

Eternal Life Comes Only from Constant Dependence on God

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of dependence on God, highlighting the need to overcome the desire for independence and self-sufficiency. It explores the concept of being a branch in the vine, subjecting oneself to God's authority, and the eternal joy of being fully conformed into the image of Jesus through submission to the Father. The message encourages a continuous journey of faith, humility, and victory over sin to have the right to eat from the tree of life, symbolizing eternal dependence on God.

Scripture: Romans 8:35, Psalm 139:23, John 15:5, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Revelation 2:7, Revelation 22:14

Topics: "Dependence on God", "Humility in Faith"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of dependence on God, highlighting the need to overcome the desire for independence and self-sufficiency. It explores the concept of being a branch in the vine, subjecting oneself to God's authority, and the eternal joy of being fully conformed into the image of Jesus through submission to the Father. The message encourages a continuous journey of faith, humility, and victory over sin to have the right to eat from the tree of life, symbolizing eternal dependence on God.

Transcript

Romans 8 is a wonderful chapter. Spoiler alert, children. Who shall separate us? You'll find out in three verses, but you can know it today.

You don't have to wait for three weeks. Nothing. I am convinced.

Nothing. Paul says, the Holy Spirit says through Paul, and I like how he goes on to say, you know, he it's like he adds a list. Who shall separate us? Let's look at it very quickly.

Romans 8. Imagine that we got here today and some or all of us had experienced tribulation. Maybe you found out somebody's not sitting here because they're in a jail cell being tortured. Maybe it was your wife, your husband, your father, your mother, one of your children, perhaps, being tortured.

Imagine if that was the week we were facing. Distress. Some sort of distress.

Perhaps you felt distressed this week in some situation. Persecution. Already talked about that.

Famine. Imagine if you came here and you say, I haven't eaten in a week, and can we have lunch already? Famine. Nakedness.

No clothes to wear. Peril. Means you are constantly afraid of what was going to happen.

Somebody's going to do something. Real threat. Sword.

That there are people waiting outside that door to put the sword to us as soon as we, or even came in with the sword. In that moment, none of us has faced anything like this, I don't think. Not even one of these.

The Holy Spirit uses this extreme example, first of all, I believe, to remind us that people have experienced this. We live pretty comfortable lives even with our problems and even with, not to diminish the fact that we all might have problems and face situations of distress. These are all things that people have actually experienced.

And yet, in the midst of it, they prove the love of God. They prove that God loved them as much as He loved Jesus. And let's not fool ourselves into thinking we know the love of God, imagining that we really have come to know Him and are secure in it, if that is somehow tied to God answering my prayers the way I want Him to.

If God doesn't answer my prayers here on this earth the way I want Him to, and when that situation of peril or tribulation or persecution or nakedness or famine comes at me and I say, Lord please don't let it, and He lets it, will that separate you from the love of Christ? Jude says, he writes one chapter, one small letter, he says, keep yourself in the love of God. The love of Christ will never separate Himself from us, but you might. And that's the warning, don't let it.

Don't let these things. Now it's true, I believe the real intent is that He's saying that the love of Christ won't be separated from us even if God was to allow these situations in our life. But the devil wants you to think that the love of Christ has been separated from you.

You've been separated from the love of Christ. Don't let him. These small trials we face here on this earth in a first world country where the biggest thing might be a traffic jam or some sickness, persistent sickness, should not, should only cause us to say, Lord keep me in your love.

I want to remain grounded and founded in your love so that when the trial gets worse and the flames get hotter and I face a situation that I never thought I would have faced, I'll know you still love me. Yeah, amen. Thank you children for your memory verses, saying them so faithfully, and adults too.

I've been thinking this week, or for the last few weeks, I would say that the primary characteristic of God is His authority, that He rules over everything. And it's because of His authority that He rules over everything, that He's holy and righteous and full of love. Because He rules over hatred.

He rules over sin. He rules over the devil. He rules over everything.

And it's His authority, I've been thinking, and I believe it's true, that is why He can't be tempted even. And that's important for us also to recognize, because God wants us to become partakers of His divine nature. And this is actually what God intended for us all along.

Turn to the very first page of the Bible, Genesis chapter 1. Genesis 1 verse 26. After God has created all of this, the rest of creation, He says, verse 26, let us make man in our image. Now, it's not talking about

the physical image, because we all look different.

So you can't say, well God looks like me, because you look different from me. So it's a different, it's the inner image of the nature. You can say, let us make man in our nature, our inner image, according to our likeness.

It means, it's like me. And what would be the proof of that? Let them rule, not let them be fruitful and multiply. That came later.

Not let them have a good life and be happy. Not let them be loving to each other. Let them rule.

That was the first characteristic that God mentioned of our being like Him. So I see there that God's intention for us is to have authority, and out of that authority, I will love, I will be full of joy, I will be full of peace, I will be fruitful and multiply. God, more than He wants you to be happy, listen to this children, the world says, oh this will make you happy, that will make you happy.

Having a lot of money, having a girlfriend, or having a nice house, or winning the game, all these things, that will make you happy. No. God is, and even God is not interested in making you happy.

Even a lot of Christians think that. God wants to make me happy. That's why I want to go to heaven.

He wants me to be happy. No. God wants you to rule.

And if you have learned to rule by the power of God in you, then you will be happy. Your happiness will not be tied to what you have and don't have. You'll be free from all jealousy, because God, by His Holy Spirit, by the nature that He puts within you, will be ruling.

You will be ruling. So God's intention was for us to rule. He says that, again in verse 28, you skipped on God blessed them and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and rule over everything.

So God's intention was for us to rule and have that authority. And I believe that, as we see clearly throughout Scripture, but especially even in Genesis chapter 1 and 2 and 3, that authority came not because Adam was stronger and Eve was stronger. In fact, Adam was no match to a lion or an elephant even back then.

I mean, think about the size of Adam. It wasn't like he was bigger than the elephant. How did Adam rule over the elephants? The elephant tamely came to Adam and said, hey give me a name.

And Adam said, yes here's your name. I have authority over you. It wasn't because Adam was bigger, but he had something in him.

That authority that God had given him, and I believe that came from eating of the tree of life. That's why God put the tree of life in the middle of the garden saying, if you eat out of this tree, you'll continue to have. He didn't say it, but I believe it's implied there.

That as long as Adam and Eve were eating out of the tree of life, all of creation would be subdued to them. The elephants, the snakes, all the other scary things, they would say, Adam you're the boss. Eve, you're the boss.

What shall I do? That naming is symbolic, represents the authority that Adam and Eve had over all of creation. They wouldn't have drowned. I'm not a very good swimmer.

I think one of the scariest situations I could be in would be, I'm in the boat out in the middle of the lake or the ocean and I forgot my life vest or something like that. But Adam couldn't have drowned. I would have authority over the waters as well.

Isn't that a wonderful thing? If you're not a good swimmer like me, I'm sure you'd like to know that. But that was God's intention. And the moment they ate out of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they lost that authority.

They died, you can say. Yes, physically their decay started. I mean Adam lived for another 900 plus years.

But that moment, that very day that he ate out of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he lost the authority. And it's the same thing that the devil is after today. The one thing he doesn't like is that Jesus defeated him on the cross.

And that now all of us who are children of God, because John 1 12, for as many as believed him, he gave them the right to be called the children of God. So now all of us also have authority over Satan. Something that we by, you know, through Adam handed to him.

When we, through Adam, but we also ate out of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, said here devil you can have authority over us. And so also the elephants and the lions and all that stuff. But really the one that mattered was the devil.

Because we ate out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And Jesus took that authority back when he died and overcame the grave and overcame death. First Corinthians 15 says the final enemy is death.

Even greater than the devil. That death, that loss of authority that we experienced in the Garden of Eden, Jesus defeated that. He overcame even that.

And so we have authority again. And that the devil doesn't like that. And our living a godly life, our living an overcoming life, must really come out of this authority that God wants us to have.

Let's turn to John chapter 10. If you ask children, this is something you, if you grow up in RLCF, we are very keen that you should know. Why did Jesus come to this earth? Most, unfortunately, most Christians are being taught Jesus came to this earth to die for your sins and take you to heaven.

That's partly true. It's partly incorrect and mostly incomplete. There's much more to that.

And if you live your life just saying that Jesus came to die on this earth and take you to heaven, you'll be convinced that God is in the business of making you happy. And you'll miss out on the real Christian life. Children, hear it now if you've never heard it before.

God is not interested in making you happy. He wants you to have authority, even from a young age. He wants you to have power.

Authority may be even a big word for some of you, but it means you'll have power. You won't be afraid in any situation. You won't be angry in any situation.

You'll be able to love anybody and everybody. You won't have any hate in you because you will have authority. You will have power over that hatred.

That's the wonderful life God wants us to live that's much better than just thinking God wants me to be happy here on this earth. Why did Jesus come? He made it very clear in John 10 verse 10, the last part, I came that you, put your name there when he says they, I came, Jesus saying that Santos may have life and have abundance. An abundance of life.

Have abundance in his life. Now you can say well I was, I'm alive. So it's clearly he was talking about a different life.

It's not just that you might live here on this earth because people lived on this earth before Jesus came. People have lived on this earth after Jesus came, but they don't necessarily have what he said he came here to give. It is a life, a particular type of life you can say and we know that as eternal life.

You can say Jesus came to this earth to give me eternal life. Can we say that together children? Pause whatever you're doing. I know some of you like to color or write notes.

Let's all say this together. Jesus came to this earth to give me eternal life. And so now you ought to be able to know that for the rest of your life.

Shall we say it together? Jesus came to this earth to give me eternal life. Let's say it one more time with authority. Jesus came to this earth to give me eternal life.

I hope you'll remember that all your life children. And what is eternal life? If you turn over a few pages to John chapter 17, we read that this eternal life or abundant life, whatever term you want to use for it, John 17 verse 3, this is eternal life not living forever. Again something you've heard in this church many times I'm sure.

This is eternal life. So two verses you can try to memorize or at least know what they say and know where to find them. John 10 verse 10, John 17 verse 3, Jesus came to give us eternal life.

What is that eternal life? That they may know the Father and Jesus Christ whom he sent. To know the Father and to know Jesus. This is eternal life.

If you have, if you know the Father and know Jesus, guess what you have right now today? December 18th 2022. You have eternal life. You don't have to wait to die and go to heaven to get it.

You have it now. If you truly know the Father and know Jesus, you have eternal life. So don't wait till you're 18 or 30 or till you go to heaven to have eternal life.

Children, if you're old enough to understand what I'm saying, God wants you to have eternal life beginning today. It's a quality of life. And this eternal life, as I see further on in this chapter, is a, that knowing is to know God in such a way that I'm dependent on him.

The more we know God, the more we become dependent on him. This is a true principle. How do I know that I really know God? You can say, well, of course I know God.

I know the Bible. I know Jesus. I know he's in heaven.

And you can say, no, that knowing God is so much more than that. Because I want to tell you, somebody who knows God or knows about him, but doesn't have eternal life, the devil, the devil, listen to this very carefully, the devil knows more about God than you or I know. I mean, the devil was in heaven before you and I ever existed.

He saw God face to face. He knows about God much better than you or I will ever know about God here on this earth. But he doesn't know God in the way that John 17 verse 3 says.

He doesn't have eternal life. And there are a lot of people who are on the other side of eternity, in hell, who have seen God for who he really is, but they will never have eternal life. So this eternal life is a knowing of God, is a partaking of his nature, is a partaking of his authority, is having his life within us.

And I'll tell you, it's very simply, this is something I've learned through knowing God's word, seeing the truth in God's word, but also through experience, that you really know that you know God if you have become more dependent on him. We're coming to the end of 2022. Is it true, dear family, that you know God more this year than you did at the end of 2021? It's a simple test.

Are you more dependent on him? Because the more you know God, the more you will depend on him for everything. Are you dependent on God for more today than you were last month or a year ago? Then you're really knowing God and you're laying hold of eternal life. Why do I say that? Because if you read further down in John 17, Jesus shows us how the Son and the Father know each other.

And that's an example. He says, I want them to know you like I know you. John 17 verse 20, he says, I do not ask on behalf of these alone, that is the 11 disciples who were there, Judas had already left, I don't ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in me through their word.

You know where your name is in the Bible, children? Right here is one place where my name is. Jesus is saying, I don't ask on behalf of Matthew and Peter and James and John and Simon and all those, but for Santos, who will believe in me through the word of the disciples. And you can put your name there.

That they may all, again, my name there, be one, even as you, Father, look at the oneness, the knowing that Jesus and the Father have. You, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you sent me. You see that Jesus' knowing of the Father is him being in the Father and the Father being in him.

And he says, I want you to be that way. Now, when you say something is in something, think about this little piece of paper, it being in the book. That means now, this is it.

I've lost my identity as it were. I know this paper knows this book because it is in the book. And that is eternal life.

He goes on to say, let's read further down and we'll continue reading. The glory which you have given me, I have given to them, that they may be one just as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be perfected in unity so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you have loved me. This is the love, this is the knowing that the Father and the Son have.

And Jesus is inviting us to come into that knowledge. Jesus knew the Father and that knowledge of the Father caused him to live in such utter dependence on the Father throughout his entire life. There's another phrase that's been going through my mind.

I'd like you to see it. It's in Mark chapter 3 verse 27. It's a very small phrase.

First bind the strong man. I don't know if you've seen this verse in your Bible before. It appears three times.

Matthew 12 or something and then Mark 3 and then again in Luke 11. So in Mark 3 he says, no one, Mark 3 verse 27, no one can enter the strong man's house except, no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man and then he will plunder his house. Now what Jesus is talking about here is not I'm the strong man and the devil overpowering me, but the devil has a foothold in some area.

There's a strong man in the house and Jesus by his authority through the power of the Holy Spirit is going to come and overpower that house, plunder the house by binding the strong man because if you read the context it was Jesus casting out a demon from somebody and then the Pharisees and his enemy said, oh he cast out Beelzebub by the power of Beelzebub. And Jesus said, no, you must first bind the strong man that's in the house. Do you want love? Do you want joy? Do you want peace? Do you want patience? Do you want all the virtues of Christ? That's what it means to plunder.

That means the devil has had a foothold in that area in your life where there's hatred, where there's bitterness, where there's jealousy, where there's complaining, where there's irritability and the only way to come and plunder that where the life has been full of bitterness and ungratefulness and all these things is to bind the strong man. There's no point trying to not be irritable and trying to not be impatient and trying to not lust and trying to not get angry and trying to not be jealous if you haven't bound the strong man. Let's turn over to Luke 11 that parallel passage that I just mentioned.

Luke 11, you can read the whole context sometimes but just look at verse 21 onwards. Luke 11 verse 21, it's the same passage. When a strong man, fully armed, this strong man is somebody inside your house, inside your heart who is causing you to fight with your sibling or fight with your wife or your husband or get jealous or be angry or irritable or be in a bad mood or whatever this is.

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house and you're saying Lord I don't want to be like that but this strong man there is guarding the house preventing you from having Christ come in. When a strong man guards his own house, his positions are undisturbed and so that bitterness, that complaining spirit, that lust, that anger, that jealousy, that love of money remains there undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he, verse 22, attacks him and overpowers him, remember we're talking about the authority that we have by partaking of Jesus' nature.

When someone stronger than this strong man attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder and now you have love instead of hatred. Now you have peace instead of anxiety and worry. Now you have patience instead of irritability.

Now you have good moods instead of bad moods. You see the secret is to bind that strong man and who is that strong man? Jesus exemplified that in John chapter 6 and John chapter 5. I'd like you to see that. Let's turn to John 6 first of all and while you're turning there I'll tell you the strong man is the you who wants to be independent of God.

This is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The you that wants to do it on your own. I mean I see it in my children.

I'll pick on Zander because he's about that age but all of my children including when I was that age, it started then. It's like no no dad I got this. I can do it.

You don't have to help me. I can do it. Whether it's tying my shoelace.

You know I'm gonna miss the fact that I can barely tie most of my kids shoelaces anymore. They can do it on their own. They've got independence.

Now it's good when it's things on this earth that they need to know skills but in the Christian life it's the exact opposite. If as you're walking with the Lord you're able to do that Christian life more in your own strength I want to tell you that's the strong man who needs to be bound. Who needs to be removed.

If you think I've been a Christian for so long I think I've got it or I've been married for so long I know how to get along with my wife. I know how to get along with a husband. I've been in this church for so long I know how to fit in in this church or whatever the circumstance might be.

I know how to overcome lust. I know how to overcome irritability because I got this. I'm figuring it out.

I'm becoming more independent of God. That's the strong man and as long as that strong man remains free in the house you might have moments of freedom from anxiety, moments of love, moments of joy but it won't be the joy and the love and the peace and the self-control and the patience and the kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness that comes from the authority of God by partaking of his life. First bind the strong man which means get rid of the I. The I that sits on the throne that says I know how to do it even if it's how I know how to do good things.

So that's why this tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not just a tree of the knowledge of evil. It's the knowledge of good and evil which means it's you. If you know how to do good and how to not do evil that's the strong man and if you're eating out of the tree of the knowledge of good you know maybe you picture the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as this side fruit is good, this side fruit is evil and you think all the rest of the world is eating out of the tree of the knowledge of evil.

How can we do more evil? More this, more that, more sin and then you're eating from the other side of the same tree. It's just the knowledge of good and you look at the people eating out of that side of the tree says thank God I'm not like that. That was the Pharisee in Luke 18.

He says I thank you Lord that I'm not like that tax gatherer who's eating on the other side but you're eating out of the same tree. You will die still. It's the tree of the fruit on this side not the fruit on that side.

It's the same tree. It's the knowledge of good and evil and as long as you're eating out of that tree you may think well I'm not like that. I used to eat on that side of the tree but now I'm eating from this side of the tree.

Am I better? No. I'm the strong man. The strong man is the eye that wants to know good and evil and have the power in my own strength to avoid it.

Jesus came down to this earth as we see here in John chapter 6 and John chapter 5 to exemplify the life that says I can't, I cannot overcome evil in my own strength. Let me say a bold statement which I think won't be that bold because most of you have been in this church for a long time. You've heard it in one form or the other.

When Jesus was here on this earth his essentially what he was saying was I cannot overcome evil on my own. Have you heard that before? Jesus as God but as man here on this earth having emptied himself said I'm just an empty shell. I as an empty shell cannot overcome evil unless this shell is full of the power of God.

We'll see that here John 6 verse 38 first of all Jesus said I came down from heaven John 6 verse 38 I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. Now you might think well okay I don't though my own will may be lust or anger or love of money or this or that. No.

Even in the good things even in the good things Jesus came down from heaven to always say no I can't do it I can't I'm not going to do my own will I'm only going to do the will of the Father. It's even more clear if you go back to the previous chapter in John 5 verse 19. Now here very interestingly if you read in verse 18 actually they are angry at him because he is making himself equal with God.

You know he says I'm the son of God and they thought he was making himself equal with God and he says no no no no you don't understand when I say I'm the son of God I am putting myself in dependence on my father. That's what it means to be a son of God. He didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped we read in Philippians chapter 2 but emptied himself and you can say he put made himself of no reputation and put himself in a place in a situation in circumstances where he was dependent on the father for everything.

So when they were saying you know they wanted to kill him verse 18 because he made himself equal with God he says you have missed it you don't understand it therefore verse 19 because they thought he was making himself equal God he said no listen God can do everything on his own I can do nothing on my own verse 19 I say to you the son can do nothing of himself unless it's something that the father does the son can do nothing on himself are you a son of God here's the test you can do nothing on your own I can't love my wife I've been married 16 years and I'm realizing even more than ever before I cannot love Megan and I believe as I'm realizing that I'm seeing more and more of the life of Christ and becoming more a son in the true sense of the word who's dependent on his father in the way that Jesus was dependent on his father on the father when he was here on this earth if even Jesus himself having never sinned ever even Jesus himself having never sinned ever said in order for me to be loving and kind and good I need to be dependent on the father how much more you and I creatures of flesh who still have sin in our flesh how much more don't we need to be dependent on the father he goes on to say that also in further down verse 20 yeah let's read continue reading verse 24 the father loves the son look at the love of the father that look at the knowledge of the son and the father it's like this unbroken relationship where the father is just giving life giving life this this is what it means to know God and to know Jesus is that I'm so connected with them that their life his life not their his life three persons one God the life of God is flowing into me unhindered this is knowledge of God it's not intellectual it's spiritual where my spirit my heart is so surrendered that there's nothing that prevents that's clogging the connection the channel for me to receive the life of God this is what it means to know God and this is how you'll have eternal life and why does Paul tell Timothy then lay hold of eternal life that means keep a hold on that make sure that that connections always clear because if you had eternal life yesterday but you allow a blockage to come in today guess what that connection is now being hindered and little by little it'll get suffocated and you will no longer have the eternal life of God and Jesus lived his entire life constantly constantly constantly making sure that that channel was open so that the life of the father could always be in him he goes on to say the same thing in verse 30 I can do nothing on my own initiative I can do nothing I can't even I can't do evil I believe there was not even anything in Jesus that wanted to do evil that like oh I want to do evil but it was the good I

want to do what I feel like doing that he saw as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as death Paul says the same thing if you look at Galatians chapter 2 after Paul was born again on the road to Damascus something changed and you can say okay he was no longer a Jew he no longer was an enemy of the Christians he was now a friend of the Christians but it was much more than that he summarizes the difference between the pre Christ Paul BC you can say before Christ and AC after Christ what was the essential difference it wasn't okay you know now I only read the Old Testament now I read the New Testament is that what distinguishes you you read the Bible versus some other book if you're born again it must be absolutely clear to you what is the difference and here's the essence of it Galatians 2 verse 19 if you're born again through the law you have died to the law so that you might live to God and then he says I because I'm born again I have been crucified with Christ it is no longer I who live I'm not alive anymore I have died and I will forever be dead see this is the thing some of us and I know I've been there myself that I say okay Lord I want to die with you on the day that I was born again or when I realized my sin it says okay I'm gonna die with Christ today but tomorrow I come back to life I start to say well okay now I want to live again and so I would say verse 20 I have died and I will forever be dead because the moment Santos comes back to life it will start to choke out the eternal life of Christ coming into me so in any situation this is why we who the next verse you're gonna read Romans 8 is we who live are constantly being put to death daily is that Romans 8 or is it 2nd Corinthians 4 anyway that's Romans 8 next verse is actually that we are being put to death daily why because I recognize that any day that I don't continue to die is a day that I will choke out the life of God from flowing freely into me so that's why Jesus said anyone who wants to be my disciple must daily take up his cross daily die to yourself so that the life of Christ can flow freely through you I have been crucified with Christ is no longer I live and I am dead I was dead yesterday I was dead the day before that I'm dead today but if you choose not to be dead today you can say well I died yesterday I'm born again I died I baptized in water and came back to life Christ lives in me well prove it today by the fact that today also I'm just as dead I was as the day before I mean do you expect to go to somebody's funeral and you bury them and then the next day you see oh they're up I thought I attended your funeral what are you doing here you're clearly it's not you weren't really dead and have you ever done that where you wake up one morning and you realize man Santos is still very much alive I thought he died yesterday or he he was dead yesterday but he seems to be alive today put to death the deeds of the flesh with its lusts and desires died to yourself today as well and then the life of Christ will be manifest in you it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith and sure and I want to give you a very simple definition that I learned when I was young I don't remember how young I was but a very simple definition for faith faith is dependence on God for everything that's it faith is dependence on God for everything you can remember that all your life very very simple definition faith is dependence on God for everything and so you can say what if I could put that definition into this verse here all the same and we should all be able to say I was crucified with Christ I'm dead Santos is dead and even though you look at me and you say what what Santos you're alive he says no but yes if you could look inside what you would see the life I now live in the flesh this container is the flesh and inside it is the real life and that life is lived by dependence in on the Son of God so here I was flesh and Santos Santos on the inside Santos on the outside and then I was born again and I was crucified with Christ Santos on the inside died Santos on the outside is still very much alive but somebody else lives in the inside that life on the inside is a life of dependence on God and you can say well was that true yesterday that's great but is it true today because today if you eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil even though you've been eating out of the tree of life for the last five years you will start to die the command that God gave Adam and Eve is just as true if you eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil today you will die even though you say well but I've been eating out of the tree of the life is it okay for me to eat out of

the tree of the knowledge of good and evil once is it okay for me to just do it in my own strength once you will die it will choke out the life the eternal life that God wants you to have now you see that this life of dependence on Christ and how long will that be will that be until I get to heaven and then no longer dependent on God what do you think what will heaven be like I was dependent on God on earth because there was I was in the flesh and I was you know there was temptation around me I finally got to heaven now I don't have to be dependent on God anymore is that what you think heaven will be like let's look at 2nd Corinthians chapter 13 wonderful verse 2nd Corinthians chapter 13 I want to begin by reading in verse 5 he says test yourselves to see if you are in the dependence on God remember I said faith is dependence on God test you he doesn't say test yourself to see whether you're reading a Bible or you're going to church or you're praying in the name of Jesus instead of some other false religion test yourself to see if you are living in dependence on God so I think you can you can do that safely anytime you read the word faith in the Bible just put it for their dependence on God test yourselves to see if you are in dependence on God today test yourself now what does that and he says before that in verse 4 because it talks about Jesus and how he lived in dependence on the father for indeed he was crucified because of weakness yet he lives not lived at this time 2nd Corinthians chapter 13 written I think around about 5080 or so ish I'm not sure exactly some you can go back and research when was 2nd Corinthians written and tell me the answer or share with us so we can all know but I think it was around 5080 you know later on in Paul's life which means Jesus has been dead raised and ascended into heaven for about 20 years and yet Paul says he lives because of the power of God Jesus in heaven also lives by the power of God so what is it going to be like for me when I get to heaven is going to thank you no more temptation no more lust no more flesh on me so I can live by my own strength and somebody tried that to live in heaven where there's no sin in his own strength you remember who that was Satan yes the highest archangel lived in the presence of God where there was no sin I can do it on my own right remember that's what we read Ezekiel 28 Ezekiel 28 this is to answer the question of whether in heaven I will have the right to lose my dependence on God and you know it's not not a philosophical question or anything like that I don't know what heaven is like but I know this for a fact that the secret to it's not heaven Jesus didn't come take me to heaven I know that but the secret the purpose of my life on this earth and for all eternity the purpose of my existence now and forever is to be dependent on God and that's true here on this earth when I have flesh and sin around me it will be as much if not more true in heaven when I will be freed from all sin there will be no sin the presence of sin will be gone and yet I will be dependent on him Ezekiel 28 verse 6 thus says the Lord God because speaking about the highest archangel who became the devil you have your heart like the heart of God read very carefully how this is phrased it doesn't say your heart has been made like the heart of God because that's what God has promised us right I will give you a soft heart a new heart a heart of flesh and I will make you walk in my commandments he promised us but the devil tried it the other way which is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil way which is I will make my own heart like the heart of God I don't know that the devil's intent was necessarily all evil the devil wasn't saying oh I want to go out and do a whole bunch of bad things I the highest archangel will make my heart like the heart of God which is pure but I will do it in my own strength and then I'll be able to take credit and see yeah God has life I have life too and this is important for us and important for me I'll tell you because I've been trying to make my heart like the heart of God as a Christian as your Lord I want to I want to do it more like Jesus I'm gonna try better this time and take a good look at what the devil tried to do he tried to make his heart the same thing you read the other passage in Isaiah 14 it's even more clear Isaiah chapter 14 it talks about how you have fallen Isaiah 14 verse 12 you how you've fallen from heaven you were so good and I believe that at that before this happened the highest archangel was dependent on God he was the servant of God with the God the father of God said do this the highest archangel did that we call him Lucifer but he

did it he did it he did it and one day he said hold on I'm not content with just being the closest to God I want to be able to tell others also to do it how you have fallen a star of the morning son of the dawn you've been cut down to the earth why because you said in your heart verse 13 I will ascend I will raise my throne I will sit in the recesses verse 14 I will ascend I will make myself like the most high this isn't I will go and commit adultery or I will go kill somebody no I will make myself like God who is good that's how he became the devil himself so when we see when you read in 2nd Corinthians 13 that Jesus also lives today by the power of God we see the secret of how he lived here on this earth and how he exists even now by the power of God in him the power of God upholding him 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 we read this phrase it says we walk by dependence on God again I'm gonna put that there we walk by dependence on God not by sight we walk by dependence on God not by sight that's faith and Jesus walked by dependence on the Father his entire life here on this earth not by sight it says prophecy about him that he didn't judge he didn't look at what his eyes saw and what his ears heard he lived in dependence on the Father so second Corinthians 5 or 7 we walk by faith not by sight you can say we walk by dependence on God not by sight I've thought of it like this it's like being blindfolded and walking through a minefield you know what a minefield is in times of war what the enemy will do is they'll know that maybe the their enemy is pressing in so they'll plant a bunch of bombs underground mines they're calling which when you and they're triggered it's like a trap and the moment you step on that little wire or something that you don't see it'll blow up and many people have died in battle through minefields they were pressing in against the enemy the enemy was retreating but they retreating but they planted a bunch of mines in that field and they killed a bunch of people through those mines and I've imagined the Christian life like this that Jesus you know it's a minefield there's traps here there's traps there the devil is prowling around me seeking to devour me, devour my marriage, devour my home, devour my children, devour everything about my life it's a minefield and now Jesus says I give you the option to either put blindfolds on and let me lead you through this minefield or you walk and try to figure out where the minefields are this is the difference between living by faith and living by sight and this is the test that every single one of us again I would say it's the difference between the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is Lord tell me what I need to do I'll figure out how to do it oh you want me to be patient today okay I'm gonna navigate my way through this minefield of impatience I'm gonna navigate my way through this minefield of jealousy or lack of contentment discontentment or grumbling or complaining and you can make it maybe you say oh wow I saw that little little trap there and I avoided it a little bit then you're kind of tiptoeing your way and then all of a sudden one day God in his mercy allows it things to blow up in your face because he loves you because the way of living by sight will lead you to death it's just bound to fail it doesn't matter if you make it a week or a month or a year or 10 years or 50 years if you're eating out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil even if you live 950 years like Adam did you will die and God wants doesn't want you to spend 950 imagine if you live 950 years I think Adams in hell today I don't know if he got to the age of 900 and think man God said I would die but here I am 900 years old I mean sounds like he and Eve might have had a pretty decent marriage they had at least three children perhaps more I think likely more 900 years him thinking I God said I would die but I managed to avoid it would you want a marriage that's 950 years of marriage would you want a family life that's 950 years of family life where you're just barely making it but you're gonna die eventually all of that will burn up in smoke because it is not the life that comes from dependence on God it is living by sight it's eating out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and I tell you this I thank God that things are blown up in my face where he showed me Santos in that area you're trying to do it it's the way that the devil proved doesn't work long before and people on this earth are still trying to prove that it might work again you know they say the definition of insanity is that you keep doing the same thing expecting different results and I I've seen the

insanity of my Christian life of trying to repeat the same mistake that the devil did that Adam and Eve did and for thousands of years people Christians and non-Christians alike have tried to do I can make it but Paul saw the answers as the life I now live I just simply live in dependence on God so blindfolded so Jesus invites you to put these blindfolds on now it's a little bit have you ever had blindfolds put on you you know sometimes we play a game put a blindfold you try to navigate your way and I've never had a situation where I'm blindfolded and somebody's leading me but I'll tell you this if you know let's say I came into this this door and brother David Lane who's sitting over there says Santosh we're gonna blindfold you but you trust me I'm gonna put these blindfolds on and I'm gonna lead you to your seat I trust David because he knows this building he's been here plenty of times his eyes are open he's navigated his way through it and I would gladly put my hand in his and say okay I would trust him and this is what Jesus is inviting you to do today to allow him to put the blindfolds on you where you don't trust on your own ability leaning not on your own understanding but trusting in the Lord trust in the Lord and lean not on your own understanding this is the secret and so Jesus is you're standing in front of a minefield this week and you might think I've got it I'll figure it out I'll try to catch myself before I get irritated with the children I'll try to catch myself before I fall into that area of lust or I'll try to catch myself before and I pray that God will allow you to not catch yourself one time so that it will all blow up and God will say the only way to do this put the blindfolds on let me lead you this is the way to life the life of dependence on God John chapter 15 John chapter 15 we read in verse 1 I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away and every branch that bears fruit he prunes it so that it may bear more fruit you are already clean because of the words which I have spoken to you abide in me and I in you similar words as we read in John 17 which is a few chapters later abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine so neither can you unless you abide in me I am the vine you are the branches he who abides in me and I in him it's like he's repeating himself isn't it he has to stress it he who abides in me and I in him he bears much fruit but apart from me you can do nothing and what do you think it will be like in heaven will we have partaken of the divine nature so much that we'll finally get to the point we'll say well Lord thanks for the years you gave me here on this earth there's no sin anymore around me I don't see any place where I can fall I'm alright will I ever get to the place as a branch as a created being that I won't need to be in the vine even in heaven never because even in heaven Jesus lives by the power of God that upholds and even in heaven I will live by the power of God that upholds me otherwise I'm bound to make the same mistake as the devil did think about it what a wonderful thing that even in heaven I will be there dependent on Jesus the vine for all eternity is there a part of you that wants to be freed of that says really you mean like even for all eternity I gotta be dependent on Jesus never independence that's the strong man the strong man that once one day at least I want to be able to have my independence I mean it's what our children are not our children but the children in the world are groomed to think you know I love what the teenage teacher shared with us that last Sunday I hope you didn't miss it the world says teenagers all teenagers like ah teenagers we know what to expect from them we expect different from our teenagers why because they have the life of God in them I mean they're going to be different when you think of your teenagers dear brothers and sisters I hope you value them as branches in the if they're born again the life of Christ is in them they're different they're not gonna act out like the rest of the rest of the teenagers why because we're longing that the life of Christ will in them and I praise God for the teenagers he's given us not not that you would get proud teenagers but that you will continue to live a life dependent on God you'll know his word and you'll be prayer warriors you be dependent on him that's why we have this teens class not that you'll grow in your knowledge of him but you'll grow in your knowledge of him that's dependent on him and that you can learn this at the age of 13 14 15 and you navigate through those puberty and through adolescence and all this stuff it's a minefield I

know it I was there feels like a long time ago but it wasn't that long ago and it was a minefield and it still is life is but children God invites you and all of us God invites us to put the blindfolds on and let him lead you because Jesus was 13 years old Jesus was 15 he was 17 he was 18 he knows the way to keep you from stumbling he is able to keep you from stumbling so but it's the secret is this life of being dependent on the father and really what it comes down to is every day you wake up saying Lord Jesus help me today I want to just be a branch in the vine and in heaven when you get there you will see the joy of being dependent on the father that's why you know the greatest thing in heaven will be who's on the right and the left of Jesus what does that mean you know James and John their mom came to Jesus said hey can we have I'll reserve the left on the right because I got to ask first you know shotgun it's like they say their mom was trying to call a shotgun on Jesus left and right and Jesus said you've missed it if you want to be great in heaven learn to be dependent on God the most learn to live so dependent you know who will be on Jesus right and left the one that was close most closely connected to him as a branch of the vine and that that's the one that says Lord for all eternity I just want to be a branch of the vine I never want to be disconnected from you this is what it means to be at the right hand and the left hand of Jesus so closely connected to him I'm dependent on you for everything that's the way I want to go and I'm repenting of how I've gone a different way at times even recently and say Lord I want to go back to be dependent on you you know I'm almost done 1st Corinthians chapter 15 just a couple more passages and then we'll close 1st Corinthians 15 look at look at what it says here this is I'll be honest with you before I read it I want to you to know I don't fully understand how this works it's a picture of heaven that we're given and it's God's Word I believe it's true and here's my understanding of it 1st Corinthians 15 look at what it says in verse let's begin reading in verse 27 he the father 1st Corinthians verse 27 the father has put all things in subjection under Jesus feet the father has put this is authority again we started talking about the authority of God he has put all things in subjection under Jesus feet but when he says all things are put in subjection it is evident that he's accepted the exception is the one who put all things under subjection so when Jesus when all things were put under Jesus feet the only exception to that is the father right so that's what he goes on to say the it is evident that he's accepted who who the one who put all things in subject to him and when all things are subjected to Jesus first 28 then Jesus himself the son himself also will be subjected to the father who subjected all things to him so that God may be all in all you see how Jesus is saying what is saying about Jesus as I understand it is that for all eternity Jesus will say I'm subject to you father the world thinks of subjection as a bad thing you know we've been subjected to slavery if you look up Merriam-Webster's dictionary you see subjection has a negative implication a negative meaning to it I love 1st Corinthians 15 verse 28 because it brings out the beauty of subjection the beauty of Jesus himself who didn't consider equality with God something to be grasping father I rejoice to subject myself to you he did that here on this earth and he says according to the source he will do it for all eternity now what about you and I do you want to be like Jesus say Jesus I've just my greatest joy is to just subject myself fully to you give myself fully to you not not just now here on this earth for all eternity when I am fully conformed into your image what will Santos look like fully conformed into the image of Jesus and he then say I'm fully conformed into the image of Jesus I got this God now no I believe all my heart is the way I want to go the way of humility the way of going down that the more I partake of the nature of Jesus the more I'm and when I'm finally conformed in the image of Jesus it will be the greatest joy of my life to subject myself to Jesus and to the father it will be so much joy in subjection okay last verse revelation chapter 2 this is what the life of God looks like don't look at the life of the world the world says subjection humbling yourselves wives submit to your husbands Oh women all over the world are throwing out that out the door saying that's a patriarchal first Corinthians Roman Ephesians 5 first Corinthians 11 all this stuff don't buy into that garbage I love that you sisters have exemplified the joy of submission to your husband something that is

missing in the world it's what makes this church a precious place your jewels sisters you are jewels in the church because you are exemplifying the joy of subjection that Jesus exemplified first of all you get to show it to our children in a way that us men don't get to it's beautiful it's beautiful revelation chapter 2 we read in verse 7 what is the goal of all our overcoming victory over sin battling fighting fighting the good fight afraid revelation chapter 2 verse 7 he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches to him who overcomes what shall Jesus do I will say you can live dependent on me I will grant him the right to eat out of the tree of life I said at the beginning the tree of life is this life of dependence on God and it's a privilege brothers and sisters it's a privilege that Jesus grants when you overcome and you humble yourself when you fall into the ground and die you take up your cross and the life of Christ is manifest in you and the victory that overcomes the world first John 5 verse 4 is your faith your dependence on God this is the victory that overcomes the world your dependence on God and you reach the end of your life having overcome Jesus will reward you with the greatest reward of all to be dependent on him to eat out of the tree of life the last chapter of the Bible says the same thing revelation chapter 2 now 22 revelation 22 blessed verse 14 blessed are those who wash their robes so that they have the right to be dependent on God is this have I not because of my ability but has the Holy Spirit put subjection and dependence on God at such a value like that pearl of great price that you're willing to give up everything for it all your trying and all your ability blessed are those who wash their robes so that they may have the right to eat to the tree of life that right to the tree of life is not given to everybody but if you live this life of dependence on God and you long for it more and Jesus says sees that all you want is to be more dependent on him today he'll says guess what I let you do it for all eternity I will allow you to be dependent on me for all eternity verse 19 the same thing if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy God will take away his part from the tree of life so one final question what do you think children is the most dangerous thing maybe before today you thought hell what is the most dangerous thing I don't think it's hell it is living not eating out of the tree of life living not dependent on God that is hell whether you living in Loveland or Las Vegas people say a sin city no what is sin city living a life independent of God that is hell thank God that he's given us the right to the tree of life where we can live our lives constantly dependent on him amen

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