

God Revealed
John 1:18

No doubt that this time of year is enjoyable for several reasons, and different things are emphasized as we consider what we're celebrating and more specifically who we're celebrating in Jesus. And you've no doubt experienced and seen and maybe even promoted yourself some of these emphases of Christmas, and they're all good things, wonderful things, that we've been singing about. We can see in Scripture as we look at this specific moment of Jesus entering into our world. Some people prefer to emphasize and try to draw attention to the demonstration of love that that event was. How that was God paying attention to mankind, loving them by sending His own Son. Others like to emphasize the aspect of the mission, of what would be accomplished when the Son came and emphasize that there would be forgiveness from sins, that there would be this work done as even a baby came and grew up and eventually would die on a cross to offer that forgiveness to mankind. Of course, you can just look throughout certain gospel accounts like Matthew and see that this is clearly no mere human being, this is royalty; He is a King. He is a King that has come, and He is even offering a kingdom to His people, Israel. Obviously, we know they did not receive that, and that is why He went to His ultimate destination of dying on the cross for the sins of mankind. Yet, nonetheless, He still reigns as King because He's not in the ground. He's not buried in a tomb. He is ascended into heaven, and He is exalted as the King, and He still will return one day.

Well, one of the realities of this time, one of the realities of Christmas (and when we think of Jesus and His coming to this earth) is the reality of His mission in revealing God to mankind, that Jesus, without a doubt, revealed God to mankind, and not just as another emphasis, another point, another opportunity for God to tell humans more about Himself, but in a very full and complete manner. Jesus did something unique, and He surpassed what anyone else tried to do in the Old Testament, and anyone else since then. He revealed God to mankind in a way that had not been done. And that is specifically what we're going to look at this morning, how it was that Jesus came and accomplished that purpose, and who He even was that gave Him the right to do that, to reveal God to mankind. So, let's look at John 1 this morning, John chapter 1, and we'll read through verses 1-18 and get the whole running thought here of John in writing this prologue, this introduction to his gospel account of Jesus' life, but we'll specifically focus

on verse 18 for the morning. But let's begin in John 1:1; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

This is our passage for this morning, and, specifically as I mentioned, we will focus on verse 18 for our time to see how it was in fact that Jesus came to be and actually is qualified, even allowed, to be this representative, to be that One that would reveal God to mankind. And this is a wonderful passage of Scripture as I'm sure potentially many of you here are aware of as you read through these eighteen verses and as you consider the truths that come out of them. It's a wonderful thing that John does for us. We obviously love the narrative, and we love the account and the story of what happened when Christ actually came and what Joseph and Mary actually went through and that whole time and how God was gracious to them and compassionate upon them and giving them directions and even messages of what they ought to do next and how to proceed in a very difficult time for them. But I love what John does. What John does is he draws our attention to way before that, to way before the moment of Jesus the baby, to before the moment of John the Baptist even, to eternity past. He draws us into the reality of Jesus' existence, not something that began when He was born a baby, but

something that He has always had. He has always existed. Jesus our Savior is eternal in eternity past and so too into the future.

That is what we find in John's introduction here about where he begins with our Savior going back into eternity, and this allows us to fixate on a glorious and grand aspect of God our Father who is in heaven and His Son Jesus who reveals Him. So, let's look at that in verse 18. First, when we look at the first phrase in our verse, we see the problem that begins to come to the surface, and that is God's invisibility. God is invisible as is clearly stated in our verse; "No one has ever seen God..." ... "No one has ever seen God..." A very clear statement there, and when you think about it you kind of take a step back and consider other scriptures and other portions of the Bible, and you realize this is true from other places. There are other statements that are made very explicitly about this truth. Consider later on in the gospel of John, John 5:37, Jesus says, "And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen..." Later on, John 6:46, again, "...not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father." How about in the Old Testament? This was even stated very clearly by God Himself in Exodus 33:30 when speaking to Moses and the nation of Israel; "But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." How about Paul in 1 Timothy 6:16? Speaking of God, he says the One "...who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen." Just some of these passages... And there are others that continue to put forth this truth.

This is the reality of God and who He is. So glorious is our God, so great in all of His ways, and so massive and vast that mankind can't handle it. Man can't handle it. There's no way that man can come into His presence and survive and live to tell about it. You cannot approach Him. No one's ever been able to do it, and Paul says no one can do it. It's not going to happen. It's very clearly stated. This is a problem "...no one has ever seen God..." But you might be considering, some of you, thinking I know a little bit of the Bible, and it seems like there's been some people throughout Scripture that saw God. At one point or another, this seems to be clearly mentioned. If you just kind of read through some passages and consider some prophets, consider some of the men and their saints and their worship of God, some of them were so privileged, it appears, to have seen God.

So, is this verse completely contradictory to all that? How do we make sense of all this? And think about it, you can go back to Exodus and think about just Moses and not just his experience, but even his brother Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel went up "...and they saw the God of Israel." As Exodus 24:10 states. Later on, Moses tells God (Exodus 33:18), "Please show me your glory." And God tucks Moses away in a rock and passes before him, allowing Moses to see the back of Him. How about Isaiah the prophet when he was in the temple and he saw this glorious image and picture and just the train of His robe filling the temple? And you think that seemed to be a vision, a sighting of God. Daniel in his prophecies, in what God showed him, eventually saw the Ancient of Days as is described (a title for God and the Son of Man His Messiah) coming and taking all authority and power. How about Paul in the book of Acts? You recall how he was definitely on his way to do more persecution of the church, and God stopped him, appeared to him, changed his life. Maybe, the apostle John, the one who even wrote what we're studying this morning, in Revelation chapter 1, how he got an image and a vision of God.

What do you do with all these instances and the many others that have taken place? How does this fit? Is the Bible just completely missing itself? Is it contradicting itself left and right? Well, the question we really need to ask, that I think helps us to understand, is to what extent did these people really see God, to what extent did they really actually see God in His essence and His character and His nature? Because we all know this. There's a big difference between seeing someone from afar that's passing by versus actually sitting down with someone, having a conversation and relating with them. There's a big difference between those things, but in both of them, you could say I saw someone, and we need some clarification. We need some understanding.

For instance, maybe some of you have had some wonderful celebrity moments where you got to see someone and actually interact with them or engage with them. My great celebrity moment happened seven years ago. It was after Courtney and I got married, and we're on our way to our honeymoon, and we went and landed in the airport in Mexico in Cancun. And at first, we saw a sign, and on the sign as someone was kind of holding it up, waiting for someone, it said David Crowder, and I thought oh, David Crowder. No way! How many David Crowders are there? Well, there's this worship artist, right? He's a worship leader, and he's got a lot of music that

ends up being sung by Christians around the world. I'm thinking, how crazy would that be if David Crowder was here? Well, if you know anything about David Crowder, he's a very distinctive looking man. Right? You can't miss him. You really can't. Right? The way he kind of carries himself and his appearance with his beard and his hair and glasses and everything, you kind of go, oh, that's the guy. Right? So, we're thinking, oh, that will be crazy. Aw, maybe not. Who knows? Well, as we're kind of getting off to go on our little taxi-van, we catch over off to the left a pretty hairy person, and I kind of go, oh, and it's the back of David Crowder, and he's walking away from me. And so, I saw David Crowder. It's amazing. What an amazing experience. Right? I know you're jealous. I know. I understand it.

I'm sure you have some greater stories here, have seen some type of celebrity, and people have seen presidents, and they've seen all these popular and famous people at different times, but there's differences in those moments when you saw someone. To what extent did you actually see them and interact with them? We must conclude that really in the same way here when we think about what happened with these men that got these glimpses of God that, really, that that's all it was. We conclude that it must've been a partial revelation of God. It was not a full exposure to God and His glory. It was some limited or partial exposure to God. Why? Why do I say that or why can I say that? How does that reconcile what we have before us? Because the reality is Exodus 33:20 still stands. If God were to fully reveal Himself to mankind, he wouldn't survive; he would die because that's what God said.

So, when God is appearing to these people throughout the course of history, clearly it was not in the fullest sense of His revelation. Clearly, it was some partial exposure in giving them some taste of His glory; thus any exposure that the people of Scripture had to God must've been in some way limited, in some way partial. And so, that's why we still have this statement that stands in verse 18; "...no one has ever seen God...", like truly seen God, not David Crowder seen God. "...no one has ever [truly] seen God..." in His glory. It's not possible. It hasn't happened, and this is the reality of the God of the universe. This is the Creator of all things. This is His power. This is His glory. This is His character and His nature on display, so great, so massive that mankind can't even fathom. Mankind doesn't have the faculties to be in that moment and survive. Mankind can't even survive. He is so glorious. Human beings are so feeble, so weak, and they cannot behold the glory of

God. It hasn't happened, and this is the truth claim that's being made here; "...no one has ever seen {God}..." ... "...no one..."

However, as we keep reading on in our verse, this is the glorious thing that we find this morning about Christ - we find an exception to this rule. And that's what we find, Jesus' identification. We see Jesus identified as this exception to the rule; "...no one has ever seen God...", but on the other hand, the only God who is at the Father's side. He has made Him known. There is an exception that John makes us aware of. This is obviously what he sets out to explain more throughout the entirety of his gospel that we're just getting a brief glimpse into this morning. So, we have this obvious chasm that we're already identified that exists, a glorious and holy and perfect and righteous God that is so powerful and massive that His creatures, mankind, can't even be in His presence - this massive gap that exists between God and man. God is the glorious and invisible God. Mankind can't even begin to fathom Him. But this new character that John introduces for us is Jesus. He is the One that has not only seen God, but He is qualified to represent God. He has seen God in a real sense and survived, and He is qualified to actually speak for God and represent Him on His behalf. This is the person of Jesus Christ. This is what we come to find.

So, let's talk a little bit more about how John describes Jesus in this brief phrase here. In this verse, He describes Jesus as "...the only God, who is at the Father's side..." ... "...the only God, who is at the Father's side..." And if we just look at that, there's a few things we can find out immediately about Jesus. First off, Jesus is God. Jesus is God; this is how John describes Him and identifies Him. Jesus is the only God. He could've said something different. He didn't have to say God. He could've said Jesus is a prophet. Alright? Jesus is a rabbi. Jesus is some priest or holy man, but he doesn't. He says Jesus is "...the only God..." I know that some of you might be thinking, oh, this is a different translation that you have because I have something different here. And I note that in the ESV, we have "God," and in the New King James, we have "Son," but the NASB also has "God." The NIV kind of does both, but "...the One and only Son who is Himself God..." to try and clarify. It is best to conclude that Jesus is in fact described here as "God." While it is true that Jesus is the Son of God, which we'll get into in a moment, clearly here it is best to see the description of Jesus as "God" as the word that is actually used that way.

So, why the discrepancy? Why call Him Son in a different translation rather than just calling Him God? It's a simple thing that comes down to, and this happens often times, where decisions have to be made, when you have all these different manuscripts that exist that have the New Testament, and all these manuscripts use different words at times. There's differences in spelling at times. There's differences in word order, and so, you kind of have to sift through it and decide wait a minute, so, how exactly is this presented? What's the most accurate thing? What did John really write? What did the Holy Spirit really tell John to write? And so, there's a few manuscripts that exist that actually say "...the only Son...", but then, there's a bunch of manuscripts that say God, and so the clear evidence points to "God" as the best translation. And to say that He's the Son is still in fact accurate, and it's probably a smoothing over of trying to, someone down the ages trying to, make it sound better or to try and make it sound, again, easier reading because to say Jesus is God, that's right in your face, and you have to deal with it, but that's the truth; that's what John does in his gospel.

And the reality is, of course, you have to deal with it. I mean, just in our passage, you have to deal with it. Right? Remember John 1:1? Some of you have this memorized; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Interesting. I wonder who this "Word" is, and that's where verse 14 has helped us. Right? "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." ... "...the Word..." is Jesus, and that's what John is setting out to tell us about. He's telling us about "...the Word..." who is Jesus. You could say in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word [Jesus] was with God, and the Word [Jesus] was God." He's already stated it, so to come to verse 18 and say, oh, this is a little hard to see here, that he's calling Jesus God. He's already said so, and he'll do it again as he recounts the events of Christ's life. You could jump to the end of John's gospel. You could go to John 20:28, and you find there that account where doubting Thomas, as we've called him, one of the disciples who had a hard time really embracing the resurrection of Jesus, he said I really have to see it to believe it. Right? But that moment when he did see it, when Jesus showed Himself to Thomas and showed him His scars and Thomas realized it was in fact Jesus back from the dead, alive in front of him, what did Thomas say? "My Lord and my God!" Once again, what could he have said? "My Lord and my..." rabbi, my mentor, my teacher, my priest? He could have said something, but what did he say? "...my God!"

Jesus is God. It's a clear statement. It's a teaching of all of Scripture, but John does a really thorough job in trying to show this over and over again in his gospel. Why do we have an exception to the rule in Jesus? Because He's made of a different kind of stuff than you and me. Jesus is God. Jesus is in fact God. Mankind cannot fathom or even bear the presence of God, but Jesus? Different story because He Himself is God. We don't just learn that Jesus is God, we also learn that Jesus is unique and one of a kind. Back in our verse, we see that He's described as "...the only God..." ... "...the only God..." That is kind of that word "...the only..." In your translation you might have something along the lines of "...only begotten Son..." or "...only begotten God..." or you could also phrase it differently as the unique One or the One who is one of a kind. All those, really, are fine translations that work for this description of Jesus. Yes, He is God, and He is with that, clearly unique and set apart and different.

So, the translations that say "...only begotten...", people get scared of because it sounds like Jesus was born, and He did not exist at one time, and all of a sudden, He started existing because He was "...begotten..." But unfortunately, that's just not what the word really even means. If you actually look at this and how this word was used in referring to the Messiah as even being the Son of God, you look back in the Old Testament and it's true, you find several depictions of Him. You'd think about Psalm 2 for instance. It describes the Messiah as the King but also the Son, the Son of God, and so right away, people think that means the Son and to be born at some point. That means there was a point when the Son did not exist, and you look back in church history and people have debated this and argued this going way back and actually already solved this issue. People try to get scared at this, thinking that the Son was born, and so there was a time when Jesus did not exist. That's inaccurate. Unfortunately, that's far from the truth. The reality is when you look at this concept of Son, you can't think of someone less. They're somehow not as good as God. The reality is when you think of the title of the only begotten Son, it was utilized often to refer to someone that was first in rank, someone that was pre-eminent above everyone else, first place. So, to be described as "...only begotten Son..." was the highest compliment you could pay. It was a good thing. It was just trying to further support the point. So, that's what we have here. He was a unique one of a kind, pre-eminent, first in rank. You can't surpass this person and individual.

He is one of a kind, and it's similar to the word that is even used when you have at Jesus' baptism and in the transfiguration when He shows His glory to His disciples. He is described by God His Father from heaven as My Beloved, My One and only, My unique One. No one else is like this person. No one else is like this individual. So, you start to think of Jesus and the qualities He possessed, His accolades, His description. How do you describe Him? Well, first of all, He's God; and second of all, He's one of a kind. He's pre-eminent. He's above everyone else. He's above everything else. He is first in order. He's singled out as one of a kind. He is standing alone in His significance and in His rank, above all others. The reality is Jesus has no contenders. There's no question on this. Who can contend with Jesus? Who can stand up to Him and say, well, I'm God, too? Who can dare throw down that gauntlet? Who could come to Jesus and say I'm the Beloved. I'm the one of a kind. I'm the One and only. No one can. Jesus stands alone in this. He is fully God as is clearly stated here. And as we look at His life as it plays out on the pages of Scripture, He is fully man. He is truly one of a kind. He is God's One and only. No one else can claim such authority.

This is the authority of Jesus. You have the glory, the power, the splendor of God Almighty in heaven, and then you have this description of His Son who is Himself God, who is one of a kind, who is first in rank, who is King over all, who is pre-eminent. This is clearly an exception to the rule of those who have seen God. Jesus, God's own Son, has seen Him, and how do we know this? Just look at the last phrase that we're looking at here is that He is "...at the Father's side..." ... "No one has ever seen God..." but the only God who is "...at the Father's side..." To continue to prove the point here, not only is He qualified because He is God and He's one of a kind, but here He is in His position, here He is in His experience and authority. He has relationship with God the Father. He has relationship with His Father. Not only does He have equal status as God, and not only is He unique in His standing as the only God, but He has this legitimate experience with God. I mean, just look at verse 1 again in our passage; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God..." He's been with God. Jesus has been with God in relationship. Some of your translations might say "...He was in the bosom of His Father..." Just another way to depict and describe just how intimate this relationship was between the Son and the Father. You kind of get this picture later on when you have the Last Supper, and the last time that Jesus spends with His disciples. And you have John himself reclining on the

bosom of Jesus and this kind of intimacy that kind of starts to show and form. And so too, John is telling us in eternity past, this is what you had, Jesus the Son of God who is God, who's pre-eminent, dwelling intimately in relationship with His Father. He has this in. He has this inside that you nor I nor anyone in history could ever get when it comes to this type of relationship with God the Father. It's amazing, amazing status.

You think about this and this is kind of how we are, too. We appreciate people that have gone through something before us. We appreciate people that have experience in some things that we don't. We really rely on it pretty heavily too when we find out that someone has gone through some milestone in life before us or someone has experienced something before us. They've had a certain class with certain teachers. They've had a certain job. They've had to go through certain experiences. We run to those people and say, what was that like? What can I be expecting when I go through that? How did you feel? How did you handle it? What did you do? What did you do wrong? What did you do well? You think about this with parenting as well. You think about this with traveling. You think about this with marriage. All these things, the reality is mankind has not had that relationship with God. Mankind has not had such experience with God, but who has? Jesus, Jesus Himself qualifies. Jesus is alone in this, that He has had such intimate relationship with His Father. He is able to actually see God and know God and be with God.

Mankind has this loss, this deficiency, when it comes to knowing God. We don't come close to this exposure that Jesus has. We don't come close at all, and it's simple. We just remind ourselves of where it all went wrong. We go back to the Garden of Eden, and we remind ourselves of Genesis 3 when our representatives in Adam and Eve and what they did in rebelling, sinning, sinning against God, throwing it all out the door, throwing it into the trash, no longer having this relationship with God. And so ever since the fall, Adam and Eve have forfeited that privilege. They forfeited that privilege for the human race to have this position of relationship with God. But John tells us something different about Jesus, doesn't he? Jesus is not sinful that He would succumb in such a way. He tells us that really, that only One has not forfeited such a privileged position of intimacy with His Father, and that's Jesus who we see here. How? How is Jesus actually able to see God the Father and have such a close relationship with Him? How is that possible?

Well, we've already covered the obvious that He is in fact God, that He is one of a kind, He is pre-eminent above all in rank, but consider the simple contrast. Where did Adam fail? And how did Christ do? Christ succeeds in every way. Mankind falls. Mankind sins, and mankind spirals downward into this failure and separated relationship from God. Jesus, on the other hand, perfectly holy, holy in all He does, no deceit, no sin, not even near Him, and this allows Him to actually be in the presence of God. This is what God demands. God demands perfection. He has set the bar high because that's who God is, and He demands what is most excellent, that is His own standard. So, Jesus fits and clears the bar where mankind falls so short. Jesus alone is the One who qualifies to speak with God, to know God, and to be with God. Jesus alone. We have the hopeless condition of mankind; "...no one has ever seen God..." Here we are groping in the dark, having no clue what to do, how to live, yet we have the exception of Jesus who is God, who is actually at the Father's side, who is related to Him. He's able to speak on God's behalf. He's able to live and function on God's behalf. He possesses the nature of God and full access to God. Glorious!

So, while the invisible God is unknown to mankind, Jesus who alone qualifies to actually know God will act, and that's the wonder of how - our verse with God's incarnation ... God's incarnation that He does in fact make Himself known. Jesus is what makes this even possible. Because of Jesus, God makes Himself known to you and me, to mankind, as our verse concludes; "...he has made him known." ... "...he has made him known." While "...no one has ever seen God..." we learn of Jesus who is the only God, who is at the Father's side. And Jesus is the One who has made God known to mankind. How has God been revealed through Jesus? In God's wisdom, He allows Jesus who is the only One qualified to make Him known. It's interesting the Greek word here for "making known" is the word "exēgeisthai" which is where we get, really, the English exegesis, to exegete something. You're thinking, okay, what does that word mean? Alright? To exegete something is to explain it, to interpret something. Alright? This idea of explaining or interpreting, this is what we want to do with the Bible every time we interact with it. We want to be able to explain, and we want to be able to understand it and what's being said. Well, that's what we have with Jesus and God. Jesus has perfectly understood God, and Jesus is perfectly able to explain and interpret God to mankind. Jesus is not only qualified, but He's able to do it, and He does. So, for us, He exegetes God for mankind. He explains and interprets God the Father to mankind.

You ask how? How has Jesus done this? What do you mean, He's explained God? He's interpreted God? It's pretty simple actually, just read the rest of the gospels. Look at everything that Jesus did, and look at everything that Jesus said. That was all a proper interpretation. That was all a perfect explanation of who God is. Just look at Christ. People have these questions. Right? And they want to know more about God. You just simply need to look to Jesus. I mean, Jesus made this known so boldly in His own life, if you were to look later at John 14:5-7, "Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?'" Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.' " And then, a little bit later in verse 9 of that same chapter Jesus says, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Who could make such a bold claim? Can you imagine a single person, a single human being actually saying something like that? If you've seen Me, you've seen God. What a blasphemous thing to say, but Jesus can say it, can't He? Because He alone qualifies. He alone has actually been with God. He alone is God actually, so He can say in His flesh with other humans around, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." In His life, in the way He responded to situations, how He taught people, what He did with the disciples, what He did with outcasts, and how He interacted even with the religious leaders, you take it all, and put it together, and you have God on display. You have God in human form. You have an exegesis of God.

How do you explain God? You look to Jesus. You want to know what God is like? Look to Jesus. You want to know God's power? Look to Jesus. You want to know God's love? Look to Jesus. You want to know God's thoughts on something? Listen to Jesus and what He said. You see, it's one thing to say something, but it's another to display it. It's one thing to actually state something, but it's a whole different other thing to actually demonstrate that, and so, what you have when you read through the Bible, you go through the Old Testament and you see these claims that God makes. God teaches Israel about Himself, and God speaks through the prophets to the people, and he constantly is telling them who He is and what kind of God He is and what He demands from them as a holy God. And if God just left it at that, that might be a little hard. There He is up in the clouds, just kind of booming out His voice and telling us what He wants and telling us what He's like, but we

don't ever see it. And what a complaint that is from people. Right? I'll believe in God if I could see Him. We have? It's Jesus. We've seen God. He's come to us in the form of Jesus Christ. You see, God didn't just speak, and God doesn't just say things and expect us all to embrace it; He demonstrated it. He backed up His Words. He showed it perfectly. He came down on this earth and demonstrated it in His entire life. Can you imagine being God in human form for thirty years on this earth and having to go through being raised by imperfect parents, to have to interact with people and have your followers (right?), the fate of the church hangs upon these foolish fishermen, and You're God in human form having to be patient in all of this.

So, what does God do? He doesn't just say I'm a patient God, He shows His patience. He doesn't just say I'm a loving God, He shows His love. You look at Christ, and what He did. Jesus is the final proof. Jesus is the verification, and Jesus is the evidence of everything God said about Himself. In the Old Testament, think of how God described Himself to Moses. He said (Exodus 34:5-7), "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty..." Those words have so much more meaning because God came down and allowed Himself to get nailed to a cross. Does He know what love is? Does He show what love is? Does He demonstrate it? Absolutely! Because of Jesus. It's what the other New Testament writers have affirmed for us over and over again. As the author of Hebrews has stated (Hebrews 1:1-3), "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power." It's clear. Jesus is the perfect display of God.

It's so sad that there are people, even though we're in an increasingly atheistic and agnostic society and I understand that, you still have people that are all willing to admit, yeah, there's probably something else out there. There's probably some higher being. There's got to be some force. Maybe, there's a big man upstairs, there's a god of some sort. And so many people are willing to admit that as they should because they live in a world that's been created, because they live in world where there's right and wrong. That

all points to someone out there, and so many people are willing to admit that, but then they stop right there, and they say I don't know if I can know more about whoever or whatever this thing is that's out there. And what a sad moment that is because, what do they need? They need Jesus. They need the display of God that has been perfectly done two thousand years ago in the form of Jesus. Jesus is the One who is the fullness of deity, all of God, dwelling in bodily form. What would that look like? It's already been done. The world needs to be pointed back to the man, Jesus Christ, to God. Jesus as has been displayed here.

People want to know more about God. People wish there was more to know about God. We have an opportunity to point them to that more, and that is Jesus. Jesus is the revelation about God to mankind. He came to this earth, and that was only His first coming. In His first coming two thousand years ago, He came to bear the sins of many. He came with a purpose. He came with that mission to display the love of God when He died upon the cross. Hebrews 9:27-28 states, "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." This is the reality. Christ came once, and that's acknowledged. He came once, and He did a wonderful work that the world needs to know, that you all need to know. He took your sin upon Himself and went to that cross. He satisfied God; instead of God now punishing all of mankind and wiping them out completely, He has the offering of His son before Him upon that cross, dying a death He didn't deserve to die. But that's what He did in His first coming.

So, what do we need to do? We need to respond to that. God revealing Himself in His fullness and His Son, and then for His Son to go and die like that, a death that He did not deserve to die, that deserves a response from mankind. We have to respond to that, and the only proper response is to fall on our knees to cry out for mercy and say thank You for giving us Your Son. Thank You for giving me the blood that He shed to wipe away my sins, to make me clean so that I can now approach You in a relationship. That's the response that we need, and that's the response that we need today because if we don't do that today, Jesus is coming again, and He's coming again to bring God's righteous judgment. This is what Acts 17:30-31 states, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the

world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Jesus did not stay in the tomb. He rose again, and He is now at the right hand of His Father in heaven, and He awaits that moment when He will return. The resurrection is proof that He will return as the way that He left. He will return to this earth and bring the judgment that is deserved, that is righteous because God is a holy God, and there is sinfulness that continues to run rampant. There are people who have not given their hearts and given their lives to their creator and to Jesus who has given Himself to them.

Don't stay in the dark about God. Look to Jesus. He will shine the glory of God upon you, and you can have the good news of forgiveness of your sins, no longer bearing that on your own, no longer trying to be good enough for God (because you can't), but instead, embracing the person and the work of Jesus. Jesus, who is God, taking away your sins, opening the door for you to have relationship with God as He has Himself.