

Be a Man - Part 3

by Ken Graves

The sermon emphasizes the unique needs of men and women in marriage, highlighting the importance of love, understanding, and communication.

Duration: 1:10:35

Scripture: Matthew 3:17, John 3:16, John 18:4, Philippians 4:8, Philippians 4:13, 1 Timothy 2:5, 2 Timothy 1:7

Topics: "Manhood"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of humbling oneself before God and seeking obedience. He quotes various Bible verses, including John 3:16, which highlights God's love for the world and His sacrifice of His Son. The preacher also discusses the role of Jesus as the mediator between God and man and the power and sound mind that believers receive from God. He warns against the temptation to focus on outward appearances and highlights the need to continually pursue and cherish one's spouse. The sermon concludes with a reflection on Jesus' baptism and his subsequent journey into the wilderness, where he faced temptation and demonstrated his strength and resilience.

Transcript

We hug ourselves before you. Give us God we pray. We hug ourselves before you.

Help us to obey. You are like my brothers. He's drawing on me, my hands are busy right now.

Alright, you want to showdown? Ken, I'm calling you out, man. You ready? Start! Alright, right here. Wait! There's another way to do this, Ken.

Are you ready? I'm ready. For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son. There is one God and one mediator between God and man.

The man, Christ Jesus. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Amen.

Alright. What sort of things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, if there's any virtue, any praise? For God has not given me a spirit of fear, but power, love, and a sound mind. Uh, Jesus wept? Yes.

I love that Bob Coy. That is a mighty man. Because might is not measured by the deepness of one's voice.

Anonymous! Oh, are we? Yes. I thought that might happen. Ken.

Hello. Let's hear that deep voice again. Thou shalt not touch the Lord's anointed, Ken.

That's stupid. Mike at the sound booth has made an adjustment to the microphone and engraved this. Bobby.

So now, you see this picture of physical strength with the vocal cords of... Go ahead, Ken. Your attention, please. For those of you who don't know, I've always said that because God is the ultimate equalizer, when Ken gets to heaven, and when I get to heaven, there'll be a slight exchange.

Ken has enjoyed this body and this voice for all these years. When we get to heaven, he gets my body and my voice, and I get his body and his voice. So to give him a taste of heaven, once again, Ken, share with us the word.

God has made men and women different. Different? Yeah, different. Here's why.

Give him back his voice, please. I'll keep my body a little while longer, keep my voice a little longer, but Ken, just a little taste of heaven. Thank you.

Thank you. All right, guys, we've only got a few minutes left. Let's, for just a few minutes, because we really don't have the time to go into all of the differences between men and women, consider that one thing is clear.

God wired a man different from how he wired a woman. That is in the soul. And the whole way of looking at things, the whole way of looking at the universe, the whole way of looking at life, that for man, it's all about war.

Everything is something to overcome, to conquer. God made you that way. You have one primary need as a man.

That is, one primary need in your soul. A need that is met in the context of marriage. A need that is addressed by what God says to the woman.

God says to the woman in marriage, Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands. Why did God say that? He said that because that is how he wired the man. The man has got one primary need.

One need that can be addressed within a godly marriage. And that is to know that you are believed in. To know that you are, indeed, a hero to her.

Now, certainly, all of it is used against you. Satan has brought sin into this picture. The whole design of God has been inverted.

And man is now actually living his life like he's material. He's just, his soul, his mind, will and emotion consumed with that material side of him. That is the reality of the existence of most people.

They live like animals, just obeying appetite and instinct. And that good thing that God put in your heart, to want to be significant, to want to affect this spiritual war, that good thing is now used against you. And the desire no longer is just to be believed in, to be a hero to your wife, to your children, to be someone who affects that great conflict, but instead, perverted, it's a desire to be worshipped, to have power, to have

power and own possessions and experience pleasure.

That's what makes the world go around. 1 John 2, 15 and 16. That whole thing is used against you.

You don't want to just be believed in now. You want to be worshipped under the effects of sin. One primary need is addressed.

The one primary need that God put in the heart of a woman is addressed by what God says to the man. What does he say to the man? Husband, love your wife as Christ has loved the church. Ephesians chapter 5. Love your wife as Christ has loved the church and gave himself for her that he might present her to himself.

A glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she should be holy. The primary need of the woman, she doesn't have a great need to be a hero, a heroine. Her need is to know that she is loved, that she would be fought for.

And that, gentlemen, will continue to be a primary need that that woman has to the day that she dies. Through every season of her life, to know that she is loved by her husband. To know that she is still being fought for.

Still being won. That need is put there by God. God put that need there.

Certainly you've seen it. You've seen insecurity in her. No matter how many times a day you tell her that you love her, she'll still ask you, Do you really love me? 1 Peter chapter 3 addresses this husband loving his wife issue by saying, you husbands, live with your wife.

Live with your wife. Did you hear those words in 1 Peter 3? Live, dwell with her. That's something that you, by nature, and the effects of sin will not do.

You live a separate life. You've got your separate space. You've got your car.

You've got your garage. You've got your space. You have your activities.

You can live another whole complete life, have another total existence from the one that you share with her. That's not the will of God. God wants you to live together with her to becoming one.

Live together with her according to knowledge. Live insightfully, 1 Peter chapter 3 says. Live according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as joint heirs together with you of the gift of life so that your prayers are not hindered.

You've read that before, right? Oh, I wish we had time to really get into that. What is this weaker vessel thing versus what are you? You and her, you're both vessels. You contain something, but she's the weaker vessel.

That doesn't mean inferior. That means much more delicate, easily broken like that lead crystal, champagne glass that maybe takes that place of honor in that hutch with the glass doors. It isn't the kind of thing you slide across the table, drink your milk from it, pound it down on the table.

It's different. She is more delicate, more easily broken, but equal indeed. Haven't you discovered you can hurt her without even trying to? And inevitably, when you do and you're unaware that you didn't, you're in

trouble also for not knowing.

Aren't you? That's why 1 Peter chapter 3 says you've got to live together with her according to knowledge. You've got to study some things. You've got to make her your study.

You've got to study how did God design, how did God make this woman because she's not just like you. Thank God. She's different.

She's made different. When you think about this, the primary need of the man, the primary need of the woman according to the design of God. You think about that.

In light of the life of Abraham and Sarah who are mentioned, by the way, in 1 Peter chapter 3. Think about how many times he was not her hero. Rather than being her hero, he hid behind her. You know his story, right? Although, among the sweetest words in the scripture is Genesis 22 verse 1 where it says it came to pass after these things that God did test Abraham.

See, Genesis 22 is the place where Abraham's life is going to come to its defining moment. And he has had all of these years, a good 25, 26 years of God proving his faithfulness to Abraham despite Abraham's cowardice, his weakness, lapses of faith. He's got a couple of victories and a whole lot more defeats.

And that 25 years between when God calls him, God makes the promise and then when God fulfills the promise. You know his story, right? And I say to you men sitting here right now, the defining moment of your life is yet to come. It hasn't come yet.

Those words written of Abraham and it came to pass after these things that God did test. What Abraham does in Genesis 22 is what Abraham will be known for forever. What Abraham does in Genesis 22 is what he is known for throughout the entire New Testament.

A man of faith. A man who believed God and was willing to give everything. A man who believed God and it was credited unto him as righteousness.

The defining moment of your life has not come. Whatever it was you dreamed about being when you were a little boy, you're not that yet. But it's not over.

God has been showing you things. God has been revealing his faithfulness to you. And the defining moment of your life is yet to come.

It'll come to pass after these things. All these things. All these learning experiences.

Your failures, your weakness will have opportunity for God to show his strength, his greatness. Do you understand what I'm saying? Think of the weakness of Abraham. The foolishness.

As a man, you want to be believed in. You want to be the hero. You want to be the one who comes to the rescue.

God made it this way. Because it was his desire that we should know him. That we would know that it's his desire to be our hero.

He provides for us in the relationship between man and woman. Between husband and wife. God provides for us the reference points whereby we can understand something about what he wants for mankind.

Are you following me? He allows us to play the part of the initiator. The hero. You guys remember when you first met that woman? Those of you here who are married.

You remember when you first met her? Remember how... You remember how you went out of your way to win her? The courage you showed. The compassion you showed. Remember the presentation you made to her? That lie? And then after winning... See, this is how we are.

Because we're all... We're made for war. We fought that fight. We won that.

We won the woman. Next battle. Move on to the next one.

Quit daily winning her. You get too comfortable. Way too familiar with that woman too, frankly.

You and I can get way too comfortable. You no longer even close the door in the bathroom. You know what I'm talking about? The day did come for me when I was walking from a restaurant door.

Date night with Jeanette. Walking from the door of that restaurant to the car in the parking lot. Every bodily function except liquid and solid took place.

From the door, I'm like... This is just on the way to the car. I'm ashamed to say to you. Vapor... I was just... I was being myself.

What I was being. I get all the way to the car and that precious bride of mine turned and looked at me and goes, The honeymoon is over, isn't it? And I was so busted. The spirit of God spoke to me as he often does and said, You, son, were better at winning the waitress than you were winning this woman that you're supposed to lay your life down for.

You were more of a... You made a better presentation for that lady in there you don't even know than you did... You were more of a gentleman for her than you were for this one you're supposed to love. So busted was I. And that day was a turning point in my relationship with her. And I returned to seeking to win her.

I don't do that in her presence. So you know. Just so you know.

I mean, maybe you're different. Maybe... Maybe you think... Your wife thinks it's funny, but... I bet if you checked, if you asked, you'd find out otherwise. Enough about that.

Primary need of the man is to know that he is a hero. That he has won that woman and that she still believes in him. That she's behind him.

Now what about Abraham, man? He freaks out. He panics. Leaves the land of promise.

Goes to Egypt. And there in Egypt, hides behind his wife. Tell him, I'm your brother.

I'm your brother, right? Because then they'll be nice to me. Well, what about her? She ends up in a harem. God himself has to come to her rescue because Abraham will not.

Now is that what you... Think about it. Is that the kind of man you want to be? The kind of man that when danger comes, jumps behind your wife? Of course not. Abraham was that guy.

God proved himself to Abraham strong. Think about this. You know... Sarah finally... You know what happens in Genesis 16.

Where she finally... She sees Abraham. He's out counting stars. He's longing for this promise.

Son, it ain't coming. She's taking it upon herself. Maybe it's me.

And I guarantee you what's really going on is that she was thinking maybe Abraham thinks it's me. And so everything from a woman is a test. And if you don't know that, you failed already.

Everything she comes to you with is a test. And ultimately, it has its root in... She wants to find out do you really love her? You know what I'm saying? She comes to Abraham. She says, Abraham, I'm thinking maybe it's me.

You know? I'm old. Why don't you take my maiden? My maidservant, Hagar. And you know what? She can be a surrogate mother and impregnate her.

Maybe that's how God wants to work this whole thing out. Oh, brothers. Was this not a test? And what did Abraham do? Did he fail his test or what? These tests, guys, there's a right answer and there's a wrong answer.

When your wife says to you and you say, honey, what's wrong? And she goes, nothing. If you believe that, you're an idiot. If you accept that answer, she says nothing and you go, oh, good.

Okay. You have blown it. You failed the test.

When scripture says husband, live with your wife according to knowledge, that means you've got to figure some things out, son. You've got to break the code. You've got to... You have got to figure out these encrypted messages.

When she says nothing, it doesn't mean nothing's wrong. It means already you're in trouble for not knowing. My wife and I learned a long time ago when I say, honey, what's wrong? And she goes, nothing.

What that actually means is how bad do you want to know, caveman? Prove to me that you really care. Keep asking. There's a right answer and a wrong answer.

When a wife comes to you and says, honey, do I look fat in this? A question that you, personally, will never ask her. Will you? Honey, do I look fat in this or what? Do I look bald in this? But she'll come to you concerned with how you see her and she'll say to you, honey, do I look fat in this? And for this, there's a right answer and there is a wrong answer. Isn't there? Wrong answer.

I've seen fatter. Or... Well, you know, hesitation. Wrong answer.

Well, define fat. Another wrong answer. The only right answer you're going to give is no, baby, you've got to be fat to look fat.

And I don't care if you are speaking of those things that are not as though they were. That is the right answer. Because it's all about do you love me? Am I still desirable to you? That's what it's all about.

It's all a test. Sarah comes to Abraham with this test. Right answer would have been, no, Sarah, it's me and you, baby.

No son at all. I don't want a son if I don't have a son with you. Wrong answer, which is what he gives.

Hey, you know, I was just thinking that. I think we're onto something here. That's a pretty good idea.

You know, you're really insightful, Sarah. Way wrong answer in the world itself. The world at large still suffers the consequences of that failed test.

Is it not? Ramifications can be far reaching. The cost can be great if you fail the test. Everything is this.

But why did God give us this? Why did he put us here in this situation? Husband being as he is, wife being as she is. Because it was the very plan of God that he reveals some things about himself to us and about the relationship that he wants to have with us. A relationship in which we, or us he-men, are part of the bride.

We are the feminine, in a sense, that responds to the masculine. That he's the initiator and we are the responder. That he is the one.

You guys are visually stimulated. You are sight stimulated and it is the very design of God that you would be. That you would see beauty, which by the way he designed.

He made it. God invented woman. God made it this way.

God is the one. He created that day in Genesis chapter 2, the mother of all babes. Every babe you've ever seen is just some distant, descended, de-evolved, sin-affected, inferior replica.

And we have seen some beauty in this world, have we not? We have seen women that have caused our breath to fail us. The power of that sight of beauty, the power of that, is incredible, is it not? What did she look like, that first woman, the one that all of these ladies descended from? What a babe, man, she must have been. What a beauty.

But ultimately, you know the story well enough in Genesis chapter 3, you know the sin came into that beautiful picture. You know that the predator came in. I wish we had time to really discuss that.

Where did he come from? We have a composite sketch of him as a being that said, I will, I will, five times, I will ascend. Be like the most high. Like Dave Hunt says, how many most highs can you have? That's a thought.

I will be like the most high. There is only one most high, buddy. We have a composite sketch of the serpent in the garden who was one so glorious, apparently he is the original evolutionist, the original, he is the father of lies, the ultimate lie that he came up with is that he could ascend.

He deceived himself first, that he could ascend. In order for him to convince himself that he could ascend, don't you think he had to first convince himself that he was not created, but that he had somehow ascended to where he was? That he had somehow or another evolved and that he could continue his evolution right up to taking the throne of God. This predator comes to the garden.

God had given two commands to the man and to the woman. Very simple. The command of God was, be fruitful and multiply.

Be fruitful, Adam. Make babies, man. I've given you the tools to work with.

Use them. Guarantee you, Adam was, yes sir, I'm on it. This was not a grievous command.

The law of God is so hard. Guarantee you, Adam was, my pleasure. Your highness, your will is my command.

Then they loved each other. But that other command was, don't eat that tree. Simple.

But for joy to mean anything, there has to be an alternative. For love to mean anything, you guys are, if you ever had the dream of being stranded, plane crash, with some babe on an island, you being you and all. And then in the dream, it's just you and her.

And after you have built her enough grass huts and enough fires, caught her enough fish, at some point or another, she looks at you and goes, I love you. Could you actually believe that? It's just you, man. It's just you and her.

There is no alternative. That would mean nothing said to you on the island. But if in fact you return to the mainland and the story is still the same, now that means something, doesn't it? When a woman has actually responded to your love and chosen you and been won over by you, even though there are so many others, that means something.

And so for choice to mean, for love to mean anything and for the freedom of will to mean anything, God gives the freedom of choice to every spiritual being he created. He created the angels, spirits, yes, even the fallen angels are a higher form of life than man. Man is material and spirit is a lower form of life.

There's a material universe, there's a spiritual universe and there is man right between the two. A combination of both worlds. Unique.

Satan comes. And I believe he struck where he could be effective. I don't have time to go into a whole lot of things, but I'm going to tell you this.

God called you. To be the leader. You, as a man, are called and equipped, wired and plumbed to be the leader.

God called you to be the leader in the home. God called you to be the leader. Yes, the spiritual leader of your family.

The pastor of your house. God called you to be the leader. And God called you to be the leader in your community, in your church.

You're called by God as men. You have inherited something. You understand that? You are equipped for it.

I am absolutely convinced that what the apostle Paul says in 1st Timothy chapter 2, where he said, I do not allow women to teach or be in authority over the man. He's talking about within the church. But to be in submission.

And then he says, why? Just so you won't call that some cultural thing. That was for them there and then. It's for us here and now because he said, why? He said, because Adam was formed first and then Eve.

There is an order to God's creation. She was created to be his helper. Not the other way around.

Adam was formed first and then Eve. And then there in 1st Timothy chapter 2, he says, and Adam was not deceived. But the woman being deceived was in transgression.

You follow me on that? The man was not deceived. Wasn't deceived? Did they not both partake of the fruit, the forbidden fruit? Yes, they did. But he did it knowing exactly what he was doing.

Now, does that make it less wrong? Absolutely not. It seems to me it makes it more wrong. But the point that is being made, though subtly, is that there is a difference between Adam and Eve.

Eve being so much more feeling oriented has that used against her by the serpent in the garden. He creates a feeling. He manipulates her feelings.

He brings her to the place of distrust. He creates this whole perspective of a God who is trying to keep her down. Selling her the same lie that he bought from himself that she, like him, could ascend.

Could ascend. You'll be as gods, knowing good and evil. This temptation appealed to every single level of her being, spirit, soul, and body.

She partook of that fruit. She was deceived. The man took of the fruit.

He was not deceived. Now, what does that mean then? Well, how could he do it? Why did he do it? If he wasn't deceived, what made him do this thing that damned us all? All of his children, all of us, messed up everything wrong with you, wrong because of what he did. What made him do it? He loved her.

He loved her more than the one who made her and gave her. He loved the creature more than creation. You see, it was idolatry.

Like I said, you can't be too hard on him because you never saw her. You've seen shadows. We have seen mere shadows.

But he loved her. He loved her more than the one who made her. That was Adam's sin.

And that has been the story of man ever since. Choosing creation over the creator. Suddenly, aware of guilt, Adam and Eve are now naked, but now they're ashamed of their nakedness.

Is that so hard to understand? Because God had only given them two commands and immediately upon breaking the one command, the shame of their guilt is now centered on the very equipment that God gave them to reproduce, to fulfill that other command. You understand that? Immediately, the shame of their guilt caused them to be very conscious of their nakedness and to cover. That's never been done away with, by the way.

You need to teach your son to pull his pants up. Teach your son to yank those pants up. The tools still need to be covered.

Still need to be put away. Pick your pants up. You cannot do the thing that God has called the man to do with one hand holding on to your crotch.

And there's a whole generation of young guys just trying to hang on to their pants. And they're always hanging on by their crotch. The whole culture, the whole fallen, disobedient, rebellious culture around us right now, especially the youth culture, is continuing to be more centered upon the equipment for

reproduction.

Centered on it. Revealing it. More and more.

All these young guys, all concerned about getting these abdominals, the six-pack, they're no longer concerned with actually the strength of the back to lift, to serve. All of a sudden, just concerned about the looks. Gotta have that abdominal.

Gotta have that six-pack, which is just directing everyone's attention down. You tell those boys to pull their pants up. And put their shirt on.

When there's a lady around. Put the tools away. Until it's time to use them.

And you use them the way God says use them in the context of marriage. You understand what I'm saying? Brothers, I think we need to call men... By the way, one of the things that doesn't exist, and I say this to every single young man in here right now, hear me on this, one of the things that does not exist according to God, you listen to me now, is adolescence. It doesn't exist.

According to the scripture, 1 Corinthians 13, the Apostle Paul said, When I was a child, I thought as a child I spoke like a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things. When do you become a man? It's not a matter of chronology.

It's when you finally put away childish things. You can be a boy and be 40. Still picking up your pants.

You put away childish things, that's when you become a man. And not until then. But there's nothing in between manhood and boyhood.

You understand that? One day you're a boy, next day you're a man. Has a whole lot to do with the choices that you make. Will you put away childish things? There are some of us who continue to live as boys on up through our 20s and 30s, our 40s and 50s.

Boys. God is calling us to be men. And to be a man, you have got to know the man.

It's all about who he is. So understand, the couple that were our parents were suddenly aware of their nakedness and did all they could do with their own efforts to cover their nakedness. You know the whole thing with the fig leaves? Religion, that's what that is.

Trying to, through human efforts, undo what was done by the effects of sin. Inadequate. They still knew they were naked.

The fig leaves they clothed themselves with were not enough. Nor were all of the leaves on all of the trees of the entire garden as they hide from God and from his voice. But he called them.

This God who is omniscient called them. Why did he call? Why does God who is omniscient ask questions like, Adam, where are you? Because he is inviting. As he still does.

He doesn't indict. He invites. God doesn't jump in your face and go, Ah, you did it, didn't you, you little punk? I knew you would.

But instead, as he does with Adam, he invites confession. Adam, where are you? I hid. I hid.

I was afraid. I was naked. And I heard your voice and I hid.

Who told you that you were naked? Have you partaken of the tree that I told you not to eat of? God knows. God knows everything. But he invites confession.

And I hear in Adam's answer, confession. I hear an honesty. Honesty.

Some say they hear blame shifted. The woman you gave me. You gave her.

Maybe that is the case. But I don't hear that. I hear him saying, She gave me.

The woman that you gave me to be with me. She gave me and I did eat. I hear a truth.

I hear a confession of idolatry. God turns his attention to the woman and he asks her, What is this that you've done? And he invites the same confession. He invites, Please tell me.

What have you done? Not that he doesn't know. But he wants them to say it. To acknowledge.

Just as it is with you and me. That God invites us to tell the truth about us. To him.

Acknowledge that we are sinners. Agree with him. That we are totally willful and disobedient.

That we disobeyed. God turns his attention to the woman and says, What have you done? And she says, The serpent. The serpent deceived me and I ate.

That serpent beguiled me. And she could say that. The man couldn't say.

It was true of her. She was lied to. Satan is still lying to women.

She can say, The serpent deceived me and I did eat. Please take note. God turns his attention to that serpent and he doesn't invite confession.

He doesn't ask him, What is this you've done? Isn't there something you want to tell me? God turns his attention to that serpent and said, You. He declares war. God declares war on that serpent.

God says, You. You will be cursed. He pronounces the curse.

You'll be cursed above all the cattle. All creeping things. On your belly you'll crawl.

All the days of your life. You'll eat the dust of the earth. And, Genesis 3.15 I will put enmity between you and the woman.

God said, Satan struck the woman. God said, I'll put enmity between you and the woman. Between your seed and her seed.

Interesting play on words because the seed is in the man. God said, Her seed. Theologians call that the prothevangelium.

That is the very first reference, The very first promise of a savior. That is where the gospel started right there. In being proclaimed.

In the curse that God pronounced upon Satan. Upon that serpent. There is in it a promise.

That someday a man. And it's very specific in the Hebrew language. That one day.

One man. One unique man. A man who is unlike any other man.

One man who is a descendant of the woman. You know that's the very first and very subtle hint. One day a virgin would conceive.

That a man would be born that would not be a descendant of Adam in the sense. That you and I all are. As heirs of Adam's flaws.

But a man would come into this world uniquely. That a virgin would conceive. Man I love Genesis 3.15. Oh what a wonderful promise.

In the midst of a horrible curse. God is cursing the serpent. And at the same time saying, One day one man.

A man. A man. A lower form of life.

Yes according to Psalm 8. Man is made a little lower than the angels. Yes a little lower than the lowest angel. This serpent was the highest angel.

God announces to him. That one day a man is going to crush your head. Or you will bruise his heel.

But he will crush your head. God sends them out of the garden. God banishes the man and the woman from Eden.

But before he does. God sacrifices. Something bleeds and dies.

For it is written that God gave them animal skins to wear. I believe it was a lamb. I believe God covered them.

God covered them. That sacrifice. The first thing that was killed.

Was the very first sacrifice. Of many sacrifices that would speak of a future time. And a future sacrifice.

The ultimate sacrifice. Alright the time is short. Let me end with this.

In your own mind right now. Go forward in time. Centuries.

Go to another place. A barren place. So very unlike the garden of Eden.

In your mind right now. Go to this wilderness. Of Judea.

Desert. Sandstone. Scorpions.

A burning sun. And in this barren place. So far from Eden.

There on the surface of the earth. Suspended between heaven and hell. Two beings meet.

Two beings confront each other. A showdown happens. You see centuries had come and gone.

The years passed. The centuries passed. And there was no man.

That could crush the head of this serpent. The serpent. Has held the world under his sway.
The wickedness of man. The sin of man. Fueled by the lust of the tempter.
A lot of men came and went. A lot of prophets. A lot of sages.
I mean there were some guys who certainly knew God. But all of them had their flaws. All of them came.
All of them died. And stayed dead. You got to know after a few thousand years.
That the serpent. Has come to believe. It ain't happening.
None of these puny men are going to crush my head. Or the thought of it. Until that one day.
That the voice of God shook the earth. That one day. When the voice of God was heard.
Like it had not been heard since it was speaking in Eden. The voice of God heard. On the earth.
In a way. That was as if God could not help but speak. Like he just ripped the sky open.
And had to say something. What did he say? This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. This is my son.
My only son. And the spirit of God is seen. Visibly.
Dove like. Descending. And resting upon the man.
There in the water. Having been baptized by John. And immediately from that.
And I guarantee you when those words were spoken by God. Every devil in the kingdom of hell shook. I guarantee you it sent a concussion wave.
Through all of the kingdom of Satan. All the way around the world. There were devils that went.
What was the. What? And Satan himself tuned in and said. What? And immediately up out of the water.
The spirit of God led that. Man. Our Lord.
Out into the wilderness to this place. To this barren place. And for 40 days.
40 nights he doesn't eat. So picture it in your mind. There's a man.
There in that barren place. And he's a man. He's a lean man.
He's built with stones. His whole life. He's got calluses.
He's got grit. He's got a leathery neck. He's lean.
He's plain. There isn't anything outward about him. That we would look at him and go.
Oh yeah man. That. That's a king if ever I saw one.
There's nothing about him outwardly. He's not head and shoulders above all the people. His voice isn't majestic.

It's a regular guy. A plain guy. Just Joe Schmo as we might say.

It's just a face in the crowd. He's out there in that place. And he is trembling.

Trembling. In this weakened state. Because now his body has begun to burn its own self.

Starvation has just begun. When into that scene comes another being. And if we could see him.

Whatever form he takes. If we could see him. We wouldn't be repulsed.

We'd be impressed. If we could see him. We'd be compelled to worship this other thing.

Oh if we could see him. There'd be a form and calmness. There'd be this outward beauty that would cause us to go.

Oh man. That's tough. That is so cool.

That is so mighty. That's majestic. Oh his voice.

I guarantee you came. Whatever form. If you could see him.

Just picture him. Entering the scene. With all of the glory that he could muster.

His glory is what he's after. He still seeks to ascend. Comes into the scene I believe.

If you could see him. He's all flexed. He's all oiled down.

He struts. Beautiful. Powerful in appearance.

Majestic. Towering over the little human. This little form of life standing before him.

And you hear the contempt in his voice. Do you hear the patronizing tone of the temptation? Do you hear it? You. Look at you.

Is that really you? Look what you've done to yourself. You poor little thing. You've become mortal.

Look at you. You're dying. Well don't just let this happen.

You've got to do something. If it's really you. Now come on.

You've got to refuel. You've got to eat. You poor weak little thing.

Well. If it's really you command these stones that they be made bread. And how do we.

Fallen. Sons of Adam respond. To being patronized.

Don't we swell up? Didn't we as little kids on the playground. Try to out inhale. Our opponent like little blowfish.

Oh yeah. Yeah. Trying to be something more.

We've been trying to ascend all our whole life. Trying to be something more than what we are. The voice of God said.

This is my son. The voice of Satan says. If you're the son.

The voice of the son is heard saying. It is written. Man.

Shall not live by bread alone. Called himself a man. Identified himself as a man.

Now you and I think that's great. Because that's something we ascended to. From boyhood.

You realize. To us that's something to. For us that was something to aspire to.

We dreamed about being men. Didn't we? Yeah. When I'm a man.

I'm gonna. We used to think a lot about it. We dreamed about what kind of man we wanted to be.

I'll be a man someday. The day couldn't come soon enough for me. But do you understand.

For the one who said those words there in that barren place. It was a long. Long.

Ways down. To becoming a man. He did not ascend to it.

He descended. I've said this before and I'll say it again right now. Every false Christ that is preached in this world.

Every one of them have this in common. They all ascended. They never descended.

They were mere men who swelled up to say there was something more. Even their versions of Jesus are not really him. Not our Lord Jesus Christ.

That Mormon knocking on your door. He is driven by the same bottom line root motivation as the Muslim terrorist who suicide bombs himself. You know that? Same bottom line motivation for the Muslim as it is for the Mormon.

It's a sex drive. It's the promise of eternal sex. You can wrap it all up.

Make it look all squeaky clean. And make it sellable to the American public. With your little Donny Osmond toothpaste smiling commercials.

You know what I'm talking about. Bottom line is this guy is still driven by his hormones. He's still driven by the same root lust as the Muslim who goes and, you know, straps bombs to himself.

With the promise that he's going to have 70 virgins waiting for him on the other side of his jihad. You know what? You ask that Mormon knocking on your door. You ask that little pervert.

You ask him. Hey. When did your Jesus ever descend? For it is written in Ephesians 4. Who is this who ascended but he who first descended to the lower parts of the earth? Do you understand that gentlemen? That the one that we are called to worship.

The one that we are called to follow. The one that we need to know who he actually is. Is one who came a long way down.

This God man. To be one of us. To put on flesh and blood and be able to die.

A long ways down guys. Listen to me. A long ways down.

Philippians chapter. You've read what is written there in Philippians 2. About let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus. Who because of the degree to which he humbled himself and descended.

The degree to which he descended. To such a degree he's been exalted to the highest place in the universe. Given a name that's above every name.

Do you understand who he is? Do you understand that in the same way you and I might take off a garment and throw it down. Lay it aside. That the God.

That the scripture reveals to us. Laid aside. Some of those attributes.

That we've talked about this very day. This God who is omnipresent. Limited himself to being in one place at a time.

One place. In a human body. This God.

Who is omniscient. Who knows everything. Emptied himself of that to become a human child.

Just like you and me. Minus the sin. Ignorant.

The one who spoke everything into existence would have to become a human baby. That would learn to speak. You follow me on that.

Is the wonder of that really hitting you? I invite every single one of you men. Stay put for these next couple of minutes. Just stay where you are.

Do not get up and leave this room. You listen to what I'm saying to you. God loved you so much.

That he was willing to leave heaven. And to dive. Plunging headlong into the darkness.

Of our ignorance. And our weakness. To become a human.

To become a man. And he did manhood. Perfectly.

Flawlessly. And what is it that we're called to do? What is the one thing that God is looking for from you and me? One thing. You sum it up in one word.

Faith. Faith is the one thing that God looks for in the hearts of men. Is the one thing that pleases him.

Faith. Synonymous with that word is trust. An expression of trust is submission.

That we submit and we obey. That we surrender our will and absolute trust to him. Do you understand that the one who has called us to do this.

Is one who himself did that. God the son. Left the glory of heaven and came here.

To become one of us. To weaken himself. To become a mortal who could die.

Who could be killed. There's so much more to this story. Recent weeks in the state of Maine where I live.

We have experienced a stretch of cold that has been severe. 20, 30 below zero. Wind chills of 50 below zero.

Normally we have a blanket of snow that insulates the ground. We haven't had that much snow this year. So this cold, this deep cold is penetrating into the ground.

The frost is going deeper than it ever has before. Resulting in complications for the homeowner. Water lines frozen from your well to your house.

Well in my case this rocky mountain where I live is shallow soil. My sewer line froze. Oh what a joy.

I got to dig it up. One 4 inch schedule 40 PVC poopsicle. 60 feet long.

Solid, frozen all the way down to my septic tank. Frozen. Now you guys maybe you deal with city water and sewer.

These are not problems you have to deal with. Some of you do, right? I had to chisel my way down through frozen dirt to the lid of my septic tank. And pry it off.

To discover everything in there was frozen solid. This shouldn't be. You see there are bacteria in there that are supposed to be doing their job.

And they're in a state of suspended animation. They're not doing anything. Things aren't breaking down.

Oh the horror. I had to actually leave the lid off and put a space heater. Down into this tank.

To warm up that abomination. That is the word abomination. Blasting it full of heat.

It eventually did thaw. Bacteria. My own little farm.

They revived. It was a spring to them. They went back to work doing what they do.

And I can tell you that I remember pulling this space heater out. And as I set it over here to the side. A cement block.

Ahead near the hole. Fell in. Disappeared into the depth.

And as it did. Splashed up. To where I was.

And my immediate thought was. That's gone. That is so gone.

I'm not going after it. I don't know if you think about this. And I frankly have to use this to illustrate sin.

Because guys. Typically most humans who produce waste. As most humans do.

Especially here in the modern world. Why they just push a little handle. And it goes somewhere.

Out of sight and out of mind. The fact is it still exists. Somewhere.

It still exists. And I say to you. So does your sin.

My sin. Or it may be out of sight and out of mind. We may have forgotten.

We may have done our little penance. Felt bad about it for a while. But it's gone.
But it's not gone. It accumulates. Somewhere.
You understand this? I don't know if you've ever visited. The sewage treatment plant. In Fort Lauderdale.
On such a wonderful field trip. All of the combined human waste. Of your community.
Goes somewhere. You understand that? Collected somewhere. There it is.
And I say to you. That the God man. Came.
And dove headlong. Into the combined raw human sewage. Of this race.
He. Went. Down.
Further down than you've ever realized. To get you. He dove into the world.
Now listen. Now think about the bacteria living down there. They like it.
The bacteria in my sewage are happy bacteria. They think it's great. They've never known it any better.
This is wonderful to them. And so you. You need to understand.
Your standards are low as well. What you're comfortable in. This world that you were born into.
You need to understand. It's gross man. It's worse than you ever thought.
Encountering some road kill. Some humid sunny Florida. Day.
Being a man. You track down a stench. To its source.
You don't know why. You just did. And the source of that stench is this bloated carcass.
Though this creature is dead. It is teeming with life. This maggots crawling in and out of eye sockets man.
Pulsating with life. You. Can't imagine having any concern.
For any form of life that low. The distance between you and that maggot. Is huge.
I say to you the distance between us. As humans. Though created in the image of God.
We are messed up and mired. The distance between us and our maker. Is higher than the heavens are above the earth.
It's an immeasurable distance. And he was willing to dive right into this. To become one of us.
Do you understand? It was that far down. And there he stands in that Judean wilderness. And identifies himself.
As a man. He identifies himself as one of us. And he says it is written.
Man. Which is what I am. Shall not live by blood alone.

But by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Do you understand that what was at test. What was at stake there was trust.

Faith. He trusted. Do you understand that? He trusted his father.

He obeyed his father. He went where his father told him to go. And he did what his father told him to do.

And it's worse than you ever thought it was. And the horror of it. Is greater than you ever imagined.

And his worthiness of glory. Because of it. Is greater than anything you could ever express.

Remember that centurion. That Roman. That officer.

Of Rome. Who in Matthew chapter 8 said to him. You don't have to come to my house.

You don't have to come to my house. Because. I myself.

Am a man. Under authority. Is that your story? Gentlemen.

Are you a man in authority? Is that what you are? Are you the man? You're the man of your house. You're the king of your castle. Or are you a man.

Under authority? Listen to me. Get this before we end this thing. That centurion said to the Lord Jesus.

I. Am a man under authority. And because of that. I said to this one go.

And he goes. To this one come. And he comes.

All you've got to do is give the order. Do you understand. That Jesus.

The Lord Jesus. Turned to him and said. I have not.

Found such faith. In all of Israel. What faith.

Do you understand. That that man. Showed that he had insight.

Into who this man is. We call Jesus. Because he was a man himself.

Under authority. He could see this man. That he was addressing.

Was here. Obeying orders. Doing the will of another.

He said. I myself also am a man under authority. What he's saying is.

I know. That you are here. Obeying orders.

And because you do. You can give them. You.

My brother. Though called to be a leader. Have no authority at all.

If you're not a man under authority. You've got nothing to say. You can issue your edicts.

You can issue your commands. Nobody's listening to you. You're not a man under authority.

If you are not a man who bows. Who himself submits. You got no right to expect anybody to submit to you.
Not your kids. Your teenage kids. Not your wife.
Nobody. You got nothing to say. Nobody's listening.
Until you finally bow. Do you hear what I'm saying. Until we bow.
We're nothing. The degree to which. Jesus Christ our Lord.
Descended. Than you ever thought. He is God in the flesh.
And who he is. Has got everything to do. With who we're supposed to be.
It's not a matter of looking at him saying. Yeah I want to imitate you. I want to be like you.
Okay you did that. I'm going to try to do that. You can't.
It's a matter of being completely overwhelmed. Focused on. It's a matter of being one.
One over. That every day you say. My king.
Never seen. Never known anyone like you. There is no one like you.
What do you want from me. Because I'm yours. I've been bought.
I'm not my own. What do you want from me Lord. That's a way of life.
All the way to heaven. Would you please pray with me right now. Father in heaven.
My prayer to you now. Is for every single man in this room. That wherever they're at Lord.
Wherever they are right now in their heart. You. My king.
Would you please speak to them. Would you please win their heart. Would you please help them to see
who you are.
You are the greatest that has ever lived. The toughest man who ever stood. To take blows to the face.
No one so driven by love. No one so restrained. His power.
As you have. There is no one like you Lord Jesus. You stood in the garden of Gethsemane.
Having settled something. You stood in that garden. As it is written in John 18 4. And Jesus knowing all
things.
That would come upon him. All things that would happen to him. Went forth.
There is no one so great as you. No hero that is as mighty. And I pray that every single man in this place.
Would have a fresh perspective of that right now. They would see that like they never did before. Father
please.
Father please in the name of the Lord Jesus. Speak to hearts. My invitation to you right now.

Even as all you Christian men are in prayer. Right now praying. My invitation to you.

Those of you here present. Who came here with big questions. Maybe you still got a whole lot of questions.

But God has truly spoken to your heart today. You have heard him speak to you. And you know.

The thing that you must do is surrender. You need to submit. To your maker.

And accept his son Jesus Christ. As your Lord. And master.

I am not inviting you to a life of good feelings. I am inviting you right now. To follow Jesus Christ.

To deny yourself. Take up your cross and follow. To a life of adventure.

And obeying the orders you get from your creator. You have never surrendered your life to Christ before. Not really.

I invite you right now. Now. To raise your hand.

And say that is me. I know I need to give my life to Christ today. I see you dude.

You. Who else? And you. I see many.

Many of you. Yes. I invite you then.

If you mean that. You are not just acknowledging something you need to do. You are saying right now I am going to do it.

Right now. Act like a man. Do the most manly thing you have ever done in your life.

And stand up. Right now. You raised your hand.

I want you to see you stand up. By standing up you are bowing. Do you understand that? By standing up you are bowing.

To Jesus Christ. My dear friends. I ask you one more thing.

If you have professed Christianity. But you have been living your own will. And not the will of your Lord.

You have been running from God. You have been living in a state of disobedience. To God.

And you want today to surrender. You want this day to be the day. In which you surrender completely your will.

And your life. And you live for your King. Would you please stand.

That was a description of you. Stand. So many.

So many. I invite you to pray this prayer with me right now. You have made a public profession.

Men saw you stand. God saw you stand. People saw you stand.

And I invite you right now. To pray this prayer from your heart. Just agree with me in this prayer.

Would you please. It doesn't matter if this is the first time you have ever given your life to Christ. Or if this is the first time you have ever truly surrendered.

It is all the same prayer dude. It is all the same heart. And I am inviting you to pray this with me right now.

And say it out loud. Dear Father in heaven. I give you my life.

I give you my life. I have only begun to understand. I have only begun to understand.

The greatness of your son. The greatness of your son. Show me more.

Show me more. I am yours. I am yours.

Forever. Father I pray that you would give the assurance. Of every single man who has surrendered to the lordship of your son Jesus.

The assurance that his sin which he acknowledged. As willfulness. Just by standing.

Give him that assurance that his sin is forgiven right now. According to your word. Forgiven forever.

To be remembered against him no more. Father in heaven. I pray that you fill every single man with your spirit.

I am not asking you again father to give them a feeling. I don't pray for a feeling. I pray for a very present reality.

A reality of the truth. That come upon every single man standing here right now. Father would you please overwhelm their heart with the reality of who you are.

What you have done. And what you have then called each one of us to be. In the name of Jesus our lord we pray.

Amen. Grace and peace to you brothers. For you.

Yes God we pray. We humble ourselves before you. Help us to obey.

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