

Your Final Answer

by Sandeep Poonen

Sandeep Poonen emphasizes the importance of having a clear and authentic answer about one's faith centered on loving God completely.

Duration: 49:45

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30-31, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, James 5:16

Topics: "Loving God", "Faithfulness"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of demonstrating genuine love for God as the ultimate proof of faith, highlighting the need to prioritize loving God above all else, addressing struggles with issues like lust, and seeking accountability and spiritual check-ups to maintain a strong relationship with God. The speaker stresses that answering the question of loving God with everything one has is crucial in overcoming various temptations and challenges, ultimately leading to a life free from backsliding and doubts about one's faith.

Transcript

There were couple of questions that people asked that they gave to me and I think one of the questions I would like to address today and one of the questions I will address tomorrow God willing. One of the questions was with a statement I made which said, how do I know if I am being a success in life in the sense that I am growing closer to Jesus. I should probably wait and read the exact question tomorrow, I don't have it with me.

And how do I know if I am filled with the Holy Spirit. So I want to address that tomorrow. The other question that was asked was, how do I be a witness for Jesus in these days when it becomes with all the stigma that there is in Christianity in India today about converting for not for the real reason, for reasons like money and also for the persecution and being wise in this day and age.

So I want to talk a little bit about that today. And I titled this talk your final answer. And I actually got that from a TV show that was popular in 2000s called who wants to be a millionaire.

And they had a version of that in India too. Are you guys familiar with this? Are you familiar with that phrase? I think Amitabh Bachchan is the guy who kind of made that phrase, a cat's phrase almost. Are you going to lock it in? Are you locking in this answer? There is no turning back after you have this answer.

Is this your final answer is the English kind of way it was said. And so this was the question that I had with relation to that. What is your final answer or the final answer that you will give to a lot of people who will ask you questions, non-Christians or other ones in the church that your faith is for real.

There are a lot of people who will ask you all kinds of questions. What is going to be the ultimate proof that your faith is real? What is going to be the response that you will give to them that says that's my final answer. I don't have anything more to say to you besides this.

What do you think about this issue? How do you think about Christianity and this issue? What do you think this verse particular means? They have all these questions that they can ask you. What do you mean about this? What do you mean about that? How do you think it fits with this view? How does it fit with this scientific view? And I'm not saying you answer everything with this final question. But when they're driving it, because they're asking behind all of these questions, how can you still be a Christian? How can you still be somebody who follows Jesus? What is going to be your final answer that says I may not be able to explain all of these things but this is how I'm going to end all of your questions with.

This is going to be my final reason and the ultimate reason on how I'm going to say this is why my faith is real. And I don't know if I'm explaining the question well enough. Am I? I don't know.

I mean what do you think? What are potential answers then? How is my faith real? You can't argue with me on this one point. If a teenager were to ask you, I got so many issues with Christianity but Sandeep, you, your faith, I want to know your faith is for real. It's just not a little cultural tradition.

It's not because you were born into that family. Go to heaven when I die, is that the final answer? These are not wrong answers. But I have seen a certain pattern that I wanted to illustrate today that I find to be the final answer on how I want to show to other people, there may be a lot of things that are wrong with Christianity, you see in the world around you, there may be a lot of things that I can't explain on why the Bible says this and why I'm asked to believe this.

But if there's one thing you're going to take away from me and my spirituality, if you're going to take away one thing that you can know without a shadow of doubt about what my Christianity is, let it be this. Let that be the final answer that you go away with. When you leave this conversation, let there be no doubt in your mind about this, about my spirituality.

So in answer to the question how do people, how do we interact with people who are not Christians, how do we interact with people who are younger to us, that we want to show them that our faith is for real and maybe our faith is not yet for real. I mean based on the questions we asked yesterday, some of us are still struggling with that. So maybe the answer to this question is not really what is your final answer to others, maybe the question is what is the final answer to myself.

What is going to be the one question that will determine whether my faith is for real? And all the other questions I might ask, well do I have the Holy Spirit? Well I don't speak in tongues, so do I have the Holy Spirit? I don't heal anybody, so do I have the Holy Spirit? How do I know my faith in Jesus is real, it's built on a rock? Let's review. We'll get to answering that question in this session. I want to review because I want to go through everything I've talked about and kind of make sure we don't forget the key points in each of these sessions.

Why are we here? I want to remind you one more time, you've given up three days of your life. It's costing each of you 100 rupees per hour, 800 rupees per day for you to be at this conference. It's a lot of money.

You're investing a lot of your time to be here. I hope you can ensure that you are a success in life. These are three verses I gave you to consider.

Four, how you can define what it means to be a success. So if you are being shaped more into the image of Jesus, you are being a success. If you are not being shaped more into the image of Jesus, you are not being a success.

And if you forgive me for saying it, maybe you could consider that you are being a failure. But there's an easy way to fix that. Because the metrics of being a success is clearly defined.

I want to be more like the image of Jesus. And I will do whatever it takes to be more like the image of Jesus. If that means I have to be honest about a struggle, that's what I'll have to do.

Because success is clear to me. If that means I have to spend one hour every month with an elder of my choice, or a man of God or woman of God I respect, that's what I'll do. And I'll keep going to anybody I respect and say will you spend an hour with me? And I won't take no for an answer, I'll keep coming saying do you have time for me now? Because we're young people, we've got passion.

But we don't have wisdom, so we go to older people for wisdom. And we ask other people, will you give me your wisdom? Will you help me with this? The people who know success as Jesus being my image will do these extra steps. Will come up with creative ways because this becomes most important to them.

Session 1 we talked about donkeys and horses. The kingdom of God has need for donkeys and not horses. And the Lord has need of me.

I cannot underline that enough. I wish I could sit down with each of you, look you in the eye and convince you of this truth that the Lord has need of you. I don't care what your academic grades tell me you do, doesn't tell me what your coolness definition in this world tells me you say it is.

I don't care what job you have, the Lord has need of you. And I can tell it to you a hundred times, but maybe you don't get it. But I don't know what it's going to take, but this has to become a reality for us.

The Lord has need for you. And you look at this picture of a donkey and you say no God doesn't need donkeys. But that's why he gave that image.

In the beginning of his last week he says I'm going to ride a donkey because I don't want horses in my kingdom. So if you feel like you're a donkey you're in good shape. The Lord has need of people like you.

The question is am I willing to submit to his needs? Oh I need, Jesus comes and says I need somebody to ride me into Jerusalem and I say no God you don't need a donkey for that, you need a horse. He's going to go to the next donkey and say will you ride me into Jerusalem and he'll find a donkey to ride him in. And you don't ever find that responsibility because you felt you needed a horse.

You felt that Jesus needed a horse. He doesn't need a horse, he needs you. Session number two, house hunting.

As a temple of God I will either be, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. This has to become a reality. As a temple of God I will either be a house of prayer or a den of robbers.

Do not be a thief. The opposite of stealing is not, not stealing, the opposite of stealing is praying. So I have a simple question for you, are you a thief? And you can say no I'm not a thief because I talk often to God.

So maybe we can do a monthly checkup every end of each month. Were you a thief this month? And we say yes, I didn't pray to God. I didn't talk to Him regularly.

And maybe you say no I'm not, I'm not a thief because I prayed regularly. I didn't make it a house, a den of robbers. Alright, maybe we could, this is going to be rather simple because I'm just driving at one simple point and I'm going to use two examples.

Again I'm walking through Jesus' last week to draw out key principles that Jesus was trying to underline. We saw in the beginning of Mark chapter 11 that Jesus came in on the temple on the donkey. That was the session one.

Session two I talked about right after He came into the temple, sorry He came into Jerusalem on a donkey, then He went into the temple looking for a house of prayer but found a den of robbers. So we said that the first thing Jesus does after He gets praised, He says I want a house of prayer. And that's what the temple was.

And then right after that, after He institutes what our houses are going to be, what our houses are going to constitute, what we should be about being temples, being houses of prayer, then we find that people start questioning Him. And they come to Jerusalem and discover here that a lot of the people are asking the questions of the religious people. But you will get a lot of questions.

And Jesus gets questions. In Mark chapter 11 verse 27 we find that these people ask questions saying by whose authority do you do things? What gives you the authority to stand up in church on Sunday and share something? You're still struggling in this and that. What gives you the right to get up and say anything? What gives you the right to encourage somebody else to say I want to start a prayer meeting? I want to pray.

You're no better than I am. Then in Mark chapter 12, to the end of Mark chapter 11, I'm going back a slide, 27 verse 38 and I'm not going to go into the details of how He answered them. For me that's not really relevant.

My point I'm trying to drive here is the people started asking Him questions. Are you for real? You just cleaned out a temple. You just said that I have to be a house of prayer.

You just said that you are a man of prayer. You just raised the stakes and said you are a faithful Christian. If you're going to say that, I got all kinds of questions I got to ask you.

And the world will ask you that? Or the Christians will ask you that? People will ask you, are you for real? This is what all these people are asking Jesus. Are you for real? And Jesus didn't really answer this question about whose authority you are. Are they operating? Is He operating under? Mark chapter 12, the next chapter, He comes to the, again the Pharisees come in order to trap Him.

Teacher we know that you are truthful. They try to flatter Him. Here's the question, do you pay taxes to Caesar or not? Verse 14.

And Jesus takes a likeness, takes a coin in verse 16 and says, whose likeness is this? And he says Caesar. And Jesus says, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God. And they were amazed at Him.

There's a lot to be drawn out of this little story. But again they're asking Jesus, are you for real? Are you for real with money matters? Are you for real when you speak with authority? Are you for real? Mark chapter 12 verse 18. Right after that, He keeps going.

Then the Sadducees come in again and says, hey what if a man dies and then the other brother marries the wife and then that other brother marries the wife and goes on and on. Whose wife is that person, whose wife is that girl going to be in heaven? Jesus answers that as well. Same chapter, Mark chapter 12, 28.

Right after He answers the question, another scribe comes up and says, what is the greatest commandment of them all? And Jesus says in verse 30, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. And the second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There's no other commandment greater than these.

And the scribe said to him, right teacher, you have truly stated that He is the one and there is no one else beside Him. And to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength and to love one's neighbor as himself is much more than all born offerings and sacrifices. When Jesus saw that He had answered intelligently, He said to them, you are not far from the kingdom of God.

And this is what struck me about this passage. After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions. They kept asking Him questions until finally they hit something and they found out, this is the final answer that Jesus has about His spirituality.

And this must be the reflection of our spirituality at the end of our day. When Christians ask you, when non-Christians ask you, when Hindus and Muslims, anybody asks you, what is the essence of your faith? What are you going to drill it down at the bare essentials down to? It has to come to this. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, your mind and all your strength and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and your mind and your soul and your strength. You have to love the God with everything you've got. Most non-Christians, most people have a problem with Christians where this issue has not been resolved.

I'm not saying they don't have an issue with the other Christians, but the people who don't answer this question correctly can appropriately be called hypocrites, Pharisees, scribes, all religions are the same, all of those things are people who don't answer this question correctly. But all of the world, all of the non-Christians, all of the Christians, all of the teenagers here in your church are probing you, are testing you, are trying to find out does this person have any agenda besides thou shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. And the moment they see something in addition to that is where death starts to creep in.

And the tastiness of your fruit becomes a bit sour and a bit bitter on the taste. And teenagers shirk away from that because they say I sense that you claim that you love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul and strength, but in your reactions with me and the way you come after me with these verses telling me to be like this or telling me to be like that or telling me I'm doing it wrong this way, I don't sense a love for Jesus that's all consuming. Or in the way that you dress or the way you are following the world or the way you always have to keep up with all these latest and greatest things, I get the sense that you love the Lord yes, but you also like a lot of other things too.

And the world sees through that. And people who are looking to be saved are not going to be fooled by it. And the truly hungry people for God say I don't want that.

Because that sounds good, but then there's death associated with it. We have to grab our minds and our hearts around that if we are going to be useful in the kingdom of God and if we are going to produce fruit that is going to be tasty for those other people around us to eat it, this has to become the central verse. Because once this question is resolved, do you love the Lord your God with everything you've got? They won't ask you any more questions.

The questions will be immaterial. And I speak that from my own experience. There were a lot of things I tried to justify about my faith.

There were a lot of questions I needed to get answered in order to get back at the atheists who had all these cute arguments and all these agnostics who told me about this and that. And I had all these arguments I wanted to pack my brain with to get back at them. Because I wanted to be armed to the teeth with saying you know what, my religion is also relevant.

My religion makes sense. My religion is logical. And I had all those answers and I'm not discounting that.

It's good to have those arguments if you can, if you have the brain for it, if you have the time for it. But those questions and the answers to those questions have become less important than answering this question to them. And when people ask me about my faith, I say look, I'm not going to be able to explain everything in the Bible that you may want to know, but I'll tell you something about my faith.

There's a man named Jesus and I love him. And I'm trying to love him with everything I've got. And if he tells me to quit my job and work for him, I will do that.

And if he tells me to give up my job and take something else which pays a lot less, I will do that. Because I'm not going to be influenced by money more than my love for Jesus. And we thankfully work in a church where people say don't quit your job.

But somebody asked me that the other day, are you really willing to give up your job if God told me to do it? And thankfully I've gotten to the point where I say, I'm honestly asking God that if he wants me to quit my job so that I could serve some people in a village, I'm willing to do it. Doesn't mean I'm going to do it, but I have to be willing to do it. That job has to have no control over me.

The comforts of having that job has to have no control over me. My wife and I, Laura, have to often pray God don't allow us to get attached to these nice things that we have. Because we want to answer your call when you do call us.

When you pick up the phone and you say, are you ready? I want to say yes I am. Because I'm not attached to anything. Because I have made this the only question that really matters anymore.

Do you love God with everything you have? Or do you want to love God and you want to get married? You want to love God and you want to get that promotion? You want to love God and you want to have this kind of future? You want to love God and get that house? You want to love God and have these children? I want to love God and be cool. I want to love God and be relevant. I want to love God and enjoy the world too.

And some of them can co-exist. Love God and being married can co-exist. The question is, is your love for God seriously damaged when he doesn't seem to be getting you married at the time when you thought you could get married? Or the girl you were interested in wasn't really interested in you? Or the guy you were interested in wasn't really interested in you? Is your love for God really on the rocks all of a sudden? Then you don't love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.

And let me underline it with one more story as well just to prove this point and you may have heard this already. But it is so critical that the answer to this question is always in the forefront of our minds. And that's in Matthew chapter 4 when Jesus was tempted by the devil.

Look, we just saw how Jesus was asked different questions by different people and they stopped asking him questions after he answered this one right. After they knew, you know what, you seem to have all these answers to these theological questions but we really want to find out, what's the essence of your spirituality? And they couldn't have an argument against this answer that, I just love my God with everything I've got. And then that was it.

Because they hit the essence of this Christianity. And if you look at the way the devil tempted Jesus, he did the same thing to Jesus. He tempted him saying, okay I'm going to tempt you with this little thing.

Jesus says, no problem I can take care of that, I'm going to quote a verse for you. Devil takes him to another temptation, jump on top of the temple and jump down and Jesus says, no I'm not going to fall for that either. I'm going to follow the Lord, I'm not going to put the Lord your God to the test.

And then we know the final test where he shows him all the glory and he says all these things you can do if you just worship me. Jesus said, I'm not going to do that. I'm going to only worship God and I'm only going to serve him.

And that's it. Devil says, I don't have anything more I can tempt you with. I might as well leave now and come back at a later time to see if the answer to this has changed.

The beginning of a house that used to be built on rock that is starting to show signs of now becoming a house built on sand is a house that doesn't answer this question correctly. So if you want to identify the first point where the backsliding will begin, and some of us may be in the midst or knee deep or head deep into backsliding, but if you want to know when you are starting to slip, where the root of the problem begins, go here. And the devil may be getting you to answer this question correctly.

He may be giving you the temptation to turn stones into bread and you may be falling for that and you may be like, oh no, no, no, no, no. I've got to keep fighting this. I need to stop saying no to bread.

I should just say, God, God, I've got to rely on your word. But that's not the deepest question that the devil is really attacking you at. Even if you get this right, the devil has another question.

He'll try you at a different angle. Jump off a temple. He'll try you at that angle.

The deepest question that the devil has always got in his back pocket is, who is he going to worship? Who is he going to serve? Who is the only love of his life or her life? So you may fall in other temptations. You may fall in temptations of insecurity or not understanding the love of God. You may fall in temptations with lust or whatever it may be.

But at the end of the day, at the end of the day, don't make the struggle about getting purity with your eyes. That isn't the biggest problem with us. That is the evidence of a deeper problem.

And the deeper problem is this. This problem, when not answered correctly, has an abundance of other problems that comes with it, which includes lust, which includes trying to fit in with the culture, which includes insecurity and many, many other things. But when you concentrate on answering this question right, you will be amazed.

You will be amazed how every other struggle starts to become a lot easier. I speak on the authority of God's word, not on some kind of just fancy concept. I am convinced of this family of God that this must be the starting point of all repentance, the starting point of all our spirituality and our final answer when the world, when the devil asks you, how are you doing? Is your faith for real? I have a simple question to you.

Do you love the Lord your God with everything you have? And that means, are there under any conditions to your love? I will only love you God if I'm feeling like I'm in a good mood. I will only love you God if you will answer this one particular prayer request of mine. I will only love you God if this, this this, you shall worship the Lord your God and serve him only, the devil will leave.

The devil will stop plaguing you with lust, the devil will stop plaguing you with all these sins if you start committing to obeying this. That every time, often in a day you will go to God and say, God I want to worship you and serve you only. I don't have my anger issues figured out.

I don't have my lust issues figured out. I don't have my security and you figured out all yet. It's been tough.

I grew up in a tough family where my father beat me up or my mother always kept berating me and it's tough for me to love them and I'll get to that God and you'll bring healing into my life at the time that you appointed for that but right now I'm going to worship you again. God I want to be about you again and I don't understand why you did this in my life. I don't understand why you gave me this weird thing in my life but I'm going to worship you and I'm going to give up everything on my altar and as I worship God and I serve him and I say God I want my life to only be about you and about loving you and desiring you and having you always in my thoughts, you might be surprised to see how some of these other issues don't become that big of an issue anymore.

Don't be surprised though because that is the way of God because this is the question that the devil has in his back pocket. This is the question he will always get you at even if you answer all the other questions right. If you answer this one wrong, you're in trouble.

If you answer this one right, you can make plenty of mistakes and that's okay. God will help you with that. This is what I mean by that you can make plenty of other mistakes.

One of the problems with a lot of us young people is we're so afraid to make mistakes even in the church because we're afraid that the elders will say that's not the way to do it. Don't you have better, you know what I mean, this is not the Christian way to do it. It's unwise and so we sit in the corner and we sit away from people because we are so afraid to step out and go out on a limb and do things because we're afraid that pretty much soon after my bright ideas come in, there's correction because a lot of my bright ideas are wrong and I'm speaking from experience.

I've had a lot of bright ideas and I still do but my ability to voice those ideas and to act on those ideas and to scrap those ideas if they were unwise has been so much easier for me because I know that whoever may confront me, even if the elder was to come and rebuke me and say something that was very proud of you, I'll say okay that was proud of me but there's one thing you got to know about me Mr. Elder, there's one thing you got to know about me, this is not going to change this one fact that I love God with all my heart and whatever I try to do, I try to do it out of a love for Him. I wasn't trying to beat people up but I ended up beating people. I'm sorry, I will learn from this.

I just love God. You should have no insecurity, you should be not afraid of any rebuke, in fact that comes with the territory of being young, that we will do foolish things but we will not be afraid because the only metrics that matters is that I love God with everything I've got and I try to correct other people and I try to help the teenagers and I try to teach Sunday school children because I love God with everything I've got. Not because I want to fix them to be great people of God, no I just love Him, I love God so I'm going to try and help other people.

So I will make mistakes, no big deal, I'll continue to express my love for God and I'll learn from my mistakes and I'll do it better next time. Our struggle with the world to conform to the world, our struggle that we have from the world where the world says you're not relevant, you're not cool, your religion is outdated, your thoughts are too narrow minded, your beliefs are too narrow minded will diminish when you answer all questions. I don't need to explain all this to you, what I want you to know about me is that my love for God is not going to be bought with a better job, with fancier cars, fancier this that you give me, it's not going to be compromised because you're going to watch this movie doesn't mean I'm going to watch this movie if you're going to talk about these things doesn't mean I'm going to talk about these things and will not grow cold.

Don't underestimate the power of non-Christians for atheists, for pagans to pick up on a love grown cold among Christians. Don't underestimate the most worldly of teenagers having the ability to sit at church and watch you and be able to pick up on the little signs. I remember when I was a teenager or something I used to watch people who claimed to be good Christians and I used to see the way their eyes watched when a pretty girl walked by and if their head started to turn like this I lost my respect for them.

They didn't know anybody was watching but I was watching. I said this guy is claiming to be a Christian but I see how he is with that pretty girl or I come to them with a stick and I hit him real hard with a verse. Don't be surprised if the teenagers don't pick up on that and say that's not the spirituality.

I know I'm not very spiritual but that's not the spirituality I want. There are so many ways, family of God that we can claim to be Christians and we can say all the right things but because our love for God is diluted or it's corrupted with our own agendas people can see through it. But when my only agenda is that I love God and I'm trying to teach you to love God too I stand here with boldness.

I'm not worried so much about all the different impressions and perceptions because before God, I'll tell you something, it's not easy for me to stand up here and speak to other people who I don't know throughout the rest of the year. I'd love to be involved in your lives. But the reason I stand up here and I can speak forcefully or I can speak with recommendations is because I answer this question to the best of my ability.

I'm not in any way trying to sell out in my personal life, in my private life, even though you don't see it. I really am not. Because of that I can stand up here with integrity and with honesty.

I may not say everything right. I may say things that need to be corrected later on but I say things with honesty and with sincerity. And I'm not trying to correct anybody else.

I'm trying to express my love for God. And what I want people to pick up when I stand here and speak is not all the lot of brightest ideas but there's one thing that they say is, he may not have all the answers right but we do know one thing, that he loves God. And that's my intention when I speak.

I don't want them to pick up the ten points that about this or that. I want them to pick up that there's something about him that we know about him that he loves God. And when you get up and speak here, when you get up and share, it doesn't have to be all cool, it can be a donkey, but he's carrying Jesus with him.

It's not pretty, yours are all out of shape, but he's carrying Jesus with him. He loves God with all his heart. And so it doesn't matter how the words come out, it doesn't matter how it looks, if you're carrying Jesus with you.

Here's a final question for you guys to write. In 2009 and 9, well maybe the rest of 2008, I will prove that my love for Jesus is foremost for my life in this way. And I'll put this comment up so that for the rest of the time you can kind of refer to it, you don't have to write it down if you don't want to.

But I wanted to show you, if you guys can all look up at the screen, I wanted to show you some answers, potential answers that I wrote down. The important thing family is that you write practical answers that you can actually keep. Don't write grandiose answers, I don't want to spend an hour praying everyday.

I wrote those kind of answers, never did it. I want to write answers that will actually be possible for me to do. These were things that I thought in my point of life right now, I could be able to do.

Now these may not be good enough for you, this may be too tough for you, so change it for you if you want. I just wrote these as some examples of what I could write down. In 2009, can you see? In 2009 I will prove my love for Jesus is foremost in this way.

I will at least once a week write down something I have learned from reading my Bible. That's it. Once a week though, at least once a week I'm going to read something.

That means if I read the Bible only once a week I'm going to read it, but I'm going to write something down in a book, or in a word document. I'm going to be faithful once a week to write something down. I'm not going to email it to all my friends talking about how spiritual I am, it's just for me.

Oh I will every week write down one promise of God. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. God is going to make me more than conquerors.

Every week I'm going to write down one more promise, which means I've got to look in the Bible for the promise. If you can't do it every week, write every other week, write every month. Be realistic with the goal you're going to put.

I will once a week talk to brother Rahul, I hope Rahul's not here, I hope there is no Rahul, but you fill in the blanks with who it is about my struggle with lusting and ask him to keep me accountable. I heard that lusting was an issue, that's why I picked on it from a few comments that were here yesterday. Once a week I'm going to call up this person, I'm going to chat with him on IM and I'm just going to check in with him and tell him real quick in five minutes how I'm doing.

I'm going to ask him to pray for me. I'm going to send an email, but I'm going to do it once a week. Maybe it's once every other week.

Maybe you can't commit to it because you like your lusting, you'd like to keep it for a little bit longer. Don't write it then. If you want to deal with your lusting though, this may be a good suggestion.

And you can pick whoever you want to do it. If it is an elder, write to an elder and tell him, I trust you, I trust that you'll keep it private, I trust that you'll never share it with anybody else. Will you be willing to talk once a week that I can just check in with you, five minutes? If it's not an elder, no problem, find somebody you respect.

Or I will at least once a month talk with Brother Ian or Brother Newton to get a spiritual check up and I will be honest with them. I put their names quite blatantly, but it could be somebody else too. I put the two elders in this church, but there are many other people who are in your lives who you say, I really respect their walk with the Lord.

Maybe it's your father. You don't have to talk to the most spiritual person in the world or anything like that. Maybe it's just somebody whose walk with the God you respect, but I will once a month check in with them and tell them how I'm doing and ask them for advice.

Because my love for Jesus is what's the most foremost question in all of the arguments. And right now, this one issue, this lusting issue is really stopping me from answering this question right. And if Satan was to bring a really pretty girl, my Christianity is negotiable.

Or if I had this really cute guy who was interested in me, I lower my standards on whether I really can marry him or not. My struggle with even being tempted by such things will diminish when I answer this question. My love for God, non-negotiable.

Let the devil hear it, let your friends hear it, through your life. You don't have to talk about this through words, through your life. My love for God, non-negotiable.

There are a few non-negotiables I have written down for my life. My love for God is one of them. Joy is another one, non-negotiable.

Because rejoice always. I will have joy. If anything's taking away the joy, serious problem in my life.

Stop everything you're doing and get your joy back. Those are the things I've put as non-negotiables in my life. Rest, non-negotiable.

If you come unto me, I will give you rest. So if I have lost rest, I have a simple solution. I am no longer hanging out with Jesus.

Time out, stop everything you're doing and say, let's get my rest back on. Let's get back onto the yoke of Jesus because with the yoke of Jesus there's rest. So I'm sharing with you some of my non-negotiables.

Another non-negotiable is my love for God, non-negotiable. So you answer that question. I will prove it in your own way.

You write it down. And it helps when you have somebody else to keep you accountable to it. But I'm not saying it has to be that way.

And let me end by one last thing guys. Let me end by underlining that I cannot overstate enough how this does banish the devil from your lives. This banishes all kind of holds the devil has over your life if you answer this question right.

Worship him, which means you come with nothing and say, God, I'm at your feet. The devil will leave. And if the devil hasn't left, start with this issue.

So I can't underline enough how much you must address this issue. And don't leave any stone unturned. Don't let pride get in the way.

Don't let, oh, I think the elders too busy. Don't let that get in the way. You run after what it's going to take for you to be free and for you to express your love for Jesus and for you to know in your heart of hearts that your love for Jesus is without question.

Do you have any questions about what I'm trying to drive at here? Do you have any questions of what you might be able to put on here? If you get this question right, in 2009, you won't have I'm backsliding. And I don't know whether God loves me or I don't know my walk with God. That will not happen in 2009.

If you get this question right. So it's very important that you write something meaningful in here that you can actually follow. You've got about 10 minutes left, at least till the end of the session.

Use those 10 minutes to prayerfully consider what is this one thing or two things I need to do? Maybe it's this desire to get a better job. And maybe you need to address that because your love for God has been diluted because you're so unhappy in the current job and you're not really happy with this, you're not really happy with that. I'm going to keep this screen up.

The comments at the top, you fill it in with whatever you want. If you want to copy it, copy what I've written in any of those but keep it. Don't copy any of these things if you're not going to keep it.

If you're going to talk to brother Rahul, find a brother Rahul or change that name to somebody else and talk to that person. All right, go for it.

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