

INTRODUCTION: UNLIKELY PLACES GOD SHOWS UP

Before Jesus ever walked the dusty roads of Galilee...

Before He ever sat at a tax collector's table or wept beside a tomb...

Before Mary held Him in her arms in Bethlehem...

He was already showing up—again and again—in the places no one expected.

Not just in palaces. Not in sanitized temples.

But in deserts... in dens... in fire... in famine... in chaos.

Let's rewind for a minute. Let's walk back through the Old Testament trail of God's unexpected arrivals:

 **He showed up in a burning bush on the back side of nowhere.**

Exodus 3 — Moses wasn't on stage.

He wasn't leading a revival.

He was tending sheep in the wilderness, running from his past, and hiding from his calling.

And God spoke from a flame.

➤ *Sometimes, God lights a fire in the place we tried to bury.*

 **He showed up in the belly of a fish—not a pulpit.**

Jonah 2 — A runaway prophet, drowning in disobedience, swallowed whole by his own rebellion.

And yet... God met him there. In the dark. In the deep. In the stink.

➤ *God doesn't wait for the storm to pass. He meets us in the gut of it.*

 **He showed up in a widow's empty kitchen.**

1 Kings 17 — A famine-stricken home with one final meal.

And God sent a prophet not to perform a miracle *for her...*

but *through her*.

The oil didn't run dry. The bread didn't stop coming.

➤ *Sometimes, the pantry becomes the pulpit.*

 **He showed up in a boy's bedroom in the middle of the night.**

1 Samuel 3 — Samuel didn't even recognize God's voice yet.

He wasn't trained. He wasn't ready.

But God called his name—over and over again—until he said “Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening.”

➤ *God still speaks in the quiet places that no one sees.*

 **He showed up in a lion's den.**

Daniel 6 — Not before the trial. Not in the courtroom.

But inside it.

Where fear lived. Where death waited.

And He shut the mouths of the beasts.

➤ *The safest place in the world is not outside the pit—it's inside it, with Jesus.*

 **He showed up in the furnace.**

Daniel 3 — Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't escape the fire.

They walked into it.

And someone else was already in there with them.

One who looked like the Son of God.

➤ *He doesn't always deliver you from the fire. Sometimes, He delivers you in it.*

So don't tell me Jesus only shows up in cathedrals.

Don't tell me He waits for the worship band to warm up.

He's been showing up in caves, kitchens, flames, fish guts, and famine for thousands of years.

And when Jesus *did* come in the flesh...

He didn't change the pattern.

He kept pulling out chairs in places no one else would go.

He kept showing up where the religious leaders were too proud to walk.

He kept turning dirt into sanctuary, and lunch into communion.

Now let's zoom in on the Gospels.

Let's walk with Jesus.

Let's look at the **places He ministered**—because they weren't just unlikely.


They were downright offensive to the religious mind.

And yet... that's where Jesus pulled up a chair.

The Places Jesus Ministered

Where did Jesus pull out chairs? Where did He turn common ground into holy ground? Where did He plant His presence when others walked away?

1. Ordinary & "Unholy" Places

 *Matthew 9:10, Mark 2:15–17*

Jesus didn't just teach in the temple courts—He reclined at tables in tax collector homes.

He didn't wait for people to clean up—He walked straight into the mess.

➤ Holiness showed up where religion stayed away.

The Pharisees avoided that house.

Jesus *entered* it.

Religion draws lines. Jesus crosses them.

Religion says “Not here.”


Jesus says, “Exactly here.”

What “unholy” space is God calling you into?

- A workplace where faith is frowned upon?
- A dinner table full of questions, not prayers?
- A neighborhood overlooked and underserved?

 **Let's stop asking, “Is this a holy space?” Let's start asking, “Can holiness show up if I step into it?”**

2. Uncomfortable or Inconvenient Places

 *Mark 5, John 4*

A demon-filled graveyard?

A well at high noon with a scandal-stained woman?

Jesus didn't say, “This isn't a good time.”

He didn't send a team to scout it out.

He *showed up anyway*.

➤ **Ministry isn't always strategic—it's sacrificial.**

Not every moment was planned.

But every moment was purposed.

Jesus walked where others crossed the road.

He paused where others passed by.

❑ **Where would Jesus walk that we avoid?**

- The ER waiting room?
- The back alley?
- The house with tension so thick you can feel it?

💡 **Don't confuse discomfort with disobedience. The path of Jesus often passes through pain.**

3. Hungry Grounds, Not Just Holy Grounds

📖 *Luke 9:10–17, Matthew 14*

Jesus fed 5,000 on the side of a hill.

No temple. No sound system. No stage.

Just hunger—and His compassion.

➤ **The side of a hill became a sanctuary.**

What turned it into a place of worship?

Not the geography.

Not the crowd size.

The presence of Jesus and the power of His provision.

❑ **Are we feeding the full... or feeding the hungry?**

- Are our churches built for the churchied... or the broken?
- Do we serve where it's easy... or where it's needed?

💡 **The church isn't a restaurant for the satisfied. It's a rescue mission for the starving.**

4. Private Before Public

📖 *John 3, Luke 10:38–42*

Jesus met Nicodemus *at night*.

He taught Mary and Martha *at home*.

He *ate* before He *preached*.

He *walked with a few* before He ever stood before the masses.

➤ **If it's not personal, it's not powerful.**

Real transformation doesn't begin on a stage.

It starts in the quiet, honest, messy spaces of relationship.

Are you building discipleship around your dinner table?

- Is your home a training ground for truth?
- Is your table a sanctuary for grace?

 **Jesus didn't just preach in crowds—He pastored in kitchens. He didn't just go viral—He went deep.**

Part 3: What This Reveals About Jesus

You can tell a lot about someone by where they sit.

Jesus didn't sit in palaces.

He sat in homes, on hillsides, and in hurting places.

What does that tell us about Him?

- **He wasn't platform-obsessed—He was people-focused.**

He didn't chase followers.

He called names.

He didn't build a brand.

He built a table.

 **The Kingdom isn't built on platforms. It's built on presence.**

- **He didn't sanitize the moment—He sanctified it.**

He didn't walk into clean spaces.

He walked into chaos and made it sacred.

He didn't avoid the mess.

He transformed it.

 **You don't need to be in a clean room to have a holy moment. You just need Jesus in it.**

- **He didn't fear mess—He met people in it.**

He didn't wait for people to figure it out.

He pulled up a chair while they were still confused.

Still angry. Still bleeding. Still doubting.

 **If Jesus can sit with them, then so can we.**

Final Challenge:

Where is Jesus asking you to *set the table* this week?

Not in the *easy places*—but the *unlikely ones*.

Not with the *perfect people*—but the *hungry ones*.

Don't wait for the room to be ready.

Just bring the Bread.