

WHERE JUSTICE AND MERCY MEET

An exposition of Exodus 33:18-34:9
at West Hills San Jose on June 14, 2020

PASTORAL PRAYER: O Lord our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. When we look at the works of your hands, and consider the depths of your power and glory, what is man that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man that you care for him (Ps. 8)? And yet the death of your only begotten Son, has opened for us the way into your very throne room, where you bid us come, and sit, and receive mercy and grace to help in our time of need (Heb 4). And so we come to you this morning.

Our soul longs for you Lord, our souls are restless. We who love your salvation say continually “Great is the Lord (Ps. 40), and yet we confess that we groan with all of creation, as we eagerly wait for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (Rom 8:18-25). Lord we plead for the whole earth, would you deliver us from the power of sin and bring all mankind into life everlasting? We pray for our neighbors and our family members, and the people that we see at the store and our mailmen, and our children’s friends would you work in your power to save them. Work through us, through others, may your kingdom come into the lives of all we know and interact with? We pray for ourselves, would you destroy sin in our lives and sanctify us in holiness. Would you make us a pure, peacemaking, love filled, rejoicing people full of mercy and good fruit. Would you fill us with faith and hope and love as wait upon the coming of the King.

We pray for our country and our state and our county and our city...would you work through your church to bring healing and reconciliation, to bring hope and restoration among peoples from different tribes and tongues and national origins. We pray for our leaders would you grant them wisdom from above. Wisdom that doesn’t overreact in response to the fever of the moment, and also doesn’t under react and fail to take seriously the abuses of power that have come to light.

I pray for your church in this city, I pray that above all we would be a city set on a hill. That we would be lights in a broken generation, giving guidance to the nation, that you would display through us the power of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. I pray that you would protect us from the question of the Pharisee who asked, “and who is my neighbor” and instead grant us the compassionate heart of the good Samaritan who saw an image bearer in need, and sought to help.

Lord I pray for our church, would you strengthen our unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace. Would you make us one as Christ is One with You, and that your joy would be in us and our joy would be made complete. I pray for baby Faith MacConnell, would you heal her body and strengthen her parents for the long road of recovery ahead. Help us, your church, to love them and bless them for the glory of God. I pray for those who have lost their jobs over the last several months, I would pray for each of them by name but I know some folks don’t want that public. Would you be with them Lord, would you show us your church how to be a help and a support. Strengthen our love for each other, and now open our eyes to hear, wonderful things from your law. I ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.

PROBLEM: I've noticed over the course of the last several months, as I'm sure have many of you, that the human heart seems to gravitate in one of two directions in response to authority. We are either inclined to obey, or inclined to disobey. But what's interesting about these inclinations is that they aren't really first rooted in conviction but in personality. Our convictions can grow strong enough to exercise control over our personality (I'm textbook inclined to disobey), but the natural inclination of our hearts is the natural inclinations of our hearts.

But where these inclinations can become deeply problematic is when we let them shape our relationship with, and understanding of, God. Most people, whether they realize it or not, gravitate toward those aspects of God's person that resonate with how we think. So if you are someone inclined toward obedience, you love God for His righteousness and justice, for judging the wicked and vindicating the righteous. And often this is done to the neglect of God's mercy and grace. Those who are more naturally inclined toward disobedience tend to gravitate toward God's mercy and kindness and long-suffering. They love Him because He forgives sin and has mercy for the penitent, often to the neglect of his righteousness, justice and wrath against evil.

But one of the most important things on earth for a Christian to understand, is that God isn't one or the other of those things. God is perfectly and completely both. God is glorified in the holy perfections of his truth and grace. And what's so so so hard to understand is how could all of those things be true of God at the same time? Don't they even contradict at a quick, surface level glance? How can God be perfectly just and wonderfully gracious at the same time? And the only way to answer that question...is to open the eyes of our hearts and to consider the glory of God.

MAIN POINT: God's glory is revealed in His mercy and justice together, so cling to the cross where justice and mercy meet.

SETTING THE CONTEXT: Please open your bibles to Exodus 33:18, where we will be picking up where I left off last week. To bring us back into the context, the people of Israel and are standing at the foot of Mount Sinai, having been delivered from the power of Egypt, yet still on their way to the land of Promise. The land of Canaan. At mount Sinai, the long awaited meeting between God and His people has finally happened, and God entered into covenant with the children of Abraham through the stating of terms, the shedding of blood, and the confession of all parties that they would abide by the terms of the covenant.

And after this happened, the Lord called Moses, alone, to the top of the mountain, where they would further discuss the relationship between God and the people. And what was revealed their was that God desired far more than a legal relationship with Israel. He desired a deeply personal connection with them, that was rich with the imagery of redemption. But as this was happening between God and Moses, the people were at the bottom of the mountain breaking the covenant by building an idol. And so Moses went down, and put to death the instigators of the sin. And the whole nation was brought into a state of repentance and mourning. And in the midst of that broken lament, the Lord had threatened to no longer accompany the people to the promised Land. To which Moses cried out in terror, if you will not go with us do not lead us up from here. And God in His mercy, agreed to go with the people. And Moses in his fear coupled with his desire to see God, asked for a revelation of God that would assure Him this was really

the case, and in our text today, God is going to respond, let's humble our minds and open our hearts for the God who made heaven and earth is about to speak...

READING: [18] Moses said, "Please show me your glory." [19] And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. [20] But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." [21] And the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, [22] and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. [23] Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."

[1] The LORD said to Moses, "Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. [2] Be ready by the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the mountain. [3] No one shall come up with you, and let no one be seen throughout all the mountain. Let no flocks or herds graze opposite that mountain." [4] So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone. [5] The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. [6] The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, [7] keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." [8] And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. [9] And he said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

PRAYER: Lord open our eyes to behold your wondrous glory in your Law. Amen.

ROAD MAP: 1.) What did God promise to reveal, 2.) what the revelation means, 3.) what the revelation was, and 4.) how all human beings ought to respond to this encounter with the Lord.

WHAT DID GOD PROMISE TO REVEAL?

1. Look down with me at verse 18, Moses cries out to God and pleads with Him, to show him His glory. And it might first be asked what kind of cry is this? Is this the cry of a single hearted worshipper who desires to see more of God? Is it the cry of someone lacking assurance? What kind of cry is this?
2. Well I think you want to start by saying that this is a cry that takes place in a context. In Exodus 33, Moses is getting a lot of face time with God and the two speak together like a man speaking with his friend. So it's not like Moses hasn't already experienced the glory of God to some extent. Additionally, Moses has seen God's great redemption in Egypt and at the Red Sea. So it isn't as if Moses has no idea what it looks like for God to glorify Himself.

So it would seem as though He wants more of God. Show me MORE of your glory, MORE of what you are like and why You do what You do.

1. Yet there is also an element of assurance seeking in this request. Beginning in Exodus 33:12, Moses began to pray asking God to please reconsider his statement that he would not go with the people. And he appears to plead with God twice in v. 14 and v. 16. And it's going to seem like the chief end of this appeal in 34:9 is going to be ANOTHER appeal to God, to please GO in the midst of Israel to the land. And the reason He is afraid that God won't is because the people have sinned a great sin.
 2. The people have literally broken the covenant, committing spiritual adultery, 5 minutes after it was made. Not literally but sort of. And Moses, I think is wrestling with the same question I introduced at the beginning. Is this going to be one of those times where you show yourself merciful? Or is this going to be one of those times where you show yourself Just and justified in your wrath?
 3. We are sinners but you are just. We are sinners but you are merciful. What is going to happen next Lord, PLEASE show me your glory. I think that is at the heart of this request.
3. And God replies, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name, The LORD." So Moses says SHOW ME, and God says...I will pass and proclaim. Moses says I want to SEE, and God says you will sense and hear. So what does that mean? Well I think at minimum it means that God basically says no. He is going to say in verse 20 that you can't actually see me and live. I'm too holy, you aren't strong enough, but I do want to reveal something to you. I want to reveal myself in a way that will bless you and not harm you.
1. You are not strong enough to fully see, I can't "show you my glory", but you are strong enough to sense and to hear. My goodness will pass before you, and I will reveal my full name and this will answer the concerns of your heart Moses.
 2. And now I think there is a lesson for us in this initial response about knowing God. The way God is about to describe Himself is called anthropomorphic. That is, he is going to describe His non-human self in anatomically human ways. I'm going to pass, by while I cover you with my hand and you can't see my face you shall only see my back and so forth. If you rush to systematic theology questions, you miss the whole point of what God is doing. If you start asking, I thought God was everywhere, how can His goodness pass by someone, if He is the fullness of all in all?
 3. Here is what I think is important to see here. This is a generous, condescending (in a good way), self-disclosure of God. God is stooping down in this moment to try and help our tiny pee brains understand something about Himself. And if you think about the way you have to explain complex things to children, the only way to do it is to try and put things into categories that they can relate to and understand.
 4. I think that is what is happening here. God is saying let me try and help you understand something about myself child. And the reason that is so critical, is that when you start to gain an understanding of theology, and the meaning of the basic terms that describe God, you can inadvertently begin to domesticate your understanding of the LORD. You can say I know what the word sovereignty means, I know what the Word all-powerful means,

I think I've gotten my arms around who God is and what He is like. And that is not true. No one, on planet earth, has gotten their arms around God. Angels in glory don't have their arms around God.

5. God isn't what you mean by the phrase all-powerful... God is LIKE the most powerful thing that your imagination can come up with. God isn't like a Father... there is something about Father's that are LIKE God. Does that make sense. God is profoundly MORE than the illustrations we use to describe Him, not equal to or less than.
6. And the prayer of our hearts should ALWAYS BE, like Moses, show me more. Show me more. Reveal more to me by the power of your Spirit. I want to see YOU the REAL YOU, that I might trust in you and glorify you in the world.
4. So the LORD says I will cause all my goodness to pass before you, and I will proclaim my name to you. And then He says something that seems disconnected but it's not. Verse 19 and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. That statement is inseparably connect to the promise to proclaim His name. It is a statement of self-disclosure, not necessarily discrimination between those who do and don't receive grace, though that seems to be a necessary implication according to the apostle Paul.
 1. A different way of translating this sentence that I think is helpful would be to the original sense in the Hebrew is to say "I will proclaim my name Yahweh before you, that is I show grace in being gracious and I show mercy in being merciful"
 2. I will say my name in order to reveal my character, which is exactly what is about to happen in chapter 34. Now if that interpretation is correct, than what is happening is Moses is terrified that God is going to be done with the people of Israel. The covenant is broken, they broke it, and God has no legal reason to stay. Moses' only hope is that somehow God will find it in His heart not to abandon the people.
 3. And God responds with an emphatic statement that He is a God of grace and mercy, the One who IS who He is... is the one who is gracious in showing grace and merciful in showing mercy. God responds to the broken and the contrite sinner with mercy and grace. HOW DO YOU THINK GOD WILL RESPOND TO YOU if you turn to Him for mercy? If you are at home right now thinking... I've sinned. I see it in how I lived this past week. I see it in how I've treated the people around me. If God is softening your heart in conviction.... He is already showing you mercy. He is already being gracious and drawing you to Himself... don't resist Him.
5. God moves on in verse 20 with the warning, But you cannot see my face, for no human being can see him and live. I want to show myself to you Moses, but what you are asking for would kill you. Let me give you a dosage that your body can handle. There are so many things that happen in this text that are just worth sitting and wondering about. I'm going to be on vacation the next two weeks starting tomorrow.... and I'm going to try to devote some time to just wondering... how someone can be so good in his goodness that to actually see it would cause my body to die. I mean that's pretty wild...
6. In any case, God moves on in verse 21 Yahweh says there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. A cleft is a crack or an opening where a human body could fit. It's like God saying I'll tell you what, I'll put you in a bomb shelter,

cover you with my power, and then I can pass by, I can run past you really quick and you can see my trail of dust disappearing over the horizon.

1. Once I've passed by I will remove my hand and you shall see my back...I don't think the imagery there is that you will see God standing still and you will look and see the back of a physical body. I think it's something more like you will see some sort of visual manifestation as it is passing away. You will see the tail end of me, or something of that nature.
2. But then He reiterates but my face shall not be seen. And I think it's helpful to remember how the Hebrew language works. It's extremely tactile. I've used the example before that you wouldn't say I'm going to go visit my uncle. In Hebrew you would say I am going to walk until I stand before my uncles face.
3. Try to hear that sort of tactile imagery here. You won't see my face...you won't really be in my presence you will catch the dust trailing off over the horizon...because any more than that would kill you.
7. So what is God promising to reveal to Moses, not the fullness of His glory. But He is going to pass by and proclaim. And as chapter 34 is going to make clear...the central and most significant part of this self-disclosure according to Moses is going to be more about what he heard than what he saw. So this is what God promised to reveal. Let's now turn our attention to briefly consider what this revelation means.

WHAT THIS REVELATION MEANS

1. 34:1 Yahweh said to Moses Cut for yourself two tablets of some like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke.
2. Is that what you expected to come next? It's crazy, when you read through this text, the discussion of seeing God is so interesting and compelling, that verses 1-4 almost go completely unnoticed? I don't know if that has happened to you when you have read these texts in the past.
3. God show me yourself, God I want to see you. You can't see me and live. But I will show you what will bless you rather than harm you. Now before all that...GO AND CUT ME some new stone tablets. In verses 1-4 the tablets are emphasized three separate times.
4. Why is this here. Remember when I mentioned a few weeks ago that when Moses smashed the first tablets at the foot of the mountain, he did so as a deeply symbolic prophetic gesture. He was saying in essence, you have broken the covenant. God our King is going to judge us. We married God, and five minutes later we gave him all the reason he needed to legally divorce us.
5. And God is saying...Go get me a fresh marriage certificate...and verse 1 I will write on the tablets. I will rewrite and renew the covenant. I know you thought that the covenant was broken, that I was going to leave...but I'm not. The covenant isn't broken. You have violated it, and I am legally in my right to divorce you...BUT I WILL NOT DO IT. Why Lord, because I'm gracious in showing grace and merciful in showing mercy? Why not Lord... BECAUSE MY NAME IS YAHWEH...as we will see in a minute. And I am who I am...this is literally who I am and what I do. I am not like a godly forgiving husband...godly forgiving husbands are like me.

6. This revelation means that God isn't going anywhere. That He wants to remain in covenant with His people. He doesn't have to, at this point, He is justified in leaving, but He won't. Because He is who He is, and He is glorified in revealing His mercy.
7. Verse 2 Be ready by morning, come up the mountain, present yourself to me...and clear the area verse 3. Get everyone out of here, get the animals out of here, if anyone remains in the area they will probably be in danger.
8. So Moses cut the tablets in verse 4 and did all that the Lord commanded. And oh by the way he took in his hand the two tablets of stone, do you see how much that is emphasized.
 1. This means two things...first and foremost that the God of Israel isn't going to forsake the covenant just because He can. And second, it means that God's supreme self-revelation, if you want to see the glory of God in the way that is safe...it means it will primarily happen in the covenant context.
 2. In other words, if you are not in covenant with God, it is very very unlikely that you will see anything of God that is like what Moses will see. If you are not a Christian, if you have not been baptized into Christ and given your life to Him, and entered into covenant with Him, you will read the words of Exodus 34 and you will not be able to experience their reality the way a follower of Christ will.
 3. In the history of redemption, the primary context in which God has revealed Himself is in covenant with His people. Not because His people are so good at keeping the covenant. Lord knows we are not. But because He is gracious to whom He will be gracious and merciful on whom he will show mercy.
9. So what have we seen, we have seen that God promises Moses that He will reveal something to Him but not everything. But what is very important is that the request is to see MORE of God, and while that doesn't mean we are able to see the fullness of His glory, we are going to see and experience something.
10. And what this revelation means is that God is going to remain faithful to His covenant even though His people have failed to keep it's terms. So let's now in our hearts, take off our sandals, for the place we are about to go is holy ground.

WHAT IS THE REVELATION OF GOD?

1. Verse 5 Yahweh descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Yahweh. The name Yahweh is most likely derived from the original words God used to disclose Himself in chapter 3. Moses asked the Lord if I go to Israel who should I say sent me? And Yahweh said I AM WHO I AM has sent you. The one God who is radically self-defined. I AM WHO I AM. Are you merciful or are you just Lord? I am who I am.
2. Verse 6, I am who I am passed before Moses and proclaimed...I just want to point out so that you will notice it, that almost ZERO attention is paid to whatever it means that God's goodness passed before Moses. Virtually all the ink is used to describe what Moses heard. Just an observation.
3. The LORD passed before Him and proclaimed, and try to hear this the way I think Moses would have heard it...I AM WHO I AM...I AM WHO I AM...and elohim merciful and gracious, slow to anger and overflowing with steadfast love and faithfulness...keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, BUT who will by

no means clear the guilty visiting the inquiry of the Fathers on the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.

4. Think about Moses. Think about His life and what He has seen. Think about the many experiences God's people have had from the days of Abraham to this moment at Sinai. What does Moses expect his readers to hear?
5. I am who I am put Issac in Sarai's barren womb when she reached an old age, I am who I am provided the lamb for the sacrifice in the place of your only begotten son, I am who I am worked through the sins of Joseph's brothers to provide the bread of life to all the world, and bring salvation to Jacob's house. I am who I am heard His people in slavery. I am who I am warned Pharaoh 9 times before finally dropping a significant hammer of judgment upon Egypt for not letting His people go. I am who I am heard the complaining of the people in the wilderness and offered them water from the rock and bread from heaven. I am who I am gave us victory over our enemies and help from the priest of Midian.
 1. I am who I am led us out of Egypt and into covenant. And I am who I am has seen our covenant breaking, and has drawn me up to initiate covenant renewal.
 2. I AM WHO I AM, I AM WHO I AM an Elohim merciful and gracious...slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
 3. Consider your life...brother. Ponder your steps sister? What do you see? Do you know what I see...i see a path of brokenness and barrenness and slavery...UNTIL the God of my Fathers remembered His covenant, and brought me out of that slavery and into covenant with Himself. I seem a path marked by MY perpetual stumbling in and out of sin...while I AM WHO I AM showed mercy and grace...who has been slow to become angry with me and who has abounded in steadfast love and faithfulness in my life.
WHAT DO YOU SEE?
 4. Are you in slavery? Cry out to the God of my fathers, he is merciful and gracious and abounding in steadfast love. Have you fallen into sin, have you set your eyes upon idols and taken delight in pleasures of the flesh that God forbids? Cry out to the Lord, He is slow to anger, He forgives iniquity and transgression and sin.
 5. Brothers and sisters...who God is...explains Israel's existence. If you are in Christ Jesus, Who God is, explains yours. Everything you have experienced in this life, you have experienced because the God who IS WHO HE IS...is the way He just described.
6. But here is where we experience the most significant problem. God is merciful and gracious, forgiven iniquity and transgression...verse 7 BUT WHO WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY...He visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children. What we saw when we looked closely at that sentence in chapter 20 is that IT DOES NOT TEACH that God punishes children for their parents sin. But rather God continues punishing generational sins as they manifest themselves in the children and the grandchildren. And where as this process is limited to three or four generations...God keeps steadfast love at the beginning of verse 7 for thousands of generations.
7. So the natural question that flows out of the heart of every reader is which one is it? Does He forgive sin or does he by no means clear the guilty? And it's important to recognize that that TENSION...those two manifestations of God's personality BARREL right through the Old Testament. They are just there, whether you think you know how to resolve them or not.

1. So what are we to do with this? Please turn in your bible with me to the gospel of John chapter 1. Where the Apostle John begins to unpack the answer to the question. In John 1:14 the Apostle writes “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father full of grace and truth.
2. There are a bunch of reasons to connect that sentence back to this moment in the life of Moses. First of all the phrase FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH and the same words in the Greek translation of the Old Testament for abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness...abounding in HESED AND EMETH. Additionally, there are many other indirect verbal links, tabernacle, glory, Moses, law and God being made known. When John says that the Word came and dwelt among us...it’s important to remember that that is the very issue at stake when Moses asks God to show him His glory, is whether or not God come come and dwell among Israel.
3. Exodus 34 is about God revealing His glory and the gospel of John is about God revealing His glory even more. With that in mind, let’s skip ahead to John 12:23 to the moment Christ clarifies WHAT THE GLORY OF GOD WILL LOOK LIKE WHEN IT IS DISPLAYED IN THE SON.
4. “Jn 12:23 “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it bears much fruit...skip down to verse 27 “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? “Father save me from this hour?” But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ Jesus answered, THIS VOICE has come for YOUR sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.”
8. Here is the moment that God is most completely known as the Father and Son are both glorified in the crucifixion of Christ. This is the hour where the fullness of grace and truth will be shown. But this grace and truth is expressed in the carrying out of judgment. Judgement of this world (this fallen system) and the ruler of this world (fallen system, i.e. the devil) He will be cast out.
 1. But in this display of judgment for the world on the Son, as the Lamb of God bears the sins of the world (Jn 1:29), is simultaneously the way in which mercy...and forgiveness and love will be offered to all creatures.
 2. In the death of the Son for sin, are all people drawn to Himself. In God by no means clearing the guilty, but charging our guilt to the Son, is the reality of mercy and grace supremely manifest in creation.
 3. The two themes in tension, the reality of God’s mercy and grace, alongside the reality of God’s justice and righteousness...are brought into perfect harmony in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Lord show me your glory. ON SIANI, God’s glory was heard...ON CALVARY God’s glory was seen.
9. This is what God revealed at the cross. That He is both completely merciful, and totally just. That He can be both just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

10. What can man do in light of such glorious holy perfection?
11. YOU can only imitate Moses in verse 8...you bow your head toward the earth and worship.
12. I don't read that and think to myself...Moses nodded his head in a downward direction. I think Moses went face to the floor, arms wrapped over the back of His skull, treasuring and fearing with terror this experience all at once.
13. A long time ago, I was spending the Christmas holiday in North Carolina where my parents were living at the time, and there was a thunderstorm in the forecast. And being from California, I was like, oh that will be nice. We will have some rain over the holiday, I'll build a fire in the fireplace. Turns out...I had no idea what I was talking about. They get storms over there called super cells, that produce 100 mile an hour winds and throw lightning bolts in every direction.
14. And one night we were in the middle of one of these enormous storms, and I was standing out in my parents sunroom just listening and watching. And a bolt of lightning struck down the street from their house...and the flash of light and the sound of the thunder was so bright and loud it literally knocked me over...and all I could see was white in my eyes and I started to panic thinking I was going blind. I was okay obviously, but I will never forget the power and the volume and the strength of the light when you are that close to lightning...
15. And here am I a decade and a half later recognizing that that was one tiny little lightning bolt in one tiny little storm in one tiny little town in one little country on one little planet in one little solar system in one little galaxy...and here the One who made all these things...is revealing Himself.
16. Every single word of this text is precious...and every word gains it's greatest clarity by beholding the Son of God lifted up...in order to draw you to Himself.
 1. Moses says in verse 9 If now I have found favor in your sight, O LORD, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin and take us for your inheritance.
 2. All my hope says Moses, is that you will see that we are stiff-necked, and that you will show grace and mercy, and forgive us. That you will see our brokenness and sin and choose to take us FOR YOUR INHERITANCE. All my hope is in your great love and forgiveness and ability to resolve the tension between your justice and your mercy. And what Moses has longed for God has done, by sending His Son in the likeness of human flesh and for sin to be condemned in the flesh that we might be reconciled to God and filled with God's glorious Spirit.
17. If you want the Lord, if you want him to take you for His inheritance, humble your heart before Him in worship, confess your sins and any part of you that remains stiff-necked, and ask Him to save you. This is who I AM WHO I AM IS...a God slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. If you want to see God's glory, look at the cross.

God's glory is revealed in His mercy and justice together, so cling to the cross where justice and mercy meet.