



The Sermon

Dr. Steven J. Lawson

Genesis 18:1-15

"God of the Impossible"

January 30, 2022

TRANSCRIPT

Genesis chapter 18, okay. I want to begin reading in verse 1. The title of today's message is "God of the Impossible," and I think that you will see why I have so titled it.

Beginning in verse 1, "Now the Lord appeared to him" – referring to Abraham – "by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, and said, 'My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.' And they said, 'So do, as you have said.' So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes.' Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

"Then they said to him, 'Where is Sarah your wife?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' He said, 'I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old

also?' And the Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, saying, "Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?" Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.' Sarah denied it however, saying, 'I did not laugh'; for she was afraid. And He said, 'No, but you did laugh.'" What a passage. Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, as always, we need Your assistance to understand Your word and to apply and live Your word. Shine light upon this text, shine light into our minds, shine light into our hearts, so that we may be those who live this passage. Bless each and every one here today, in Christ's name. Amen. [End]

In these verses we very clearly see that God is the God of the impossible. That speaks loud and clear to us in verse 14, which says that, "Is anything too difficult for God?" No difficulty is too great for Him to handle. No trial is too hard for God to solve. No obstacle is too large for Him to remove. God delights to step into what is impossible for us and do that which only He can do.

This is taught throughout the entire Bible, and Job 42:2, Job said, "I know You can do all things." And Jeremiah says, "Ah, Lord God, nothing is too difficult for You." And the angel said in Luke 1:37, "Nothing will be impossible with God." And in Luke 10:27, Jesus said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God. For all things, all things, all things are possible with God." That is what is clearly declared in these verses.

And verse 14 is the rhetorical question, "Is anything too difficult for God?" and the answer is so obvious it is not even answered, because we all know the answer: "Nothing is too difficult for God." Creating the universe out of nothing was not too difficult for God. Answering our most challenging prayer request is finger play for God. Converting the hardest heart is nothing for God. Reconciling strained relationships is child's play for God. Fulfilling His promises is what He does.

This is the message of these verses, and this is what we're looking at today. And this is what we need to hear, because, "Do you have a family member who needs to be converted? Do you have a marriage that needs to be restored? Do you have a career path that needs to be extended? Do you have

a job that you're needing to secure?" I want you to know that nothing is impossible with God.

So, let us walk through this passage verse by verse. And I want you to note first in verses 1 and 2, "The Appearing. The Appearing." We see that immediately in verse 1: "Now the Lord appeared to him." The word for "Lord" here is Yahweh or Jehovah, and it refers to God as the self-existent One, the God who is not dependent upon anyone or anything, but that everyone and everything is dependent upon Him. This is the God who showed up. This is the God who appeared, the all self-sufficient God who has no needs whatsoever, and that we have all of our needs to be met in Him.

"The Lord appeared to him." This is what we call a theophany, which is an appearance of God in some physical form that He takes for a limited period of time to manifest Himself to His creatures. It is God coming down to our level, to kindergarten level, so that He may communicate with man. And this occurs often in the book of Genesis. It occurs under this description: "the angel of the Lord."

Now the word "angel" can refer to either an angelic being or it can refer to a messenger, and the word "angel," *aggelos*, actually means messenger. And there are many times in the book of Genesis that God appears as the angel of the Lord. And just to walk you through these very quickly, you can just jot down these references. But in Genesis 16:7, we read, "The angel of the Lord found Sarai by a spring of water in the wilderness." In Genesis 21:17, "The angel of the Lord called to Hagar from heaven." Genesis 22:11, "The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven." Genesis 31:11, "The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I said, 'Here am I.'" The angel of the Lord appeared in Exodus 3:2 at the burning bush, and we read, "The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush." Verse 4, "And God called to him from the midst of the bush." The angel of the Lord was God Himself.

Now what a mysterious thing this is. God who is invisible, God who cannot be seen, God who is without any corporal body parts, yet chooses at a few incidences to make Himself known to His servants. And that's what's taking place here: "And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre." It's a large grove of trees about 20 miles south, southwest of Jerusalem, and there

is extreme elevation change in that part of the world, and these oaks are at about 3,000 feet high in elevation.

"And while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day." What is he doing just sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day? The text does not tell us. But I think it's reasonable to assume that he is contemplating and meditating upon what God has just said to him in the previous chapter that, "You shall have a son of promise and his name will be Isaac." And so he's just sitting here at the door of the tent, no doubt, his wheels turning and replaying in his mind what God has just said to him, when we see this in verse 2, when he lifted up his eyes he saw something, caught him off-guard. It just suddenly appeared.

"When he lifted up his eyes, behold, three men were standing opposite him." They just appeared almost as out of thin air. And these three men are the Lord Himself and two angels. We know that these are two angels with the Lord, because in chapter 19 and verse 1, we read of the two angels that came to Sodom... [Mic cuts off]

So, there were three men suddenly just standing opposite him, and these three men, as we piece this narrative together from various verses, it's the Lord Himself. It is God, Jehovah, Yahweh, with two angels. And the angels are also mentioned in chapter 19 and verse 15 in the plural. This is quite a trio that come walking up to Abraham while he's sitting there at the front door of his Bedouin tent.

And I want you to note that it is God who always takes the initiative to seek us. It is God who always is the initiator, and it is always God who is the initiator with you. You didn't find God, God found you. We all like sheep have gone astray. Each one of us has turned to his own way. "No, there's none who seeks after God, no, not one," Romans 3.

And here, even now that Abraham is a believer; nevertheless, it is God who is taking this initiative, and it is God who has brought you here today. It is God who has taken the lead in your life, and it is God who is directing you and bringing you to an encounter with Him. And so, the question is, "How will Abraham respond?" And the question is, "How will you respond today?" And we see in the middle of verse 2 the second heading: "The Adoration." The appearance of God brings about the adoration of God by

Abraham. It's the only proper response a person should have when they come to encounter God.

And so, in the middle of verse 2, we read, "and when he" - Abraham - "saw them," - the three - "he ran." Now just remember, Abraham's ninety-nine years old. He just flew, running like a sprinter. In fact, I looked up this word for "ran" in the Hebrew, and it means to run swiftly like a sprinter, like an athlete would run. He sprinted to God. And this was unheard of in the Middle East for an elderly man to run, and it suggests that Abraham perceives, or at least begins to perceive who this is, that these are not normal strangers who come walking up, but that there is something extraordinary about them.

And it says, "When he ran from the tent to meet them, he bowed himself to the earth." He just went down like cut timber. He threw himself onto the ground into the lowest possible posture that he could possibly assume. He literally puts his nostrils into the dirt. If he could go any lower and assume an even lower posture of humility, he would have done so. I believe Abraham is recognizing that he is in the presence of Yahweh God, and he must bow down to worship Him.

To bow down is a sign of homage to one who is far superior to you. It is a sign of submission of a lesser to a greater. He lowered himself in the presence of God in humble adoration, because he is in the presence of Him who is vastly and infinitely superior to him. And he said, "My Lord." The word for "Lord" here is a different word for Lord. It is Adonai. And Adonai means the Sovereign One. It means Master, Ruler, Owner, and Lord. Adonai is in the plural, which intensifies the word. It's called a majestic plural, which means the exceedingly Sovereign One. This is like when Jesus returns in Revelation 19 and says that there are many diadems upon His head, just sovereignty stacked on top of sovereignty stacked on top of sovereignty, unimaginable supreme authority.

"My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight," and the word "favor" here is the Hebrew word for grace, literally grace. "If I have found grace in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. You are my Master, I am but Your servant. Do not just pass through and away from me; I must serve You."

And those who have come to see who God is, those who are worshipers of the one true living God, they must invest their life in the service of this God. You can never sit on the bench, you can never sit in the stands, you've got to be out on the field. If you know who God is, you've got to put your shoulder to the plow, you've got to find some place of service: you must be active in serving this God. And so that's what begins to happen in verse 4: "I've got to serve You."

And so, in verse 4, we read, "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet. I just want to bring some comfort to you, and rest yourselves under the tree. Come under the shade, it is blistering hot under the blazing sun. Just sit here, let us bring water for your feet, and let us bring you food," - in verse 5 - "and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on."

And it's interesting, he says, "then you may go on." And the implication is, "I know I am unworthy for You to come under my tent." This is like in Luke 5:8 when Peter, after the miraculous catch of fish said, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man. I can't remain in the presence of Holy God, as I am so unholy." And so Abraham says, "You may go on since you have visited your servant. And that's all that I am, I am Your servant. Put that on my epitaph, put that on my tombstone. That's all that I am is I am Your servant."

Verse 6, "So Abraham hurried." He made haste, because serving God must be done immediately, it must be done swiftly. We cannot delay in serving God. Time is too short. God is too great. What we do for the Lord we must do now, today. Proverbs 27:1, "Boast not yourself of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth." What we do for God we must do now, and we must do it swiftly, we must do it quickly. And that's what Abraham is doing.

So, verse 6, "So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes. Sarah, do it now.'"

Verse 7, "Abraham also ran." I mean, he is just in accelerated motion: God is here. "Abraham ran to the herd, and took a tender choice calf," - he ran as fast as his feet could take him - "and gave it to the servant, and he

hurried to prepare it." And no doubt, the servant hurried to prepare the calf, because Abraham is standing right over him, and Abraham is applying pressure, "Do it now. Do it now. And placed it before them."

Abraham comes back in a flash, "and he" - Abraham - "was standing by under the tree as they ate." Now that's significant. Abraham doesn't just pull up at the table with them and sit down and have casual conversation, "How's it going in heaven?" No, he stands over here under the tree. One, he's unworthy to sit down with them; but two, "I'm not Your equal, I'm Your servant, and so I'm standing here in a state of readiness. Whatever You need, whatever You want, I will make it happen. I will bring to You whatever You need." And so he is standing under the tree as they ate.

This has to be in our heart today as well. This speaks volumes, I think, to us. There needs to be a sense of urgency about our Christian lives, to invest our life in the work of God and the ministry of God. And what we're going to do for the Lord, we must do it now; not tomorrow, not to procrastinate, but now for our lives to count for both time and eternity. Psalm 90:12, "Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom. Every day that we have to live for the Lord is a precious gift from Him, and it must be invested for His glory and for the extension of His kingdom.

So, what is it that the Lord would have you to do today? What opportunities are before you? What needs do you see? What has been reoccurring in your mind? What is it that the Lord would have you to do for Him? And what great pleasure there is in knowing that your life is counting for eternity? It certainly begins at home, it certainly begins with your own family, but it extends out and works its way out. And it is as unique and different for each one of us here today as our circumstances are unique. But Ephesians 2:10 says that, "God has foreordained good works for us to walk in." They're out there, they're there, and we must step into those good works and to do them for His glory.

Well, the third thing I want you to note, after the appearing and the adoration, in verse 9 I want you to note, "The Assurance." And verse 9, "Then they said to him," - the three of them - "Where is Sarah your wife?" because they had something to say that concerns Sarah. They have business to attend to here.

"And he said," - Abraham said - "There, in the tent." And this is a Bedouin lifestyle. It is living in tents and moving around depending upon sources of water and grass growing for livestock, et cetera. And so Abraham lives in a tent, as everyone lived in a tent in this arid region.

Now verse 10, "He said." Now, who's the "he"? Well, it's one of the three, because He said, "I will," - not we - "I will surely return to you" - and when we piece this all together, the "He" that starts verse 10 is one of the three; it's none other than God Himself. It is the leader of the three. It is the Angel of the Lord, capital A. It is the Lord Himself who is mentioned in verse 1. It is the Lord who in the previous chapter was taken up from them after His visit, verse 22 of chapter 17. That's the speaker here: it is God Himself.

"And God says," - in verse 10 - "I will surely return to you. You can just write it down. You can just etch it in stone with letters of steel. Surely I will return to you, Abraham, at this time next year; behold, Sarah your wife will have a son." And He was reinforcing what has already been said. This is nothing new. He's bringing assurance that He is a promise-keeping God, that all of His promises yea and amen, and so He is nailing down again in the mind of Abraham the promises that God has made.

And you'll see that in the previous chapter in Genesis 17:19 God has already said this. We read, "Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you will call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him." Verse 21 of the previous chapter, "My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year."

So here in Genesis 18 God is simply reinforcing and bringing double assurance of what He said earlier in Genesis 17, as if God is saying, "Yes, Abraham, you heard Me correctly. And I am a God of truth, and I am a God who keeps His word." Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withers, the flower fades away, but the word of our God abides forever." Malachi 3:6, "I am the Lord, I change not." Psalm 31:4, "I am the God of truth." And so this assurance is brought to Abraham: "It will come to pass just as I said, and this is a follow-up visit I'm making with you."



So, in the middle of verse 4, I want you to note fourth, "The Absurdity," and I think you'll see why I call it the absurdity. In the middle of verse 10, "And Sarah was listening at the tent door." She's on the other side of whatever this animal skin is or whatever this fabric is that is used, a canvas-like material for the tent. She's listening at the tent door which was behind him. She's hidden, she's out of sight, she's eavesdropping.

Verse 11, "Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age." Let's remind ourselves of just where they are in life. Abraham is ninety-nine years old and Sarah is ninety years old. And we read, "Sarah was past childbirth." She was long past her reproductive years. Sarah at age ninety, "I'm going to be impregnated? It will be a conception in me? I will carry this child for nine months in this aged body, and then there will be the delivery?"

My daughter just went through a delivery. They just recounted some of that to me. I'm a very sensitive man. I was actually asked not to be in the delivery room. And for this ninety-year-old woman to go through this entire experience, which is bigger than life? How did Sarah respond to this? Might be the same way some of us would respond.

Verse 12, "Sarah laughed to herself," like, "This is ludicrous. This is bizarre. This is off-the-chart. This is utterly impossible." And there is unbelief in this, because this is God who has said this. And this is exactly how Abraham responded in the previous chapter. In chapter 17 and verse 17, Abraham laughed as well. And that's why they are to name him Isaac, which just means laughter. "Every time you call Isaac you're going to be reminded of this moment when you just laughed at the word of God, that it just couldn't happen."

"Sarah laughed to herself," - verse 12 - 'After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being so old also?' And there's kind of a sensual undertone on that: "Shall I have pleasure in this conception?" I think for us to learn before we move on to the next verse, let us never laugh at the promises of God. I mean, if Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do," let's not laugh at that. Let's realize that He said what He meant and meant what He said. As long as it is His will and it glorifies Him and it expands His kingdom, then let us keep on asking, keep in seeking, keep on knocking on heaven's door. Let us not laugh and say, "Well, He didn't really

mean that." Let us not assume the absurdity of Sarah, or God would never provide for this or that.

So this leads to verse 13, "The Admonition," which is a warning. And so, verse 13, "The Lord said to Abraham," - and the Lord will now ask two questions; here's the first question - 'Why did Sarah laugh? Do you think I cannot fulfill My promise? Do you think I cannot execute My word? Do you think My plans are erasable or changeable? Do you think I did not mean what I said? Why did Sarah laugh?'"

Now here's what's interesting; Sarah never said anything, she only laughed in herself. And she's not in the room, she's on the outside eavesdropping. And what this tells us is that God knows every secret of the heart, instantly, immediately, perfectly, accurately, that there is nothing in our hearts that is hidden from God. She did not laugh out loud, and yet God says, "Why did Sarah laugh?" Let me give you two cross-references. We need to be reminded of who God is even in our own lives.

Psalm 139, verses 1-4. We all know these verses, let us hear them again. David is the writer: "O Lord, You have searched me." And that word for "search" was used of the spies who went into the land under Joshua to search out the land. "Lord, You explored me. You know every inch of my inner being - my mind, my heart, my conscience, my motives, my thoughts. Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know me better than I know myself. You know me better than anyone else on this earth."

Verse 2, "You know when I sit down and when I rise up." And that's a figure of speech: going down, rising up. It implies in everything in between. "You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path, my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways." Verse 4, "Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it all. You know what I'm going to say before I know what I'm going to say; that's how perfectly You know me inside out." He knows exactly what's on your mind this very moment, the good and the bad.

And then Hebrews 4:13, "There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." There are no secrets from God in our lives. God knows our every

thought, our every motive. And Abraham and Sarah are in the process of having a crash course in theology proper.

And then the next question. That was the first question, that God is all-knowing. Second question, "Is there anything too difficult for God?" That's what we call a rhetorical question. The answer is not supplied because the answer is so obvious. And the answer is a resounding no, nothing, nothing, nothing is too hard for God. He opens a door that no man can close, He closes a door that no man can open. He makes our way straight. He answers our prayers. He goes before us and removes all obstacles that would prevent us from moving forward in His will. He protects us, He preserves us, He supplies for us. Nothing is too hard for God, whether it's in the macro or the micro, whether it's big picture or small little details. In reality, everything is small in our lives to God. There really are no big obstacles, there really are no big problems in our lives compared to God.

So, God says, "At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year Sarah will have a son." Now nothing could have been more impossible in their two lives than for Sarah at this point to bear a child. Her womb is dead, her body is barren. She has no capacity within herself for conception, for gestation, for delivery. If this is going to happen, this is going to have to be divine intervention. This is going to have to be God stepping in and making this happen; and that is exactly what will happen, and we will see that in a couple of Sundays.

We need to be reminded that when we come to God in prayer, nothing is impossible to God. Bring great requests to Him. Bring audacious petitions to Him. Do not downsize your prayer life. Lift up your eyes and look unto the heavens, and come before the throne of grace with boldness and let your request be made known unto God. And if it is according to His perfect will, if it is for the motive of His greater glory, if it is for the advancement of the kingdom of God here upon the earth, God is a make it happen God, and God is a prayer-hearing God, and God actually takes delight in answering our prayers because it brings honor and glory to His name.

So, the last thing that I want you to see in verse 15, number six, "The Avoidance." Verse 15, "Sarah denied it." I mean, she was just caught red-handed. Her hand was in the cookie jar, and she's saying, "What cookie jar?"

"Sarah denied it however, saying, 'I did not laugh.'" You almost laughed to say it. She tried to cover it up. She tried to conceal it from the all-seeing eyes of God. "She said, 'I did not laugh'; for she was afraid." She was afraid of God finding out. But God already knows.

And so, "He" - God - "said, 'No, but you did laugh.'" Sarah's finding out what you and I know. We can't play games with God. We can't cover up our failures from the only One who can forgive them. We cannot be in self-denial that something did not happen when in fact it did happen. We have to come clean with God.

If we try to conceal our sin, God will expose it; but if we bring our sin out in the open before God, He will conceal it. So it's the paradox of forgiveness. If we try to cover it up, God's going to bring it out in the open; but if we bring it out in the open before God, God will conceal it. First John 1:8, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Verse 9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

So that's a lesson for Sarah, and it's a lesson for you and me. And so whenever the Holy Spirit brings conviction into our lives and with His finger presses down on the live nerve of something, we cannot go into denial and pretend that that is not there. We must come clean with God, because God already knows. "No, but you did laugh."

So, what is our takeaway from all this as we bring this to conclusion? What is our takeaway? And I think we come back to the big picture, that nothing is too difficult for God, that God is a promise-keeping God, and God will do everything that God says He will do no matter how difficult it may be.

You may be thinking, "How could God possibly forgive all of my sins? If other people in this room knew of my past or even my present, I would never come back." And yet God knows, and God says, "Come, let us reason together," says the Lord; "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be white as wool"; that if you would come to God and just confess your sin to God, God would just wipe the slate clean forever and ever, and He would take that sin and bury in the sea of His forgetfulness, He would place it behind His back and He would remember it no more. That's what God says He will do.

And you may think, "How could I ever be reconciled to a holy God in heaven?" And the gospel says that God, in the gospel, has come to us in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, to make the only point of connection with Holy God; that Jesus is our mediator who has offered Himself upon the cross on our behalf, bearing our sins, and has made the only way to God through His shed blood upon the cross. That's what God has said He will do.

And we can't laugh and say, "No, God can't do that." Not only can God do it, He's already done it. If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, the moment you commit your life to Him, He forgives all of your sins – past, present and future. They were all future when He died on the cross, by the way. So He will just wipe the entire slate clean and present us faultless before the throne of God, clothed in His perfect righteousness. That's what God says. We have to believe God.

And so, as you are here today, first of all, to believers, is you would be a believer here today. Know that God has forgiven all of your sins eternally, they're off the table; and He has covered them with the blood of His Son, and He has washed them away into the abyss of His forgetfulness never to be brought back up again ever. It's over. It's a done deal. And so, what assurance we should have as believers.

And if there's any haunting sense of guilt as a believer, that's not from God. The devil is a grave-digger, and he is resurrecting certain things that God has long ago buried. And if you're not a believer in Jesus Christ today, I want you to know that if you would come to Christ, if you would trust Him, if you would believe in Him from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet, every inch and every ounce of you, He would wash you in His blood, and you would be as pure and clean as a virgin snow, you would be white before the Lord. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, it would happen that quick.

So if you've never committed your life to Christ, there could never be a better time than to do it this very moment. You don't have to walk an aisle, you don't have to raise a hand, you don't have to sign a card, you don't have to jump through hoops. Just right where you are right now, right where you are seated right now, in your heart come to Christ. Take that step of faith. And Jesus says, "Him who comes unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

He is the friend of sinners. He has come to seek and to save that which is lost. He's come for someone just like you, and His arms of forgiveness are open wide. He will take you in, He will adopt you, you will become a joint heir with Christ. He is preparing a place for you in heaven. He will come live inside of you by His Holy Spirit. He will walk with you every step of the way, and He will take you all the way home to glory, and you will never perish, you will never slip through His fingers.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them from My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all, and no man shall pluck them from His hand." You could never be any more secure in this world or in the world to come than to be held in the saving hands of Jesus Christ. So put your trust in Him, and He will rescue you and redeem you. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, thank You for every verse of what we looked at today. And for us as believers, we really feel like bowing low to the ground and humbling ourselves in Your presence and serving You immediately, because the grace You have put within us must be expressed in doing good works that You have foreordained. Bless everyone who is here today with the abundance of Your mercy and Your grace. Open the windows of heaven right now and pour out the fullness of Your blessing upon this gathered body of believers, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.