

The Glory of God's Emotions (Exodus 34:6)

INTRODUCTION

Turn to Exodus 34. Father, we come to You in the name of Jesus; we ask You for the spirit of revelation, for living understanding. We ask You to reveal Your heart to us, to reveal Your name to us in yet a greater way, and we thank You in Jesus' name. Amen.

In Exodus 33 and 34, Moses had a very dramatic, face-to-face encounter with the Lord, and in this encounter with the Lord, the Lord revealed His emotions to Moses. And God associated the revelation of His emotions with the revelation of His glory. Moses cried out, "Lord, let me see Your glory" and the Lord revealed His emotions, His emotional makeup, to Moses. This established in the Bible the glorious fact of God's emotions. He has deep feelings. Not only His behavior, but His emotional makeup is an important part of His being that we need to understand.

Now, many in the Body of Christ ignore this dimension of God. Maybe they're afraid of emotionalism. We don't want to be involved in emotionalism, but neither do we want to worship before God devoid of the emotions that are proper. God's deep emotions compel Him to desire deep relationship with us.

Why is this subject practical to us? Because as we understand the emotions of God, it strengthens our human spirit, it tenderizes our heart, and it makes us stronger in the Lord. Secondly, when we understand the emotions of God, it strengthens our relationship. And we all love to be loved, and the great Lover of the human race loves us in a way that surpasses what we understand. And when we connect with that, it does something in our spirit that is very powerful.

Another reason we want to connect with the emotions of God is because it will strengthen us in our ability to minister to other people. We will have a far more effective ministry if the revelation of His emotions touches us, and if we then communicate those emotions to others. It will change the way we carry our heart before God. It will change the way that we think about God in our private life.

King David was a student of God's emotions. He was called "the man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). And so, like David, we also set our heart to become students of God's own heart. We become students of God's emotions.

CHRISTIANITY IS THE PURSUIT OF A PERSON

Paragraph A: Christianity is the pursuit of a person. That is the core foundational definition of Christianity, the pursuit of a person. Yes, we actively resist sin and sickness and Satan, but the resisting of darkness is an overflow of our pursuit of the relationship of the One who is the light.

Christianity is much more than escaping from hell. Christianity is much more than a work assignment, receiving a ministry assignment in the kingdom, or even the Great Commission. Christianity is much more than a code of conduct, or of holiness. It's the pursuit of a person.

Now, many believers live in a defensive Christianity, meaning they focus on resisting the bad. And their mindset is not to be overcome with negative things, with darkness and with sin. However they don't

aggressively pursue relationship with the Lord, and the more they try to take a stand and hold their ground and say no to the encroaching darkness that's attacking them and tempting them, this approach to their faith actually leaves them weak and ineffective. Actively we need to pursue relationship, not just defensively resist the darkness.

THE POWER OF OUR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Paragraph B. The power of our Christian experience. Paul testified of it. It's found in this interaction with the Man Christ Jesus, dialoguing with His heart, with encountering Him, with fresh discoveries of who He is.

Look at what Paul says here in Philippians 3:8. He says, "I count everything loss for the excellence of the experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:8, paraphrased). Paul talks about the fascination that touched his spirit when he grew in knowledge of the Man Christ Jesus, the magnificence, the splendor of experiencing Jesus. I mean more than just the forgiveness of his sin, but the ongoing discovery of the Man Christ Jesus.

Jesus is a glorious person, obviously. He is a very fascinating person who has deep enthusiasm for us. Now why is it that the most fascinating man, fully God, fully Man, who has deep enthusiasm for us, is Someone with whom we don't enjoy relating? I mean, we're committed to the relationship. We want to get out of hell; we want to work an assignment in the kingdom. We want to be called; we want something important to do. We want godly behavior, but the idea of actually relating to Him daily is a burden to us. It's a challenge to so many of us. Why? Because we haven't understood the emotions of God's heart. As we understand, not just what His mandate is, or what the end product of salvation is for us in terms of getting out of hell, but when we understand the emotions that He has for us, the relationship takes on a whole new dynamic.

GOD PROCLAIMS HIS GLORY BY REVEALING HIS HEART

Roman numeral II. Moses prayed to see the glory of God (Ex. 33:1-19). Moses said, "Please show me Your glory," and the Lord said, "I will make all of My goodness pass before you, and proclaim to you My name."

You can feel in this prayer in verse 18, "Please, show me Your glory" (Ex. 33:18, paraphrased), the urgency that Moses had, and I want to encourage you to make this a lifelong prayer that you embrace for your own life. I believe the prayer of Paul, "Father of glory, release the spirit of wisdom and revelation" (Eph. 1:17), was inspired by this very prayer of Moses. And we want to pray that prayer, and the New Testament version of it is, "Father of glory, show me Your glory; show me the revelation of Your heart."

And then in verse 19 God answers Moses and says, "I will make all of My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim My name to you" (Ex. 33:19, paraphrased). "I will proclaim My name to you." And He does this for Moses by revealing His heart. Now when God proclaims His name, He reveals His personality, His character. However, in this context He described His emotions to Moses. He revealed His emotional makeup to him. I mean, what a remarkable experience! Moses heard God preaching on God. He heard Moses revealing the name of God, really revealing His emotional makeup to him.

Now, God has the best personality of anyone in existence. Think about it: He is the kindest, happiest, most intelligent, most interesting, and most committed. He has the most passionate personality of anyone who exists. And when we understand these truths about Him, they tenderize our spirit. And they cause us to want to connect with Him in an ever deeper way.

Paragraph B. In Exodus 34:6, the Lord goes on and describes His name to Moses. “The Lord . . . proclaimed” (Ex. 34:6). He says, “Moses, I told you I would tell you My name to show you My glory, so here it is. I will tell you what My name is.” In other words, “I will tell you what My personality, My character, is like. I will tell you what My emotional makeup is like by telling you My name.” And He goes on and describes Himself as “the Lord, the Lord God, merciful, gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth” (ibid). And then in verse 14 He adds, “I am the Lord and My name is Jealous” (Ex. 34:14, paraphrased)!

THE GLORY OF GOD REVEALING GOD TO THE HUMAN HEART

Now in this one passage in Exodus 34 we see God summarizing His glory in the most succinct way in Scripture. This is the place where He most succinctly defines what He means by His glory. I'm going to highlight five facets of His emotional makeup that are deeply connected to the revelation of His glory. Ever since this experience in Exodus 34, the Holy Spirit has been emphasizing these truths about God, and even in your own life He's emphasizing these truths whether you connect with them or not. I assure you that this is what the Holy Spirit wants to talk to you about. This is not the only subject He wants to talk to you about, but it is a primary subject that is on His heart. And as we see this passage of God revealing God, we get insight into the Holy Spirit's emphasis of what He is saying to us, and not only that, but what He wants to say *through* us in our ministry to the people we love.

Now at first, when we read about these dimensions of God's emotional makeup, they seem too good to be true. It seems too good to be true that the uncreated God, who was never, ever created, the God who always existed, the God of Genesis 1, the God of all power, would have this emotional makeup. But it's so exciting. The implications are so dramatic, that the Great One who has all authority feels like this. It's not only what He does, but how He feels without any effort. This is the way of His heart and personality, infinitely; we can count on these emotions. We can anchor our life around the fact that He feels this way about us.

Now the most remarkable thing to me is the context of Exodus 33-34. Because Israel has just been delivered from the bondage of Egypt, and come through the Red Sea. God parted the Red Sea and a lot of great things happened. Moses went up on the mountain. And when Moses went up on the mountain, in Exodus 32, the children of Israel betrayed the Lord! They worshiped a golden calf. They sinned against everything that was important to God. And Moses went up on the mountain and said, “Let me see Your glory!”

And the Lord says, “I will show you My glory by telling you My name,” which means, “I am going to tell you what My emotional makeup is like. I'm going to tell you how I feel deep in My being, and by understanding that you will experience My glory. And I want you to go back and tell the children of Israel, though I have been so gracious to them, and their response is to worship a golden calf in utter betrayal of the relationship that I have made with them. Tell them this, that I am merciful; I am gracious, and I will suffer long with them if they will turn.” I mean, what a remarkable statement! “It is My glory that I feel this way. It is My glory that this is who I am and how I relate to My people, that if they will turn, I will be gracious to them. Because that's not just what I do, but who I am.”

And so Moses comes down from the mountain, and the nation of Israel is terrified of the edict. How will God respond to them as a nation? And Moses says, “I have such indescribable good news: that if we will turn, He will be gracious to us, and He will suffer long and abound in goodness. He has good plans for us, even though we have betrayed Him in this most grievous way.”

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THE REVELATION OF HIS GLORY?

Paragraph B. Practically, what are we supposed to do with this revelation of His glory? Well, we set our heart to go deeply in our understanding of these five facets of God's emotional makeup. Now, there's more in the passage than the five I'm highlighting, but these are the five I want to mention briefly.

The first thing we want to do in response to these is that we want to thank God in a very specific way for having this kind of heart. When is the last time you said to the Lord, "Thank You that You are so gracious to me and my loved ones"? When was the last time that you said, "Thank You that You are so longsuffering with my failures"?

And the reason I'm pointing this out is because these are the facets of God's emotions that He wants emphasized. These are the ones the Spirit is emphasizing through the Word and in His ministry to the church. And if we will begin to thank God, one by one, and get these truths into our conversation with the Lord, if we begin to thank Him, we will grow in the increase of our experience of these truths simply by thanking Him for them. We will grow in understanding, and the glory of God will touch us in these ways in a greater way.

Well, we do more than thank Him for them; we search Him out. We open the Bible and we say, "Holy Spirit, show us the way to go deeply in our understanding." We want to go deeply in these truths. We take time to go after these.

THE LORD DELIGHTS IN WHO WE ARE FOREVER

Now all of us have heard that God is merciful and gracious. And undoubtedly we have all been moved by those truths a few times over the years. However, it's not enough just to agree with them and to remember being moved by them. The Lord wants these truths to become an active part of our day-by-day relationship with Him; for our recognition, our searching out, our declaration of these truths to have a center place in our relationship with Him. The end result is that we live in a different way, with the assurance that God enjoys us.

I believe that the number one human emotional need for every human being is the assurance that God enjoys him or her. Now, we could simply say that God *accepts* us, but the word *acceptance* doesn't say enough. Because maybe God just stamped our passport: "Welcome to the kingdom! Next!" He accepts us into the kingdom, but it's more than that: He actually enjoys us. And when we have the assurance of His enjoyment, it gives us confidence in our partnership with Him. There are so many dynamics that happen inside of us when we have this assurance, rather than the subtle fear or even the overt fear that He is rejecting us, or that He is mad at us, or that He is sad about our life. Understanding God's emotions is essential in our pursuit of living in a way that glorifies God.

RELEASING THE GLORY OF GOD INTO THE LIVES OF OTHERS

We all want to live for His glory. We all want to pursue the glory of God in our life, and in a really practical way we do this by coming into agreement and receiving the truth about God and His emotional makeup as He declares Himself here. However, it isn't enough that we receive it; we want to release this truth to other people.

You know, when we pray for one another, whether it's a ministry time here at the front of the auditorium or just a few friends getting together and praying for one another, if we pray for one another and we speak some of these truths and God touches them a little, the glory of God is released. When you pray for someone and you pray that the mercy of God would touch them and they say, "Thank you, brother, that blessed me," even if it

only touches them a little, beloved, that is the glory of God being released through your ministry into their life. When they become convinced that God is gracious, even if it's only a baby step forward, when they begin to see that God is longsuffering in His relationship to them and their failures, beloved, it is the glory of God that you are releasing to their life.

When some people think of the glory of God, they have a kind of theoretical, conceptual understand, and if you ask them to define it, they don't really know. They would say, "Well, you know, just live for His glory."

"Well, what does that mean?"

"Well, for His glory!"

However, in a very practical way, the glory of God is released when we receive and release even a little of the revelation of God's heart in this way. That is a central facet of receiving and walking in the glory of God and living for His glory.

But it goes beyond receiving and releasing it in ministry to others. When we express these virtues in our own life, when we not only receive His mercy and pray mercy for others, but actually act mercifully and graciously to other people and abound in goodness in our plans and intentions for them, then, when all of us come together, we are walking in the glory of God. Even though it may be only a small measure, it's still the glory of God.

Well, let's look at the answer that God gave Moses when Moses prayed, "Lord, show me Your glory."

He says, "OK, I will tell you My name." And when He said, "I will declare My name," He was essentially saying, "I will reveal My emotional makeup."

THE LORD GOD HAS ALL AUTHORITY OVER EVERYTHING

Paragraph C. He starts by declaring that He is "the Lord, the Lord God" (Ex. 34:6). The very first thing that God does, before He describes His emotions, is to declare His authority over all things: His authority to direct the nations, His authority to direct our lives. We can summarize it in a very, very simple way: He has all authority everything.

WE RELATE TO GOD ON HIS OWN TERMS, NOT ON OURS

After He declares this, then He describes these facets of His emotional makeup, but the two are deeply related subjects. Because if we're going to develop our relationship with God, it's based on the fact that we accept and we recognize His authority in our life. We cannot relate to God on our own terms; we must relate to God on His terms.

The reason I say that is because there's a lot going on in religion today, both in and outside of the Body of Christ. There are different ideas about relating to God on our own terms, and it's based on sentimentality, not the revelation of the Word of God and what He says about God. If we're going to grow in relationship to God, central to that relationship is the acknowledging, the recognition of His authority, His right to have authority over us, and so the Lord establishes that first. Then He goes even further.

THE SUPPLY OF GOD'S MERCY IS INFINITE; ITS DURATION, ETERNAL

Paragraph D: He says, "I am merciful" (Ex. 34:6b, paraphrased). So now He's going to describe His emotional makeup—again, not just what He does, but who He is eternally. He has infinite mercy. The supply of His mercy is infinite, and its duration is eternal. He will never, ever diminish even one fraction of a percent of the mercy that is in Him, because He cannot change. He is infinitely merciful for eternity.

And so He says, "I am merciful." He's telling them that He's tender. "I will be tender in how I relate to you in your weakness if you will honor My authority." Yes, we fail, we stumble, but when we stumble and fail we acknowledge it. We don't rationalize; we say, "I have sinned." We don't rationalize or explain it away; we acknowledge it, and then we declare war on the area in which we stumbled. We say, "I'm setting my heart to be free of this. I'm not going to settle down and live in this compromise for a few months or a few years."

And the Lord says, "If you will do that, if you will relate to Me on My terms, you will find that I am always merciful towards you. I will relate to you in your weakness, and even in your failure, in great tenderness."

THE PRIMARY TRUTH THE DEVIL SEEKS TO UNDERMINE

Now this is the first aspect that the Lord told Moses, and I believe the reason it's the first one is because this is the truth that we need first and the truth that we need most. One of the primary issues that the devil seeks to distort is this understanding of God's mercy. I mean, we all know that God has mercy, and we have received His mercy. However, even though we know it, even though you may preach on it for fifty years, the enemy will still seek to distort it in our understanding.

THE HOLIEST BEING IN THE UNIVERSE IS ALSO THE MOST TENDER

Now, isn't it amazing that the most holy Person, the only One who upholds perfect righteousness, is the most tender? Typically when someone walks in righteousness, they have a temptation to look down on the people who don't, but the most righteous, the most holy, is actually the most merciful and the most tender. It says here in Micah 7:18 that "He delights in mercy" (Mic. 7:18). It's effortless for Him to show mercy. He delights in it. He doesn't have to grit His teeth and steel Himself to show us mercy. "OK, they're coming to the prayer meeting, they have all of these failures, and so I have to get myself ready to show them mercy one more time." Beloved, that isn't how it is; He delights in it. He doesn't grow tired of giving us mercy.

You know, you've heard people say, "I am emotionally worn out. I don't know if there is any more mercy for this person in my relationship with them." You've heard those kinds of sentiments. Well, the good news is that He delights in mercy. He doesn't grow tired of it. The mercy tank isn't almost empty. If we will respond to Him, if we will acknowledge His authority and agree to live in it, He responds to us. Yes, we stumble, but when we stumble we acknowledge it, and we sign right back up for obedience within the hour. He says, "I have mercy for you"—infinite mercy with eternal duration that will last forever.

GOD DESIRES MERCY FOR US, EVEN MORE THAN WE DESIRE IT OURSELVES

Now, He delights in mercy. He doesn't grow weary of it. I remember when I was a younger believer, how I would negotiate with the Lord, and I would say, "Lord," as if His mercy tank was just about empty and I had maybe one more shot. And I told the Lord, "Lord, if You will forgive me this one more time, I will never ask forgiveness in this area again. I mean, I mean this double, triple this time." It was as though the gas tank of mercy was on fumes and we had one more mile to go and then we were out. And I would negotiate with the Lord: "Forgive me one more time!"

And the Lord's answer was, "No that isn't how it works. I delight in it. It's who I am. I will be this way forever in My personality, far more than you know."

It isn't an issue of us talking God into forgiving us; it's an issue of God talking us into receiving it. Beloved, He delights in it. Moses was to tell the children of Israel, "If you will say no to the golden calf, the Lord wants you convinced that He has mercy for you!" And He wants us even today to have a new conviction that He has delight in mercy. He enjoys giving us mercy. He isn't weary. He isn't at the end.

It is through the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed (Lam. 3:22). We deserve to be consumed. We reason within ourselves, "If I was God I would have wiped me out by now!" Well, praise God that you are not God, so you aren't going to be wiped out right now, because God is different. We would be tougher on ourselves, but it's because of His personality that we are not consumed. Yes, we deserve to be, but we're not. It is because His compassions never fail. They never run out, ever. The mercy tank never ends, ever, if you will respond and agree with His leadership and accept it again.

As a matter of fact, the mercy of God is new every single morning (Lam. 3:23). Every single day of your life you can wake up with a new beginning in God. This is the truth. You can awaken as a first-class citizen in the kingdom, not on probation because of what you did yesterday. If you will stand against what you did yesterday, the compromise I'm talking about, I'm telling you, His mercy is new every day. And the Lord wants us to have renewed confidence every day. Because what happens is that when we understand the emotions of God like this, it gives us confidence in our spirit in our relationship with God that instead of running from God we run towards Him. Because we so love to be loved, and He loves so well, and when that connects with us we open our heart, and then we want to run and be as close to Him as we can.

WE LOVE TO BE NEAR THE ONE WHO LOVES US SO WELL

I have the image of the father and the little child hanging on His leg. I remember when my boys were little, sometimes they would hang on to my leg, and I couldn't shake them off for anything. They wanted to be with me. I would be going out the door and they would cry, "We're going with you!" And the reason a little child feels that way towards their mom or dad is because they know how intensely they're loved by them. They want to be by the person who likes them the most. And so as I saw that happen with my own children years ago, I began to get this picture of me hanging on to God's leg: "I'm not going anywhere; wherever You go, I'm going to be as close to you as you will let a human being be in this age."

I love to be near the One who loves me so well. I love to be loved, and we're all that way. The problem is that many of us don't connect with the truth of how He feels about us, and so we don't enjoy the relationship. We're committed to it, but we're more thinking of gritting our teeth and paying a price to relate to God. I can imagine the angels sitting around the throne saying, "Father, You are so fascinating! Jesus, You are so glorious! They're talking about paying a price to endure relating to You! Do they know who You are? You are the most fascinating Person with the most enthusiasm and commitment of anyone. Why are they talking about paying a price to relate to You?" It's because we don't get who He is and we don't understand the enthusiasm that He feels.

GOD'S MERCY IS SUPERIOR TO THAT OF MAN'S

Paragraph two. Isaiah 55:7-9. Now, I'm going to let you read that on your own. It's the famous verse that says, "God's ways are not man's ways; God's ways are higher than man's ways. God's thoughts are higher than man's thoughts." And Isaiah says, "As high as the heavens are above the earth that is how much more superior God's ways are to man's ways" (Isa. 55:9, paraphrased).

Now, that's a great verse, and you've heard it quoted through the years. However, usually when I hear this verse quoted, I hear it quoted out of context, which is OK; the Lord doesn't mind. We talk about God's ways of wisdom, the way He is directing us as being higher than our own ways of directing our lives. And that is a true point, but Isaiah 55 isn't talking about God's wisdom being superior to man's, though it is. He's talking about how His mercy is superior to man's. His willingness to forgive is greater than man's, and He uses the phrase here, "I will abundantly pardon beyond anything you can imagine" (Isa. 55:7, paraphrased).

What He's really saying is, "Look around the whole world, and the most merciful person you can find, God's mercy is infinitely superior to their mercy." There is no one on the earth who provides an accurate model of the intensity of mercy God has in His heart to the person who turns to Him. And I don't mean turn to Him the first time; I'm talking about the believer who stumbles again and again, and it's the thousandth time we've repented and returned to Him. I tell you, the mercy is abundant. You find the most merciful person in the earth, and I assure you that God's mercy is so much higher than that person's mercy—as high as the heavens are above the earth.

The context of this passage is the mercy of God. It isn't talking about God's wisdom; it's talking about His mercy, though the Lord doesn't mind if we use this passage related to His wisdom being greater, but that isn't really what He's saying here.

HE DOESN'T RELATE TO US BASED ON OUR FAILURE

Paragraph E. The Lord is gracious. He doesn't give us what we deserve. He doesn't relate to us based on our failure. Now, it's normal for us to relate to other people based on their failure, but He doesn't. He is generous when He evaluates our weakness. In His generosity, in His graciousness, there is none like Him. And again, it isn't just what He does, it's who He is in the secret places of His heart. It's who He is forever, effortlessly. I mean, beloved, we have a really good deal, that we relate to God. This thing called *Christianity*, relating to God through Christ Jesus, is really a good deal. I mean it is really, really good.

The most powerful Person who exists is the most gracious. Now, often, powerful people are proud and not gracious. They have so much power, they take the people way below them in terms of status and position and treat them roughly. They don't need them. They don't want to relate to them: "Just get out of my way! I have things to do, places to go, and people to meet!" And the most powerful are typically not the most gracious unless they're making a deal, but it's different with God. The most powerful is the most gracious. There is no pride in Him at all. He is so humble with His greatness. He is gracious in all of His ways with us forever. That isn't just between now and when we die, but forever we will discover the gracious God.

GOD KNOWS OUR FRAME AND ALL OUR FAILINGS

David said "God doesn't deal with us according to our sins" (Ps. 103:10, paraphrased). In other words God doesn't relate to us according to what our sins deserve. "For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are but dust" (v. 14, paraphrased).

I remember back when I first met the Lord forty years ago; I remember those early years. I was deeply committed to the Lord, and when I discovered the weakness of my own flesh and my sin, I remember specifically saying this to the Lord several times. I said, "O God, can You believe it!?" I mean, it's kind of ridiculous now when I look back on it. "Can You believe it?" Of course you can believe it.

I remember saying that because I was so surprised, and I thought that because I was shocked, God was shocked. And I thought because I was exasperated with myself that He was exasperated with me. Beloved, He wasn't shocked. And when I said, "O God, can You believe it?" He didn't answer, but if He had He would have said, "There's a whole lot more where that came from; don't worry, just wait and see." He didn't say that, but He could have.

GOD ISN'T SURPRISED BY OUR WEAKNESS

Here is my point: God isn't surprised by our weakness. He knows our frame; He knows we are but dust. If you want to build a building and put it on a foundation, you need to put steel and concrete in that foundation. If you build a building on a foundation of dust, dust isn't strong, dust isn't reliable, and dust isn't durable. You would never build on dust; that is a horrible foundation. However, God understands that we are but dust in our human frailties and our abilities and our capacities. He understands that. He knew what He was getting into when He came after you. We didn't know in our pride; at least, I'll speak personally: I was shocked along the way, and I thought that because I was shocked, He was shocked. He wasn't shocked; He knew what He was getting all along when He came after you and me.

THE LORD, THE COMPASSIONATE AND LONGSUFFERING GOD

Paragraph G: He is longsuffering. What does it mean to be longsuffering? It means that He suffers long; that's what it means. He bears with us. He doesn't write us off. We write off one another, but He doesn't write us off. He doesn't get exasperated, bitter, and cautious with us. He is longsuffering.

Now, He knows more than anyone. He knows more about you and yet He will suffer the longest with you. Maybe someone who doesn't know a lot about you will be patient for a while. However, He's the One who knows the most, and He's the most patient, and the most committed to the relationship forever.

Now there are times where believers will intentionally walk in compromise. In other words, the Spirit says, "Don't." It's not an issue of failing that day, and then within the hour they wage war and repent and fail again and repent again within the hour. That's called *weakness*. But it's common for believers to go for a few months or a few years not resisting, but acting in, an area of compromise. And it injures them on the inside. It dulls their conscience. It dulls their spirit, and it changes their capacity to respond.

I've known people over the years who said, "You know, the Holy Spirit's telling me no on this one issue, but I'm just going to do it for a few months and ride it out. I know He will forgive me. I love God and I'm going to get right."

And I say, "You don't want to play with that!" Because what they don't understand is that their capacity to respond is what changes. However, the good news is that God's capacity to respond to us doesn't change. If we will come back, He will show that He would suffer long with us, because it causes pain to His heart when His children sin.

Again, I'm not talking about sinning, repenting, and waging war against it, even though they continue to stumble. That's called *immaturity*. I'm talking about when they knowingly go a few months or a few years in a known area of disobedience that causes pain to God. That is called, "grieving His heart"; that is called, "grieving the Spirit." God suffers in the sense that it hurts His heart.

However, when we come back He says, "You know what? I'm not writing you off. I haven't lost enthusiasm for you. I'm still committed to you." It's remarkable.

Now again, some people presume upon that, and what they don't realize is that that kind of deliberate compromise actually changes their ability to respond; but it never changes God's ability.

IT COSTS A LOT TO GET AND KEEP A DEMON

You know, demons are really expensive. It costs a lot to get demons. Did you know that? It costs time and money. It costs a lot to go get demons; to go and invest ourselves in these various areas that open our lives to demons. Then it costs a lot to feed those demons once they're in us, because they have these big habits. Then, when we get tired of the demons, it costs a whole lot to get rid of them. I mean, it costs a lot to get, to feed, and then to get rid of them. The whole thing is so expensive. Financially, it's very expensive; emotionally, relationally, it's just a bad deal.

And so, some people presume on God's kindness and go into darkness for a while, knowing they can come out, but they don't really know what they're playing with. And they don't really know the danger of what might happen inside of them, but here's the good news: God doesn't lose enthusiasm; He suffers long with us.

THE MOST REJECTED AND ACCUSED PERSON IN HISTORY

Paragraph H. He abounds in goodness. He abounds in goodness. God is the most rejected and the most accused Person in human history. There have been more accusations and rejections of Him by more people, but He maintains the posture of planning abounding goodness to anyone who will change.

Now, He relates that way to unbelievers, but He also relates that way to believers when they go through good and bad seasons; He abounds in good plans for you. He is entirely committed to your greatness and to your fullness. Beloved, this is the God that we relate to. This is the Man, Christ Jesus, who is fully God and fully Man.

THE MOST HIGH IS THE MOST ZEALOUS FOR WEAK ONES LIKE US

Paragraph I. He says to Moses, "Tell them that My name is Jealous. I have deep emotions to protect My people and to protect My relationship with my people. I will protect them against the enemies who assault them, and I will even protect them against their own compromise. I will break in to wake them up, because I love them that much. They can still say no, but I will break in. I will intervene."

The Most High God is the most zealous for weak people. I mean, normally when someone has great pomp and grandeur and glory, they aren't so interested in the little ones, but the Most High is the most zealous for the weak ones like us. It's remarkable.

THE TRUTH OF WHO GOD IS IMPARTS AND AWAKENS LOVE IN US

Paragraph J. God told Moses, “Moses, I’m just proclaiming My name to you. I’m proclaiming what I’m like to you.”

I believe Jesus is referencing this very experience that Moses had in John 17 when He prays before the Father, shortly before He dies on the cross. He said this: “Father, I will declare Your name to them, and I will keep declaring Your name to them in order to awaken love in their heart” (Jn. 17:11-12, paraphrased).

This sounds like what God told Moses. God told Moses, “I will declare My name to you,” and here Jesus, I believe, is referencing that very encounter. He’s saying, “God, I am the One who proclaims Your name, and here is My reason: to awaken love.” Why? Because when God reveals the truth about His heart, it imparts and awakens love in us. And so, as we understand, the Spirit is emphasizing these things to us. We never outgrow them, never. Again, if you’ve been preaching on them for ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years, it doesn’t matter; you’re still at the beginning of the beginning of the ocean of the reality of God’s mercy. It’s so much bigger than we will ever be able to exhaust in this life. We will never, ever plummet the depths of the truth of how merciful He is; there is none like Him. And the Spirit is emphasizing these truths to us as individuals. And the Spirit is emphasizing these truths so that we can bring them to others in our ministry to them. Then He wants us to reflect these very characteristics in our own behavior and actions towards other people. And all of this together is called the glory of God.

Amen. Let’s stand.