

12.21.25

Genesis
A Visit from God
Chapter 18 vs. 1

Genesis 18:1: Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

We're in the Book of Genesis, and we're also in the Book of Luke as well. But this is such an appropriate passage because it's literally a visit from God. I mean, I can't think of anything more amazing than that, than God visiting us, that whole name, Emmanuel, God with us. It's just inconceivable that the Creator of the universe would come to earth and have a relationship with us. It's just literally inconceivable! And yet, throughout the Old Testament, you see bits and pieces of His desire to do that. I mean, we know that He walked in the garden with Adam. We know as well that there was some communication as well as some physical presence with

Noah. God would even come down and look at the condition of the world, and He says, "I see that every thought of man, every intent that they have, is only wickedness and evil continually." And He does that same thing when He comes down and He looks at the city of the tower of Babel. It says He came down and went into the city. That's an interesting picture, isn't it? He did the same thing in Chapter 18 in which He'll go down to Sodom in this particular passage. But besides the fact of Him curtailing the wickedness and the evil that would literally be self-destructive in our lives and His saving mankind through all of that, you see Him in these personal snippets in the Old Testament. As we begin to read about Noah, He will literally shut the door for Noah. Scripture will tell us that He'll walk with Enoch, and it gives a sense of literal physical presence. Can you imagine that?

But there is no greater relationship that is really described than the relationship of God and Abraham. And as James 2 tells us that Abraham was a friend of God. It seems as if there's kind of a quote from Isaiah 41 that states that same fact, a friend. A friend of the God of the universe.

What an amazing thought! That He would come and dwell among us. It is also interesting that we know that Abraham was a stranger in the land. And as we begin to read, he comes from the name of “*‘ēber*,” which means Hebrew; that's where we get the word Hebrew, which actually means “one from the other side of the river” or “stranger”. So, he was a stranger in the land.

And I think of the Gospels and how it describes Jesus; John doesn't go into the whole manger thing. In fact, actually, Luke is the only Gospel that even talks about it. But John will come from a different perspective in which he says, “He came into His own, but His own received Him not.” He was a stranger, though He was the Creator in His own world. That's unimaginable, once again.

Well, Matthew will describe the fact that Herod was hostile against Him and didn't want another king in the city and would slaughter the children in Bethlehem to curtail that. But Luke would give us that wonderful picture of Mary and Joseph in the simplicity. And the context is very interesting because it starts off with the taxation. And you say to yourself, “What a lousy time for a kid to be

born, when all the world was going to be taxed.” But it was their humility that they would subject themselves to the authority, as Romans 13 says, “All authority is ordained by God.” So, as they would subject themselves to this authority, that it would literally bring them to the exact place that they needed to be at the exact time that they needed to be there, and Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. That there would be shepherds in the field keeping watch over their flock by night, and that the angels would come in their presence and say, “You've got to go see this One born in a manger.” They would be very much at home in the stable. And here, this Jesus born in a stable, lying in a manger; they would find Him wrapped in swaddling clothes. What a bizarre thing, shepherds. Actually, when you think about it, I can't think of better people to go because they were very caring individuals. If they're caring for flocks, they're going to care for Jesus. So, that's a good group of people to come. And you see their faithfulness to take care of what God has given them, and yet their willingness to let go of their livelihood to go see this child. I often wonder, “What happened to the sheep when they went to go see the child?” They just

drop everything and they go. And you can see how powerful the message was in which they went.

I was reading about the whole concept of the stable. And Scripture tells us that there was no room for them in the inn. And the way it would actually be is as you were going to the city, there were these places to stay. They were pretty much known for their lack of security as well as their lack of cleanliness, these inns that you would go to. But at this particular occasion, perhaps by virtue of the census, the city was extremely crowded. And so, as they come in, as they would go, they would look at the rooms, and usually the rooms were on the 2nd floor. What was on the 1st floor was a stable. So, as they would try to find a room, they wouldn't be able to, but these open places underneath would be the place where they might find a place to rest. And there our Savior was born. Magnificent story.

And it's a story that surprises us as we've been talking about the Book of Luke, because we have to say, in an unlikely place, around unlikely people, here you have God visiting. Who would have thought? This particular passage

in some ways really capsulizes that thought. And I thought, “We just can't pass this one up.” So, I want you to look at it with me as we look at the simplicity of this verse, and in some ways the complexity of it. Because in this one particular verse, God is capsulizing the heart of the message. He is literally clarifying for us why the Lord appeared to Abraham, and He is clarifying for us and expressing what God is looking for, as well as what you're going to see within the passage, where He will meet us. I can't help but think about this time, man, I feel like I missed it because I wasn't there with the whole manger thing. I'd like to personally meet Him. Wouldn't you? I mean, we hear that phrase, “You have a personal relationship with God.” What does that look like, and how do you do that? And there's no better place to begin by looking with Abraham, where he had a personal relationship with One that actually called him “friend”.

This passage starts off, if you look with me in Genesis 18:1, with the word “now”. Now, that's in the New American Standard. I don't believe the King James puts it in. And the fact of the matter is, in the original Hebrew,

that word is not there. However, the New American Standard is not wrong by putting it there. And the reason why I say that is that it's understood that as a result of what has been happening, this now happens. So, what the New American Standard does is it puts in that which is inferred in what is called basically the structure of the Hebrew language. As you look at this, the structure of the Hebrew language is that you have what is called a sequential imperfect. That means that we're dealing with a sequence of events. So, what are the sequence of events? Well, the sequence of events is what just happened. Well, what just happened before this? Well, that whole chapter that happened before this was that Abraham had made a covenant with God. God was making a covenant with Abraham, and He says, "I want you to have a part in this. I mean, if we're going to have a relationship, we're both going to be in this." And when God tells him to do what he needed to do, it's an amazing text, Abraham does what he does immediately and willingly. And God sees the expression of somebody that actually wants to be with Him. I mean, it's one thing to say that you want to be with somebody; it's another thing

to act immediately on the things that mean so much to them. And so, that literally sets the stage for this verse. I mean, what is God looking for, right? The Scripture says, “The eyes of the Lord search to and fro looking for a heart that's wholly His.” And He is a God that is looking for truth. Jeremiah 5:3 will talk about this as well, that He is a God, His eyes search for truth. He's looking for genuineness. He's looking for real.

Who is it that actually gets to be with God? That's the question, isn't it? How do you get there next to Him? That to me is the story. How do you get next to God? And Scripture is telling us, well, there's a beginning to this. And the “now” puts us into the realm of there's a foundation that's laid. You have to be willing, you have to have the same desire that God has, that is, to be with you.

There's an interesting verse in 1 Chronicles 28:9 as well as the same verse that's actually repeated in 2 Chronicles 15:2. It reads this way:

If you seek Him, that is the Lord, with all your heart and a willing mind, He will let you find Him.

Now, that's actually a promise within the passage. But what does that mean? You know, if you seek Him with all your heart and a willing mind, and what you're really seeing is a person that is really desirous of doing whatever God says, because that really is the epitome of faith, right? I mean, if you say you believe somebody, you trust them. And if you say you trust them, then if they tell you to do something, you'll do exactly what they tell you to do because you trust them. That's faith. That's why Jesus will say, "If you love Me, you'll keep My commandments. You'll do what I say because you actually believe that I love you. I mean, I didn't spare anything for you. You know that I'm not going to give you anything bad. So, just trust Me."

So, the passage starts off with this foundation, as it were, of a sense of obedience, a commitment that Abraham is making.

Now, it reads this way,

(Genesis 18:1) "Now the LORD appeared to him..."

Did you wonder what I wondered when you first read that? Why didn't he just put Abraham's name? And the

reason why is they're directly tying it to what had happened, so that you understand that it's Abraham. You know it's Abraham. Why do you know that? Because that's who we've been talking about. So, the passage is purposely tying in, once again, the commitment of Abraham with the Lord. Why did God appear to Abraham? Because, well, I mean, you go back to Genesis 15, Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him as righteousness. What's it saying? He actually believed, and when God told him to do something, he did it quickly. Everybody says, "I want to have a relationship with God." I go, "Well, do you do what He tells you to do immediately?" I mean, when you know God tells you... And I know, come on, let's be real with ourselves, you don't know everything God wants you to do. But I'm not talking about everything. I'm talking about what you know God wants you to do. Do you do that immediately? I mean, there were a lot of things that Abraham didn't know that God was going to ask him later on to do. But if God speaks to you, will you do whatever He wants you to do now and with a willing heart? If in fact you will, don't be surprised that you'll see God.

There's a great text that we oftentimes quote from Matthew in Matthew 5, and it fundamentally says, "Blessed are the pure in spirit, for they shall see God." Now, what it's talking about when it's making reference to pure in spirit is actually talking about somebody that is free from the corrupt desires of the world. In other words, they're not desiring self-aggrandizement. They're not desiring things for themselves. They're not looking for selfish ambition. They just desire God. And if that's Who you desire, if you're free from all those other desires, above all else, you desire Him, what will happen? Well, the passage is pretty clear, you will see Him. You will see Him.

"Now the LORD appeared to him..."

I want to make sure that we know who this "LORD" is. Once again, in your Bibles, it should be capitalized on every single letter, "LORD". When that's true, then we're literally dealing with the name of God, Jehovah, transliterated, or Yahweh, more basic. What we're talking about is, this is God. This isn't just an angel of the Lord.

This is actually God in the present. I mean, it's amazing; God is with him.

"Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre..."

Now, why is God appearing to Abraham here? Don't you think that's a valid question? Why at the oaks of Mamre? Is there something about the oaks that's just really wonderful? I would say God is appearing to Abraham here because that's where Abraham lives. The fact of the matter is that God's omnipresent. That means He's everywhere. If you've ever read Psalm 139, it tells us, well, it's actually kind of a dialogue that's talking to God, "Where can I go from Your presence? If I go to Sheol, You are there. Even in the blackest of night, if there's no light, even that's not darkness to You. There's no place that I can go from Your presence," literally the passage says, which is telling us that there's no place that God is not. God is everywhere. God's in this room right now. You don't see Him.

It reminds me of Job. In Job 9, he says,

(Job 9:11) "Were He to pass by me, I would not see Him; Were He to move past me, I would not perceive Him."

And I think that's true, clearly, of a lot of us. But that doesn't mean He's not here, and that doesn't mean that He doesn't exist.

As Acts 17 says, in Him we live and breathe and have our existence, and one of the valid arguments for His existence is you're breathing. And so, we know that He exists because there's life. In Him is life, and the life of God is the light of men. So, we know that His very presence brings life. If life exists, then God has to be among us in order for that to take place. Nevertheless, the thought is, where is He? Because I'd like to see Him. I'd like to have this personal relationship. And He doesn't appear to me because of my inability to see Him.

Romans 10 talks about this and kind of affirms the fact. He says, "If you're wanting to see God, don't say, 'Who will ascend into heaven to see Him?' and don't say, 'Who will descend to the abyss to see Him?' You're not thinking straight," fundamentally, Paul is saying. "For God is near even at the door, that if you'll believe in your heart that God died for your sins and that He rose again, you can be saved if you'll confess this. He's near even now to you."

That's a great passage, and what Scripture is telling us is that He's an ever-present help in time of trouble. He knows where you live. He's there where you live.

One of our favorite passages as you go into the Psalm, in particular, in Psalm 58 and then 59, you begin to see God's involvement in life. And you begin to see His desire to be a part of us, even the concerns that we have. And in some respects, God is visiting Abraham's concerns.

Because why is Abraham living at the oaks of Mamre? That's a good question. You remember in Chapter 13? All of you should remember this because you were here when I was preaching in 13. But in Chapter 13, he actually gets a choice to choose. And God says, "Why don't you go over all the land and find a place and actually just walk through the land?" I don't even know if He's really talking about finding a place. And Abraham settles in the oaks of Mamre. Well, geographically, the oaks of Mamre are elevated in a position of about 3,000 feet above sea level. You're on the west side; you can overlook the Dead Sea and the Dead Sea, just to let you know, is 1,400 feet below sea level. So, as you're looking, you're probably

4,400 feet above as you're among these oak groves that are there. Why did he settle there? Because Lot settled in Sodom and Gomorrah, and this gives him a perch in which he can see visually where he is and what's going on there, because he's concerned about his nephew Lot. So, that's why he settles there. Now, God had already fundamentally told him, "You need to break from the family." But he's got these concerns, see. And God knows he has concerns. It'll be in this particular chapter that Abraham will dicker for the lives of those in Sodom and Gomorrah, "If there are just 50? If there are just 45? If there's 40, would you spare the cities?" And he'll do that within this particular passage. But what we know is that's why Abraham settled there. The oaks of Mamre, "Mamre" is actually a name of an individual, he's an Amorite, that lives in that area. So, these aren't Abraham's oaks. They belong to somebody else. He's visiting. He's a stranger, he's an alien in this region. And this is one of the guys that actually helped Abraham at the time in which he rescued Lot. Remember when they were captured? And so, he goes and rescues him with his 300 and some odd men. And then he has some helping

him. And one of those men were Mamre. Well, Mamre helps him, and at the end, of course, the king of Sodom wants to give something to Abraham for all the help, and Abraham says, “I'm not going to take anything. You would say, ‘Well, it was you that helped this come to pass,’ so I'm not going to take anything.” But he does turn and he says, “But give something to Mamre.” I don't know if you remember the text. What we have is a relationship, and Abraham has been very much, though he is a stranger in the land, in the business of not trying to separate himself from the cares of those that are around him, but has really vested in them. And one of the reasons why he was beloved in this particular area. And one of the reasons why he has free reign to settle where he wants to at this particular juncture. This is why he's at the oaks of Mamre. He is more about relationships than you would think. And Abraham will ultimately be willing to give up everything for a relationship. This defines him.

(Genesis 18:1) “Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door...”

Why is Scripture telling us this? It actually tells us when he's there.

Look at the rest of the verse,

“...in the heat of the day.”

Now, from what I understand, and once again, all you have to do is a little research, but what happens in the heat of the day? Two things happen. Usually nap time. I'm not talking about you. I'm talking about in this culture. It's both nap time, but before that, it's dinner time. So, you eat, and you take a nap. The fact that he's at the tent door with some facsimile of vigilance is an interesting picture. It's a picture of expectation. It's a picture of desire. And so, we won't go on into the whole text, but as the passage will go on, there were three men that he'll see, and little does he know that one of the three men is God Himself, and two angels with Him. And nevertheless, as he sees them, he will greet them because he's expecting something. Why is he expecting something? Well, God has been dealing with him and been communicating with him and saying that He's making a covenant. But he should be expecting something because

he did exactly what God told him to do and he did it quickly. And now, that's the time to expect something. If you will obey God and you'll do it quickly, expect something. Expect Him to visit you. Expect a relationship with God. Without faith, it's impossible to please Him. If you just do something because you think, "Well, that's just what I do. I'm a nice guy."... But if you do something because you love God, expect a relationship. God sees your heart, and as Hebrews will say, He's not so unjust as to not reward those who seek Him. Without faith, it's impossible to please Him, for you must believe that He is and that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. This guy's at the tent door; he's looking for a relationship. And does it surprise you that he finds one? Does it surprise you that God shows up? This will actually begin to define the way God works and reveals Himself. It's interesting to me, we read these things in Scripture, and we go, "Wow, so that's what God dreamed up." And I go, "Well, not exactly." God is sovereign over it. There's no doubt about that. But what God does is He uses the things that we do to draw us to Himself. It's an amazing thing. And it's all relational.

Let me give you an example. In Isaiah 9, it tells us the great prophecy, “Unto us a child is born.” Do you know up to that point, there was no prophecy of how the Messiah was going to come? But in Isaiah, that prophecy is given. A child will be born. Think about that. Now, the question you have to ask yourself is, why that sign at that time? And there's only one answer to it. The children of Israel were slaughtering their children. They were placing them on the god of Moloch. And God says, “Stop killing your kids.” And He puts this sign, and He says, “You may be killing the Messiah.” And He uses this to curtail, but He uses this as well to give the prophecy of that, to display the relationship that God cares for, “How can you kill this innocent child?” And so, He begins to build these prophecies.

In this particular passage, God, in a marvelous way, is telling us what He's looking for. In a marvelous way, He's not only telling us what He's looking for, but He's telling us where to meet Him. I want to know where to meet Him, right? Where you want to meet God is at the doorway. Now, the doorway is an interesting symbol. It's

a symbol of receptivity, as John will say in John 1, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power.” And it's also a position or place of decision. Will you let that person in, or will you not let that person in? Ultimately, the city gates became the place in which judgment was made, at the city gates. You read this in Proverbs 1 as well, that wisdom makes decisions at the gates of the city, at the doorway.

There's an interesting passage in Exodus 33. Turn there with me. Sometimes you read something in the Old Testament, and you go, “So, why did God do it this way?” Have you ever had those moments? Okay. So, the setting of this is that the people of Israel, God has rescued them from Egypt. As He's rescued them from Egypt, they have a moment of rest, and then they begin playing with making an idol, at the same time that God is talking to Moses about the laws of God. The worst thing that happens in all this is that they broke a covenant with God. It's like you sit down with somebody and you say, “Do you love me?” And they say, “Yeah, I love you.” “Promise?” And they say, “Yeah, I promise.” And then you find them with

somebody else. That's what this moment is like. So, God turns to Moses, and He goes, "I know these are obstinate people." And He turns to Moses in all of this, and He, if you look at the end of chapter 32, it reads this way,

(Exodus 32:35) "Then the LORD smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made."

See that?

Then you read Exodus 33:1, at the end of verse 1, "I swore to Abraham..."

Do you see that as it goes on?

Of course,

(Exodus 33:5) "... You are an obstinate people...""

Then it puts us into an interesting setting. Now, the setting is this, that Moses is fed up with the people at this juncture. So, he just wants to get away from them. So, he packs up his tent and goes outside the camp. Now, the word that the King James uses is "tabernacle," but it's basically the word "tent". And the thought is that this is the tabernacle of God that he packed up. No, this is his

own personal tent. So, you can use the word “tabernacle” or “tent,” it's the same word, “'ōhel”. But the fact of the matter is that he's packing this tent up himself, and I'm sure it wouldn't have been the tabernacle of God, besides the fact that they haven't totally put it together yet.

But it reads this way if you look in verse 7,

(Exodus 33:7) “Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting...”

Why would he call it that? See, what you're dealing with, as Galatians 3:17 tells us, it's 430 years later from Abraham; Moses desires, and God calls Moses, to have the same relationship that He had with Abraham. A friend. And where do you meet a friend? At the door of the tent.

Now, keep reading with me. I'll show you how this goes.

“... And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting...”

That's why they call it the “tent of the meeting”. Why? Because that's where you meet God.

“... which was outside the camp.

(Exodus 33:8) And it came about, whenever Moses went out to the tent, that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of his tent...”

Ah, this is where you and I make decisions.

“... and gaze after Moses until he entered the tent.

(Exodus 33:9) Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses.

(Exodus 33:10) When all the people saw...”

Now, why would God do it that way? Because He had already established a relationship with Abraham. And what was the relationship? Abraham was longing to see God. And every time he was longing to see God, you know what he would do? He would sit at the door of the tent, to see God, and God would show up. God would just show up.

Do you have a longing to see God? Will you do anything He tells you to do whenever He tells you to do it? Well,

that sets the stage. Then set yourself at the edge of that tent, and go, “I'm ready for You.” Get ready.

Passage goes on; it reads this way,

“When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent.”

This is just a follow-through of Abraham.

(Exodus 33:11) “Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face...”

This is a face-to-face meeting. The entrance of the tent is a place of receptivity, and it's a place of decision. Are you going to receive? And are you going to do it now? It's a decision that you're making.

In Exodus 40:6, the tabernacle, when it was finally built, at the front of the entranceway, guess what was there? The place of burnt offerings. You go, “Well, I don't know what that means.” Burnt offerings meant total dedication. So, whatever you offered on a burnt offering, it was given total dedication. Where is it? It's at the door. Why was it at the door? Because it's showing that you are longing for

this. Nobody's forcing you to give your all. You are expectantly desirous to do this, because you know that it would just draw you closer to God, right? It's actually a place where Aaron and his sons will eat the food of ordination, at the doorway of the tent. Because as you read the text, he'll invite the men in. He'll go, "Let me give you something to eat." And that's what they ate. I mean, we think of this in technical response, but the fact of the matter is, God was demonstrating a relationship, right? A relationship. Well, in many respects, what God is telling you is what's necessary and what He's looking for in order to have a relationship. And clearly, we see Abraham giving that response of not only a desire to be with God, but an alacrity to do whatever He tells him to do, and a receptivity to those that God places before him.

There's an interesting passage in Hebrews 13, if you turn there with me. I know I'm having you jump around just a little bit, but Hebrews 13. Interesting question, if I could just pose it to you, would you rather have a relationship or would you rather go after your selfish ambition and fleshly desires? People are making those decisions all the

time. You know where it talks about your husband and wife, we're talking about fidelity. So, are you just going after fleshly desires, or do you want the relationship? I mean, you have to make these kind of decisions, right? Would I rather have money, or would I rather have a relationship? In some way, this passage in Hebrews 13 deals with this.

It starts off this way,

(Hebrews 13:1) “Let love of the brethren continue.”

Now, watch what he says in this next verse,

(Hebrews 13:2) “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

Would Abraham kind of fall into that category?

(Hebrews 13:3) “Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.”

(Hebrews 13:4) Marriage is to be held in honor among all...”

He's dealing with brethren, strangers, and marriage. And in each case, it's a relationship. There's a relationship for the brethren because there's a fondness for them. You're going the same way. There's a relationship with the strangers because you're helping those in need. That puts you in the category of the good Samaritan. You don't know who this person is. You don't know where they're from. You don't know what they've done. You don't know what they believe. But you can't leave them in need. And that's a divine response, because God is a God to the helpless and the strangers. And there's the relationship of marriage, which he's talking about true and faithful relationships, fidelity that's going on above fleshly desires, you're going to be faithful.

In fact, the very next verse,

(Hebrews 13:5) “Make sure that your character is free from the love of money...”

Which would keep you from relationships.

Abraham is displaying his desire for relationship above anything else. Is it a surprise to you that God shows up?

Now, I've got to show you a couple other verses. You have a moment? Okay, Luke 19. It's Christmas, but you're not going to open your presents today. In Luke 19, you see the heart of Christ.

And it reads this way, if you look in verse 41,

(Luke 19:41) "When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,

(Luke 19:42) saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.”

Why don't people see God? Why didn't they see Jesus?

(Luke 19:43) "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you..."

He's talking about Jerusalem at that time.

"... and hem you in on every side."

This actually happened in AD 70.

(Luke 19:44) "and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you

one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

“I was here. You just didn't notice Me.” And why didn't you notice Him? Because you were involved in your stuff; because you could care less about relationships. I mean, you're not going to see God if you don't care about a relationship. That's what He's about. And you didn't want to do what He told you to do because you didn't trust Him. You didn't have the spirit and the heart to say, “Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly,” because you weren't expecting of Him.

Interesting verse in Luke 3:15, it says that the people at this time, which was the time of the birth of Christ, were in a state of expectation. Why do you think He showed up? Because they were expecting Him. Where were they sitting? At the doorway.

Another passage that I want you to read with me is found in Luke 23. And if you forget everything else that I said up to this point, please don't forget this point. Because this is God saying, “This is where I'm going to meet you.” So, if you can get this in your head, because you want to meet

God, right? I want to meet God. So, this is where you meet Him. He's actually telling you where you can meet Him. The first thing that He says to you is, "I'm going to meet you at the door." Once again, that's the place of decision; that's the place of receptivity. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave power." Will you receive Him? Is a relationship with God more important than anything else to you? Are you sitting at the precipice going, "I can hardly wait to see You?" 2 Timothy 4 will say that a crown of righteousness is given to all who have longed for His appearance. Are you waiting at the door? Jesus is fundamentally saying, "I'm waiting. I'm going to be there at the door." Now, the reason why we know this to be true is Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door knocking." He's meeting you at the door. But that's not just it. He's going to tell you that He's going to meet you under the trees. And our Savior died on a tree. "I'll meet you at the door, under the tree." What time was it? In the middle of the day, noon.

(Luke 23:44) "It was now about the sixth hour..."

That's 12 o'clock, noon.

In the text, God is actually telling you where to meet Him and when to meet Him. Because that interesting picture of noon is that you put aside all of your fleshly desires, i.e. the nap and the eating, to look for Him and to wait for Him. Under the tree. It wasn't convenient for Him, was it? He makes the same commitment to you in a far greater way. "This is where we'll meet." It's no mistake that one verse literally describes how we will meet Him. And so, as we think about this Christmas, although we are excited about the fact that He was born, we are excited about the fact that He walked among us and that He met us at a door under the tree at noon.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness to us, and for Your desire to have a relationship with us. It's inconceivable to us that You would want to do that. But if we would receive You, You would give us the power to become children of God, even if we would believe and put our trust in Your name. But we must come in a way, as You tell us, as You would come, with all of our hearts, with a willing mind, and You will find us. Father, I thank

You for Your presence, and I thank You that You reveal Yourself to those who long to have a relationship with You. Father, more than anything else, what I pray is that we will see You this season. Let all the lights and all the tinsel fade away, and may on this day, in the middle of the day, may the sun itself be darkened as the glory of the Lord shines, and we see Your love that's given to us.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. You want to have a great Christmas? Receive Him. Wait expectantly. Believe God is going to reveal Himself to you and believe that He shares and will give His goodness to you. Trust Him for everything. Walk with Him in every way.