

Show us the Father

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. This is the second message of our new series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

John chapter 1 verses 14 through 18. The Bible says, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John bare witness of him and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me. And of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time.

The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. Let's bow our heads for another word of prayer. Father, I pray that you'd work now. God, help us to see you through Jesus and help our church to just love you more and more as individuals and to get our hearts and our eyes on you.

[1 : 15] And I pray, dear God, that you would just do a mighty work. Lord, help these simple thoughts tonight to bless your people and to excite them about how good you are. And I'll give you great honor and glory and praise for what you do.

The verse is John chapter 20, verse 31. You saw that this morning. Let's look at that verse again. I hope that you will think about it. Why did John write this book? Why did the Holy Spirit use John to write this book?

And there it is in front of you. These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name. I think there's two great things that will happen out of this book.

One, we're going to get the gospel out. So all of your family will be able to hear the gospel, know about Jesus, all your friends, anybody you'll bring. It's going to be hard to be preaching here without just bringing out the wonderful, glorious gospel of Jesus Christ on a regular basis.

On the second side of it, I want to know him. I want to grow in my knowledge of God the Father. He is my Father. I'm in the family. Thanks to him, I've been born again.

[2 : 22] The Lord Jesus has saved me and has forgiven me. And I'm in the family, and I want to know God. How do I get to know God? I don't really get to know God. The church is a means to get me to how to know God.

But the real way I get to know God is by Jesus. He's the one who is the very express image of the Lord, of the God of heaven. If you would, verse 14, won't you just write down the word, word.

That's what's going on in that verse. Circle it. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

And here's what happened. When Jesus came, he was God manifest in the flesh. When Jesus came, he was God manifest in the flesh.

Look at 1 Timothy 3, verse 16. It should be written on your notes there, but you need this verse. He was God manifest in the flesh. If somebody questions, is Jesus God?

[3 : 20] Look at what 1 Timothy 3, verse 16 says. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh.

Can you read that one phrase of me? Would you say that out loud with me? Are you ready? God was manifest in the flesh. Now, what's manifest mean? It means God was showed for who he is in the flesh.

God was put out for everybody to see. God was declared in front of everybody in the flesh. God was manifest in the flesh. How was he manifest in the flesh? That's Jesus.

Can you say amen right there? So he is the word, and he is God in the flesh. In Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4, when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law.

God made manifest in the flesh. That's what happened. He lived among us. And I'm not going to take the time to go to those words. I do want Brother Tony to preach. I want to get to a major truth that I think you ought to see if you would.

[4 : 23] Go with me to verse, go with me back to the verse here, verse 14. And look what it says. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Full of grace and truth. Now, just real quick, look this way. What's going on there? You know what happened? Jesus is the fullness of grace.

Jesus is the fullness of truth. Jesus was full of grace and truth. And real quick, let's think about what grace is. What's grace? Grace is God saying, you don't deserve to be saved, but I love you.

Grace is God saying, you don't deserve to be saved, but I love you. Grace is God saying, you could never get to heaven by yourself. You could never find me. All you've ever done is messed up, but I'm here to save you.

That's grace. And truth, he's truth. And truth is harsh. Truth can often be pretty rough because truth says you're a sinner and you're going to go to hell.

[5 : 25] And that's true. But Jesus comes to put things right and be the truth and to show us how to be saved. Truth shows us who we are and what we need. Truth shows us the Father.

That's who Jesus is. And Jesus never failed. Look at verse 15. Here's the witness. John, bear witness of him and cried, saying, this was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me.

That's a wild statement. I want you to look at it. You've got to read the Bible and look at detail. Look what it says here. It says he was preferred before me because he was before me.

You should underline that word before or circle that word. John is six months older than Jesus. John is several months older. I'm not going to say it's six.

I think it's six. John is several months older than Jesus. I believe it's six months. And John looks at it and tells everybody, hey, he's first. He's preferred because he was before me. But he wasn't before him physically.

[6 : 25] How was he before him? Again, again, John the Baptist said, Jesus is not a man. He's God. He was before me. Just like Jesus said, Abraham was glad when he saw my day.

And he said, and I told him I am. So again, he is being declared as being before him. God has used old John to build up Jesus and to get him ready and to bring him out to the world so that the world can hear who he is.

Because John knows that Jesus is God and he's not. The verse says, John 1.30. Look at John 1.30. This is he of whom I said, after me cometh the man which is preferred before me.

For he was before me. And so I'll just say this, you know, God put his stamp on John in great ways. And he let John have great power and be used to God in a great way.

But I don't know of anybody else that all the time stood still and the Holy Spirit came down into something like a dove. And a voice came out of heaven. And the whole trinity was there and said, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased.

[7 : 32] John said, he's not me. He's a lot better than me. He's before me. He is God. He is God. He is the pre-existent Christ. I'd like this to show you verse 16, 17, 18.

And I want to give you some verses and this will finish it up. You can study this and I'll hit it next Sunday. Look at verse 16. And of his fullness have we all received and grace for grace.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him.

You can only see God one way. You can't see him. Nobody's ever seen him. But Jesus declares him. Now, go with me to Romans chapter 8. I just take some. I want to take some time.

I want to go over this full. The fullness of grace. I want to show you something. I want to show you something. I want to show you what's going on here. The fullness of grace and truth. Look, if you would, in Romans chapter 8, verse 31.

[8 : 32] He is the full expression of God's grace. Look at 8:31. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

These are fantastic verses. Look at this. What can we say to everything that goes on? If God's on my side, who could be against him? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?

Do you understand what's going on in those verses? He said, you want to know how God, you want me to tell you how you know God loves you? You want me to tell you how to know that God is for you and how God is with you and God is working in your life?

He said, because God gave his only son. And so many times, now watch this. There's just a whole bunch of this grace that you need to get a hold of. It wasn't enough to get you out of hell.

And it wasn't enough to get you out of sin. It wasn't enough to save you. It was enough for all of that plus all of your life. Because here's what he said. He said, if God's for us, who can be against us?

[9 : 33] So tonight, you know that who can be against you? Who can rise up and stop you? Who can separate you from the love of God? Who can take away your salvation? What bad thing could happen to you? Here's what he said.

Nothing. Because if God's for me, who can be against me? And then he said, if you're questioning whether God wants to work in your life, whether God wants to meet your needs, notice this. He said, if God gave you Jesus, would he hold back some pitiful little thing, some small thing?

He gave you the biggest and the best and all there is in heaven, so the rest of it is ours. Look if you would in verse 33. By the way, if anybody wanted to point their finger at you and accuse you, look at what he says in verse 33.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who could point at God's people and say, I have an accusation? Because you know who justifies? It's God that justifies.

Some man comes forward and points his finger and accuses. It's God that justifies. Who is he that condemneth? Who's going to condemn me? Who could go against me? What's the highest court in the land?

[10 : 34] It's not the Sanhedrin. It's not the Independent Baptist Council. It's not the Southern Baptist Convention. It'd be the God of heaven. He said, if somebody's against you, who could it be? Who could it be? If they want to put a charge on you, who could they put on you?

And then he said, who condemns? It's Christ that died. Yea, rather that is risen again, who's even at the right hand of God who makes intercession. So, you know, can I just say, how many of you ever wonder about your salvation and you doubt your salvation?

And sometimes you mess up. How many of you ever mess up and feel like maybe, maybe he doesn't love me anymore and maybe I'm not really saved and I'm such a mess up. I don't even know if God could love me.

You ever think, don't raise your hand. You ever think that? Well, let me just go ahead and tell you. You got a lawyer who says, hey, I'm the one that paid the penalty. I'm the one that saved you. I'm the one that fixed you. And I don't care who wants to say anything bad about you.

I'm here and I'm the guy, not them. You know who likes to accuse you is the devil, the accuser of the brethren. And he'd like to discourage you. He'd like to say, you don't measure up.

[11 : 33] You don't do enough stuff. There's a lot of things you need to be doing. And if you don't do them, God's not pleasing you. Here's what, here's what Paul said there. Because Jesus is the full expression of God's grace.

And here's what he said. How could you ever think that? Who in the world could accuse you? Who in the world could condemn you? Who could put you down? If it's Jesus that died for you, God that sent Jesus to die for you, and a judge that be God, the judge that be Jesus, you're all right.

Tell the devil to shut up. That's really what's going on. Can you say amen right there? That ought to be pretty good stuff. So you say, well, what about the law? He gave the law. He's got rules.

He's got law. He's got rules. Where does that fit in? Well, let's see what the Bible says about that. Galatians chapter 3, verse 19, if you would. The apostle Paul asked the question. Galatians 3, 19.

You ought to look these up because I've skipped just to the real meaty parts of the message. Here it is. Wherefore, then serveth the law. Well, why we got the law then?

[12 : 31] If you want to talk about grace so much, why we got the law? I mean, sometimes independent Baptist churches and Christians and Baptists in particular, we like to major on law too much.

And here's what he said. Well, what we got the law for? Look at you. It was added because of transgressions. So the seed should come to whom the promise was made. It was ordained by angels of the hands of a meteor. What's the law for?

Now, look at verse 24. He's going to answer the question. He said, wherefore the law was our. Help me. What's the word? Was our schoolmaster. Circle that.

Schoolmaster was our school. That's a great word. It was the guy that showed you where you were flunking. It was the guy that helped educate you. It was the guy that helped you arrive at the truth.

And the truth is Jesus. And it was the law that took you to Jesus. Wherefore, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us under Christ. To bring us under Christ.

[13 : 27] The schoolmaster to bring us under Christ. That we might be justified by keeping all those rules that he was teaching us about. Amen? Is that what it says? Look at it. Was he saying, I'm going to teach you the rules?

So you know all the rules? So you can measure up to the rules? And you're going to go to bed at night? Say, yeah, I knocked nine out of ten. I'm batting a 350. I'm doing pretty good. Is that what he said? No, no, no. He said he's going to be a schoolmaster to bring you to Jesus.

A schoolmaster to bring you to Jesus. So that you can be saved or justified by what? Speak. By trusting what Jesus did. By saying, I believe. By saying, I believe.

Look, if you would, verse 25. But after that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. Did you see that? Once you get the faith, you don't need the schoolmaster.

Once you get the faith, you don't need the schoolmaster. Once you come to Jesus, you don't need the rules now because you came to Jesus. But after that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

[14 : 26] So Paul's saying, you know, those Jews have been coming down from Jerusalem, and they've been trying to confuse the matter. Here's the truth. The truth is you were dirty, rotten sinners, and you deserved hell. And the Lord used Jesus, and he used the law.

He used the law, and he used truth to say, you're sick, you're sick, you're sick, you're sick, you're sick. And it's the sick that need a doctor. He said it was to show you that you messed up.

And when you figured out you messed up, he could bring you to the truth. Now watch this. In the Old Testament, there was law. And that was our schoolmaster. And we were given all those rules.

But let me tell you so you don't get confused here. In the Old Testament, there was grace shown all the time. I don't know if you ever pay attention to that. Because you know what he did? He had all those rules. And he'd get through giving all those rules, and he would say, well, you messed up.

And somebody's about to die. So bring a lamb and come see me. You messed up. Here's grace. You deserve death.

[15 : 31] But I'll let somebody else die for you. And he said, so even in the Old Testament, he was showing you mercy. He was showing it. A sacrifice was available for every sin.

A sacrifice was available. By the way, did you know, we don't have time to go through it, but you've got to read the Old Testament. You know that if you were so poor you couldn't buy one animal to sacrifice? He always said, if you're too poor to get that one, let me give you a cut rate.

Here's another animal. I just want you to know you can't, but I can. Just trust me. Take my sacrifice. And that's what salvation's about. Coming to believe that Jesus did it. The law made room for God to make a substitute.

And that's what happened. He said, I don't understand that. I don't see how a little bird could die and save me. I don't understand how some meal could be offered and I could be saved. I don't understand how a lamb could die.

I don't understand how Jesus could. Isaiah 55, if you would. 8 and 9. Look at it. Isaiah 55, 8 and 9.

[16 : 33] He said this, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Now watch this. Nobody in this room understands the Trinity. Nobody in this room understands how God's plan of salvation could work. Here's all you're doing.

You're just trusting Jesus. We don't come in understanding. We don't come in knowing. We don't come in our strength. We come knowing we need Jesus and that he died for us.

He died for us. I'd like to give you one more verse, I think, and I'll leave it right there. Look at 2 Corinthians 5, 21. This is the beauty of it. 2 Corinthians 5, 21.

We saw the word. We saw John was a witness to it. And here's the work of Jesus. Jesus is the clear, full expression of how good God is. Don't read the verse yet.

[17 : 38] Look this way. I want you to understand. Somebody sold you a bill of goods. Somehow along the way, you bought the Catholic doctrine. And I don't mean to hurt your feelings by saying it, but it's the truth. That God the Father is austere and mean and hateful.

But thank God Mary is sweet. And she can talk God into doing nice stuff. Or Jesus is sweet. But here's the truth. You want to know God, you know Jesus.

When you see Jesus, you see God. Let me tell you how God is. He's a sweet and loving God. Full of compassion and full of grace. He is your heavenly Father. Abba, Father. And he looks down and he says this.

Hey, quit having this caricature of me. Because when you see Jesus, you are seeing the Father. And here's Jesus. I'll pay your sin debt. But all you'll have to do is trust.

All you have to do is believe. All you have to do is receive the gift. Now look at 2 Corinthians 5, 21. And understand, it wasn't God wanted to send you to hell and Jesus is a nice guy and took care of things.

[18 : 36] It was God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit took care of things. It was, in fact, it is in 2 Corinthians 5, it is God in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

But look at 2 Corinthians 5, 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. God made Jesus to be sin for us.

And Jesus never knew sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We sing praises to God. We worship Jesus tonight.

And I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why we do. We worship the God of heaven. We worship Jesus tonight. Because something miraculous happened the day we got saved.

Our sins were taken away. That's only a small part of the picture. Somehow you think, well, thank God he forgave me my sins. It didn't stop there.

[19 : 34] When he took your sins away, that was the taking off the bad stuff. But then he put on the good stuff. And look what it says. That we might be made righteous.

It doesn't say that. Look at the verse. Look at the verse right behind my head. Not that we might be made righteous. That we might be made the righteousness of God.

Not Austin's righteousness. Not Pharisee righteousness. Not Jewish righteousness. Not Baptist righteousness. But the righteousness of God. And so tonight, we are forgiven.

But not only are we forgiven. We are righteous. And for that reason, we are saints. He has done a great work in our lives.

So he came to work and show us the full expression. It was Jesus full of grace and truth. It's Jesus showing me what my father is like. No man has seen the father.

[20 : 32] But Jesus has declared him to us. You know, I know exactly what God the father is like. Because every time I look at Jesus, I see my father. Every time I see his kindness, I see my father.

Every time I see Jesus dying in my place, I see my father. I know I'm saved because I serve a good God. Who loved me and paid the debt. Father, I love you.

And I thank you for the chance to be here tonight. And God, I thank you for the book of John. I thank you for these wonderful truths. And I just pray that you'd help us to apply them to our lives. God, help your people tonight to leave rejoicing and happy and grateful and thankful with a song in their hearts.

Because their sins have been forgiven and they've been made the very righteousness of God. Help them to go out of here excited about serving you. Excited about being yours. God, I love you. And I praise you.

And I thank you for our kind and good joy in Jesus' precious name. Amen. You have been listening to Austin Gardner, Pastor of Vision Baptist Church. For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to www.visionbaptist.com.

[21 : 39] Thank you.