

Being Completely Broken

by Sandeep Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of complete brokenness and surrender to God for His transformative work in our lives.

Duration: 55:18

Scripture: Psalm 46:1, Isaiah 41:10, John 3:16, John 15:13, Romans 8:32, 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, Hebrews 11:21, 1 Peter 1:6-7

Topics: "Spiritual Humility", "Godly Strength"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of embracing trials as a means to truly know God, highlighting the significance of humbling oneself in the face of challenges and finding God's strength and refuge in times of trouble. It encourages focusing on knowing God deeply, making Jesus the ultimate hero in life, and prioritizing His approval over worldly definitions of success or failure.

Transcript

The first session yesterday, we thought about the person of Naaman and how Naaman was somebody who Jesus highlighted as being the only leper who received healing in all of Israel, even though there were so many people who were so many lepers. And we saw how he was willing to humble himself to be able to dip himself into the River Jordan and to immerse himself not once, not just do a quick dip and come back, but seven times, almost a sign of completion, saying, I'll do as much as it takes until it's completed into the River Jordan, which is a symbol, a picture of the way of the cross. And we talked about how we have to come to rest with this lifestyle of death to self.

We have to come to rest into this is, you know, reconcile that this is the only way for me to live for the rest of my life is a life of death to self. And we heard at the very end from Brother J. Munda, what made Naaman do that was because he was so sick of his leprosy. That's what, in spite of the great command of God from the Prophet of God, and the instruction was very clear, was very prescriptive, go and do this.

We wish we would be that prescriptive. God, should I do this? Should I take this job? Should I go here? Should I go to this school? If only we could go to the Prophet and the Prophet would just say, yeah, do this. But even when it was so prescriptive, we found that Naaman was not willing to do it because there was a crossing wall.

But when he considered, when he took into account his leprosy and how horrible that condition was, he was willing to do anything. And in all of our lives, and as I think about you all, I think especially about the young people, and I think about my life, and whoever wants to think they are young can take this advice from them as well. But I really believe that the Lord can start to work through our lives when we really come to that point in which we are willing to surrender everything.

And we have really come to that breaking point. And then, it's not that there's one event in your life and then that's a breaking point and then you're all set. We have to come to a lifestyle of knowing that we must be completely broken.

We must come to a revelation that the only way God will work in my life is when I am completely broken. I must be gripped with the truth that God only works to create out of nothingness. He doesn't like, he doesn't enjoy working when I'm still hanging around trying to add my two cents.

He really wants me to be crushed and broken. And if you think about the story of God, which is given to us sometimes in this book, and it's continuing to be written in all of our lives. The book about the great acts of God have been written in this book, but they're continuing to be written in heaven about our lives too.

And there's a possibility that our lives too could speak about the great acts of God. It's good for us to think about that. But when we think about the great acts of God working through our lives, what is God going to highlight? And Jesus, among all the stories in the Old Testament, chose the story of Naaman.

Imagine being highlighted by Jesus among all the stories. A lot of much greater men never got highlighted. But what an honor it must have been for Naaman that his name was highlighted by Jesus.

Hey, think about that story. Jesus talked about the great centurion. And he said, great is your faith, this Roman centurion.

But Jesus highlighted it. You've got a great faith. The Syrophenician woman who said, Lord, I'll even take the crumbs that fall from the table like the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table.

Jesus marveled and said, what a great faith. And as we look at all the stories in the Bible, what we find is that Jesus is trying to underline certain parts of your life. Not all the events in your life are going to be underlined.

There can be a great story with many, many chapters that if you were to write the story of your life, there'd be many, many chapters that you could write. When you were born, when you finished school, when you got a job, when you got a promotion, when you got married, when you had children, when you gave your heart to the Lord, when you were baptized. But there's going to be some parts where the Lord has an opportunity to underline.

And in Naaman's case, it was his breaking point. And God underlined it. Why? Because Naaman chose correctly.

Even if it was Naaman's breaking point, Naaman could have been still proud and said, nope, I'm a great Syrian warrior. I'm not going to dip myself in that filthy river. All of Syria would have talked about the great Naaman who had won all these victories.

It wouldn't have been written in the story of the book of God. But because God had, because Naaman was able to come to his breaking point as it came to his leprosy, and he saw that his leprosy was more bothersome to him than all of his victories and his medals and his crowns as a great warrior, he was willing to humble himself and said, I'll take care of that leprosy. I'd rather be known as that stupid Syrian who dipped himself in that dirty river because my leprosy is so horrible to me, I cannot take it anymore.

And if you think about Luke chapter 4 in that passage, where Jesus said that in Luke chapter 4, he actually underlines two stories. And it's two very small stories in the whole book in the Old Testament. These are two very, very small stories.

And Luke chapter 4, he talks about two stories. I talked yesterday about Luke chapter 4 verse 27, where he talked about Elisha and Naaman. But the first story that Jesus highlights again was about Elijah and the widow in Zarephath.

Now just remember, remind us of what was the context in which Jesus said this. Jesus had said, I've come to preach the gospel, the good news. I've come to free the captives.

I've come to bring sight to the blind people. And everybody was like, yes, what a great man. Jesus, you're the right man.

But then he said, just remember, not everybody's going to get this. There were many people who were facing the famine, but only one widow got held by Elijah. And there were many lepers, but only one.

And they got so angry that they wanted to kill Jesus. Because Jesus was saying, just because the good news and there's freedom from the captives and sight for the blind, it's not available to everybody. And he highlighted Naaman, because Naaman was willing to do anything to set aside all his medals.

Can you imagine the great Naaman coming out decked in war, taking up all his medals at the River Jordan and dipping himself. He humbled himself and said, Lord, I'm putting all my trophies I lay down. That's what the picture I have of Naaman, taking all his trophies of war and saying, I'm going to cling to the way of the cross.

And he dipped himself seven times and he got cleansed. The other story is about the story of the woman, the woman of Zarephath. And that's in 1 Kings chapter 17, I believe.

In 1 Kings chapter 17, we can turn there, where Elijah predicts a drought or a famine. And he goes to a brook, where God sends him to a brook and he drinks water from the brook and ravens feed him. Just imagine what an incredible picture that must have been.

Crows coming and feeding him in the morning and in the evening, bread and meat. So he was being fed and then the brook dried up though. Some of us may feel that the Lord really called us to a particular brook, a place that gave us sustenance.

And then God may dry up the brook. God, who sent Elijah to the brook, also dried up the brook. Because he says, I want to send you to a widow.

And Jesus was going to reference this widow many years ago. What an incredible news that the brook dried up. If the brook never dried up, Elijah would have had the great story of having ravens feeding him.

But Jesus couldn't reference that story. Jesus was able to reference the story because the brook dried up. So no circumstance, even if it was started by the Lord, is without God being in control.

God who takes us to the brook, God who gives us a job, may dry up that job. God who gives us certain things to comfort us or to help us, may suddenly take that away. Because that's the time when God says, I'm going to send you to your next assignment.

Lord, this brook was so good for me. Ravens, this clearly is a miracle from you. Lord, your hand is on that brook and those ravens.

But then the Lord sometimes will dry that up. Take it away. But then we have to say, God, what's my next assignment? And what God took Elijah to was to a widow and Zarephath.

And you see what the widow and Zarephath had to do. In 1 Kings chapter 17, I wonder how many of us would even come close to what this widow did. In verse 10, Elijah, the brook is dried up, goes to this city in Zarephath and he sees this widow who is gathering sticks and says, please give me a little water.

Some random person coming to this city and says, give me some water. You know what this widow does? Sure. Excuse me, who are you? Who am I to get you water? No.

Okay, go get some water. I'm a widow, I don't have much, but if you want some water, I'll go get it for you. And as if that was not enough, Elijah said, okay, thank you, since you're being so helpful, actually can I ask you for some more things? Please give me some bread too.

In verse 11, we see the widow was even willing to give him bread too. And said, you know, actually I don't have any bread. I just have a little bit left.

I'm collecting sticks so I can make some food and then we're going to die. She was literally had one last meal left. Not five meals left, not one can of flour left.

My heart's beating fast because I don't have one flour. Just little left, one meal left. And see what the word of God was through Elijah.

Don't be anxious, but here's what you're going to have to do. Come and feed me first. Make that bread.

What will most men of God say? Oh no, I'm so sorry to trouble you. Yeah, yeah, please feed your family first. Didn't mean to trouble you.

Completely illogical. Elijah says, I appreciate that you're on your last meal. Your son and you are about to die, but honestly, this is what you need to do.

You need to feed me first. But thus says the Lord, verse 14, the bowl of flour and I'll be exhausted. And what an incredible faith of this woman in verse 15.

Some of the stories in the Bible, some of the great acts of faith are so small, like the great act of this woman is in verse 15 of 1 Kings 17. So she went and did according to the word of Elijah. Some of such a simple thing.

But if you put yourself in her shoes, one meal left, that's it. I have one son. My husband has died.

All I have in life is my son. And I was going to have one meal left. No complaining spirit, no murmuring spirit.

One meal left. Here comes God saying, give now. The very last thing I had, just one meal for my son and myself.

She went and did according to the word of Elijah. What does that mean? She gave him her last meal. Not only depriving her, but depriving her own son.

One little sentence. And Jesus, as a boy listening to all these stories, underlined it. When he was a little boy, he heard that one little thing.

The Holy Spirit underlined it in his heart. That many years ago, many years later, when he was 30 years old, when he first got to preach, maybe his first sermon after he was tested, he underlined her. What an incredible honor to be underlined by Jesus.

She, if she had read 1 Kings, might have given some advice to the author saying, can you please expound on what this really meant? Can you give me at least one whole chapter for myself to explain all my emotions, how deep it was, how many tears I cried? No, no, she just went and did. But Jesus, the heart of God, says, I know exactly what you did. That when Jesus has to talk about it, he picked that story.

What about the great sacrifices of Joseph? I didn't want to pick that one. What about the great sacrifices of what David did and Jeremiah did and great Daniel, great men of God, standing in front of the lion and throwing the first? They're all great stories. But when the Lord wanted to talk about it in his first sermon, what two great acts of faith, he took two completely small stories and highlighted it.

And we may think of our own lives and think, well, this is an ordinary person. I didn't come from much. I don't have such a great any story of a background.

I'm not a son or a daughter of anybody. I'm just an old person. I get average grades.

I'm just a widow. I only have my son. I'm a Syrian.

I'm a heathen person. I'm not even a Christian properly. Every single person God is saying, there are going to come times in your life when I'm going to put certain things in front of you.

Syrian, widows, Arafat, random people, everybody sitting here, no matter what your background is, there's going to come a time when God wants to break you. And God wants to use that situation to break us. But he's not trying to break us just for the sake because he's a mean God.

He wants to underline things. Look at these people. Have you considered my servant Job? And the devil says, well, you give him everything.

He's like, no, no, no. You try it. Try that.

And he underlined the story of Job. Why? Because of Job's breaking. And some of us may be going through different kinds of breakings in our lives.

We may have gone through some kinds of breakings in our lives. And we may not have done what we should have done. We may have looked back at some of the breakings and said, God, I missed it.

I just complained and I complained and I complained. But God may have some more breakings in store for you. But it's not without a purpose.

Even if it's a small little trivial story, nobody knows about it except three or four people. God heard it. Jesus, little boy Nazareth, listening in the synagogue, heard it.

And he underlined it. And it's worth it. It was worth it.

All of that was underlined. Even though the authors and scripture of 1 Kings didn't pay much attention to it, Jesus said, hey, I'm going to read it. And billions of people are going to read my words.

And I'm going to go and read 1 Kings 17. And I'm going to marvel at this woman because Jesus picked it out. And Jesus is in the business of picking out a little boy with five loaves and two fish.

He's in the business of picking out that little woman who was suffering with the issue of blood for years. He picks them out, those little people who are at whom God uses to crush. And God breaks and he sees she did according to the word of the Lord.

When crushed, when broken, when humbled, when laid low, at that lowest point, he chose to immerse himself seven times in the river Jordan, in the way of death to self. You could not stop him. You could not stop her from walking the way of the cross.

Could not. He would take any shame. He would take any despising.

He was committed to the way of the cross. That's Naaman. He was committed to obey the word of God because his leprosy was too much.

He was willing to take anything. And so was this woman. I don't know much about her faith, but she was willing to do all of that.

You think about the life of Jacob. We know about Jacob, the deceiver, grabbing onto his older brother's hand or leg or whatever it was, and then deceiving his brother of his birthright, deceiving his father by stealing his brother's birthright, deceiving his father-in-law with the sheep, choosing all the good sheep for him. And then we find that he wrestled with an angel, and God touched his hip and dislocated his hip so that he had to walk on it with a staff.

And then he loses his son, Joseph, his favorite son. And then, you know, the rest of the story, Joseph helps the family get together and then he goes to Egypt and is finally reunited. His favorite wife, Rachel, dies, all that stuff.

You think about that whole story of Jacob. Now, that's the whole story. What, if you're the Holy Spirit, do you highlight about that whole story? Lots of stories in there.

What do you think the Holy Spirit highlighted? You know what he highlighted? Tell me in Hebrews chapter 11. Wonderful, long story of Jacob that took many chapters, almost from like, almost 10, almost 20 plus chapters of Jacob related in there. Some of it is Joseph, but Jacob comes back in there too.

But then when you think about the author of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, say, look, I want to think about Jacob. The Holy Spirit underlines just one thing. Here's what it is in Hebrews chapter 11, verse 21.

We have many stories in the Old Testament and we can do the Hebrew and the analysis and get wonderful things out of it. But here's what the Holy Spirit said, hey, look, what I want to underline in the book, what I want to underline in the story of Jacob, here's what I'm going to say. He, as he was dying, all those other stories, actually, you know, I filtered through all the stories of Jacob.

What I want to underline is when he was dying, the very end of his life, he blessed each of the sons of Joseph and worshipped, leaning on the top of his tower. That's it. And there are a couple of things in there.

It's leaning on the top of his tower. They didn't know. The Holy Spirit didn't have to write that.

He was dying and he blessed each of the sons of Joseph and worshipped. But it was important. It was a critical thing in Joseph's life.

It was in Jacob's life. And this proud man, Jacob, who was so self-sufficient and could outwit anybody, at the end of the day, had to lean on his tower. God was able to take that man, Jacob, and get him to where he was leaning on his tower.

What everybody on this earth looked as Jacob was walking, limping, and feeling sorry for him, saying, look at Jacob, leaning, always can't walk anywhere without leaning on his tower. So much so that it says in Genesis that the Jewish people don't eat that part of the body of the animal because of the remembrance to Jacob. And God said, that's what I see.

That's the beautiful part about Jacob. Because that's the time I broke him. That's the time when he was broken.

From then on, walked with a lean on his tower. Everybody in this earth is saying, oh man, poor Jacob. God is saying, great Jacob.

And we have to see that. We have to see that. That even the whole world may despise me because of, look, he lost his job.

God must be angry with him. Look, this happened to him. God must be upset with him.

Look, that happened. His child has this problem. What is it? There's this problem going on in his marriage.

God must be angry. God's looking at them and saying, he's leaning on his staff now. Now he's leaning on me now.

Great Jacob. That's what I'll underline now. And he wasn't leaning on his staff and complaining.

He was leaning on his staff and worshipping. We can lean on our staff. God can break you.

God can break us. And we lean on our staff and we just complain. Then there's nothing written.

There's not going to be any story written about Jacob. If he was leaning on his staff and he complained. And God broke Jacob, but Jacob still had to choose, I'm going to worship.

And that's the choice before us. God allows these breakings in our lives with the hope that we will lean on him and still worship. And the question is, Lord, can you say that that's what the breaking did to me? You've allowed different situations to come in my life.

You said no, and I thought your will would definitely be to say yes. It makes so much sense in my mind that you should do it this way, but you did it that way. And everything, every dream I've ever had from a young age, you've just broken it and crushed it.

And here I am, leaning on my staff. Can't even walk anymore. Being the ridicule of people.

Look at this great man alive, Jacob. Here I am, leaning on my staff. But because you worship, God says, I'm going to underline that.

One little story. You turn with me to Genesis chapter 49, because this is where, this is the story that Jacob, that the author in Hebrews is underlining. In Genesis 48.

It's where this story comes from. Where Jacob was about to die and he calls Joseph's two children in. And Joseph had two children, Manasseh and Ephraim.

And look what happens in verse 12. Genesis chapter 48, verse 12. Jacob is about to die.

Joseph clearly is his favorite child. And now these are Joseph's two children. And so Joseph takes his two children to Jacob to be blessed.

And Joseph, verse 13, took Ephraim and put him on his father, Israel, that's another name for Jacob, on Israel's left hand. Because the blessing of the right hand in that culture was more important than the blessing of the left hand. And the right hand was considered the more favored blessing.

So he puts his younger son on Jacob's left hand and put his older son on Jacob's right hand. To say, hey look, you know, birth order is important. Manasseh is my firstborn son and that was a big deal in that culture.

So clearly I'm sure your right hand will be for my firstborn son. But you see what happened in 14. It says that Israel, Jacob, stretched out his right hand and switched hands.

Did the completely illogical thing and said, right hand is actually going to go to Ephraim and left hand is going to go to Manasseh. And it says in verse 17 that when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the younger boy, it displeased him. It displeased Joseph.

And Joseph said in verse 18, actually, no, no, no, no, maybe Jacob you're old, you can't see, maybe you don't know my children, but Manasseh is the older one. So place your right hand on his head. And Jacob said, no, I know my son, verse 19, I know, I know, I know what I'm doing.

He also will become a people but his younger brother will be greater. And he blessed them that day. And you just see a little bit of a context in verse 22, this Jacob.

I give you one portion more than your brothers. So all of my inheritance, I'm going to give you a little bit more than all of your brothers. But where did he get the inheritance from? Which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.

I don't even know what story he's talking about there. But there's apparently some story about Jacob with an Amorite which he took with his sword and his bow, which I don't even know about. It's not written.

Nor was it underlined. The great Jacob who took all of that inheritance that he gave to all of his children, he got it from the Amorite. With his sword and his bow.

I don't know any story that Jacob talks about with his sword and his bow that he took. Maybe I haven't read it carefully enough but I don't know what he's talking about. God says, imitate it with me.

I don't even want to talk about it. I'm not even going to tell anybody about it. That's what made Jacob so strong.

But what made Jacob so great in God's eye was that he leaned on his staff. And when God said, switch hands, do the completely illogical thing, God, Jacob was changed. Finally, when he was about to die, Jacob said, sure, anything you say, God.

Jacob didn't just come up with this thing. He was prompted by the Lord. God said, switch hands.

Prophetically, God said to Jacob, that's the boy you're going to have to bless more than Madison. And Jacob didn't say, well, let's go think about it. Let's argue this over, God.

Let's go have another wrestling session. Wrestling's over. He leaned on his staff and he worshipped God and he said, whatever you say, God.

That's what Hebrews 11 says, that he blessed the sons of Israel. But what he blessed the sons of Israel was the illogical thing. Lord, the most logical thing from the human standpoint is to bless with the right hand the oldest son and to bless the left hand with the youngest son.

Both get a blessing. That's the logical thing to do. I'm going to listen to you, Lord.

Because now I'm broken. Now I'm broken. Now I don't have my own opinions anymore.

And God said, out of all of the story of Jacob, some of which we read about, some of which we don't even read about. How he got his whole inheritance. Isn't that worth talking about? How all of the sons of Israel, all the twelve sons got their inheritance.

Apparently, he got it from the hand of the Amorite with a sword in his bone. I got no idea what he's talking about. And God says, I don't even care to talk about it.

What I care to talk about, Jacob, and what I'm going to highlight in the New Testament, in the book of faith, is that finally I got this man who was known as a deceiver. His name means deceiver. But I got this man to lean on his staff and to worship and to do whatever I say.

It didn't even make sense, but he did it. And he did it with a worshiping heart. And that's what God is asking us to do in our lives too.

No matter what the situation is, God is trying to break us. And he's never done with breaking us because he wants us to be broken. But whenever we harden ourselves, God says, I'm going to break you again.

God would love for us to remain broken. God says, I want you to humble yourself. Remain humble.

But no worries, if you get hard, I'll break you. But this is not such a horrible thing. Because even the breaking, I can highlight.

I can use this horrible situation and highlight it. I don't know why this widow ended up with just one last meal. Maybe she wasted her money.

Maybe she gambled all the money away. Maybe she invested in the wrong things. Maybe it was her fault.

Maybe Naaman got leprosy because he was an evil person. Maybe all those things may have happened, but God still said, you can redeem this situation. So maybe it's been because of our own fault that we are in the situation that we're in.

And we've landed up in this horrible situation because of our own foolishness. Jacob definitely is an example. He made a lot of things wrong because of his own foolishness.

But God said, I can use you. If, when I break you because I love you. And I can't use you when you're just this hard person.

If you're soft, I can use you. But I can still make you great. If when I break you, you will lean on the everlasting arms.

If you will lean on my arm, safe and secure from all alarm. Leaning on the everlasting arm and worship it. And doing whatever the Lord says, however illogical it is.

God says, I'll underline that in the book of faith that is being written. And I believe every single one of you here has his name in the book of faith. It says in the finally the books will be opened.

Not book. Books. It's so big.

This is going to include every one of us. And if all we did was wasted all of our breakings. And complained.

And then we asked for forgiveness. God will forgive you. But it will just be blank.

Sabitunin. Just a bunch of blanks. I broke him.

I wanted him to worship. But he just complained. Oh yeah, he asked for forgiveness.

So I deleted it. But I can't say anything beyond that. There's his name there.

Yeah, you're in the book of life. Come on in. Yes, you're happy.

But nothing to write about us in the book of faith. But then the woman in Zarephath. I broke him.

I can write something about her. Jacob. Slave, the Amorite, all kinds of things.

Nothing I can write about that woman. I broke him. You worshiped.

Meaning. That's the hope that we all have as Christians. So, in 1 Peter it says that the testing of our faith.

1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 7. Verse 6. It was so hard and so difficult and distressing. It resulted in praise and glory and honor. When Jesus opened up the books.

Praise and glory and honor to God. I think I spoke here last year and I talked about the divers. I talked about how there are two women or two men, hopefully.

Some men can help with divers too. But when you clean a dirty diver. And that's what a lot of mother's roles are.

Cleaning the dishes. Cleaning the divers. Cleaning the slobbery clothes.

Bunch of cleaning. Who's mess? Other people's mess. A lot of the children mess.

A lot of times a mother's life is full of cleaning. Cleaning, cleaning, cleaning. Something that the kids mess.

Kids spill food on the floor. Kids dirty their clothes. Divers are dirty.

But there are two kinds of divers. Divers that were turned into gold. Because there was not a spirit of complaining.

When the mother changed the divers. Other people, the divers just remain divers. Nothing to write about dirty divers.

But if divers were cleaned. Without a spirit of complaining. It results in praise and glory and honor.

At the revelation of Christ. Lord all I did was clean divers. And clean dishes.

And clean floors. But did you do it without complaining? Did everything give thanks? Because this is the will of God. Lord I've been born again.

Lord I want to do your will. Well my will is that in everything give thanks. Everything.

Clean divers, clean dishes, clean the floors. Okay, Lord I'll do that. It results in praise and glory and honor.

At the revelation of Jesus. This is what all our breakings can do. If we see that what God is looking for.

Is if it can result in. Not our forgiveness. God can easily forgive you of all the times you've complained.

From all the trials that you've gone through. That's the beginning thing that you should know. That forgiveness is very easy when you accept Christ.

When you ask for Christ's forgiveness. Even now. If you confess your sins.

And if you walk in the light. He can cleanse you. It's easy.

But do you want those same breakings to result in. Praise and glory and honor. That's another level.

Then rejoice. Don't complain. In everything give thanks.

In the hope. Not that you look good. But that God looks good.

That must grip us. That must grip us over and over again. These trials are so important in my life.

That the greater the trial. The more important a chance I have to get to underline. That it may result in praise and glory and honor.

And you know we can turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 2. Verse 14. But thanks be to God. Verse 14 through 17.

But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ. And manifests to us the sweet aroma. The knowledge of him in every place.

For we are a fragrance of God. Of Christ to God among those who are being saved. And among those who are perishing.

To the one an aroma from death to death. To the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things.

We are not like many peddling the word of God. But as from sincerity. But as from God we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

I think of crushing. A lot of times I think of this picture of crushing a seed. And a smell coming out.

Sometimes you crush garlic. You crush it. And a smell comes out.

I smell garlic. It was crushed. You crush some fragrances.

You crush these sweet seeds. And a sweet fragrance comes out. And Christ is saying here.

That we can be an aroma from death to death. I kept crushing Sandeep all his life. I kept trying to crush him.

But all it went was from one death to another death. But another story is. I crushed Sandeep and it went from life to life.

From an aroma of the knowledge of God. To an aroma of the knowledge of God. Allowed this situation to happen in his life.

And I crushed him. And it resulted in the knowledge of God. And I crushed him again.

And it resulted in the knowledge of God. Through the praise and the honor and glory of God. Every way I tried to crush him.

Every time I cried. Every time the Lord allowed the devil to attack him here. Or to do this here.

He was crushed. But all that came out. Was the sweet aroma.

Of the knowledge of God. In every place. Every situation.

At work. Crushed him there. Home.

Crushed him there. On the road. Crushed him there.

In every particular place he went to. Went to Atlanta. Crushed him there.

Went to San Francisco. Crushed him there. I sent him all kinds of places.

Any place he was crushed. No matter what I tried to crush him. Sweet aroma came out.

What was the sweet aroma? The knowledge of God. Suddenly he got to know me more. She got to know me more.

She didn't complain. She got to know my ways. She didn't just cling on for dear life.
And slip into the kingdom. No. She leaned into it.
He leaned into it and said. No Lord. This situation is specifically designed by you.
For me to know you. That's a very clear reason. Why you took away my job.
Why you caused the sickness to come into my family. Very specifically. Intentionally.
Allowed by the Lord. Whose sovereign God. Who allows all things into our life.
Nothing slips his view. He very specifically said. Yeah he didn't cause it.
The devil is the one who caused all evil. But he allowed it. Saying even if the devil.
I'll allow this into his life. Like God allowed the devil to hit Job. But with a very specific purpose.
That at the end of it. Job could say. Now I know God.
Now I see you. And I retract my heart. With sackcloth and ashes.
He came to the knowledge of God. That was the whole reason. Why God allowed Job to go through so much.
And it was worth it. The fragrance of life. Because Job can say.
Now I know God. I was an upright man. I was blameless in all my ways.
But I didn't know God. I lost all my children. I lost all my property.
But now I know God. Beautiful aroma. God can add double easily.
Can add three times, four times. There's no problem. How do you buy knowledge of God? What money do you pay for that? God says.
That's what I'm interested in. And you pay more. For the most expensive things.
What does God have to do. To give you a million dollars? Simple. Do you think it's complicated? Any of us who are in debt.
Any of us who have mortgage payments. Any of us who have a magic number. We say once we hit that number we'll retire.
Whatever it is. 100,000, 100 million. Whatever number you put in your bank account.
Once I have that I'll retire. Then I'll serve God. Whatever that number is.
How easy is it for God to do that? How easy is it for God to drop that money into your account tomorrow?
Some long lost relative you never knew existed. Someone said I'm going to give it to the fifth generation.
Six cousin rude.

And it's like oh it's me? 100 million dollars. Okay. Do you think it's very difficult for God to do that? Very easy.

Very, very easy. To do those kind of things. You want a nicer car? How easy is it for God to do that? Let's be honest.

How difficult do we really think God is? The things that we strive for. What are the things that are really difficult for God to do? For us to get to know him. That's difficult.

Because it involves us. And we have a free will. And for that he paid a big price.

You know what he did? For God so loved the world. That in order for this world to know him. He went through all the options.

One angel. 500 angels. 5 million angels.

I mean that's not going to cut it. He had to send his only son. God so loved the world.

That if he wanted the world to know him. That's eternal life, right? He had to send his only son. That was the minimum payment.

That God could do. 100 million dollars. No problem.

You can just drop it into your account like that. But for God to get. For me to get to know God.

That wasn't an easy problem for God to solve. It cost everything. It cost God everything.

God had to empty. Out his bank account. You know what it says? God emptied himself.

Completely emptied. Iron drain. Everything is empty.

A couple more coins. Empty all of it out. God had to empty himself.

Infinite God had to empty himself. In order to solve one big problem. That you and me might know God.

This is a big problem. God said. That's what I want.

If I wanted every son of mine. And every daughter of mine. To have 100 million dollars.

Easy. I can do that. I don't need to send my son though.

Let's just keep Jesus in heaven. Let's not have to spend that. But he was not interested in that.

What he was interested in. All along. Was knowing God.

The tree of life. That Adam and Eve may know God. And we squandered it.

Because of that. We gave into a tree of knowledge. Of good and evil.

And said. What do I have to do now. To get these people back.

This creation of mine that I love. Let's do it. Because I want these people to know me.

And now. He says. I'm going to send you trials.
And these trials. Are only with one purpose in mind. I gave up everything.
Because I wanted you to know me. And now these trials. Are going to be a way.
In which you get to know me. But most of my children. Instead of them.
Getting to know me as a result. Keep complaining. Beating themselves up.
Thinking they know good. Thinking that God is commending them. And God is judging them.
Thinking that they are. Somehow. Not favored children of God.
Quite the opposite. Exactly the opposite. God loves you so much.
That he's allowed these trials. Because he says. I want you so much to know me.
Don't you know. This God who gave up his own son. Freely.
For us all. Will he not along with Christ. Give us all things.
That's what it says in Romans chapter 8. What more should I do to tell you that. That's all I'm interested in.
This situation.
That situation. In all places. That I send you.
I want you to know me. And I sent you my. I gave up everything.
I emptied everything that I had. To prove 2,000 years ago. That that's what I'm interested in.
The most famous verse. John 3.16. God so loved the world. That he gave his son.
Everything. His most precious. Everything.
So how much do we know him. So how much do we know him. That's what matters right.
Not are all my problems solved. Not are my children educated. Not are all my children married.
Not are all my health issues solved. Nor do I have victory over sin. Not even that.
Do you know him. Do you know him like. What a friend.
He is. We sang it. What a friend we have in Jesus.
Do you know him. Do you know his everlasting arms. That you're leaning on.
Safe and secure from all alarm. I heard voices singing it. I was singing it too.
Do you know him as that though. God said I'm going to send you. Trials through life.
So that you may know him. Know him. Lord I want to know you.

I go through many bible studies in our. Many times when I. Go to bible studies in our church. I ask the Lord as I'm driving home.

Lord did I know you Lord. Did I get to know you. Or did I just.

Exchange good information. Brains talking to brains. Is that all I did Lord.

Did I really get to know you. Lord out of all that was said. What is it about you that I got to know.

What is it about your character. What is it about your person. What is it about your holiness.

What is it about your values. What do you like. What do you like.

Did you get to know him. Have you gotten to know him. How much he loves you.

His loving kindness. Did you get to know him. Are you leaning.

How much his everlasting arms. Are so strong. Because you lean on him.

Do you get to see him as. Magnificent. Because the Holy Spirit is showing you.

That you're the one who pierced him. You know him as a great. Comforter.

He's not just a comforter. He's a great comforter. Who comforts us.

Do you know him as that. Do you know him as a father. Whose heart beats so fast.

Every time you sit on his lap. Do you know him. The sweet aroma.

To trials. He always leads us in triumph. So we can produce that.

Dear brothers and sisters. Embrace. Not enjoy.

Embrace the crushing of God. Embrace it. Not because it's not right.

Not because it's not a cross. Not because it's not. It is.

It is a cross. There's something in it. But embrace it.

Because we. Are so interested. In.

Why Jesus died for us. Because we could know God. And say God I want to know you.

I want to know without a shadow of a doubt. That your arms are everlasting. I want to know without a shadow of a doubt.

That you are my refuge. And strength. Of very present help.

In times of trouble. In times of trouble. So you need a little bit of trouble to find that out.

And that you can be a refuge. You don't go to a refuge when everything is great. But when the bombs are falling.

Then you go where is the shelter. Where is the bomb shelter I can go. And I find that God becomes that bomb shelter.

How does that concept really say. My bank account was my bomb shelter. Because I was kind of a little low.

And then I just went to pay the check. And. My daughter had a little cold.

So I went to the doctor and got a little prescription. My doctor was my refuge. And strength.

Then when sometimes my kid gets something that can't be cured. Or that he'll have to live with. Or she'll have to live with.

For the rest of her life. Now there's an opportunity. To lean on everlasting arms.

And a very present. Not past. Or future.

Present. Continuous. In times of trouble.

This is a wonderful life. Dear brother and sister. Even in trials.

That we can live. We can embrace this life. The way of the cross.

Knowing that the knowledge of God. Let us focus our lives on what I want to know. Let us be so narrow minded.

On knowing God. That he'll be our hero. That we will obey him.

We will see to him. So that Jesus will truly be our hero. Young people listen to me.

Young people listen to me. Make Jesus your hero. Eliminate all other heroes.

Make him your everything. Make him the only one that matters in your life. That's the father I want to live.

But make him everything that matters. I remember something that my mom told me. When I was a young boy.

She said, If Jesus is happy with you. And the whole world despises you. You're a success.

Young man, young woman. If Jesus is happy with you. But the whole world thinks you're a failure.

You're really not a failure. You're a success. And the flip side is also true.

Even if the whole world thinks you're a success. If Jesus is sad. By the choices you're making.

You're a failure. Dear young people. The world is going to tell you a definition of success and failure.

Please use God's definition. Choose the approval of the only one that matters. Christ.

Knowledge of him. Being the only thing that creates a good aroma. God bless you.

Thank you so much for allowing me to be here. It's always a pleasure. I say that when God asks me to come to places like this.

Because of your prayers. I really mean this. Because of the openness of which you love me.
And the prayers that you have spent. Seeking for this time. The Lord blesses me.
I feel like God is the cook. And he makes a little bit of food. And he says here.
Take one and give it to them. And I take one and I give it to them. And he says you know what.
Actually here's one bite for you. So every bite I give you. I'm getting something myself.
I mean this. God feeds me. God feeds me so much in situations like this.
So I'm really deeply thankful. I am a partner with you in the work that you're doing. I'm rooting for you.
That the Lord may build his body here. He's going to come again soon. Any day now he's coming.
And then we look forward to seeing you. May God bless you.

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