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SERMON TITLE	**SHOW ME YOUR GLORY**
SERIES	**KNOWING GOD**
DATE	10/25/2026
KEY SCRIPTURE	**Exodus 33:18-23; 34:5-7**
SYNOPSIS	Moses asked God, "Show me." God answered by telling him His name, and it's better than most of the pictures we carry around.
HIGHLIGHTS	

►SHOW ME YOUR GLORY Knowing God (Week 2)

Exodus 33:18–23; 34:5–7

The title of today's message is Show Me Your Glory, and it reminds me of Missouri's nickname, the Show-Me State. (Some of you might be from there. That's okay. We still love you.) There are a couple of stories about where that came from and nobody can say for certain which it was. But think the nickname, "Show-Me State" is just a really polite way of admitting nobody there can read the instructions.

But I kind of get the Show-Me attitude. Don't tell me. Show me. And there's a man in the Bible ►who said almost exactly that to God. So here's the question for today: **What is God actually like?** Not what we've heard or assumed. What is He really like?

Last week we started this series on knowing God, and I said you can know a lot *about* God and still not *know Him*, so let's press on to genuinely know Him. But that raises the question: who ►exactly am I pressing on to know? Because **a lot of us are carrying around a picture of God that we picked up somewhere along the way, and some of those pictures aren't very good.**

Here's the good news. God doesn't leave us guessing. He tells us.

Let me set the scene. Moses has just come down off Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments, and he finds the people dancing around a golden calf. That's Exodus 32. It's the worst moment in Israel's history up to that point. They'd seen the plagues, they'd walked through the Red Sea on dry ground, eaten manna every morning, and then forty days without Moses, they made themselves a cow and called it God.

And in **Exodus 33:3**, God says, I'll still give you the land I promised. "But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way." You can have the stuff. You just can't have Me.

And Moses won't take that deal. **Exodus 33:15**, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." In other words, I don't want the Promised Land without the Promise-Maker. And God says, okay. I'll go.

Now this is a man who already knew God pretty well. **Exodus 33:11** says, "The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend." And yet, right after the worst week of his life, Moses asks for more.

Exodus 33:18–20, "Then Moses said, 'Now show me your glory.' And the LORD said, 'I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But,' he said, 'you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.'"

Show me your glory. I think Moses is from Missouri.

The Hebrew word for glory here is kabod (kah-BODE), and at its root it carries the idea of weight. Heaviness. When we say somebody's opinion "carries a lot of weight," that's close. So Moses isn't asking for a light show. He's asking, God, let me see the real weight of who You are. And he asks right after the people blew it, he broke the tablets, and a lot of people died. Moses is worn out. And that's when he says, I need to see You.

Some of us are there this morning. It's not been a good week. Maybe it's not been a good year. And you're not asking for answers so much as you're asking, "God, I just need to know You're who I hoped You were." So ask. Moses did. God didn't scold him for asking.

►ASK HIM TO SHOW YOU

Moses says, show me Your glory. And God says, I'll show you My goodness. I'll tell you My ►name. **Moses asked for the weight. God gave him His character.**

Now hang with me here, because back in verse 11 it said God spoke to Moses face to face, and now God's saying nobody can see His face and live. Which is it? "Face to face, as one speaks to a friend" is a way of saying close. Personal. Nothing in between. But seeing God's face, all of His glory, straight on, is more than any human being can handle. So God makes a way. Verses 21 through 23: He puts Moses in a cleft in the rock, covers him with His hand while His glory passes by, and then lets him see His back.

►Close enough to know Him. Covered enough to survive it.

And then in chapter 34, God does exactly what He said He'd do.

Exodus 34:5–7, "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.'"

This is God describing Himself. In His own words. If God filled out a name tag, this is what it would say. And look what He leads with. Not "powerful" or "holy," even though He is. He leads ►with **compassionate. Gracious. Slow to anger. Abounding in love.**

That word "love" in verse 6 is the Hebrew word chesed (KHEH-sed). It shows up about 250 times in the Old Testament, and it's hard to get into one English word. It's love that keeps its promises. Loyal love. The kind of love that doesn't leave when you make it hard. And remember who God's saying this to. People who just built a golden calf.

And this description gets quoted all over the rest of the Bible. It's like Israel's memory verse about who God is. My favorite is Jonah. Remember him? God tells him to go preach to Nineveh, Jonah runs the other way, gets swallowed by a fish, finally goes, preaches, and the whole city repents. And Jonah is mad about it. **Jonah 4:2**, he says, "I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love." He throws God's own name tag back at Him like a complaint. (You ever been mad at God for being nice to somebody you didn't like? Me neither.)

Here's my point. A lot of us have a picture of God that's built on our own experiences. A tough dad. A harsh church. A bad season. And we figure God's mostly irritated with us and just barely putting up with us. But that's not how God describes Himself. He says, I'm compassionate. I'm gracious. I'm slow to anger. I'm full of a love that keeps its promises.

So when the picture you've got of God doesn't match what He says about Himself, which one wins?

►TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD

Now, we can't skip the end of verse 7. "He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation." That one bothers people. And some of you are sitting here this morning wondering if you're paying for your granddad's sin. Or worse, if your kids are going to pay for yours. Let me give you a couple of things the Bible itself says that help.

It's about consequences, not guilt. **Ezekiel 18:20** says, "The one who sins is the one who will die. The child will not share the guilt of the parent, nor will the parent share the guilt of the child." God doesn't hold you guilty for what your parents did. But anybody who grew up in a home with addiction or anger knows sin doesn't stay in one person. It splashes. It runs downhill. That's not God being unfair. That's just what sin does. And then, some aren't just affected by those sins, but they continue headlong in the same sinful patterns as their parents.

But here's what I think is the main point here. Look at the numbers. Three or four generations. And right before it, God says He maintains love to thousands. Three or four, against thousands.

►Judgment has an end date. Mercy doesn't run out.

Here's where it really gets good. Because what God promised Moses on that mountain, He finished in Jesus.

The disciples once saw a man who'd been born blind, and they asked Jesus the generational question. **John 9:2–3**, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" And Jesus says, "Neither." Jesus would not let that man be defined by his family tree.

Peter tells people with all kinds of family baggage that Jesus bought them out of the empty life they'd inherited, and He didn't pay in silver or gold. He paid in blood (**1 Peter 1:18–19**). An

inherited empty life. That's the third and fourth generation. And Peter says Jesus paid to get you out of it.

►**Your family history is real. But it isn't your destiny.**

God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock and covered him with His hand so he could be near God and live. There's an old hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee." That's the picture. In Jesus, we're hidden and covered. Close enough to know Him, and safe in Him. The guilt doesn't get passed down anymore, because Jesus took it. And the pattern doesn't have to get passed down either, because Jesus breaks it.

►**JESUS BREAKS THE CHAIN**

I've got two friends, brothers, that I've known for decades. They grew up in a house where their dad drank, and when he drank, he got mean. I'll leave it there, because that's their story to tell, not mine. But you can imagine what two boys learn in a house like that, about what a man is and what a dad does and what you do when you're angry.

It wouldn't be unusual for them to follow in their dad's footsteps. You know, hurt people hurt people. That's the third and fourth generation thing we just read about, sitting right there in their living room.

But in middle and high school they started hanging around our youth group, which was a bunch of teenage knuckleheads, me included. (Not exactly a dream team.) And God used those friendships to bring both of them to Jesus. One of them's a pastor today, and both of them have lived godly lives. Neither one of them drinks, and neither one of them became their dad.

That chain had been coming down that family line for who knows how long, and it stopped with them. Not because they were tougher than their dad, but because Jesus is stronger than what their dad handed them.

And maybe you grew up in that house too. Maybe the chain hasn't broken all the way yet, and some days you're still fighting it and losing. Hear me. That's not the end of your story either.

So let me ask you: When you picture God this morning, what do you see? Do you see the God built on your own experience? Or do you see the God who describes Himself as compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love?

Here's the truth: you don't have to understand everything about God to trust Him. He already ►came to you, in Jesus. And if you've never trusted Him, today's the day to stop guessing about God and start knowing Him.

Or maybe you're not questioning who God is as much as you're struggling with something that got handed down to you. A temper. A habit. A fear. Something you swore you'd never do and you're doing it. Jesus breaks the chain. Not your willpower. Him.

In a minute we're going to sing. You're free to stay where you are and let the song be your ►prayer. But if you want to pray Moses' prayer, **"Lord, show me who You are,"** or if there's a chain you want broken, come. I'd love to pray with you.

Draw Me Close

Father, we've carried around some pictures of You that aren't true. Thank You that You don't leave us guessing. You told us who You are. Compassionate. Gracious. Slow to anger. Full of a love that keeps its promises. Show us Your glory, Lord. And where something's been handed down to us that we don't want to hand down to our kids, break it. You already paid for it, Jesus. We take You at Your word. Amen.