jesus.

Remember there were others in the book of Acts that tried to cast out demons, and it wasn't in the name of Jesus. And so the 70 returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. Now, Jesus' response is that, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, and then he speaks about the reason for rejoicing.

So when he says, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, this is a little difficult. Some people connected to the casting out of Satan from heaven right at the beginning. The problem is that the tense that is used here is past continuous tense.

So he's not referring to a one-time event. He is referring to an ongoing series of events. So literally what he is saying is, I saw Satan constantly being cast out of heaven, or fall like lightning from heaven.

So what does that mean? And of course, again, the learned people will argue endlessly about exactly what it means. But remember the context in which Jesus is saying it. The context is always important.

We spoke about that on Thursday night. The context is, they're saying the demons are subject to us. Jesus is saying, I saw Satan being cast out on an ongoing basis.

In other words, Jesus is connecting the casting out. And I'm not denying that Satan was cast out of heaven. We understand that.

But I saw him being cast out while you were doing these things. In other words, the kingdom of darkness is being destroyed on an ongoing basis, one victory at a time. Now this becomes complicated because we say, well, you know, what about the cross? Didn't Jesus gain ultimate victory at the cross? Yes, He did.

But at the same time, the devil's kingdom is still very much alive. We just need to go out there and into the world, and we turn your television on, and we know that Satan's kingdom is still very much alive. And even after the cross and the resurrection, He is still called the God of this world, and still speaks of the fact that the world lies in the lap of the wicked one.

So while God has regained authority, if you will, not that God ever lost authority, but has conquered the devil, He is allowing him to continue. And we know that He will allow him to continue until the millennial reign, when He will bind Satan for a thousand years. At the end of the thousand years, He is loosed again for a little while.

He deceives the nations, and then He is taken, and He's finally cast into the lake of fire, and He plagues us no longer after that. And so it's a process of Him gaining the victory, literally one soul at a time. Could He have claimed His victory? Could Jesus have claimed His victory at the cross and said, I've defeated the devil, I've paid the price of ransom for the souls, now the devil is to be bound, and He's never going to plague anyone anymore.

Yes, He could have done that. He had every power and every authority to do so. But God in His wisdom chose not to do that, and I'm not going to try and get into all of the reasons for that.

And so the kingdom of Satan, and this is a problem, is that we're looking for the kingdom of Satan to be destroyed in one fell swoop. If we can just go up to the mountain here where the crosses are, and do some spiritual warfare up there, and march around a little bit, and put some oil on those crosses, and we can bind the devil, and we'll have no more trouble with him here in Sun Valley. Well, that's been tried a thousand times over in every city in the world, and it clearly doesn't work.

We don't have that kind of, that's not within the context of God's plan. But God's plan is to dismantle the power of Satan, or the kingdom of Satan, one soul at a time. And in the end, we know the book of Revelation, the bottom line is that Jesus wins.

And so He has begun, in the preaching of the kingdom, to bring Satan down from his high position. When it says, I saw him fall like lightning, I've struggled with that idea. What exactly does he mean, I saw him fall like lightning? Well, when he speaks about lightning, we know the thing about lightning is that it is a flash, it's there for a moment, and you can see it, and then it's gone.

Maybe the consequence of the lightning is left. And what is the consequence? The consequence is destruction, fire, or burning, or something broken where the lightning struck. But the lightning also doesn't just strike once, it continues to strike over and over.

We don't know much about lightning storms here in Los Angeles, we never see, except maybe the flash is way up there in the desert. I love watching the lightning when I have an opportunity. And it flashes here, and then it's over there, and then it's over there, and it's an ongoing thing.

And I think that that's really what He is speaking about. But now let's get back to the point that Jesus is making. So they're rejoicing because the demons are subject to them.

And in fact, many years ago, I heard a very well-known preacher in South Africa preach on this passage. And the point of his message was that if you want to have some rejoicing, if you need some joy in your life, all you need to do is go and cast out a few demons, and you'll have rejoicing. Now, I don't understand how people can come to those sorts of conclusions when you just need to read two verses further and understand exactly what Jesus has to say about it.

And He says, or three verses, Behold, I give you authority, and I'm going to come back to that. And then, Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, but that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven. So the basis of our rejoicing is not that demons are subject to us, but that our names are written in heaven.

So that whole idea, and I know it's very popular in charismatic circles to say, well, you know, if we go out and we do some spiritual warfare, and we get some victory over the devil, and we do a spiritual march around the city, and that, or I don't even know what they call the thing, do a march, a prayer march, and

anoint the corners of the city with oil, we'll have great rejoicing, because no, that's not where our rejoicing comes from. Our rejoicing comes from the fact that our names are written in the book of life. In other words, that we are saved.

I'm not going to analyze that concept of the book of life, or written in heaven, but we understand that that is just another way of saying that we are saved, that we are born again. That is the basis of our rejoicing. If we're going to rejoice over anything else, our joy will be fleeting.

We'll have joy at one moment, and we'll be discouraged the next moment. Remember that at the same time that some of these guys were casting out demons, others were not able, or maybe the same guys were not able to cast out demons out of another individual. And so, if the basis of our rejoicing is the success that we're having in dealing with demons, or in any other endeavor, in any other work of the gospel, whether it's in the preaching of the gospel, and people are getting saved, and we rejoice, and we say, and obviously we do rejoice when people get saved.

The angels in heaven rejoice over one soul that comes to repentance. There's no question about that. But if that is where my joy comes from, it's going to be an up-and-down experience, because not everybody is going to accept the gospel.

A majority of people will reject the gospel. And then I have no basis for rejoicing, because I'm preaching, preaching, preaching, nobody's hearing the gospel, so now I get downcast. The basis of my rejoicing is not in response to the gospel, is not on the basis of healing, is not on the basis of miracles, is not on the basis of the casting out of demons, is not on the basis of the church growing, it is on the basis that my name is written in the book of life.

That is the basis of our joy. It is something that I guess us as preachers have to learn more and more as we see less and less results, and we find frustration. Many, many preachers are dealing with frustration and disappointment, seeing things not happening the way they expect them to happen, the way they want them to happen, the way they used to happen.

No, our rejoicing is not what is happening out in the world. It's not what's happening even in the church. It is what's happened when Jesus saved my soul.

And you remember the message from Peter not so long ago, that there are those who have forgotten that they were purged from their former sins. They'd forgotten that they were purged from their former sins. Folks, we can never get away from this essential part of the message.

It doesn't matter how deep we get into understanding the scriptures. It doesn't matter how much God uses us or doesn't use us in the preaching of the gospel or in ministry, but at the end of the day, the basis of our rejoicing is the fact that we have been saved. But we take that for granted.

We say, well, I'm saved now. What's next? No, I'm saved, and that's all that matters. It doesn't mean that we don't grow in grace.

It doesn't mean that we grow in obedience and that we grow in effectiveness in the ministry of whatever ministry God has called us to. But at all, the basis of my joy is not in those things. But the basis of my joy is in the fact that my name is written in heaven.

I'm not rejoicing because of what happens in politics. I don't rejoice in what happens on the stock exchange. I don't rejoice in what happens in the weather.

We have a wonderful day today. Last Sunday was cold and miserable. That's not the basis of our rejoicing.

The basis of our rejoicing is in one thing only, and that is that Jesus died for me, and He saved my soul, and He's written my name in the book of life, and that He's coming again for me. That is the basis of our rejoicing. And it doesn't matter what happens around us.

It doesn't matter how many disappointments we deal with. It doesn't matter how many hardships we deal with. And who knows, we'll probably get locked down again by the looks of things, and we may have to stay at home again for another three weeks or four weeks or whatever it is, because of the increase of the virus.

The fact that we can't meet, if that happens, and we can't meet together like this, then that is not why we rejoice or don't rejoice. The fact that we're not inside, but we're out in the sun and the heat this morning, that's not the basis of our discouragement or disappointment. Our basis of our joy is to be found in our salvation.

And you remember it was David who said when he repents in Psalm 51, he says, Lord, restore to me the joy of Thy salvation. Many Christians have lost the joy of their salvation. They've got used to being saved.

They've got used to being in a relationship with God. And as Peter says, they've forgotten where they came from. They've forgotten that God brought us out of a horrible pit, that He has removed our sin as far as the east is from the west, that we who had no right to salvation, who had no right to a relationship with God, that God in His grace and in His mercy extended His hand to us, and He saved us and brought us to Himself.

That we who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from God, and not just strangers from God, but His enemies, He loved us and He died for us. That is the basis of our rejoicing. May God help us to never forget this, to when we find ourselves being discouraged because of the present situation that we find ourselves in, because of our finances or because of the lack of ability to move around, the virus and all of the stuff that we're dealing with, may in each of those things the Lord bring us back to this basis that we have something that we can rejoice in, and that no one can take from us, and that is our names are written in that Lamb's book of life, and that Jesus is coming for us again.

That should be the basis of our joy. That should be the basis of our rejoicing. And everything else is cream on top, if you will, but the basis of everything, and we must never get away from this.

I'm afraid that in communion, we tend to make it impersonal. We come to the Lord's table, and we remember what Jesus did at the cross, and of course that's important. Of course that is, we can never forget that.

Jesus says, do this in remembrance of me, but there is a personal aspect that we can never forget when we come to the Lord's table, and that is that He saved me. That what I'm celebrating is not just that He died 2,000 years ago, but that 50 years ago, whenever it was in my life, and it was about just over 50 years ago, He saved my soul, and He washed my sins away, wrote my name in the book of life. That is part of what we celebrate as we come to the Lord's table, as we take the broken body, and we remember

that His body was broken, that I might be healed.

Not just be healed spiritually, but healed physically, body, soul, and spirit. That His blood was shed, that my sins may be forgiven. Not just the sins of the world, but that my sins might be forgiven.

And I believe that we need to have a personal sense of gratitude when we come to the Lord's table. Not just Jesus died, and He died for the world. No, Jesus died for me, and He shed His blood for me, and for that I'm deeply, deeply grateful.

All right, so now let's get back to verse 19. In the context of the fact that he says, I saw Satan fall, he says, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. This is connected to Mark chapter 16, where it speaks about taking up serpents, and we know that there are some who dispute the authenticity of Mark chapter 16.

Let's stick to Luke chapter 10. You will trample on serpents and scorpions, and over the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Does this mean physically, or is this spiritual? Well, first of all, I do believe that it is physical.

I believe it is literal. We have at least one example in the New Testament, in the book of Acts. You remember that Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Malta, and he brings firewood to the fire, and there's a snake in the wood, and the snake is warmed by the fire, and strikes him.

And everybody sits around waiting to see Paul die, but nothing happens to him. And in fact, this was a sign to them that in fact he was indeed a man of God. So I do believe that there is divine protection on those who are saved, and particularly in the context of the preaching of the gospel.

This is particularly true of those who are missionaries, and I've personally heard many, many stories from my grandfather and from other missionaries, who have personally witnessed God's divine protection on the mission field. I've heard missionaries speak about the fact that the witch doctor would try to poison them, and in fact would be sure to put poison in the food. Somehow they'd get the poison in the food, and they'd sit there waiting to see the missionary fall over.

But the missionary doesn't die. Nothing happens to him. His stomach isn't upset.

Nothing happens. He's fine, because he has divine protection. I remember another missionary tale of the local witch doctor coming to attack him and his wife and their daughter.

Their daughter, apparently a young girl, was very pretty, and the witch doctor needed a young woman to sacrifice to his gods, to his ancestors. And so he decided that he was going to take the missionary's daughter. And as they came, he gathered all of the men of the village.

They came to the missionary's house in the middle of the night, and there were angels with flaming swords right around, protecting the missionary and his family. The missionary never saw that. The next morning, many of the men of the village came to be born again, and their testimony was that we came to attack you, and we saw the angels there, and they were protecting you with flaming swords.

And so we can go on and on and tell many, many stories of how God has divinely protected. So I believe that this is real. I believe that this is physical.

But the scripture also says, you shall not tempt the Lord your God. So the idea of snake handlers, and I think we all understand what snake handlers are. These are people who take this verse and say, well, you know, so they had boxes of snakes in the church, and they'll take the snakes out and play with the snakes, and many of them die.

And of course, the excuse is that he died because he didn't have enough faith. Now that is nonsense. Jesus clearly, in being tempted to jump down from the temple, says, you will not tempt the Lord your God.

So we cannot play with danger and expect divine protection. Now does that apply to snakes? Yes, it applies to snakes. Does it apply to poison? It applies to poison.

Does that apply to the coronavirus? It applies to coronavirus. You cannot tempt God and say, He has to protect us, because we're going to be disobedient to His word, or disobedient to a lawful command of the government, and say, God has to protect us. God has no responsibility to protect you against your foolishness.

As we said right at the beginning of this whole process, if you decide to step out and walk across the 405 at five o'clock on a Monday afternoon, don't expect God to protect you. He can't protect you against your own stupidity. And so we cannot use this verse as a carte blanche, as a blanket cover for just doing whatever we want to do, and God has to protect me.

No, He will protect me if I'm in His will. He will not protect me if I'm not in His will. He will protect me if I'm in His will, and particularly in the context of the preaching of the gospel.

But I believe that there is something far more important here. I don't believe that Jesus' primary concern was with serpents and scorpions. His primary concern was with the kingdom of darkness.

The previous verse just spoke about the devil. The verse before that, we cast out demons. And so when He's speaking about serpents and scorpions, He is also, I'm not saying exclusively, but He is also speaking about the power of Satan.

Satan's power, remember right at the beginning, He's revealed as a serpent in the garden of Elbedan. He comes to Eve as a serpent. And right at the end in the book of Revelation, He's called that old serpent.

So the snake is a picture of the devil. And scorpions, I assume, have to be, take the same picture. You remember that in Psalm 22, it speaks about bulls of Mashen, and dogs surrounding Jesus at the cross.

These are demon powers. So they're represented by various things. And so does He protect us against the evil one, against the devil and his hordes? Yes, He does.

And this is the basis of the promise that He gives us. He says, I will give you authority to trample on demons. This does not give us, and we're going to see this in Peter in the next few months as we get further down into Peter, that this does not give us permission to speak evil of dignitaries.

Demons are powerful beings. We need to be careful how we deal with them. But at the same time, we don't run scared of them.

We're not afraid of them. And particularly, we're not dissuaded from doing the will of God, because we're afraid what the devil can do to us. Jesus says, I'm giving you power, and I'm giving you divine protection.

And so the protection He gives us is not just against physical things like snakes and motor accidents even. I've experienced a few times in going out in the old days when I was traveling long distances to go and preach every night of the week, that God's divine protection against a motor accident. I remember one night, and Nina was with me, we were driving along, and it was heavy fog, and you couldn't see more than one cat's eye at a time.

You know what a cat's eye is? These reflectors in the road. I was looking for one cat's eye after the other. That was all.

You couldn't see a line. You could just see the next one, and then the next one. So I don't know, we were maybe doing 20 miles an hour, 10 miles an hour, I don't remember.

But suddenly I stopped, and I had no reason to stop, but I hit the brakes, and I hit them hard. And then I saw lying right in front of me was a black cow. In Africa, many of the cattle lie on the tar road, on the asphalt, on the pavement, because it's warm at night.

It reflects the heat. And there was this cow, and I hadn't seen it, but God had seen it. So He protects us, not just from snakes, but from any kind of physical accident.

But we need to be doing His will. We need to be doing His will. All right, now let's move on.

So rejoice in this, not that the spirits are subject to but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. In that hour, Jesus rejoiced. Now remember a few weeks ago, we said that there are these contrasts, or these parallels, that Luke draws.

And here's another one. So they are rejoicing because the demons are subject to them. He is rejoicing because God has been revealed.

Let me just use that as a shortcut. In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit. So it wasn't an outward rejoicing.

It was an inward rejoicing. Now, we need to say a little about that. Many—earthly joy is an external thing.

We show it with laughter and with smiles and with whatever ways that we express our joy on the outside. But spiritual joy is not necessarily shown on the outside. It is a deep sense of joy inside, a spiritual joy.

And Jesus, why doesn't He just say, He rejoiced? But it says He rejoiced in His Spirit. Deep down inside, there was a joy. There was a peace.

And folks, that's where we need to have the joy. It doesn't matter whether we smile or don't smile. I'm not a smiley person.

And I've borne the burden of being called an angry young man. Now they can't call me an angry young man anymore. So I guess now they call me an angry old man, because I don't smile very much.

It doesn't mean I don't have a sense of humor. It's just that you don't understand my sense of humor. But the fact that I don't smile doesn't mean I don't have joy.

And folks, I have tremendous joy in my heart because of what Jesus does. It doesn't necessarily mean I need to show it. So if you're not that kind of person, don't let people put a thing on you and carry this

monkey on your back that I've got to put on front of being smiley and happy and shining and laughing and do all of this kind of thing.

We're not all that way. Some of us are that way. Some of us are not that way.

But where I need to have joy is deep down in my spirit. I need to know that my spirit is in contact with God's Spirit, and that God is the God of peace in my life, and that I have deep-seated joy over the work that God has done in my life by saving me and by changing me and keeping me and all of these wonderful things. And so Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit, and He says, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent.

I thank you, Father. And then He says, Lord of heaven and earth. This is a Jewish way of speaking or of addressing God.

He is Lord of heaven and of earth. But again, remember the context. The context is in the sense of, and I don't want to use the term spiritual war, because there's a whole lot of wrong connotations to that.

But it's in the context of our interface with Satan and with demons. And what He is reminding us of is that God is the Lord. He is the Master of heaven and of earth.

He is not just God in heaven, but He is God here on earth. He is not just God in Jerusalem. He is God here in Los Angeles, in Sun Valley.

He is Lord everywhere, and everything is under His feet. Everything is under His control. Everything is under His authority, yes, including the devil.

He is the Lord of heaven. And whatever is in heaven, the angels and whatever demons are in the strata between heaven and here, or whatever goes on in there, He is the Lord of those things. He is the Lord of every solar planet, solar constellation out there in the universe.

He's the Lord of all those things, but He's also the Lord in your home. Now, you may not recognize Him as such, but He still is. He still is the boss.

The problem is we don't often want to recognize His boss-ship, His lordship, His authority. But it doesn't mean that He is not. He still is the Lord of heaven and earth.

And then He says that you've hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in your sight. He has hidden them from the wise and the prudent, so God loves stupid people.

No, obviously not. God is the most intelligent being out there. There is no one who has His knowledge.

He knows everything. He is omniscient, and He wants us to know as He knows. Remember, that's one of the joys of the resurrection, is that we will know all things, even as we are known.

So God is not in favor of ignorance. Jesus came as a teacher. He came in many different roles, many different offices, but one of the prime things was that He was a teacher.

What's the purpose of a teacher? Is to elevate people's knowledge. So it's not about us being ignorant or stupid, but it has to do with an attitude, an attitude of thinking we know, when in fact we don't know.

Arrogance.

Oh, I know these things. I know everything. And I'm sure we know people who will blatantly say so.

I know more about anything than anybody. And yet many of us feel that way. We don't have the temerity to say so, but we think deep down in our heart, well, you know, I know more than this person.

I know more about that. But when it comes to spiritual things, God does not reveal Himself to know-alls. He doesn't reveal Himself to those who are wise in their own eyes.

This is not whether you're wise or foolish in the sense of knowing or not knowing things, being educated or not educated. It has to do with what my education or my lack of education has done to my attitude. Some pride themselves in their lack of education.

Others pride themselves in their education, in their degrees and whatever. But He's revealed them to babes, to babes who are innocent and open to know the truth. Notice He didn't say two- and three-year-olds, but He said to babes.

Because at two and three years, they start to argue with you. But babes don't argue. They just accept.

They just believe. Now, again, we're not saying, let's just be foolish and believe everything that's on television. I've told you, I've warned you against that many, many, many times.

That's not what it is. But it's when God speaks to me through His Word, when God speaks to me through the preaching of His Word, when God speaks to me through His Spirit, there needs to be a teachableness, a willing to say, teach me, show me. I need to know.

But unfortunately, we've spoken about this before many times, the biggest obstacle to spiritual growth is an inability to be taught. When we think we know things, when in fact we don't know things, when we think that we know everything, when in fact we know nothing. And of course, the greatest fool has to be the man who knows nothing and doesn't know that he knows nothing.

The man who knows nothing and doesn't even know he knows nothing. The wise man, doesn't matter how much he knows, becomes increasingly aware of his lack of understanding, his lack of knowledge. Those are the ones to whom God reveals Himself.

And so, what spirit do we bring to the Word of God? When we read the Scriptures, and here's the problem, when you've been a Christian for a while, you've read it all before. And so you read, I know that. And you pass over.

And you miss something important that God is trying to show you in that same verse that you maybe read a hundred times before. You see, because I think I know. But when I come to the Word of God, and I come to a verse or a passage, whatever it is, and I look at that, and I say, Lord, help me to see what you're trying to say in this passage.

Yes, Lord, I've read it many times. And maybe as a preacher, I've preached it many times. But Lord, show me Yourself again.

Reveal Yourself to me in Your Word. And as we come to His Word as a babe, not as someone who's been a Christian for 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years, not as someone who's been in a thousand Bible studies, but as

a babe saying, Lord, speak to me. Reveal Yourself to me.

Reveal Your Word to me. It is then that He shows us. But the moment we look at the passage, and we make up our mind, we say, well, I know John 3.16, God so loved the world.

Yeah, I know that. We get nothing. He doesn't show us anything.

He doesn't reveal Himself. He doesn't reveal the Father. All right, let's move on.

We're going to run out of time. All things have been delivered to me by my Father. And no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

All right, so I'm going to deal with this very, very quickly. Jesus is speaking here about the most profound knowledge that anyone can have. The world will argue as to what is the highest form of learning, the soft sciences or the hard sciences, or philosophy or theology.

What is the highest form of knowledge? What is the highest subject you can ever study, or rocket science or mathematics? No, the highest form of knowledge is the Father knowing the Son, and the Son knowing the Father. And this is not knowing, obviously, in a superficial way, but knowing intimately, knowing in truth and reality. And He says nobody knows what the Son knows about the Father, and no one knows what the Father knows about the Son, except those two.

It's an exclusive club, and of course the Holy Spirit is part of that. And then at the end of the verse there's a comma, and it's almost an afterthought. And the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

In other words, He's saying the highest form of knowledge is what exists between Father and Son. But He says now the Father is revealing Himself to us, and He's including us in that exclusive club of knowing God, of knowing the Son. And notice that He says, to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

Now this is not election. This is based on the previous verse. What does the previous verse say? He reveals Himself to babes, and not to those who are wise in their own eyes.

So if you think you're going to be clever, He is not going to will to reveal Himself to you. But if you're humble, and if you're open, and say, God, I want to learn. I want to know you the way you really are.

He will reveal Himself to us. You remember Moses. God met with him many times.

Moses met God in the wilderness, in the burning bush. God spoke to him at different other times, in other different ways. Moses then finally goes up into the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights, and he communes with God.

God gives him His law. He comes down. He goes back up another 40 days and 40 nights.

If anyone had known God, in fact, to such an extent that Moses' face has changed, and Moses reflects the very glory of God from his face, he is physically changed by that experience. And yet Moses comes out of that whole experience, and he says, God, show me Yourself. Show me Yourself.

Moses had seen God like no man had ever, and probably never since then, has seen God. And yet he comes out of that, and he says, it's not enough. I need to see Him more.

I need to see Him in a better way. And remember, it's at that time that God says that no one can see my face, but I'll pass by you, and you'll see the afterglow. And God passes by, and He puts him in the cleft of the rock, and Moses sees the backside of the hind parts of God, and God declares Himself to Moses.

If anyone had known God, Moses knew God. And yet he comes through that whole experience, and he says, it's not good enough. I need more.

And he says, the Father will reveal Himself to such. God doesn't say to Moses, you've had 80 days in my presence. What more do you want? God says, no, I'll give you more.

And folks, you remember the woman with the pot of oil. As long as she was prepared to pour out, there was more and more and more and more. The oil never ran out.

And folks, as long as we're willing to say, God, I want to see, and I want to know more, He will reveal to us more. But the moment we say, no, I'm full up. I've got enough.

I don't need more. He doesn't will to reveal Himself to us beyond that. And then he turned to his disciples and said privately, blessed are the eyes which see the things you see.

Now I'm going to deal with this very, very quickly. Verse 24, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see and have not seen it, and have heard what you hear and have not heard it. What did they see? They saw Jesus.

They saw Jesus. They saw the fulfillment of the hope of the Old Testament. They saw the fulfillment of the prophecies.

They saw the miracles. The kingdom of God had come near to them, remember last week. And so what they had was more than the prophets of the Old Testament.

In fact, what we have is more than what they had. You say, well, how can we have more than they have? We have a lot more than they had. They saw Jesus before the cross.

We see Him resurrected. They saw Him in His humiliation. We see Him in His glory and exaltation, ascended to the right hand of the majesty, given a name above every other name, that He is not the Lamb that was slain, but He is a Lamb that has seven horns, as revealed to us in the book of Revelation.

We see Him in a way they did not see Him. We see Him through the New Testament, which they did not have. We see Him through the Holy Spirit He has given to the church, which they did not have until the day of Pentecost.

We see Him through the ministries that He has given to the church when He ascended on high. He gave gifts to men, Ephesians 4, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. They did not have those things.

They just had Jesus in His humiliation. We have so much more. They did not have the church.

We have the church. They did not have 2,000 years of history of God's faithfulness to the church and to the gospel as we have for 2,000 years. But we have seen so much more than they did.

And I know you say, well, we did not see those miracles. Well, we have their testimony. And remember Peter said, we dealt with this these last couple of Thursdays in Peter.

We did not tell you cunningly devised fables. We told you what we saw. We told you what we handled.

We told you what we heard. We have their testimony. Folks, I really do believe that as much as we look at ourselves and we look at the state of the church today and we say we are not in a good place.

Yes, we are not in a good place. But folks, we have privilege like no other generation has had. We have the benefit of 2,000 years of teachers and of preachers, many of them bad, but many of them good, revealing the depths and the glories of God in God's Word.

They did not have those things. And folks, I just glory and revel in the New Testament, in the wonderful depths of the New Testament. Yes, the Old Testament is great, but it's nothing like the New Testament.

We are blessed and we don't understand how blessed we are. I know many Christians say, well, if we were just like the people of Israel who ate the manna and who passed through the Red Sea, if we were just in the New Testament and actually saw Jesus preach and heal the sick and do those things, folks, we have far more than that. He says, I tell you, and I believe that this is true for us, that many prophets and kings desire to see what you see.

What do we see? We see the church. They didn't even have a clue about a thing called the church or the bride of Christ. All they could see was Israel and have not seen it and to hear what you hear and have not heard it.

Father, we thank you for the tremendous privilege that is ours of being saved and be born again. Lord, I pray that that prayer would be real in our hearts, the prayer of David, restore to me the joy of thy salvation. Lord, that we may revel, that we may glory, that we may rejoice in the fact that we are saved and our names are written in the book of life.

Lord, not in an arrogant way, not in a conceited way, but in a sense of humility, Lord, as that great hymn writer John Newton wrote, amazing grace that saved a wretch like me. Lord, make these things real to us. Lord, they are simple things.

We have not expounded any depths this morning. Lord, we have not got into any deep theology. Lord, these are just the basics of the faith.

And yet, Lord, we forget them. And I pray that you would help us to come back to these things, to be reminded of them. But Lord, more than that, that they may be the principles and the things by which we live our lives as we rejoice daily in our salvation and as we rejoice daily in that which you've revealed to us, that you brought us into a relationship with the Father and the Son, fellowship with the Father and Son spirit.

Lord, that you have revealed to us those things that the Old Testament prophets and kings and great men were not able to see. Help us, we pray, in Jesus' name. I pray that you'd go with us now, Lord, keep us and protect us, bring us together again safely on Thursday.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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