

Angry Creature, Gracious Creator

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 30 January 2022

Preacher: Pastor Cal Morrison

[0 : 0 0] Well, Stephen, earlier on, Stephen was mentioning some of the places where it is most difficult to be a Christian. Afghanistan tops that list of the places with the most severe persecution, followed by North Korea. I wonder what it would be like being a Christian in those countries, praying for your persecutors, praying for your safety, praying to see salvation, praying just to be able to gather together. I wonder what it would be like if somehow suddenly God showed incredible mercy to your persecutors. I wonder if you would be suspicious of any repentance that came from them. I wonder if you would welcome them in at your service. I wonder what that must be like. I'm sure Christians and churches and the people of God have had to face that kind of scenario for as long as there have been people of God.

The thing is, we are not so far from feeling like that ourselves. We are not immune to the difficulties of welcoming someone that God would show mercy that we perhaps don't think He should show mercy to. When a man is in the dock, he will prefer mercy for himself. But when a man is in the jury, he will prefer justice. Well, this afternoon we're going to go into the book of Jonah, if you have a Bible, please turn to the book of Jonah. The minor prophets. If you're struggling to find it, go to the New Testament and turn left. It's just before Micah, just after the major prophets.

The book of Jonah. The book of Jonah. When it comes to Nineveh, Jonah wants to be judge. He wants to be the judge, jury, and executioner.

If you've ever seen the film Gladiator, he's like Commodus. When life or death is in his hands, he stretches out his arms and he puts his thumb down. No mercy. He's like the machine gun preacher, if you've ever heard of him. Real person. Machine gun preacher. Dealing out severe justice on sinful enemies while accepting mercy for yourself. Jonah. We know the story. Most people know the story of Jonah as Jonah and the whale. In fact, in most children's storybook Bibles, Jonah chapter 4, completely missing. Jonah chapter 4 is not even there in children's Bibles, most of the time. Because the story is perhaps just seen as a story about the fact that God is very merciful. But missing out chapter 4 means you miss out on the why. Why is God so merciful?

We could end the story with God being merciful to this nation. This nation that repents. God being merciful. What a wonderful thing. But the real story of Jonah ends with a very angry prophet.

[3 : 3 9] very angry prophet at the fact that God's been merciful. We could end the story thinking that Jonah himself turned around.

It's the usual thinking that after the whale, Jonah turned around and went to Nineveh with the good news. But that's not how it happened. No, Jonah went to Nineveh preaching disaster and hoping for disaster.

And he went out of the city after preaching there and he waited. He didn't go home. He waited on a hill to see what would happen. To see if God would strike them down.

Chapter 4 doesn't allow us to conclude that after a second chance, Jonah went to preach the good news and was glad to see a city saved. Chapter 4 doesn't allow us that.

As we're about to read, the fact that they were saved from disaster displeased the preacher exceedingly. The question is, does he do well to be angry about this?

[4 : 49] It's the question that God asks. So I'm going to read from chapter 3, verse 10 to the end of chapter 4. God, our Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for your prophets. We thank you for your mercy. We pray that as we open your word that you would speak to us and that we would learn something about you.

We pray in Jesus' name for your glory. Amen. Jonah chapter 3, from verse 10. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, that is Nineveh, God relented of the disaster that he said he would do to them and he did not do it.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry. And he prayed to the Lord and said, O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country?

That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish, for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster.

[6 : 07] Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. And the Lord said, Do you do well to be angry?

Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade till he should see what would become of the city.

Now the Lord God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah that it might be a shade over his head to save him from his discomfort.

So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant so that it withered.

And when the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

[7 : 15] But God said to Jonah, Do you do well to be angry for the plant? And he said, Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die.

And the Lord said, You pity the plant for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night.

And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also much cattle?

That's the word of the Lord. I pray he blesses it. What a strange thing to end a book like that on a question like that. We don't know what became of Jonah. We don't know what became of these things.

The contrast here is between the heart of God, the Creator, and the heart of man, the creature. And this contrast is brought out in two acts of which God uses the second act to illustrate the first act.

[8 : 26] You see, the first part of it is God and Nineveh. What God does with Nineveh and how that makes Jonah feel. And then the second part is about Jonah and the plant.

What God does with that and how it makes Jonah feel. And the second one illustrates the first. How Jonah feels about the plant illustrates how he feels about this Nineveh situation.

You see, however angry he is about God's actions, Jonah has a pretty good grasp on God's character. His feelings are not the result of a lack of understanding.

You see, he said, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? This is why I try to run away because I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, relenting from disaster.

And I cannot stand the fact that you would be like that to someone like Nineveh. That's why I ran. See, he knows the character of God. He knows what God is like.

[9 : 32] His feelings aren't a result of lack of understanding, but rather, his feelings are the result of a sinful heart. A sinful heart that wanders and forgets. Question, is knowing God's character supposed to lead you to anger?

No. Does knowing God's character lead you to anger? Probably not. I hope not. But does God's actions, or like in Jonah, God's lack of action, ever lead you to anger?

Think about what goes on in the world. God, why are you not doing something about this? Does God's actions, or lack of actions, ever lead you to anger, confusion, questioning God, doubts?

If it does, you realize that God's actions come out of his character. And while we would say that his character doesn't lead us to anger, sometimes the things that God does or doesn't do leads us to feelings that show us how we often think of God's character in a small and limited way.

Sometimes the things that God does or doesn't do, things that we can be confused about, even angry about at times, sometimes those very things help us grasp something about God's character that we might have lost sight of or never really known in the first place.

[11 : 09] And I'm saying this now myself, not as someone who knows everything about God. None of us do. I'm confident that none of us do. Paul says, oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God.

How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways. We just, we know Christ.

We know God in Christ, but we just don't know God. And that's not to say we're not Christians. That's to say that God is greater than we can possibly imagine. who God is is far beyond what we can comprehend as creatures.

God is more amazing than you could possibly think. So why is Jonah so angry? He's very angry. Jonah is fuming.

He's so angry that he wants to die. Is it just because he hates the people of Nineveh? Is he racist? Does he just hate them? Is it the idea of God forgiving a truly wicked people?

[12 : 16] They were wicked. God said that right at the beginning. The wickedness of this people has come up to me. I know about it. that's why you need to go and tell them that if they don't turn around disaster's coming.

This was a wicked people. So is Jonah just angry because the idea of God forgiving a wicked people is detestable? Or does Jonah think that their repentance will be superficial?

Does he even want them to have a chance to repent at all? Or is it because God's turning to a foreign nation to show mercy might indicate that God is turning away from Israel?

Certainly saving this city means that the Assyrians have a fighting chance to invade Israel later on. Not a good thought. God, if you save these people, do you know what they're going to do to us later?

Do you know who you're saving? You know, if you let these people live, they're going to come after us. Is that what's going on in Jonah's anger?

[13 : 33] We don't really know. We don't know from this book precisely why Jonah was so angry in the first question. We're not told exactly, but perhaps the second time God asks it, perhaps when it comes to the plant that helps us, that helps to illustrate something about this because he feels and responds the exact same way about the plant when he's asked if he's angry about the plant.

Could it be that his feelings about the plant help us understand something about his feelings when he's first asked? You see, he is just as angry about the survival of something that he doesn't like, Nineveh, as he is about the loss of something that he does like, the plant.

And right at the heart of that anger, the blame is put on the character of God. This is your fault for being a gracious, merciful God. I knew that. I knew that.

And I can't stand the thought of you doing that to someone like them. Jonah indicates in chapter 4 that right from the beginning it was knowing the character of God that made him run away in the first place.

It was the idea that God belonged to Israel. God was Israel's God. Israel's God. Jonah had been preaching to Israel about this God.

[14 : 58] More importantly, Israel was God's nation. So why should he have any business being the gracious and merciful God to another nation when he's in covenant with this nation, with Israel?

If he's the covenant God of Israel, why should he have any business being gracious and merciful to their enemies? What is that all about? And not just any nation, that nation, a truly, truly wicked nation that would destroy Israel if they had the chance.

And it seems like God has given them the chance. Why? Why God? We don't exactly know what was going through Jonah's mind in this story. But what we probably do know is that we have this story because Jonah told it.

For some reason, later on, Jonah told this story. And in this story, he doesn't shy away from portraying himself very negatively. He portrays himself much more negatively than the pagans in this story.

He even portrays himself later on when he writes the story, he portrays himself more negatively than the Ninevites. In fact, more negatively than the wind, the sea, the whale, and the worm who are all obedient.

[16 : 22] And if he told this story, he was telling it later on when the people would know that the Assyrians were coming against him. Later on, when this story is written, people know it's happening now.

Assyria has risen up and it's coming after Israel. Most likely, he's telling this story because others in Israel had the same anger and attitude that he had had at first.

They had lost sight of what Jonah lost sight of when it happened. And presumably, he's now learned from his time with God baking in the sun.

And he's wanting to share that because people need to learn something. For instance, here's something we need to learn. God is not just the God of Israel.

God is not just the God of Christians. You see, in the story of Jonah, God is the creator of all things. He's the God of the pagans, the God of the Ninevites, the God of the whale, God of the wind, God of the sea.

[17 : 31] He's the Lord that made the heavens and the earth. Everything's his. He's in control of everything. If he wants to hurl a windstorm and a storm, he can do that. If he wants to appoint a worm or a whale or a scorch an east wind or a plant, he can do that.

God is the creator of all things. He made everything and therefore, he has the right to be concerned about anything and anyone in his creation because he made it.

It's his. Like the later prophet Ezekiel says, God, God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Ezekiel 33, 11. And was Nineveh wicked?

Most certainly. But God takes no pleasure in disaster to the wicked. Takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Did Nineveh deserve disaster?

Most certainly. Is God obliged to be merciful? No. God's not obligated to be merciful. Does God have a right to be merciful?

[18 : 37] Does God have a right to be merciful to them? Yes, he does have a right because he made them. Does that not what he said to Jonah about the plant?

You pity this thing that you didn't make. And here's a great nation, over 120,000 people that don't know they're left from their right. I made them. Do I not have a right to pity them?

At this point, Jonah doesn't think that he does have the right. Jonah doesn't think that God has the right to be merciful to them because in Jonah's mind, perhaps he thinks that God's mercy belongs to the faithful and they're not faithful.

God's mercy belongs to the faithful. The question is, Jonah, have you lost sight of this, Jonah? The question is, is Israel faithful?

No. Is Israel any more faithful than Nineveh? No. Was Israel wicked? Yes. In fact, what we learn from this in 2 Kings chapter 14, you want to flip there, 2 Kings chapter 14, we have this situation.

[19 : 54] The king of Israel at the time is Jeroboam II. This is what it says, in the 15th year, this is 2 Kings 14 from verse 23, in the 15th year of Amaziah, the son of Joash, the king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria and he reigned 41 years.

41 years. And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin.

41 years he was allowed to reign, even though he did what was evil in the sight of God. How patient has God been with Israel? So patient. You see, Jonah thinks that mercy belongs to the faithful.

Israel has not been faithful. Not been faithful. And at this current point, when Jonah is having this argument with God, Israel is not faithful. In fact, they are repeating the sins of the first Jeroboam.

If you read on, right, Jeroboam, the second, reigned 41 years and he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. Verse 25, he restored the border of Israel as far as the sea from Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant, Jonah.

[21 : 35] You see, Jonah was a true prophet and he brought a word of the Lord to this evil king of Israel that God would give him victory. Now, does that not tell us something when God tells Jonah to go to Nineveh, that evil, wicked nation?

And Jonah's like, wait a minute, you're going to give us victory one minute and then you're going to send me to Nineveh the next minute? The fact that God gives Israel victory, the fact that God gives Jeroboam II, victory here, is a sheer act of grace.

Jeroboam II didn't deserve victory. Israel did not deserve victory. It goes on to say, for the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter, for there was none left, bond or free, there was none to help Israel.

But the Lord had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under the heaven. So he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, the son of Joash. He saved them by the hands of this evil king because God pitied Israel.

You see, Jonah has this problem with God showing pity to Nineveh. He's lost sight that God has been showing pity to Israel all along. Israel has never deserved the blessing and protection that God has given them.

[22 : 54] Israel has never, never earned the grace that God has given them. Never earned it. God's been showing pity and patience ever since. Jonah's completely lost sight of that.

How should you, how should you show pity to this nation? You know, it belongs to us. No, it doesn't. God has been showing you just as much pity, more pity than Nineveh.

Was God obliged to be merciful to Israel? No. Never, ever, ever do we earn the grace of God.

Never. Never, ever, ever is God's mercy given on the basis of our performance. Never. Does God have a right to be merciful to Israel? Absolutely. He made them.

Israel belongs to Him. He's the creator of all things. He can be merciful to whom He will be merciful. faithful. The verse in Ezekiel that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

[24 : 00] That verse in Ezekiel is about Israel's sin actually. And in response to their great sin because that verse seems like it's about those people out there but it's not.

It's about Israel's wickedness. And in response to their great sin they ask how they can possibly live. How can we possibly live? To which God says in Ezekiel As surely as I live declares the Lord God I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked but rather that the wicked should turn from their ways and live.

Turn. Turn from your evil ways for why should you die O house of Israel? Up to this point God has been exceedingly merciful and patient with Israel.

incredibly merciful to Israel. Not because they deserved it but because he is as Jonah rightly said the gracious God and merciful.

God is gracious and merciful and he's been gracious and merciful to Israel for far too long. Perhaps part of Jonah's anger is like being angry at the death of the plant.

[25 : 15] He sees that as being the death of Israel. Turning to Nineveh means the death of Israel. But as we'll find out from Ezekiel Israel only dies because it never turned.

What's Jonah to say? Look at these wicked people of Nineveh who repent when Israel never repents. What is it? So perhaps Jonah's anger is the fact that he sees this as being the death of Israel.

This is the end. I don't want to play your games anymore God. I don't want to be your prophet if I'm going to be turning away from Israel to some other nation and see the death of Israel.

I think this is the point of Jonah. Israel has had far more opportunity to turn from their evil than Nineveh ever had. God has been unbelievably patient with them.

So if Jonah is writing later on, he's learned this lesson, if he's writing later on to the people, then look at Jonah as a representation of Israel itself.

[26 : 22] Look at how patient in this story God has been with Jonah. How patient is God with Jonah in this entire story? How many times if it were us would we have left him, let him go?

Okay, you want to run to Tarshish and use someone else then? How patient is God throughout the whole book? Gracious, merciful, slow to anger with Jonah.

How quickly would we be angry at Jonah? How quickly do we become angry with each other? With our spouse? With our children?

With our parents? With our friends? With our neighbours? Whoever? Somebody in the road when you're in the protection of your car? How quickly do we become angry with others?

Imagine if someone were to act like Jonah to you if they were disobedient, if they did the absolute opposite of what you asked them to do, and they were ungrateful, and they were wishing away their own life.

[27 : 22] This thing that you've asked me to do, I would rather be dead than do this thing. Imagine somebody acting like that to you, and then after that they had the cheek to be angry at you because you were kind to somebody else.

How easily and quickly do we get angry? and how little patience we have at very small things. Look at how undeservedly kind God is to Jonah.

Right to the very end. This book ends with God still being patient and kind to Jonah, still being gracious, still being very slow to anger, still abounding in steadfast love.

You see, God can handle our tantrums. God can handle our anger. How many times like sheep do we wander, yet how patient? God is exceedingly patient.

He's wonderfully patient and gracious and merciful. And if we see God's patience with Jonah, how much more do we see God's patience with Israel? The king doing what was evil in the sight of God, yet God allowed him to reign 41 years, only by grace.

[28 : 35] God even allowed him to have victory and expand the borders because he saw the affliction of Israel was very bitter, because there was none to help them. All was based on the grace and mercy of God.

Jonah pitied the plant, and while God had every right to pity Nineveh, how much longer had he pitied Israel? Any good that Israel enjoyed was never deserved, never earned, never based on their performance, always based on God's loving kindness, always based on the amazing grace and mercy of God.

And they'd enjoyed that grace and mercy longer than anyone, and God's patience was about to run out. And I take it personally when I'm reading this, I take it that the plant is a picture of Israel.

Whether it is or not, doesn't matter. However, the very least, we know that the plant is the thing that Jonah pities. He pities a shrub more than 120,000 lives.

And that's the thing that God pities. Jonah pities the downfall of that which he did not make, and which was for his own benefit. Wanting it, he wants the plant to live, because the plant was good for him.

[30 : 01] whereas God pities the downfall of that which he did make, and which was for its own benefit. Wanting it to live, not for his good, but for its own good, because of the inherent value that he has given it as its creator.

You see, do we perhaps at times view the character of God as being good simply because we ourselves benefit from who he is? I remember watching a short kind of docu-film thing called God on Trial, and it was about the Jews in the concentration camp, and in this, you know, very thought provoking film, the Jews set up this court system in one of the camps.

They said, we need to set this up, because they were having an argument about whether or not God was good. So they set up the proper, you know, three on either side arguing the case, and they set up this court system, to determine the matter of whether God is good or not, and whether God is keeping his promise, because they thought at that point, God's not keeping his promise to Israel.

And it's really interesting because in it, one of the questions that somebody asked was, is God only good when you're on his side? Is God only good when you are on his side?

It's a hard question when you're not on his side. God is good. It's a hard question when you're facing God's character only like that, only good because you're benefiting from it, but when you don't, he's not good anymore.

[31 : 42] God is good all the time. God simply is good, full stop, whether or not you're on his side, God is good, always. He's good to the good, he's good to the righteous, he's good to the wicked.

The sun shines on the righteous and the wicked. God is good. But do we perhaps view the character of God as being good simply because it's for our own benefit?

Do we perhaps at times view God's grace merely as something for us? Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

But please don't save a wretch like them. Sometimes there's a habit that's crept into our vocabulary as Christians.

What has God got in store? I know what we mean by it. I've used it myself. But I think that just thinks too much on ourselves.

[32 : 48] Even as a church, even as Christians, God is the creator of all things. Do we think too little of his grace? That's the point. I think more often than not we think too little of it than we think too much of it.

It is right to give thanks and praise to God for saving us. It is absolutely right. We should celebrate in joyous praise that God has saved us. But we mustn't think that God is gracious to us so that we can enjoy it for ourselves.

It's like a father showering their child with gifts but not for the child not to let anyone play with them. Far more than I said I would before I was a parent, I shower my children with gifts and spend way more money than I should on them.

As a father, your love just drives you to that. But it's not so that they can not share it. It's not so that they can be selfish with it. They've got an overabundance of gifts, of course they should share it.

God's grace is like that, isn't it? Paul's words in Ephesians, we know. Ephesians 1, 7 and 8, in him that is God's son.

[34 : 06] In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. which he was stingy to give us, is not the verse.

He lavishes us, lavished grace upon us, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us. God is the creator and owner of all things.

He's the maker of every creature. And while none deserve his grace, he has the right as creator to be merciful to whomever he wants, because it is all his.

He owns it all. He made everything. And he has every right to show grace and mercy to whoever he wants. And we are neither deserving of grace, nor is he obliged to be gracious, but he is.

He is gracious because it is who he is. The Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding and steadfast love, even when it's towards someone we think that he ought not to be gracious to.

[35 : 21] He has every right. But when we realize that, when we begin to realize what grace, the grace of God is all about, we see that it's far bigger than us, far bigger than our own salvation.

God's grace isn't, God's grace even towards us isn't even merely for our own benefit. God's grace is far bigger than what we gain from it. God's grace to Israel was supposed to be a picture to the world of who God was.

If you want to know what kind of father a person is, you look at their child, see how he relates to them. How God related to Israel was a picture to the world of what kind of father he was, what kind of God he was.

And so he wasn't stingy with his grace. He wasn't quick tempered. He lavished grace upon Israel, abounding in steadfast love towards them, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, so patient.

And look at us in Christ Jesus. Look at the cross. God's own son died for us because God wanted to show not just you, not just me, wanted to show the world what kind of father he is.

[36 : 47] A father that would send his own son to die to save the lost. A father that would be gracious and lavish his grace upon us. God's grace was supposed to be a picture to the world of who God was.

Yet the recipient didn't even grasp that grace. And when you look at Jonah, and you've probably thought about how Jonah stacks up. You've maybe thought this before, I know I have.

How does Jonah as a prophet stack up to the other prophets? You look at Isaiah, send me, I will go. Jonah's running the other way to Tarshish. How does Jonah stack up to the other prophets?

Well, Jonah's not shy because he tells this story. And maybe that's not what we're supposed to think about how we contrast, how we compare. How do you stack up to the next Christian?

How do I stack up to the next Christian? Maybe that's not what we're supposed to be thinking about. Maybe it's about seeing that God's grace is never based on how we perform. Never, ever, ever based.

[37 : 56] Just as gracious to Isaiah as he is to Jonah. Just as patient as he is with them as he is with us. Because it's who he is. How do we stack up to the Christians, the heroes of our faith?

The point is not about comparison. It's about seeing God's grace is never based on us. God's grace is bigger than our failures. And his mercy is greater than our sins.

His grace towards us is far greater than we realize. Because it's not merely for us. It's not merely about us. It's not simply for our forgiveness. It is greater than our individual salvation.

His grace is a picture to the entire creation, to the world, what kind of God he is like. So when we see God do or not do things, things that we don't understand, things that we might get angry about or confused about, we must realize that it's not because God is not concerned.

He's far more concerned than we realize. His grace includes more than us. His plan is always considering more than we would. For he's the creator of everyone and everything.

[39 : 09] And while we're often only concerned about our own circles, God is concerned about everyone and everything that he has made. While we are losing patience at small things, God is patient on a grander scale than we can possibly imagine.

While we are getting angry at other people, God is slow to anger with us and them. While we enjoy the grace that God shows us, God is longing for others to know that grace too.

The grace that God shows you is meant to be a picture to the world of the grace that they could have in Christ as well. The point is not that God goes too far to save them.

The point is that he goes the same distance to save us. We are all guilty in the dock and yet God sent his son to take our punishment on the cross because his character is to be gracious and merciful and he's just and right to do so.

We are not entitled to God's grace and thank God his grace is never received based on our performance. A friend of mine used to say to me, you can never, ever, ever earn your way into God's love and you can never, ever, ever send your way out of it.

[40 : 28] Isn't that comforting? God's character, how much bigger his grace is than we realize. The things that he does or doesn't do in the world, whether we understand them, points towards how awesome, magnificent the grace of God really is.

That he is patient like this, merciful like this, and he continues to be so, so that more may receive his grace through Jesus Christ just as we did because he died for all.

Let me pray. God, we thank you so much for your grace towards us for we were those in the world who were enemies to you.

Yet you have been patient, so patient with us. God, we thank you that your grace just completely outweighs our sin.

We thank you that your mercy overcomes judgment. God, we thank you that you stretch out your arms to us when we are running away.

[41 : 42] we thank you that you are slow to anger when we are shouting and shaking our fist. We thank you that you send your son to die on a cross while we are the ones shouting, crucify him.

God, we thank you for your grace and mercy to us, and we pray that your grace and mercy to us would be known by us just how magnificent it really is, and it would be seen by others so that others might know how gracious and merciful you are, so that others might know that you are reaching out to them in Christ just as you did us, and that is the King of God that you are.

God, we give you praise for who you are. In Jesus' name, Amen. Well, let us sing a few. Here we are. Practice with All Of take