

A Gentle Heart

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[0:00] A Pastor's Reflections, A Gentle Heart. Genesis 47, 12. And Joseph nourished his father and his brethren and all his father's household with bread, according to their families.

Psalms 103, 13. Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him. Proverbs 8, 30. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

The Bible is like no other book in the world. Not only does it contain the revelation of God, the truths of eternity, and the way of salvation, it presents to us a picture of God that we would never have come to on our own.

The religions of this world come from the heart of fallen man. They are the outcry of a heart created for God, but separated from God. Man's fallen heart is unwilling to admit its own state, and yet cannot live without an object of worship.

The need to worship places fallen man in an awkward position of wanting to worship God, but not wanting to worship a God they are accountable to.

[1:19] Therefore, man turns to religion to placate his need to worship. By creating false gods he is not accountable to. For that reason, the religions of this world will always view the concept of God through the lens of man's fallen heart.

To them, God is not something outside of themselves, but simply an extension of themselves that meets a need within themselves. Man's gods are more like man than they are like God.

The Bible presents God in a whole different light than the false gods of religion. The false gods of religion bear the same characteristics as the fallen men that created them.

They are capricious, angry, sensual, self-seeking beings who seek to enslave their subjects through pride and dominance. The God of the Bible, however, bears no resemblance to fallen man, because he is outside of fallen man, and is not subject to fallen man, nor created by fallen man.

The God of the Bible is as high above the false gods of religion as the heavens are above the earth. Isaiah 55, 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

[2:43] Thankfully, those thoughts and ways come from the heart of a God of love, not religion. God's desire is not that we be dominated, but delivered. He deals with fallen man through love, grace, gentleness, and mercy.

God is a God of infinite patience and love, not of religious anger and wrath. The next time you begin to doubt God's love for you, remember that God is not like you.

His love is far above the fallen hearts of man, but it is also for the fallen hearts of man. Father, thank you for being so gentle with my fallen heart.

Thank you that my wrong ideas about you can never affect your gracious ideas about me. Keep me from seeing you through the eyes of religion. Help me to always remember that you are a gracious Father with a gentle heart.

Amen.