

The Nature of Jesus - Part 1

by Gayle Erwin

The sermon explores the true nature of Jesus, emphasizing servanthood and the importance of understanding His character as a reflection of God.

Duration: 48:40

Scripture: Mark 9:33

Topics: "Nature Of Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of serving others and living a life that makes a positive impact on those around us. He starts by highlighting the simple act of using a fork to eat and how it requires precision and repetition. He then contrasts this with the idea of seeking excitement and novelty in life, suggesting that serving others is a more fulfilling path. The speaker refers to a Bible verse in Mark 9:34 where Jesus teaches his disciples about the importance of being a servant and putting others first. He concludes by explaining that a servant's job is to make life better for others and to help them fulfill their potential.

Transcript

I've really looked forward to this particular moment because tonight we begin looking at the real core of the nature of Jesus. Something that has possessed my life. I cannot believe, well I can when you see where it is in scripture, how much this has meant to me.

I hope it means as much to you. You know, the real question in life is what is God like? Everyone wants to know. Even atheists want to know.

They do. I have had some interesting conversations just lately with atheists, people that didn't believe in God and I asked them, how did you come to that conclusion? And they get a little bit put out because they didn't think they'd ever have to defend it. And it's really an indefensible situation.

And usually they say, well, I'm a seeker. Well, I say, okay, that's movement. That's movement.

They want to know. They just sort of say, we know you're not there, God, so why don't you go away and leave us alone, okay? And the whole New Age thing, it's a seeking after something they know is out there. It's out there, they know.

Somewhere. The question is, get in touch with it. So they find places where there are vortexes where whatever it is comes and they ohm and they tinkle in an attempt to get in touch with something that's out there.

Well, the thing is, we've settled that. That sounds arrogant, but it really isn't. We know what God is like.

He's like Jesus. That's exactly why he sent him, so we would know precisely what he's like. The problem is, we've kind of messed up Jesus too.

You know, we have, through the centuries, traditions, and dare I say this loaded word, mythologies, have gathered around him and we've painted pictures of him that are not so. For instance, Christmas. Christmas is an interesting time.

We sing songs. I really wish we'd sing those songs all year long. I love them.

But there's one particular song, I hear it and I like the song, I really do, but I can't help but think, hmm, Silent Night. Let's talk about that. Silent Night? Silent Night? You know why Bethlehem was jammed with people, don't you? It was because the foreign government that ruled the land said, go back to your birthplace, we're going to tax you.

Silent Night? The pubs were full and everyone was angry. But for some reason or other, we tend to think that there was a cosmic wave that went through and everyone said, did you feel that? Must be a holy night. Folks, it was a profane night and only a small handful of people had any idea what was going on.

And Mary, I don't know why it is that we tend to think that she had no birth pains. You see all of the pictures of her holding the newborn baby Jesus? I wish my wife looked that good after our children were born. We seem to think that she just said, Joseph, it's time.

And here's Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes. Oh, folks, there is so much that we have done to the scene that places Jesus at an almost untouchable distance. May I begin to bring him back very close to you? This one who wrapped love with skin so you can touch him.

Well, I think I've made a discovery. Now, I know that sounds arrogant too, but what can I say? I think I've made a discovery of some places where Jesus describes himself. Now, the best way to know someone is they must reveal themselves to you.

Otherwise, you make less than accurate observations. For instance, you can look at me and make certain observations. He likes to eat, likes to talk.

But to really know me, I must reveal myself to you. And the same is true with God. The beautiful thing is God does.

That's the thing about the scripture is he reveals himself to us. And that's the thing about Jesus. It's his revelation of himself.

And now Jesus reveals himself. He describes himself in response to a certain apostolic activity. Oh, another group of people to talk about.

Apostle. When I say the word apostle, what pops into your mind? Do you see as I do these tall, handsome men with deep bass voices who walk in unison with Jesus everywhere he goes? And when Jesus finishes

speaking, they form the apostolic touring choir that sings just as I am without one plea while every head was bowed. That's not exactly the way these men were.

You know what the apostles did more than anything else that's recorded in scripture? More than anything else. They argued. I love it.

They argued. You never do that, do you? Well, I do. I've never lost an argument.

Oh, often the other person had the better case, but that didn't mean I lost. But the problem with arguing, especially if it's with your spouse or someone like a roommate or a co-worker that you have to stay with, it's never really over. You know that we're going to talk about this again.

And that's the way it was with the apostles, because, you know what they argued over? You would think it would be deep theological questions. Surely they resolved the tension between predestination and free moral agency. Surely they did.

No. These great men of God argued over who's the greatest. I'm better than you.

You are not. And off they went. I love it.

I love it. Those men encourage me so much. You know, every once in a while even I feel apostolic.

Well, they never would tell Jesus what they were arguing about. There are all kinds of interesting scriptures. The first one I'll read is from Mark chapter 9, beginning with verse 33.

It says, Then he, this is Jesus, came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house, he asked them, this is the apostles he's asking, what was it you disputed or argued among yourselves about on the road? They kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. Aye. It's hard to tell Jesus, isn't it, when you're arguing something like that.

Can't go up to Jesus and say, well, we were trying to decide which of us was the greatest in the kingdom. I've noticed that about prayer. There are some things when I approach the Lord in prayer that I might say to you, I would not say them to Jesus.

That's one good thing prayer does for you. It sort of straightens out some of your thinking because you realize in some things you begin to pray, this is ridiculous, isn't it? So they wouldn't tell Jesus. I understand.

Now, here is where I believe there is beauty and humor in scripture. I want to enlarge a little bit here. I don't want to change it, but I want to put myself in it and think how this might have gone.

Jesus is busy being the Messiah. The apostles are busy arguing about who's the greatest. Jesus says, hey, what were you guys arguing about back there? It's okay.

It's okay. It's private. You don't need to know.

But Jesus knew, oh, I love this. I can see the twinkle in his eye as he almost says, well, it's okay. I don't need to know, but can I give you a teaching fellows? Okay, go ahead.

You're the boss. Let me tell you who the greatest in the kingdom is. You told, you must have told.

I didn't tell. Can you see the shock on their faces? Personally, I think Peter started the argument. I can see him folding his arms and thinking, good, I'd rather they hear it from him than from me.

But it is here, you see, where I believe I've seen, had this discovery, seen this nature of Jesus, because when Jesus begins to teach about the greatest in the kingdom, he was teaching about himself because he was greatest in the kingdom. So this set of teachings that he did in different places becomes an incredible revelation of his very nature. And he says, he that is greatest, and I can see the guys thinking, yeah, yeah, is it me? Is it me? He is, that is greatest, must be servant of all.

Slave is a better word. Isn't that exciting? No, I know. It really isn't.

And you're probably thinking, you mean I gave up Thursday night to hear this? It really isn't exciting territory. I've often thought, what if I were to go on television like some hucksters I've seen and say, ladies and gentlemen, normally people travel thousands of miles and pay thousands of dollars to attend this seminar, but today I have a special deal just for you. If you'll send me \$500, I'll send you 15 tapes and 12 books, and in one week, you too can be a slave.

My mother might send a few dollars. But if I were to go on TV and say, if you'll send me \$500, I'll send you 15 tapes and 12 books, and in one week, you too can be rich. Oh man, the checkbooks would come out and somebody would get rich.

So it really isn't exciting territory. Well, Jesus went on, let me just read this to you, and then we'll go on and consider it here. Verse 34, But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.

And he sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all. Well, we better deal with this. What is a servant's job? Well, a servant's job is to make life better for someone else.

It's really as simple as that. A servant's job is to live toward others in a way that frees them to become all they were created to be. I am amazed as I read Galatians how much Jesus is about freedom.

Freedom! Another way that we might describe this that I like to use as an operating description, we'll do that tonight, is a slave or a servant is someone who is others-centered, especially as different from self-centered. Now, this is rather embarrassing to me because I have to make some confessions here, and I don't always like to do that up in front of this many people, but I'm afraid I have to confess to you that I am an incredibly self-centered man. I'm sorry.

I don't want to be, but I am. I think of myself most of the time. If there is a group photograph and I'm in it, there I am.

I find me first. I've never met a mirror I didn't like. In fact, I figure you folks, the first thing you thought of this morning when you woke up was, how's Gail doing? Now, the thing about being self-centered as opposed to others-centered is it's miserable.

It's really miserable. Jesus said it would be. You know, He told us here in this Bible, this book that you could call the manufacturer's manual.

You know, He created you, and so He knows how you work. If you're going to fix your automobile, well, go to the manufacturer's specs to be able to tune it upright. And if you want to tune yourself upright, go to the manufacturer's specs.

And He who made you said, if you want to find your life, lose it. Yeah. Wow, lose it? I know God said that because I would not have.

I would have said, you only go around once in life, so grab! Get there before the other fellow does. That's not the way to do it. Or I would have gone down to my local bookstore and found books like looking out for number one, how to win by intimidation.

But only here in the manufacturer's manual do you hear Jesus say, if you really want to find your life, you have to lose it. In fact, if you really try to find it, you will lose it. I should have known that.

He said it, but I learned slowly. In fact, I could have known it from just simple observation. You're familiar with this thing called self-consciousness.

It's misery. I know. I know.

I have a genetic problem here. I know it's genetic because my dad looked like this. But I've discovered in my old age that I have to lean over further when I eat, because if I don't, sploosh! Oh, man.

And here I am, embarrassed because I know I'm going to be up in front of people, and they're going to think, messy eater, isn't he? So I learned how to walk around. I can cover things very well, and if I have to shake hands with somebody, I can do a quick switcheroo. But I'm spending mind time on myself, and it's misery.

Have you ever awakened in the morning, and you got up late, and you're in a rush, and you look in the mirror. Dangerous thing to do in the morning, but you look in the mirror, and there is a hare that is disobedient. And you do everything you can because you're in a rush to get out, but you're out now in public, and you're walking around like this, because you know they're staring at you thinking, doesn't own a comb, doesn't he? It's misery.

It's misery. In fact, I shouldn't talk about my wife. She's not here tonight.

When she gets a runner in her stocking, the world has come to an end. All of Southern California stops and stares. She knows it.

It's amazing what this does to us. Jesus knew that. So he said, I don't want you to live miserable.

I don't want you to live that way at all. That's not freedom. That's tormenting.

I want you to give yourselves away. I want you to find out what it means to really tune yourselves up so that you work right. In fact, one of the most interesting concepts in Scripture is that we are the body of Christ.

Now, that's very good to know because God has issued each of us a body, so we know how bodies are supposed to operate. Are you aware, surely you are, that every single part of your body, every single part of your body is a slave to the rest of your body? Everyone. Not one part of your body, not one exists for itself.

Not one. Even if you take part of it out at night and lay it on a shelf. You don't put a banana there so it can eat during the night.

In fact, it is this kind of thing that makes you healthy and happy and even able to be here and enjoy yourselves because your body is serving itself. Every part is serving the rest. What if it was different? Have you ever thought about that? I mean, just certain simple things could not go on.

In fact, to show you how important this is, tonight you did this. I know you did it this morning, but I'm almost positive every one of you did this tonight. You took a deadly weapon in your hand and you rammed it into a morsel of food and it came toward your face at breakneck speed.

You could lose an eye. But at the last second, with phenomenal precision, your mouth flew open and the fork deposited the food over and over and over. Never miss.

No blood or anything, man. Great precision. Now what if? What if your hand decides, I'm tired of this routine.

Same thing over and over and over. I want to do it my way. No.

Your body doesn't do that, you see. It's delighted. It's delighted to cooperate with itself.

Aren't you glad that even the simple act of clapping, one hand says, not me, and the other one just... It is possible for one part of your body to begin to serve only itself. It does happen. It's a medical condition.

Doctors have a name for it. They call it cancer. That's the very nature of cancer is when one part of the body begins to serve only itself.

Man, we consider that a dread disease, life-threatening. If only we understood how dread a disease, how life-threatening self-centeredness is in the body of Christ. Wow.

Well, suddenly this takes on a different hue, doesn't it? Oh, yes, of course. Servanthood makes all the sense in the world. And it really does.

When you see how God is, how He has revealed Himself through Jesus, and what begins to happen in our lives when we follow Him, it's incredible. Well, Jesus compares Himself to a couple of other kingdoms in order to explain to us in comparison how He is. One of those would be the kingdom of the Gentiles.

Now, I'll read it to you in a minute, but He says, you know, the rulers of the Gentiles, in other words, the greatest in the world kingdom. Gentiles would be what they would basically call the world out there, the pagan world. He said, you know, the rulers are the greatest in the Gentile kingdom.

And how they love, or not love, but how they lord it over others. He says, not so with you. So, not lord it over becomes number two here.

Now, that makes sense if you understand number one. It wouldn't make much sense for me to come to you and say, look, I'm your slave, and you'll do what I tell you. That doesn't compute.

But isn't it amazing how many people get their whole idea of who they are by how much or how many they are over. Oh, I'm constantly among groups of guys. We'll get together from time to time, pastors and the like, maybe, and we'll kind of sidle up to each other and say, how many you have? And in some way, the

world is constantly asking that question.

But if you understand number one, number two makes all the sense in the world. Well, Jesus compared himself to another kingdom, and that's the kingdom of religion. Now, you've lived long enough to know that religion and the kingdom of God are not necessarily the same thing.

And Jesus knew it too. And so he says, you know, the teachers of the law, the scribes, the Pharisees, those who sit in the seat of Moses or, or shall we say the seat of authority, or shall we say the greatest in the religious kingdom, and how they love to lay heavy burdens on others. But they themselves were not left a finger to carry the load.

He says, do what they say, but don't do as they do. So the only valid form of leadership in the kingdom of God is leadership by example. I am not free to say to you, do as I say, not as I do.

But I'm free to say, as Paul said, and I think he understood this, follow me as I follow Christ. I am so delighted that Jesus did not come to this earth and say, I have come to lay down certain basic principles, which I would expect you to learn very carefully and gather together with all the other great learning of history and come up with a thing called Christianity. He says, follow me, follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

Now, this is the thing that many who don't know the Lord really don't understand. They think, oh yes, I believe in basic Christian principles and the ethics of the great religions. No, no, no, no.

Jesus is not basic Christian principles. He is a person. And he didn't say, follow my basic Christian principles.

He said, follow me. He's a person. Follow me.

I realized once that just about everything I know, I've learned by example, really. In fact, my wife and I have four children. They taught us more than we ever taught them, but I tried hard to teach them proper table manners.

But they eat like me. It's what they see. And I have a crazy habit.

I often will stand with my thumbs in my belt loops and my hands in my pockets like that. It's a worthless habit. It doesn't bake any bread, but I do it.

And one day when my son was about three, four, five years old, I've forgotten, but he had his first pair of belt loop trousers. And I was standing like this, and my wife said, look. I looked over there, and there he was looking at me.

And I thought, would you look at that. Just by example, I've taught him a totally useless habit. That's what happens.

I have some dear friends who, when their little daughter was about six years old, cute girl, she was playing in the patio of the church with some of her friends. And the mother was standing about 10 feet away. And at one point, this little girl did this with her friends.

She went, I'm so tired. And I looked at the mother and smiled, you know, and she went, oh. She says, I guess you know what goes on at my house.

I said, yeah. If you have a five or six-year-old, let me just spend a few hours with them, and I will know you. They just do what they see.

We learn by example, don't we? By example. I had a pastor friend who I think had caught the understanding of this. He called me one day, one Monday actually, and he said, hey, Gail, I got to tell you about the sermon I preached yesterday.

I said, great. I like to hear things like that, because if it's really good, I borrow it. He said the title of it was Some Things I'm Sick and Tired Of.

I thought, oh man, you're not preaching sermons like that, are you? And he knew what I was thinking. So he said, now don't jump to conclusions till I tell you. Okay, okay.

He said, the first point was this. I am sick and tired of expecting you to pray when I have not been praying. He says, I am sick and tired of expecting you to read the Bible when I have not been reading the Bible.

He says, I am sick and tired of expecting you to give when I have not been giving. I thought, all right, you've caught on. Jesus said, follow me.

I will make you to become fishers of men. He never expects us to do anything that he hasn't done first and shown us how. I love it.

I love it. Paul says to the church at Thessalonica, he says, you have been imitators of me, and now you are a model for the rest of the churches in Asia. Ah, exemplifying going on.

To the church at Philippi, he says, the things you have heard from me and learned from me and seen in me, these do. Wow. But it's so comfortable following when this kind of thing is going on.

It's so comfortable following when there is modeling, when there is example. Then you know you'll be able to do it. Some years ago, I was teaching in Nashville.

My wife and family were on the coast of Mississippi where my mother lives, and they were going to drive up to join me. Well, to get to Nashville from there, you have to go through a town called Mobile, Alabama. It's a beautiful old town.

It just was not designed to drive through, that's all. The freeway bypass was not complete. Went out into the middle of a swamp and stopped and didn't tell you it was going to stop.

For two hours, my wife tried to get through that town. She'd stop policemen and ask directions. She'd stop at service stations and ask directions.

Directions were not her strongest area. And finally, at the point of despair, and I don't know if you've ever been at a point of despair in your life, she stopped at one more service station and said, Sir, will you please help me get through this town? Now, if you've ever been at a point of despair and asked for help, you've probably heard what the man said. It's easy.

Don't you hate that when you've been breaking your neck, and it's easy. He said, all you have to do is go this direction, and he described it. Now, if you have ever given advice, you have heard what my wife answered.

I tried that, and it didn't work. He said, well, here's another way you can go. And he describes it, and she says, I tried that, and it didn't work.

So he looked at her for a second. He said, then you're not going to make it through this town. He turned around.

Fortunately, there was a man overhearing the conversation who said, lady, I'm driving this car out front. If you don't mind following me, I know this is a tough town to get through. I'll show you.

All right. So she got behind him. They went down Government Street under the Bankhead Tunnel up the east side of the Mobile River to miles beyond.

The freeway began again, and he stopped, and he said, now, you get on that. It takes you straight to Nashville. You can't get lost.

Now, I don't know this man, and I don't know if he was a Christian, but he certainly understood how Jesus led. Follow me. Follow me.

Oh, I like that. Then Jesus says, he that is greatest must be humble. I never have liked that word, and it's mostly because I misunderstood it.

You see, for so much of my life, I thought humility was basically an inferiority complex that worked its way out in my life this way. I'm really nothing. Can't sing.

Can't play a piano. Can't pick a guitar. Barely pick my nose.

And people would respond to me the way I wanted. They would say, oh, Gail, you're so humble. And I would say, thank you.

It's not me. It's the Lord. Until I heard the Lord say, it's not me either, when I had nothing to do with that.

See, that's not humility. That's sickness. Well, let's see if we can define humility.

Humility really is an accurate assessment of yourself. It's being absolutely honest about yourself. It's an honesty principle, actually.

Honesty about myself. Now, that can be devastating. An accurate view of yourself will drive you to the Lord, you know.

We could call it being upfront. Plain vanilla. Plain vanilla.

What you see is what you get. Transparent, willing to be read like a book. Living without pretense, without hypocrisy.

Now, a falsely humble person is a pain to be around. They really are. A falsely humble person, I'm just your humble servant.

That's all. I'm just coming over here just to serve you. And I just want you to know, I'm just going to hang around here and be your humble servant.

Please understand, I'm just going to be your humble servant. And then you begin to think, get him out of my face, man. But a truly humble person is a delight to be around because you never have to figure them out.

If they say, good morning, you don't have to think, I wonder what he meant by that. Oh, one of my favorite stories in the Old Testament. And we'll get back into this in one of these interrupted sessions later on.

I like Moses. I like Moses. PhD in Egyptology.

And he'd messed his life up something terrible. And now the best job he can get is way out in the back of the desert, herding sheep, not his own even, for 40 years. Think of that, 40 years.

What have you ever done for 40 years? Ever thought about that so boring? And finally, God says, I think I can talk to this man now. Now, I have often prayed, God, don't let me get so hardheaded that it takes you 40 years to get in touch with me. So God says, I think I can talk to this man now.

So he sets a bush on fire. You ever wondered which bush? I mean, there were billions of thorn bushes in that desert. How'd he pick a bush? Did he have a Mr. Thorn Bush of Israel contest or what? I think he looked for one that was nearby, available, it would burn.

And he sets this bush on fire. And Moses, bored to tears in the desert, sees it. All right, something different in the desert.

Let's check this out. And he gets over here and discovers, he was 80, you know, he gets over here and discovers that it was not your average bush. It didn't burn up.

In fact, it was even more different than that. It spoke. And it knew his name.

Moses, Moses. What? Take off your shoes, you're on holy ground. He took off his shoe and promptly entered into an argument with the bush.

I love it. That takes nerve. Jewish people have a stronger word for that.

They call that chutzpah. That's like murdering your parents and then throwing yourself on the mercy of the courts as an orphan. Well, the bush won and Moses says, okay, okay, I'll go, I'll talk to Pharaoh, I'll talk to the children of Israel, but what's your name? When they asked me who sent me, what do I say? And God said, you tell them, I am.

That I am has sent you. Oh, I am. Oh, I get goosebumps when I say that.

You see, if I were to send you, I would have to say, tell them I ain't has sent you. Or the great maybe. But God is an I am.

And the thing is, he says, this is the name I've chosen to be known by from generation to generation or from now on. It's his name. Wow.

And Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter three that he's the father after whom his whole family and earth is named. So that means that's our last name. I am.

How about that? Gail Irwin, I am. Now that means our very name calls us to I am-ness. Our very name calls us to honesty.

It calls us to being the ones who are unhidden, who say, here's the truth about me. Problem is, I'm afraid that so much of the time I even lie with my face. You ever? You wouldn't do that.

No. There are times when I desperately need prayer, but I find myself coming to the gathering of the saints, and I know they're going to greet me at the door. So what do I do? How you doing? Fine.

Praise the Lord. I don't have any problems. I'm a Christian.

Hello. Wouldn't confess it anyway. Oh, what a terrible.

What if one part of your body deceived another part of your body that way? Have you ever thought about it? You see, this is the thing that makes humility so powerful, because it means that we give up deception. We give up any lying to others about ourselves. I believe you get to humility, by the way, by confession.

You see, confession is simply telling the truth about yourself and saying, I know this is what you think, but here's the truth. And so here's where you can pray for me and say, confession isn't necessarily going back and seeing how much you can dig up way back there and pull it up and say, I bet my, I got bigger sins than you. No, that's not, that's not confession.

Confession is just living honestly and saying, here's the truth about me, and here's where you can pray for me. The Bible does say confess your faults one to another. It says that.

Now, the way I handle that is, sure, I'll be glad to confess your faults. No, but humility says, yes, here's the truth. Here's the truth about me.

I don't have to be hidden anymore because I'm forgiven. Oh, what a difference to live openly and freely and unhidden. How much energy it takes to have to hide and cover things up.

In fact, what was the, what was the first thing Adam and Eve did when they sinned in the garden? They hid. They hid. They began the cover-up process.

Oh, by the way, I'll throw this in. This is free. I have a fig tree in my yard.

I love figs. But when I pick figs, I have to put on a long-sleeved shirt because fig leaves really make you itch. Adam and Eve sowed fig leaves.

Oh, I can see them, whoa, whoa, walking around. They knew they should suffer, you know. And God comes along and goes, ooh, that is not what I had in mind.

Let me fix you some lambskin seat covers. And I have discovered that when I try to cover myself, it is painful. Only God knows how to do it.

In fact, if you want to create some chaos where you work, if you work among people that haven't come to know the Lord and don't understand His forgiveness, you can just go up to them and say first thing in the morning, what you have kept hidden for years is going to be revealed today. It's chaos then. But see, the beautiful thing about humility is when you recognize the truth about yourself, when you understand, man, I'm hopeless.

I'm a sinner. I can't quit sinning. I can't get control of my life, man.

I am, what am I going to do? That's where God says, do I have a plan for you? He says, all you have to do is come to me with that hopelessness, that humility, that reality, and I will forgive you and change you. Oh, man, turn us into an I am. And only He can do it.

Your body would not survive without humility and yet without this honesty to itself. And yet everywhere I go, and I do go places, and I've discovered that every culture that I am ever in, including my own, says don't let them know the truth about yourself. Play your cards close to your chest.

Keep a poker face. My British ancestry taught me, keep a stiff upper lip. I don't know quite how you do that, but you're supposed to keep a stiff upper lip.

But one part of your body, if it tries to deceive another part of your body, you're in desperate condition. Desperate. The simple act of walking could not occur.

You see, I take a step and I'm expecting this leg to follow through, right? But what if this leg says, he only thinks I'm coming to him. I'm on my face, you see. One part, look at it this way.

Suppose I'm standing next to a stove, a burner is on, it's red hot, and I do a very unintelligent thing. I lay my hand on the burner. Now, if my hand acted the way I have sometimes seen the body of Christ, now please know I'm not talking about you here, I'm talking about other places that I've been.

I laid my hand on that burner and it acted like I have sometimes seen people act. You know what it would do? It would say, oh, you've done a stupid thing. Oh, this is embarrassing.

Don't let the rest of the body know that you've done this thing. Just be cool. My body would never do that.

If I lay my hand on a hot burner, immediately, get me off of this, I've done a dumb thing. See, that's the way my body operates because each part is honest with the other part about itself. Well, we're about halfway through with this first part of what Jesus is like, and I'm going to have to stop here and finish this in our next session.

But you've got to think about this because this is so incredibly important. If this is the way Jesus is, he's better than anybody I have ever seen before. I mean, this is incredible.

No person that I have ever met other than Jesus fulfills this. And if you think about who he is and the fact that he has come to be this for us, boy, my overwhelming immediate response is, oh, Father, I want to be like him. I want to receive him.

He's the only one that can handle my sins, and I want him to do it. So, if you don't know him, the saddest thing in the world would be to walk out of here with the greatest opportunity you ever had presented to you. To know the only one who can forgive you and give you that incredible, ah, in your heart that says, ah, I'm forgiven.

I'm free. The king of all the universe is God. Not to get me to serve him, but to serve me, and then I can't help but serve him, see.

And you know, as our pastor told us at the beginning, if you want to be prayed for, tonight's a good time to do it. And you only get prayed for when you say, here's some truth about me that I need God to do something about, or some truth in my situation. What an incredible opportunity, because the God who came to show this to us, walked it out, proved himself this way, and is here tonight to take care of this.

What a golden opportunity. May the God of grace and glory overwhelm you with his presence and draw you to him. Amen.

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