

# Knowing Christ the Friend

by Ed Miller

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and embodying true service to the Lord through reliance on the Holy Spirit and a personal relationship with Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:10:29

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:18, Exodus 33:20-23, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 7:15-17

**Topics:** "Friendship"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker explores the concept of serving the Lord and how it can be done on earth as it is in heaven. The sermon begins by discussing the service of God's bond servants in the eternal state, where they serve Him day and night. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the blueprint or divine intention for serving the Lord. He suggests three key principles: learning to be a receiver and allowing God to serve us, cultivating a deep union with Jesus Christ, and ultimately bringing forth fruit unto God. The sermon encourages listeners to focus on these foundational principles in their pursuit of serving the Lord.

---

## Transcript

Good evening, brothers and sisters in Christ. I hadn't heard that song we just sang, but one of the refrains over and over again, one of the prevailing ideas, was every soul, every heart, nobody left out, and the prayer that God would meet us, each one. We are all different.

We've come with different hungers, different capacities, different needs, but the Lord knows each one of us intimately, and He's able to meet each one. As we come to the study of God's Word, I want to remind you of a principle of Bible study that is absolutely indispensable in your study of God's Word. As you go on, you're going to find many, many things helpful, and though there are many things that are helpful, there's only one thing that's indispensable, and that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit.

It's His book. The Bible, like our Lord Jesus, is human and divine. There's a human side, and we need to see the human side.

But after all the academics are finished, there's also a divine side, and only God can reveal God. Only the Lord can turn the spotlight on Himself, on the Lord Jesus, for our hearts. Before we go to prayer, I want to just remind you of a marvelous passage in John chapter 12, one of those times when God broke the silence and spoke from heaven.

And when He spoke from heaven, it's in verse 27, 28, around there. When He spoke from heaven, it was to glorify His Son. He said, I have glorified you, I'll glorify you again.

Every time God speaks to glorify His Son, some people only hear thunder. And some people said, it's just an angel. We're going to pray that God will speak to glorify His Son.

After the voice, the Lord Jesus said, it wasn't for my sake, it was for your sake that the voice came. So let's trust the Lord together that as He speaks to glorify His Son, we won't hear thunder. We won't just have some spiritual experience and just hear a messenger.

But when God speaks to glorify His Son, let's hear God speak to glorify His Son. Let's bow. Our Father, we do thank You again that we can call upon You to make bare Your arm and to revive Your work again in the midst of the years.

We can also pray that You would not pass by anyone. Draw us, Lord, we desire to run after You. Cause us to see You.

And as we touch this marvelous issue of serving the Lord, serving You, we pray that You would clinch these truths in our hearts. That You would teach us what it means to be serviceable to the Master. We thank You for meeting us so faithfully throughout this week.

And we pray now once again that by Your grace, You would dawn Christ upon us. Speak, Lord, in a living way. Take us beyond the letter.

Deliver us from flesh and blood. And we pray that we might respond to Your voice. Thank You, Lord, that You're going to meet with us because we ask it in the deserving name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Well, I understand that some are just joining us for the first time. And so very briefly, I'm just going to set the principles before you.

I understand there are tapes and you can listen and catch up. But we're discussing this marvelous theme this week on being serviceable to the Master. And the Lord has thrilled our hearts with Himself.

And I hope He's also fired the right side of some of our brains as well. Everything is in Christ Jesus. Now, as you know by now, that my awful responsibility and my blessed responsibility has to do with that matter of serving the Lord.

And so we're trusting Him to continue to grace us as we look for His heart in this matter. As it was said over and over again throughout the conference, are we servants? Should we serve? Should we serve the Lord? Should we serve in the house, through the house, the house? Should we serve one another? That's not the issue. That's been settled.

We were created to serve. We were redeemed to serve. We're called to serve.

That's not the issue. The issue is, are we serviceable? How can we serve? What provisions has God given us in His dear Son to enable us to be serviceable to the Master? In our consideration of how to be serviceable in terms of serving the Lord, we've been looking at what I've called the blueprint, the divine intention, the master plan. And I want to set that before you again, and so I'm going to ask you to turn to Revelation chapter 7, please.

Revelation chapter 7 to begin. Let me just set this before your hearts again. Beginning at verse 15, For this reason they're before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple.

And He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. They will hunger no longer, nor thirst any more, nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb in the center of the throne will be the shepherd, and He'll guide them to the springs of the water of life.

And God will wipe all tears from their eyes. If you glance at verse 15, you see that there's a service up there. Those who have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb in that eternal state are serving Him day and night.

And then if you glance at Revelation chapter 22, please. Revelation 22, beginning at verse 3, There will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it.

And His bondservants will serve Him. They will see His face. His name shall be on their foreheads.

And there'll be no longer any night. They'll not have need of the light of a lamp or the light of the sun. Because the Lord God will illumine them.

And they will reign forever, forever. His bondservants will serve Him. They'll see His face.

And I thought as I studied this, if we could get a vision of that eternal state. There's no doubt, there's no question that up there in that eternal condition, they're serviceable to the Master. And they're serving.

After all the doings done, they're up there serving. What they're doing, we'll leave for someone else to discuss. But how they're doing it, how are they serving the Lord? Because if I can lay hold of how they're serving, maybe I'll know a little bit on what it means to serve the Lord down here in this lower arena.

Our Lord Jesus taught us to pray, Thy will be done on earth as it's done in heaven. How is it being done up there? Now, what has been so meaningful to my heart approaching it that way? What has helped me to see a little bit more in this matter of serving, I understand has not been all that helpful to some. Even a little confusing.

I think some of my words, some of my expressions, some of my terms might have gotten in the way. I anticipated that actually. And I tried to bend over backwards to speak in common denominator language and avoid any of the controversial issues connected with the details of chronology.

But I think I offended somebody's chart. I thought I had that chronology nailed down, give or take 1,007 years. But words that are so familiar to those who have been instructed in the Lord, words like resurrection, resurrection body, marriage, supper of the Lamb, new heavens, new earth, new Jerusalem, heaven, we all have different charts.

When someone says resurrection, you say resurrection. Heaven begins with resurrection. Which one? Is it the resurrection of the overcomers or is it the tribulation saints or is it another resurrection? Which phase? Resurrection I, resurrection II, and which phase? And the marriage feast.

When is that? I look at my chart and I think that's over here in the middle. And it's right after judgment season. And I have it here and it seemed like you put it over here.

Is it before the millennium, after the millennium? New heavens and the new earth. Which one? Is it Isaiah's new heaven and earth in 65 where the youth dies at the age of 100? Or is it John's new heaven and earth where there's no more death? What are you talking about? You're using all these words. New Jerusalem.

Is that a place? Our brother was sharing today, the city, the bride. Is that a place? Is that a person? Is that a condition? Who's in there? Everybody? Somebody? Heaven. When did that begin? I thought the kingdom of heaven was within you.

I've been following this little outline. How does heaven begin and how does it continue forever? And some folks are saying, what are you talking about? So let me nail down what I mean. Take your chart, however it's arranged, and go to the end of it.

All right. No matter what order you got everything in, go to the end of your chart. I want you to go past the tribulation.

I want you to go past the rapture, past all your phases of the resurrection, whatever they are. I want you to go past all the judgments, however many you have. I want you to go all the way to the end and then take a big step a thousand years or 2,000 years.

Pass your chart. That's what I'm talking about. That's what I'm using the word heaven to describe.

After it's all done, after it's all finished, way up there, forever and ever, His bondservants serve Him. And before they do that, this has to happen. And so does this, and so does this.

And they contain great principles on what it means to serve the Lord. And so what we've been doing, God assisting us, is we've been going up to look at that great blueprint beyond the charts where His bondservants in their new glorified bodies are serving Him day and night. And as the ages roll upon the ages, His bondservants will serve Him.

I want to see how they do that. I want to glance into that place. And so that's what we've been doing.

So I hope that clears up a little bit. You know, it's interesting how these eschatology things can get you going in this direction or that direction. When I fell in love with Lillian, when I married that dear girl, we did not have wallpaper in our house, in our living room.

We had my chart. I'm serious. You come to visit us, and there was my, I had it all down.

It was all, I had the whole thing. My whole chart would have made Larkin envious. Two times so far, we have looked up beyond the veil into that eternal state where His bondservants serve Him day and night forever.

Now, I don't want to spend the whole evening reviewing, but let me just get those principles before your heart. What does it mean to serve the Lord? How can His will be done on earth as it's being done up there? That's our heart. How does heaven begin? Our first look at heaven and an answer to the question, how does heaven begin? It has to begin.

There's got to be. And God does it. Before they can do that, there is a wonderful resurrection.

Wherever it is on your chart, that's got to come before they serve Him day and night. It's a miracle of grace. Heaven begins with grace.

And how does it continue forever? Luke 12, 37, when He comes again, He's going to gird on the slave apron, and He is going to wait on them forever. God serves them. They have finally gotten it straight up there.

They have learned that God is the servant and they are the receivers. And they have learned to serve the Lord the same way the earth serves the sun. The earth serves the sun by allowing the sun to serve the earth.

And as it receives, it becomes a testimony. The first principle of serving the Lord. I must be a receiver.

I must allow the Lord to serve me. The more I allow the Lord to serve me, the more I serve Him. And then we looked again a second time.

How can I serve the Lord? How do they do it? I want His will to be done on earth as it's done in heaven. How do they do it? How does heaven begin? And I suggested before they can do that service, there's got to be a marriage. A wedding.

A union with Jesus Christ. If they're going to live happily ever after, it begins with that marvelous wedding. And the fruit of that union is the manifestation of the Lamb who is the lamp.

He fills that new Jerusalem and radiates through it throughout the new heavens and the new earth. If I'm going to serve the Lord, I've got to bear fruit. In this, my father's glorified Jesus said, If you bear fruit, much fruit, barren and sad, fruitful and glad.

How can I bear fruit? Romans 7, you remember, United to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. And so earth becomes a facsimile of heaven. That's how they do it up there.

I want to serve the Lord. Then I must be a receiver. I want to serve the Lord.

Then I must know union with Christ. And that's where we left off. And so now, brothers and sisters in Christ, that brings us to the next principle.

I hope you're understanding at least our approach on this. I want to look again at the blueprint, at the place where they're doing it right. How do they serve up there? How does heaven begin and how does it end? Now, rather than going straight up there and looking at the blueprint, I want to set it up.

And so I'm going to ask you to turn to Amos. I want to read a couple of verses from Amos chapter 7. I think sometime if we can get a contrast, it makes it a little clearer. If I build a building and then I look at the blueprint, I might really be able to see where I messed up.

Amos chapter 7, verse 7, And he showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, what do you see, Amos? He said, a plumb line. Then the Lord said, behold, I'm about to put a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel.

I will spare them no longer. Now, quite apart from the immediate context of that, I know this is allowable. DeVerne did it when he took us to that parable of the trees.

And so this is an illustration. And in the illustration, God's people had built a vertical wall. And their vertical wall looked so good.

And it looked so straight. And it looked so tall. And compared with all other walls, their wall was pretty good.

And they said, look at our wall. We have a good wall. And then the Lord appeared in a vision, standing by their vertical wall with a plumb line in his hand.

And he said, you think your wall is so straight? I'm about to drop a plumb line next to your wall. And let's see how straight your wall is. And so before I look at the blueprint, before we go up there and see how they do it, I would like to suggest at least, I too was trained in the large house.

And I'd like to show you how we built our wall in the large house. And when he dropped his plumb line, it hit me right in the head. I'm going to ask you to turn, if you would please, to John chapter 12.

Let's build a wall and we'll call the wall Christian service. John chapter 12, beginning at verse 23, please. Jesus answered them, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it.

He who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. Now, look at the context. It's Christian service.

Verse 26, if anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am there, my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, him will my father honor.

And so there's no doubt this passage is talking about Christian service. Now, clearly in the context, the first application is our Lord Jesus. He is the grain of wheat that must die in order to bring life to the world.

He's the grain of wheat. But if you look at verse 23 to 26, look at 26, it goes beyond that. Yes, Jesus is the grain of wheat, but if anyone serves me, he must follow me.

If I'm going to be a servant of Christ, I must follow Christ the servant. Where? Well, he's a grain of wheat. That's the context.

You glance at verse 32, he's talking about his death. If I be lifted up, I'll draw all men to me. Verse 33, he was saying this to indicate the kind of death he was going to die.

Jesus said, if a grain of wheat abides by itself alone, it'll never produce. It has to die. You want to serve me, then you're going to have to die.

You're going to have to become a grain of wheat. You're going to have to follow me. You can't abide by yourself alone.

Verse 25, he who loves his life loses it. He who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. So far, so good.

And so we take our first building block for our wall, our Christian service wall, so that it'll be true, so that it'll be accurate. We lay it carefully and we call it the grain of wheat rock, the stone. Death to self, let's just call it that.

Dying to self. Now, there's another stone. Some say it's just the other side of that stone.

But let's make it two stones. Some say one's negative, one's positive. Next to the die to self stone is the Lordship of Christ stone.

Romans 12, 1 and 2, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto Him. And so it's not only the end of my life, but it's His life. It's the beginning of His life.

And those are the two stones, death to self and the Lordship of Christ. It's not only deliverance from, it's deliverance unto and a total surrender unto Him. And whether that surrender is a crisis or a process in our lives, it's deemed as necessary if I'm going to serve the Lord.

God to die to self. Ever heard that? God to die to self. Christ must be absolute Lord of our lives.

So far, so good. Looks like a good wall. Looks like a straight wall.

That's what I was taught in the large house. If I'm going to serve the Lord, Ed, you're going to serve the Lord? Then Christ has to be Lord of your life. And you've got to die to self.

What a nightmare those seven years were as I tried to die to self and make Christ Lord of my life. I'll tell you, it was agony. They all say the same thing.

Some in these words, some in those words. But it's this, that the goal of your life, surrender to Him. And so I did.

I surrendered to the Lord. And then I got up and went out and sinned. I can't blame God.

So I did something wrong. I held something back. So I had to surrender again.

I'll tell you, I became one with the altar. I surrendered my guts out. I didn't know how to surrender anymore.

I went through my library. And if any of you have seen my library, God has given me a marvelous library. And I went through every book.

And I surrendered every book to the Lord by name. Surrendered everybody in my family to the Lord. Went through my body.

I surrendered my eyes and my ears and my lips and my tongue, my hands. I couldn't surrender anymore because that was my wall. I had to surrender to the Lord and die to self.

I couldn't die to self. And I couldn't surrender to the Lord anymore. Every hour, every day, every week, every month, every year, more and more dying to self.

And I felt a little bit spiritual from time to time. I felt like, well, I'm more surrendered today than yesterday. And then tomorrow, uh-oh, well, I got to do it again and again and again.

There was never an end to that. And maybe there's somebody here tonight that has built that kind of wall. And you're longing for the day, for the season, for the hour.

Someday, He'll be Lord. I'm serious about that. I'm going to surrender.

Someday, it's going to happen. And someday, finally, I'll be dead to self. I'm trying.

I'm surrendering. I don't know what else to do. I'll just keep trying to be more surrendered this week than last week and next week and this week.

All right, brothers and sisters in Christ, that's the wall. And now let's go upstairs. May God help us.

I'm going to ask you to turn, please, to 1 Corinthians 13. Rather, 15. 1 Corinthians 15.

Let's look at the blueprint and let's ask the Lord to come down in His great mercy and stand by our wall with a plumb line in His hand. Oh, God help us. 1 Corinthians 15, beginning at verse 22.

As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive, each in his own order. Christ the firstfruits. After that, those who are Christ's at His coming.

Then cometh the end when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and all power. He must reign until He's put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says all things are put in subjection, it's evident that He is accepted who put all things in subjection to Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

Let's break it apart a little. How does heaven begin? How does it continue forever? Say it begins with a resurrection and it continues with God serving man. Yes, it does.

How does it begin? Say it begins with a marriage and it continues with the manifestation of Christ through His glorious bride. Exactly so. How does it begin again? Well, according to chapter 15, it begins with an end.

Verse 24, then comes the end. When He's abolished all rule, all authority, all power, He must reign until He's put all enemies under His feet. That sounds like Lordship.

That sounds like the rock I have in my wall. Lord of all. If you ever wanted a picture of Lordship, you have it here.

Every enemy under His feet. That is absolute Lordship. Demons, angels, men, things visible, things invisible.

Every stronghold of error is under His feet. Every fortress of ignorance is under His feet. The reign of lawlessness is put down.

He's King. He's Lord. Every power is subdued.

He reigns. Before Him, every knee bows. And so I say, Lord, your wall so far looks like my wall.

And then I look at verse 26, the last enemy to be abolished is death. And I say, I have that stone in my wall and it always seems to be the last one to go down, too. I can't die to self.

The last enemy is always death. After the last enemy goes down, there's no more enemies. Everything's subdued.

Verse 54 of the same chapter, we have this description. Death is swallowed up in victory. That's the final picture of victory.

By the way, let me just say this on the side. This picture, death is swallowed up in victory. It's such a glorious picture of the victory that He gives us.

If you were to take your newspaper tomorrow and read a headline that said, cancer is swallowed up in victory. Wouldn't that be a glorious headline? Or multiple sclerosis is swallowed up in victory or some other debilitating disease? And what would that mean? It would probably mean that a cure has been found and now you can be immunized and you won't get it. And it's a death blow to the disease.

Cancer swallowed up in victory. But what about those who've already had cancer? They will, that won't help them too much. But from now on, that cancer is swallowed up in victory.

The victory God offers when He says death is swallowed up in victory. It not only says a death blow to death in the future, but it goes backwards all the way back to Adam. That's the kind of victory He gives.

He not only puts the fire out, He rebuilds the house. That's the kind of victory He gives. A victory that not only promises you for the future that you can have victory, but reaches back and undoes the damage that that thing has done in life.

When you pray for someone to have victory, and you pray for yourself to have victory, ask God to give you that kind of a vision to pray for that kind of a victory. The kind of a victory that will restore the years that the locust has eaten. That will turn the curse into a blessing.

That's the kind of victory that He's offering. Now, let's get back to the question. How does heaven begin? So far, I see the same two stones.

I see the Lordship of Christ, and I see death, victory over death. And that's what I learned in the big house. What's the difference? And so the Lord Jesus stands there with His plumb line, and He holds it next to our wall and His wall.

Let me tell you the difference. Up there where the bondservants of Christ serve Him day and night forever, where they are serviceable to the Master in their wall, those are foundation stones, not top stones. In other words, that's the starting point.

That's not the goal. The Lordship of Christ is not the goal. That's the starting point.

When heaven begins, that's done. He's Lord of all. When heaven begins, death is finished.

It's not out in the future saying, oh, I hope someday I'll be dead. I hope someday Christ will be Lord of my life. That's all behind.

It's a finished work. Lordship is accomplished, and victory over death is accomplished. Friends in Christ, how the enemy loves to make a goal out of a starting point.

It'll kill you. He makes a goal out of a starting point. If he can get you to believe that it's still out there and it still needs to be done, you'll never arrive.

You'll never begin. You can't begin to be the servant of the Lord. It's a finished work.

If I'm going to serve the Lord, I must do it like they do it up there. I can't stop praising the Lord for the clear presentation our brother Stephen gave the other day on this wonderful issue. It's over.

It's done. It's finished. It's through.

Two thousand years ago, I died to self in the person of Jesus Christ, my substitute. That's not a goal. That's a starting point.

I've got to come and reckon that by faith. I believe that. And He is Lord.

His death has made me die, and His resurrection has made Him Lord. It's done. I tell you, that's a glorious thing.

That's how heaven begins. And as he puts the plumb line next to mine, and I see to me that's all out in front. And yet, my wall was so crooked.

It's finished. I can't serve without being a receiver. I can't serve without union with Christ.

And I cannot serve Him if His Lordship and dying to self is always out there. And it never is real in my life. It's got to be back there.

Over. Done. Through.

Finished. Accomplished. Once done, forever finished.

Bless the Lord. Now, hold on a moment and let me try to answer this question. Heaven begins with lordship accomplished and death victorious.

How does it continue forever? It's strange when you read 1 Corinthians 15. You don't expect this. Verse 28, "...when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him." See, what I would expect is, and when all things are put under His feet, when all rule and all authority and all power and all dominion and every enemy is down, the last enemy is down, He shall reign forever and ever.

That's what I'd expect. But it doesn't say He shall reign forever and ever. When He finally becomes Lord of all, I'd expect Him then to exercise His Lordship.

Isn't that why you became Lord of all? So you could be Lord. He said, no, I don't want to be Lord as you understand it. And He turns around to the Father and He lays it all down.

Because there's something beyond lordship. It's not beyond lordship. He didn't abdicate the throne.

He is King of King and Lord of Lords forever. He dropped a little hint of it in John chapter 15 and verse 15. Let me read that to you.

He said, "...no longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends. For all things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." And in that marvelous passage, He takes that great truth of the lordship of Christ and He opens it up and He shows us the heart of lordship.

And the heart of lordship is friendship. And all the time I'm waiting and bowing down and surrendering and giving up this and trying to make Him Lord as if that's the goal. That's not the goal.

That's the starting point. And He said, I want you to get through that so you can enter into My friendship. See, it's the same kind of thing that Joseph's brothers in type and picture.

They so resisted for years. You'll not reign over us. You're going to lord it over us.

And when they finally entered into His lordship, they found out it was friendship. The heart, the marrow of lordship is friendship. And that's how it is up there.

None of His bond servants up there are saying, oh, I wish I could surrender to the Lord. I wish I could die to self. They're not saying that up there.

That's all very far behind. And I want to develop that a little bit more. But I want to call attention to one little difference.

I look up there and I see such an ideal. And I come down here and it's not that ideal. Up there by having lordship behind and victory over death behind and entering into friendship.

And now they're going to go forward in friendship for eternity. Here, His life. Now, the question is, where's the cross? And don't I still have to die to self and still surrender? Exactly right.

Here we die to live to die. Understand what I'm saying? I reckon myself dead by faith. I died 2,000 years ago.

If I'm going to know His resurrection life, I've got to take my faith that I died. Then I get His life. Now, what's the fruit of His life? It enables me to die.

And to pour myself out. And to lay it down. And to desire to do His will.

And to delight in His will. And to have that my meat and my drink and to lay down my will. And so here, the more I enter into the life, the more I'm enabled to die.

It takes life to die. I was talking to Mary Lou this afternoon, and she was pointing out that arrangement when Paul prayed, said, why did He put that I might know Him and the power of His resurrection being made conformable to His death? Fellowship of His suffering. Why'd resurrection come first? I die that I might live.

That now by His life I may die. Here, His life allows me to die. There, His life allows them to stay dead.

They're not going to rise up in rebellion up there. How does heaven continue forever? Let me suggest that this friendship up there, they're beholding the beauty of the Lord. Up there, they've gone through lordship into friendship.

They're mutually enjoying, are satisfied with one another. When the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13, 12, then we'll see Him face to face. Now we see in part, then we'll know Him fully as we're known.

And when 1 John chapter 3 says, when we see Him, we'll be like Him. We'll see Him as He is. Brothers and sisters in Christ, that does not mean that we'll see the Lord and we'll arrive.

We've seen Him, now there's no more to see. I don't know your view of that eternal state, but let me give you some of my guesses. Because He's infinite, you cannot overtake that which is infinite.

You can pursue it, but you can't overtake it. Forever and forever and forever up there, they'll be going on in friendship and knowing Him more and more and more. You're only eternal on one end.

He's eternal on both ends. He's infinite and forever and forever, we're going to know Him up there. 1 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 10, another of my favorite verses.

I have favorite verses on everything. In fact, I make it a hobby. My favorite verses change all the time, but I make it a hobby for every subject.

You name a subject, I'll give you my favorite verse on it. I did that on purpose. I have a list.

My favorite verse on Trinity. My favorite verse on the Holy Spirit. My favorite verse on the Second Coming.

My favorite verse on resurrection. I have favorite verses. I love it.

And they keep changing. And here's one of my favorite verses on the Second Coming. 2 Thessalonians 1, 10.

He's coming to be glorified in His saints and marveled at by all who believe. Isn't that a wonderful verse? He's coming to be marveled at. When the Lord Jesus returns or when I'm up there, I see Him.

My eyes are going to be opened wide in amazement. And my mouth is going to be opened wide in amazement. And I'm going to say, I always knew He was beautiful, but I never knew He was like this.

I think I see Him now, but I only see Him, man, as trees walking. When I see Him and marvel at Him. You see, when we see Him face to face on earth, we see Him immediately.

That is through mediation, through things. We see Him through ordinances and we see Him through creation. And we see Him through one another.

And we see Him through the trials of life. And even the Bible, we see Him through the Bible. But then face to face, immediately, without anything in between, we're going to see the Lord.

We're going to see the beauty of the Lord unveiled. Every cloud and every curtain and every veil is going to be drawn aside. No lattice view up there.

And we're going to marvel at Him. Revelation 7, 17 says, The Lamb shall be the Shepherd. There is a great mixing of metaphors.

The Lamb shall be the Shepherd. Say, why do I need a shepherd up there? Because I'm not done knowing Him. And He's going to lead me to rivers of living water.

I thought there was no thirst up there. It's like when you receive Christ into your life. He that drinks this water shall never thirst.

I'm thirsting more now for the Lord than I did before I got saved. It's a different kind of thirst. It's a thirst from satisfaction, not for satisfaction.

We've already been satisfied in Christ and now we want more. And they have that thirst in heaven. There are many, many guesses as to what Revelation 22, 2 means.

On either side of the river was the tree of life bearing 12 kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. Say, what's that all about? A tree of life.

One tree on both sides of the river. Healing of the nations. Do they need healing? Here He provides needs.

There He prevents needs. Is that just health? What is that all about? I have my guesses. You have your guesses.

Here's my guess. I feel like Vernon McGee when I heard him say one time, if you disagree with me, you're in good company. So now you need to decide if you want good company or the truth.

I'm only kidding. He also said one time, I have many friends who take different positions on this issue. And I agree with my friends.

Anyway, this tree of life. I thank God deliberately for my sake, for our sakes, because we're so weak. I think He divided eternity into months so I could get some grasp of it, some hold of it.

And every month this tree bears 12 manner of fruit. And so let's say the first month it's apples, bananas, peaches, pears, plums, kiwi, whatever. I have an idea because it says kinds of fruit.

Then the next month it's different. And the next month it's different. 12 kinds, every month different, different.

And it's a picture of our Lord Jesus and we'll be feeding on Him forever and ever. First month in heaven, 12 manners of fruit. I'll say I knew the Lord Jesus was wonderful when I arrived.

But then my eyes will be one month wider in amazement. And my mouth will be open one month wider in amazement. And I'll say I always knew He was beautiful.

But I never knew He was like this. And after a thousand years go by and I've been feeding on the tree of life with the people of God, my eyes will be a thousand years wider in amazement as I behold this marvelous Savior. That's what they're doing up there.

How glorious. It begins with Lordship behind. He is Lord.

I am dead. And now I've gone through Lordship into friendship. And I'm just knowing the Lord and going forward in the glory of the Lord.

You know, there's one servant. I'll wrap it up. There's one servant in the Bible.

Human servant. 25 times he's called the servant of the Lord. And he's so interesting.

He's a different kind of a servant because he's so close to the original. Of this servant, we read, he had face-to-face fellowship. You know who I'm talking about? God talked with him as a man talks to a friend.

He beheld the form of the Lord. I'm talking about God's servant Moses. The servant of the Lord.

And you read, in fact, turn if you would. And we'll close with this illustration. Turn, if you would, to Exodus chapter 33.

32 and 33. In Revelation chapter 15, I look up into heaven. And as I was studying all about heaven and all those verses, I was amazed when I looked at one of the songs they sang.

Revelation 15 says, and they sang the song of Moses, the bondservant of the Lord. What a song. What a servant.

Exodus chapter 32, please. Let me just give you the background here. It's right after the sin of the golden calf.

And Moses has come down out of the presence of the Lord. And now his heart has been touched with, he's a servant of the Lord. He has gone through lordship and into friendship.

And he's got a passion in his heart, a desire in his heart. And nothing else is going to satisfy that servant of the Lord. Now, I know I'm not doing justice to the Scripture.

I'm flying over it. But just enough to touch the heart of it. God makes him some offers.

Exodus 32, 9 and 10. And the Lord said to Moses, I've seen this people. Behold, they're an obstinate people.

Let me alone, let my anger burn against them, that I may destroy them. Now watch this. And I will make of you a great nation.

Don't answer, but. What if God said that to you? What if God said? They really blew it. I'm going to start all over.

And I want to use you as my instrument. Man, I think my heart would flip. Yes.

OK, right. You read the record. Moses said, I don't want that.

I don't want my kingdom. I don't want you to start over. I don't want to be used by you to start all over.

That would violate your holy character. That would do injustice to your promise and your vow. And it looks like on the level of earth.

It looks like and I think God is playing with us here. But it looks like Moses changed God's mind. You read that.

It's interesting. And so God makes him another offer. Chapter 33, verse 2. I'll send an angel before you.

I'll drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, the Jebusite. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey. I'll not go up in your midst.

You're an obstinate people. I said, I'll send I'll give you an angel. And that angel will go before you and bring victory into the land.

Moses, the servant of the Lord, said, I don't want an angel. Thank you anyway. If God told me he's going to send an angel and wipe out the... I say, oh, what a great experience I'm going to have.

I'll just follow this angel and have victory. Moses, the servant of the Lord, had a different heart. He said, I don't want a kingdom.

I don't want to be greatly used. It's not a servant of the Lord. That's not what I want.

I don't want some great experience. I don't want an angel coming down and leading my way so everyone could say, there's the guy that followed the angel. I don't want that.

And then God comes a little closer. Chapter 33, please. Verse 14.

He said, My presence shall go with you, and I'll give you rest. If you read that very carefully, it seems like even that did not satisfy the heart of Moses. When he responds in verse 15, If your presence does not go with us, do not lead us from here.

It's almost like he's taking that for granted. God said, I'll go with you. I'll give you rest.

He says, I know that. Don't even send us if that's not true. It's like Moses is saying, I don't want a kingdom.

I don't want an angel. And I don't even want something called rest. The servant had another passion.

He had something else in his heart, and it was very much like they have up there. Well, you know where I'm heading. Chapter 33, please.

Verse 18. What do you want, Moses? What can satisfy that servant heart of yours? And Moses said, I pray you, show me your glory. Nothing else could satisfy the servant of the Lord.

What are they doing up there? Lordship behind. Death to self behind. Friendship begun.

And up there, they're just saying, show me your glory. Oh, I knew you were beautiful. I didn't know you were like this.

Show me your glory. Show me your glory. That's what they're doing up there.

And that's what Moses was done. And now I'm really going to do dishonor to chapter 33. This great passage.

There's no time to develop it. You remember how God answered that prayer? He said, you want to see my glory? And he took his servant and he put him in a rock. He's praying for light.

He's praying for glory. He's praying to see the satisfaction of the Lord, because that's the only thing, that mutual satisfaction, Brother DeVern shared with us. That's his heart.

Show me your glory. I don't know how dark that cave was, but that sounds... Show me your glory. He puts you in a cave.

And then he puts his hand over it. That's pretty dark. In answer to the prayer, show me your glory.

You never know what the Lord's doing when he puts you in a cave and puts his hand over it. Here's what he was saying. What's true up there is true down here in picture.

You want to see the glory of the Lord? You've got to abide in Christ. And as you abide in Christ, I'll pass by. I'll protect you from what you're not ready to see.

You'll see the back, as Dana presented it, the mercy of the Lord, the loving kindness of the Lord. Here we are at the end, at the end of my little session. What's it mean to serve the Lord? Let me suggest to you these three things.

Don't get all complicated. Don't say, well, I got to look for a ministry and look for a service and get involved in this and that. Before that, maybe God will lead you into that.

I'm not suggesting he won't. But I'm saying this is the foundation. This is the basic.

This is how it's done up there. And it's how it's got to be done down here. You want to serve the Lord? Learn to be a receiver.

Let him serve you. You want to bring forth fruit unto God? Learn what it means to have union with Jesus Christ. You want to serve the Lord? Lordship and death to self is a starting point, not a goal.

By the grace of God and the death of our Lord Jesus, that is done. Now enter into his friendship. And pray, Lord show me your glory.

And he'll put you in the rock. And he'll begin to pass by. And you'll learn what it means to serve the Lord.

One thing have I desired of the Lord. And that will I seek after. That I might behold the beauty of the Lord and live in his house.

Let's bow together. Father, teach us how to do thy will on the earth as it's done in heaven. Teach us what it means to have you serve us.

Oh, what grace. Teach us what it means to be united to you in such a way that glorious fruit comes out of our life and Christ is manifest. Teach us what it means to reach the heart of lordship and enjoy friendship.

And to behold the glory of the Lord. Give us heaven in the bud now. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11414.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ed-miller/knowing-christ-the-friend/>

# *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](http://www.sermonindex.net)**