

# Hanging Out With Jesus: What It Means To Really Know Jesus

Unedited Transcript

*John 14:7-11*

Good morning, men! Let's go ahead and do a shout out. By the way, let me mention to those of you online if we haven't done a shout out for you, send me an email at the address that Michael will put on the screen ([patrickmorley@maninthemirror.org](mailto:patrickmorley@maninthemirror.org)) and we'll give you one as well. Today, we want to welcome a new group, a brand new group, and I'm very excited because this is the first group we're giving a shout out to that is led by a new Area Director for Man in the Mirror. So Robert Thompson is over in the greater Tampa area, North Tampa, over in Lutz, FL. They're calling the group the North Tampa Coalition of Men's Discipleship. A group of 10 meeting bi-weekly Saturdays at 6:50-8:00am, and their first meeting was June 28<sup>th</sup>. So I wonder if you would join me in giving a great welcome to these guys right now? One, two, three, hoorah! Welcome guys, we're really glad to have you with us!

So we're doing a series called Hanging Out With Jesus. We're going to talk this morning about what it really means to know Jesus. In theology, one of the first principles is that God is incomprehensible. Now, this doesn't mean that we can't know anything about God, but what we do know is partial, it's incomplete. Because of that, Christianity involves believing things that we do not, will not, and cannot ever really fully understand or explain, which makes it a very peculiar religion. We actually believe things we can't understand. We actually believe things that we can't explain. Let me carry that further, there are communicable attributes of God, and there are incommunicable attributes of God. These are theologians' ideas, but the point is that there are attributes of God that are communicable. His love, his mercy, his truth; these are things that we can relate to. But then, there are these incommunicable attributes of God; God is infinite, God is eternal, God is omnipotent, he is all powerful, God is omniscient, he is all knowing, God is omnipresent, he is everywhere, God is self-existent. I can actually exhaust your knowledge of God with one single question; where did God come from? So the reality of this is that there's a lot of God that is simply beyond our experience.

Now imagine for a moment that there is no Jesus and that there is no Bible. You are God and you would like to communicate to human beings that you would like to invite them to be part of your family. Well, we know from general revelation, which is the creation, created things, we can know there is a God just by looking at what exists. Antony Flew, for example, one of the most famous atheists of the last fifty years, became a theist in 2004 at the age of eighty one! In his own words, he said I came to believe that there is a God by unaided human reason, not faith. He's not a believer in Christ, but he said just through unaided human reason, it is only logical to conclude that there is a God. And yet there is remaining a huge chasm of ignorance between us and God without Jesus and without the Bible. So God, in addition to general revelation, has given us special revelation. He's given us the Bible and he's given us Jesus. Why? So that we can comprehend him, so that we can understand him, so that we can know what it means to really know God.

**No Mere Man: Divinity and Trinity**

The first thing I want us to talk about is how Jesus is no mere man, his divinity, and the trinity. All of this preamble brings us to today's text. We're going to be at John 14:7, but we're going to actually re-read verse 6 from last week. There now have been three and a half years that the disciples have been with Jesus. Just imagine now that you've been with me three and a half years, and on a regular basis I've been discipling you. I'm not even worthy of being called a shadow of Christ, but just roll that up and say that you personally have been with the savior for three and half years! And you had seen the miracles! You had seen heal the sick and raise the dead! You had seen him multiply the fishes and loaves, you had heard the teachings. Pick it up at verse 6. Jesus says:

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

There's that whole exclusivity of Christ, the most inclusive kind of exclusivity there is, because Jesus said anyone can come to me. In all other religions, there are rules and regulations you have to meet before, but with Jesus, all you have to do is come to him with humility and repentance. Verse 7:

<sup>7</sup> If you really know me (hence the title of the message, What It Means To Really Know Jesus), you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

So Jesus is affirming once again, his divinity, that he is part of the trinity of God, and I want us to get to the goal of the text, the goal of why he is telling us this. Let's read on:

<sup>8</sup> Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

So even after three and half years, you see there's still some confusion on the part of the disciples. So if you've been with me for three and half years and you're not confused, guess what? You're deluded! Because God is incomprehensible! If somebody comes to me and says can you help me, do you think that I would be foolish enough to say yes? If someone comes to you and says can you help me, the correct answer is no, but I know someone who can, and that would be Jesus. Philip says Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough. Jesus answered:

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup> Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. <sup>11</sup> Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

The clear goal of this text is that Jesus wants to help us, his disciples to believe. To believe that he is in the Father, to believe in his divinity. He wants us to believe that he is part of the trinity. How? Through his words, and then through his works, his miracles. Jesus wants us to believe that he is the full and explicit revelation of the Father. You can know who the Father is by knowing Jesus.

Now, there are some other texts to take a look at, and I would like you to be aware of them. Colossians 1:15 says he is the visible expression of the invisible God. John 10:30, Jesus says the Father and I are one. Colossians 2:8 says that in Christ dwells all the fullness of God in bodily form. Hebrews 1:3 says that Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. Jesus is the exact representation of his being. This trinity thing is pretty mind boggling, so this is the book called *Systematic Theology*. There are many of them, I've read four different systematic theologies, Calvin, Hodge, Murkoff and this is Grudem. I actually haven't read this particular one, but it's nice to be able to

say you own it. But I will tell you something very interesting, you can learn a lot from a *Systematic Theology*. It would be a good idea for every Christian at some time in his life to read through a *Systematic Theology*, and this would be a good one. In fact, Brett Clemmer, who is the Vice President of Man in the Mirror, right now is actually leading a Bible Study at his church. I think he has about twenty men showing up each week, and you know what they're studying? This book. They're going through this book page by page, chapter by chapter, and he said it's one of the most exciting Bible Studies he's ever had. He said his men are getting so into understanding the character and attributes of God from the perspective of a theologian who is explaining them! For example, there's a big chapter in here on the trinity. The point I was going to make to you is that you're never going to understand the trinity! There are all kinds of analogies out there. Grudem notes several of them and just how inadequate they are, but the three leaf clover idea, the tree with three parts, roots, trunk and branches, water in three forms, steam liquid and ice, and then the farmer, the mayor, the elder and the union of the intellect, will and emotions. He just points out how all of these are interesting but they don't really give us an understanding of the trinity. The concept of the trinity is this: that God is three unique persons and one essence. There's just nothing in the human mind that has the ability to comprehend that!

I was driving up to north Florida on the turn pike and going over what I was going to say in my mind. I was praying Father, Son, Holy Spirit and suddenly I was hit with a force that was so heavy I felt like I was under the weight of a hundred tons, in one sense. In another sense, I felt like I was a helium balloon! I was lead heavy and feather light at the same time! This comprehension, this apprehension, of the trinity swept over me as I was praying to them, and it only last for a few seconds, but it was so overwhelming that the veil was completely torn back and I had this much greater understanding of the trinity! It was so wonderful, so exquisite, it was superior to anything I've ever experienced before! Then the veil closed back over, and within a minute I could not remember a single thing that I had seen or what had happened. I couldn't remember a single thing! I remember that it had happened and what I had felt, but I couldn't remember anything about the trinity. And yet, my understanding of God was pushed forward into a much more profound place, and I have never been the same! That has actually happened on several occasions now, where meditating on the trinity, the Lord in his gracious mercy and love has pulled back that veil and let me see something more of it for just a moment and closed it back. I can't describe it to you because it is ineffable, it's beyond words, beyond comprehension, but it is real! Jesus in this passage wants us to know that the trinity is real!

So the Big Idea today is this: **Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body.** This is straight scripture, but of all the Big Ideas I've given you in recent days, I can't say this for all time, but if you were ever going to memorize a Big Idea, this would be the one. If you say Pat, can you help me? No, but I know someone who can! Jesus! **Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body.** He can help you!

### **The Benefit of Increasing "The Awe Gap"**

Let's talk about the benefit of increasing the awe gap. What is the awe gap? This was another experience I had early in my journey. When I became a Christian, I knew that God was high, higher than me, but I really didn't think he was that high. On the other hand, I felt like I was pretty high myself, so I had a pretty strong opinion of myself. So I am high, and God is not that high, but when you get to really know Jesus, you start to see oh my goodness he is so much higher than I thought! The more you learn about **Jesus, the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body**, the more you learn about him, the more you learn about the Father. The more you learn about the Father, the more you learn about the Spirit, because they're three in one. One essence. One day you're looking around and

you say oh my gosh he's so high and holy, I can barely even see him anymore! On that day, you look over at yourself and you realize you're not as high as you thought you were, and your own estimate of yourself begins to become more humble. Not in the sense of human dignity, but you just realize that when you are in the presence of this holiness, this Jesus, that you're not as big of a deal as you thought you were. Over time, this awe gap just continues to grow and grow, or should. I hope it is!

I was sitting out in the back yard one day last week. Hadn't done that in while, with the stars and everything, just looking up in the dark sky of the early morning. I had just seen that very famous Hubble telescope picture, the one with ten thousand galaxies all as different color dots. Most of you I'm sure have seen that. I was looking into the stars and reflecting on that picture, and thinking about infinite, thinking about eternity, and actually stupid enough to think about where did God come from? And I was overwhelmed! The thought came to mind, what we do know is infinitesimally small compared to what we don't know. But if we will spend an hour gazing into and meditating upon the star studded sky, it will make us a better, softer and more humble person, because it will put things in perspective, it increases the awe gap. That's why it is so wonderful that we can know Jesus, because when we know who he really is, then we know the Father, we have seen the Father, we can believe that Jesus is the Father, and we can see that the Father dwells in Jesus and Jesus dwells in the Father. How? I can't explain how, it's just something that becomes apprehended when we come to the place where we believe this idea, that **Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body.** Straight scripture.

### **What Should This Awe Produce In Us?**

Finally, what should this awe produce in us, as disciples and disciple makers? As disciples, the first and foremost thing according to the text that this should produce in us is faith. Jesus, his goal in talking here in this text is that you would believe him, that he is the Father and the Father is in him. The first application here and what this awe should produce is just more faith, believe. Faith in what? The things we can explain and the things we can't explain! Have you ever thought about the idea that faith and understanding are really, not always, but virtually opposites? If you can understand something and know it, you don't really need faith. You don't need faith to believe that  $2+2=4$  unless you're in a mental institution.

Second, what this awe should produce in us as disciples is heart transformation. It should produce heart transformation. The question is, is it behavior modification that leads to heart transformation, or is it heart transformation that leads to behavior modification, or changes in behavior. Well, there are probably some situations where behavior modification will have some impact, but let me tell you the problem. The problem is this, when you come to me and you say can you help me and I say yes, I have just limited the arsenal to behavior modification techniques. I can tell you here's what you need to know, here's what you need to do. Study your Bible more, pray more, go to church, do the spiritual disciplines. I can tell you how to modify your behavior, but I can't transform your heart! That's why when somebody says can you help me, you should never say yes! Because you can't! All you can do is help them modify their behavior and behavior modification does not usually lead to heart transformation, it's heart transformation that leads to behavior modification. So what we should do is say no I can't help you but I know someone who can, Jesus! **He is the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body** and he can help you. Bring people to Jesus, don't bring people to the means! Bring people to the ends, bring people to Jesus!

You have to be pretty far along in your journey to understand this, I get that. But if you want to be a disciple of Jesus, study his attributes and characteristics. Get a hold of a systematic theology and

increase your understanding of God, or at least the way that some interpret God. Grudmen is good, Calvin is good, Hodge is good, Murkoff is good. I don't know if anybody else has a suggestion, but those are good.

What should this awe produce in us as disciple makers? Be humble. They said to John the Baptist are you the one? He said no, I'm not the guy. I'm the guy that knows the guy. John the Baptist said I am not even worthy to untie his sandals. So how do you know when you're humble? You know that you're humble when what's really in your mind and heart is I am not worthy to even untie his shoes! That's the awe gap, that's what it means to be humble! I am not even worthy to untie the shoes of Jesus! The opposite of that is you need help? I'm you're guy. I'm not the guy, I'm the guy that knows the guy. So if somebody comes to you and asks you for help, what do you say? I can't do anything for you, but I know a guy. I'm the guy that knows the guy, and that's the Big Idea for the day: **Jesus is the guy, the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body.** Let's pray!

### **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you are the Father. You're in the Father and the Father is in you. We don't understand it, what we know is infinitesimally small compared to what we don't know. But we know you! And you've given us this full revelation of God. Lord, as disciples ourselves, give us faith, transform our hearts. As disciple makers, help us to be humble, so that we can help others meet you, so that you can transform their hearts. Not that we can transform their hearts, but that you can. We ask this in your name, and everybody said, amen!