

Sermon in 2 John *12-13*

God Face to Face

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[Unless noted otherwise, all Scripture is from New American Standard Bible (NAS).]

¹² Having many things to write to you,
I do not want to *do so* with paper and ink;
but I hope to come to you
and speak face to face,
that your joy may be made full.

¹³ The children of your chosen sister greet you.

AMEN

Section FOUR: Farewell.

It is always hard to say goodbye in a letter. John hopes to come to his recipients and personalize his words. Speaking face-to-face with someone conveys more meaning than just words written on paper. When face-to-face and eye-to-eye, there is the physical presence of the soul and intent of the heart. The weight of the message is heavier and sinks deeper when delivered in person. We are God's children, and He delivered His most precious message in person, meaning The Message of Incarnation, The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Luke 4:17-19 *17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written,*

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden,

¹⁹ To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

God did not come to be one of us to stay in the shadows. God came to communicate directly with us. God came to save us from ourselves. Man's historical collective wisdom cannot gain entrance into the kingdom of God. Man cannot even see the kingdom of God unless he is born-again of Spirit. What is man to do? God has revealed Himself in the creation itself.

Romans 1:18-20 ¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

God came to us face-to-face, so that we can see Him.

Therefore, through what God has made, the creation, man can hear the conviction of God's Holy Spirit and is given the opportunity to respond to God's voice of conviction.

About What God Has Made

From a human perspective, the creation reveals the reality of God's unreachable universe. It is true. There are more stars than we can count. There are more orbs in space than we can count. The universe is incomprehensible to us, and, at the same time, represents God. We know the universe is there, but we cannot fully see or comprehend its space. We perceive vastness of time and energy, and, at the same time, we study organized particles smaller than atoms in our laboratories. Quarks.

Quarks - Tricky to measure

Quarks can't be measured, because the energy required produces an antimatter equivalent (called an antiquark) before they can be observed separately, among other reasons, according to a primer from Georgia State University. The mass of quarks is best determined by techniques such as using a supercomputer to simulate the interactions between quarks and gluons, with gluons being the particles that glue quarks together

<https://www.livescience.com/45344-facts-about-quarks.html>

Quarks - May set the universe's fate

Nailing down the mass of the top quark could reveal to researchers one of two ghastly scenarios: that the universe could end in 10 billion years, **or that people could materialize out of nowhere**. If the top quark is heavier than expected, energy carried through the vacuum of space could collapse. If it's lower than expected, an unlikely scenario called "Boltzmann brain" could see self-aware entities from random collections of atoms. (While this isn't a part of the Standard Model, the theory – framed as a paradox – goes that it would be more likely to see organized groups of atoms as the random ones observed in the universe.)

We observe through the investigation into quarks that man studies what he does not clearly see or fully understand. However, he plods along.

God made it simple for us. God became one of us, so that we would not have to build a space ship to go find Him – LOL.

God's great love and grace incarnated in front of man, face-to-face. God came to live with sin in the flesh, and, at the same time did not sin, proving that it is possible for man to be insulated from sin. In our current temporal fragile state, we are subject to sin. However, in God's Heaven, in the Believers next life, sin and death (death and hades) do not exist for they are thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:11 And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds.

¹⁴ And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:1-8 **1** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea.

² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them,

⁴ and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be *any* death; there shall no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

⁶ And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.

⁷ "He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

⁸ "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

God's judgement is personal and eternal. God's judgment when we error in this life is reasoned to bringing our attention to the things that separate us from His great **love** and **joy**. God's **grace** allows Believers to be restored to a state that we can be in the presence of God when we leave this life. God corrects us for our own "eternal good."

Hebrews 12:6-11 ⁶ For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives."

⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?

⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, that we may share His holiness.

¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

When I was a child, my mother would call-out corrective instruction to me and my brothers, as we played in our rooms, to speak softer or not play so rough. With three sons, she had her hands full. At times, we were so engrossed in what we were doing that we did not hear her instruction. Then we would hear. . . “If I have to come in there, you are going to be in real trouble.” In other words, a face-to-face meeting was required. This statement from mom was generally all that was needed. However, if that recommendation was not sufficient then she would say, “Okay, just wait ‘till your father gets home.” Well, that settled it.

Man has such a fundamental problem of bad behavior that God did not stay in Heaven. Man is stubborn and does not listen; and, as far as listening, man cannot hear God through his misbehavior. “The Father” had to come see us just as my mom said that she would, if we did not straighten-up.

God’s love gave us “free will choice” (Genesis 2:17). God’s grace gave us a path to come back to Him, after we exercised our choice of rebellion away from Him (Genesis 3:15, 22-24). God desires for fallen man to respond to His Holy Spirit conviction (John 16:8) which allows God to spiritually reorder man’s heart (Acts 2:36-39; John 3).

If God could have paid the price for sin by just writing a letter, by writing a check, then I’m sure he would have. We write checks all the time to pay for things. However, man often writes checks from overdrawn accounts. It is the American way. The U. S. Congress does this on a daily basis. They simply vote for a “continuing resolution” to print more money. It is as if they put I.O. U.’s in the memo section of the bills they pass. There is just one big difference between the U.S. Congress and God. Congress has built a debt so big that it will never be paid. They have written checks their collective congressional dairy-aire’s can never cash. Can you imagine Jesus on

the Cross looking over at the criminal on his cross, who just accepted Him as Lord and Savior, and saying: “Thanks for the confession, but I am all out of grace, love and forgiveness, my account is overdrawn.”? There is a difference in man’s bank account compared to God’s. God’s bank account (His grace, love and forgiveness account) can never be overdrawn. God’s resources are not man’s. God is unlimited.

Man has attempted to be God’s account manager in printing paper certificates for God’s grace, love and forgiveness. Man has tried using “rites of indulgences” in the middle ages. The Dark Age Church defined “indulgences” as:

describes an indulgence as "a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints".^[2]

This is one of the main reasons for the formation of the rebellion at the time of the Reformation heightened in the 1500’s.

God could have asked us all to pay up-front and then wait for Him to reimburse us. In fact, this is what many manmade religions do. If a person or group asks you to perform a work or pay money to receive God’s blessing then you know their teaching contradicts the Word of God. God paid up-front for you. Do not listen to charlatans and faith-peddlers.

This is often phrased as “Seed Money” for temporal gain. Whether for temporal gain or for salvation . . . For by no work can we boast that we are saved; it is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8).

We must remember that we do not have a powerful enough authority or material resources to pay the price for sin. The Law could not take away the results of sin or pay the price of sin.

Hebrews 10:11-12 ¹¹ And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

Just think about the grand Temple in Jerusalem and all its priests. Jesus was superior to all of those priests and buildings. In fact, they all died, and the buildings were destroyed by 70 A.D. during the Roman destruction.

God came in the most personal way to accomplish His mission, face-to-face. John wants to see the people he loves and those which he has given his life.

We noted previously that Irenaeus chronicled that John was released from Patmos and had come to Ephesus where he died. Therefore, John may have seen the people face-to-face that he writes.

My view is that John believed that by his people seeing him their joy would be made full. He knows that his days are numbered. He knows that he is an eye witness to the life of Jesus our Lord and Savior. He knows that people want to see him and that through his witness people can look at him and see a face that met with God incarnate, The Christ, Jesus, face-to-face.

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