

January 12th, 2025

Malachi 1:1, 5 - Great is the Lord! (Sermon Transcript)

Turn your Bible to the Book of Malachi. The Book of Malachi is the very last book in the Old Testament. So if you get to Matthew, you've just gone just a little too far. If you opt into the Grace Life Church group on the app. One of the first things you'll see this week is a Blog article I wrote about the upcoming Construction that's about to happen right out our front door, which I know we're all thrilled about.

Okay, like praise the Lord this is the posture. I'm trying to take here It's going to be starting soon. It's going to be inconvenient and if You want to know more about it? You can read How our hearts should respond when we face things like this week Now imagine, in a couple weeks, when this road is torn up and nobody knows what it looks like and you're running late for church.

Now, during construction events, they're gonna lower the speed limit from what is normal. Out here it's 45. They're gonna lower it to 25. Alright? And it's gonna be inconvenient. Again. So imagine a couple weeks, you're on your way to church and you're late. And you're like, it's Sunday morning. There's, it's, there's nobody working.

It's Sunday morning. You could probably say the same thing about Monday through Saturday, too. Which we'll find out, alright? We go through and you're driving and you're like, it's okay to go 45. And as soon as you go, that very familiar white car marked Clay County Sheriff's Office. Now, as soon as you see them, you already know.

They've seen you for two minutes now. You're done for. And so they pull you over, and you get pulled over, and now, not only are you late for church, but you're getting a speeding ticket. At that point, the Lord's just working on your heart in some way that I, we can talk after that happens, okay?

Officer pulls you over, and walks up to the window and says, Sir, Ma'am are you aware that you were going 45 in a construction zone that's marked 25? And your response is, Sir, are you aware of who I am? Now what do you think is going to happen there? Alright, now we see this happen in celebrities, and politicians, and athletes will try this.

Do you know who I am? I'm a world class whatever. And thinking they can get out of the ticket. Now if we try that, I don't know what's going to happen, alright? But



let's say in this moment the police officer decides to say, It's gracious, and just says, No, I'm not aware of who you are, but you're speeding, and that's why I pulled you over.

And then instead of saying, You know what, you're right, I apologize, I got, we've got off the wrong foot. You double down and say, do you even know what you're doing? Are you even trained to pull people over? Is your radar, has it been checked recently? This is what my dad told me to ask. I never have because I don't want to worry about that.

Okay. Has it been calibrated? Did you know you were even going faster than I was just to pull me over? Now, I don't know what's going to happen about that, but usually, the sheriff's office is friendly about letting pastors into the prison to let them see their church members. I don't know what's going to take place after you have this conversation with the police officer.

In this scenario, alright, we would never do this, is exactly what's taking place in the book of Malachi. To use the illustration, God has pulled over the people of Israel and said, and called them out for breaking the law. God has the right to do this just like a police officer would if we break the law.

And instead of acknowledging their sin and what they've done, the people of Israel say, Are you aware of who we are? We're the people of God. And God's I'm fully aware of this. And then they begin to question who He is. Are you even able to do this? You, have you been faithful? Are you able to tell us what to do?

Now obviously, I would not want to be in their shoes. Because God, throughout the book of Malachi, is going to answer their question and give specific examples exactly of what He has done. And as we'll see throughout the next couple weeks as we study this book, God is who He says He is. And over and over again reminds us how great He is.

So as we begin this study in the book of Malachi, my prayer is simple. Lord, help us to see Your greatness. Maybe you have been a Christian for a long time and your faith has grown stale. Have you ever been there? You're just in a season, you're just like, and we'll talk about this stuff today. Just not excited about Jesus for whatever reason.

My prayer is that you will see how great God is. Maybe you're in a season of grief. Anybody ever grieved before? There's some of you now that are grieving and hurting for a variety of reasons. And in those moments, in a grief, while the grief doesn't necessarily go away, it's beholding and seeing how great God is.



Or maybe you have no idea who God is,

trying to figure out what it means to follow Jesus. My prayer for you is the same, that you will see how great God is. So let's read Malachi chapter 1, verses 1 through 5. We're only going to focus on verse 1 and verse 5. Next week we'll look at all of 1 through 5. But let's read Malachi 1, 1 through 5, and then we'll respond to the reading of God's word together.

The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you. Says the Lord, but you say how have you loved us is not Esau Jacob's brother that clears the Lord yet I have loved Jacob, but Israel but Esau I have hated I have laid waste his hill country left his heritage and jackals of the desert if Edom says we are shattered But we will rebuild the ruins the Lord of hosts says they may build but I will tear down And they will be called the wicked country and the people with whom the Lord is angry forever your eyes shall see this you And you shall say great is the lord beyond the border of israel This is the word of the lord father open our eyes to behold the wonderful truths from your word Help us to see and behold how great you are to never lose sight of this Help us to see how much we need you in your name.

We pray. Amen We've been looking at the minor prophets in our life groups these are smaller portions of smaller books at the end of the Old Testament written by just a whole bunch of different prophets or the prophets were people God used or like a preacher or pastor who would speak the words that God wanted to say to his people and so in this last year we've been doing this in our life groups for a while now We're shifting and we're going to be talking about Malachi in our life groups and we're going to be preaching on it on Sunday morning.

And I ask this question a lot when we started a new book. How many of you, and I'll ask the same question to you, how many of you have ever read or studied, let me rephrase this because I think this will get more hands raised, okay? How many of you have never read or studied the book of Malachi until now?

All right, so this is a book, and that's fine because this is a book you're not really going to. All right. It's the very last one in the Old Testament. These minor prophets, it's man, God is just angry all the time. What is going on? And so we like to skip to Matthew where it seems like God is happier.

But God hasn't changed, as we'll see in the book of Malachi. The book of Malachi is a fascinating and incredible book. I've been looking forward to studying this with you all for months now. The only thing we know about Malachi is that he's a prophet and that his name is Malachi. That's it. His name means my messenger.



As God has raised up Malachi to be his messenger, just so happens Malachi's mom named him Malachi, which means God's messenger. His time is after Israel has returned to Jerusalem. They've been in exile, and then if you know the story of the Old Testament, God used Ezra and Nehemiah to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, to rebuild the city, and now Malachi is coming in after them.

The people have returned, and as always, they're not doing what they should be doing. In fact, it's actually strange, because the people of Israel aren't really doing anything wrong for, it's shocking. Usually they've, the issue has been they've sinned against God, but here's something different.

This is a posture that they've taken on. They're just not excited about the things of God. It could be a host of reasons we'll see over the next couple weeks. It could be they just, no one ever taught them who God was. It could be they had forgotten. Could be they thought they were better than they realized, or they they're better than they, they assumed they were better than they really were.

The book is a bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament. It looks back to the Old Testament and summarizes it. Even in the first couple of verses we get, we're introduced to some Old Testament characters in the book of Genesis. It's summarizing the Old Testament, but at the same time, it's looking forward to the New Testament, the hope of Jesus that will soon be ushered in to the world.

It was written sometime between 450 and 400 BC. Now, there's a lot of you that are new to the, to Grace Life, and so I'm gonna share a joke, and this is not offhanded, I already shared it with them, okay? But this book even predates Mr. Jim, all right? So if he approved it, he knew it was coming, It's been a while since this book was written.

But what happens after this book is written, is that it appears that God goes silent for 400 years. God didn't disappear. He doesn't go away. He's just no longer speaking to his people. And for 400 years, the people of Israel do not hear from God until one guy named John the Baptist shows up and says, let me tell you, the Messiah's coming.

And he's on his way right now. And actually that's him right there. Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. So 400 years, it appears that God is silent. So what is God going to say to these people before he kinda shuts off from 'em? He's going to tell them to stop and behold how great He is.

To respond in obedience to Him. Over and over again, people of Israel are going to question God. They're going to question His love, as we already saw. God says, I have



loved you. And you say, how have you loved us? It's astonishing that they would say this. They're going to question his faithfulness.

They're going to question his holiness. They're going to question his generosity. They're going to question his salvation. They're going to question his justice. And over again, God's going to say, You've missed it. This is how I have been. This is who I am. I've never changed. You've changed. You're the problem, not me.

God is who he says he is. And you might be saying Pastor Matt, This is written to the people of Israel a long time ago. Doesn't even matter to me. Yes, it does matter to us. It does when we're reading the Old Testament a lot of times we stop and say this isn't for me I'm, we're in the New Testament time period.

Jesus has come, he died, he rose again, now we're living under the New Testament. So we don't really need the Old Testament, but the Old Testament is always pointing to Jesus. And so when we read the Old Testament, it was not written to us, per se, it was written to the people of Israel. But the application that we learn from it is for us today.

The Old Testament, even with its laws and sacrifices, is pointing to Jesus. He fulfills the law. And Jesus is going to be the perfect sacrifice So when we read the old testament, we're always looking to Jesus. In fact, my wife Julie is over in kids kid life Teaching the kids about a story and the whole point is the Jesus is the main character in the old testament, even though we don't see him But it's leading to what Jesus is going to do for sinners And so when we read the book of Malachi, we have to read this story from a historical context We have to read it how the people of Israel were going to understand it Now the meaning does not change.

What it said to them then is what it says to us now. The meaning does not change, but the application for it does change. We're living in the 21st century. We're dealing with things that I think the people of Israel would be shocked that we're dealing with. How would you explain artificial intelligence to a Jew who lived in 400 B.

C.?

They wouldn't even call you a time traveler because I don't think they would understand what that meant.

But this book carries so much truth for us today. Because what Malachi saw in the people of Israel, we see today. Malachi saw that there must lie within the hearts of God's people a deep, radical, overwhelming conviction of who God is. This is not just



a, this is God. Awesome. Malachi is going to tell these people, you need to know deeply, at the core, who God is.

This is not just a superficial understanding. This is not just, you're not acquaintances with God and everything's okay. You need to know Him at a deep level. This is the God of the universe. Know Him. I think for us today, there is a deep need for us to have strong conviction of who God is. Every, there's, there are people searching and looking.

And they're asking, who is God? Unfortunately, there's a lot of Christians who can't even tell you who God is. I would say the book of Malachi is for us too. Malachi knew that the greatest sin of God's people is the sin against God. Listen, I'm not perfect. You're not perfect. She's not in here so I can say this.

Julie's not perfect. Okay, and she knows that. We're still trying to follow Jesus and we're still dealing with our own sin and frustrations and trying to just live like God has called us to do. So every time we sin, it's not just a mistake. It's a sin against who God is. Malachi understood that the human heart is prone to wonder.

You Towards complacency. The worship of God becomes stale, lacks enthusiasm, and is often void of joy. You ever gone to the pantry? It's we'll make it late, okay? Whatever late is for you. 9. 30. Is that late? Late? Okay, so that's not, that's still, the night's just starting for me, okay? You're, it's been a couple hours since dinner, you're thinking about a snack.

So you go to the pantry and there's a bag of chips you find in there. You're like, oh, that's great. You open up the bag of chips that you see didn't get Closed all the way by one of the kids? Ever been there? Man, infuriating, okay? You have a brand new bag of chips, and it's just open, in the pantry. And you know what's gonna happen when you bite into that bag of chips.

It's gonna be just stale. Or a cracker, okay? And you bite into it, and you're like, you know that taste? It just, it's got all the flavors, but it's just, bleh. But you're hungry, and it's late at night, and you've already sat down on the couch, and you're not going back to the pantry. So what do you do? You eat those stale chips!

And this is what happens in the Christian life. Our walk with the Lord grows stale, and instead of saying, this isn't right, I need something fresh and new, we just keep going back to it's familiar, I don't really want to do the work. So our walk with Jesus grows stale. If that's where you are, the book of Malachi is for you.



Or maybe you're just in a season where you just can't escape the sin. It feels like it's just beating you up and tearing you down and weighing you down. Pride. Laziness. Greed. We can run the list. You're just, Lord, I can't overcome it on my own. The book of Malachi is for you too. Maybe you've just forgotten how great God is.

This is what I love about sports. I love watching the older athlete who probably should have retired, but they just can't give it up. You know who I'm talking about? There's a few of them, okay? And then they come out and they have one game that reminds you of how great they are. And I think oftentimes, We fail to see and we've forgotten how great God is because we look at our own circumstances and think man Everything's bad.

So therefore it must mean God has not done something, right? Book of Malachi is for us to remember how great God is whether you're in a spiritually dry state or in a state of grieving questioning or wondering We look to this book not to learn something intellectually, but to learn and see and behold in our hearts and souls how great God is.

This is why I think life groups are so important. They're starting back up this week. Darren mentioned them. Darren's doing a great job leading them. We've got a shift in them this semester that I think is going to be awesome and I can't wait. Man, we need one another. If you've grown stale in your walk with the Lord, it is good to share with someone.

Listen, I'm just, I'm in a rough season right now. Because here's how the Lord has worked in my life, I know He's worked in yours. There's someone in the group that's been there and says, listen, I've been there, I'm praying for you, I'm going to come alongside of you and encourage you. It's a place where we can confess and just show our desire to be more like Jesus.

So get into a life group this semester this quarter. Study the book of Malachi with us, but not only that, be around brothers and sisters in Christ who want to encourage you and help you grow, who aren't concerned if you're perfect or not, who just want to see you thrive in your walk with the Lord.

Whether you've been going to church here for a while and you haven't plugged in or you're new. I hope you join a life group this year. If you've got more questions, you can talk to Darren or talk to me afterwards and we'd love to help you get connected. And

as we go searching and looking for the Lord, the good news is we actually don't have to go on a big magic hide and go seek game with the Lord. God has revealed



himself to us. Let's actually get into Malachi 1. 1. That is a 20 minute introduction to today's sermon, okay? for listening. It says the oracle of the word of the lord to israel by malachi The word oracle is a funny word.

We don't use it often In fact, I don't know if i've ever used it in a normal conversation It's a goal now to this week at some point use it All right, the oracle of the word of the lord to israel by malachi The word oracle is a divine proclamation That carries a weight of that need that bears Responsibility It's not just a casual conversation that God is having with the people of Israel.

He's making a proclamation that is intended to not only be heard, but responded to. In other words, what God says to the people of Israel and what He says to us in His Word carries eternal value and demands a response. When we hear the words of God, it is not just awesome, that's great. Thank you for sharing, God, and go on to what we want to do.

It's hearing what he has to say and seeing that this is important, it's weighty, it's good, and then responding to God's word. God's word comes in loud and clear to the people of Israel. This is an announcement. It doesn't go to spam, it doesn't get lost in the mail, it doesn't go away after 24 hours. It's loud and clear and it's here to stay.

God says what needs to be said and he demands a response to his words. And it's the word that counts. of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. This is significant. I know it's just the first verse, usually we just skip over it, okay? But significant of what is being said here. That God is the one who is speaking through Malachi to the people of Israel.

This is not a historian's words that we're reading. It's not even Malachi's words. It's God speaking through Malachi. So what we know about God does not come from historians. It does not come from teachers. It does not come from just a couple people that got together and wrote some good things down.

What we know about God and what God has said comes directly from God Himself. No one else, but from God. Everything we need to know about God has been revealed to us. But God hasn't told us everything. Deuteronomy 29 29 is just a wild verse. It says, the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of His law.

Everything we need to know about God. God's told us everything. Yes, there are some things that God has not said because he's God, but everything we need to



know, he's told us yesterday I was working on some projects and. I was sitting there and I got stumped. And now, as I've gotten older, I've realized, and this is a weird transition as you get older, as you realize all the things that you laughed at your dad doing, you start to do.

Anybody, anybody there? Alright, so my dad has mannerisms that I'm like, that is so funny. And I laughed at him. And then when I was in high school, I was embarrassed by that now I'm doing. And I don't, like I, you can't escape it. It's just, I can't. So my dad, when he thinking will like close his eyes and like in his ears, okay?

And so recently I noticed that I do this. When I'm trying to like I'm learning something new or I'm listening or reading a book and I'm trying to comprehend it I'll close and I'll do it when I'm talking to you so if you're talking to me and I'm doing this it's not because I'm hurting it's just I need you to dumb it down a little bit for me okay?

It's probably what I need the help with. So I'm trying to just comprehend. Words or something I'm trying to learn or trying to figure out a problem. I do this often when just, I'm studying the text and I just, it's this, cause I'm trying to block off everything. And it reminds me that I'm really limited.

Like our brains are limited. We get distracted easily, I mean we try to plan out our days, but we don't really know what's going to happen. Isn't that a weird thing to think about? Just how limited our brains are? They're incredible. But then the thing, man I can plan, but I really have no idea.

I have no idea what's going to happen. There's some things I just can't learn. Or there's something new I learned that I'm like, what? This is a thing? Do you ever feel that way? Just limited. Our brains can only go so far. We can't predict the future. We can't know every detail of everything, and we can't be in multiple places at once.

We are limited. But God is not limited. This is what blows me away about God. Not once has he ever been like, Oh, what does that mean? What's going on? God knows everything. He knows what's going to happen tomorrow. He knows what's going to happen in the future. There's something that happened at my house yesterday that for us was a, nothing serious happened, but it was like a, an emergency that needed to respond that I had no idea what happened.

And if I knew it would have happened, I wouldn't have started all the projects I was doing yesterday. I would have just avoided it. But God knew he knew exactly what would happen. He's never surprised. He's everywhere. He's all powerful. He has no limits. Malachi chapter 3, God will tell the people of Israel, I don't even change.



God's not like artificial intelligence where He's constantly learning something and growing. God is never developing and learning. God is God. He's always been this way. So yes, it hurts our heads to think that God's always existed. Like He didn't come into being. See, I made the face. Did you see it?

Yeah. See, I'm like, man, God's He's always been. And I can't wrap my head around that because I'm human. I can't wrap around my head that how, God, doing it again, see? Now I'm in my head a little bit. How God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are three persons in one God. It's not three different gods, it's one God.

So yes, my brain hurts a little bit. Because it reminds us that we are human and God is not. God is unchanging. He does not have limitations. And in order to know who God is, we just didn't wake up one day and say, Oh, there's God. No one created the idea of God. But in order for us to know who God is, somebody had to tell us.

And it was God. There's four ways God has revealed himself to us. The first way is God has revealed himself to us in creation. I don't particularly love the cold weather. But it's nice. God created it. Genesis 1 tells us that God created everything by speaking it into existence. Let there be light, and there was light.

I love doing this with kids when we're learning this. Someone say, turn the lights on, and every, all the kids are like, turn the lights on, and nobody turns lights on. Because you can't, we don't have that type of power. God said, hey, let's put a sun right there, and the sun was there. Let's put some stars there, trees.

I, Genesis 1 is so powerful. God created all of it, and it was good. That is until a couple of chapters later when sin came into the world and corrupted it all. But creation has one purpose, to show us the glory of God. Romans 1, 18-21, Paul says to us, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

For what can be known about God, is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world, and the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him.

But they came, became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts. We're darkened. Romans 1 tells us that God created the world and it was perfect and now creation shows us that there is a God who is good and glorious and that is enough



to condemn us. So every time we look at the trees, we see that there's a great God who is glorious.

Every time we look at the snow on Facebook and reminds us that we live in Florida, we praise the Lord for His glory. Psalm 19, 1 says the heavens are full. Declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. One of my favorite things to do, and I share this often, is my trash night, I have to take the trash out on Monday nights to the street.

And I love a clear night. You just look up at the sky. And I think of Psalm 19. The sky above proclaims his handiwork. And here's what's wild. Man, this world is big. Big. Colossians 1 tells us that Jesus holds it in his hands.

Can you see and behold how great our God is just in creation? And then the second way God reveals himself to us is in the hearts of mankind Ecclesiastes 3 11 says God has made everything beautiful in its time Also, he has put eternity into man's heart yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end Ecclesiastes tells us that God has put a Longing for something bigger than ourselves in our hearts When people go searching and seeking, this is something God has shared.

What we're actually looking for is not creation, or not food, or not love, or status. What we're looking for and longing for is actually God Himself. Acts 17 says, And God made from one man, Adam, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods in the boundaries of their dwelling place.

God has established the continents. He established the borders of the United States down to South America. All those borders God established. Why? That they should seek God. And perhaps fill their way toward Him and find Him. Yet, He is actually not far from each one of us. God has established everything so that we will seek after Him.

And we don't even have to go far. He's close by. But you notice those two ways that God has revealed Himself fall short. They're good. He's good. He's revealed his greatness to us, but they fall short. And here's how they fall short creation cannot save you from your sins Just being having a clear conscience doesn't even save us We are born sinners And god revealed himself to us to help us see that we are sinners And that he is a holy god a good god and he wants to bring us into a right relationship with him If creation could do that, we'd all be outside right now, right?



No So how is God going to reveal that He is a saving God? God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. What I love about Malachi, and I was telling Julie this morning, is Malachi is just rich in theology, or the things of study of God, it's just rich. She then proceeded to say, which book is not rich in theology, and that stumped me, I was like, that's actually, that's a fair point, babe, that was good, right?

And so I love this because it's showing us that Pointing to Jesus. God's revealed Himself to us. God, the Father, sent His Son Jesus to us. Here's what John 1 says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. So in the beginning, meaning before anything ever existed, there's always existed the Word.

And the Word was with God, meaning this is God and the Word. Okay? With me so far? The Word was with God, and the Word was God. Meaning, that God, And this Word are both the same, but they're different people. Alright? He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. The Light shines into the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Couple verses later in verse 14, it says, And the Word Became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory as of the only son from the father full of grace and truth John opens up this book about Jesus by telling us that Jesus is the word In the beginning was the word Jesus has always existed He didn't come into play at Christmastime.

He's always existed. He was with God the Father, showing the distinction between the two, but at the same time saying that Jesus is fully God.

God the Father, John 3, 16 tells us, sent His Son to this world to put on human flesh. How did God reveal Himself? Fully? By becoming like us. It's quite remarkable, actually, that Jesus, at some point, would have had to cut His fingernails. The same fingernails that he made.

Think about that for a second. Jesus ate. He was hungry. He slept. He took naps. Yes. He became like us so that we could see who God the Father was. So God revealed himself through his son Jesus. And why is Jesus called the Word? Like, why would John use this phrase? When you speak a word, you see it with your eyes or you hear it with your ears, right?

If a word is not spoken or written, then it's only contained in thought. Meaning, can you read my thoughts? No, praise the Lord for that, okay? You can't read my



thoughts, they're currently invisible. But as soon as I speak them, or write them down, you see what I'm thinking. The invisible has become visible.

Jesus, the word, is the outward, visible expression of an invisible God. This is why it's so powerful. God said, you wanna see who I am? Let me show you. In Jesus, God has revealed Himself to us through His Son, Jesus. And we learn about this, Jesus, by the fourth way God's revealed Himself to us, is in the Bible.

John 5, 39, Jesus states, You search the Scriptures, this is the Old Testament, because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness about Me. Yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life. Jesus says, when you read the Old Testament, guess what it's about? It's about Me, Jesus says.

So even the Bible, all of it, from Genesis to Revelation and Malachi in the middle, points us to who God is. So everything that God has said in his word and through Jesus is all about himself. And why does God reveal himself to us? Why did God take it on himself to say, you know what, I'm going to let mankind know who I am.

I want them to see and behold how great I am, how good I am, that I am for them, that I am their creator. Why did God do this? Malachi 1 verse 5 tells us, Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel. God is going to be doing a work in the Israelites. He is going to show them their sin, He's going to show some punishment.

All why is He doing this? To show us how great He is. To show them how great He is. God has revealed Himself to us so that we will behold how great He is. He revealed Himself to us so that we can see and behold how gracious a holy God, who has done no wrong, is righteous and perfect. He's revealed Himself to us as sinners, unrighteous, imperfect, and showed us, hey, through me you can have eternal life.

He wants us to see that He is eternal life, meaning death is not the end here. That for those in Christ, we are brought into life eternal with God the Father. He brings us into a relationship with Him. He wants us to see his initiating love towards sinners. God has revealed himself to us so that we can behold how great he is.

Adam and Eve, and here's often our approach to this. When Adam and Eve in Genesis chapter 3 disobeyed God, what did they do? They ran and hid. And what does God do? God comes looking for them, and he could have destroyed them and started all over again, but yet he's gracious and covers them. And brings them back into a relationship with him.



It's different now because of sin But god in that moment in genesis chapter 3 promises Jesus Now what we do when we are in sin Is we think god's disappeared and we have to go looking for him in the midst of our grief and our pain and our hurt and Questioning we think god's backed off and disappeared.

Where are you god is not The question is where have I gone? Adam and Eve ran just like we do, but God is initiating love, chases after us. If you're here today and you have not placed your faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, let me tell you there's no more running you need to do.

That Jesus came to this earth for you, to die for you. We deserve death because of our sin, against the Holy God. But Jesus became our sacrifice for you. If you are looking for God, look to Jesus, who died because he loved you. And then he didn't just die, he rose again three days later because Jesus is God and he's greater than death.

He's greater than anything we will face. He is greater than our sin and he invites us to believe in all that he's done for us. And yet, as Christians, we so easily develop a diluted view of God. Does God love me, we'll say? Is God really faithful? We're gonna see that the questions the Israelites say are questions we ask.

Is God really gonna provide for me? You Is he actually present with me right now?

It's in these moments that we need to turn and see the greatness of God. Have we become bored with Him? Have we tried to bring God down to our level instead of seeing that we need to go to His? And see and behold how great and mighty and powerful He is? Have we tried to box Him into something that makes us feel comfortable?

You can't box God in. You can't ignore Him.

You can't forget Him. Because when you really behold and see who God is, it really shows us the ones who behold God's greatness are the ones who truly belong to Him. The end of Malachi, which we'll look at in a couple weeks, tells us that those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. That's a plug for life groups, I think.

The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name. They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked.



1 Between the one who serves God and the one who does not serve Him. See, the difference between the righteous and the unrighteous is the righteous have seen and beheld how great God is. What I love about that word in verse 5, your own eyes shall see this. Is it not just a, it's not just a look and glance.

It's a sit in the moment and stare deeply into something. My kids, Merritt especially, will come up and say, Dad, look at what I got her this book that she can draw, and so she drew a chicken. It's a really good chicken. Colored it. It's beautiful. What I realize is often as a dad, I love her so much.

She is just the best. But when I'm sitting and I'm distracted, and she says, Dad, come and look at this. Look what I've done. Often times I'll just glance and say, Oh, that's great. Instead of what she wants is to For me to take it and look and behold and stare at it and look at all the different beautiful colors and how great She is right

This is what god wants from us Not just a glancing look for an hour on sunday morning Not just for a few moments throughout the week when we're like, oh man, it's a little warm out here. Thank you god No, He wants us to take Him and stare deeply at Him and behold Him for how awesome He is. He wants us to see all of His grace, all of His love, all of His patience, all of His mercy, all of it.

And yet, so often we just treat God as the trees passing by on a highway. We notice them, we know they're there, but we're not really looking at them. We're looking at where we want to go. It's my prayer. As I said at the beginning of this sermon, as we study this book, is to stop and gaze deeply on the greatness of our God, who loved us enough to send His Son Jesus for us, and who rightfully deserves to be seen as great and powerful as He is.

Because as we'll look at a little bit more next week, how great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel. Meaning, our God is so big, He has no borders. Like a country, like walls. He is a God that cannot be contained. And he is a God worth knowing everything possibly about.

