

Be a Man - Part 2

by Ken Graves

We can know God through the testimony of nature, conscience, and scripture, and we should respond to unbelievers with the authority of scripture.

Duration: 1:06:54

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Manhood"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor reflects on the disciples' experience of being caught in a storm while Jesus slept in the boat. The pastor emphasizes the humanity of Jesus and his unwavering faith in the face of fear. He encourages the audience to seek a deeper understanding of God through the Scriptures, which reveal not only who God is but also his heart. The pastor also highlights the importance of being men of the Word and seeking God's guidance in all aspects of life.

Transcript

We humble ourselves before you, forgive us God we pray. We humble ourselves before you, help us to obey. You can be actually sure that you know him and then go through some things where God has the opportunity to reveal more of who he is to you in such a way that will cause you to wonder did I actually even know him at all before this.

Maybe you've experienced that. His disciples did, you remember on the boat crossing the lake, Galilee. The lake is 7 miles by 12 miles wide, long.

Now whichever way they were going that night, they were going nowhere in a storm. A storm of wind. It was powerful, it terrified these men.

Experienced on that lake. They were pretty sure this is it, we're going to die. And as a testimony to just how human he, Lord Jesus, was, he was sleeping.

No doubt exhausted, having spent himself. A degree of fatigue that allowed him to sleep through the storm. Finally somebody got desperate enough to go and find him, wake him.

I know it probably may have offended already the artists among us. Just so you know, I am one of you. I do sketch, I do write songs, and an occasional poem.

They're all very manly, I'll let you know. Close your eyes for just a second, would you guys just close your eyes, please. And see it, let your ears be turned into eyes.

For just a minute. We really thought we knew him. We answered his call, and we followed.

A mismatched band of men we were, sailing off into tomorrow. I never knew a man to work so hard, and spend himself like him. And at last I saw him finally lay down, as though light was growing dim.

Darkness came, as did the wind. That lake became a beast that howled and roared and reached for us, 13 mortals for its feast. All I believed now seemed a lie.

And nothing made any sense. Waves of terror washed over my soul, each one even more intense. And I felt my way to the back of the boat, to where I saw him lay.

So human was he, that in his fatigue, despite those pounding waves, he slept. Like a man unaware that there was any reason for fear. Like one who knew just where he was going, and what he was doing here.

Then one angry thought broke through my fear. As my panic reached its peak, it erupted out as a hostile question I could not help but speak. We're going to die, I cried out loud to the one who led us there.

You said let's go over, but we're going under, and how is it that you don't care? And at first he said nothing, but seemed to be struggling with a mind not fully awakened. Straight from his dream into our nightmare, still he wasn't the least bit shaken. He stood up suddenly and steadied himself, with one hand he held to the ropes.

Like holding the reins of a stallion, he rode that rising and falling boat. One hand on the ropes, one hand in the air, as we cowered along the sides. He confronted that beast that caused us to cower, so frightened and terrified.

The words that he spoke were not a request, and they were not a victim's plea. His words were not louder than the howl of the wind, or the roar of the Galilee. But his words carried power, undeniable power, even the force of the wind had to flee.

Mightier than the thunder of great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea. He spoke to that wind like it was a dog. His command muzzled its jaw, and it fled with its tail tucked between its legs.

Quiet, as we huddled in silence and awe. Everything was quiet, upon hearing those words. The water, the earth, and the sky.

Nothing was more silent or speechless than we, who just witnessed this with our eyes. This man who took lordship over nature, for whom nature immediately complied, now turned his gaze upon us little men, just beginning to slowly rise. Why were you afraid, he asked us.

How is it that you have no faith? We had no answer to give him then. And, looking back, we can only say that we were afraid of what was against us because we did not realize what manner of man it was that we followed and trusted with our very lives. We had no answer for his question of us, but we had many more questions of our own, and someone finally spoke those words that still echo in my soul.

What manner of man, indeed, is he? Still, more than I can know. Okay, poem's over, you can open your eyes. You may have gone through things like that in your life, where you discovered that he is greater than

you thought, greater than you realized, and that should be a way of life.

You and I should be living our lives in, I mean, what Joe Foch calls a perpetual state of blown-mindedness, where we are continually more and more in awe of the greatness of the God-man, our Lord Jesus. So the real central question is, who is he? And to deal with that, really to answer that question, and to give that question real justice and an answer, there are some other questions that we've got to ask first. Because, you see, this one that all of Jerusalem was moved by, asking who is he, this one, he's not just a man.

He's not just Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee, no, he's more. He is God, in human form. He is absolutely a man, 100% human, and yet at the same time 100% God.

Oh, he's mysterious. There is mystery, much mystery, surrounding who he is and how he does it, what it is that he does. How can he be human? How can he be human? How can he be tempted, and yet he's God, and God cannot be tempted with evil.

Was temptation real for him? Well, it was real enough that he bled over it, that he sweat blood over it. But did evil have any pull on him? No. Oh, so much mystery.

And I'll tell you this, brothers, it is a mistake for a person to always be trying to explain away mystery. There's a lot of people that do that. A lot of theologians do that.

A lot of people content to explain away mystery, mystery that cannot be explained, can't be understood. Who is God? Let's ask that question. Who is God? In order for us to see who is this God man, let's ask who is God? Who is he? Wow, that's a big question.

We could spend eternity on the subject. Who is God? Who does God reveal himself to be, and how does he reveal himself? Well, you guys know he testifies to us through creation. God testifies of himself through creation.

In what is visible, we can get some of the attributes of the one who is invisible. But there's only so much you can know about God through the testimony of nature, right? You can know that he is huge. For the universe as we've come to know it is vast.

Its creator must be greater. You can know that he is huge. You can certainly know that he is genius.

Spend any time studying creation, you will have to. You know something, by the way, if you live in an urban area, you really find you're surrounded so much with the stuff of man. You've got to get out of it every now and then.

You've got to get out into the wilderness. You've got to go do something more than just watch the Discovery Channel. You've got to go and be with God out where there is a whole lot less of what man has made.

And just take the time. I'm not necessarily saying you need to stop and smell the roses, but you need to stop and check out the bugs. You need to stop and look at these little creatures.

Study these things and see the variety, the genius behind it all. The wonder of it. And for me, as a little kid in Maine who was just a social reject kid, you know, spending all my time out in the woods, out in the forest, it was there that the forest itself testified to me that there's a maker, that there's a creator, there was

genius behind it all.

There's order to it. But that's really about all you can... Well, you can also know that he is also an artist because he designed beauty. There's no way to explain beauty by chance, random processes.

You've seen the sunsets, you've seen the color of the sky at night, even in the snow in the winter. Where I live, you know, I'd be out in the woods just hanging out with the Lord and just see the color of that white, pure white snow. Weighed down those dark green boughs of the spruce trees.

And then as the sun was setting, the various shades of color. And I like that time of the day when the sky itself is now darker than the earth beneath because the snow is white. But there on the snow is cast this blue, sort of purplish-blue hue.

I love that time when the stars first appear on the eastern side of the horizon. I used to be out there in that and go, this is beautiful. Why is there beauty? Why isn't it all just black and white? Why is it at all? Why does it exist? Because an artist brought it into being.

But that's all you can know about God through the testimony of nature. That's it really, nothing more. God also testifies to us of his existence and who he is through our conscience.

He's written some things on our heart that we innately know. We are innately aware that there is a God and every single atheist is nothing but a liar. Every atheist is a liar.

Actually, every atheist is an arrogant liar. If you are an atheist, you are presuming omniscience. If you are an atheist, you are saying, I know everything.

In order for you to say there is no God, you've got to say, I've been everywhere. I've been all over the universe looking for him and there's no God to be found. An atheist is about the most arrogant, stupid man that exists.

I'm an atheist. There's no God. Think of it.

The things you've got to convince yourself. You are not a little kid coming to that conclusion. No little kid does.

You were born, you knew some things when you were a little boy. You talk yourself out of later and why? Usually for moral reasons. You know what a fool is? Biblically, the fool that has said in his heart there is no God.

You know what a fool is according to God? He's not someone who's intellectually deficient. The fool is someone who's morally deficient. That's the root cause.

Immorality is the root of all stupidity. Immorality is the root of all atheism. People convince themselves that there is no God because they don't want to even entertain the thought that they're going to have to answer to him someday.

But your conscience testifies to you that there is a God. Now I can handle somebody saying to me, you know, I'm an agnostic. What is an agnostic? Someone, which is really incredible, when you see arrogance combined with agnosticism.

That's absolutely absurd. Because what is an agnostic actually saying? Agnostic is saying ultimately, I don't know. And how can you be arrogant and go, I don't know.

How can you be boastful about it and yet there are those guys. I'm an agnostic. That's like going, I am very uncertain.

You know, how do you brag about something like that? If you've been an agnostic, well you can cure that real easy. You can get cured of that real easy. Just acknowledge the truth that your heart has testified to you about all your whole life.

There's a God and this you can know about him through the testimony of your conscience. You're going to have to answer to him someday. You'll stand before him.

There is a God who made you and he will be your judge. There's right and wrong in your heart written there and you knew it. I don't care where you were born.

I don't care if you were born in the deepest, darkest jungle of the Amazon where people are eating each other. Born into a cannibal family. You still know you don't want nobody eating you.

You know right from wrong. It doesn't matter where you were born. I wasn't born into some religious family.

But the testimony of my conscience combined with the testimony of nature told me there's a genius behind it all and I'm going to have to answer to him. There is right and there is wrong. But really there isn't much more that you can know about God through the testimony of your conscience.

God has revealed himself to us in the pages of Holy Scripture. Man, I love that. Don't you love it when some unbeliever goes, well how do you know you can trust that? Well I'm glad you asked.

You want to stick around for the answer? They're usually just spouting off questions to express themselves. Usually not actually looking for an answer to the question. You know what I'm talking about.

You know there were two examples of that. Chase this rabbit for a second. You remember the angel Gabriel was sent by God to deliver two messages to two separate people.

Remember? To Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist. And to Mary, a little virgin girl. Zachariah is an old dude.

Old geezer. Never been a dad. He has certainly prayed.

He's prayed many times but now he's long forgotten his prayer and just accepted the fact that God ain't going to answer his prayer. Serving in the temple. Remember? The angel delivers to him, Gabriel.

I'm telling you, this angel wasn't Roma Downey. Or Pearl Bailey. Or some other, you know, networked version.

The angel. Without exception, every time an angel appears, the first words have to be, Calm down. Don't be afraid.

Fear not. Ain't no flying babes. Flying in and out.

Some diaper wearing little cherub. You know what I mean? You read in the scripture that their voice shakes the doorposts of the temple. And it's not, wah, wah, you know.

It's the absurdity of it. But this angel, Gabriel, he gets delivered two messages. Remember that? And the one message is to Zachariah.

Guess what? Your prayer's been heard. Gives him this great news. You're going to be a father! Remember, Zachariah asked a question.

How can this be? Remember that? What do the angels say to him? I can paraphrase it for you. The story's in Luke chapter 1 but I can paraphrase it for you. The angel goes, I am Gabriel.

I stand in the presence of God. Shut up. And stay that way for nine months.

You want a word fast, buddy. His announcement, I am Gabriel. What do you think this is? Some singing telegram? Some joke? Hello! You don't get to talk until you see this actually fulfilled.

I'm out of here. The next message he delivers to a virgin girl. Who also asks a question.

How will this thing be? See, I know not a man. Obviously the question came from a different part of her heart, a different place. It wasn't because Gabriel doesn't go, shut up! But instead he goes, well, I'm glad you asked.

But don't worry about it. The power of the Most High will overshadow you. He gives her the answer to her question.

So the point being, there are those who ask questions only as a way to express their actual doubt. They don't want an answer. But a sincere question always gets a sincere answer from God.

And there are those who always want to ask those stupid questions. Stupid. Or they want to just express themselves.

The agnostic. How could it be? How could this be? How do you know you can trust the Bible? How do you know? How do you know that? You should have an answer for that, my brothers. Have an answer for that.

You should be able to testify to them because this book speaks the truth about the past. It speaks the truth about the future. It speaks the truth about the present.

The prophetic aspect of it alone, you ought to have a handle on that. So you can say, well, because God says it, it happens. Look at this and point it out to them.

They always ask, well, didn't men write the Bible? Don't ever say yes. Say no. Holy men wrote.

Not just men. Holy men. They wrote as they were moved on by the Holy Spirit.

They were moved upon. And here we have this, what does Missler call it? Integrated message system. This integrated message system.

It's genius in the way it does things. And you know what I love about it? You want to know who God is? He doesn't go, well, just turn to page 839. Hey, you have a description of God.

Like if we were writing some manual on God, wouldn't we do that? But that's not how God does things at all. You know, like you turn to this page and there you find a list of all of his attributes. But now instead he scatters them throughout the whole system.

This whole message system. He scatters all these little pieces and you've got to go looking for them. You dig.

You seek and you find. And you put all of these little pieces together. It comes together like a mosaic.

Maybe, men, you have a hard time relating to the concept of mosaic. A little too artsy for you. Well, let's go with composite sketch.

It comes together like a composite sketch, doesn't it? It all comes together, a little piece from here, a little piece from there. And all of this information about God. He reveals himself to us.

Through the pages of scripture. He reveals not just who he is, but how he is. What he's like.

He shows us his heart. The scriptures, guys. We need to be men of the word.

You cannot know God at all unless you know him as he has revealed himself in the pages of scripture. Your Bible ought to be with you. You ought to be seen with that thing every single day.

It ought to be part of you. It ought to be bound to you. You ought to have it in your heart.

You ought to be speaking it continually. You ought to let it be the thing that comes out of your mouth. The world around you does not need to know any of your philosophy.

Everybody's always asking a question. Perhaps it's always on your mind. What is that one thing? Man, if I only knew that one thing to say to this unbelieving loved one.

If I only knew. If I just had the right illustration. If I just had the right argument.

What is the seed, according to the Lord Jesus? The seed is the word of God. What do they need to hear? They need to hear the word of God. I'm telling you guys.

All you gotta do, and I believe this is the very responsibility that God has given every single one of us. To be led by the Holy Spirit, but to continually say, it is written. It is written.

That's what the world needs to hear. The world is so full of opinions. The world is one stupid Donahue show.

You know, with a roving mic going, you say what? You say what? Hello, you say what? I don't care what you gotta say, because you're just a descendant of Adam. What does God say? What did he reveal about himself? That is what the world needs to hear. That is what should be continually coming out of you.

And I'll tell you something else. I don't care if they go, I don't care what is written. You still just planted it in their heart.

Just speak it. You know what is written? Just the other day, I got some goofball in St. Louis airport. Asked me to come over to his little table.

He's got his little books on reincarnation. His opening line was, do you believe in reincarnation, dude? I said, no, that's stupid. And he said, well, come on.

And I said, well, give me a reason why I should believe it. He started going off, and I go, no, no, no, give me a reason. He starts doing these mental acrobatics.

You know, he's a contortionist. And I'm going, stop, quit that, knock it off. I want to know who tells you.

What authority do you have to tell me that I will die and come back as something else? What is the source of your authority? What authority will you give me for what you believe? You know, I keep coming right back to that. I keep coming back to that. Finally, I go, it is written.

It is written. It is the point at which a man wants to die and then the judgment. It is written.

And I didn't give him any of my arguments. I didn't go trying to follow him through his tangled, contorted mental thought process. I just said, look, dude, it's written.

It's written. And I'll tell you one word that kept coming out of him. You know, you've got to remain flexible.

You like that word, don't you? Flexible. He just said flexible about 20 times. I'm telling you that there is authority in this book.

I drew on him. And I said, listen. God's word has proven to me it's true.

I can tell you why I believe what I believe. You've got nothing to offer me, man. And the world needs to hear you say, it is written.

That's what the world needs to hear. It is written. Is not my word a hammer busting on rocks, God says.

Is not my word, is not my word a hammer. Oh, if I had a hammer, the guys used to say. Well, dude, you got a hammer.

You take up this mighty sword. It doesn't matter how feeble your little hands are. God will put this sword in our feeble little hands.

And it isn't the hand that holds it that makes it powerful. You know what I'm saying? You understand this concept, right? Man, you use power tools, right? You understand. You don't have to be a mighty man to run the levers.

And this thing is more power. It is the thing that brought the universe into existence. God spoke and it is.

Oh, this thing is powerful. What a power tool it is indeed. The most powerful thing that you will ever take up.

And it's opening lines are so sweet. The opening lines, Genesis 1.1. To me, the among coolest words in the Bible. In the beginning, God.

Oh, man. It's like God is just going, you know what? No apology for not explaining to you who I am, where I came from. Because you can't handle it.

No apology for what's not there. No attempt to explain the unexplainable. Starts out with a given.

Starts out just like that. In the beginning, God. Deal with it.

In the beginning, God. Oh, man. And we go through this thing and systematically we go through this.

And we put all of the little pieces together. And we come up with a composite sketch of a being so great. He is beyond all our reference points.

We can't even comprehend him. Consider just a few of his attributes that he has clearly revealed to us there in the scripture. He reveals to us that he is eternal.

There is no beginning and no end. Now, I have a hard time with that because I do begin. I can remember back.

It gets sketchy the further back I go toward my beginning. You ever hear any of those... Sorry, I try not to use bad words, but... Idiots. You ever listen to any of those idiots that have traced their past back through hypnosis and regression therapy and all that junk? This is stupid, man.

Sorry, but there are so many things about this world that are stupid. I must... I don't know any other word that really covers it as well as stupid. But they go back in regression therapy and there are some of those who actually testify that they are right back to actually remembering their birth.

You can hear them. They are laying on the doctor's little couch. They are under hypnosis and they are going, The light, the light is so bright.

Supposedly being born. Someone is slapping me. It is so stupid.

And there are people who... And as if that is not stupid enough, then they go back to previous lives. You know what is really cool? All of the Hollywood crowd that ever end up on Leno or some other place testifying, Yes, I believe in reincarnation. You know, I discovered in my previous life I was a princess.

And there is always some kind of royalty. Nobody is ever like head janitor of the vomitorium. You know, all of them without exception are some kind of royalty.

It is the flattery of Satan. It is the lie from hell. I have a beginning.

So do you. Time is linear. This is what time is.

You know, the pagan belief systems all have time being cyclical. This big wheel, it just keeps turning. You go around and you come around.

You go around and you come around. It is so foolish. God's word starts out with in the beginning.

Because you see, there is a beginning. Time is linear. And you can write it out on a graph, on a timeline.

That we move in one direction. We move forward toward our future. Toward an end.

God has no beginning, no end. He is eternal. It is hard to relate to, isn't it? And yet He is omniscient.

That one is hard. That one has to be. God is omniscient.

He knows everything. Knows everything, guys. That is to say, He knows what is to us the past.

He knows what is to us the present. And He knows the future. I am not going to go on about that because you understand that already, right? He is above it all, outside of time.

He can see it all, laid before Him, to all that is right now. To Him, it is just all right now. The thing that messes with my mind, my little mind, more than anything, more than the fact that God knows the end before the beginning, that God foreknows everyone who will ever choose to respond to His love, that doesn't hurt my head as much as the whole concept that God not only knows the future, He even knows the future that could be.

He even knows the potential future. I don't want to chase that one too long because it hurts my head, but think about it because it is true. You know, it was David who said, in that one occasion, while fleeing from Saul, Lord, if I stay here, if I stay, he inquired to the Lord through the priest, if I stay here, will the men of this city hand me over to Saul when Saul lays siege to this city? And the Lord said, yes, if you stay, they will.

So David goes, then I won't. I will leave and thus not be handed over to Saul. And he left and so he wasn't handed over to Saul.

But think of the implication of that. God knows what would be if you take a right-hand turn instead of a left-hand turn right here. God knows exactly where that will end and the choices that that will lead to.

And every choice, and all of the, into infinity, all of the ramifications of every choice you'll ever make. He knows the potential. That hurts.

My little blue-collar nargon, man. Blue-collar is flattering. There's white-collar, blue-collar, then there's no-collar.

That's where I live. And that hurts my little mind. Omniscient.

Omnipresent. Omnipresent! The scripture reveals that God is everywhere at once. There's nowhere you can go to get away from Him.

I am barely in Fort Lauderdale right now. I'm barely here. Let alone being everywhere at once.

That's hard for me to handle. Hard for me to relate to a God that big. That every one of us can be praying to.

He knows what every one of us are thinking right now. We could all be praying at the same time. He can hear every single prayer.

What a God is that. What a huge God. He is all-powerful.

All-powerful, omnipotent God. I love that one, but I have a hard time relating to it. Because I am so little, so weak, so not omnipotent.

All-powerful. And in that context, I always say this, I'm going to say it again. Does that mean that God can do anything? That's how it's often worded by the agnostic.

No, God can't do anything. He can't not love you. He can't lie.

He can't deny himself. There's a lot God can't do. And still be who He is.

But is He all-powerful? Yes. He's all-powerful. Almighty.

They're always asking the agnostic or the atheist. They always go, hey, can God do anything? And you say yes. As soon as you say yes, you've made a mistake.

My God is all-powerful. Can He do anything? Well, He's all-powerful. As soon as you say yes, they go, well then, can God make a rock so big that even He can't lift it? And your answer to that is always, it should be, that's stupid.

Next. It's a violation of logic. It's like people saying to you, come on, pick yourself up by your bootstraps.

I can't. I'm standing on them. It's an absurd thought.

You can't pick yourself up by your bootstraps. You can't, you know, God can't make a rock so big that even He can't lift it. This is a dumb thought.

It's a violation of logic. He's omnipotent. He's almighty, all-powerful God.

You think just those few attributes alone. And then you add to that such things as He is holy. He is absolutely holy.

Completely perfect morally. Righteous God. That's hard to handle when you're as much a lowlife as I am.

You are. You are, too. You are such a bunch of worms.

God is not one bit involved in trying to elevate your self-esteem. Bunch of wiggling little maggots. Low form of life.

Just putrid. You know, I said this the other night to the guys at the Calvary House. I'm going to say it to you guys here.

If you have been called by the Lord, you've been chosen. And you have. You have been honored.

But you have not been complimented. If you know how God does His choosing, you know you were not complimented. God did not pick you because you were so cool.

And you had so much to offer. You were such a high form of life, He just had to have you. Just got to collect them all.

You were chosen by the Lord because He uses the foolish things of this world. I was picked for the very reason that God uses the weak things of this world to confound the strong. He chooses that which is nothing to confound those that are something.

I know what I am. I know where I came from. I don't yet know what I'm going to be.

But I do know I'm just poor white trash. Spam-sucking trailer trash. Living on welfare and government cheese.

When He found me, He met me. He introduced Himself to me, gave me a reason to live. I will say I'm not living on spam today.

God has blessed. We buy beef now. God is certainly blessed and we're no longer on welfare.

Learned to work. God took me through my twenties on the end of a chainsaw. Collecting scar tissue.

And I was on the handle end. And I'm grateful for all that God has done. But I know what He found.

I know what He called. I know who I was. And I got a little glimpse of what I was going to be if it had not been for His grace.

God is so righteous, so loving. And we are so sinful. I like how Jesus says it.

You being evil, it's like a given. You being all messed up and all. Know how to give good gifts to your children.

Nobody went, oh. None of the common people anyway. It's always those who have been educated beyond their intelligence.

Those people that have gone way too far in school. That want to go, oh, not either. But the words He'd say to the multitude, to the common man.

You guys, you being evil. Nobody took exception to that. Nobody argued, I'm not evil.

Nobody. Nobody knew that was a given. Yep, that's what I am.

In comparison to God, in contrast with Him. And yet, one attribute of God does not ever cancel out another attribute. He is absolutely righteous.

He's the righteous judge of the universe. He can't be bought. He can't be bribed.

He is not the God. The good old boy in the sky. That all the old country songs would sing about.

I remember as a kid hearing the Oak Ridge Boys singing. A song about Judgment Day. And God going, come on in.

You did the best that you could do. Like He is just some stupid Billy Bob in the sky. That just, just, you know.

He is. Many people have made God in their own image. And I think He's going to look at them and go.

Oh, good enough. Come on. Get on in here.

He's not. God is not any of that. God is absolutely righteous.

Righteous. You can't buy Him or bribe Him. And His standards won't lower.

He won't change anything that He said about right and wrong. And the wages of sin is death. Absolute death.

This. Listen. This God in the scripture.

Is righteous. And yet He is. Loving and merciful.

How in the world does that work out? How can He be loving and merciful. And slow to anger. And be forgiving all that He reveals about Himself here.

He is all of that. He is merciful. He is just.

How. Oh, does not my soul. My whole being.

Want justice. As Joseph Smith. Oh, I can tell you.

There is a thing in my heart. Wanting vengeance. God never says vengeance is bad.

Just says it's His. God never says vengeance is a bad. Bad.

Stop that. God never says vengeance. He says vengeance.

Is mine. And I'll have it. So here's this God.

Who is absolutely loving. And absolutely just. How will a loving God.

Deal with the wickedness. Of a murderer like that. Same way He has dealt with you and me.

Same exact way. He in His genius. Finds a way.

Makes a way. That that sin can be paid for. In full.

Some of us have created this own. Little man made purgatory. Well, all purgatory is man made.

Ain't no purgatory in the Bible. I don't care where you came from. Who told you so? Check the book.

Ain't no purgatory. Well, if there is a purgatory. It's for cats.

Cats. Cats. Common house cats.

In the hands of junior high school boys. That's closest thing to purgatory. You ever going to find.

We've created our own little purgatory. When it comes to our sin. And that's where I'll go to this place in my mind.

And I will feel bad about it. I'll punish myself mentally. For a while.

Just for a while. And then in my own mind I'll feel better. Having punished myself.

And I'll consider the debt paid. That. Is not justice.

It would not be justice. For Joseph Smith to stand. Before the judge.

The presence. Of his victim. And hear the judge say.

Do you feel bad about it? Joseph Smith said. Yes, I feel really bad about it. I really feel bad about it.

Really bad. And if I could go back. I would not do it again.

I feel bad. How long have you felt bad? Well, ever since I did it. I felt really bad.

The judge go. All right. Well, you've paid.

Would you as her dad say he paid? Would you? Oh man, you haven't paid. You have not paid. That's not payment.

That's not equity. That's not justice. Everything in you would scream out for justice.

Wouldn't it? Your sin and my sin is no different. And a just God will deal with sin. The only way that sin can be dealt with.

Is that it's got to be paid for. And paying doesn't mean you feel bad for a little while. Paying means you're burning hell eternally.

A burning hell. Eternal hell. And yet he's loving.

And his love. Makes a way that it can be paid for. The justice can happen.

And love can happen too. Oh, see, that's what it's all about. That is who he is.

That is why he came. That is what he comes to do. That justice and grace and mercy can come together on the cross.

Oh, the genius of it. Oh, the wonder of it. It is indeed amazing, this grace.

We've talked for just a few minutes about who is God. That is a way longer subject. You know, he reveals himself to us as being Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Three distinct persons and yet one in substance. What is the substance of God according to the scripture Jesus said? John chapter 4 to the Samaritan woman. He said God is spirit.

That is the very substance of God. He's spirit. He is spirit.

Well, let's talk for just a few minutes about who is man. Who is man? Well, man is a combination of two substances according to the scripture. We read it right here in Genesis 2 verse 7. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.

Two substances come together to make you. Spirit and matter. Breath and dust.

You see? Two substances. That means that you are a unique thing in this whole universe. Do you understand that? That you as a human being are unique as a form of life in all of God's created universe.

Because you see, there are other beings that are spirit. There is a spiritual world, a spiritual realm, as it were, a spiritual universe. It's the original one.

It's the real reality. There is this material world or universe as we relate to it. What C.S. Lewis called the shadow lands.

It's not really as real as what brought it into existence and that is spirit. And in this material world there are other forms of life. God has created the plants, God has created the fish and the birds, creeping things and according to the scripture.

They are just material. They are not like you. You are spirit and matter.

Spirit and matter. Two substances. Your dog, whatever it is, is only a material thing with consciousness.

Soul. God created consciousness and even animals have a consciousness. They have a soul, they have a sort of mind, will and emotions, but they are not a spirit.

They have no God awareness, no God consciousness. They are not, in a sense, they are not part of God. His very breath is what makes you what you are.

And you are a spirit who lives in a body, but who has a soul. And that soul, that part of us that is there in the middle, that has to choose between these two sides of our nature. You are dual in your nature in a sense that you are spirit and matter.

Do you understand that? According to the scripture, you are breath and dust. Created by God of two substances. One substance is superior to the other substance, right? The case is made in the scripture that spirit, that which is invisible, is greater, is superior as a substance to matter.

And I will tell you why God did that. Why? Because He wanted to demonstrate His love for you. He made you a spirit, gave you a body, you have a soul.

And God who is spirit, before the foundations of the earth, before He ever created matter, He knew you, He loved you. And He made you a combination of two substances, one superior, one inferior. Because it was His very plan to join you.

His very plan to come down and become material. Do you know that? His very plan to come down where we are. You got to think about this guys, because the incarnation is a statement that you must not miss.

The fact that God became flesh and blood, that He became human, is a statement from Him about His love for you that is greater than you think it is. It's more intense than you realize. You, created in the image of God, in His likeness, created in His image.

Not physically, because God is not material, God is spirit. You are created in His image. Man is created in the image of God, that's what Genesis reveals to us.

Created in the image of God, but not only that, God takes man, Genesis chapter 2, and divides him into two genders. This is real relevant to you. You need to know this.

You need to know what happened in Genesis chapter 2, you need to be reminded of it, if you already know it. Genesis 2.18, the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper.

You are familiar with this. I will make him a helper suitable for him, a help meet for him. I will make him a helper.

Are you aware that you need help? Are you aware that God Himself looked down at the first man and said, I need to help this guy. Are you aware of that? That you need help. Help in what? What is the purpose of God creating you? The purpose of God creating you, was so that you could know Him.

That He could reveal Himself to you, and you could be a worshipper, an enjoyer of God. Right? Yes, you were created for war, as a man. But ultimately, because your creator is a warrior.

Because your creator is a man of war. Exodus 15.3 Yahweh, His name. He is a warrior.

He reveals some things. I want you to follow me on this, and I only have a minute to lay this out to you, but I want you to get this. It is written that the Lord God first chose man, all of the living things that He created.

Brought every one of those animals to the man to see what He would call them. Whatever Adam called them, that was the name of that thing. Why did God do that? After saying, I will make him a helper.

God wanted to show man His uniqueness. He wanted to show man that there is not another thing like Him. He showed him all of these forms of life that are just material.

There was not another spirit among them. There was nothing like Him. A combination of those two substances.

Then the Lord God caused him to fall into a deep sleep. And the Lord God took, King James Version that I read, says the Lord God took a rib. And from the rib that He took from the man, made He woman.

Hallelujah. God made woman. Oh the genius of God.

You see everything in creation, you read the account of it in Genesis, and everything is going from disorder to order. Everything is going from good to better. What's the last thing God creates? Woman.

Oh hallelujah. God, His final act of creation is Eve. Now, I want you to follow me on this, and if you misunderstand me right now, you're going to leave here thinking I'm a heretic.

I want you to listen. Tune in. When I'm thinking that, listen to me.

God is not a man. God is not a man. God, our Father, is not a man.

Nor is He a woman. The attempt to try to make God into some feminine deity is pagan. But hear me on this.

Everything that we relate to as being of man, everything we relate to as being of woman, everything that we relate to as masculine, and everything that we relate to as being feminine, all of those things are in God. I'm saying to you that God created Adam in His own image. And in that sense, I'm saying to you that Adam was not a man like us originally.

I submit to you that everything that we see in our Lord Jesus, because He is absolutely steel and silk. He is whatever the situation demands. You see perfectly balanced in the Lord Jesus, everything that we relate to that is tender and kind and compassionate and gentle, and everything that is mighty, the toughest man that ever lived, is He.

We see all of that perfectly balanced in Jesus, our Lord, don't we? And I say to you that Adam, created in the image of God, in His original state, is all of that. When God puts him into a deep sleep and He takes something from him, the Hebrew word that is translated rib can be, and I think personally, better translated side. But you're thinking purely of the material.

And I say to you that He took more of who man was. He took more of who Adam is or was. It wasn't just material.

Listen to me, it was something of the soul. He took one side of who Adam was and made someone else. What I'm saying, are you making any sense right now? I'm convinced, I am absolutely convinced that that

man woke up and knew that he was different, that he'd been altered.

I do believe Adam came up out of his deep sleep and was going, man, wow, I feel different. I feel, I feel, no I don't feel, maybe that's what it is. Something's different man, I just, whoa, something's missing, I've been changed.

He was a genius, I'm convinced that he woke up knowing that he had been altered and there was a lot missing. And then God presented it to him. And I'm convinced that right then God went, and there, and that Adam went, there she is, there it is, everything that I am not.

Everything that is taken from me. And he said, she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man. He didn't wake up and go, wait a minute, I'm missing, four, five, six, hey, got a bone missing here.

He didn't wake up looking for missing material. Do you understand what I'm saying? There was something more that was presented to him and he said, she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man. This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, woman.

He said it for this cause. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife and the two shall become one flesh. The two.

Brothers, you cannot have one flesh out of more than two. You clear on that? Some things you just gotta settle, you gotta pick a woman and go with it man. Talk more about that in a few minutes.

The two can become one. And that is what makes homosexuality such an abomination to God. It is such an offense to God.

It is against his creation. It's against his total design. And you, I say this with all the love in my heart, if you're struggling with that, settle that thing man.

Because you're not created by God that way. And it's not a matter of the plumbing. Although that's very obvious.

What one part was made for the other part. Two men don't go together physically. It's a sin, it's a crime against the maker.

It's more than plumbing guys, it's wiring. It's an issue of the wiring. It's a soul thing man.

You cannot have a man and a man together and get one out of them. You cannot make one. That's not a marriage.

It's not what God intended. And it will never bring you happiness. It will never bring you fulfillment.

It will never. You call yourself gay all you want and you're not gay. You're miserable and you know it.

Your heart is broken. Your body is in pain half the time. You are messing your body up.

Sinning against your own body. You sin against your own heart. You say you're all you want to.

That's what I am, that's what I was born to be. You know what, maybe you might have convinced yourself you were born to be that. But I tell you I was born to be some things that I must not be as well.

That's why I need to be born again and so do you. You become a new creation. Do not hear any hate in my heart except for the sin that is ruining you.

If that is your struggle, believe me, I hate it because of what it does to you. And I say that your maker hates it because of what it does to you. He loves you.

He has better things for you. There are differences between men and women. You're aware of this.

We are created absolutely equal. We come together and we make one, we complete one another, man and woman. But we're not the same.

You were created, every one of you as little boys were made for war. God didn't make little girls for war. He made them for love.

He made man to sort of isolate this one part of himself, strength, courage. And he makes woman to isolate this other part of himself, his love and tenderness. Now is that to say that there's no tenderness in a man, no love, no gentleness? Of course not.

But predominantly man is known as one who is cognitive. You guys know, you're not all about, or at least you shouldn't be, all about how you feel. We're not going to have a little feel-fest here.

That's not what we came to do, that's not what we're into. But how does that make you feel? Oh, man, that's not how we're called to live our lives. And there ain't nothing that bugs me more than that coming out of a man.

It's not manly. When you're like, well, I just feel, I kind of, when a guy comes in my office and he says, I want to know what's going on with you, man, what's up with you? And a guy goes, well, I just kind of feel like, I don't know, I kind of felt like, then I felt like this. Whoa, you just said feel like three times.

I didn't ask you to tell me how you feel, I want to know what's the reality. What's going on in your life, what do you know? That's what I want to know. I'm talking to a man.

You are not so feeling-oriented. Yeah, you got feelings, but you ain't got no feeling compared to what your wife has. Your wife, she got feelings.

Compared to her, you don't even have any. I'm serious. Compared to her, dude, you, listen, there should be this, when it comes to physical strength, there's probably a strength differential between you and your wife.

Hopefully. And you, because you are a man, and you can attribute it to, you know, hormones and all kinds of physical things, but when it comes to physical strength, you and her can do the same workout, but you got to be stronger than her, always. No matter what, you got the same diet, same exercise routine, but she's a girl.

And you're always going to be the one that's able to open the jar. And be the man, be the hero. There is a difference.

Yes, she can attain a certain level of physical strength, but not compared to you. She don't have any strength. And I say to you that same sort of differential between what she has as physical strength and what you have as physical strength is reversed when it comes to feelings.

You don't even have any compared to what she deals with. That's the very design of God. That's how it's supposed to be.

She has most of them, the feelings. She always wants to talk to you about, in fact, have you ever been made to feel like there's something wrong with you? Because you don't have any? Have you ever been made to feel like there's something wrong? I don't know, maybe I'm broke, man, I don't have any. I don't, I don't feel that much.

You've got to understand that love is not a feeling. I am so grateful that God said, love your enemies through the Lord Jesus. He said that.

Love your enemies. And never once mentioned your feelings. I'm so grateful that he didn't say, I want you to, I command you to feel warm and fuzzy when you see him.

I couldn't do that. I am so grateful that love is what you do. Love is an act.

Love is a choice. Love is something higher than a feeling. And God says, love your enemies.

If you see him hungry, feed him. If he's thirsty, give him a drink. This I can do, Lord.

And you discover as you do the thing that love commands you to do, then your feelings do follow. Your heart follows the choices that you make. Ain't nothing more pathetic than a man telling me, I can't help how I feel.

That is so not manly. That is the most pansiest thing you can say as a man. I can't help how I feel.

I always hear this from somebody who's struggling with adultery. Oh, listen. I've been that man.

As a young man, I have been there. And I was that pansy. I was that pathetic thing going to God, going, I can't help how I feel.

His love for me did not strike me with any lightning bolts. But I felt the whip. When he showed me what love actually is.

Oh, what a turning point in my life that was. Nothing more pathetic than a man going, I can't help how I feel. Yes, you can.

You can too. And you must. You're called to.

You're a man. You have some feelings, right? You don't live by them. What if you wake up? Imagine a scenario.

Your dad, husband. Yeah, your daddy man. Your husband man.

You're awakened in the middle of the night by your wife, who's a lighter sleeper. Tuned in to the needs of the house. Tuned in to the needs of the children.

When they cry, she wakes. Most of the time. I'm talking about generalized terms here.

You know what I'm saying is true. But she wakes you in the middle of the night. She stirs you and says, I hear something.

There's a noise. I think someone's in the house. You'll have feelings then, won't you? But you're a man.

You don't live by them, do you? Because if you do, you're going to pull your little blanky force field over you. But you're not that guy. So you're going to get up.

You'll have feelings. And just imagine. You go out the bedroom door.

You go through the dark in your house. And you see around the corner, there is a stranger in your kitchen. He just came through the window.

Got a knife in his teeth. You'll have feelings then, won't you? You will have feelings. You'll have a mixture of fear.

Fear will be one of those feelings. And it's based in fact. It's legitimate.

This is scary. There's a lot at stake. But you'll also feel anger.

You will know your house has been violated and your family is being threatened. You'll have a whole bunch of emotions. And which one will you obey? You are a man.

You're going to run back and get a little group, a little family thing happening. Come on. Everybody get together.

Let's get together right now. Because we've got feelings. And I just need to get them out.

I'm scared. I'm scared, honey. I'm scared.

Kids. Daddy's scared. And you're doing that.

Your kids are not going to go. Oh, daddy. I just think it's so good you're in touch with your feelings.

I just. I want to be just like you, dad. I want to be just.

Your kids aren't going to respect. Your wife's not going to go. That's my man.

Your wife who may at times be angry over the fact that you don't have any feelings is not at that moment going to be grateful that you're expressing them. There they are. There's those feelings I've been looking for.

I knew you had them. You're a man. You'll take action because it's your job.

Because it's what you were wired for. It's what you were made for. You'll have emotion, but you will disobey some.

You'll obey others. Fear's going to factor in to you making sure you do this right. You know what I'm saying? Because you're a man.

There's a. Wow. We've got to take a break. Announcements, pastor? Please.

We'll pick up where we left off there.

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