

07 New Wine in New Wineskins - Jesus the Only Thing That Matters

by Sandeep Poonen

The devil's craftiness can lead us to settle for less than all of Jesus, resulting in spiritual adultery and a lack of joy and fulfillment in our lives.

Duration: 1:01:23

Scripture: Psalm 73:25, Isaiah 29:13, John 16:13-14, Romans 12:1, 1 John 5:3

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Personal Relationship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of making Jesus the sole focus of our lives, above all other desires and distractions. It highlights the journey from considering Jesus a great person to making Him the main priority, ultimately reaching a place where Jesus is everything, the sole passion and focus. The speaker challenges the audience to seek a deep, personal relationship with Jesus, surrendering all other worldly desires and distractions to find true satisfaction and fulfillment in Christ alone.

Transcript

So, as I said this morning, we're going to hear at least five brothers who are under the age of 50, who are elders of churches, who have a good testimony. You heard Brother Victor in the morning. All these brothers are folks who became elders by the time they were 30 years old or around 35, early 30s.

And that's the age, as I said, when Ian and I were elders, when we started. Sometimes we think that we need much older people to be elders. But these brothers are brothers who have not only been elders, but who have learned to work together with others and to submit to spiritual authority through the years.

And that has been their salvation. We have a lot of brothers who are elders and many pastors in many churches who are a law unto themselves. And it always leads to confusion.

You never read that in the New Testament. In the New Testament, the only type of church we see in the New Testament is that which was planted by apostles, and they appointed the elders. And the apostles took a fatherly care for the elders, all especially writing letters to them, correcting them, rebuking them, encouraging them.

It's very rare to find churches like that anywhere in the world today. Why is that? Has the Holy Spirit changed? Has Jesus changed? He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. It requires people who will

have the faith to believe that what God spoke and wrote in the Scriptures can be fulfilled today.

Now, it's a lack of faith. You say, no, no, no, we can't, it doesn't work today. Well, according to your faith, it will not work in your case.

But we decided from the beginning that we would try to stick to the New Testament Scriptures in every area. And now, after 36 years, we've seen the result of that, how we've been able to work together in glorious unity and fellowship over these years with many, many people. In the New Testament, there's a wonderful verse in 2 Corinthians 5, which says we do not henceforth know any man according to the flesh.

We don't recognize one another as Telugu-speaking or Tamil-speaking or Anglo-Indians or Malayalis or North Indians or Gujaratis or Europeans or Americans or anything. There's no difference in Christ, even human relationships. So, today, we're going to hear Sandeep Poonen now.

He happens to be my son, but that's besides the point. He's a brother in Christ and he's an elder in a fellowship that he started in California. And he often speaks in a very large church in California for 5,000 people regularly.

And there was a, in fact, they wanted him to be the pastor there, which of course he turned down. But he shared a message there, which I felt would be very beneficial. And I asked him if the Lord led him to share that with us too.

In fact, that's what I told the others as well. Don't hesitate to repeat a message which the Lord anointed somewhere. Don't feel that you can't repeat that.

Those who always want to hear something new must go to a place called Athens in Greece. You read about it in Acts 17, 21. They always wanted to hear something new.

But in the Old Testament, prophets repeated their messages. The Gospels repeat what Jesus said and did four times. The Epistles repeat many things.

Because we need to hear repetition of the word until the word becomes life in us. So, I'm never ashamed to repeat and repeat until, like the Old Testament prophets, until the word becomes life. So, Sandy.

I wanted to say before I started that we got to hear such wonderful truths earlier today. And I had the pleasure of going to Tamil Nadu last week, last weekend with my dad and my brother. And we heard Brother Victor earlier today.

My heart broke within me as I heard the testimony of, testimonies that we heard. How I wish that I had so many of the elders that I've gotten to interact with as my elder. I honestly say that before God.

I'm only 36. I'm young. I wish I had elders like so many of you have to guide me into the truth.

This is such an unbelievable gift that God has given so many of the churches in India. I'm desperate to find one man like this that I could submit to. But it seems like God has really blessed the work over here and given so many godly men that I'm humbled.

I really am to stand on this pulpit. I hope that I honor God through what I share. We were talking about, we heard in this morning about Revelation chapter 12, where the dragon, the devil was enraged, was angry.

I thought back to the first time when the devil was ever angry. The devil was cast out of heaven, and I'm sure he was angry then, but then he saw God create, renewed his creation of heaven and earth by creating the sun and the moon and the stars and all of the creation, and he created the trees and the fish and the animals, and then he watched as God breathed into these piles of dust that he had formed with his hands, and he breathed life into it. And this was the darling of God's creation, and the devil watched all of this.

He was the greatest in all of heaven besides God himself. He watched all of this, and he was enraged. And he said in his mind that he was going to corrupt the best of all of God's creation.

He wasn't going to go after the animals. He wasn't going to go after the fish. He was going to go after humans, men and women.

And he saw a man and woman in the Garden of Eden, and he was enraged. He could have come as a dove. He could have told them, hey, this is God speaking, knowledge of good and evil, now I'm okaying it.

He didn't. He could have come as a lion. The devil could have come as a lion, roaring and saying, by brute force, you must eat this and command it, but he didn't.

When God wanted to attack the purest and most innocent of God's, when the devil wanted to attack the purest and most innocent of God's creation, the devil knew that he had to be crafty. He couldn't fool somebody by being innocent or some kind of vision. He couldn't fool Adam and Eve by being intimidating, but he knew that he could fool, maybe fool Adam and Eve by being crafty.

And we know the story of Adam and Eve, and we know that Adam and Eve fell because of his craftiness. And a lot of us think that Adam and Eve must have not been very smart. We think we, I know I've thought this, I wish I could have been in the Garden of Eden.

I would have chosen differently. After all, it's just a matter of choosing between apples and oranges, isn't it? I could make the right choice. How could they make it, how could they have blown it so easily? But it wasn't easy.

The temptation was not easy. It was very, very, very hard. And this is why I find that the temptation to Adam and Eve was very hard.

Turn with me, 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 3. And we read here that how the devil was able to deceive Eve, because as he came through the serpent, he deceived Eve by his craftiness. It wasn't by his brute force, it wasn't by some kind of twisted logic. It was by his craftiness.

And then he says, Paul is saying, I'm afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ. He's making a comparison here. Paul is saying that just as the devil deceived Eve by craftiness, you too will fall.

And he says, I'm afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ. Some of us Christians think that the devil is going to really intimidate us by demon-possessed neighbors or something. Or we feel that the devil will intimidate us because, or he'll fool us because of dreams and visions.

And he does fool people by demon possessions or by fool people by dreams and visions. But for the best Christians, for the most sincere Christians, the way the devil will deceive us, will deceive I hope all of us sitting here who desire to be the best Christians possible, is not by brute force, is not by some vision, but by craftiness. And the crafty lie of the devil is that he will say, all you need to do is lessen your simple and pure devotion to Jesus.

I think of it like a virus that they put into these computers, that hackers put into the computers. It's a small little file, nobody even notices it. It can come through a USB that you put into the computer and it slips in.

And the hacker doesn't care if it sits dormant for a while. But the hacker knows if the virus is in there, it will slowly and surely achieve its purpose. It will start to destroy the computer, eventually until the computer is completely destroyed.

And I don't know if we have seen our lives and estimated our lives as to whether we are being deceived by this metric. We all know that we can criticize other people, we can pass on YouTube videos, look at how these people do things, look at how these people are deceived, look at this crazy belief that other people believe, look at how they believe in the prosperity doctrine, look at how they believe this thing about the millennium or whatever. Well, the Bible tells me where deception has really started.

So before I take specks out of ignorant other people's eyes, I've got to ask myself if I have the log of deception in my own eye. And I have already started to be deceived if I have been led astray from the simple and pure devotion of Jesus. That's how the devil was.

When the devil saw that I was converted for the first time, when the devil saw that or at least that I renewed my commitment to Jesus recently maybe, the devil is enraged. But he doesn't come swinging at me. If he knows I'm serious, he knows that won't shake me.

He knows it may shake me for a little bit, but I'll realize the power of the name of Jesus. If the devil really wants to get the best of God's new creation, he's going to come after us with craftiness, and he's going to slip in a little virus that says, lessen your simple and pure devotion to Jesus. And I have a question that I've asked myself, and it's an indicting question.

It's a very convicting question. It's a very simple question. This is it.

Sandeep, look at your present relationship with the person of Jesus, and ask yourself from how you're living your life what Jesus means to you personally. Not what his theology means to you, not as what his doctrines mean to you, what does the person of Jesus mean to you? And that has become a very convicting question for me, because I could be doing a whole lot of other things. I could be coming up with all kinds of new creative sermons.

I could be going all over the world preaching things. I could be writing all kinds of songs. It doesn't really matter.

This is the question that helps me understand whether I too am deceived. I can talk about false prophets. I can talk about deception elsewhere in the church, but if I myself have lost the simple and pure devotion for Jesus that I once had, I too am deceived.

And the deception is coming, and it may take weeks, it may take months, it may take years, but that deception will start to rot and start to ruin my spiritual life. That simple and pure devotion to Jesus is what

is the one metric that will always give me an answer of whether I am deceived or not. And as I thought about it, I thought about what Jesus could mean to me.

And I thought about all different kinds of stages in my life, and how I could slip back into past stages of my life of what Jesus could mean to me. When I was born again, I think I wanted all of Jesus. I didn't know what all of Jesus meant, but in the simplicity and purity of my heart I wanted all of Jesus.

But over time, Jesus didn't become all of my fancy. And I want to talk about two lies that we as Christians can settle for less than all of Jesus. The first one is where Jesus is a great thing for me.

Now that sounds very good. Having Jesus as a great thing sounds like a very good thing. And this is what I mean by that.

This is what I wrote down for it. This is how I know Jesus is a great thing for me. Because the main desire of my life is to maximize my life here on earth, and to enjoy as many of its attractions as possible.

Now that I'm a Christian, I might have to avoid some things, but I'm still focused on enjoying myself here on earth. So I want to live like a king here on earth, maximize all my time here on earth. Of course I'll never deny Jesus.

I'll try to raise my children to be good children, and then I hope I go to heaven and be a king once again. So live like a king here on earth, don't do anything terribly wrong, and then go to heaven and be a king again. But there could be many things wrong with such things.

When Jesus was a great thing for me, there was a lot of place in my heart for other things. And the biggest thing that co-existed in my heart was the world. So as a young person, I'll still come to church on Sunday, but I really enjoy my time on the weekends, on Saturday and Sunday, with my, Friday and Saturday, with my worldly friends.

Because the world is so much more pleasurable to me. And I desperately as a young person want to be cool. And even though I may say, Jesus, I want to renew my life to be Jesus, you want to be everything, that desire and that temptation is still present.

Always attacking me saying, you want to be cool, you should be cool. And affects us in different kinds of stages of life in different ways. It means we want to listen to the kind of music.

We listen to all kinds of music that affects us differently. We listen to music by people who don't know the love of God and so are angry. And me, I know the love of God, I was raised by a loving family, I'm not angry, but I keep listening to this music by angry people and I find out that sooner or later I'm starting to become angry at God, at other people, because I want Jesus.

And I love the things of this world. I just want to be cool and it's too hard for me to say no to my young friends. I use Jesus like a credit card.

Whenever I'm in help, I'll just swipe it. Normal times, every now and then, I'll access the blood of Jesus, but I just want Jesus to advance my career, take my children to heaven, and I want to maximize my life. I can't say no to my Christian friends.

I love the things of the world and the world knows it. So many young people, let me ask you this, does the world know that there's something different about me because I'm a Christian? It's not so much by my

actions but my heart? Or do I have such a desire to be cool that I don't have lost the ability to say no to my friends? If I'm married, Jesus is a great thing for me. So I go to church on Sundays.

I want to teach all my children the Bible stories, and I'll teach them all the Bible songs, and I congratulate myself that I'm not like that neighbor who physically abuses his wife, and I'm not like that other neighbor who believes in evolution and abortion. I'm different. But my children know that I don't really have any personal connection with Jesus.

I rarely talk with him, and they can see my wife and I don't really have much of an interaction. If I think back about the last time my wife and I had an interaction about Jesus and how we could be better disciples of Jesus, I can't even think about the last time we had such a conversation because Jesus is just a great thing for me. The world, the things of the world, the pleasures of the world is what is most important to me.

James chapter 4 verse 4 tells me that I'm an adulteress. That's a pretty strong word, but that's exactly what James tells me I am. I claim to be married to Jesus and fooling around with the world.

What a tragic state, and I can only say it's tragic because I've been there. It is such a horrible place to be. Adultery, committing adultery, spiritual adultery, claiming to be married to Jesus.

There's one thing good about most such people, and it was true about me too. When I was in that situation, I knew that I didn't have what the Christian life was promising to offer. I didn't sometimes know what it took.

Many times I didn't want to do what I needed to take, but I knew something was wrong. And many of you young people may be there. You may be enjoying the world, the passing pleasures of this world.

You haven't gotten to the story of the prodigal son where life has become all about the pig farm. You've still got a little bit left of your inheritance left, that you're partying and having a good time with your friends. Money hasn't run out as yet.

Your energy for the things of this world hasn't run out as yet. So you say, no, no, no, no. That Friday night's not pig farm to me.

It's actually a pretty good old time for me. But you know that when you come to church on Sunday, something's not right. Something's not adding up, and you want, you know Jesus could offer you a better life, but you don't have the courage, or you don't know what it takes, or you don't have what you want.

You don't have what it takes to do it, or at least that's what you think. You're willing to admit if somebody were to be real and compassionate to you, that I don't have it brother. I don't have what it takes.

I'm missing something. I want that Jesus that some people talk about. As Paul says, we've been tricked.

We've been fooled by the craftiness of the devil. The devil has fooled us. He's not robbed us of crores of rupees.

All he's taken from you, all he's done is put that virus in you that has started to spread and destroy that simple and pure devotion for Jesus. And it doesn't matter if all other things may be looking good, and we have a good testimony in front of other people. The devil knows the virus is alive and kicking.

And so we look around in the church, and we say maybe some other brothers and sisters can show me what it means to have that true life. And we find another set of Christians, but unfortunately, another set of Christians are probably most prevalent in most churches, especially in churches that preach holiness. But it's a different kind of life, which is not the life that Jesus offers.

And that is a standard of life where Jesus is the main thing in my life. I talked about how Jesus is a great thing, but there's plenty of place for other people. But then there's another group of Christians where Jesus is the main thing.

This is how I categorize that, and I've been there too, and I'm constantly struggling to make sure that I don't settle in there. I'm constantly focused on making sure that I don't commit any big sin. As long as I'm succeeding in that, I'm fine.

I know that just saying I'm a Christian is not good enough. I've been in church long enough. So I must also do something with my life that demonstrates that I'm a follower of Jesus.

So I'll never commit adultery with another woman's man's wife, or with another woman, since I'm married. I will always be faithful to pay my taxes. I'll read my Bible.

I'll pray consistently. I'll even try to get victory in some of the thought areas of my life. But still something is missing.

I'm missing an enduring joy. I'll put verses up on plaques in my room and on my Facebook account, but my heart doesn't really long to be close to Jesus. Does your heart long to be close to Jesus? If it doesn't, we could be people who are just making Jesus the main thing.

I'm not going to ever do something terribly sinful, but I'm not excited by the person of Jesus. And so when that question is posed to me, what does Jesus mean to you? What does the person of Jesus mean to you? If I'm intellectual and I've studied theology, I immediately go to that. Oh yeah, Jesus died for my sins.

Jesus gave up his life for me. He sacrificed everything for me. He was a propitiation for sins, if I know some better words.

But I don't have any idea what that means. It's never become personal to me. It's been a long time since I've wept.

It's been a long time since I've been broken over the fact that Jesus died for me. It's not personal anymore. It's just a thought.

It's just a theory. It's become old news. It's not good news anymore.

Or if I'm the emotional type, I think about intimacy about Jesus, but it's all because I weep and I think that I love Jesus because I watched some movie where Jesus was dying and I say, that's great. Or I listen to some moving worship songs and I say, yes, now I love Jesus. But during the day, the next day or the few days afterwards, my heart is not drawn to Jesus.

The person of Jesus, I'm not talking about living this life or obeying this command. The person of Jesus, Jesus, you. That's a sign that I may be just making Jesus the main thing.

And these are some of the things that accompany people who have Jesus as the main thing. I find that hypocrisy and legalism is abounding in me when I try, when I make Jesus just the main thing. I'm not truly happy in Jesus.

I'm not able to live a life of freedom from sin. I'm living a life of sometimes victory over sin. But the moment I fail or the moment I get discouraged, I'm back to sitting in the back of the hall.

I don't know how to get up. So every year for two months, I'm sitting in the back of the church, not able to testify, having a glum face. And then it's good for another three, four months because I get encouraged and then I'm back again.

Jesus is just the main thing. And I'll talk about victory over sin and I'll get victory over sin, but it's like a rag being squeezed and a few drops of water falling out. And that's pride that so easily comes because after years and years of squeezing a rag and water coming out, slowly the bottle, the glass of water has a little bit more water than most people.

So I look at the other people and say, look, I've got a little bit more water than you. So you've got to respect me. You've got to honor me because I scraped and I clawed my way to this kind of righteousness.

Honor seeking is also present. I can never access true faith because I seek the glory of man, John 5:41. I go to the Bible thinking that just obeying the scriptures blindly is going to give me eternal life.

I have not found that that is a way of death that the Pharisees had. They too searched the scriptures thinking that it brought life. They were unwilling to come to Jesus.

They made their life about obeying the commands. We too can make our life about getting victory over sin. And I feel that what turns off most non-Christians and I feel that what turns off most young people in the church are when older brothers, people who are supposed to be leaders, we don't demonstrate that Jesus is more than just the main thing.

When we just demonstrate that Jesus is the main thing and my career can also be in there and I can just do many other things. When I don't have a driving passion for Jesus, people who are young are not happy with that and are not fooled by that. They want to see people who are devoted to Jesus and that's my deepest fear.

I don't really fear anymore that Jesus is going to become a great thing for me. I don't think I'm going to find myself really committing adultery constantly with the world. Something has changed that I fundamentally lost that attraction.

It still tempts me like anything but I don't think I'll wallow in that mud for too long. That's not going to be my problem. My problem is going to be that I'm going to make Jesus the main thing.

He's the main thing in my heart but there are corners in my heart. There are certain shelves in my heart that I don't let God touch. Maybe it's my family.

Maybe it's my wife. Maybe it's my children. Maybe it's my career.

Maybe it's my bank account. Maybe it's something or the other. Maybe it's some way of interacting with other people that's sinful and I say God no I can't do it.

That's just my personality. And we can answer every theological question the right way but we don't have a passionate love for Jesus. If we don't have that we are already being deceived.

And we have this concept that a life in balance is the right life to live. A life with Jesus is number one and all the things subservient to that, that's fine. All second, third, fourth and fifth.

But we don't have a life where we're driving hard and hard to Jesus. We don't know what to make of Philippians chapter 3 where Paul says I count all things including my own righteousness at last. I have no idea of even understanding how to get to that.

Because I have 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Yes Jesus is number one but many other things are 2, 3, 4 and 5. God calls me to a highly, I see the life of Paul is a life I want to emulate next to Jesus. And I see him having a highly imbalanced life. Jesus had a highly imbalanced life.

He failed in most of the metrics of this world. He was willing to count everything as loss for the sake of gaining Christ. That was it.

That's the third category of people for whom Jesus is the only thing that matters. We must be so immersed in the love of Jesus that he is our only driving passion. What do we make of Matthew 6.33 where it says seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you and you tell me hey look it's right there.

I've got to seek his kingdom first and then all the other things will be there secondary right so I can have Jesus and his kingdom number one and then I can have my career and all of these things number two. Tell you what God showed me about this. This is an attitude when I say God I can have Jesus as you as number one and all these number two is where I have the mentality of somebody who is a hired slave and not a son.

A son is all about his father's business. A servant is somebody who says 8 to 5 I clock in and I clock out. God I did my 8 hours for you now it's my time I do whatever I want.

But the son comes out of laboring in the father's vineyard and in the farms and comes home and is with the father. He never goes away from the father. He's doing his father's business and then comes home to be with the father.

When I seek the kingdom of God first and I say oh God I can fit all other things into it and kind of achieve all these different things for you. The mentality of God where I say God I have to do for a certain number of things as long as I check off these things. You're okay with me then I have an idea of God as a task master.

I don't know him as a father. I don't know what it means to dwell in the father's house. I want to come in there a few days a week.

I want to come in when my money is running out. I've not chosen to abide in Christ. I've not chosen to dwell in God because that's the only place that I really want to be.

And I want to take a couple of verses to illustrate this difference. I spoke this sermon about 18 months ago and I'll tell you I cringe when I hear that sermon that I spoke because I know how convicting that word is still for me. And if that's one sermon that I feel is the one that I failed most in is that sermon.

It is such a constant battle to make Jesus the only thing. The devil is relentless. I desire to be a faithful man of God who wants to serve him and the devil says alright if you are the best of God's new creation I'm going to come and attack you.

I'm going to bombard you with my virus from every different direction. And it's going to be subtle. It's just going to be decrease your passionate simple pure love for Jesus.

And he's got a lot of time. He wants that virus to slowly sit in. And there's so many different ways it can come in and it's a constant battle to keep fighting it and say Jesus I want to renew my love to make you the only thing.

I'm squandering it a little bit. I'm making you just the main thing here once again. Look at this verse.

This is what I want to give you is a couple of ways in which I understand the difference between Jesus being the main thing and Jesus being the only thing. Because if I look at a group like this I think that most of us probably some of us young people may be making Jesus a great thing but the rest of us our battle is to fight between making Jesus the main thing to making Jesus the only thing. And I want to look at a couple of verses.

1 John chapter 3 verses 2 and 3. How do I know if I'm making Jesus the only thing? These are a couple of verses that I'm using to apply to my life. Beloved now we are children of God it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that when he appears we shall be like him because we shall see him just as he is.

And here's verse 3. Everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself just as we are pure. People who have Jesus as the main thing are purifying themselves as Jesus is pure. People who have Jesus as the only thing are also purifying themselves as Jesus is pure.

What is the difference? This is the difference that I have seen in my life and it has to do with the word purity. When you think of the word purity if I asked you to define the word purity what would you say? I thought about this often this is one of those verses that have made a big impact on my life. What is the meaning of the word purity? Purity I've usually thought of as being the absence of sin.

And so I said okay if I want to be like Jesus because I want to see him fully like he is I've got to keep fighting sin. So I've got to keep fighting, fighting, fighting, fighting, fighting sin. And there's nothing wrong with that.

Purity does mean partially having a freedom from sin. But I want you to follow me if you can with this. When you define something as the absence of something you're only telling me what it doesn't have.

You're not telling me what it does have. If I held up a cup with some liquid in it and I told you it didn't have coffee in it I might be making a true statement. But I have not told you what is in the cup.

I've just told you there's no coffee in the cup. But what is in the cup? And it's the same thing with my purity. I can hold up this thing called purity and say purity is in the absence of sin.

Okay does that just mean it's an empty cup or has it got something in it? And I've seen that to have purity like Jesus is pure is not just to have the absence of sin but to have the fullness of the love of God in me. And that's a subtle difference but I think an important difference because I can make my God victory over

sin. And when Jesus is the main thing for me I keep asking is God happy with me and I want to obey the commands of God but victory over sin becomes my God not Jesus becomes my God.

And I saw this in verse 6 no one who abides in him sin no one who sins has seen him or knows him. Every time I sin it's saying that I have not seen God and since God is love every time I sin I am saying that I have not seen or known the love of God in that particular area. So I don't have to grit my teeth I don't have to fight a little harder I don't have to say oh God maybe I need to pick up a second wind of strength to overcome this I tell myself God somehow I sin that means that I have not known your love like I should.

Purity does not come from me fighting and fighting and scraping and getting all the dirt off my cup purity comes from me getting more and more understanding of the love of God over me. I believe that that is the secret of Jesus' life that Jesus was always convinced of the absolute love of God that the father had over him. In all situations and that's my problem every time I sin I have no idea how much God loves me that's why I choose the pig farm that's why I leave the home thinking that that pleasure is going to satisfy me.

I don't know the love of the father in that moment when I sin so when I look at that verse everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself I don't say oh that means I got to fight sin fight sin fight sin fight sin and that becomes my focus no I say God I need to have a greater and greater revelation of the love of God over my life. I need to know how completely loved unequivocally loved that I am by you. I don't need to seek any approval by man because you love me so deeply every time I seek the approval of man it's an indication that I don't know your love.

Every time I judge somebody it means that I don't know your love. Every time I look at a woman with lust in my heart I don't know your love God and it's changed my focus. I'm not grumpy anymore it brings a smile on my face when I sin because when I sin I tell myself God I've forgotten how much you love me and I get up and I say God I don't want to do this next time but I get joy I get the joy of the Holy Spirit back in me because the Holy Spirit has come to guide me to Christ.

He's come to guide me to the love of God. He's not trying to beat me up saying oh there you go you sinned again all of those failures is trying to drive home the point to me that you do not know the love of God like you should. Family of God take that definition of purity with you it has completely released me from this law this righteousness based on those law and I want to stick with it.

I don't want to ever go back into bondage of trying to complete this work and getting victory over sin by fighting and fighting harder. I must do my part I must buffet my body I must discipline myself but it is all an outworking the fact that I'm so deeply loved and that purity is not judged by whether I sinned or not. My growing in the purity of Jesus is not judged by whether I did these sins or didn't do that many sins.

Last year I did 25 sins a day now I'm doing 23 sins a day so I'm becoming more pure. No the estimate is this is how much I knew the love of God now I know the love of God even more. That's the only metric.

Sin will drop off as I know the love of God more and more. Jesus is the main thing people get so bogged down with sin sin sin sin sin. They don't realize that dying to self is a pathway to experiencing the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

So they make dying to self the gospel without saying God all of that dying to self was in order to get me to the resurrection life of Christ. There's no way to get to the resurrection life of Christ without dying to self but God forbid that I just die and get buried. No I was crucified with Christ so that I could live with Christ in

newness of life.

God I don't want my life just to be an elimination of sin program. I want my life to be an exhibit of your love. How fully loved you how fully loved I am.

Another verse 1 John chapter 5 verse 3. For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not burdensome. This is God's love. As we heard in the morning Romans 8 13 if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.

And I see that this is the love of God. So don't don't misunderstand me by thinking that the love of God doesn't have an active component of what I must play in it as well. God's love over me is proved by the fact that I keep his commands.

There is an obedience that's present in the love of God. But the second half of it is where I differentiate between Jesus is the main thing and Jesus is the only thing that his commandments are not burdensome. The reason why the commandments of God are burdensome to me is because Jesus is not the only thing that matters in my life.

I have seen that so clearly in my life that as I have made Jesus the person of Jesus the only thing that matters none of his commandments seem so burdensome. He is such a special person to me that his commandments are made easier. It doesn't matter if it goes against culture.

It doesn't matter as we heard this morning if people are going to call me legalists. If people are going to categorize me as saying oh he's Indian that's why he probably believes that. He comes from that culture which teaches this and this and this and that.

It doesn't matter to me because for me when Jesus is the only thing I read his word and if his word tells me that it must be done a certain way that's the way it is. I used to fight and fight and fight and argue and argue on why it should this worship be cultural and why this should be the mission of the church and this is how to reach young people. And so many other theories I had when Jesus was a great thing when Jesus was the main thing but when Jesus became the only thing I decided to look at his word but I realized that I was able to look at his word with simplicity.

I was able to look at his words as it is and say God these words are words of life. You need to make these words come alive. Where do we get that kind of boldness that we heard this morning where we can say we're going to love our enemies in the face of persecution.

Where does that come from? It can be burdensome if we keep trying to love our enemies and we don't have a passionate love for Christ but if we have a passionate love for Christ these commands don't become burdensome. Doing the will of God doesn't become burdensome. If I tell my wife in the morning I'd like to have a particular dish some chicken curry for dinner and we have had a good time in the morning and we are one and I have to leave to go for work I don't believe my wife will find it burdensome to make that chicken curry for me because she loves me.

Because we are one it comes out of this is somebody I love. He likes this chicken curry for me tonight I'm happy to make it for him but if I have a fight with her before I leave in the morning if I have an argument with her before I leave and I criticize her or if there's some strain between me and her then anything I say is going to be burdensome to her. That's my problem I feel that sometimes the commands of God become burdensome because I've lost that love relationship with God.

I've lost that simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus and I keep trying to fight it, trying to get it back, trying to get it back, trying to get it back. Maybe thinking if I obey the commands more strictly I'll do it. Maybe if I squeeze the rag a little higher maybe that's when the water will come out more.

Lost the simplicity and purity of Jesus because other things have crowded it in. I must acknowledge my condition that I am deceived. I've realized that if I make this the metrics of deception that I have very little time to spend trying to figure out why other people are deceived.

When I find myself so busy looking at all the other world views or looking at all the other theologies and why that's wrong and why this is wrong and why that's wrong and why this is wrong I found that usually that also means that I myself am deceived because I've lost a passionate love for Jesus. I'm caught up with all the theologies and I have found the reverse is true that as I try to stay committed to keeping the love of Jesus simple and pure I have less time for these other things and the thing that is most passionate to me is what is most passionate to Jesus. That is why His church has become so important to me.

Building the body of Jesus Christ has become so important to me not because I have an obligation, not because I'm somebody who wants to be something in the kingdom, no because it's Jesus and His body and the thing that Jesus loves the most is His church, that's His bride. So the best thing I can do if I love Jesus or I claim to love Jesus is to do the thing that He loves the most which is to work on His bride, to making sure that the bride is ready for the bridegroom when He returns. It's not some obligation that I have to build a church or to build a name or to have a correct theology and have a CFC in the US or nothing like that.

That has not been my obligation one bit. I have been enamored with Jesus. I want Jesus to be the only thing in my life and what Jesus is most excited about is His body because that's the bride of Christ and Jesus when anybody is going to get married that's the thing He's looking forward the most.

He's not looking forward to the flowers being there and all kinds of music. He's looking forward to the bride and I'm convinced that when Jesus comes back the thing He's going to be most excited about is not that there's not going to be any more AIDS anymore, not that poverty is going to be established, that's all going to be true but Jesus is going to be most excited when He comes again that His bride is ready. If I truly believe that then I will set to work on that same agenda and it's not burdensome.

I understand the words of Paul when he says you have many teachers but you don't have a father. I can grow in having the heart of an older brother and having the heart of a father because I'm just interested in getting the bride ready because my bridegroom needs to see that bride ready when He comes back. It's not some obligation, it's not some command in some verse in the Bible that I'm trying to religiously follow.

I'm just trying to make Jesus happy when He comes back because I labored on what He was most excited about. What do we do? Look, I hope you know I've not attained this at all. I've not come close to attaining this at all.

As I said I spoke this 18 months ago and it's still something that beats hard within me and it's a convicting word that the Lord says by your own words you'll be condemned. If you're not careful yourself you're going to be under stricter judgment. So I stand under those words of God.

I don't want to preach theory. I've asked myself many times Lord I don't want to put an undue burden on young people. Is it really true that Jesus you must be the only thing? It's so hard to keep that pure simple

love for you.

I'm convinced however that there's no other way that this Christian life will make sense. You can try for years to make Jesus a great thing. Let me know if that works out for you.

It didn't work for me. You can make Jesus the main thing. Let me know if that works out for you.

It didn't work for me. I'm convinced that if Jesus did in fact give up all that he did give up for me it makes all the sense in the world. It all makes all the sense in the world that he must be my only passion.

What do we do if we don't love Jesus only? There's no quick fix answers. But I will tell you the one thing that I would like to leave with you. And that's what the Lord has been impressing me more and more in my life.

The only way to make Jesus more and more the only thing is to constantly seek for fresh immersions, fresh baptisms in the Holy Spirit. If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. Don't try to put to death the deeds of the body.

If by the Spirit, you need the Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body. You're going to be putting to death the deeds of the body but you need the Holy Spirit. And I've realized that as I've desired to reclaim this Jesus is the only thing when times when I fall and I find myself making Jesus the main thing.

I find the Holy Spirit working within me and the word of God telling me seek back the Holy Spirit. Seek for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. Seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire and all of its fullness.

And then the Lord says you only need to do one thing. You need to completely surrender yet again. You need to lay yourself completely on the altar.

Then the fire of God will fall. You will be baptized in the Holy Spirit if you will surrender completely to God. That has been God's simple truth to my life.

The only reason you don't get the Holy Spirit when you ask Him for it is because the Holy Spirit has nothing to fall on. The fire has nothing to fall on because there is no sacrifice. But the moment a sacrifice is put on which is my living body, Romans 12.1. My body is a living sacrifice.

The fire will fall. And the Holy Spirit's very purpose has been given. This is my most favorite thing about the Holy Spirit.

John chapter 16 verse 14. This is exactly how it's written very clearly. This is how you make Jesus the only thing.

Very simple verse. John 16.14. He shall. He's talking about the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will glorify me. The Holy Spirit has been sent to glorify Jesus. What does glorify mean? Glorify means to make Jesus bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger.

That's the Holy Spirit. That's what He's come to do. That's what He was sent to do.

To glorify Jesus. To make Jesus bigger in my eyes. So I don't have to read more meditational books.

That may help a little bit. But what I really need is a fresh continuous baptisms in the Holy Spirit. So that Jesus becomes bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and it clouds out the world.

It crowds out my flesh and it's instincts and it's passions and it's desires. That it's easier to put the flesh to death. Because the Holy Spirit is glorifying Jesus all the more.

Jesus used to be this big and now Jesus is becoming this big. Jesus I want you to be the only thing. Holy Spirit baptize me with your fire and the Holy Spirit if He sees me fully surrender will make Jesus more and more enviable.

That committing sin won't be as attractive as it used to be. It will always be a temptation. The temptations will always be there.

But as I fix my eyes on Jesus who is love. He'll fill me with the love of God and say look how big Jesus is. I fear that a lot of the people, a lot of us in the New Testament have not seen Jesus as big as even John the Baptist did.

John the Baptist said I'm not even worthy to untie his shoelaces. And I've gone before God many times and said God I'm not there. I'm not there.

I think I can be pals with you. I so often treat you as we're just buddies. You're not that big in my eyes.

And He didn't even have the Holy Spirit. Lord with your Holy Spirit I make you so small. And Jesus wants to get us to the point where we can make Him the only thing the Holy Spirit has been given to us.

That He can help us. Get us from one glory to another. To where we are conformed more to the image of Jesus because Jesus is the only thing we're looking at more and more.

We may do plenty of other activities but the thing that drives us the most, the thing that we're most interested in is the person of Jesus. Not the things of Jesus. Not the doctrine of Jesus.

Not all the things that could come with Jesus but Jesus Himself. Let me close by reading a song that was written Be Thou Supreme, O Jesus Christ. Be Supreme, O Jesus Christ.

Your love has conquered me. Beneath your cross I die to self and live alone to you. Be Supreme, O Jesus Christ.

Nor creed, nor form, nor word, nor holy church, nor human love. And I can add a lot more things to it. Nor victory over sin, nor missionaries to some country, or eldership in a church.

Nothing of that compares with you, my Lord. Be Supreme, O Jesus Christ. My inmost being filled so that I shall think as you did think.

You who always knew the love of God. You, Jesus, become so supreme that I will always remember how loved I am. Just like you were so loved.

And you will do as you did will. Be Thou Supreme, O Jesus Christ. My soul exalts in you to be your slave, to do your will is my great happiness.

Family of God, I speak as one who has not achieved in any shape or form. But this is my desire. This is something that I'm gripped by.

I want that doing the will of God to bring me great happiness. And I want to seek the fresh and constant baptisms in the Holy Spirit that I might get there. Amen.

We all fall into one of these three categories that we heard. Either Jesus is a very great person for us, or He is number one, the main person for us, or He is everything. There's nothing else.

Now we may think that if He is number one, we're pretty good. But I believe that's the reason why we experience so many ups and downs. Through many years, I tried to find out what is the mark of a true worshiper, because the Father seeks those who will worship Him.

And I have come to the conclusion that the words in Psalm 73 verse 25 is the mark of a true worshiper. He looks at the Lord Jesus and says, I have no one in heaven but you, and I desire nothing on earth but you. I want to challenge you, my brothers and sisters.

You may go to heaven, but Jesus is a great thing in your life. I don't know. I'm not sure.

If Jesus is the main thing in your life, there's perhaps a better chance of you going into the kingdom of God. But if you want to satisfy the heart of God the Father, who sent Jesus to die for our sins, the only way to do it is to say, Lord Jesus, you are everything to me. I desire nothing on earth but you.

I desire no one on earth but you. I will never love my job or money or house or property more than you. You are everything.

There's a saying that goes like this, when you have lost everything in the world and you're left only with God, you will find that God is more than enough. When you have lost everything in the world and you're left only with God, you will discover that God is more than enough. That's a worshiper who says, Lord Jesus, I don't desire anything on earth but you.

I don't desire anyone on earth but you. If you can keep yourself there, and I'll tell you, it's something we have to daily seek to do, not just once. I remember in the first Bible I ever got, I wrote on the front page, Lord, I desire nothing on earth but you.

I don't want anything in heaven but you. That was way back in 1960. Now I've tried to preserve myself and that's what made my Christian life so happy, extremely happy.

So I want to encourage all of you to go that way. May God bless you as you find your satisfaction in Christ alone. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we pray that you will make this real to us so that like the Apostle Paul, we find everything else is rubbish compared to Christ. Everything else is rubbish compared to you. Help us to examine ourselves honestly to see whether we can say that, that everything else is rubbish compared to you.

Bring us to that place. Thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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