

Come, Lord Jesus

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon reflects on the speaker's memories and experiences at CFC, emphasizing the unchanging essence of standing for truth. It delves into the theme of reaching greater heights spiritually, urging listeners to abide in God's unchanging truths and fix their eyes on Jesus to press on towards perfection. The message highlights the importance of being ready for Christ's return, focusing on eternity and seeking the things above while being prepared for His imminent coming.

Duration: 24:29

Scripture: 1 John 2:24, Hebrews 6:1, Colossians 3:1, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Preparedness for Christ's Return"

Description

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Transcript

Yeah, thank you dear brothers and sisters for the opportunity to be with you all virtually today. I would much rather be there in person, but I'm thankful that I can see you all, thank God for technology, and really this is a privilege for me. It almost brings tears to my eyes just seeing the hall there and seeing your faces.

I'm really, really thankful. I'll just share a few memories and then briefly a word the Lord has laid on my heart. My earliest memories are before I was in the first eight years of my life when CFC was meeting in our home and I loved it.

I don't really remember, but I feel like we had to get up a little earlier because the house had to be ready for the meetings, but I didn't mind it at all. I loved setting up the chairs as a little boy. I remember a distinct memory of the shamiana on the road because the conference had gotten so big where they had to have overflow seating onto the road with speakers there set up.

I remember a vivid memory of them cooking on those big black vessels, the rice and sambar, which is still what we eat in our conferences, and it was in the back of our house. I have a distinct memory of that. Perhaps one of the things that speaks to me is that CFC hasn't really changed in its essence.

The faces have changed, the buildings have changed, and different other things have changed, but the essence of CFC, I believe, has not changed because CFC has stood for the truth from the very beginning, and the truth never changes, and it's still holding to the truth. That's a tremendous example to me. Another memory is watching the new hall in Forte da Costa, which is now the old hall being built.

I remember Brother Ian's carpenters chiseling the boards that I still see some of them there in the hall. Be merciful to others as God has been merciful to you. All things are possible if you can believe.

If you fear God, you need fear nothing else. God gives his grace to the humble. I still remember his carpenters chiseling those individual letters in the front of our house and being fascinated by it.

One of my favorite times was hall cleaning on Sunday evenings, and I think only in the church you can get people excited to clean toilets at the age of 10 years old like I was, but it didn't matter what I was doing. There's a part of me that thinks I was only there for the biscuits and the tea that we got afterwards, but really I enjoyed being around others who were in the church, and somebody talked about David Robson, who was also one of my closest friends, but others, even older older brothers and younger boys, really, you know, I would much rather be there than do homework, of course, but that's another memory. And CFC was also a place of refuge, and I mean, by that I mean just even the building.

I remember one day I was really discouraged and very sad, and I didn't want to go home because I felt like if I went home I would have to pretend that everything was okay, and I was really discouraged. So you know what I did? I went up to CFC and walked up to the terrace. They didn't have the third floor at that time, just had the open terrace and the water tank was there, and I just laid down on that water tank.

I still have that memory, but what that speaks to me is that CFC, even the building itself, was a place of refuge. Of course, I went back home after that, but I'm thankful for that. And like I said, the location has changed, the buildings have changed over the years, but the Spirit is the same.

I can tell you, my dear brothers and sisters, that every single time I've walked into that building, I've sensed the presence of God there. The Spirit of God is there, so much so that that was my desire about 20 years ago when I longed to be a part of a church where that same Spirit was there, and at that time I thought, well, it's not possible to do it here in America. I'm just going to go back to Bangalore and be a part of CFC, and I started to make preparations in my mind to move back to Bangalore.

Then the Lord directed me to where He's called me to be here in Colorado now, but that's been the longing of my heart, that when people walk into RLCF, they will sense the Spirit of God there in the same way that I've sensed it every time I walk into the church hall in CFC. And here's what that's like for me. You know, when I walk in there, I want to tell you the honest truth.

As God is my witness, when I walk into that building, I feel like I don't deserve to be here. I look around at the hunger and the thirst on the faces of the brothers and sisters there. When I sense the Spirit of God there, my initial reaction is, I don't deserve to be here.

And I believe that's the Spirit of heaven. I really think when I get to heaven and walk through those gates of heaven, whatever that means, I think my first reaction will be, I don't deserve to be here. I look around and I think, what am I doing here? Why did you allow me to be a part of this work, dear Jesus? And I still feel like that when I come to CFC.

I look around, even though I've been there perhaps longer than everybody except a few, I still feel like I don't deserve to be a part of CFC, but I'm deeply thankful that God has allowed me to be a part of it. When I saw that the theme was reaching greater heights spiritually, I thought, how appropriate. I'd like you to turn with me to a verse in 1 John chapter 2, verse 24.

This theme, reaching greater heights spiritually, is not a new theme. It's a theme we've had from the very beginning. One of the verses that was cut out in wood is there on the pulpit even today, the same pulpit, I think.

And it says, let us press on to perfection. I remember those verses being chiseled out in wood, and it's still there today. So this theme has been there for 48 years.

And and so what I read here in 1 John 2, verse 24 is the same thing. As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

This is the word the Lord gave me just a few minutes before I came to this meeting. I was thinking about this theme, and I was so challenged by that. It was a reminder for me personally that the truths I have heard in CFC from the very beginning, which really haven't changed, because it's truths from God's Word which has not changed.

If I abide in those truths, I will abide in the Son and in the Father. And reaching greater heights spiritually comes from fixing our eyes on Jesus. That verse, let us press on to perfection, comes from Hebrews chapter 6, verse 1, as you know.

And a few verses later, I think in verse 20 or so, it says that we press on to perfection by seeing Jesus who has entered through the veil and is seated at right hand of the Father. So for me, the way that I reach greater heights spiritually is that I'm seeking to dwell in the heavenlies. I'm seeking to realize that eternity is all that matters.

And this is perhaps the greatest truth that CFC has taught me, is that eternity is the thing that matters. You've heard that in many different ways. For example, the only thing serious in life is sin.

You've heard my dad say that many times. Why is that? Because in eternity, the only thing that will have mattered seriously is sin. All the other things, mistakes we made or things that God blessed us with, things we didn't have in life or had in those won't matter.

Sin will matter. And I'm thankful to God that CFC taught me that eternity is what matters and how to be ready for eternity. In Revelation chapter 4, I see after God gives John a picture of how the different churches are doing at that time in chapter 2 and 3. In verse 4, it's like the Lord is telling John, I want you to get an eternal perspective now.

In Revelation chapter 4, he says, after these things, verse 1, I looked and behold a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me said, come up here and I will show you what must take place after these things. Come up here.

And that's the call that the Lord's been laying over my life. And I encourage you all, dear brothers and sisters and children in CFC, come up higher, come up to heaven. Let God give us a deeper perspective that eternity is the only thing that matters.

One of my favorite memories in my childhood was traveling by train. I still love traveling by train. It's very fond memories of it.

And I can distinctly remember many times standing on the platform in Cantonment Railway Station. I think the state railway station must still be there. And usually if we had to go anywhere by train, we had to go there.

The city train station was too far and the trains would usually stop in Cantonment Station and we could stand there. And I remember that sense of nervous excitement standing on the platform. And to me, it didn't matter where we were going.

Just getting on the train was enjoyable enough. In fact, the best vacation holiday for me would probably be a long train ride where you never get off the train. But I was there on the platform with my daddy and mommy and my brothers and all our bags around me.

And I'm sure you've all been to these train stations. And there's a lot of activity on the train station. There's people selling snacks and chai and maybe some toys for the train ride.

There's some beggars there hoping to get some money. But no matter what was going on for us as a family, it was always, when's the train going to come? When's the train going to come? And even for me, I would be peeking around the corner to see, is the train coming? Is the train coming? And of course, you know, I'd want to get close to the edge and mommy would pull me back and say, no, don't get too close to the edge. You couldn't stop the excitement though.

In fact, even if you wanted to go to the toilet, you probably couldn't go because there's no time. And remember, most of these trains would only stop for two or three minutes at Cantonment Station, which means you better be ready when the train's coming. Get your hands on the bag.

And my dad would make sure all the bags were close by. You can't have one bag over here and another bag over there and another bag somewhere else. Keep them close by.

Watch over them because you have a very short amount of time once the train pulls in to get on the train. I thought about that recently for the last few weeks, the Lord's been giving me that picture. He's coming soon.

And to reach greater heights spiritually is to be really ready for Jesus to come. I think of David in Psalm 39. I praise God for what he's done in CFC all these years and the blessing that he has given CFC.

David says in Psalm 39, I think of David writing this perhaps as a successful king. God had blessed him. He'd become, I don't know exactly when he wrote this Psalm, but David certainly was a man who got blessed and received the kingdom, perhaps Israel's greatest king, led God's people in praise, led God's people back to him.

He was a man after God's own heart and the throne, God said, the king would never depart from that throne and Jesus descended from him. But in the midst of that, all that success that David faced, all the ways in which God had blessed him in the same way that he has blessed CFC, I see David's attitude, why he was a man after God's own heart. In verse 4, he says, Lord, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days.

Let me know how transient, how passing I am. I thank God for the 48 years, but even as I think about that, these are passing, these 48 years are going to seem like nothing when we're in eternity. Let me know how passing I am.

Verse 4, now verse 5, behold, you have made my days as a hand breath and my lifetime as nothing in your sight. Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. Surely every man walks about as a phantom.

Surely they make an uproar for nothing. He amasses riches and does not know who will gather them. And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.

I hope, dear brothers and sisters, that even as we look back on the last 48 years or however long you've been in CFC, that what you're waiting for is Jesus' return. That what you're excited about, even in the midst of all the blessings that the Lord has given us, is Jesus is coming back. In the book of James, we see similar words.

James chapter 4, verse 13, James 4 verse 13, come now, you who say, today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit. Or it could be even ministry, come let's do this or let's have this ministry. Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.

You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that. I thought about it like that.

If I was standing on the train station, the platform, waiting for the train to come and somebody said, hey, come with me, let's go look at that that beautiful tree over there. Or here's something else, somebody's playing cricket in the ground near the station. My answer would be, if the train doesn't come, I can go.

If the train doesn't get here before that, I can do this. Let's say I was to ask my mom, can I go to the she would say, I don't know, maybe not. There's not time for it.

If the train doesn't come before that, we can. And it's that attitude that I believe will raise us up to greater heights spiritually. That in everything that we plan to do, the mindset is, if the Lord doesn't come before that, I can.

I can allow myself to do that. That's the question the Lord's been asking me and I want to share with you all. I wanted to share with you all.

Are you looking for the train? Is your heart leaning around the corner to see is Jesus coming? That's all I'm looking for. I'm not looking for anything here on this earth. I believe that's what this verse in Colossians chapter three means.

You turn that with me. Colossians chapter three, verse one, Colossians three, verse one. Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, what that means is that the old me loved the train station, loved all the little toys and the snacks and the other pleasurable things on the train station.

That's what this earth is. Everything on this earth is passing away. But I died and I've been raised up with Christ, which means now this new person, Christ, me having been raised up with Christ, all he's interested, all I'm interested in is the train.

I'm not interested in anything else here on this earth, not even ministry or any success or being known in the world. I'm waiting for the train because I've been raised up with Christ. And so keep looking for the train.

That's how I would paraphrase that second phrase. Keep seeking the things above. Keep seeking the things above.

This is what it means to reach greater heights. I'm looking for the train. I'm waiting for that train to come.

Yes, God has given us freely all things on this earth to enjoy, he tells us in first Timothy six, but only with the mindset. If the train doesn't come before that, I can get a promotion in my job perhaps, or I can build this house, or I can do this, or I can do that if the Lord doesn't come, if the train doesn't come. So keep seeking the things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on the platform. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is our life, is revealed when the train comes, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

It's a wonderful word. Are you looking for the train? That shows where your heart is. If your heart is here on this earth, then you'll be taken up with the things on the train platform, the train station platform.

But if you're taken up, if you really died and were raised up with Christ, you're waiting for the train. You know, it's sad that I believe that Satan is more ready for Christ's return than many Christians. We read in Revelation 12, I think verse 12, it says that he knows the time is short.

Isn't it sad that the devil, who is going to be judged for all eternity, is probably more ready for Christ's return than many Christians? I thought about that recently earlier a few days ago, and that was convicting to my own heart. It was like a dagger to my soul. I said, Lord, is it true that the devil may be more ready for your return than I am? Because he knows, he doesn't know when Christ is coming, but he knows the time is short, we read in that verse.

And so he's increased his activity. He's getting busy. He has a purpose to finish before Christ comes to get as many people into deception as possible.

And yet many Christians are lazy, taking it easy and relaxing and being taken up with things on this earth. The devil is ready for Christ's return. How much more must we be his bride for whom he is coming back? I'll close with one verse, and that's the last verse, one of the last verses in the Bible.

The last phrase in the Bible, Revelation chapter 22, verse 20. After all these things that God has shown us, all the way from the old covenant, his love for us in creating us in the book of Genesis, his desire for us to be holy and giving us his law, his yearning, his calling us back to him through the prophets, he's sending Jesus as the word made flesh, as our savior to save us from all sin, and he's sending the Holy Spirit to be our witness, to be our comforter, to be our friend, to be our helper, and all of these things. At the end of it all, verse 20, Revelation 22, verse 20, he who testified through these things says, Jesus says, yes, I am coming quickly.

I'm coming soon. And the answer of everyone who has really understood everything in this book will be even so. Yes.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. I hope that's the cry of your heart today, dear family and CFC, that in the midst of, even as we look back on all the blessings that he's done for us, my cry is, Lord, come.

I'm ready. I hope you're ready, because there won't be time to set things right. Are some of your bags on this end of the platform, some of your bags on another end of the platform? Is there something else you need to do to make sure that you have all your bags? What about your children? What about those matters that you haven't set right, or something else that's hidden in a dark area of your heart? When the train comes, there won't be time to set it right.

Now is the time. Now is the appointed time. Today is the day of salvation.

If you hear his voice, don't harden your heart. But if you set it right, and if you can say, Lord, I am really ready for you. Give me a little bit more time to love you and to give myself fully to you, because I've set all things right, and I'm ready for your coming.

Then I can say with John, Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. It's a wonderful song we sing sometimes.

Oh, the King is coming. The King is coming. I will hear the trumpet sounding, and then his face I'll see.

The King is coming. Praise God he's coming for me. Amen.

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