

WALKING WITH GOD – GOD IS NOT A MAN Prt 2

If You are joining us for the first time, you find us in the middle of a series titled **MERE MORTALS WALKING WITH GOD** and we are doing prt 3.

God created us as social beings, with a high affinity for relationship. In fact, one of the reasons God created you was for fellowship – for Him to fellowship with Himself in the form of a man. God made humans in His own image and when God looks at you, He sees Himself.

Yes, God created you to fellowship with Him, but mere mortals don't find it easy to walk with God. Last week, we observed that one of the reasons why man find it difficult to fellowship with God was that man thinks that God is like human beings. Human beings cannot be trusted because they are weak and unreliable.

However, God is reminding us that He is not a man, and He can be trusted. Last week, I started unpacking the whole thesis of **GOD IS NOT A MAN** and I want to dig a little bit deeper this morning in that regard.

Because God is immortal, it sets Him apart from man and it is impossible to fully comprehend Him. However, what God does is that He exposes certain dimensions of Himself to us, one aspect at a time.

In that regard, we exist in the realm of progressive revelation, and we get to know God in stages. I will share with you what the Lord has laid in my heart for you to be reminded of His nature – in other words, this is not exhaustive, but it is what the Lord is wanting us to know about Him in this season.

1. He is a promise keeper.

- It was powerful to observe that when God makes a promise, you can count on Him to bring it to pass. This makes God so reliable that you can count on Him all the time.
- When I started this series, I used the analogy of a relationship between a parent and a child as one that takes after the relationship between a believer and Father God.
- One of the reasons a relationship between a father and a son can crumble is the father's high standards he has for his son. Whilst it is a good thing for a father to have very high standards for his son, if those standards are overextended and unreasonable, the father might break the son in the process.
- We have seen how fathers can be very tough with their children, you can hear how they scream at their boys if they miss a penalty at a kindergarten soccer match.

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- As a result of unrealistic expectations, fathers can sometimes be very impatient with their kids.
- When human beings have been impatient with you, it is highly likely that you will think that God is also impatient and has very high expectations of you.
- This brings me to the next aspect that differentiates God from man.

2. God is patient.

- Patience in the Bible is described as the ability to endure difficult people and situations without giving into anger or giving up hope.
- Quite often man is very impatient – it is rare to find a man that is genuinely patient when placed under pressure.
- Because of that we have projected that same image on God, where we see Him as impatient, prickly, and easily provoked.

2 Peter 3: 8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

- This is a beautiful scripture that reminds us of God's long suffering towards us – God is not easily moved by your flows but is long suffering so that you might come to a place of restoration.
- God does not rejoice in the death of a sinner, and He is waiting for as many as possible to come to the knowledge of Jesus before closing the end time curtains.
- On the other hand, the patience of God teaches us great patience – God does things at His own pace.
- God is never in a hurry – with the Lord a day is like a thousand years.

Psalms 130:5-6 "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning." (ESV)

- Because God is patient with us, we need to learn to wait upon the Lord – sometimes we overestimate our readiness and our capabilities and as a result we want to skip certain processes.
- A life well lived, is a life lived at God's pace.
- The bible tells us that in his time, he makes all things beautiful (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

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- In God's calendar, there is a due time – "don't grow weary in doing good, for in due time, you shall reap, if you don't grow tired" Galatians 6:9.
- God is also patient with you when you sin, and you come back and ask for forgiveness.
- God can do beyond what man can do – can you imagine the amount of forgiveness that is found in Him if He expects you to forgive other people hundreds of times a day.

Matthew 18:21-22 Then Peter came up and said to him [Jesus], "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."

- God is willing and able to forgive because He knows that we are mere mortals, who are full of weaknesses.

Psalms 103:13 As a father pities his children, Jehovah pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our form; He remembers that we are dust.

- God is not looking for perfection but rather for a broken and a contrite heart.
- A broken and a contrite heart cannot wear out the patience of God.
- This is a major difference between God and man – though man is inherently imperfect, yet man is looking for perfection in others, but God is looking for humility.
 - A humble person is not perfect but is easy to correct.
 - A humble person won't get everything correct but does not stop trying.
 - A humble person does not know it all but looks for counsel and advice.
 - A humble person is not self-made but is dependent on others.
- The Bible is full of stories that reveals God's patience in His dealings with man.
 - God was patient from the beginning. When Adam sinned and clothed himself with leaves, the Lord came dressed them in animal skin - *Genesis 3:21 And for Adam and his wife Jehovah God made coats of skins, and clothed them.*
 - God promised Abraham a child but Abraham and Sarah decided to make their own plan. But still God followed through with His promise and Isaac, the child of promise was born.
 - Moses tested God during the burning bush encounter. God wanted to send Moses to deliver Israel, but Moses continued questioning God. Though God got angry (Exodus 4:14), He still used Moses to deliver Israel.

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- Israel tested God's patience in the wilderness for forty years. But God still fulfilled his promise of bringing them to Canaan the promised land, though with a different generation of people.
- However, though God is patient, it is possible to outrun His patience. In other words, it is unprofitable and unwise to abuse God's patience.
- God's patience is abused when people continue in sin, without genuine repentance.
- God's patience is abused when people are careless and neglect or take for granted God's provision.
- When Israel abused God's patience, they ended up in captivity in Babylon.

Psalm 81:11 But My people would not listen to My voice, and Israel would have none of Me. 12 So I gave them up to the stubbornness of their own hearts; and they walked in their own conceits. 13 Oh that My people had listened to Me, and Israel had walked in My ways!

- God's patience is easily abused by the hard-hearted person, who does not pay attention to God's patience.
- Each time we keep on pouring sand in the eyes of God by being stiff-necked, we attract upon ourselves severe correction from Father God.

Proverbs 29:1 Whoever remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.

- What are the take homes regarding the patience of God?
 - God determines the course of our lives through His patience.
 - God's anger is calmed, and it brings about forgiveness.
 - God's love and care for His people is revealed through his patience.