

“God in Chaos”
Jim Smith

(Sermon Outline notes Pgs.1-6. Actual Sermon Manuscript begins on page 7)

Isaiah 45:18 NLT

For the Lord is God, and he created the heavens and earth and put everything in place. He made the world to be lived in, not to be a place of empty chaos. “I am the Lord,” he says, “and there is no other.

Chaos

Definition - “Complete disorder and confusion.”

Another word one might use for Chaos is:

- Bedlam,
- Anarchy,
- Disorder,
- Pandemonium,
- Madness
- or Turmoil.

Nobody likes Chaos.

- We don’t like it in our finances
- We don’t like it in our relationships
- We don’t like it in our emotions
- We don’t like it in our Kids bedrooms
- We don’t like it in our world

Chaos creates Stress

- It creates fear
- It causes our lives to be tipped upside down...

Yet, much of God’s doings always occurred in the midst of chaos.

- He created everything that there is out of chaos.

Genesis 1

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Genesis is the seedbed of the Bible,

Out of chaos we find creation ,and this seems to be the pattern that develops in and around anything that God is doing.

- Piercing light coming out of the endless darkness.
- Dry land emerging out of the tossing sea.
- Life breathing from lifelessness
- Reproduction from barrenness

At creation, it appears that chaos came before anything.

- And it appears that everything that there is came out of or as a result of the Chaos.

It would seem that Chaos is the place where God does His greatest works.

- One minute things look bleak
- The next everything is booming

It started that way and it will end that way.

- You see the pattern from Genesis all the way to Revelation.
- Water coming from a Rock in the wilderness.
- A redeemer as a result of a fallen world.
- It's a storm on the Sea of Galilee and everyone's about to die, then Jesus speaks peace to the storm.
- Lazzuras is dead 4 days in the tomb, then Jesus brings him back to life.

No matter how difficult it may seem,

- God is always going to bring something out of the chaos.

“Our prayers do not define God, they merely cause Him to reveal Himself to us through the chaos of the situation.”

Just because what you are praying over is a really bad situation does not mean that God is a really bad God, or that He is weak, or absent or non-existent.

- Your prayers don't define who or what God is,
- but they will give him the opportunity to show you just how good and powerful that He is.

Someone said, “My situation is so bad.”

- That does not define God,
- That's your chaos

If you are looking for God to move...

- If you're looking for a miracle in your life...
- you probably don't need to look for one in a place of serenity and peace...
- but rather in a place where things are not stable.

If areas of your life have serenity and peace, thank God for that...

- but realize if you have serenity, you don't need a miracle.

But we don't live in a perfect world do we.

- We may have serenity in some areas of our life, but all of us have chaos in other areas of our life.

So, can we focus for just a minute on the places of chaos in your life?

- The areas where everything is out of place.
- The places where nothing is as you want it to be.

Can I tell you this morning...

- here is where God will work in your life if you will let Him.

Psalm 46:6 NLT

The nations are in **chaos**, and their kingdoms crumble! God's voice thunders, and the earth melts!

People are like, "Man this world is a real mess.

Or "My life is a complete disaster right now.

- But then **"God's Voice Thunders!"**

The voices of Chaos are saying,'

- Hopeless
- Death
- Ruin
- Disaster

- But then **"God's voice Thunders."**

His voice supersedes the voices of hopelessness in your life.

- It supersedes the impossibilities and desperation of our world.

Revelation 1:8 KJV

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the classical Greek alphabet.

- Jesus declared in His revelation to the Apostle John that He is the Beginning and He is the End.
- No matter the chaos that is going on in our world, He is still God and He will still work if we will let Him

Nobody likes the Beginning

- Because the Beginning represents in our world, Chaos.
- Omega however, represents the end or completion of something, in fact a miracle.

We don't like the trouble we have in our lives,

- But we love it when a miracle shows up.

We don't like Alpha,

- but we like Omega.

We don't like chaos,

- but we love the miracles.

So understand...

- He Is Alpha.
- He Is Omega

He is there with you in your Alpha or Chaos

- And He can take you to your Omega or Miracle in your life.

See you can't have the ending of something unless you have the beginning of it.

"Miracles come out of chaos"

If everything in life were hunky dory or "Normal", we wouldn't need God.

- That would be Heaven.

But we are not in Heaven yet are we?

- So we understand that we are living in a fallen world that needs God.
- There is chaos here
- And as long as there is chaos here, we need God's help.

Chaos is not some punishment that has been handed down to you.

- It's your Alpha.
- It's the place where you are needing to trust Him for your Omega or Miracle.

No matter how impossible it may seem, God is always going to bring something out of the chaos of your life if you ask Him to.

Ezekial 37:1The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

² And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

³ And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

⁴ Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

⁵ Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

⁶ And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

⁸ And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; **Come from the four winds**, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

It looked like the wind was there to destroy what God was trying to do,

- But it breathed life into the death that was in the valley.

You thought the chaos was there to destroy you.

- It was there to give you life.

“God in Chaos”
Jim Smith
(Actual Sermon Manuscript)

What a time we’ve all been through, right? These last couple of months have just been a tough time, haven’t they? You know, we don’t understand the value of being in church until they tell you that you can’t be in church.

There’s just something about it, when we’re together, sometimes it’s easy to take advantage of the fact that we get to go to church today. Week after week after week becomes mundane at some point, until somebody tells you that you can’t, and then something flips and you say, “I’m going. It wasn’t all that important a while ago, but it’s really important to me now.”

Let me just say this to you. (I’m not in my message. I’ve got a shorter message, but I feel like I just need to say this.) I’ve been to other countries where they would cut our heads off for being in this room together worshipping Jesus Christ right now. If you walked out of this building with this Bible in your hand, they’ll take your life. As Americans, we can walk right down the middle of Lincolnway and stand in front of the courthouse like this (Holding Bible out) all day long, and there isn’t anybody going to bother you. They might think you’re a little off, but they sure won’t come take your life.

I just want to say to you, as Americans, we have certain liberties that not everybody in this world has. There are churches all around this world, in other places in this world, that are being burned down. Their pastors are being taken and put into prison and tortured. Their saints are being beaten in the streets.

Persecution is happening in this world, and we just got a little taste of what that could look like these last two months. I don’t like what just took place. I don’t like the decisions that were made. I don’t like how it was handled from the very top to our governors, to our senators, to every lawmaker, even to our mayors. I’m not saying they’re wrong, I’m saying I don’t like how it was handled. I will say that I believe that it was a wonderful opportunity and wake-up call for you and I to realize the value of being in the House of God when the doors are open.

As a pastor, I’ve handled phone calls these last two months, people talking about suicide, people dealing with anxiety, marriages falling apart, people struggling in their walk with God, trouble with their teenagers, trouble on their jobs. I’m telling you, in the last two months as pastor, I have dealt with more stuff than I have dealt with in seven years. I believe the reason why is because we weren’t able to be in church together. There’s something about it when God’s people come together that God heals, and God mends, and God ministers, and God speaks. Revelation comes, healing comes, ministry comes. There’s a value to being in church on Sunday. There’s a value to being in the house of God when the doors are open.

For the last couple of months, we've been told, "You can't," from the very top all the way down. Everybody trying to tell us as believers that we cannot join together to worship our risen savior together. I'm just going to be really honest with you right now, if that's okay. I have had more anxiety in my own life these last two months than I've had in a long time. You say, "You Jim?" Yeah, hey, listen, I'm a human being too.

It created anxiety for me to not be able to be with you. I've been coming in this room and preaching to an empty auditorium with empty chairs. I saw on the internet where somebody in the children's ministry went and put puppets all over the chairs of their church so the pastor would have somebody to preach to on Sunday morning.

Just coming in here and trying to preach a message that is going to reach somebody's heart and life, it is so much easier for me to preach to your family, to your marriage, with you sitting here. I can see your face, and God can speak to my heart about what's going on in people's lives and I can minister to that. Even as a preacher, even as a pastor, even as a man of God, it has created anxiety in my mind and in my life, and it just feels good to be here with you this morning. It does.

Somebody said to me this morning, "We just needed some fellowship." I'm glad you're here to fellowship with God's people. I love you and I appreciate you all being here today and we're looking forward to others as they make their way back to the House of God. I just want to say to everybody that might be watching via Facebook, "Hey, it was handy. It's what we had to do for a little while, but now it's time to come on back to church. Get up off that couch, come on back to church. We've got a pew here; we've got a chair here with your name on it."

Listen, if you're somebody from our community that has been watching our services and thinking to yourself, "I kind of like what's going on over there." Come and check it out. We'll be here next Sunday, 10:00. Come and check it out and see what God is doing here. We really believe that God will meet you here in this place and bless your heart and bless your life.

I want to get all preachy about being back in church, but I'd better not do it because I feel like the Lord has given me a message. Let's pray together. *Lord Jesus, all this stuff that's going on in our world, Lord it's not just affecting us here locally, it's not just affecting the state of Indiana, or even the United States. Lord, this thing is all over the world right now. It just seems like the world is tipped upside down. It just seems like the governments don't know what to do. These people that we have put our trust in to watch for our health and our welfare, the World Health Organization, has betrayed us and served others when we were supporters. It just seems like the people we've been trusting to watch for us haven't been there for us. And as a result, Lord, we're seeing this thing that has wrapped itself and placed its tentacles into every home, into every palace, into every place and government in every nation in the world. God, things just don't seem like they're supposed to seem. As a matter of fact, it seems like chaos is the word that could describe what's going on in our world today. Lord Jesus, I want to speak to that today, and I want to show these hearts that are here today, and these that would tune in online and watch this with us online, I want to show them that chaos does not surprise You. That*

chaos, as a matter of fact, is the place where You do your greatest work. I pray it in Jesus name. Amen.

God in chaos. Look at this with me in the book of Isaiah, chapter 45, and verse 18: ***“For the Lord is God, and He created the heavens and earth and put everything in place. He made the world to be lived in, not to be a place of empty chaos. ‘I am the Lord,’ He says, ‘and there is no other.’”*** (New Living Translation). He made the world to be lived in and not to be a place of empty chaos.

I just want to say as God’s representative to you this morning, that it is not God’s will for chaos to reign in our world that we live in. We might look over at other nations and say, “Well, you know, they’ve been our enemies for years, so it doesn’t bother us one bit that they might be experiencing some kind of chaos over there.” I want you to know that it is not God’s will for chaos to rule and reign anywhere in this world. Not in a nation, not in a home, not in a place of work, and not in your minds here today.

The definition of chaos simply means complete disorder and confusion. It happens when everything that you think is supposed to be a certain way doesn’t turn out that way. In fact, it’s quite opposite of what you would have expected.

It was a marriage that started out with two teenagers in love, but now, all of a sudden, it’s chaos. It’s that little child that was that bubbly, giggling, beautiful little child, but now they’re that teenager that has got some things going on in their life that is working to destroy their life. Mom and dad are looking at it and they’re seeing chaos.

It’s that family that financially has specific needs and areas of resources that they need to be blessed, but when they open up their checkbook, or when they open up the ledgers, or they open up the program on the internet that they’re using to handle their finances, they see chaos. Chaos in our world and chaos in our lives. Another word for chaos is *bedlam*. It’s anarchy, disorder. It’s pandemonium. It’s madness. It’s turmoil.

Not to be political again, but much of what’s going on in our world these last several evenings with the riots in many states all around this country over the death of a man in Minnesota, all of these riots that are taking place, it’s disorder. It’s anarchy. It’s madness. It’s bedlam. It’s crazy stuff that should never be happening. It does not represent the cause that they say that they’re out there for. It does not honor the person that they say they are recognizing, and it’s destroying the very neighborhoods that they live in. It does not make sense to me.

Maybe I don’t understand everything, but it’s madness to me. Folks, we’re living in a time period right now that is unprecedented. I’ve been on this planet for 56 years and I’ve seen some things. I lived through Vietnam & Watergate. I lived through a lot of presidential problems, and I lived through President Clinton and all that happened during his presidency. I’ve lived through the first Gulf War. I’ve lived through the second Gulf War. I watched the twin Towers fall. But I’ve never seen anything like what’s going on in our world today. It just seems

to me that chaos is the word that describes what is going on in our world today. Nobody likes chaos. I don't like it. I'll just tell you; I don't like it.

I opened up my phone. I normally read the news on Fox. I'll peek at CNN just enough to get my feathers ruffled. I guess that tells you where I'm at.

I opened it up and I saw young people standing on top of cars that burned last night, and they've got their hands raise up like they just accomplished something good. I see police having to push their way through crowds of people who are simply out there trying to get a message across to everybody else in this nation, that we've got to stop doing certain things that we're doing in this nation, because it's hurting us. It's hurting our soul, the soul of America is being destroyed by some of the things that are happening. So they're out there trying to make that point, saying, "We've got to stop this." But in doing what they're doing, they're also being a part of the problem.

It just doesn't make sense to me and it just seems like turmoil and madness is all that's going on. I'll tell you, when I turned that on this morning and I was watching it on my phone, I just clicked it back off. I said, "Man, this is Sunday. This is God's day." I don't know what these people have going on in their lives, but I am not going to pay any attention to it today. I am going to worship God. I am going to the House of the Lord today. I want to feel his presence. I don't want everybody else's chaos to keep me from getting the blessing that I need from the Lord today.

Nobody likes chaos. We don't like it in our finances. We don't like it in our relationships. We don't like it in our emotions. We don't like it in our world. Nobody wants to live in chaos. Because chaos creates stress. It creates fear, and it causes our lives to be tipped upside down to where no peace of mind can be found.

I want you to understand something here this morning. Much of God's doings always occurred in the midst of chaos. Think about that for a moment. He created everything that there is out of chaos. In Genesis, chapter 1, the Bible starts out this way... Genesis is the seedbed for the entire Bible and for how God works. In other words, how you see Him work in one way, you'll see where that is replicated throughout the scriptures and throughout time.

It reads like this: ***"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."*** (Genesis 1:1-2, KJV). In other words, it was just chaos. There was no form. There was no calmness. There was no light. There was no mediation of temperature. There were no certain elements that were on the earth that could sustain life. It was literally chaos.

So God spoke. ***"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*** (Genesis 1:2-3, KJV). Out of the chaos of darkness, light appeared. Out of the chaos of the seas being tossed to and fro, (nobody could survive on the oceans and the seas, no matter what ship they were in) but God spoke to all of the seas. He

spoke to the waters on the earth and when He did, they just all calmed down and dry land appeared.

Chaos. It was there at creation, and out of the chaos we find creation. It seems like this is a pattern that develops in and around anything that God is doing. I'll explain that a little more. Piercing light coming out of the darkness. Dry land emerging out of a tossing sea. Life breathing from lifelessness. Reproduction happening out of barrenness. At creation it appears that chaos, actually came before anything else.

When you look into the word of God, there's the first verses of the scripture: ***"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form."*** You realize when God created it, there was a certain element of chaos that was attached to it until He began to form it into what He wanted it to be. He spoke and the earth was created. He spoke and the sun was put in its place. He spoke and the moon was put in its place.

But there was chaos in the universe until the Spirit began to move, and until His Word began to speak. When it did, order came, light came, life came, reproduction happened. All of the different creative days began to take place. One right after another. God removed the chaos that was going on and He placed perfect order in its place.

Out of creation we understand that order came. At creation, it appears that chaos came before anything. It appears that everything that there is on this planet today actually came out of, or as a result of, the chaos that was there before. We don't like chaos, do we? We don't like to talk about chaos, but it would seem that chaos is the place where God does His greatest works.

One minute, things look really bleak. One minute, things just look terrible. One minute, it looks like we are about to give up and throw in the towel and just give up on everything because everywhere we look, we're seeing chaos. Every time I try to do anything, it doesn't work. Every time I try to make something happen it just seems like it falls down on me. Everybody is against me. Everybody speaks against me. Every time I try to accomplish anything, it just seems like there is just no way in this world that it's going to work. Everything has come against me. Chaos is in my life, so why try? But realize that chaos is where God does His greatest works.

One minute, everything is okay and the next minute everything is booming. It started this way at creation, and it ends that way in the book of Revelation. You see, the pattern from Genesis, all the way to Revelation... the water coming from a rock in the wilderness, a Redeemer coming as a result of a fallen world... It's a storm on the Sea of Galilee and everybody is about to die in the chaos, and then Jesus speaks: "Peace, be still." Lazarus is dead four days in the tomb, and then Jesus brings him back to life. Chaos is where God performs His greatest work..

I believe that God actually waits for chaos sometimes because He wants to show off His abilities and His power to demonstrate what He is capable of doing. If He showed up on my best days all the time, I wouldn't really need Him. But He'll show up on my worst day to show me the difference between light and dark, and oceans and dry land. From one contrast to another, He'll

show me His ability and what He's able to do in my life. Somebody said, "There's no reproduction in my life. I'm not accomplishing anything spiritually. Nothing's changing in my life." But God will speak into that chaos and He'll bring about life, and seed begetting seed after itself. He'll bring life and truth and help and hope into that situation.

You see, no matter how difficult it may seem, God is always going to bring something out of the chaos. Our prayers, they don't define God. Sometimes, we've got a problem in our life and we go to pray, and we think what we're praying for defines God.

I have a problem losing things. I don't know where my glasses are right now. They might be in this building; they might be on my bed stand. I don't know where my glasses are. I lose things all the time. But the Lord and I have a little something worked out. He helps me find things. Now that might sound really stupid and simple to you, but there's times I have walked all over my house and I can't find what I'm looking for, and I need to get about my Father's business. So I stop and I pray, and I say, "Lord, I really need to find my glasses right now, because I need to get a message put together for Sunday. Can you help me?"

Within seconds, a moment or two, there's my glasses. I don't know if He has an angel put them there or if He just lets me slow down my thinking long enough to realize where my glasses are. You say, "Jim, that's kind of a dumb, silly little thing that you prayed for." Let me tell you, I pray for a lot of other stuff too, but God is not defined by my prayers. Yes, God might help me find some things every now and then, but that's not how big my God is. He's a whole lot bigger than that.

You say, "I wasn't able to pay my rent this week. I wasn't able to make my house payment," so you pray, "Lord, I need help with my house payment. Lord, I need help with my rent this week and this month." You might pray that way and God might help you pay your rent. He might bring a miracle that helps you make that house payment, but I want you to know something. God is not limited by your prayers.

He's bigger than your rent payment. He's bigger than your house payment. He's bigger than your cancer. He's bigger than your heart condition. He's bigger than a failed marriage. He's bigger than a teenager strung out on drugs. He's bigger than all the problems that this world has. He's bigger than all of the chaos that is in your life, all of the chaos that is in our community, all of the chaos that's happening right now all around this nation and all around this world. Our God is bigger than the chaos! Our God is greater than the chaos! Our God is stronger than the chaos. And out of the chaos, He's going to do His greatest work. Out of the chaos, the miraculous is going to come.

One of the things I noticed about this whole COVID thing and us not being able to have church and us having to go live with our presentation on the internet... One of the things that just surprised me was the vast number of people who were watching our services. On Easter Sunday, we had about 300 or so people watching our Easter Sunday. I think if you go back to

that video right now, you'll see that well over 1,000 people watched the Easter service on that Sunday from our Facebook.

You say, "Jim, how many would you have normally had?" Well, this is a relatively young church, so we'd have been good to have had 170 people here on Easter morning. I'd have been happy with that. But to think that God used the chaos that is going on in this world to take us from 170 in this place to over 1,000 people all around this country and around the world, literally, people watching our Sunday service. God has expanded the ministry of Acacia into homes, into all kinds of places, states, nations, that we weren't there before.

You say, "Well, Jim, the chaos that's going on, what's God going to do with it?" I'll tell you what God's going to do with it. He's going to tip it upside down, turn it inside out and make something marvelous happen for the kingdom of God.

Sometimes we get to looking at what's going on in our world and we get so overwhelmed by it all and we think that God doesn't know what's going on. Can I just tell you; He knows what's going on in this world. I'm going to tell you in a minute, He's Alpha and Omega. I'm going to describe it to you.

If you're looking for God to move in your life, and if you're looking for a miracle in your life, you probably don't need to look for that miracle in a place of serenity and peace in your life. If your body is healthy, you're working out in the gym, you're pumping iron, you've got things happening, physically you're in great shape. You've got a good job going on. You've got a great marriage going on. Your kids finally moved out of the house. Whatever it is that's going on in your life, and it seems like everything is okay. You probably won't be needing a miracle right about then, but you get that doctor's report and you'll need a miracle.

You get that notice from your employer, and you'll need a miracle. You have something happen to you and all of a sudden some chaos comes into your life and you'll be like, "God, where are you? I need a miracle in my life today." It would be really cool if God showed up on every one of our very worst days, but understand something... there are some days that He lets us go on by ourselves. I'm not saying that He leaves us completely, but every mom and dad in this place that has ever raised kids, you know that at some point you want that kid to be able to do for themselves. You want them to be able to make some decisions for themselves. You want them to be able to act a certain way by themselves, not because mom is telling them to, not because mom and dad is telling them this is what you need to do.

He is our Heavenly Father, and there comes a place in our Christian walk with God where we ought not to have Him poking and prodding us every step of the way to get us to do what it is that He's called us to do, or live the way that He has called us to live.

I was really worried with this whole COVID thing. I got to thinking, "What if folks don't show back up to church after this is all over?" I mentioned it to a friend of mine in the ministry, another pastor. I said, "You know what I'm concerned about is these two months would cause

some folks to kind of fall away.” And you know what he told me? And it’s cold, okay? I didn’t like the answer. I’ll just tell you right now, I don’t like this answer, and you’re not going to like it either. He says, “Jim, if they fall away, your church never had them to begin with.”

If all it took was two months of not being in church for somebody to go the other direction and tell God, “I don’t need You anymore,” and not let church be something that’s important to them, if that’s all it took was a couple of months sitting at home watching church on TV or on your iPad or your phone (whatever it was). Realize that maybe things just weren’t right in your life to begin with. I believe with all of my heart today that if we’re looking for God to move, and we’re looking for a miracle in our lives, we need to look for God to move in those areas of our lives where things are not stable, things are not right.

“God, I’m not where I want to be in my walk with you. I am not where I want to be in my marriage. I’m not where I want to be in my job.” We begin to look at the different areas of our lives where we admit we need God’s help and that’s where and when He shows up in our lives.

I’ve had people tell me, “I don’t need God. I don’t need *a* God. I’m doing pretty good all by myself.” Well I’ve lived on this planet long enough and been around those people long enough to have them almost begging me to come and pray with them when it’s all just about over for them.

We don’t live in a perfect world, do we? We may have serenity in some areas of our lives, but all of us have chaos in some other areas of our lives. Someone said, “No, no, no. I’ve got all this going good.” Well that’s great. That’s what you need to focus on, actually. The good stuff that’s happening in your life. You really shouldn’t focus on all the chaos because the chaos will drag you down.

Just recently, I’ve been having to tell myself, “Well, what’s going right?” There’s been so much going wrong that I’ve had to tell myself, laying in bed at night, “But let’s just think Jim, what’s going right, right now.” I start thinking about what’s going right, and what was keeping me awake before, this other stuff is putting me to sleep and I’m sleeping like a baby, because I’m not focused on the chaos, I’m focused on what’s going right in my life.

God wants that to happen in our lives. Can I just tell you this morning, here is where God would want to work in our lives if we’ll let Him, and that is in the chaos in our lives. The psalmist says this, ***“The nations are in chaos, and their kingdoms crumble! God’s voice thunders, and the earth melts!”*** (Psalm 46:6, NLT). In other words, it just all falls at His feet. It crumbles, it melts. It may look like chaos. It may look like the worst thing in the world is happening to you and your family and the world that you live on. Kingdoms are crumbling. Chaos is everywhere, but if you’ll listen to God’s voice, He’ll begin to melt all that stuff away.

You start watching all this chaos that’s happening in our world today, it will drag you down. It will cause you to doubt your faith in God if you watch it long enough. It will make you want to get out there and join these people and be a part of the chaos that’s going on. You need to

understand something about God. When we evoke God in the chaos, things begin to melt away. Things begin to come together. God speaks to the situation and the problem that was so big before, the chaos that was so destructive, just falls away.

We've got this COVID-19 thing going on. We've had over 100,000 people in this country die as a result of it to date. That's the number that they're giving us anyway. I don't doubt it, I'm just saying that I don't know if it could be exactly accurate. I know there's a lot of things that come into play when they decide who and what and all of that.

I've got to tell you, guys, I just wonder what would happen in this nation... You know, we were told that we couldn't have church, and it wasn't just this church, thousands and thousands of churches all across this country. Churches that have taken it all the way to the Supreme Court and got shot down last week. You can't have service. Why? Because there's a pandemic in our world.

You know what I have not heard of yet, because there's a scripture where God said, ***"If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face... then will I hear from heaven...and will heal their land."*** (2 Chronicles 7:14, KJV). You know what I haven't seen, and I love my brothers and sisters and pastors all around this nation and world, but I have not seen a unified effort of prayer from anybody. (Maybe within a specific denomination, a group a churches.) I have not seen a nationwide call to prayer other than the one day that our good president announced that this was going to be a day of prayer a few Sundays back.

If these other people will take their anger and their destruction and their chaos to the streets, why in the world has the church not risen up and said, "I'll pray. I'll seek God's face. I'll stand in the gap." In the Old Testament He said, "Behold I look for a man to stand in the gap. And the old prophet said, 'Send me, I'll stand in the gap.' "

Where is the spirit of the believer that says that God can work in the midst of chaos and He can bring about a healing that would declare to the nations that He is God. He alone is worthy of our praise, and we ought to recognize Him, not science, not all of these other things getting all of the credit, for some immunization that might come along, but perhaps where God would deliver us from the pestilence that's in our world. Do you know that historically, God has healed the pestilence in this world time and time again?

Look into the scripture you'll find over and over again where He healed this disease, healed that disease. You know, the Bible tells us that when Jesus was walking the terra firma of this world for three and a half years... when He went through their towns and through their villages, He healed *all* their diseases. There was never anyone that went to Jesus for healing who didn't get it. It was a woman with an issue of blood. It was the despised lepers. It was a man without eyesight.

There was never anything that Jesus couldn't heal. I believe that if the believers that are in this world, would rise up and become who they have been called to, and go to prayer, and go to seeking the face of God, I believe God would give us a miracle. You know, these churches, we've been allowed to have 10 people, so why not 10 people at a time having round-the-clock prayer, 24/7 for the last two months? In every church. In every state. In every nation.

Wouldn't that have been something if every church in this nation would have said, "You know what? We can't have church, but we can have prayer." What did Jesus say about the House of God? He said this should be called a house of prayer, where people come and they intercede for the chaos that's going on in the world, and they pray for God to bring about a healing.

Voices of chaos say things like, "Hopeless." They say, "Death." They say, "Ruin." They say, "Disaster." But then the Bible says that God's voice thunders. When God's voice thunders, it just shuts the mouths of the naysayers, and it shuts the mouths and the voices that speak into this world that say, "The only thing that can operate in this world is chaos." God defeated all of that on the day of creation. He defeated chaos on that day, and He'll defeat chaos in your life today. Realize God's voice supersedes the voices of helplessness in your life.

In the book of Revelation, chapter 1, and verse 8, Jesus said, ***"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."*** I like that. That was Jesus talking right there. That's pretty cool. That just settled the argument for those old Jews if they'd have listened.

Alpha and Omega. Listen to this, and you probably know this, but alpha and omega are the first and the last letters in the classical Greek alphabet. Jesus, in his revelation to the Apostle John, declared His revelation that He is not only the beginning but He's also the end. This is important to look at. No matter the chaos that's going on in our world, He is still God and He'll still work if we'll let Him.

Nobody likes the beginning. Beginnings are hard. Beginnings are a lot of work. Beginnings are a huge investment. Beginnings are a struggle; they just are, but understand, beginnings represent, in our world, chaos. Chaos. That's what was in the world in the beginning. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and there was chaos, there was darkness on the face of the deep, so beginnings represent chaos.

Omega, on the other hand, represents the end, or the completion of something. In fact, the miracle that was needed to cause the chaos to become what God designed for it to be. We don't like the trouble that we have in our lives, but we love it when a miracle shows up, don't we? We don't like alpha, and we don't like all the other little letters in the alphabet, but we sure like omega.

"Lord, give me a miracle. God, give me a sign. Lord, show me something; speak to me. Lord, I want to hear your voice." We don't like trouble in our lives. We don't like alpha, but we like

omega. We don't like chaos, but we love the miracles. Understand something with me today, He is Alpha, chaos. He is Omega, the miraculous.

Chaos does not disrupt God. It may disrupt our nation. It may disrupt our world. It may disrupt the world's economy. It may disrupt the world's health. It may disrupt every function of this planet that is going on today, but understand, chaos does not disrupt God, because that's where He begins to work. That's where He begins to operate. If we let it.

I don't want to get into it too much, but there is a book in the back of this Bible, this New Testament, and it is called the Book of Revelation. If you haven't done it in a long time, you ought to open it up, and you ought to begin to read it, because what you're going to begin to read is today's headlines. It's interesting to me today to hear not just preachers talking about end-time events but politicians beginning to say, "I remember when I was a child and what I heard in that church, and what I learned as a child we're seeing happening in our world today."

You know what just blows my mind is that God knew all of this stuff was going to happen. You know, some people think, "Well maybe God is surprised by everything that is going on in our world today." I don't think He's surprised one bit. As a matter of fact, when you read the back of the book, you'll find this word *pestilence*. Disease, that's what that means, disease, sickness. God foreknew it and it's written in that book right there.

I don't want to throw a dark cloud on this service right now. I feel like this is a time of celebration, but I think it needs to be a time of locking us in a little bit, too. We're all upset over COVID-19, but when I read that book I find that something is going to happen to this world that is actually going to take the lives of one third of the world's population very, very quickly. So you say, "Oh, my God, it's the end of the world, what's going on right now!" No, no, no, not yet, not quite. There are still some things that are coming and it's in that book. If you'll read it, you'll find out about it. You'll find out for yourself. You don't need anybody to explain it to you. You'll figure it out. God will speak to you. He'll show it to you.

You want to know what all that says to me? It's that God is in the chaos. People are like, "Oh, my God! COVID-19," and I see God working, and I see God building His Church, and I see God making her more beautiful than she ever was before. I see Him purifying God's people. I see Him just using the events that are happening here to draw hearts into His church that hadn't been in church in a long time. They're like, "I need to be in church!" And I'm like, "I know. Why do you feel like you need to be in church?" "Because I'm seeing some things happening in the world that I read about one day, that a Sunday school teacher taught me, that you taught me, Jim. And there it is in the back of the book and I'm seeing it happening today." Chaos, chaos, chaos. Scary stuff.

He's Alpha and Omega. He's there with you in your chaos, and He can take you to your omega if you'll let Him. You can't have the ending of something unless you've had the beginning of it.

When you look into the scriptures, there's so many opposites, so many contrasts. Love/hate. In Revelation, God said, I'd rather you be hot or cold, because you're lukewarm. Contrast. God and the Devil, good and bad, contrast after contrast after contrast. What I understand is that the contrasts that are happening in our world, they're there for a reason, and they're there for a purpose, and they're there to show us the separation that's supposed to be in our lives between us and the world we live in. That's why Jesus told us, ***"Come out from among them, and be ye separate."*** (2 Corinthians 6:17, KJV).

He was not saying that you need to live in some little compound someplace, but what He was saying is there needs to be something different about you than the rest of the world. There needs to be a love in you when everybody else is hating. There needs to be some grace in you when other people are judging. There needs to be something about you that represents the Kingdom of God.

If everything were hunky-dory in our lives, we would not need God. That would be Heaven, wouldn't it? If you didn't have any problems, no chaos? That sounds like Heaven to me right there. That's what I'm expecting to have happening when I get to Heaven is the lack of chaos. Sometimes, folks, we want that to be here and now, but it's not realistic, necessarily all the time, because we live in a fallen world. It's fallen so God can show us salvation through Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

We understand today that the work that He has done and the work that He is doing in this world that we're living in is to redeem this world back to Himself, so there's going to be chaos in our world, in our governments, all different kinds of places. This is not something that surprises God and it's not something that should surprise you if you read your Bible.

What it should say to us and help us to understand is that God's not finished in this world yet. In the day that the chaos stops, and it will (read about it, the 1,000-year millennial reign of Jesus Christ), peace comes all over this world. When there's chaos, we can look around and say, "You know what, God's still working. God's still building His kingdom. He's still bringing people into the Kingdom of God."

One thing that I know about people, and I've been around people. I've been doing the people thing for most of my life. One thing I know about people is, generally, when there's some chaos in their lives, that's when they start going, "Where's God? Where's Jesus? I need his help right now." When everything's going right, people aren't always looking for Him, but when the chaos shows up...

Can I just say to you, when that chaos shows up in your family, let God use it. Let Him use it. "Somebody's sick in the family, Lord heal them." That's what we want. God heal them. Sure, I want God to heal them too, but that's chaos that's happening right there in their body, so I say, "God, use it and heal them if it be your will."

I think we should pray for healing, but I think we ought to pray for God's will. Pray this way, He said, "...Let thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." "Lord, I want you to heal my brother, I want him to be healed." I've been praying for my brother Rick since I was 17 years old. I remember the night God filled me with the Holy Spirit. I begged and pleaded for God in tears, sobbing, for God to save my family. I cried and cried, service after service, just sobbing and weeping, praying for God to save my brother Rick, because he was just pretty far out there.

Then just a few years ago, some things began to happen in his life. One day, he was taking out the trash on a snowy day and he slipped, and he fell and when he did. He broke his ankle. It broke it bad. His leg, it just busted it. The bone just went like this. He had to go to the hospital. So we're praying, "God, heal Rick's leg." I'm praying secretly, "Lord, use it."

They take him in. They put plates, they put screws, they send him home. They send him home and he sits in bed and he gets some blood clots. A blood clot goes up and gets in his lung. Now they call me, they say, "Jim, you've got to get to the hospital. Rick's in the hospital. He's got a blood clot in his lung and they don't know what's going to happen."

So they take him and we're in the hospital. It just so happened that the cardiologist that's taking care of him is actually my cardiologist. The man that operated on Rick's leg is actually the man that operated on my leg a while back, so I know all of these doctors, and I know some of these nurses. It's kind of like *déjà vu* all over again, but this time it's Rick.

So Rick is in there and he's got this thing and they're saying, "Pray for Rick because he's got a blood clot in his lungs." So I'm saying, "Lord, heal the blood clot in Rick's lung, but God, use it. This turmoil that's been going on... You know Lord, 30 some years ago I pled and begged at that altar in prayer for Rick's soul, that one of these days we'd be able to baptize him in Your wonderful name." I begged God, and I reminded God.

They do an MRI and they look at the blood clot in his lung and when they do, they look over at his heart. They find that one of the valves is hemorrhaging blood. They said, "We don't give you much longer to live unless this is operated on." Now they have to take him down to Indianapolis, and it takes a long time for it to happen, but they change every valve in his heart. They literally took the man's heart out of his chest, put these mechanical valves in, and then they put it back in his chest. The whole time, everybody's like, "Jim, pray for Rick's heart." And I'm saying, "Lord, heal Rick's heart, but God, use it. Lord, I don't know why all this stuff is happening to my brother right now, but God, use it."

Rick goes down for the surgery and he has it. I could show you the picture and it's scary, him laying there, it just scared me so bad. I thought I was going to lose my brother. I told his son, I told his fiancée, I said, "Listen, when he comes home from that hospital, I want him to come stay with me in my house, because I want to be his nurse." They couldn't afford nurses and all that. I said, "I want to be his nurse. I'll take as many weeks as I have to take off. I'll take care of him. I'll make sure he gets his medicine. I'll make sure he gets everything he needs. We'll feed him. He'll sleep in the room I sleep in, all of these things."

They bring him in, and they set him down in my living room. They bring him from the hospital, they set him down and I'm thinking, "Okay, God, maybe you're going to use this time of me ministering to Rick to heal him." And instead, right there after sitting in my chair for 40 minutes, the man has a stroke, and now there's a blood clot in his brain. I'm racing him to the hospital, and all the way there he's asking me the same question over and over and over. He couldn't move past a six-second conversation all the way to the hospital because there's a blood clot stuck in the front lobe of his brain.

We get to the hospital and we're dealing with the doctors. They're wanting to just walk away. They're wanting to just give up on this whole case, and I stood out in the hallway with my doctor, my cardiologist, and I said, "Please, do what you have to do. Keep helping him." I got with the nurses and I got with the people that do the physical therapy. I said, "Please, help him. Don't give up on him. If you give up on him, he's going to die." They kept working on him.

You wonder sometimes, "Lord, why the broken ankle? Why the blood clot in the lung? Why the aneurism in the heart valves? Why the surgeries? Why the strokes? Why does this stuff happen in our lives, God? Why is there chaos in this world?" I'll tell you, one of the trophies in Heaven in my mansion (Whatever it looks like, I have no idea. My mind can't comprehend it.)... But Jesus said, ***"I go to prepare a place for you. Where I am, there you may be also."*** (John 14:2-3, KJV) There are many mansions.

So in Heaven, in my mind, there is a mansion. In that mansion there is a mantel, and on that mantel there is a trophy, and what that trophy looks like was about three, four months ago when we had the baptismal right there and we came in between services and I baptized my brother Rick in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of his sins.

See, God can do a miracle in the chaos. God can bring salvation in the chaos. You think, "Lord, why is all this happening to me?"

I've seen the miracles come out of the chaos so many times. Guys don't give up. Don't give in. Don't let all of this stuff that's going on in this world overtake you. Shut those voices out and say, "God, where are You at in all of this right here?" God is in the chaos.

Ezekiel, one day, is called by God to go speak to some dry bones in a valley. You know the story, the valley of the dry bones? God says, "I want you to speak to these bones right here, Ezekiel." So, Ezekiel begins to prophesy, or can I say pray, for those bones that were dried up. They didn't have sinew, but God promised sinew. They didn't have flesh, but God promised flesh. They didn't have omega, they didn't have healing, they didn't have miraculous, but God promised that.

When you read the text, you'll find after Ezekiel prophesies, the Bible says that the four winds came together. Not four comfortable little breezes, but the four winds came together and began to blow on that valley. What the four winds represent... You've got an eastern breeze

blowing against a western breeze, blowing against a northern and southern. You know what begins to happen? That's what begins to happen. Whether it was a tornado or whether it was a hurricane, I don't know. But something like that hit that valley.

What's amazing to me is God made a promise that He was going to raise these people up, that He was going to cause these dry bones to live again. Then He told the prophet, "Speak, or pray, for these bones that they would live again. Speak, tell them, 'Hear ye the Word of the Lord.'" When God made this promise, the wind began to blow. Can you imagine what that looked like to the natural eye? The storm is brewing. The storm is blowing. Things that were over here are now over there. Things that were over there are now over here. Chaos is what it began to look like. The storm was blowing, the four winds were blowing. There's a tornado, there's a hurricane effect going on. Bones that were over here are now over there. This hip bone is fine over there, and it looks like chaos.

Read another verse later. You know what it says? ***"And there stood up...an exceeding great army."*** (Ezekiel 37:10, KJV). A miracle took place in the midst of all of that chaos. God actually brought chaos into the situation to bring about a miracle.