

The Beginning of Miracles

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. This is the fifth message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

He's publicly that he is God and he steps forth to the earth to show that out in all these people. In the story we have, it's been the third day and they've come down to a marriage.

They've been invited, Jesus and his disciples, his mother's already there. The mother, his mother, the mother of Jesus is already there and Jesus and his disciples are at this wedding.

And so while they're at the wedding, all of a sudden something extremely embarrassing takes place and they realize they're running short of wine. This party is probably a Wednesday.

This party is going to go on for several days. The family's got everything ready and, but they've run out of wine and Mary comes and finds Jesus. And she said, Hey, they've run out of wine.

[1 : 0 2] And he looks at her and says, Hey woman, my hour is not come. It's not time for me to show everybody who I am. Then she turns to the servants and she says, Hey, y'all just do whatever he says do.

And she leaves. And then there are six of these pots there, stone pots. They hold about 120 gallons of water. And he says to the guys, Go fill them up. And they went and they filled them up all the way to the brim.

And when they got through, he said, Well, draw out of that water now and take it to the maitre d' take it to the guy that's in charge of the party and take in that wine. And when they did, the guy in charge of the party said, Wow, this is the best wine we've had.

Most people say the good one, give out the good wine first. And then when everybody's been eating and drinking for days, they're kind of satisfied. Then they bring out the stuff that that's not as well prepared.

But you have brought out the best wine and you brought that to us. And so they, they get through the, the, the party's over. And if you got in your Bible and you look down at verse 11, the apostle John, who's writing a letter with the purpose of saying, Hey guys, you're going to know Jesus is God.

[2 : 1 1] When I get through with my book, when I get through writing the, the gospel of John, you're going to know that Jesus was a man who was God in human flesh, come down to this earth.

And you're going to know that. And he said, so this is the beginning of miracles. This is the first story. Look, if you would, in John chapter two and verse 11, this beginning of miracles, did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory and his disciples believed on him.

Now, I don't know if you kind of following along in the story, but Jesus has come out, uh, uh, into the desert where John was at the river baptizing and John, the Baptist, not John, the apostle, the, another John looks up and sees him coming and says, behold the lamb of God.

He has called out some apostles to follow him. And before we get to John chapter two, he's already been 40 days in the wilderness being tested and tried.

Uh, Satan is trying his best to knock him off target. Satan's trying his best to get him out of, of who he, of, of who he is and to get off target. And he has overcome that.

[3 : 21] And now he shows up at a wedding and he saves these people, this big embarrassment. This is one of the favorite stories that people have in the Bible. They like it because Jesus made wine.

I just put in my notes, the drunk's favorite passage because everybody always likes to say, Oh, so Jesus made wine. Have you ever heard the story of the drunken coal miner who got converted and he became a very vocal witness for Christ?

One of his friends was trying to trap him by asking, do you believe that Jesus turned water into wine and the miners, uh, the, the, the, the drunken coal miner now saved said, I certainly do.

He said in my home, he's turned wine into furniture and decent clothes and food for my children. So God is able. Amen. So he turned, uh, he turned water into wine and he turned wine into furniture, decent clothes and food for this man's children.

Now, first thing, maybe I get to the story in a minute, but here's some interesting things for you. The first time Jesus really publicly shows himself, he shows up at a wedding, at a marriage.

[4 : 26] He shows up at a wedding, at a marriage. That's like Jesus is sanctioning. What we know is to be true from the Bible, from all the way back in the book of Genesis, he shows up at a marriage.

Isn't that interesting? God believes in instituted the family and marriage. Can you say amen? Amen. And Jesus, when he goes to start his ministry, steps out onto the stage.

And where does he come out first? At a marriage. And what does he do? He works a miracle. And I don't just, I'm not even going to preach about that. I'm doing all this extra. You don't even have to pay for it, but listen to this.

Isn't it interesting? He loves marriage. A man ought to be married to a woman. Say amen. That's what he's been doing all the way since the book of Genesis. He made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.

Amen. And he instituted marriage. And marriage is the way God intends for things to do. And he puts his blessing on it. I would also ask if I were preaching on marriage, which I'm not.

[5 : 26] But I would also ask you, how many of you have invited him to your marriage? How many of you got him in your home? How much is Jesus involved in your home? In the Bible, he shows up at a wedding.

In the Bible, when they're sad, he fixes things. In the Bible, he's meeting their needs. And yet I'm afraid some of you are believers and you check in with Jesus on Sunday morning and say, I'll check you out next week.

I'll be back in 162 hours. I'll be back in 164 hours, Lord. I don't have much need for you. Wouldn't it be interesting if you let him come and take residence in your home and you counted him as important at your family?

Could you say amen right there? I think it might be interesting to include Jesus in your marriage. Why is he a stranger in your home? Why is he a stranger in your home?

Another thought. Not in the preaching, but it's in this passage. Some of you kind of got the idea, if I ever let Jesus really take over my life and do all the things you guys talk about, man, he'd be a killjoy.

[6 : 29] Man, he would put a damper on things. Man, the party would be over because Jesus showed up. Totally the opposite. He showed up.

He showed up. They were running out of the wine. The party was about to come to a screeching halt. And Jesus showed up and brought the joy back into the party. Can you say amen? Can I tell you something?

If you decide to serve Jesus, you decide to put him first and you decide to honor him, you're going to find out that he is the opposite of taking away the joy in our lives. You're going to find out that real joy is found in knowing Jesus Christ.

In this very book of John, Jesus said, I've come that they might have life and have it more abundantly. And they've offered you. Hey, some of you would honestly believe I can't really get happy unless I have something to drink.

If I go to a party, if I don't get a little tizzy there, if I don't get a little lit up a little bit, I can't really enjoy myself. Boy, you'd find out Jesus can come to a party and make you have a party without losing any control of any of your faculties.

[7 : 31] You wouldn't need the alcohol. You wouldn't need the drugs. All you need to know is somebody who can change your life. And his name is Jesus. Satan has you believe in the opposite of the truth.

I want to show you another thing. This introduction stuff here. In the story, look if you would in verse 4. John chapter 2 and verse 4. Jesus saith unto her, woman, what have I to do with thee?

Mine hour is not yet come. Now look this way a second. This is just additional things for you to consider because I'm not going to preach forever in the book of John. But did you know Mary's not the center of the story in the Bible?

Did you know Mary's not the central focus of worship? And if there was ever a chance to bring Mary to the forefront and to put Mary out there, Jesus had a great opportunity here.

She comes up to him at the wedding and she said, hey, Jesus, they don't have enough wine. And Jesus responds and he doesn't say, oh, thou mother of God, thou virtuous woman, thou immaculate conception.

[8 : 40] He doesn't do any of that. He just says, woman, what do you got to do with me? You understand that? He was being the word woman. There's not a disrespectful term. The word woman.

There's a word like saying lady. What do you got to do with me? But he was saying this. Hey, mine hour. My hour is not come. Not our hour.

Not your hour. But my hour. Who is the central figure in the whole Bible? His name is Jesus. His name is Jesus.

It's not Mary. It's not Baptist. It's not church. It's not prophets. It is. Jesus is the son of God. He's stating who he is.

He's not the son of Mary. He is the son of God. And by the way, my hour has not come. You know that Jesus came to earth on purpose, with a purpose.

[9 : 37] He came to die. You ought to know that. He's at this wedding. He just got through going mortal combat, hand to hand with the devil. Whipped him with one hand tied behind his back.

The devil took off running. And he's come to this wedding. And there's joy going on in the party. But in his heart, he knows my hour is marching towards me. I'm here. And I came for a purpose.

I came to die. Every time you're going to find this my hour, mine hour, the hour. Whenever he's talking about that, he's talking about the fact that Jesus will soon be glorified by dying.

He will die. He will die. A criminal's death on a wicked cross to bring salvation. He's not being disrespectful of Mary.

He's just letting everybody know. He's just letting everybody know. It's 120 gallons of water approximately in those pots there. And he turns that water with no magical incantation, no added additives that he put in the water.

[10 : 40] He just said, fill the pots, take the water to the maitre d'. And the guy drank it and said, wow, this is the best wine. Now go, if you would, to chapter 2 and verse 11.

And let me give you three things I hope you'll take home with you today. I want you to look at chapter 2 and verse 11. Anytime you read a story, you need to know where the story's going.

Anytime you read a story, you need to know what the point of the story is. In chapter 2 and verse 11, the apostle John, the Holy Spirit, writes down and tells us what the point is.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory. And his disciples believed in him. The beginning of miracles manifested forth his glory.

I guess one other thing. Maybe on a question and answer time, maybe another time we'll discuss the water being turned into wine. And I'll go over that with you. But you know what's the first thing everybody asks me about? Oh, we're going to be in John chapter 2. Are you going to explain to us about wine and what wine is and what the position on wine is?

[11 : 45] Well, you know, that's an interesting sideline. But the story's not about the wine. The story's not about water turning into wine. That's not that big a deal.

I'll just be honest with you. That's not that big a deal. I mean, this same Jesus who turned water into wine took six days to make a whole universe. He just said, hey, there's an earth. Bam, there was an earth.

Let there be light. He made a man. I mean, it's not that. He's just showing out. I'm the same guy. I was when I made the whole world. And what he wants you to get a hold of is this. Jesus is God.

Could you say that with me? Could you say that out loud with me? Ready? Jesus is God. Say it again with me. Jesus is God. Now, if you'll write this down. Number one, his hour is not yet come.

His hour is not yet come. Do you know? Now, I want you to write that down. I want you to understand. And if you got your Bible open in the book of John, you can underwrite it in verse four.

[12 : 46] Jesus saith unto her, woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. I want you to understand. Now, listen to this. This whole story in the Bible, please, you got to get a hold of this.

This isn't like freak accidents are going to lead Jesus down the wrong path. He's going to get crucified. Whenever you watch it on TV and you come about Easter or Christmas time, they really got the story all messed up.

I mean, they don't understand that Jesus is God. They don't understand that side of it. And so everything about his life is marked very differently than our lives.

He was sent by God, born exactly like God said he would be born, raised like God said he'd be raised, came forth like God said he'd come forth. And everything is marked on a timetable. And Jesus is going to die at the moment, at the hour God has prepared for him.

First thing, mine hour is not yet coming. I want you to know this. You got to write this down. You got to look this up in your Bible. Jesus came to the earth for a purpose. Write that down. He came for a purpose.

[13 : 53] Look, if you would, in Luke chapter 19 and verse 10. Luke chapter 19 and verse 10. For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which is lost. Now, he's called in the Bible the Son of God.

He's called the Son of Man. He's called Jesus, Lord Jesus Christ. He is God in human flesh. He's called the Word. There's a whole lot of names for him. But whenever we're speaking of him in terms of his humanity and in terms of him being a human here on earth, he's called the Son of Man.

And you know what Jesus said? He said, you know why I'm here, don't you? You know why I came, don't you? You realize I'm not a regular guy, don't you? I came because you guys messed up.

You guys got off track. You guys disobeyed a holy God. You guys deserve to go to hell when you die. You guys could not go to heaven because you sinned against a holy God.

And God has sent me. I am the sent one, the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one, the Lamb of God, the Son of God. And I've come from heaven to live among you and die on a cross for you.

[14 : 57] It is just not time yet for me to die. Matthew chapter 20 and verse 28. The Bible says, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

And underline this in your Bible. Write this down. Look it up later. And to give his life a ransom for many. To give his life a ransom for many.

Do you know what he came for? You know what he said? My hour's not come. Here's what his hour was. There was an hour when he would fulfill the very will of God on earth. And sin would be paid for.

And he has come to die on the cross for us. I want you to look this one up. You don't have notes today because the printer's messed up. So look it up with me if you would. John chapter 10 verses 17 through 18.

You've got to underline this. The movies kind of let you think whenever you read or watch a story about Jesus. You kind of get the feeling he was a really good guy. He was kind of innocent and kind of misled.

[15 : 54] Kind of going around doing a lot of good stuff. And somehow he made the religious crowd mad. And somehow he got on the wrong side of the political crowd too. And then they grabbed him one day and they killed him. And the poor guy died.

And then later on the apostles kind of made up this great big story about him being God. Totally wrong. He was God. And he was telling them that he was God.

And he's showing them that he was God. Now look if you would in John chapter 10. He's not dead yet. He is not going to die yet. And before he ever dies look what he says.

Look what he says in John chapter 10 verse 17. Therefore doth my father love me because I lay down my life. Would you underline I lay down my life.

Then I might take it again. Now look this way. Notice what he says. He says let me explain to you. I'm about to die. I'm about to die. You don't know that yet. And no one's come to get me yet.

[16 : 49] And I'm not under arrest yet. And no one's here yet. But just let me go ahead and tell y'all I'm about to die. And I'm going to lay down my life. Now if you're thinking well that's really nice.

That's kind of like Martin Luther King. He laid down his life. No Martin Luther King got killed. He didn't lay down his life. And Nathan Hale who I only have but one life to live.

And my only regrets I only got one life to live. He laid down his life. No he got killed. But Jesus laid down his life. Look what it says in the next verse so you know. John chapter 10 verse 18.

You got to know this. No man takes it from me. No man takes it from me. I lay it down of myself.

I have power to lay it down. I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father. In verse 18 would you want to align this? No man takes it from me.

[17 : 45] I need you to look this way a second. You see salvation would be a whole different story. Now look at me. You got to listen to me. Salvation would be a whole different story. If we were talking about a helpless defenseless nice Gandhi.

Or Martin Luther King. Or Nathan Hale. Or one of our heroes Abraham Lincoln. And the poor guy got killed by some assassins. And that's how they want you to see the story.

Because they want you to see him as a man. And not as who he was. God in human flesh. And here's what he said. He said disciples. In a little while we're going to Jerusalem.

So let me go ahead and tell you all up front what's going to happen. I'm going to die. But nobody's going to take my life from me. Now I might just add two real quick things so you get the story.

Do you remember in the garden when they came to get him that night? And they were looking around trying to figure out who he was. And Judas goes to kiss him. And he just says the words I am. And they all fell over backwards. You see he had power.

[18 : 46] All he had to do was go. I am. And they all fell over. One guy took off running in his underwear. Left his clothes and boom. Went running naked. I mean he is God.

The Bible is clear. He could have called angels to take him down. He didn't have to die. He died because he wanted to die for you. It was God in human flesh dying for you.

2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 19. It was God in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Jesus came to die.

He knew he was leaving. You got to understand that's the real story here. Mary says Jesus. They don't have any wine. He said woman. What have I got to do with you? This is not my hour.

This is not my hour. Look if you went in John chapter 13 and verse 1. John chapter 13 and verse 1. Now before the feast of the Passover when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the father.

[19 : 48] Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end. Depart out of this world to his father. His hour was come. Look if you went in Matthew chapter 26 and verse 18.

And he said go into the city to such a man and say to him the master said my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at the house with my disciples. Now just look at this real quick.

I'm going to go to the next point. I want you to understand Jesus lived life on purpose. Jesus lived life on purpose. He came to die on a cross. He came to pay our sin debt.

He knew he was going to die. He was born in the shadow of a cross. He constantly looks to and refers to being on the father's timetable. Jesus our will come. He will die.

He will be buried. He will rise from the dead. You should know his life's not an accident. His death was intentional. He died for you. Will you reject an intentional gift offered to you?

[20 : 45] He offers a gift to you. The Bible says in Romans 6.23. The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And I would ask you this morning. Do you understand? How many of you church people understand Jesus is God? If you understand that, say amen. Do you understand he died on purpose? If you do, say amen. We're not here to remember a guy.

This is not a moment of silence at a ball game because somebody died. He died on purpose. I have a question. How come we can be so quiet about that? How come we can be so quiet about that? How come we wouldn't be interested in sending missionaries all around the world and tell everybody he died on purpose?

First, the beginning of miracles. He gets ready to step out and do miracles. And the first thing he says is, by the way, I'm fixing to show you all who I am, but I got an hour coming. I got an hour coming, and this is not that hour.

I'll give you a glimpse, but the real glimpse will be when I stand or when I'm hanging on a cross on Calvary paying the sin debt for every man and every woman.

[21 : 51] Second thing I want you to look at, if you would, is this is the beginning of miracles. Look, if you would, in verse 11 and underline it, it's the beginning of miracles. That'll tell some of you something. Some of you probably read some apocrypha books, and you've read stories about Jesus doing miracles when he was a child.

Well, those aren't true. You say, well, how do you know that? Because John chapter 2 verse 11 said, the first miracle, the beginning of miracles, was when he turned the water into wine.

What about when he made little clay doves and pigeons when he was a baby? He didn't. What about when he used to kill little kids for bumping into him when they were running and playing in the neighborhood? That didn't happen.

Somebody wrote that. That's why it's not in the Bible. This is the beginning of miracles. By the way, we know about his birth and his early life a little bit. We know about him when he was 12 years old.

But the next time we see him, we see him in this story as the Lamb of God. And he begins to show us he is the Lamb.

[22 : 56] He's the Lamb of God. He is manifesting his glory. He wants you to know he is God. He is God. It will just be a few days from now in the story.

Next week, you'll be in John chapter 3. And there will be a rabbi. There will be a spiritual leader of his day. And he will come to Jesus by night.

His name is Nicodemus. And when he comes to Jesus in John chapter 3 and verse 2, he will say, I'll tell you why I came. Look at what it says. Then the same came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know you are a teacher come from God.

For no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him. Nobody could do them. Two other things before we get to the third and last point.

And I think the most important point. This is Jesus standing up and saying, I am God.

[23 : 59] I created a world and I can change water into wine or any other thing I want to do. And before it's over, he will raise people from the dead. He will produce food like crazy.

He will forgive sin. He will walk on water every step of the way saying, no regular man does this. No prophet does this. Nobody measures up to Jesus.

He is the son of God. He is God in human flesh. And could I just remind you before I go to the last thing and we go back to John chapter 2, the last verse.

Could I just remind you of this? He is the source of life and he is the source of joy. He's the source of life and he is the source of joy.

Do you understand that he said, I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. And some of you today are kind of in the throes of a decision.

[24 : 56] You're kind of in the balance. You're kind of between two places and you can't make up your mind. There's a side of you that says, I want to know Jesus. I want to give him my life. I want to surrender to him. But I'm afraid if I do, he'll ruin my life.

And the one who's telling you that's the devil. The one who's telling you that is the one who wants to ruin your life. In John 10, 10, when it says that he has come that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

The verse actually starts and says, the thief comes but for to steal, to kill and to destroy. And that thief is Satan. And he would love for you to not believe in Jesus.

Every religion in the world has God. But there's only one way to God. And that is through Jesus who died on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus who died on the cross of Calvary. Go with me if you would to chapter 2 and verse 11. Go with me to John chapter 2 and verse 11. Last thing I want you to look at with me. He says, the beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory.

[26 : 02] And his disciples believed on him. Would you understand manifested forth his glory? I don't know if you can gather the concept. But here we are on this planet and we really think we're big stuff.

I mean, we are convinced that we are big stuff. We're convinced that we are the height of the creation and that we are the height of the evolutionary ladder or whatever else you want to think.

But there is a God who was before there ever was a world. There is a God who was before there ever was a world. And that God, John chapter 1 says, in the beginning was the Word.

And the Word was with God. And the Word was God. And that Word is Jesus. Because in John chapter 1 and verse 14, that Word took on flesh. And we knew him as the only begotten, the Son of God.

And we see his glory. We see his glory. I want you to understand. Here's what's going on. You've got to understand. God intervened in history. God came down. The fact is, it's all God anyway.

[27 : 10] He started the whole world. He created it with words out of his mouth. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And he goes through a whole plan. It's God's plan.

And God sees the beginning of the world and the end of the world. And it's all such a short little thing to him. Because he's always lived. God has no time limits. Man, we don't understand that.

Man, we don't understand that. You know, I've been catching raccoons in my yard. I have these groundhogs in my backyard. And they're digging holes in my backyard. So I ordered me some traps.

I ordered one. It's a death trap. You stick your head in there. And it's going to feel it real good. And I ordered a live trap. And the groundhog found the killing trap. But I didn't know I had raccoons.

And all of a sudden, I wake up. Four times now, we've caught a raccoon. And we go out there. And there's a raccoon in the cage. And you walk up to the cage. He goes. I mean, he thinks, don't you come near me, big old 250-pound boy.

[28 : 10] I whoop you. I look at him. I say, you're in my cage, boy. And then I reach down and pick up his whole world. And I walk it over to my car. And I turn the trap up and shake out the dirt.

And I pick up the thing. And I set it in the back of my car on a towel. So if he gets scared, he doesn't mess up my car too bad. And I drive him about 10 or 12 miles. Because I read on the internet, those little raccoons will make a 10-mile trip to get food or to get a mate.

And I'm just hoping he don't know where Ms. Coon lives. Because I don't want him back. And I drive him 10 miles. I mean, we're riding this way and that way. You know, I got him kidnapped in the back of my car.

And I arrive over on somebody's country road. It's behind your house. Just joking. And I arrive over there. And I get out of the trap. And I set it down on the ground. And I reset.

And I lift the lid of the trap. And that coon jumps off. He can jump about 8 feet before he ever hits the ground. And he takes off running. And I can hear him as he runs away. Woo! I'm smarter than that guy. I got out of that trap.

[29 : 11] And I'm away. And he goes off looking for Ms. Coon. But he doesn't know. He's a long ways from Ms. Coon. I took him where. I hope he can't find his way back. Now, do you understand?

That coon's probably thinking how smart he is. You know, they'll chew their foot off to get out of a cage. They'll do anything they can. But I'm smarter. A little bit. I got a trap.

Now, I didn't build a trap. I bought the trap. I put him in my car. I drive him off. You say, how far did you drive? I read on the internet how far he can go. So I go further. Because I'm smarter than he is. Now, can you all of a sudden imagine God?

Here's John the Baptist. And here's Peter and James and John and all the guys. And they look at a guy named Jesus. And he was born in a town named Nazareth. And he looks just like them. And it's hard for them to accept this is God.

This is God in human flesh. How in the world could you ever believe that a person with a human body, born on the earth, born among us, eating food, dressing clothes, getting big, all the things he does, how could he be God?

[30 : 11] So John said, well, he was. He was. And I'm going to prove it to you. And I'm writing a whole book about it called The Gospel of John. And if you'll recall the story, he was baptizing.

And he looked up and he saw him coming down. He said, that's him. That's him. Behold the Lamb of God that takes away this end of the world. And Jesus came down and he got baptized. And if you recall, John has recorded it so you'll know what happened.

All of a sudden, this dove thing comes flying down towards Jesus, like the Spirit of God. And a voice comes out of heaven and says, hey, that's my beloved son.

And I'm happy with him. And John said, we heard it. And we saw it. He's the Son of God. And then some other guys come up. And John says, that's him.

That's the Lamb of God. He's been to the wilderness and said, come back out. And he's won. He's always going to win because he's the Son of God. Say, man. Now he shows up at a wedding. Mary goes out.

[31 : 07] And just like any other, you can imagine your mother saying, buddy, run to the grocery store and pick up some diet Mountain Dew, caffeine free, and get a big Georgia mug to put it in.

No. She walks in and says, hey, Jesus, they don't have any wine. He said, woman, what have I got to do with you? Do you not know yet who I am? I'm not a man. And I'm about to show everybody, I am above it all.

I am God in human flesh. And so wine is made. You need to know this. Look in your Bible, John 1, 14. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory.

In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And one day the Word became flesh. And let me tell you, John says, we saw him and we knew he was God. Chapter 2 and verse 11, it was manifesting forth his glory.

If I could take you to a verse I think it's so beautiful to me, I want you to go with me to John chapter 17 where Jesus is praying. He's talking to the Father. And the Holy Spirit writes it down so we know how they talked.

[32 : 17] In John chapter 17, Jesus is all alone, and soon he'll go to the cross and die like a criminal that he's not. But even there he'll have victory because three days later he'll be alive.

And you know the keys of death and hell. But in 17, 5, he says, And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Jesus is praying. Now look at you, you gotta listen. Are you paying attention? He's about to die. You can almost hear the crosses being made. You can almost see him hanging up the crosses to get everything ready on Golgotha, on Calvary.

You can almost see it happening. And Jesus knows it's gonna happen because he knows the beginning from the end. And he's praying. He says, God, I want you to glorify me. I want you to glorify me like you did before we ever made this world.

I know who I am. I am God. Read the verse to me again. Verse 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world began.

[33 : 24] But I love verse 24. Look at verse 24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.

For thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. I can see him praying. He's got the apostles. They're all over there. They're all over there. You know, they're probably sitting around in a campfire.

Probably got them a McFish sandwich going there from McDonald's. They're all sitting there eating. And Jesus over there and prays. He says, Father, I know who I am. I've known who I was before I ever got here.

I am the preexistent Christ. I am God from eternity past. And I will be God in eternity to come. I am God. And God, I know we've been glorified all together.

I had glory with you. And I've humbled myself. And I've made myself with no reputation. I've took on myself the form of a servant. I've made myself obedient. And soon I will die. And Father, they've watched me for these years now.

[34 : 26] For three years, they've seen me. I've fed the hungry. I've healed the sick. I've raised the dead. I've walked on water. I've made fish jump in nets. I've put money in fish's mouths.

I have proved that I am God. But Father, don't I want them to know what it is to be with me and you? I wanted to see the glory I had with you before we ever made this world.

And I wanted to see that. Do you understand what's happening at the wedding of Cana of Galilee? You were thinking, oh, man, we're going to get to find out about beer today. We're going to get to find out about water being made to wine.

That's going to be fun. No, we find out Jesus is God. And he wants the world to know I'm God. And I'm above it all. And I'm the creator. And I was before it was ever made.

And I was glorified with the Father. And I will be glorified with him again. Let me show you I'm Jesus. I'm the Christ. I'm the Messiah. I'm the Son of God. I'm the Lamb of God. I'm the one who takes away the sin of the world.

[35 : 28] You can be saved through what I'm about to do when my hour gets here and I die on the cross. Now, I'm going to ask you a question. Can you see him a minute? Can you see him?

The God from eternity past here on earth, limiting himself for you, taking on himself human flesh, allowing men he made to spit on him, to beat him, and to throw him on a cross and kill him and mock him.

And the whole time doing it knowing he could stop it at any minute. But he's dying for you. Can you imagine that? I just want you to go with me, John 17.

Not to look at the verse we've already looked at. I just want you to go there. He said, Father, and I want the glory back like we had it. I'm fixing to go up there. He's going to nail me on a cross. Everybody's going to mock me.

Everybody's going to treat me like nothing. And Father, I want the glory back like I had it. But God, I don't want the glory by myself. I want to take them with me, these that you've given me, and I want them to see me.

[36 : 32] And someday, the same guy, under his praise to the Holy Spirit, wrote another book called Revelation. And in about Revelation chapter 4, he's seated on a throne.

And the angels and that seraphim are singing around him and saying, he is worthy. He is worthy. He is worthy. He's been, he's suffered and he's died and he's risen again.

And the whole world knows, the whole creation knows that he is God. That's my life. My life is hid with Christ in God.

He's yours. It's not about me. And it's not about you. It's about God. The great God creator of the universe who loves you.

The judge of all the universe who loves you, who sent his son to die for you. Two questions. Number one, do you know him? Have you believed in him? Not God.

[37 : 30] You see, the way you believe in God is you put your faith in Jesus who told us he was God and he come to make the way. Have you put your trust in him? Do you know you'd go to heaven if you died?

And the second question is, how can we keep it quiet? How can we be satisfied not to tell the world about such a great God?

No one knows a God like him. Other gods would do with you what they want to do. They're not true gods. They're little G gods. They're counterfeit gods. They're fake gods because there's only one God.

But the God of heaven loves you. Would you believe him today? Would you trust him today? Would you step out and tell others about him?

Father in heaven, I love you. Thank you for the chance to speak to these folks. I pray that you would richly, powerfully bless every one of them. I pray, God, that those that aren't saved today would be saved.

[38 : 27] I pray you'd help them to put their trust in you and to believe in you and what you did on the cross of Calvary. And I pray, God, that Christians would step forward and say, I must tell others about my wonderful God and my wonderful Savior.

God, would you show your power? Would you magnify yourself? And I will thank you for all that you do. And I will step forward and say, I must tell others about my wonderful God and my wonderful Savior.

God, would you show your power? Would you magnify yourself? And I will thank you for all that you do. Thank you for listening to this message by Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

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