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Genesis

Chapter 18 - God's Merciful Visitation

Shall I Hide? (vs. 16-21)

Genesis 18:16-21: Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off. The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”

And the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

Well, in many respects, this is such an applicable passage because it reminds us of how God visits us, and it gives this graphic picture in the tangible of the visitation of Christ. What a magnificent picture when you think about it, that God would come and visit you. Well, where does He visit you? Well, what's interesting is in the passage in Chapter 18, He visits you at the door under the tree. And as we spoke about this, it's a good reminder, as Revelation 3:20 says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." It's your door. It was Abraham's tent door. It was where he lived. "Tent" is an interesting metaphor for skins and your flesh. And so, it's an interesting picture of God knocking at your heart's door and saying, "You want to let Me in? Can we eat together?" It's actually stated there in Revelation 3:20. And the question is, will you receive Him? So, where do you meet? Well, you meet at your door under the tree. And of course, you meet Him at the cross, don't you? So, it is an invitation that He gives. Who does He meet with? Clearly, those who are receptive to Him. And what you see clearly at the beginning of this

particular chapter is the receptivity of Abraham running, rushing, as we put the question down, "What's the rush?" And the rush is that the Savior's come. You know, sometimes you introduce people to the Gospel and they go, "What's the rush?" And you go, "Today, if you hear the voice, don't hesitate. Today, open up the door." So, it is clearly a wonderful picture of that receptivity to the gospel, of course. When you see the disciples being sent out, Jesus goes, "Go to the house and say, 'Who's worthy?' And if they're not, move on." You say, "Well, that's expecting the people to make a decision right away." Yeah. Because right away demonstrates a desire. If in fact you say something like, "I'm going to think about it," it's just like somebody hesitating about saying that they love somebody. "You know, let me think about it." So, obviously at that particular juncture they don't really love that individual. So, you see that, and you see Christ coming into this picture not only to a place that is receptive of Him, but He comes with an interesting message, and the message is that there's going to be life. But ultimately the message is, and we have it under the heading, "What's so funny?" Because of course, in this

particular message that is given, Sarah's going to have a child at the age of 90. So, she laughs at this and He goes, "What's so funny? Is anything too hard for God?" And I remember the time that I finally came to that comprehension. Now, once again, I don't fully understand all of the ramifications of it, but I remember coming to that point of going, "Nothing's too hard for God. Why am I questioning Him?"

If you look in verse 14, clearly the statement is, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time, it's going to happen." And you go, "He seems so sure of Himself." Well, I guess it's because He controls everything. So, an interesting message. He declares nothing is impossible for Him. And ultimately, as we come into this passage we're going to be looking at, He clearly reveals His greatest and His great purpose to those that He loves.

I was thinking this past week, when you consider the passage in which it seems as if the question is being asked out loud in verse 17,

(Genesis 18:17) “The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?”

And the question is, why would God hide anything that He's about to do? And really, throughout Scripture, there are multiple reasons why God does hide from us certain things.

Let me just kind of give you a list of them. One is in John 16.

(John 16:12) “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”

There are some things that are actually too overwhelming for us. Jesus says to His disciples, “Many are the things I have to say to you, but you can't handle them now.” And it is the grace of God.

You know, when you read the Book of Daniel, you begin to read of this individual and he says, “Man, I want insight. I want insight. I want to know.” So, God just starts throwing all these things at him. And there's a point where he goes, “I was sick for days.” And you realize he couldn't even get up. And you realize how powerful some

of these things are. And it really is God's grace. I'm glad that he doesn't give me too much information. Connie and I have oftentimes talked about the fact that how we're actually glad that God didn't tell us when we're going to die. I don't want to know. I just want to live my life. Because you'd be thinking about that one day your whole life. You'd just be fixated on that. So, it really is the grace of God. And it's one of the reasons why God does not reveal certain things to us. Also, there is a sense of God doesn't reveal things to us because it doesn't concern us. I think one of the big problems of our world is that we're connected to the world. So, if somebody murders somebody in China, we know it. And the world begins to put all this stuff on us that, quite frankly, we were never meant to know. However, it builds up anxiety, of course, you know, fear sells. It's one of the reasons why the world conjures these things up, because in fact, "If you want to be safe, you have to buy our product." So, the world is going to be destroyed; you need to get an alarm system. You'll feel safe if you do that. But the problem is that ultimately it doesn't concern us. And so, God says, "I'm not going to give you this information."

A good example of that is Daniel 12. In which He turns to Daniel, He goes, "Okay, you see all this information?" Daniel goes, "Yeah." He says, "Close the book." And His point is, "It doesn't concern this generation. The things that I've told you doesn't concern this generation. We'll open it up later." Of course, you have the Book of Revelation that begins to be opened up for us. And so, it not only doesn't concern you, but doesn't concern the things that you're concerned with. Because we know that God clearly will accomplish, as the psalmist says, that which concerns us. So, obviously at this particular juncture, and there are times in our lives where that doesn't concern us, then I would say beyond that, God will withhold things because it just plain doesn't benefit you. Every good and perfect gift comes from above, and God knows what's best for us. And it's just like a parent raising a child. You know, it's not going to do any good to sit down with a five-year-old and talk to him about taxes. I mean, why does a kid need to know? It's not going to benefit him in any way. He's not going to go out and figure up his own taxes. So, the point is that it ultimately doesn't benefit you.

And there's an interesting passage that we oftentimes go to. It's found in Deuteronomy 29, if you turn there with me. Some of you are already saying the verse, Deuteronomy 29:29, right?

Deuteronomy 29:29 declares this,

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us...”

Sometimes we stop there. Let's just read a little bit further,

“... and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.”

Now, what he's telling us is that the law He revealed to us, why? For our good.

If you back up into Deuteronomy 28, here again, we won't go through all of it, but if you look at Deuteronomy 28,

(Deuteronomy 28:1) “Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.”

Which is, I would say, a benefit.

(Deuteronomy 28:2) "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:"

And so, he goes on,

(Deuteronomy 28:3) "Blessed shall you be in the city..."

(Deuteronomy 28:4) "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body..."

(Deuteronomy 28:5) "Blessed shall be your basket..."

You know, I mean, blessed, blessed, blessed. The point of the matter is that there were hidden things that He didn't reveal. But obviously, according to this passage, the words of the law are things that He did reveal. Why? Because it benefits. It gives you blessings. It is the blessings of God.

And then I would say, last but not least, one of the reasons why God would not reveal certain things to you would be that it would actually bring greater condemnation upon you.

If you turn with me to Isaiah 29,

(Isaiah 29:9) “Be delayed and wait,
Blind yourselves and be blind;
They become drunk, but not with wine,
They stagger, but not with strong drink.

(Isaiah 29:10) For the LORD has poured over you a spirit
of deep sleep,
He has shut your eyes, the prophets;
And He has covered your heads, the seers.

(Isaiah 29:11) The entire vision will be to you like the
words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the
one who is literate, saying, “Please read this,” he will say,
“I cannot, for it is sealed.”

(Isaiah 29:12) Then the book will be given to the one who
is illiterate, saying, “Please read this.” And he will say, “I
cannot read.””

Now, why would God do that? I've oftentimes seen people, they open up the Scripture, we're reading it together, and they go, “I have no idea what that's talking about.” We read another passage, “I don't know what He's talking about.” And it really is the grace of God because they have not yet received the Spirit of God, the

Spirit of truth that reveals these things to them. And once again, you're not going to understand everything immediately, but as you begin to dig and hunger for righteousness, as the Spirit will do that within you, you'll discover the wonderful treasures that God has prepared for you. He'll reveal that truth. And so, interestingly enough, to the world, it's a closed book. And that's why you have these, academic nuts, macadamia nuts. That's why you have these people in universities and they begin to declare certain passages of Scripture. And I'm going, "They have no idea what they're talking about." Paul will talk about Pharisees who make confident assertions about things that they don't understand. And so, you have all these educated people making confident assertions about Scripture, and they have no understanding about it because it's a closed book to them. The reason why God closes the book to them is because had He opened the book, and they go, "I get it," now they're culpable for the sins that they go against. So, that's why Scripture will say over and over again, like Matthew 13:13, that Christ would speak only to the multitudes in parables. Why? Because they weren't

receiving it yet. And so, once you receive it, now you're responsible to obey it. And certainly, it was the grace of God that was withholding these things to them. And I oftentimes think of the passage in 2 Peter 2:21 where he says it would have been better for them not to have known the way of truth. You wouldn't think Scripture would actually say, "It'd be better that you don't read the Bible." But I've actually told people that. You probably don't want to read it right now because you're not accepting it. If you come with an open heart to the things of God and just listen to Him, how wonderful and transformative it is in your life. So, interesting points: too overwhelming, doesn't concern you, would not benefit you, and would clearly bring greater condemnation upon you. So, God would withhold that information.

So, who does God reveal things to? Well, if you look in the passage that we're looking at, God is revealing to Abraham these truths. And in certain respects, see, he falls in line with Amos 3, which God says, "I'm not going to do anything unless I reveal to My servants, the prophets." And so, He reveals it to them; as well as Jesus will say to

His disciples in John 15, "You are My friends. So, no longer do I call you slaves. You're My friends, and I'm going to tell you what the Father's plan is." So, He begins to reveal to them in John 15, 14-15 His wonderful plans for them in that. So, God's going to reveal His secrets and His plans to His people that will be responsible in these things. And it was kind of, once again, if you kind of are antithetical to the list that we just gave, "Why wouldn't He?" You also realize that "Why would He?" And the first on the list would be because it'd benefit you. And so, God is revealing something to Abraham because it's benefiting to him. And one of the first things He says, if you think about it within the passages, is, "I'm going to bring your life into your family. Your wife is going to have a child." So, the first thing that He talks about is life. The second thing that He'll talk about is the judgment of the world. And it's the graciousness of God to reveal to us as well, you know, I was thinking about the ministry of Christ, you saw the resurrection of Lazarus before you saw the crucifixion of Christ. And it's the graciousness of God to reveal to us His greatness and His ultimate plan. And it's something that we know as believers that causes us to

have hope. Though we grieve, we don't grieve as those who have no hope, but we believe that Christ is coming for us. So, there's this great sense of graciousness that God is visiting us with, even in the bad news, so to speak. But if, in fact, it will benefit us, then God is going to reveal it to us, His servants. He's going to reveal it to us, His friends. If, in fact, it concerns us. And in this particular passage, He's going to be talking about the whole issue of Sodom and Gomorrah and the destruction of Sodom. And you say, "Well, why would He tell Abraham?" And really, the dialogue is, "Should I hide this from Abraham, what I'm about to do?" And the answer is no, because it concerns him. And why does it concern him? Because Lot lives there. And we keep coming back to that passage in which God says, "I'm going to involve Myself and I'm going to tell you and I'm going to accomplish that which concerns you. I know that you're concerned about this." So, because it concerns us, and I think that's a great comfort to us as believers, to know that God is working on our behalf because we are His friend, as Abraham is described as such. And He's not going to hide such a thing.

The passage says, if you look in Genesis 18:16,

“Then the men rose up...”

Of course, we know that two of the men are angels, one of them being Christ. There's three men altogether.

Just to remind you, in Genesis 19:1,

“Now the two angels...”

So, it defines exactly who they are.

But if you look in this passage,

(Genesis 18:16) “Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom...”

We know that this is where their focus is.

“... and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.

(Genesis 18:17) The LORD said...”

Once again, it's all capital, “L-O-R-D”.

Let me just make this point as well; the name of God is not defined until Exodus. So, actually, Abraham would not know to call Him “Yahweh” or “Jehovah,” or actually comes from the derivative of “yahweh,” which means to exist, “the self-existent one”. He would not know the

name. So, that's one of the reasons why Abraham, though at somewhere along this line in conversation, he might understand that this is God that he's talking to, he will not refer to Him as His proper name because he does not know it yet. It will be revealed to Moses. Now, you say, "Well, why is it written in Genesis this way?" And I would say, because Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. And so, Moses goes, "I know who it is," and he gives us His name. So, anyway, long story.

But verse 17,

"The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,

(Genesis 18:18) since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?"

In other words, "I'm inviting him, he's My friend, in on the process." Why would God visit you with information? Why would God tell you certain things and reveal to you certain things? Well, obviously it'd be something that would benefit you. Obviously, it might be something that concerns you. But beyond that, it's God bringing you into

the work that He's called you to do. And so, if in fact He's revealing something to you, God's saying, "I want you to do something about it."

A number of years ago, somebody came up to my mother in the church and they said, "I think this is wrong in the church. I think they should be doing this." And they were right in a lot of the things that they were saying. They ought to be sharing more or caring more or something like that. It's a very general sense. And my mother looked at them, and she goes, "Well, the reason why you have the burden is because God wants you to do it." So, people sometimes wonder, "Why do I have such insight? Why doesn't anybody see this?" And I'm going, "Well, maybe that's your calling." So, you need to be sensitive to things that God has given you.

So, clearly, there's a purpose in which God is involving Abraham in this particular act. Now, what we're going to find is, one of the great ways in which He involves Abraham is in intercession. And as we'll go on to read in the text probably next week, is the intercessory prayer, because it really is a prayer, he's talking to God, on behalf

of the people of Sodom. And I would say this as well, it is interesting to me that we tend not to care for people that we really don't know. I mean, they are people, they exist, they have feelings, they hurt. But if we don't know them, I mean, we might say something like, "Well, that's sad." And then we go on with our life, you know. But when it's somebody that we're connected to, then we get involved. Well, Lot's smack dab in the middle of Sodom. So, once again, it's not only something that concerns him. Now, He's going to involve him in the work of salvation. The hope that somebody can be saved. Can we save somebody out of this? And our hearts begin to be stirred because our loved ones sometimes are mixed within something. And it's through that God begins to stir our hearts for other loved ones. Because we're so proxemic oriented, that if somebody's around us, then we really care, but if they're not, then we're just not really there.

So, within the passage, as it says,

(Genesis 18:18) "since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?"

In other words, “The ramifications of what I'm about to do and the foundation that I need him to set is being in play here. And so, I'm going to reveal this to him.”

(Genesis 18:19) “For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children...”

Look at the word there, “command,” which seems to be a sense of connection with what He's been saying at this point, that He's commanded him to be a blessing to the world, right? So, he's got to pass this command on. In other words, “I'm going to bless you; I'm going to make you a blessing.” Well, he's got to command this to his children. In other words, God has called us to be a blessing to others. And so, that's the great command that he has to pass on. And that command is to rescue, to save.

“For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness...”

And righteousness is often times directly connected, strangely enough, we oftentimes think of it as more legalistic thing, but righteousness is actually connected to

mercy. That's why the Pharisees would put money in to help the widows. It wasn't because they cared for the widows, but they knew that there was an act of outward demonstration of righteousness or mercy.

“... by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”

That is to say, to make him a blessing. Of course, ultimately, what the responsibility of Abraham is going to be is to preserve this blessing. And through the years, there is a sense of, “Abraham is our father. What did he believe?” And you begin to see the foundation, I would say.

Let me just show you how that plays out. Isaiah 51, if you'd turn there with me.

It reads this way in verse 1,

(Isaiah 51:1) “Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,

Who seek the LORD:

Look to the rock from which you were hewn
And to the quarry from which you were dug.

(Isaiah 51:2) Look to Abraham your father..."

What is He telling us? That's your foundation. You know, so many people declare Abraham as their father, even today. What we want to do is tell them, "Go back to the roots. What was Abraham doing? What did he do?" And it gives us a foundation for that, you know.

"Look to Abraham your father
And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain;
When he was but one I called him,
Then I blessed him and multiplied him."

What a great example of how God can take nothing and bring it into something. Is anything too hard for God? Is anything too difficult?

Go back to Abraham. Why did he receive the blessing? And the bottom line is, it's because he walked by faith. He trusted God. And so, you begin to see the characteristics of Abraham that are being drawn out of this.

And of course, He goes on and says in verse 4, “Pay attention, people. You need to do these same things.” So, His point within the passage is that “I called Abraham for this purpose. He has preserved this position for Me.”

(Genesis 18:20) “And the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.”

(Genesis 18:21) I will go down now...”

So, now we're in the singular, and obviously it's the Lord that's speaking. We see that in verse 20.

“I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

And I read that and I go, “Okay, You're God, You're omnipresent, why do You need to go down? Just stay there. No reason for You to see this.” Once again, it's in the sequential perfect within the text, but it's all connected in this passage that begins to reveal why He's doing this. So, let me see if I can explain it appropriately. When the Lord says in verse 20 that “The outcry of Sodom

and Gomorrah is indeed great,” I think immediately our perception is that it's an outcry of rebellion. And I'm not negating that. It could possibly be, and part of that outcry is. But the term “outcry” in Scripture, almost always, strangely enough, refers to distress. And so, the same thing is true when you go back to every thought of man was evil continually during the days of Noah. And there was a sense of distress because he uses phrases of those that were treacherous, that were coming upon him. The thought is that if people are steeped in their sin, then they're really, really happy. But the fact of the matter is, the more you get into your sin, the more miserable you become. And that's why people commit suicide. You go, “If you're so happy, why are you killing yourself?” They say, “Leave me alone. It's freedom.” But, you know, Scripture will say, “No, you're just putting yourself in prison.” The wages of sin is death. So, how does sin work in your life? It makes you more miserable till you die, because it's that which is destructive in your life. It's a destructive force. They say, over half, probably more, of homosexuals are suicidal. So, the question is, why is it that Christ is hearing outcry? And I would say He's hearing

distress. It's the pain. Here again, we automatically think that it's anger, and obviously anger is a part of the distress, but the misery and the bitterness that the sin is creating is developing an outcry that comes before the Lord.

You see it in Genesis 19:13 as well,

“For we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD...”

The passage says in Genesis 18,

“... “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.”

“*Kābad*” (grave) is this picture of oppression. The best way I can describe it is it's like a heavy weight on you. And so, I like the Hebrew language because it's so graphic, right? So, you take this heavy weight and you lay it on somebody. Now, they can't move. They can't get up. They can't do anything. So, Scripture will actually use this word to refer to the fact that somebody's in a position in which they're helpless, they're hopeless, they can't do anything.

And it actually defines that sense of, “And I can't help myself.” So, the sin has become so engrossed that it has taken over to the degree that people can't get out of it. That's an interesting picture, isn't it? They're so oppressed by the sins that they have committed, that they're at a point of no return.

If you look at the passage,

(Genesis 18:21) “I will go down now, and see...”

Which is probably as much experiential as it is visual. So, God actually wants to experience. Once again, the question goes and arises, why would Christ come to earth? And Hebrews will say He was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin. But we have a High Priest now that can sympathize with our weakness. Why? Because He's been there.

So, Him coming down and coming down for the purpose of experiencing,

“... and see if they have done entirely...”

Now, the word “entirely” is actually a word that means “termination”. So, if they've actually come to a point of

hopeless termination, is probably the way that it would be put.

“... according to its outcry...”

Watch this very interesting phrase,

“... which has come to Me...”

Now, once again, the reason why the phrase is interesting is because it's almost always used in terms of something coming into somebody's house. In other words, trouble is one thing. People will have trouble all over the world. But when trouble comes into your house, that's when you start doing something about it. Who's He talking about? Lot. “Trouble has come into My house. Lot.” You go, “Well, I don't know if Lot was a believer.” Well, here again, read 2 Peter 2:7. He rescued righteous Lot who was oppressed by the wickedness around him. So, what Scripture is clearly telling us is that, and even when you see the destruction in Revelation 18, you just see the destruction of Babylon; it says in Revelation 18:20, at the destruction of Babylon,

“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

In other words, why would God get Himself involved? “I must see personally the torment that My house is feeling.” And so, He doesn't just come in to destroy, but you've walked into His house. And as we'll go on to see in Genesis 19, you'll see the people coming in wanting to have relations with the angels, and they're pushing the door down. They're coming into His house. So, it's an interesting passage.

So, I think of 1 Chronicles 16:22,

“Do not touch My anointed ones,
And do My prophets no harm.”

Hebrews 11:7 talks about Noah, and it says that Noah prepared an ark for the salvation of his household.

And Peter will make an interesting statement, and the way the King James words it, it reads this way,

(1 Peter 3:20) “... eight souls were saved by water.”

Wait a minute. They were saved? See, God was saving Noah from the world by water. We think He was destroying the world. That wasn't His number one mission. His number one mission is that they came into His house; He was saving Noah. So, it's a wonderful and interesting picture within the passage. Obviously, what God is doing and revealing to us is that He desires to reveal things to us for a particular purpose. And let me just say this in a practical sense. Because you have a relationship with God, God desires to reveal things to you because He knows that He can trust you. And I would say this, He's looking for people that are faithful, that will handle accurately His word, as 2 Timothy 2:15 says, that will act responsibly in the way that they carry out His mission, and that they will care deeply for that which He's called them to do. God is looking, and He will visit you, and He'll lay something on your heart, and He'll say, "You need to do this." And oftentimes, it's in times of catastrophe.

When you consider the Book of Philemon, you have this interesting story of his slave, Onesimus, who stole from

him. But when Paul sees him in prison, he leads him to the Lord, and he then writes this letter to Philemon. He goes, "You need to receive him back." And he makes a statement, "Perhaps it was for this reason, that you might have a brother instead of a slave." Now, what happened was that Paul's eyes were opened to the purpose of what was going on. Everybody else was going, "I don't know, why did that happen? Why did it even happen?" And Philemon might have been at a point where he was wondering, "Why always me? Why did things get stolen from me?" But God was revealing to Paul the things.

The same thing is true with the church in Acts. You look in Acts 8 as well as in Chapter 11, in particular verse 19, you see the persecution of the church. And all these people out of Jerusalem are being spread out. But it actually tells you why, that the church was growing and that souls were being saved and the message was going to the Gentiles. I mean, how do you get a Jew to talk to a Gentile? You persecute them and get them out of the city, and they've got to go into other places, and they've got to have a neighbor, and there they are. So, the word of God

began. But those things are really, if you think about it, only revealed to those that are God's. Paul says when he writes to the Philippians, he goes, "You know, I've seen heaven." We know that he saw heaven. He actually was caught up in the third heaven. Fundamentally, "I've seen heaven. I'd really rather be there." But he goes on and says, "But God has revealed to me that I need to stay for you." And I would say, you know, sometimes something will happen, and here Paul is, and I just want to remind you, here he is. He's still in jail. So, right off the bat, "Just the way things are in my life, I'd rather be in heaven in many respects. But if I was in jail, I'd really rather be in heaven." See how that just kind of ups the desire? But it's in that context that he realizes that, and God reveals to him, "You need to be here for the Philippians." There are going to be things that happen to you that are difficult, that are hard to swallow, that you don't know why they're happening. Maybe it's a catastrophe in this place, a catastrophe in this place. But God's going to visit you. If you're receptive to Him, God's going to visit you; He's going to tell you why it's happening. And you're going to go, "I get it." And it may not always be just for you. Just

kind of warning you. Sometimes it might be for somebody else.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your work in our lives, and the fact that You desire to visit us, and to visit us with that which is not only a wonderful message of Your plan, but an involvement in it with You. You tell us that we can be co-laborers, and we realize that it's required of stewards that we be found faithful. And so, Lord, may we be faithful with the information that You give us. As You have embraced us, we have embraced You, and You began to open our eyes to things. Lord, help us not to be condemning with this information, but help us to be responsible with it in such a way that we would proclaim exactly what You would have us to proclaim with the people that You would have us proclaim it to. Open our eyes, Lord, to these things that You would reveal to us, and open our hearts that we would receive it appropriately.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. We're asking you to be responsive to Christ. I mean, remember, it started with Abraham's receptivity to the selfless, sacrificial Christ. If, in fact, you will do that, God will begin to open up doors. His first message to you is, "I'm going to bless you, and I'm going to make you great." His second message is, "This is how we're going to do it." It's going to surprise you. It's not always going to be seemingly on the onset, the best of news, but God is going to use it to do greater things than you could even ask or think. I mean, is anything too hard for God?