

What Is My Place In The Kingdom

by Sandeep Poonen

This sermon delves into the concept of two kingdoms - the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. It emphasizes the importance of securing one's place in the kingdom of light by understanding our identity as children of God. The speaker highlights the significance of being a child of God, the journey of getting back up after defeat as a mark of success, and the ultimate goal of being filled with the Holy Spirit. On the flip side, it warns against falling into the kingdom of darkness through deception, loss of faith, and self-righteousness, urging listeners to turn back to God and secure their identity in Christ.

Scripture: Galatians 3:27, James 1:2, Romans 5:3, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Acts 17:26

Topics: "Kingdom of Light vs. Kingdom of Darkness", "Identity as Children of God"

Description

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Transcript

I wanted to share, I think it builds on what we've heard so far. I wanted to share my screen and walk you through some slides. It may be easier to follow.

That's why I do it. So hopefully your children can follow it through. I want to talk about my place in the kingdom.

And there are basically two kingdoms that you can be a part of. Very simply, two kingdoms you can be a part of. The kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness.

Which kingdom am I in is what we, I just want to kind of share some thoughts that I've had that helps with it. I want to secure my place in the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of light. I'm not going to call it the kingdom of God and all that.

Just to think about it, darkness and here I am, stick figure. Here's you are, stick finger. Okay.

All of you, you're a stick figure. Where are you in the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness? I wanted to kind of share a few things as it relates to this. First one is the kingdom of light.

Here it is. There are three kinds of people who can be in the kingdom of light. You don't have to take notes.

It's going to be on the video or wherever. I'm happy to share this. But there are three things that I wanted to write about.

And I wanted to give you very simple things. The first one is child of God, which we heard about. And this is something that's extremely important to me.

And I think it's very important for us as people to understand as we heard are fundamental. And I use this word intentionally. The word that I've realized is incredibly important to use, especially for those of us in this age, young people is identity.

Our identity is child of God. That's it. And we have two choices.

If we believe in the Bible, you have two choices, child of God or child of Adam. That's it. Paul makes that very clear in Romans chapter five, you have only two options, child of God or child of Adam, child of Jesus in the tree of Jesus or in the tree of Adam.

That's your only two choices. And the reason I want to show this verse in Galatians chapter three, verse 28, especially you young people, I want you to remember this verse, because it's a very important verse in terms of identity. And we hear a lot about identity in culture today, which is why it's extremely important.

I feel for us as Christians to know what our identity is. And our identity is one of two choices, either child of God or child of Adam. And Galatians chapter three, verse 27, 28 says, for all of you who are baptized into Christ, have clothed yourselves with Christ.

And here it is, there is now neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free man, neither male nor female. So from this I get, my identity is not based on race. There's a lot of talk about racial identity.

It doesn't exist in Christ, in the church, in Christ. It's not my identity. It's not that it's not important.

It's not that I'm not Indian, but it's my Indian-ness is not my identity. My identity is in Christ. So it's not race, whether you're Greek or Barbarian or Jew or whatever it is.

It's neither slave nor free man. It's not my status, social status or whatever my status may be. And we try to caste system ourselves, even in the West, based on certain classes.

And it's neither male nor female. It's not gender. In all of these things, we can have an identity and the world is trying to suck us in into saying your identity is based on your gender, is based on your race, it's based on that's who your identity is.

And we have to be very clear, my identity is only one of two options, child of God or child of Adam. So a lot of people you talk to at school, a lot of people you talk to in the workplace, they're not children of God. Once you get into children of Adam status and identity, the debate is wide open.

And we have no desire to participate in that. They can say whatever identities they want within there. But for the Christian, it's one of two identities, child of God or child of Adam.

So for us, it's extremely important that we secure that we're children of God and then we settle it. And we don't bring race, we don't bring gender, we don't bring these other things into the equation. My identity is child of God, made in God's image, male and female.

We must be very clear about this, because then it helps me to secure that that is my identity. That's my point number one. If I'm a child of God, I'm in the kingdom of God, I'm in the green zone.

Okay, whatever you want to call it. I'm in the green. The next level, and I'm not saying these are the only three stages, but another thing that was extremely important to me was, I used to think for many years and young people, this has affected me a lot when I was in a teenager in my 20s.

I used to think that if I was defeated, I was automatically a failure. I was not a good Christian. I learned in my late 20s or early 30s that that was wrong.

That was not even scriptural. It's not whether I'm defeated that makes me a success or a failure in the green zone. The question is, am I getting up? So defeated but getting up is the first level of success as a Christian.

I learned that from James chapter 1 verse 2 through 4. I learned that from Romans chapter 5 verse 3 to 5, that we can exult in our tribulations and trials because the testing of my faith produces not victory over sin, not proven character, but endurance and endurance is getting up. And teenagers, young people, it's so important to realize that you can be on the green path in the green light. You've not reached your goal, but you're on the path if you're getting back up and going back to God.

This was so vital to me to realize that God was saying, I look at you as a success. And this was the prodigal son, dirty, messed up, completely torn up, but coming back to the father and the father says, let us celebrate. This changed my Christian life, changed my Christian life, that I'm having a good day if I'm turning back to God.

Well, how defeated was I in the day? It's a secondary question. First point is, am I going towards God? This is something that has to settle deep within us, that falling in sin, but getting back up and persevering. I put some verses in there and there are more to that too.

I have to see myself in the green zone, in a place where the Lord can say, you're accepted back in the beloved. Now let's work on your fruit that you're getting, your victory status. That is another meter, but that's level two success.

Level one success is coming back to God. I got that from Romans chapter 5 verse 3 to 5, spoken about that many messages, but that's so important for me. And then again, obviously the ideal state is filled with the Holy Spirit.

And actually it happened by mistake, but I like the fact that the green color is almost fading out. Somebody who's filled with the Holy Spirit. And I did it by mistake, but I realized that's what filled with the Holy Spirit means.

Sandeep is becoming less and less because he's being found in Christ, not having a righteousness of his own, where if you look for Christ, he can't be found because he's found in Christ. And so that's a great mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit increasingly in more and more ways. It's Philippians chapter 3, that I'm hidden in Christ, that Christ is increasing and I'm decreasing, that people see me less and less.

All of my things that the glory grows solely to God. There are other things that I also wanted to point out. So again, this may be one of these that hopefully is to encourage you to secure your identity as a child of God.

Keep getting up and going back to God. We are on the success program of God if we're getting up. He's made it so easy to be on the success program with God.

Go back home. Go back home to God. That's where success begins.

That's not where success ends, but that's where success begins. On the Father's lap as he teaches us. So no reason why we can't be a success today, we turn back and go back to God.

This is things that again, our identity with God also has been so important. Now kingdom of darkness, this was the easy one for us to maybe look at this and to say, these are two things that we think we are clear in kingdom of darkness people. People who are blind to the glory of God.

We read 2nd Corinthians 4 a little bit later on, but Paul talks about there are people in this world who are blinded to the glory of Jesus. They don't even see it because the devil has blinded them. They're dark.

There's no light. There's no glory of Jesus showing in their lives. So we'd be like, okay, those are the typical non-Christians.

There's also the kind of people who we say are possessed by the demons. They're maybe further down the track towards kingdom of darkness. So these are the easy ones that we probably all agree with.

Okay, these people need to get into the green status, but there are a couple of other ones that I also wanted to point out that helped me to say, you could be squarely in the red status if you're here. Here's one deceived by the devil coming as an angel of light to not forgive others. That's in 2nd Corinthians 2 verse 11.

He says that we should be aware of the devil's schemes. And we've heard this before. This is something that we've heard many times in this church, that if we don't forgive others, God won't forgive us.

And even the Corinthian church, Paul was saying, look, if you don't forgive this person who has sinned horribly against you, we need to be aware of the devil and his schemes in forgiving this person who sinned in horrible ways, like the woman caught in adultery. So we, who are the people who didn't commit adultery can be deceived by the devil schemes to not forgive others. And as we know, which is other in the green on the red, to me, I put them in the red, because if you don't forgive others, you're in the red.

There's another couple of people who are in the red, and they're not in the red, but in the green, but they're trending in the red, losing faith and hope in Christ. This is very dangerous. This was the danger that Jesus was very afraid of.

When he talked about with Peter, he says, Peter, I know you're going to fall. The devil is trying to sift you as we, but I'm praying for you that your hope in Christ, that your faith in Christ will not fail. You're not

looking at God anymore.

You're looking in the opposite direction. It's if you were falling and getting back up, you're falling and getting back up, you'd be in the green. And we go in that direction, but you're starting to lose your hope and faith in God.

I'm worried. I'm really praying for you that your faith does not fail. So dear brothers and sisters, some of us, because of our circumstances, are we starting to lose our hope and faith that God can complete what he started in us, that God is good, that God is on the throne.

Then we may not be in the red as yet. We may not be in the kingdom of darkness, but we're getting in that direction. We're still in the green section, losing faith and hope in God, but it's dangerous.

We could end up like Judas, or we could end up like Peter, depending on which way we turn to face God or not. There's another person who's also even farther than the right. And this was where also the Lord was speaking to me.

When is the moment when you've turned around from being green to going towards red? This person is in the green. This person is going to heaven. But I've started to go around the wrong direction because here is a person who has lost his simple and pure devotion to Jesus.

That's 2 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 2 and 3. And Paul says that you can read it. Paul said in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 1, please bear with me because you're going to think I'm crazy. You're going to think I'm crazy that the way I think you should be with Jesus is like a woman and a man who are engaged to each other.

He said, bear with me with a little foolishness because I think it's new for you. It's maybe not new for us that the church and Christ are ought to be the bride and the groom, but maybe we don't understand the significance of this. And it can become just words.

And it was good for me to read 2 Corinthians 11 verse 1 to say, bear with me with a little foolishness because you're going to think I'm crazy. I know it sounds crazy that you and Christ are going to be like in a marriage relationship, but that's what I have in mind for you. But I'm afraid in that context, he says, I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived you, you'll be led astray from your simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus.

And so we can think it's absurd. We can think it's crazy that that's the kind of relationship that God and us are supposed to have. But God, Jesus, the Lord keeps pulling me back to say, this is the definition of deception.

This, I used to have a lot of issues with all kinds of gospels out there, the health wealth gospel and the falling down gospel and all the charisma and all of those things until the Lord showed me, okay, fair enough, those are wrong, but are you too deceived? Are you also deceived? And the Lord said, if you have lost your simple and pure devotion to Jesus, you too are deceived. So it's just a bunch of deceived people throwing stones at each other. But you too have started down the path of deception.

You're not in the green. Lost a simple and pure devotion to Jesus. This is the worst of all.

And this is also something that to me struck me from scripture. This is what we hear from Jesus, that even worse than being possessed with a demon is to be a hypocrite and self-righteous. That's what I got from these verses.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, because, you know, when you go and make a disciple of Jesus, you make them twice the son of hell. What is a demon possessed person at worst? This person is going to hell. And here you see these hypocrites and these self-righteous people making them twice the sons of hell.

And I find that those who justify themselves as self-righteous could be squarely in the church, but are way in the kingdom of darkness. So much so that these are the people who were looking at Jesus on the cross and quoting the scripture to him, saying, you're not the Christ. You know how I can prove to you, Jesus, you're not the Christ.

Let me show you the verse that proves to you, you're not the Christ. These were the Pharisees quoting the scripture to Jesus on the cross. Worse than any demon possessed person.

So we can have this great, Dane, we're very scared of being demon possessed. And so we're like, oh, what a horrible thing if your child or your neighbor or somebody else is demon possessed. It's something worse than being demon possessed, in my mind, from these verses, is to be a hypocrite and self-righteous.

These are things that as I was studying the different kinds of things that God was warning me about, and this is not exhaustive, but these are the things I'm like, what should I be worried about? And I find that the extreme left person is the person who's sitting in the church. We don't find many demon possessed people sitting in the church, but we'll find hypocrites and self-righteous in the church. Find that within me.

And I let me have the sobriety, the soberness to say, why am I gloating that I'm better than the demon possessed person or better than the person who's blinded if I have this? And not only am I not in the kingdom of light, I'm the worst in the kingdom of darkness. And I have to change drastically. And this is all I need to do.

Even if I'm in the dark red, I need to just turn around. That's the simple thing I need to do. First of all, is turn around.

Even if I'm a hypocrite and self-righteous, even if I'm possessed by the demon, even if I'm blinded to the glory of Jesus, no matter who we are, we have to turn around and start facing God. And then God has appointed us the limits of our boundaries of our habitation, hoping that we may seek and grope for him and find him. And this is a great word for all of us who are hypocrites and self-righteous in the church.

There's hope for us. Even if we're squarely in the dark red, we have to turn around. Repent.

That's that word, repent. Turn around and say, God, let me secure my identity again. Not the fact that I can cast out demons, but that my name is recorded in heaven.

And one last thing about this is, who are the two options? Is it God and the devil or God and self? And it has really helped me to realize that the devil is there. He's deceiving us. But the real God that all of us are either running towards or away from is the God who's in heaven or self.

This is what I should ask myself, which God am I facing? My preferences, my desires, my ambitions, or it's God himself. The moment I start thinking about the devil, I've realized, I give an easy answer. I'm definitely not for the devil, so I must be for God.

And I default myself into, I hate the devil, so I must really love God. No, no, no, no, no. That's not the question to ask.

Do I love myself or do I love God? Do I love whatever I want to do or do I want to love God? Do I love whatever my feelings tell me or do I love God? Do I love what my thoughts tell me or do I love what the word of God tells me about me? That's the only thing I need to be really looking at. And so that's kind of what I summarized there. You can kind of read it later, but growing in the kingdom of God is I'm a child of God.

That's a summary of what I said. And who is my God? That is basically God's great purpose in life is to get me to turn around and face him and say, God, I want to have faith in you. And to have faith is to say, Lord, you are everything.

I am nothing. Lord, you are everything. I am nothing.

He who comes to God must believe that he is. And if God, if I believe that God is, that means I'm saying I isn't. I'm not.

God is. I am not. God is.

I am not. And God's constantly asking me through my trials, through my circumstances, through everything, who is? God is. So let's turn around to face him.

I pray that we may secure our identity in Christ. We may know that God died for us, that just for the unjust, in order that he may bring us to God. He's trying to bring us to God.

Everybody, hypocrites, demon possessed people, everybody, people who've lost their simple and pure devotion to Jesus, the call of God is wide open. And he's saying, turn around and face me and realize who the other God is. It's not the devil you have to be afraid of.

I squashed the devil and all of his power. If you come in Christ, you don't have to worry about anything. But the one enemy that you have to really fight for the rest of your life is self.

May the Lord help us.

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