

# Be a Man - Part 1

by Ken Graves

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*This sermon encourages men to look to their Maker for what it is that they're supposed to be and to understand who Jesus Christ is and what it means to be a man.*

**Duration:** 1:06:55

**Scripture:** Psalm 62:11-12, Jeremiah 9:1, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:15-16, John 1:29, Romans 8:28, Revelation 5:5

**Topics:** "Manhood"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the theme of violence in stories and the battle between good and evil. He compares the portrayal of Jesus as a gentle figure to the reality of his actions in the Bible, such as overturning tables and releasing doves. The speaker also shares his personal experience of questioning his existence and being reached out to by a male teacher. He highlights the dual nature of Jesus as both a lamb and a lion, representing his loving and conquering qualities. The sermon concludes with the power of Jesus' voice in causing demons to flee.

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## Transcript

Well, it is a blessing to be here with you, and I'm grateful that you are here with me. If you would give up your day off, I commend you for doing such, giving up your day off to get to know more about who the Lord is and what he wants from you, what he wants from your life. And I know that you, having given up your day off, you did not give up that time with your family, that time with your recreation, whatever that might be.

You didn't do that to come over here to get offended, necessarily. And I want you to know, I want you to know straight up, first thing, I will not go out of my way to offend. And I acknowledge at the beginning of my time with you that it is a possibility.

It happens, it happens a lot. And I'm seriously not, I'm not trying to offend. I'm also not trying not to offend.

So if you do get offended, I want you to just act like a man about it. And I mean this, don't get up in a huff and make your big statement walking out. If you get offended, if that happens, just deal with it like a man.

Sit there and process this thing and wait for the opportunity and take advantage of the opportunity to ask me personally for clarification or tell me what you don't like that I said, okay? Don't just walk out of here. You might not have the whole picture when you go stomping out of here. You know what I'm saying? Don't

act like something other than a man.

Don't be like, well, I never, you know, and just up and... I've learned to say this because in saying this, I have seen a whole lot less guys get up and take off. But wherever I have spoken on this subject of being a man, I have seen people get themselves up and out. And having said that, you are less likely to get up and go out and go to the bathroom too now, won't you? Because you're going to, you'll look like one of them.

All right. On the subject of, and it's a big subject and we've got just a little bit of time to deal with it. The subject of being a man.

I really do believe, I am convinced that there is a need for us to look to our maker for what it is that we're supposed to be. It is a big mistake, a huge mistake to look to this world, to look to man, to look to Adam for information about what it is we're supposed to be. It is a mistake also to look to Eve.

If you ask, the women in your life will tell you what they think you are to be. And they think they know what they need you to be. But they're wrong.

Most of the time, they're wrong. If they could, they would turn you internally into one of their girlfriends. They would.

Because they believe that that's what they need. Many of you, men, if you could, you would likewise turn your wife into one of your buddies. Maintaining, of course, that female body.

What you want is a man on a woman's body, and I want you to know that's gay. It's against God's design. And for the record, when I say that's gay, I mean that's not good.

You have a whole lot more in common with the population of San Francisco than you want to have. Now, if you are one of those men who has, as I did once, gotten on your wife's case with all those stupid questions like, Why? Why? Why do you have to be so emotional? Why are you so emotional? Why is everything a test of my love? Why do you speak in riddles to me? If you're that man, the answer to the question is because God made her to be a woman. And you're insulting the very design of God when you demand that she be something other than what God wired her to be.

And I am in defense of manhood. I think there's a whole lot done in our culture today that is trying as much as possible to neuter you, dude. There is a culture around you that wants to make you some kind of non-male.

Some kind of picnic, basket-carrying, sweater-wearing, blanket-carrying poet, you know, with those guys in the novels that don't exist in God's economy. In order for us to really deal with this subject, who is it we are supposed to be? What is a man? Something worth noting, I believe, is that Adam, in Genesis, in the book of beginnings, he is the first man. But in the New Testament, it is worth noting, especially you see this in 1 Corinthians 15, the whole context of the resurrection, you see our Lord Jesus Christ referred to as the last man, the second man.

Adam is referred to as the first man. Our Lord Jesus is referred to as the second man. As if there was nothing from Adam to him that could actually be called a man.

You want to know what a man is? We have it demonstrated for us in the Gospels. The Lord from Heaven. He is the one that created.

He is the one that brought man into existence. He is the prototype. It was in His image that Adam was created.

He is everything that a man is supposed to be. And has your heart been completely won by Him? I hope that as a result of our just looking more at Him today. Because honestly guys, if we spend too much time focusing on man, we're going to leave you depressed.

If we spend too much time focusing on, well, either we're going to be depressed or we're going to be... We'll laugh a lot. There's a lot to laugh about. Because we're weird.

But will we be different? If we spend our time looking at what is a man? I don't think so. But if we spend our time looking at the man. The one that Pontius Pilate said was the man.

Remember those words? Behold, the man. Truest thing Pilate said. He is the man.

He's not a man. He is the man. He is everything that a man is supposed to be.

He is the one the Apostle Paul spoke of. In 1 Timothy 2.5 when he says that there is one God. And there is one mediator between God and man.

The man. Christ Jesus. The man.

I have come to the place. And I don't know about you guys. And I'm not going to try to impose something on you that isn't you.

Or the Lord hasn't done with you. I'll tell you something. The Lord has done with me.

And been doing with me. And even more recently. As I've come to the point where I can't even feel comfortable speaking just his common name.

Without identifying him as Lord Jesus Christ. Lord and Master. In fact I've made an observation.

Maybe you have as well. There is a strange form of familiarity. With one who is so great.

That there is a lack of reverence in our day. A lack of reverence encouraged in our day. For one who is actually our King.

Who is the King of all Kings. Lord of all Lords. Some of us will address our pastor as Pastor Bob.

I'm often addressed as Pastor Ken. And yet the Lord Jesus. Just referred to as Jesus.

So you may see that. In our time together I want to present him to you as none other than our absolute Lord and Master. He is everything that we want to be.

He is everything. There is no one like him. There is no one like our Lord Jesus.

There is nobody like him. And may I say to you. I also would ask that you not judge me as just being some backwoodsman.

Though I am. From the state of Maine. And assume that the things that I'm about to lay out to you are just.

Somehow or another I'm representing my backwoods culture. Because I'm not. I was born into a family of woodsmen.

Cavemen. Who I was born the first time to be a wife beaten adulterous violent drinking idiot. That's what I was born to be.

The first time. Into a family of men who worked in the woods and cut the trees. I had a serious need to be born a second time.

To another father. Whose kingdom now I seek to represent. It is not some culture.

Not my culture. Not the American culture. I get this everywhere I go.

You know this is a cultural. It ain't cultural. It's a kingdom.

So let's be clear on that right from the beginning. Okay. It's a king I represent.

To you. Your king. Some of you have not yet truly surrendered to him.

And I submit to you also that there are some of us here today. Who don't really know him. But think we do.

That have mental graven images of Jesus. That is actually way too small and way too femmy to be him. There's three kinds of people in this world.

According to a country preacher I listened to when I was a kid. The Lord took me from the northeast as a 16-year-old boy. Knew he was called into the ministry.

Took me to the deep south. Not quite this far south. But to Alabama.

I was exposed to some really profound and yet simple country preaching. And I remember one certain Brother Holmes. Who didn't believe in dead air space.

Always felt like when he stood up at the pulpit there should always be sound coming out of him constantly. And so whenever he couldn't think of what to say next he just filled it in with praise. You ever heard those guys? Where glory? Hallelujah! Where glory God? And he was looking for his notes to figure out where he was next.

And he went where glory to God! Hallelujah! All the way to the next point. And then he would say things that were profound. And I remember this one thing that he said.

He said, well I remember several things. He was the king of the one liners. But I remember him saying what is, where glory to God? Where fellowship? What is fellowship? Hallelujah! Fellowship is two fellows in the same ship.

And I remember that was profound. That's fellowship. But more profound than that were his words.

Where glory to God? Hallelujah! Where glory to God? Them are three kind of people in the world he said. Them it is. Them it ain't.

And them it thinks they is but ain't. And I believe that that is a true statement of manhood. There are those who think they are.

Those who definitely aren't. There are those who are. But truer still.

With regard to knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. There are those who do know him. There are those who do not know him.

And they know they don't. But there is a world full of people under a delusion. That have an idol.

They call Jesus. But he is not our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh religion is a confusing thing.

And certainly it is my hope that in our time. Some things will come together for you. If you happen to be here today.

And you are one of those men that knows that you don't know Jesus Christ. Our Lord. Well I pray for you.

That this whole thing for you. This was a setup dude. God has set you up.

Brought you here today so you could hear this. You have a friend who knows the Lord Jesus. Who wants you to know him.

So please listen with an open heart. There are others here today. That I just want to invite you to consider the possibility.

Just consider it as just a possibility. That maybe the one that you pray to. The picture that comes to mind.

Maybe you actually even got a picture on the wall. That is influenced. Your whole perspective.

Of the one you pray to. Consider just. Please consider.

It is possible. That you don't really know him. But you convinced him yourself that you do.

I don't want to try to shake anybody's faith. I am not trying to throw you into confusion. What I am saying is.

Let's be biblical. Let's know him as he reveals himself to be. Let's see him as he clearly presents himself.

I believe that there are men who are finding false comfort. In a Jesus. That is just like them.

Who is actually created in their image. In their likeness. False comfort in their misinterpretation of scriptures.

Like that verse in Hebrews. About us having a high priest. Who was at all points tested like us.

Yet without sin. And there is a lot of men. And I hope maybe even here this morning.

We need to be fixed on this. Because in their mind they are thinking. Yes he was like me.

He was a lot like you. But he is not just like you. A lot of men.

We. All of us have this in common. Just two fellows in the same ship.

We are all in this one ship. We are all visually stimulated sexual beings. Aren't we? We know we are.

We are sight stimulated sexual beings. And we find false comfort. In the idea that the Lord Jesus was likewise tempted.

Well. Do you think the pedophile can comfort himself likewise? That. The way that you think of Jesus.

Struggling with a desire for some earthly woman. Reveals that you really don't know who he is. Who he is.

He is not just a man. He is God. There are those who hold to the deity of Christ.

To the exclusion of his humanity. There are those who hold to his humanity. To the exclusion.

Forgetting that he is God. And God cannot be tempted with evil. Neither does he tempt any man.

I encourage you. To be willing today. To consider the possibility that maybe you need to adjust your.

Whole concept. Of who it is. You say you know.

Who is he? Turn would you to Matthew chapter 21. Because men. This is the central issue.

This is what it is really all about. Everything that. We.

Are supposed to be. Is wrapped up in. Who.

He. Is. I've seen a lot of stupid things come and go.

In my years in the ministry I've seen a lot of men's movements. A lot of stuff for men. That had a mixture.

Some things that were really good. And some things that were really quite stupid. I have seen.

The attempt. To. Dumb this whole thing down.

To. Maybe the seven promises of a promise keeper. Why seven? Why not do all ten? Because we know we can't.

Seven promises of a promise keeper. Trying to live your life that way. Is really not all that different from trying to just live by the ten commandments.

Something that. Was given to us to prove to us that we can't do it. It's an attempt to try to live the law.

Can I just say that? Can I just do the promise keeper thing? Can I just. Can I just keep the promises? When. In reality what we need to be.

Are promise believers. Promise keepers. That's something that God can turn us into.

But it's not the way we're supposed. It's not the secret to living this life. It is not the secret to discovering who it is you're supposed to be.

It's an attempt to try. It's religion man. It's an attempt to try to live out your law.

Are you offended yet? You promise keepers dudes. Get over it. Think about it.

Think it through. What about you. What about.

What about the whole attempt. And it's a clever marketing scheme. And I'm.

And I'm sure. You know. That.

That there are those of you who would say. Oh come on. Don't pick on that.

Because a lot of goods come out of it. What about that whole. Little WWJD.

Bracelet trip. Is that the secret? Is it really what the Lord intends for us? Is that. Is that what we're supposed to do? It's just.

Going on asking the question. What would Jesus do? What would Jesus. What would he do.

What would he do. If he were to do something. Which he's not.

But. Somebody has to. So I guess I will.

What. What would he do. I tell you what he would do.

He would keep. The commandments. He would live the law.

Perfectly. Is that what. We're called to do.

Just look at him. Look at. Christ.

And say. What he does. I'll do.

That's it. No. There's got to be something more than that.

Something way more than that. Because. Because.

Because we're not him. And. You know.

I've seen. I think Pastor Bob mentioned last night. He's.

As well. Seen people that have attempted to use. Accountability.

And. Fellowship. Accountability.

That's it. That's the secret. Using.

Your friends. To try to. You know.

Put yourself on a leash. And the other end of the leash. In their hands.

Because. You're just a beast. You're an animal.

You're going to automate. After all kinds of wrong things. And.

You need. You need them to help you. Hold back.

Is that. Is that how you want to live your life? Is that the secret to this? Is that what we're called to? I say no. I think all of that's.

Stupid. Well. This is a place for accountability.  
Certainly. It's good to look to. The Lord Jesus.  
And ask. In this situation. What would he do? And.  
Yeah. I believe. I believe in keeping promises.  
But that's not the secret. To. Living the life.  
That we're called to. It's got to be something. Supernatural.  
And none of that. Is. I have seen things.  
I've gone to. Men's. Things.  
Looking. Hopefully. For something.  
Powerful. And. Typically.  
You know what? Guys. All deal with the same. Stupid.  
Temptations. In different forms. I was at one thing.  
I remember this. I'll never forget this. In a. In a. Small.  
Stadium. Where the speaker. Was.  
Telling these guys. How they need to just. Confess their sin.  
How they need to just. Get honest. And how they need to get transparent.  
Become sort of. Emotionally naked. With each other.  
Which I. Seriously. Discourage. This.  
This. You know. This guy was going on about.  
How you need to just. You need to just. Just.  
On the count of three. I want you to just. Stand up.  
Come out of the closet. Come out of the seat. And there's certainly.  
A place for. You know. Admitting things.  
Acknowledgements. Just. I mean.  
On the count of three. I want you to stand up. And just.  
Shout out. Your sin. Well.  
I can see this one coming. Sure enough. On the count of three.

One. Two. Three.

There were like. Two or three guys. Scattered.

Who just stood up and went. Masturbation. And the sound of crickets and snickers.

They sat back down. Is that really. Is that the thing.

Are we just all supposed to. That's it. Just.

Just. All. Just confessing all our junk.

I don't think so. I think the secret. Is this.

Matthew chapter 21. Verse 10. It says.

And when he was coming to Jerusalem. All the city was moved. Saying.

Who. Is. This.

Who. Is. This.

All the city was moved. You see. The next verse.

Says that. And the multitude said. This is Jesus.

The prophet of Nazareth. Of Galilee. Talk about those.

Who think they know him. But don't. The multitudes answer reveals.

They don't have any idea. Who he actually is. They think he's just Jesus.

They don't know him to be. The Lord. Jesus.

They think he's a prophet. They don't know. He's the one.

That all of the prophets. Spoke of. And that all prophecy is about.

They think he's from Nazareth. They have no idea. That he is the Lord from heaven.

No idea. Man. They've got a perception.

They so very much. Represent. Religious folk.

Who are very sincere. But they don't have any idea. Who he really is.

They don't know him. So much more than they think. Was there a time in your life.

Most of you are Christian men. There was a time in your life. At some point or another.

You were moved. To ask that same question. You were moved.

You were stirred. Something. Circumstances came together.

The spirit of God working on your heart. Caused you to be asking that very question. Who is this? Who are you Lord? For me.

Being a little kid. From Maine. Poor kid.

Welfare. Family. Dad.

Violent. Drunk. Left us.

Died while he was gone. I got four sisters to fight for. My mother.

Spent my whole childhood. Worrying. And then she.

My dear mother. So broken hearted. So needy.

Looking to men. Older. Always in the bars.

Always bringing somebody else home. Trying to find love. The kind of love that only would be found in Christ.

Which I say today. She has found. Sits there on the front row of Calvary Chapel in Bangor, Maine.

Blows my mind every time I look down to see her. But in those days. So desperate for someone to love her.

So in need of love. Men life was horrible for us. Always trying to survive the cold every winter.

Summertime wasn't so bad. We could always find food. You know, if you know how to find things in the woods, if you know how to catch and kill, no problem.

But winter was always that horrible surviving time. Worrying about will I be able to keep these girls warm? And can I keep these boyfriends of my mother's away from them? Boy, I was a bitter, hateful kid. Just fighting grown men in whatever equalizer I could come up with.

I remember attacking a guy when I was eight years old with a two by four. And he took it away from me, but it didn't prevent me from trying again another way. I was on my way to becoming a really hateful, bitter, psychotic, you know, some kind of nutcase.

Somebody who would need to be locked up. And there were well intended people who came and picked us poor rural white trash kids up on a bus and bussed us to their church to, you know, sit us in front of a little flannel graph and put paper dolls up there and tell us stories. And I know they meant well, but I'll tell you, their little one dimensional paper doll Jesus didn't move me, didn't stir me.

You know, and I'll be honest with you, I think a lot of the artists, people, and I'll speak in generalizations, and I know they are generalizations, and I just ask you to deal with it maturely. You know, the Lord Jesus spoke in generalizations. When he said, Bow unto you Pharisees, right? It's a generalization.

There were a couple that were not so bad. We know of Joseph of Arimathea, right? We know of Nicodemus, who at least had questions, but bow unto you Pharisees still applied. And I'll be honest with you.

I think a lot of guys who gravitate toward art are really feminine. And they have imposed, a lot of the artist's conceptions of Jesus, the man, are a bunch of feminine men, you know, creating their own image of Jesus. I understand it's a difficult thing to try to communicate gentleness visually, isn't it? How do you do that? You read of meekness, how do you communicate that visually with a picture? And that's one of the reasons why it's a mistake for us to do so many pictures of him, because none of them are adequate.

But what do they end up with? I remember seeing a little paper doll version that always had him like this, always touching someone like this, touching the leper like this. He looked like a fairy to me. He didn't look like a, he didn't look like the man of men.

He didn't look like the ultimate male to me. All the pictures, even the one they had in shrine on the back of the wall looked like a bearded lady. Did not look like anything that would stir the heart of a boy.

You guys remember being boys? You remember when you were a boy? Gentlemen, I want to tell you something. You were, you were created by God. Yes, you were created by God to know him.

That's why you were brought into being. I'll tell you what else you were created for guys, and this is different from women. You were created for war.

That's what you were made for. And you were born into a cosmic conflict between good and evil, and you knew that innately when you were a little kid. Remember when you knew that? Remember when everything was all about war? Was it really just a matter of hormones like testosterone in your body? Was it a physical thing? No, it's not.

It was wired into you. It's not just some body thing. It's a soul thing.

You were born for war, man, and you knew there was good versus evil, and you wanted to be on the good side. You wanted to affect that whole thing. All your dreams, day or night, your dreams were about being a hero in that war.

And what happened to you? What in the world happened? You were wired with this knowledge. You knew it. You know, as a little boy, you play with action figures, and you love violence.

Not violence for the sake of violence, violence for the sake of good, violence for the good guys winning. Every film, every book, every novel, every story that ever moved your heart was a story about a hero, wasn't it? On the athletic field, on the battlefield, maybe for you it was, maybe you were less physical, a lot more intellectual. But still, for you, it was all about a war between good and evil.

You knew that. And everything you went about doing was conquering. It was a battle to be fought and something to be conquered, solved, figured out.

It's still that way. I saw their little paper doll version of the Jesus that they presented, and I was not moved. I was not stirred.

It didn't look like he'd ever worked a day in his life. It looked like if you could feel his skin, it would be the skin of a woman, silky, soft, and thin. The pictures, they didn't move me.

Though they were all well-intended, they had no effect on my life until finally at 13, when I was at a point where I was so sick of living. I wanted to die and I didn't want to exist. I questioned my very existence and wondered, where did I come from? Where am I going? Why am I here? What is the point of it all? I

remember the despair of those days.

Just a couple years earlier, what are you, 10 years old in fifth grade? Fifth grade, being a fatherless kid? I was reached out to by a male teacher. I thought, you know, he's just a great guy. Just a great guy, and he just has a soft spot in his heart for us guys who don't have dads.

You know, he always took us on camping trips, that kind of thing. I had no idea what a homosexual was. Ten years old, you know what that is.

You hear people using words, but you don't know what they mean. I can testify to you that it was by the grace of God that I didn't end up being molested and scarred for life. The grace of God and the fact that I was a mental case and a violent 10-year-old.

But I can tell you that my heart was molested. My heart was molested. When I discovered, when the horror came over me, the realization that this man actually is interested in me in some romantic way.

Not like a dad that I thought he was trying to be. The heartbreak of that made the next three years all the more bitter. I was all the more, I kept just growing in violence.

My whole dream was just grow up and be as big as I can to beat that, just take vengeance on a world full of men. But at the age of 13, my heart was moved. I was moved upon by the spirit of God through the witness of another teacher.

And I say to you, every time I get on this, I swear I'm going to get this thing in my throat and I'm going to act like I'm clearing it. I'm not crying. It was the witness of my junior high school science teacher, Larry Egency.

He walked onto that campus and you could tell this man knew where he was going, where he came from, why he was here. Nobody else seemed to know that, but that man knew where he was going. He knew why he was here.

You could tell it was not as much about anything that he did, it was who he was. You could tell he knew some things. I didn't know him personally, I didn't take a chance.

We didn't become friends, I didn't know him anywhere except in that classroom. But I looked, I watched him and I listened to him. He taught us the theory of evolution, that was his job.

The man, by the time he got done teaching us the theory of evolution, you couldn't possibly believe that stupid fairy tale. Oh yeah. Well, Larry taught it like it ought to be taught.

The joke that it is. And he left us with this big, burning question that I remember being the one to vocalize it. It's recency.

Where did we come from then? What is the deal? When I asked the question, his back was to the class, he was writing on the board. He turned around, he put his chalk down. And he said, I remember everything about this moment.

I remember what the guy was wearing. I remember he had this sort of plaid shirt on, this corduroy blazer, he had a brown tie on. He had this magnum P.I. look.

And he turned around, he looked at the class, he looked at me. And he said, almost with this tone of unbelief, disbelief, just the irony of it. He said, it's against the law for me to tell you.

It's against the law for me to answer that question. I said, my soul was moved. I went, it's against the law? It's illegal? I've got to know now.

It's against the law, is it? Well then. And I instantly made the connection between what he was implying and that black book on the corner of his desk. That I had heard that school was fighting him about even having it there, like it was a crime.

Oh man, Larry Eacinsey. Thank you Lord for Larry. Thank you Lord for Larry.

That he was someone who, that he is someone who knows. I received a copy, a paperback copy of that book that Larry Eacinsey had in leather. Yeah, Living Bible, paraphrase.

I read it that year and I met in it, in its pages, I met the man. I met, I met someone who won my heart and continually wins my heart. A king that I could bow to and sanctify my heart as Lord.

And there was a point in your life, you Christian men, where you were moved to ask the question, who is this? And that is the question. Not what did he do? Not what would he do? The question is, who is he? That is the question. Who is this? A lot of people are throwing a lot of answers out and like the multitude there that day in Jerusalem, they don't know what they are talking about.

Who is this? That is the central question. It is the one question that burned the hole in the heart of that one Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus. What is, what is sin? You probably heard it defined as missing the mark.

That is partly true. Transgression, breaking God's law. But you know something, guys, sin is actually, in its simplest form, boil it right down, you know what it is? It's willfulness.

It's not just breaking the law or not rising to the law, falling short of it. It's actually lawlessness. That's what it actually is.

It's willfulness. God's law is irrelevant to me. That's what it actually is.

And the one perfect life lived, the only man who ever lived a perfect life, is the one who lived his entire life and every aspect of it to do the will of another. To do the will of his father. Never did his own will.

Never once spoke his own words. Did everything he was told to do. Lived in absolute and perfect submission.

That is why this little moralist, Saul, after his conversion, could look back and say, I was the chief of all sinners. The worst of them all. No, he wasn't guilty of vices.

He wasn't guilty of these, whatever you want to call them, indiscretions or impiety. He was willful. He did his own thing.

It was all about him. He was a little guy, most likely. Little guys have it hard in this world.

They got so much more. The world treats them unfairly. They got to work harder.

And everybody gives, you know, they label them. Oh, they get their little Napoleon syndrome. What does that mean? That they've succeeded at proving themselves? You know, little guys have to work.

And he was a little guy. We know that most likely from his name, Paul, after his conversion. Which just means little.

Just a little guy. His given name was Saul, requested one. He was so about achieving.

So about proving himself. And the field where he chose to fight his fights was the field of religion. And he attained the levels that none of his peers did.

He excelled. What a student. What a scholar.

What a thinker. There he is, face down in the dirt. Damascus Road.

Having made this big face plant, making this little dirt angel. He's got one question. Just one question burning a hole in his heart.

One thing he has to know. A voice has knocked him down. A light and a voice.

His senses completely overwhelmed. And boom, he is down on the dirt. With one question.

To the voice that speaks his name. He has one question. Who are you, Lord? You know this, right? Acts chapter 8, chapter 9. Who are you, Lord? Who are you? That was the thing.

Who are you? That was the one thing. And the answer to the question. He understood the question to be central.

It was everything. Who are you? And the answer to that question. Who are you, Lord, he says.

Because whoever you are, you are obviously Lord. That much I figured out. You are Lord, but who are you? And here are those words.

I am. And that little Pharisee knew that he was being confronted by the same God that spoke to Moses. I am.

Jesus. I am Yeshua. Whom you are persecuting.

It is hard for you to kick against the pricks. Kicking against the pricks. Interesting thing, the Lord said.

And don't you wish you knew the rest of the story, because there is more to that story. There is more to that story. When? Kicking against the pricks.

What was the Lord speaking about? Well, you guys know what a goad is. Kicking against the goads. You see, it was the ancient cattle prod.

You know that. They would sharpen a stick to a very fine point and use it on the flank of a stupid beast. An animal so dumb that it won't be led will be motivated with a goad.

A stupider beast still, instead of moving from that point, getting out of range of the point, would just kick against the thing. Do you understand what a sort of offensive statement this is? The Lord Jesus said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.

Kicking against the goads, you stupid little beast. I am trying to get you somewhere and you are fighting me. Do you understand that? Now listen, the one who said those words is the one who identified himself as the good shepherd.

And shepherds lead. Sheep, sheep follow. The good shepherd said, my sheep know my voice and they follow.

Well, the good shepherd himself went into the temple and acted like the good cowboy. You remember? He made a whip. He made a motivator.

A goad in another form. Remember? I never did see the flannel graph on that event. Such a one should be made.

Just knocking furniture over. Overturning tables. You see, you guys, you know the thing about our Lord Jesus Christ that to me is so stirring.

The one thing I hope that you see before you leave here today is that in a sense, in a way that I will hope to explain in the next session, there are like two sides of God in a sense. Psalm 62 ends with a statement, the two things I know about you, Lord. You, O Lord, are strong.

Strength belongs to you. And you, O Lord, are loving. There is in the person of the Lord Jesus, Lamb and Lion.

He is indeed the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. The very nature of the Lamb. And He is the Lion of Judah.

At the same time, the Conqueror. Both. Completely.

And you would think that those two things would be in opposition, but they're not. Not in Him. Think about it.

The man. The Lord Jesus. There is one whose voice causes demons to shriek.

They can't handle it. They freak out and blow their cover. And the same voice causes little children to sense comfort and safety and just want to be around Him.

Isn't it ironic? Nobody ever spoke such hot, scorching words against sin. I mean, He talked about hell in graphic detail that nobody else did. And at the same time, nobody ever spoke such kind, gracious words to the guilty sinner.

The irony of it. That He goes into the temple and He just overthrows the tables. Just knocking things over.

Driving men out with a whip. Whipping them. No regard at all for their self-esteem.

On that note, by the way, it was Him who said, What is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God. Think about that in the context of your self-esteem. He whipped them.

He whipped them, guys. And then He comes to the dove cages and just lets them out. Have you thought about that? He is violently throwing furniture around.

Money flying everywhere. Men being flogged on the backside. And He comes to the dove cages and just lets them out.

He is not going to hurt a little dove. You see what I am saying? The lamb and the lion. I should point out to you, men.

Because we are all stirred by that. We are like, yeah, He whipped them. I know I am.

I am like, yeah. Whipped them. Drove them out of there.

Whipped them, He did. But before He whipped, He wept. He wept before He whipped.

He cried over the city. And He expresses the heart of a mother. You heard those words? Oh, Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. Oh, I would have gathered you. Like a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you wouldn't let me.

You would have. Oh, the heart of a mother He expresses. Doesn't He? And He comes right down.

Walks into His Father's house. And He doesn't flip out. He doesn't lose control.

Never. He is always in control. And He is not doing His own will when He does this either.

He is doing exactly what His Father told Him to do. Son, I want you to go down there and clean my house. He went in there and cleaned His Father's house.

He didn't say anything about my nothing. He didn't go, my. He said, it is risen.

I love that. He was like, if your picture is the Mr. Rogers version of Jesus, then you've got to think, I don't know, what do you think? Excuse me? Excuse me, can I have your attention please? He, I am absolutely sure His voice went above everyone else's. Everybody else's voice with this announcement.

You will all leave now. With this announcement. It is risen.

My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer. For all nations. But you have made it a den of thieves.

Out and with zeal and with passion. He is whipping them. Flogging these men.

I say that even that is an expression of love. For He made the very tool Himself. His own loving hands.

Hands that never made a fist, made a whip. Made a whip, man. And He took the time.

And what, it is an expression of love. The same expression of love that would cause you as a dad, who must have inflict a sting on a hiney of that kid you love. When nothing else works, they're so young that nothing else works but are spanking.

You, in order to spare them a much greater pain, you'll spank those kids. Taking the time to break a switch off a tree. Whittle it down.

Is loving. Well, you don't go after a bat. That would break a bone.

You don't want to harm, you want to sting. You want to get their attention. Yes? You don't go after a cleaver, a blade.

That would break the flesh. You love these little ones. All you want to do is sting the surface of the epidermis.

You know, and it was the one who actually designed the buttocks. The very one who placed every nerve ending there. His very design.

He made a whip to sting them. He made a whip. He made that whip and he started flailing with that thing.

Can you, have you ever pictured it? You guys remember getting whipped when you were a kid, right? You instinctively throw your hand back there, don't you? And then you get whipped on the hand. You know there were guys in robes going, and trying to get out of range of that thing. Where was that little Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus? Where was that prized student of all of Jerusalem? Gamaliel's number one.

Where was he that day? Don't you wish you knew? I wish I knew. Where was he? Where was Saul of Tarsus when the whip was flying? Was he there that day? When did he first get goaded? When was he first driven by the Good Shepherd? Was it there? Well, you know what, even if he wasn't there, even if he was gone that day, where are you going to go if that whip can't reach you? Where are you going to go? I know some of you are asking that question too. Where can I go? You know what you can do? Is turn.

Go the other way. Repent. That is what repentance is, by the way.

It is a change of mind, a change of direction. Repent. It's as simple as that.

Just plain repent. Turn around. Metanoia is the Greek word.

Repent. Change your mind is what it means. Where was Saul of Tarsus when the whip was flying? And it really doesn't matter because wherever he was, the whip was going to reach him because the words of Christ would reach him.

Woe unto you Pharisees, you hypocrites! Woe unto you! Those words would get you and they would hurt your feelings wherever you were if you were a Pharisee. Woe unto you, you sons of hell! You cross land and sea to make one proselyte, and after you made him, you made him two times more the son of hell that you are. You snakes! That would hurt your feelings.

Those words reaching you would hurt your feelings, and I'm sure, without a doubt, those words, at some point Saul of Tarsus began to be whipped. And there, on Damascus Road, he hears those words. Isn't it hard for you to kick against the goats? Isn't it hard for you? The first question he asked was, Who are you? I am Jesus.

His second question, What do you want me to do? That was a surrender of the will. You see? That is conversion, and if that hasn't happened to you, if your will hasn't been given over, and if it hasn't come to that place for you, then that's still got to happen, dude. There's a place you got to come to, where after seeing who he is, maybe that will be here and now, today, where you got to come to the place where you go, What do you want me to do? Because it's no longer about you.

Once you realize who he is, it's not about you. Your life is not about you. Your life is all about, What do you, the one who made me, and the one who loved me so much, that you would come down here, as far

down as this, as way down here, to love me, to lift me back up.

What do you want me to do? You've heard the prayer that he taught us to pray, right? They call it the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, which I don't have any, perhaps in your past you used it as your religious mantra. Certainly that was not the Lord's intention.

He gave for us in that an outline. These are the kind of things that you should pray. He gave us a model prayer.

He gave us something, the framework, that we could then build upon. And what is that prayer? Is it not a prayer of submission? Surrender? Giving in? Is it not? Your kingdom come. Your will be done.

Lead me away from temptation. Deliver me from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom.

Yours is the power and the glory forever. Is it not a prayer of submission? I submit to you, brothers, that that is what the Lord Jesus has called us to. And that is, by the way, the means to real greatness.

Submission. Surrender. Saul of Tarsus got himself in a submission fight with God.

And on the Damascus road, he got tapped out. He said, uncle. When he said, what do you want me to do, Lord? And what was he given? The first step.

Arise, go into the city, and it will be shown you. One step at a time. And that would be the story for the rest of his life.

He would be led. He would be someone's bondservant. But the one thing he asked, the one thing that he needed to know, the thing that started it all for him, was who are you, Lord? Was that not the central issue when Jesus spoke with that woman at the well in Samaria? John chapter 4. His identity.

Was that not the issue? Remember what he said to her? Woman, if you only knew. Who? If you only knew who. It is.

If I was talking to you right now, you would ask me for living water. You know, she was then moved. You know she was then moved to ask, who is this? At first, she just knows out as a man at the well.

And then, you know, through her conversation, discovered, oh, with his accent, his dress, he's a Jew. He's not just a man, he's a Jew. Through the conversing, revealed, oh, this guy's a prophet.

He knows things. But ultimately, she comes to conclude, he is the Christ. And what is that? What is that? That is so much more than you think it is.

He is the Christ. He is the Messiah. She was converted.

But the whole issue was, who is he? It was the very thing that Jesus asked his disciples. You remember that in Matthew 18, where he said, guys, who do men say that I, the son of man, am? Oh, I wish we had time to really get into that and study that one phrase, his favorite phrase with regard to himself, son of man. It means a whole lot more than you think it does.

The ultimate male. The man of men. Who do men say that I, the son of man, am? And he collected from them the various answers.

And for the record, he was not having an identity crisis. He wasn't asking for their help. Guys, who am I? Who am I? I'm just going to find myself.

Could you help me out here? Going to find myself. That was the trip. I was not a hippie.

I'm too young. I was a little kid looking at the hippies hanging out in town. The hippies were all trying to find themselves.

That was their thing. I just want to find myself, man. I just want to find myself.

I remember back in those days thinking, that is so weird. You want to find yourself. I heard one comic say it best.

He said, man, I was all trying to find myself. Then one day, I found myself out in my front yard with all my stuff. My dad said, hey, you've been looking here 20 years.

Apparently, you're not here. Want to find yourself? Go somewhere else. Jesus wasn't having an identity crisis when he said, you know, who am I? He said, who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? You remember they all gave their various answers, right? Some say you're Elijah.

Some say you're John the Baptist. Some say you're Jeremiah, one of the prophets. You see, that is the result of focusing on what would Jesus do or what Jesus did, focusing on what he did.

There were those who really focused on the miracles. Man, oh, they were into the miracles. There are people like that today.

You know about that. Whole churches, whole movements. That's all they want to talk about.

Signs and wonders. Signs and wonders following believers. I don't know why they all get that accent, but they do.

All wrapped up in the miraculous. Always slapping somebody on the forehead, man. Always blowing in your face.

Always trying to work something up because you've got to have signs and wonders. Whole movements all wrapped up in that one aspect. That was their favorite thing, man.

You know there were people back then, there were people in the multitude going, man, did you see the miracles? And they were always talking about the miracles and they failed to let the miracle draw their attention to who he actually is. They were all wrapped up in what he did. Others all wrapped up in his confrontational ways.

Because the Lord was, oh, indeed, on earth confrontational, wasn't he? So very confrontational. And there were people who liked, they were fans of John the Baptist. They loved to see him give it to them.

All unto you, you snakes, you brood of vipers. And they were like, yeah, yeah, give it to them. They'd been pushing us around, those Pharisees, loading us down with all these burdens.

Yeah, did you hear what he said? He said, they don't lift one finger to help us out. Stinking Pharisees. You know there were people who loved that.

They loved that, in your face type of, and Jesus was that way, was he not? Oh, indeed he was. You remember that occasion where there were Pharisees going, hey, you know, you've got to get out of here. Herod wants to kill you.

And they're expecting him to go, oh, no. He goes, you don't want, you go tell that fox. Here's my itinerary.

You can go tell that fox. And it's worse than it sounds. They're translated for us in English.

The way it is in Greek, it was worse. It was even more insulting. Go tell that vixen.

Literally. Go tell that little girl fox. I like that.

I like that. And see, there were people in the crowd that day. There were people like that.

Did you hear that? Ouch. There were people that day going, oh, man. It's like Elijah.

He's back from the dead. I mean, John the Baptist. Yeah, that's what we need.

We need moral reform. We need somebody to tell it like it is. Brothers, you wouldn't believe how early days of ministry for me.

I'm glad that there was no tape ministry. And every videotape that exists of the television show that we put together when I was in my 20s had been destroyed. I was the most, in your face, obnoxious young preacher you ever heard.

I had long hair. We played heavy rock. Had a long beard.

Black leather jacket on the tape. Late night television. Bangor man.

Look, you stupid heathens. So, so loving, so effective. That's another subject.

I can relate to those people. Then there were other people who were just so gentle, so concerned, so loving that they would weep. People that were worried about their country, worried about the individuals of their country.

People who were so concerned about lost Israel. And they wept too. Then they identified with Jeremiah.

He was the weeping prophet. They wept. And they saw Jesus.

They saw that in him. They saw that he did that. He weeps.

Look at him cry. All touched by that. And my wife, every time, she's such a lady.

And that is a good thing. I'll come back from, you know, every weekend, this is the deal. I'm speaking to men.

Somewhere. Get back home, late flight. Bangor man, to be at church on Sunday morning.

How'd it go? She wants to know. How'd it go? Did they cry? Did the men cry? Well, I hope not, is my response. Most of the time.

Because for them, for ladies, that's an indication. That's the gauge. You know, they measure the response in inches.

You know, like rainfall. Like precipitation. You know what I mean? Was it a good ladies retreat? They cried.

I'll tell you something. Listen. You don't be.

Oh, you know what? We gotta quit. In a minute. Well, you gotta have a break, guys.

You gotta coffee in, coffee out. You're gonna be. You're not gonna be able to retain anything.

You gotta keep going. Yeah. Well.

This. But I did, on one occasion, recently, my wife asked me to. It was actually Thanksgiving.

She has a Bible study. And I can see that either I'm gonna get food for the feast, or she's gonna do the Bible study. Because she can do both.

My wife, she gives birth to a study. She doesn't just spit one out. She gives birth.

She travails. She labors. Labors.

You know, sometimes I, you know, fan her head. I ice on her forehead. Help her with breathing techniques while she's trying to put out this Bible study.

Takes hours. Takes days. And it's time for a feast.

I said, honey, I'm gonna teach you Bible study. You ladies Bible study, okay? Reluctantly, she said, okay. And I did that.

I went in there that night. And I went, all right, ladies, come on, let's sing. And I did this Bible study.

The Spirit of God did this thing. The Holy Spirit did this thing. I was teaching about Sarah.

And I got talking about my wife. I got choked up. And I started weeping.

I'm not kidding you. Put them all over the edge. All of them.

We all just sat around. We started crying together. It was such a sweet time.

But let me end with this point. There were people who loved that about the Lord Jesus. They saw him weeping.

They went, oh, that is so sweet. But to them, that's what he was all about. They looked at the thing that he did.

They failed to see who he actually is. He asked the man, who do men say that I am? He got their answers. And he said, who do you say that I am? You remember Peter's answer.

You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And he, the Lord Jesus said, upon this rock where I build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. What rock? The rock of who he is.

Not what would he do. The rock of who he is. Let's spend a little bit more time today looking at who he is.

Brother Jennerino.

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