

“Son of the Living God”

A sermon taken from Matthew 16:13-20
given by Pastor Donat Boucher
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I want to read a quick verse in Amos chapter 4, verse 12. It's actually not even the whole verse because the Lord is reaching out to Israel and Israel is not responding. He's saying, you know, you're not responding. Just the words of this verse are what I really want to glean from, but not the context of what He was saying because you're all going to respond quite well, so I'm not afraid of that. But He says, “prepare to meet your God.” And I think every time we gather as a church, as an assembly, as a fellowship, I think that should be the quest always. Prepare to meet your God. That doesn't mean at death, we will meet Him face to face then. But each and every time we gather, we have that opportunity to meet our God. Amen?

Our Father, we do thank You for this day, Lord. We just give You all the glory and the praise. We thank You for the time of worship. You are an awesome God. You are worthy of our praise, Lord, and of our attention. Lord, we just thank You for all that You're doing. We thank You, Lord, that You're the One who is working in us and through us what You desire of us. Lord, that it is Your hand that is upon us, guiding us, leading us, empowering us, giving us the desire to know You. God, we're just so grateful that You don't just meet us where we are, Lord, but You extend Yourself to us. That, as we looked at Wednesday, You bow down to feed us. And Lord, even today, we look to be fed by You, Lord, and we're sitting at Your table, and we know that You are always the host when You are present. And so, Lord, we know that You will be all of that for us, Lord God, and that You will feed us the portion that You have set aside before we even entered into this dining hall. You already had a plan, a purpose, and You had a meal that was set aside with our names on it, Lord. God, we ask that Your Holy Spirit would be the teacher, the guide, and the revealer of truth. We know that we get nothing unless You're doing it; unless You're ministering to us, Lord God, unless You're sometimes shouting in our ears and sometimes just whispering in that still small voice, Lord. We just thank You, Father God, for Your mercies that are new every day, Your overwhelming grace, Your love that's immeasurable. And we thank You, Lord God, for each one that comes out, to just be drawn closer to You. To hear objectively the teaching of Your Word. And Lord, I pray God that Your Holy Spirit would teach, and that I would hide behind Christ, Lord, that we would hear as the word of God and not the word of

man. We thank You for Your word. We thank You for how You lay it out so perfectly, Lord. We know that You, Lord Jesus, are the answer to every question, the solution for every problem. So Lord, help us. Father God, to just know You in a deeper way and that we would meet You here this morning. So we love You, we praise You and we ask this in Christ's name. Amen.

You can open your Bibles to Matthew's Gospel. We're in chapter 16. "Son of the Living God" is what I titled it. It's easy to find the titles when the messages are as clear as could be in the Word itself. The context of this, "the Lord is on His way." He's actually on his way to the Mount of Transfiguration but He's going to really instill in them His teaching that He's going to the cross. It was a difficult thing for them to receive so the Lord just kept ministering it to them, kept ministering to them, kept ministering to them. So it's important that they know who He is and what He's all about as they're going to see the transfiguration. Well, three of them will. And they're going to experience the Lord in ways that they never did before. But Jesus wants them to know who He is.

1 John 5:13 says, these things have been written to you so that you may *know* that you have what? Eternal life, that you have eternal life. And so it's interesting, growing up in religion, you know, when you are asked, "do you know Jesus?" "Well, I know of him." But do you know Him? I could not say that I knew Him and I certainly didn't know that I had eternal life. But as the Lord ministers to our hearts, when we receive the revelation that Peter received, when we get that, there is absolutely no turning back from that. When you see that, you accept that, you embrace the revelation of Jesus Christ, it's a transformation. It's a transformation. Me and Brother Keith were talking yesterday, and he was saying the same testimony as me, like, I didn't want to change. I didn't want my life to change. I wanted Jesus just to come alongside and be my Savior. I wanted that insurance against hell. I certainly didn't want to go there. I wanted to go to heaven and I just wanted the Lord to come alongside me. And I literally said, I don't want to lose my friends. I don't want to lose my lifestyle. I just want the Lord to be a part of my life. Well, it doesn't work that way! God doesn't ask you, well, what would you like Me to take? What would you like Me to give? How would you like to live your life now that you're born again? He doesn't ask. He just continues to pour Himself out upon us, and the transformation takes place within us, there's no denying it, and you can't help but change. Even if you don't want to. I did not want to. I always think of Psalm 2. The Lord sits in the heavens, and He laughs. He must have got a kick out of me, I'm telling you! "Okay, Donat, yep, you don't want to change, I get it. Oh, yeah, yeah, okay, I'll just be your co-pilot for now, okay? That'll be good." "Oh, yeah, Lord, that'll be awesome." And God just laughs.

I'll tell you one thing, He gave me a hunger for His word. I read my Bible every day. I just had a hunger to know Him. And that hunger hasn't subsided in any way. Actually, it's getting greater. I want to know Him more now. I don't want to go to heaven yet. I

know, I know, it sounds weird. But I don't. Because I'm seeing the Lord in ways here that I'm not going to see there. I'm not going to see that, and I'm enjoying getting to know Him more and more. Philippians 3:10, the Apostle Paul said his desire was to know Him, to know Him. Even though it was through the fellowship of His suffering and the power of His resurrection, I just want to know Him. In knowing Him is when the transformation takes place. Salvation is a foundation. That's just the foundation. But then the Lord builds upon that, and it's that building and that continuous growing that I like. Because I get to see the Lord in ways that I've never seen Him before.

According to Mark and Luke, they were traveling on to another city, another town, and they stopped along the way. And the Lord just sits down with His disciples, and He starts to ask them a question, well, "Who do people say that I am?" And He gets into this little dialog with them, but what the Lord reveals in just these short verses is so awesome; about his church, about the fellowship, about the transformation, about the revelation. And it's just so powerful in those short verses that I don't want us to miss that. So we're going to begin in chapter 16, verse 13. We're only going to go to verse 20. I'll read it all, and as always, we'll just circle back. It says, "now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, 'who do people say that the Son of Man is?'" And they said, "oh, some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, but still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." And then He said to them, "but who do *you* say that I am?" Church, that is the most important question that you need to answer. So many people give so many different responses that are not in line with true salvation, but Peter does. Watch this. Verse 16. Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter." He changes his name. He was Simon before. He says, you're Peter. He says, "and upon this Rock, I will build my Church." This is the first time the Church is mentioned. He says, I will build my Church "and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ. He's admitting, of course, He's the Christ. But did they see that He was the Christ?

The Messiah is more than human. He is God. Isaiah chapter 9, verse 6. It talks about how He's the Prince of Peace. He is the Father. He's God himself. Jeremiah 23:5-6. Micah 5:2, that Messiah would be born of a virgin. He would be born in Bethlehem. All these things Jesus fulfilled. But did they know that? Did they understand that? "The Son of the living God."

Jesus was taking His disciples towards the destination of another revelation, which was the transfiguration and how they saw it. He said, some of you will not die until you see the kingdom. It was just a picture of the kingdom. Elijah shows up. Moses shows up. It

always blows me away that they knew who they were. Peter's like, you want me to make a tent for Elijah and Moses? Like, did they bring their card? I mean, how did you know? Check the license at the door? How did you know? Because in the Spirit, we know. We know. When we get to heaven, I truly believe we will know. We will know. When we see Paul walking around trying to hog all the time with Jesus, we'll know. We'll know! So He begins by saying they're going to Caesarea Philippi, which is a Gentile town once again. The Jews, the religious leaders, had rejected Jesus as their Messiah, and so He now was going to the Gentiles, and He was drawing many, many of them. He says, "who do people say the Son of Man is?" A title that the Lord had given Himself and uses quite often. The Son of Man. Listen, He's the Son of God, too. But He became one of us. And so He called himself the son of man. What a humbling statement. What a humbling name He gave Himself.

Man wants to be God. Listen, if Jesus Christ isn't your Lord and Savior and He's not your God, then you have another God. And it's most likely called self. Most of the time it's self. And it's like man is striving so much because that's what Satan did. He wanted to be exalted. He wanted to be God and people have been worshiping themselves for so long. Yet Jesus comes and He calls Himself not the Son of God, but the Son of man. It just blows me away. Those are the things that the Lord shows us, and that's why I say that I'm not going to get that when I'm in heaven. I'm going to know, I want it now. And it's just so awesome.

They said "some say John the Baptist." You remember Herod believed that Jesus was John the Baptist, you know, reincarnated, that he came back. So some obviously may have believed that He was John the Baptist. He says "others say Elijah." We know that Elijah is coming back. He'll refer to that again in chapter 17. Well, we know that John the Baptist, (had they accepted Jesus as Messiah), would have been the fulfillment of the Elijah. But yet they didn't. So there is an Elijah that comes back.

When we did a mock Seder, a Seder is the Jewish feast when they would have their last supper. They would get together. We put these meals together. We had two of them. We invited the rabbi, the local rabbi that came. Rabbi Elliot was the first one. He was awesome. Rabbi Mark was good too. But Elliot came the first time and recited the prayers in Hebrew. It was cool. There would always be an empty chair. So when they did the Seder, and they would have it in their home, they would keep an empty chair, and they believe Elijah would come at the end of time, and he would come to set up the end, and they kept an empty chair. So it made sense that some people would say Elijah, maybe thinking that Jesus is that fulfillment of Elijah. Maybe that's who He is. Maybe not. Then "some say Jeremiah." Jeremiah was the weeping prophet. Jesus was the man of sorrow. I don't know, was there a correlation there, why they thought He was Jeremiah? Jeremiah also proclaimed that the judgment was coming. Jesus mentioned

that more than once. He mentioned hell more than heaven, so they knew something was coming.

Then he says, but “others say the prophet.” There was a prophet that Moses had predicted in Deuteronomy 18:18. It says, “I will put my words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.” There was a prophet that was coming. It's Jesus. It was Jesus. He was the prophet to come but they didn't make that connection at that time, and when Peter spoke he spoke for all of them. He was the spokesman. It's not like one of them got up and said, “No Pete, that's not true!” I think they all felt what Peter was saying was true. So when He said “but who do you say that I am,” when the word is said “You are the Christ”... The Christ means the anointed one. Okay? But do you know what else it means? Messiah. He was proclaiming Jesus as Messiah. You're the Messiah, the Holy One of God. What a proclamation that Peter makes. It was a divine revelation. We use that word often here. We say unless God gives you a revelation of Himself, you cannot know Him.

Man does not decide their day of salvation. Galatians 4:4 says, “In the fullness of the times, God sent forth His son, born of a woman,” to come at a specific time. That time was the coming of Jesus Christ, born in a manger, in Bethlehem, at that specific time over 2,000 years ago. But that same principle holds true for us when it happens to us. “When did I get saved?” In the fullness of time when God sent forth His son to come and dwell to live in *this* “temple”, and He allowed *His* Spirit, the Holy Spirit in Romans 8, to bear witness to *my* spirit, the spirit that He quickened by His breath, and revealed to me that I'm a child of God. That's when the transformation began. I don't have a date. I don't have a spiritual birthday. I don't know. I know I say this all the time. You heard me say my baptism made a difference. For me, it was... When I got dunked and I came back, I was still in my mess and I was still struggling. I am not saying that was salvation. Salvation, I would say, was before that. Salvation, in the spiritual new birth... the picture that God gives us is the natural birth. So there is a conception, something that happens, right? These two little fishies or whatever they are... and all of a sudden there's a seed. I'm not giving you a class on this, okay? You can look it up when you go home! But something happens and then it begins to grow. I believe that God, when He plants the seed within our hearts, there's something. It's not salvation yet but it's something that happens that moves us within our hearts, that is stirring us up.

The time period for the natural birth can be nine months. Carol's granddaughter was what? Four months? She was a pound and three ounces. I mean, we were praying and praying and praying. And she's a beautiful young lady now. It's amazing. But it doesn't have to be nine months, it could be at any time. And for some believers, it could be more than nine months. You could be in that state for a year or two before you really understand that the Lord has transformed your life. But when you can proclaim Christ as

the Messiah, as the Son of the living God... that's salvation. That's salvation. You can't deny that. It's a spiritual revelation, a divine revelation.

It's not an intellectual decision. That's why we can't say, "Oh, I'm going to say this prayer, and today's the day that I'm going to get saved because I feel like being born again today. I feel like being saved." It just doesn't work that way. I tell people all the time, that's why we don't do altar calls here, which I don't believe in because they're not biblical. But people that have gotten saved in this church... It's not because of man. It's because of a revelation. It's because God showed you and changed you. Man loves to take credit. We want to take credit for our own salvation. "Well, I invited Jesus into my heart when I was five years old and He's been there ever since." No, you didn't. You didn't know Jesus. Too many times I've heard that story and I'm just afraid that without that revelation, I don't see how. And I think this is the perfect text for that. Galatians 1 is another perfect text for that. It's revelation. It's what God is doing. It has to be a God thing. It's not a man thing.

Listen, it should be noted that there's been more than one confession of faith prior to this one. Nathanael had confessed Christ as the Son of God in John 1:49. He said, Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the king of Israel. That's pretty clear. And the disciples had declared Him God's Son after He stilled the storm in Matthew 14:33. They said, "You are certainly God's Son." Did they know that intellectually? Did they know that in their mind? It doesn't say they got a divine revelation, but they had a revelation. Peter had given confession of faith when the crowds left Jesus after His sermon on the bread of life. In John 6:68-69, he said, "You are the Holy One of God." That's Messiah. That's Messiah. In fact, when Andrew had brought his brother Simon, Peter, to Jesus, it was on the basis of this belief. In John 1:41, he said, "We have found the Messiah." Jesus is at a critical point in His ministry at this time with His disciples, and He wants to be sure. That's my heart. I want you to be sure. I don't want there to be a guess. You know, when people are, well, you know... "Are you a believer?" "Oh, I'm a believer." "You a true believer?" "I'm a true believer." "You born again?" "Oh, yeah, I'm born again." "Are you going to heaven?" "Well, I hope so.".... It should never be a "hope so." If I'm relying on "hope so," I'm afraid. I'm much afraid. "Do you know for sure that you're going to heaven?" "I think so." I'm not relying on my mind. No way. "The whole head is sick," Isaiah said in Isaiah 1:5. The whole head.

What am I relying on? I'm relying on God's promises and God's word according to God's Holy Spirit that He revealed Himself to me in such a way that it changed me and in an undeniable way, I know that I know that I know. My speech changed, and my thinking changed, and my actions changed, and what I didn't want to change changed. Everything that I thought I wouldn't change, changed. Your lifestyle changes. Your love for one another changes. Your love for your family changes. God does that work. That's undeniable. See, I can't deny the change in my life. I can't. And so I don't have to

convince somebody about salvation, and that Jesus is Messiah, and that Jesus is Lord, and sit there and try to, you know, pressure them into believing. I say, watch my life. Watch my life. If you knew me before and you knew me now, you'd be like, "there's a God... there is a God!" We can all say the same thing, especially some of us that lived that lifestyle, and we get to that place where we realize it had to be God. There was no other way this was going to happen if God didn't do it. Again, I didn't want to change. I was fine right where I was.

Jesus answered him and said to him, "blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah." That simply means son of Jonah. He said, "because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you." He talks about His church. The church is composed of all who are washed in Christ's blood, clothed in His righteousness, renewed by His spirit, and joined to Christ by faith. That's the fellowship of believers. That's the Church. All who belong to it are of one heart, of one mind. They hold the same truths. There's no division here. They hold the same truths and believe the same doctrine as necessary to salvation. There's only one way to get saved. It's a Church which has only one Head, and the Head is Jesus Christ, Colossians 1:18, and only one foundation, and it's Him. He talks to Peter, and He says, "I'm changing your name from Simon to Peter." Peter means Petras. It means a stone. And then He says, "but upon this Rock, I will build my church." That rock is Petra. That's a granite. That's a stone that is a massive stone that it's going to be built on. Some people have taken that to believe that Peter was the first pope, and Peter was the first leader, and Peter has the keys to heaven, and he's the one that opened it all up and that's why they think he's standing at the pearly gates, and none of that is true. None of it. You're going to have to trust me on this one. Jesus is the Rock.

I love 1 Corinthians 10:4. It talks about the rock that poured water out during the wilderness experience. And it says that rock followed them through their journey. And then it says that that rock was Christ. That rock was Christ. You are a stone. You are a stone that is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. A living stone, 1 Peter 2:5. We're all living stones. That's what Peter said he was. He's a living stone, and that the Lord was doing this work. Because Jesus is the Son of God, Satan can never prevail against those who are His own, and death cannot conquer Jesus' own. The Old Testament scripture recognized the rock as a symbol of God so many times, so many times. Let me give you just a few examples. In Deuteronomy 32:4, I love this verse, it says, "He is the Rock, His work is perfect." Isn't that awesome? "The Lord is my Rock and my fortress," Psalm 18:2. In Psalm 18:31 it says, "For who is God? Save the Lord. And who is a Rock? Save our God." Jesus Christ is the foundation rock on which the church is built. In Psalm 118:22, "the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." That's the rejection of Christ by the religious leaders. But yet if you put faith in Him, He's the chief cornerstone.

You know what that means? He's holding it all together. It's all built upon Him. 1 Corinthians 3:11, for no man can lay a foundation other than that one which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. This is the foundation that was laid by the apostles and the prophets as they preach Christ Jesus. He says the gates of hell, the gates of Hades will not prevail. For all the people that ask, is there evil in the world today? There's evil in the world today. There's plenty of evil in the world today. We see it. Do we have to fear it? Absolutely not, Satan has no power. If God took a step back, if He removed the hedge like he did with Job, you would see the power that Satan has. Satan killed all of Job's kids, totally annihilated all his wealth, took all his livestock, took down his business, I mean, tore everything apart... his wife, who, I mean, God bless her, I can't blame her, but she was like, "just curse God and die, otherwise we're all going down." I mean, she lost ten of her kids. That's quite a trial. Then because Satan said "skin for skin, man will do anything to live," God said, "listen, you can do anything to him, but you can't take his life." You know what that tells me? Satan can take a life if God allows it. He said you can't take his life. So he gave him these boils upon his whole body. I had one friend of mine who had one on his leg. He said it was the most painful thing he's ever experienced. And Job had them from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. And he didn't curse God. He didn't curse God. Instead, his testimony was, "I had heard Him in the hearing of my ears, but now my eyes have seen Him." You know what Job had? He had a revelation. He had a revelation that changed his life.

Job was righteous. Job was a good guy. He helped the poor, he always took care of the family. He was rich. He had wealth. He was a good guy. He stood at the city gate and he was one of the judges. He was a good guy but he didn't see Christ as the all-sufficient one. When he did, his whole life changed. His friends that came to comfort him, that didn't comfort him, he prayed for them. He prayed for them. What a transformation in his life. The only time Satan has power over you or me is when God removes the hedge. And if he does, it's for a reason. I'll never forget what Ed said. Ed said, "I think if we asked Job when we get to heaven, 'Job, was it worth going through everything you went through?'" He would say, "it sure was." Because he's seen the Lord, I think, in a way that you and I may never see Him. Because we'll never suffer the loss that he lost. That's why when God does things in our lives, when He allows the trials in our lives, when He allows the calamities in our lives, it's always to draw us closer. It's always for us to have keener eyesight. I'm nearsighted. I can see good close, but far away, I don't know who's out there. But I put my glasses on and I can see clearly. I can see you. But the point is, the Lord allows these things in our lives so that we can see Him clearer.

So gates of Hades is simply the realm of the dead. That's what Hades is. By His death and resurrection, Jesus would conquer death so that death would not be able to hold any of His people. So what is death for you and me? Sleep. It's sleep. It's not annihilation. It's not... we go to sleep. It's a short nap. Because as soon as my eyes close and my heart stops, I'm in heaven. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." Present with the

Lord. So the power of Satan can never destroy the people of Jesus Christ. It cannot. The mystical body of Christ shall never perish or decay. So the true church never dies. Never dies.

When all the persecution came in AD 70, what the history books tell us is that they crucified over a million Jews during that time. Are you kidding me? And they left them on the cross until they died. And they thought, “the church is dead. It'll never survive.” But Fox's book of Martyrs tells us that it was the blood of the saints that was the seed of the church. That the more they persecuted it, the more it grew. That's God's plan. That's God's perfect plan. We look at it in the natural and we go, oh, the church is dying. It's going away. No, it isn't. The Church is thriving. This revival is going on all around this world. We don't see it. You're not going to see it on Channel 12, I can tell you that. Or even cable news, you're not going to see it. But it's going on. God is moving. And you know what group of people He's moving in? In the Muslims. God's saving them. He's giving them dreams and He's changing their lives. Listen, for them to make a statement of faith and say that I am born again now and I believe Jesus Christ as Messiah, you know what the penalty is? They die. We think, say a little prayer. Say a little prayer. Go to a comfortable church. Get your ears tickled and you'll be fine. I ain't telling you that! I'm saying forget the prayer. Seek the Lord with all your heart. Just keep seeking Him until you know that you have Him. And if you keep showing up, which is what I keep telling everybody, “just show up, just show up, just show up.” And you know what happens when you keep showing up? Oh, you got changed. See? I told you. Now you can be mad at me for that. I don't care.

Acts 2:44, He brings His people together and gives us all things in common. Jesus said, “I will build.” You know, I had people say to me, (guys I was in Bible college with), “Oh, you're a church planter.” I go, “I didn't plant nothing.” Listen, I didn't have the seed. I didn't have the willingness. I didn't plant nothing. This is what God did... I said, “I'm going to start a Bible study in my house and just see what happens.” Ta-da. That's what happened. That's what happened. You can't stop that. You can't. Listen, He builds on a firm foundation, on a Rock. He said, “I will build.” He said, build what? “My church.” He didn't say, *your* church, “*my* church.” You know why? The church isn't a building. It's you. It's each one of us. That's the church. It's each one of us.

The Son of the living God. The shadows of Calvary were beginning to gather and the Lord desired to prepare His friends for all that it stood for. Listen, I don't know when the end, when the rapture will be, I don't know any of that. I know this. When you just have the heart of Christ and you're looking at the days we live in, it could be any time. I hope it isn't, but it could be any time. Be prepared. Son of the living God. Be prepared. Know for sure. He gives Peter these keys, keys to the kingdom. The key is a badge of authority. It's the kingdom of heaven. It's not heaven. He didn't give him keys to heaven. He gave him keys to the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is in our midst. It's among

us. It's here. You're living in it. So what were his keys? They were authority. Authority for what? To open the doors of faith. Peter did that in Acts chapter 2 at the time of Pentecost when he preached the sermon. It says 3,000 people got saved. Remember, they thought they were drunk because they were speaking in their own language, and everyone understood them in their language. It was an amazing time. He also gave him another revelation for the Samaritans in Acts 8:14. It says, "Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John." They opened the door for the Samaritans to come to faith. Acts chapter 10, Cornelius' house, Peter opened the door again for the Gentiles to come to faith.

Then Paul would take the mantle, he would open it up for those that were living outside of Palestine, for the Gentiles. God took a legalistic Pharisee, and would teach him the revelation of Jesus Christ, and teach him the grace of God, so that he would be the proclaimer of God's grace. Now listen. If I was God, and as Ed would say, "I speak as a fool," Paul would be the last one. No, he was persecuting. He had them killed. He cast a vote for Stephen's death penalty. God says, that's the perfect one that I'm going to choose. God is so amazing. Listen, you know how Paul got his Galatians chapter 1? This is how Paul got saved. We know it was when he was on his way to Damascus, but then, and I love this, it says, "but when God"... This is Paul, writing to the church in Galatia... he says, "but when God... had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, was pleased," (wait for it), "to reveal His Son to me that I might preach Him according to the Gentiles." Who revealed it to him? Oh, he said a prayer and God just... no! He was going to persecute the church. But then he realized after, God chose to reveal His Son to him and He reversed it all.

Binding or loosing to a Jew, meant to impose or release from a legal obligation or penalty. So the binding and loosing has already taken place in heaven. Kenneth Weiss's Bible translation says this, whatever you bind on earth, forbid to be done, shall have already been bound, already been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, permit to be done, shall already have been loosed in heaven. They do on earth whatever God has already willed. That's all you can do. You can't change that. The church does not get God's will done in heaven. It obeys God's will on earth. It's Matthew 6:10, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." As it is in heaven.

Let me close with this. There are only two systems of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is how to study God's Word. There are only two ways. One is in the flesh, flesh and blood. The other one is a revelation from Jesus Christ. You can study the Bible. You can get all the Greek lexicons you want. You can break down all the Greek words, look at all the tenses, and tell me exactly what it says. You can get that, and not get Jesus. But if you're looking to Christ, you can get a simple thing, like I said at the beginning, which wasn't even in the right context, "prepare to meet your God." That's what stuck out to me. No, they weren't obeying. They weren't coming to the Lord. You weren't coming. You

weren't coming. He said, "prepare to meet your God." We all need to be prepared to meet our God. I pray we met Him here this morning. Listen, one is natural and one is supernatural. Revelation from God is heart knowledge. You know that you know that you know. You don't need a Bible degree for that. You just know.

It's the difference between knowing God and knowing about God. You've heard that before. Many people know about God. "I know about God. I know about Jesus. Yeah, He came, He died, He's the savior of the world. I know that." That was me before I was saved. "I know that. I know that." Then I got saved... I was like, I knew nothing! Listen, until you get it from God, you don't have it. Paul's principle that he laid down, again, I read it in Galatians chapter 1. God set him apart from his mother's womb and called him through grace, and it pleased Him to reveal His son to him. Amen? I pray that God reveals His Son. Let's pray.

Lord, we're so grateful that You continue to pour out Your spirit upon people, opening our eyes to see You high and lifted up, the Holy One of Israel, the Son of the living God. To see You, the only One that could provide Jesus Christ to our spirit and see truly that He is the Savior. There is no one else. There's nothing else. And God, we're glad You keep reminding us, we are a forgetful people. We're thankful, Lord, that You continue to remind us of truth, that You loved each one of us and called us out of darkness into Your light. We pray, Lord, that Your Spirit continues to reveal more of Yourself, that the reality of heaven would be seen on this earth by Your people, that we would truly walk in the light that You have given us, realizing that You are continually feeding us truth, confirmation and confidence in who You are. In Christ's name, Amen.