

Bigger Than You Anticipated, Better Than You Dreamed

by Dennis Kinlaw

God's plans for our lives are bigger and better than we can imagine, and He wants us to trust in His goodness and sovereignty.

Duration: 44:45

Scripture: Zechariah 2:1, Zechariah 2:12-13, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of feeling left out as a child while others enjoyed playing ball games. However, he had a spiritual encounter where he realized that he would rather be with God, even if it meant doing something as mundane as milking a cow. He emphasizes that even in a cow stall, one can experience the glory of God if they are receptive to it. The speaker then transitions to discussing the city that God is building, emphasizing that His plans are bigger and better than what we expect. He uses the example of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the Promised Land to illustrate this point. The sermon concludes with a dream that the speaker had, where he sees a horseman and learns that everyone else is doing better than the people of God.

Transcript

Our scripture lesson is in the Old Testament, in the book of Zechariah. I had a friend who was preaching for me one Sunday morning, and he stood up and said, My scripture this morning is in the book of Zechariah, if I can find it. If you have any problem with it, you will find that it is next to the last book in the Old Testament.

So start with Matthew and work backwards. I want to read the second chapter of that prophecy. Then Zechariah said, I looked up, and there before me was a man with a measuring line in his hand.

I asked, Where are you going? He answered me, To measure Jerusalem, to find out how wide and how long it is. Then the angel who was speaking to me left, and another angel came to meet him and said to him, Run, tell that young man, Jerusalem will be a city without walls, because of the great number of men and livestock in it, and I myself will be a wall of fire around it, declares the Lord, and I will be its glory within. Come, come, flee from the land of the north, declares the Lord, for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven, declares the Lord.

Come, O Zion, escape, you who live in the daughter of Babylon, for this is what the Lord Almighty says, After he has honored me and has sent me against the nations that have plundered you, for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye, I will surely raise my hand against them, so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me. Shout and be glad, O daughter of Zion, for I am coming, and I will live among you, declares the Lord.

Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day, and will become my people. I will live among you, and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be still before the Lord, all mankind, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling. One of the things that I have come to love about scripture is the emphasis upon biography and the emphasis upon history, because biography is human life, individual life like yours or mine, like your story or mine. And history is human life, too, but it is human life on a larger scale, on the corporate scale, inclusive of us all.

But you will notice that the great emphasis, apart from places like the book of Proverbs and scripture, the great emphasis is on not abstract truth, but it is on truth that is worked out in somebody's life. It may be the truths that attend a righteous life, or it may be the truths that are illustrated in an unrighteous life, but again and again God has seen fit to show his truth either in individual lives or in the life of his people, we whom he has created. Now the context tonight in this passage is a particular historical situation, and let me quickly reconstruct it for you.

You know the story of the history of Israel. It began with the call of Abraham and Ur of the Chaldees, and Abraham left that land to follow God and walked with him across the years. When he died there was a group of people, his family that was in the land of Canaan, and then they were taken, went down into Egypt, you will remember, and there they served in Egyptian bondage for four hundred years.

Then God raised up Moses, brought them out, brought them through the wilderness into the land of promise, and Joshua made conquest of the land of promise, and the people of God were in Israel, the land of Palestine. You will remember in due time David became king, and there was a royal kingdom established over the people of God. Then the people lived in the land and went through various stages of faithfulness and unfaithfulness to God.

In due time, you will remember, the unfaithfulness was more predominant than the faithfulness, and so God dealt with them historically. You will remember that the northern kingdom disappeared and the southern kingdom, ultimately about six hundred years before Christ, you will remember, was carried away into Babylon into captivity. So as earlier in their life they had been captives in Egypt, now they are captives in Babylon, and there they prayed for God to look with mercy on them and bring them back to their own land.

You see, Israel's identity and its well-being was associated with a piece of real estate and with a national existence, and so as they prayed and as they repented, God looked with mercy upon them and gave them the chance to go back to their land. They had been displaced peoples, like so many peoples in the twentieth century of our own existence. These were displaced people now able to return to their own country.

Very significant, the fact that the person who permitted it was not a Jew, but he was a man by the name of Cyrus, and you will remember, as a pagan, it was he whose heart God touched and said, Let these people

go home, and so in the Old Testament Cyrus is called the servant of the Lord, even though he was not a believer, he was the servant of the Lord, because the Lord God is sovereign God over all of human history. He rules and reigns as the Old Testament says. He has the heart of the king in his own hand, and so he used an unbeliever as the means of getting the people of God back to their own land.

Now when they came back about 538, after they had been for the better part of half a century in Babylon, you will remember they came back with great hopes and great expectations. They came back to the site of the city of Jerusalem, and the city had been destroyed. It was nothing but rubble.

They came to the place where the temple had originally been built, and there was nothing but rubble there, and so they started to work. They were not wealthy, and they were not numerous. It was a small band of exiles come home, and their wealth was what they could carry in their hands and carry on their back.

Now you have to contrast the smallness of this group and the poverty of this group with the incredible wealth and magnificence of the kingdom of Solomon when the first temple was built. You will remember that in Solomon's day he was so wealthy that they said that silver and gold were as common as the pebbles in the roadway. Now that's pretty good wealth.

It was a magnificent period, this period of Solomon, of power, earthly power and pomp, and they built this magnificent temple. Now all of that is gone, and this handful of struggling exiles come home and say, We will build again the house of God. But you can imagine some of their inner disappointment that when they got ready to build the house of the living God, the only God, they could only build it as a reflection of their own resources.

But they started to work. But you will remember that as they started to work, opposition developed, and so an edict went out from the king that said that they had to stop in their tracks. And so for eighteen years they walked past what had been the beginning of the construction of the temple, and they could not finish it.

Now I never think of that, but that I think of a story I heard in my earlier years. I grew up in the South, grew up in Depression days, and those were not easy days. Now they were not easy for individuals, they were not easy for organizations like churches.

And I used to ride through the South, and I would see where a group of people had decided to build a church, and they would dig out a foundation, dig out a basement, build a foundation, and then cover over the basement. And then they would start their services in the basement, and they would worship there, and say, one of these days God will bless us, and we'll build a superstructure, and we'll build a great church here, but we'll start in the basement. I remember riding through the country once with a preacher who said, you know, if a church stays in the basement over five years, it'll never get out.

There is something about a mindset that adjusts itself to defeat. And if you don't fight it, it will grip you and control you. Now it wasn't five years that they lived with simply the foundations cleared and an initial step taken.

It was ten years, and fifteen, and eighteen. You will remember that for the Jews to celebrate their major festivals like our Easter, or our Christmas, or our Pentecost, they had to have the temple. The temple was a vital part of their worship.

So here was a whole nation of people who had gone for seventy years without being able properly to celebrate Christmas, or Easter, or Pentecost. And they were ready to despair, and then God acted. It's always marvelous to me the way the Bible makes it clear that it's the act of God that makes the difference.

He takes the initiative, and he did. He sent them two preachers. Now it was sort of like the Methodist, you know.

The Methodist sends you a preacher. You don't choose them. He gets sent to you.

And so you take what somebody else chooses to send to you. Now they had a prophet showed up. God sent him.

And the word went around town. We got a new preacher in town, and somebody said, What's his name? And they said, Well, his name is Mr. Easter Christmas Pentecost. Now that's the English translation.

The Hebrew is Haggai, which means my festivals. Isn't that an interesting name for a preacher? But how appropriate. Here are the people of God who have been unable to celebrate a major festival for seventy years.

And now a preacher shows up, and his name is my festival. And Haggai came up and stood up and said, I have a message to preach to you. We're going to celebrate the festivals of God again, and God is going to let us build his house again.

You've built your houses. Now we will build God's house. And so he got them started.

You will remember he didn't last too long, and God sent another preacher in. People said there's another preacher in town. Somebody said, What's his name? And they said, His name is the Lord has remembered.

Now in Hebrew, that's Zechariah. That's what the name means. The Yah on the end is the name of Yahweh, the Lord God, and the Zachar is he remembered.

Yahweh remembered. Now, of course, that was extremely pertinent, because what they were saying now was, God has forgotten us. You may never experience this, but somewhere in your life you'll think God's forgotten you.

And I want to say that when you get into the depths of it, you will find somewhere a messenger that comes, and his message will be, No, God doesn't forget his people. And so Zechariah stood up to preach. Now he was a kind of preacher.

He'd stand up on Sunday morning and say, I had a dream last night. Wish I could get my sermons that way. It would be a lot easier.

But he said, I had a dream last night. And he said, This is what I dreamed. He said, I dreamed I was in sort of a little valley vale, and I looked, and here was a horseman on a red horse, and then there were a lot of other horses and horsemen behind him.

And I said, What are these? And an angel spoke to me and said, This is God's CIA. These are his central intelligence agents, and they're going out over all the world to find out what's going on. And Zechariah said, Well, what'd they find out? He said, They found out that everybody's doing better than the people of

God.

Everybody's getting along better than the Hebrews, than Israel. And then he said, But God is going to do something for us. So the next Sunday morning, he stood up and said, I had a dream last night.

He said, I had a dream, and in my dream, I saw four horns. Now, in the Old Testament, in an apocalyptic literature, a horn is a symbol of power, earthly power. And so when Zechariah said, What are these horns? These horns represented the kings and the kingdoms that had trodden down Israel.

And then he said, I had another dream, and I saw four carpenters coming with their saws. And I said, What are they going to do? And the angel said, They're going to saw off those four horns. Now, I sort of like that.

I like the fact that in human history, the guy who saws off the horns is not four carpenters, but is one who came from Nazareth. Hitler thought he could make it in human history and establish himself, but his kingdom got sawn off. Before him, you think of how many hundreds of people there are that have come with their passions to build their kingdoms in the world, and not one of them has stood.

There is one kingdom that will stand eternally, crown him with many crowns, the Lord upon his throne. So he said, I saw those carpenters coming to saw down these kings that have trampled Israel underfoot. Then he said, next Sunday, he said, I had another dream last night.

And he said, I was standing on the rubble of the city of Jerusalem, and I saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. And I said, What's he going to do? He said, Well, he's measuring the city of Jerusalem to see how big the new city is going to be, because the city is going to be built again. God is going to choose Israel again.

Now, it may be there's somebody in our midst tonight, you've known the blessing of God in your life, and you've lost it. It may be there's somebody in our midst that once knew the preciousness of the living presence of Christ within, and that presence is now gone. I want to say there's good hope for you, because God said to this rubble city, I'm going to choose Israel again.

My city will be rebuilt, and the temple will be rebuilt. And so Zechariah was very excited, and then a man came and an angel came and said, Go grab the young man and stop him, because the city that I'm going to build is bigger than you expect. And the lines that you're drawing on this city are too small for my plans for this city.

I'm in a lot bigger business than you think I am, and I want to be a lot better to you than you expect me to be. You see, when you've backslidden and you've come under the judgment of God, and when you've come home thinking that everything's going to go well, and then you sit for 18 years and wallow in your own frustration, you've gone through guilt and hope and now it's thwarted, and the frustration is deep and your self-image is destroyed. And you don't expect anything good from God.

Why should God do anything good for the likes of us? And God says, But you don't understand. My plans for you are bigger and better than you ever dreamed. This is going to be a city without walls.

Now, I like that because I believe that that's typical of God. God's plans for every one of our lives, God's plans are far bigger than our carnal ambitions could ever imagine. God's not in little business, He's in big business.

And you know what He likes to do? He likes to take the ordinary and do the extraordinary in their lives. Just let me mention a few. Moses.

Now, he started very well, and I'm sure his ambitions exceeded that of the valedictorian at Harvard. Because, you see, he was the son of the Pharaoh and had all the wisdom of the skilled leaders and teachers of Egypt, the greatest nation in the world. The world was his.

And then you'll remember he got some ideals, and he decided he wanted to fight for some people who were in bondage, his own people. And you will remember he got banished. And just as his people spent 400 years in exile, he spent 40 years in exile.

And he was a failure, knowing that he was a failure on the backside of a desert taking care of sheep when God said, I'm going to change the course of human history with you. And he did change the course of human history. The greatest man that ever lived was a failure and a shepherd in nowhere, and God took him and changed the course of history.

I love the fact that Abraham in the Septuagint is called a king. I always thought of Abraham as sort of a Bedouin peasant, you know, wandering through the desert with his little herd of sheep. But you remember that he had 318 camels, and a camel was at least as good as a Mercedes Benz or a Rolls Royce.

And any guy who's got 318 of them sitting around on his spreads doing rather well. But the thing that's most interesting to me is there's only one man ever wanted his wife, and you know who he was? It was the Pharaoh. Now, Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev had never looked at Elsie, but that's where God stuck Abraham.

He's not moving to the margin, he's moving to the center, because human history is his and this world is to be his kingdom. Now, David, you'll remember, there couldn't be much hope for him because he was the eighth of eight brothers. And in that society, the first brother got all the breaks.

And then along comes the prophet and says, one of your sons I want to annoy. And so Jesse put the oldest one out, and God said, no, that's not the right one. And so Jesse the father put the second one out, and Jesse was a good Jew of those days.

He was distressed that his oldest son missed it, so he put up his second, and God said to the prophet, not this one. And God went down all seven, and those were the only ones that Jesse had brought out. David was the youngest, and he was off tending sheep.

And so the prophet turned and said, don't you have any more sons? And Jesse said, yes, I've got one eighth boy, but he's a callow youth. And the prophet said, go get him. I love the fact that God likes to take the unexpected and the one you wouldn't choose and do it just to let us know that his purposes and his plans are always bigger than we anticipate.

But the one that's very tender to me is the one about Mary, the mother of our Lord. I read this for years before I thought anything about it. Do you remember that when she went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, she began to tell her cousin Elizabeth about what had happened to her? And you know how she worded it? She said, The Lord has looked upon the low estate of his handmaiden.

That lets you know how she saw herself. The Lord has looked upon the low estate of his handmaiden. She wasn't expecting anything out of life.

And she said, but God has highly exalted me. And she said, all generations will call me blessed. And you know, there are more paintings and more icons and more statues of Mary in the world today than of any queen or president's wife or empress in human history.

And I wouldn't be surprised they're more than all of the empresses that ever lived. Mary said, God's looked on the lowest state of his handmaiden and all generations are going to call me blessed. God said to these dispirited, despairing people in Jerusalem, it's going to be bigger than you anticipated.

And it's going to be better because I'm looking with favor on you. Now, he said, the second thing is not only going to be bigger and better than you anticipated, but safer. You don't even have to worry about building walls around the city of Jerusalem.

Now that I'm sure came as a tremendous shock to these Jews and sort of a terrifying shock. You couldn't have a city without walls. The walls were your protection.

And so they built those walls and built them big and built them heavy and broad, and they were to defend. And the people lived, those who could in the city, and the rest lived around. And when any trouble came, they all fled into the city behind the walls and then they closed those gates on the walls.

It was a city surrounded. And God said, you don't have to worry about those. I'm going to be the wall around you.

You're going to be safer than you thought. My plan's bigger and it's going to be safer for you to obey me than you thought. Now, there's a passage in C.S. Lewis's book on hell, you will remember, Screwtape Letters, where Screwtape has let the person to whom he is assigned develop a friendship, a love relationship with a person that's a Christian.

And he's talking about his problems with his uncle, and his uncle writes to him to tell him what a stupid donkey he is. He said, didn't I tell you to keep him away from her? Because if you'll just think, every time you've gotten near her, you found that there's sort of a mist around her, like a hazy fog. And you think you can puff it away, but when you try to penetrate it, you find it's as invincible as steel.

And when she gets him in there, you can't get to him. Now, there is a protection for the person who's in the center of God's will. There's a hymn that says, there is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God, a place where sin cannot molest.

Now, it doesn't mean there is no place where you can get in life where you can't be tempted, but there is a relationship to God so intimate and so close that he becomes your defense and your protection. That's beautiful. And because of that, it's safe for you to stick your neck out and do what otherwise you'd be afraid to do, because he is your security.

I don't know whether you're familiar with the life of C.T. Studd or not, but it was one of the books that challenged me remarkably, greatly, when I was at the student stage of the game. C.T. Studd was a Cambridge graduate, one of the most famous athletes in his day, one of the Cambridge Seven. His father was one of the prominent social leaders of England, high class.

He had a brother who became the Lord Mayor of London, but Charlie decided to throw everything on Christ. So when he inherited a fortune from his father, he gave it all away except 5,000 pounds. He was in love, and he had talked to his fiancée.

He said, Now, we're going to trust God and live by faith, and if you can't live by faith, then you don't want to marry me. So she entered into an agreement with him that they would trust God for their survival needs. And so when Charlie inherited his part of his father's fortune, he gave it all away but 5,000 pounds, and he sent that in a single check to his fiancée as his pre-wedding gift to her.

She got that 5,000 pound check and sat down and wrote a letter back to him and said, Charlie, call the wedding off. I refuse to marry a liar. You told me we were going to trust God, and then you send me 5,000 pounds.

And she sent the check back. So Charlie sent the check to General Booth of the Salvation Army and wrote back penitently to his fiancée and said, Is there any chance to get the wedding back on track? And she said, If you're ready to live by faith, then I'm ready. We'll get married.

It was interesting, when they did get married in China, she wore a sash across her wedding dress that said, if I remember correctly, Hallelujah for Jesus. Now they gambled. He was home in England on one of his trips home, and his brother, who was the Lord Mayor of London, asked him what he did with his fortune.

And Charlie said to him, What did you do with yours? Well, he said, I deposited it in the Bank of London. That's safe, and they'll guarantee a good return on it. What did you do with yours? Charlie said, Well, I thought about putting it in the Bank of London, but I checked it over and decided it wasn't a real good risk.

So I put it in the Bank of Heaven, and I'm going to get eternal returns on it. Now, God says to this little band of exiles that have come home, all they've got is what they could carry in their hands and on their backs, and there are not too many of them. It's going to be better than you expected, and it's going to be safer because I'm going to be in the midst.

I'll be the wall of fire around you, and I'll be the glory in the midst. Now, one of the things that was in their heads was, We'll build a temple. We need it, and it'll be good to have a place where we can worship again, but we will always know that we once knew something better because Solomon built this magnificent, glorious temple.

So some of them said, The glories of the former days are such that we will never know in our lifetime glories equal to that which our fathers knew. You know, always looking back. I remember a preacher who used to preach on this platform about 150 years ago.

He was in a camp meeting, and somebody sang the old hymn or the old song. It was an old-fashioned meeting in an old-fashioned place when some old-fashioned people had some old-fashioned grace, and an old-fashioned, and it went on old-fashioned, old-fashioned, old-fashioned, and this preacher leaned to the camp meeting preacher next to him and said, Blessed be antiquity. Now, there are a lot of people who believe that the best is behind us, but God's not going out of business.

I just like to say God's not going out of business. God's got bigger things in the future than he's ever had in the past. He's got more work to do and more people to work on and with.

He's not going out of business, and he said it's going to be bigger, safer, and the glory is going to be greater. You had a building that you gloried in. I'm going to be in your midst, and I'm better than the temple.

Now, is that a prophecy of the coming of Jesus? You'll remember Jesus when they said to him, What right do you have to cleanse this temple? He said, Strip it down, and in three days I'll raise it up, speaking of himself. We have the glory, the greatest glory. Now, the temple was glorious in Jerusalem, up on a hill, and there was nothing like it in all of the country, and the Jews were so proud of it, and legitimately so.

Now, I've never done a great deal of sightseeing, but I remember Elsie and I were in England, and we were on one of these tours where you had to be taken around and see sight. So they took us out to see Tintern Abbey. You'll remember Wordsworth wrote a poem on lines written above Tintern Abbey.

There's nothing in the poem, if I remember correctly, about Tintern Abbey. He was just locating where he wrote the poem. But he apparently was on a hill where he could look down, and in this valley there was Tintern Abbey.

Now, out of everything I saw in England, Tintern Abbey was the most impressive to me, and it's ruins. It's not an abbey, it's not a great cathedral, it's the remains of a great cathedral. You see, there's a part of a mammoth wall here, and a part of another one, and a bit of another one, and the back that has a part of the circle where the great window was in it.

So it's just remains that are there. But those remains are massive, towering up over a cow pasture and a sheep pasture, and there's not a house or a building anywhere near it. So you come down in this valley, and you see, once was this incredible architectural glory.

Now, I can understand why. Old Wordsworth was impressed with the beauty and inspired. Well, that's the way the Jews felt about the temple.

You could see it. We like what we can see. You could stand in its presence and feel its glory.

God says, I'm going to give you a greater glory. I'm going to give you myself, and I will dwell in your midst. And do you know that is the glory? God in us, Christ in us, the hope of glory.

Now, I want to ask you, do you know that presence inside you? If you ever know it, it will transform your life. And if you ever know it and lose it, you'll live in nostalgia and lamenting regret the rest of your days unless you find his presence again. Because out of all the gifts God can ever give you, the greatest is himself.

I'm glad I learned that when I first became a Christian. I was 13 when I found Christ. Now, there's some people think young people can't understand these things as well.

I suspect young people may understand these things much better than older people. They come to them cleaner, with less scar tissue on them. And five days after I was genuinely regenerated, I had no question that my life was transformed.

I heard Henry Clay Morrison, who was the president of Asbury College, picture over here on the wall, preach on sanctification. I never heard of the word. But he said, God wants all of you.

And I went forward and said, whatever the is, it's all yours. And there came a glorious sense of his presence. I remember how it sanctified everything in my life.

I had an old cow I had to milk every day. Hated her. Detested her.

Busted my bare toe many a time against her side. One day she didn't like it, so she turned and pinned me right between her horns against the wall of the barn. I'm glad she got me between the horns.

I found out though that if life's hard on you, the best place in the world to shed tears and nobody ever know you're shedding them is with your head buried against the back leg of a cow while you're milking. Never miss a lick. But I can remember one day sitting on that stool and milking away.

I'd had to leave a ball game in the middle of it. And I was in the midst of self-pity. The other boys didn't have to leave the ball games.

They could stay to the end. And I had to leave. And suddenly I was aware I wasn't alone.

And there was a voice that spoke to me very clearly and said, would you rather play ball without me or milk a cow with me? And there was something inside my soul that rose up and said, Lord, I'd rather milk a cow any day with you than do anything else in the world without you. And I found out that I could swing a two-gallon bucket like this, never drop a drop, as I'd run home with a sense of the glory of God in a cow stall. Now, it doesn't have the shining marble, and it doesn't have the high altar, and it doesn't have the sweet-smelling incense in the cow stall, but it does have the glory if you're receptive to it.

And it can become a holy place. It was in those days that I found a hymn. Will you let me share it with you very quickly? You've never heard it.

You've never heard the tune of that other one. You've never heard the words of this one. See if you can catch them as I say them.

How tedious and tasteless the hours when Jesus no longer I see. Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers have all lost their sweetness to me. The midsummer sun shines but dim.

The fields strive in vain to look gay. But when I am happy in Him, December's as pleasant as May. His name yields the richest perfume, and sweeter than music is voice.

His presence disperses my gloom, and makes all within me rejoice. I should, were He always thus nigh, have nothing to wish or to fear. No mortal as happy as I, my summer would last all the year.

But now listen to this third one. Content with beholding His face, my all to His pleasure resigned. No changes of season or place will make any change in my mind.

While blessed with a sense of His love, a palace, a toy, would appear. And prisons would palaces prove if Jesus would dwell with me there. You heard Tom Hermes tell yesterday morning about how in his family background they martyred many of his relatives for Christ.

And the Muslims took them and said, You deny Christ or we will kill you. And so many of them denied Christ. But there were some who stood steady.

And then the ones who stood steady as they marched them to the execution ground began to sing. Now why did they sing? They knew a glory that set them free from their fears, and they would rather be dying with Christ than living without Him. And many of the people who had recanted remembered the divine presence and said, We'd rather go that way, too, and came back and joined the ones who were headed to their martyrdom and gave their lives, too.

Now I want to ask you if you know the divine presence like that. I rejoice in any movement to seek Him, kneel at the altar. Thank God for any Christian experience you have.

But God wants to bring you to the place where you know what it means to walk with Him and to talk with Him and to have that kind of relationship with Him. Do you know Him? And does He know you? Or have you been so busy living your own way that there's been no way He could get to know you? I'll tell you, if you let Him know you, it'll be better than you anticipated and bigger than you dreamed. It'll be safe enough that you can trust Him, do what He wants you to do, lay it all in His hands and gamble on it, and there'll be a glory that attends your way.

I'd like to think that this year at Asbury there would be some of you that are young people that would come to know that kind of living relationship with the Lord Christ. If it is true that He lives, you can know Him. Maybe that you've known that kind of relationship, don't let anything keep you from getting it back to where you walk with Him and you talk with Him.

Should we bow our heads together for prayer? Our Lord, we marvel at the way you love us and want to be a part of our lives and want to know us. That when we've sinned against you and when we've failed you, you let your own judgments come, but they're not to cut us away or to shut us out, they're to bring us back because you want us to walk with you and to talk with you. Amazing thing, but you've told us that we are the apple of your eye.

We're the delight of your life and your heart's grieved when you don't have unbroken communion with us. Let us know enough of that joy that it will spoil us for the world and it will spoil us for a life of disobedience or unbelief. It will spoil us for anything but intimate obedience and faith in you.

If there's someone in our midst tonight who needs that kind of communion and whose heart hungers for it, if there's somebody here who's once known it and lost it, don't let that person leave without opening the door again to that kind of relationship. And if there's somebody here who's never known it, we pray that tonight that person might let you establish that kind of personal communion. And then Father, if there's some of us who've known you, but we've let the relationship get cool, bring us back to where the deepest passion of our lives is to know you and to walk with you.

And we will give you thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20890.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dennis-kinlaw/bigger-than-you-anticipated-better-than-you-dreamed/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net