

You Have One Job

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of simple, pure devotion to Jesus, focusing on being solely dedicated to Christ and His interests. It warns against the spirit of the Antichrist, which can manifest through distractions, false teachings, and self-centeredness, urging believers to prioritize Christ above all else. The message challenges listeners to examine their choices, affections, and ambitions in light of their devotion to Jesus and His body, the Church.

Scripture: 1 John 2:18, 2 Corinthians 11:3, Philippians 2:20, Luke 14:33, Philippians 2:4

Topics: "Devotion to Christ", "Discernment Against Distractions"

Description

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Transcript

I'm just rejoicing in my heart today with the reminder that every day, every day, Jesus is leading us closer home and we refuse to look at the things of this earth. We refuse to look at the things of this earth because it's temporary, it's passing away. I'd like you to turn with me to 1st John chapter 2. I hear a lot in this time about how this is an indication of the end times, that Jesus' return is near.

I believe it is, but I don't think necessarily just because of what's going on in the world today. Jesus is, every day is getting closer and closer to his return, but there are other things that were told in Scripture about how we know that Jesus' return is near. That's what I'd like us to look at today.

1st John chapter 2, we read in verse 18, 1st John 2 verse 18. In the previous verses, verses we should all be familiar with, beginning in verse 15, he says, do not love the world. If you didn't love the world, then seeing it pass away, as he says it would, in verse 17, wouldn't shake us.

If something you don't love is passing away, is dying, shouldn't make a difference to us. So he says then in verse 18, children, it is the last hour. This was 2,000 years ago, which means we're probably in the last few minutes or seconds.

Nobody on this earth knows when Christ's return is, but we know God's Word is true, and if John, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wasn't lying when he said it was the last hour. We shouldn't read this and think, well it's been 2,000 years, John probably got it wrong. No, he was absolutely right that it was the last hour.

So we can be absolutely certain that these are the last few minutes or seconds. But he says, just as you heard that Antichrist is coming, or the Antichrist is coming, even now, 2,000 years ago, many Antichrists have appeared. I think most Christians are probably familiar with the concept of the Antichrist.

That person, or being, or organization, or something that will represent the exact opposite of Christ, that will draw away and deceive many, that the devil himself will use, will possess, we think, and use to draw away, if possible, even the elect. So the Antichrist is going to be somebody, primarily for Christians, is what I think, with a godly fear I say that, that the main purpose of the Antichrist will be, yes, to draw the whole world away, but especially Christians, especially Christians, to draw them away from Christ. And many with the same spirit, that's what Antichrists mean.

Many who have that same purpose are filled with the spirit of hell, whether they are demon possessed themselves, but have a wicked spirit in them. These Antichrists have appeared, and from this we know it is the last hour. John's very clear.

He's not saying children is the last hour, because Rome is being, I mean, Jerusalem's being ravaged, or we're being persecuted, or there's this disease, pandemic that's spreading, or here I am locked up in jail. No, it is the last hour because of the Antichrists, and the number of them, which means as we reach the end of time, the activity of Satan will only increase. If many, for John, was a hundred? What are there now? A thousand? A million? I don't know, but many, many more, I believe, and that's a serious thing.

Here's the saddest part of it all, and the most fearful, I believe. Verse 19, these Antichrists went out from us, but they were really none of us. They will have sat in churches.

So I believe that the Antichrist will come holding a Bible, conducting meetings, preaching sermons in the name of Jesus, having YouTube videos, and online broadcasts, and whatever internet technology you want to use, writing books, having gatherings, but it will be the spirit of the Antichrist, and that ultimate Antichrist will be the greatest manifestation of that, and before that there will be these Antichrists who will be in those places which were churches of Jesus Christ himself, and these people presumably once upon a time would have had a faith in Jesus. They went out from among us. So what does it mean to have the spirit of the Antichrist? Antichrist just means opposite from Christ, and turn with me to 2nd Corinthians 11.

The Bible is very clear that the opposite of Christ doesn't look like the opposite of Christ. If Christ is righteous, the opposite of Christ doesn't look unrighteous. That's the important thing.

The opposite of Christ, the Antichrist, doesn't look unrighteous. That's what we read here in 2nd Corinthians chapter 11. You won't be able to tell just by looking at them, or even necessarily by their words, or their gifts.

Jesus said very clearly, you will know them by their fruit. That means you taste the spirit that's in them, and you'll say, I know the Bible. I've been taught in sound doctrine.

I know the spirit is not the spirit of Christ. That's how we will know. Because outwardly, if I look at, oh he's reading the Bible, maybe even your preferred version of the Bible, and he's interpreting it the way I know

I'd like it to be interpreted, and they're having meetings, and they're using the name of Jesus, even performing so-called signs and wonders, Jesus said.

The Antichrist would do. So it shouldn't surprise us if these Antichrists, plural, also can perform certain signs and wonders. It shouldn't surprise us.

It's the spirit that is against Christ, but looks like Christ. So that's what he says here in 2nd Corinthians 11. We'll begin reading in verse 2. Paul, this is again, this is written even before what John wrote in 1st John.

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, similar warning. I'm jealous for you with a godly jealousy, because I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your mind will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus, there's the Antichrist. The Antichrist's name is not some false god, or false religion, or some evil sounding name. His name is not Satan.

Inside it's the spirit of Satan, but his name is Jesus. Somehow the Antichrist will present himself in the name of Jesus, and look like Jesus. But it's Jesus.

If one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted. Look at what he says in verse 13. These men are false apostles.

What are they calling themselves? Apostles, but they're false apostles. Deceitful workers, they're working, they're planting churches, they're gathering together, they're preaching, they're praying, they're doing, you know, helping the poor. They're workers, but they're deceitful workers, and they're disguised as apostles of Christ.

Disguised, that means you look at it, you think it's an apostle of Christ. Disguised. No wonder, for even Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light.

Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. So the true Jesus looks like righteousness, the false Jesus, the Antichrist, also looks like righteousness. The true Jesus, the spirit of Christ, does works.

The spirit of the Antichrist also does works in the name of Christ, but they're deceitful. This is what we must know. How do we discern the spirit then? As I've been meditating on this for the last couple weeks, as a warning, and a special warning for this time, I think, my personal opinion here, is that this, what's going on in the world around us, is a little bit of a distraction by the devil.

God's allowed it, but it's a little bit of a distraction to get even Christians to be taken up with that, so that the devil can slip in as a disguised apostle, or a disguised worker of righteousness, and somehow I can allow a spirit that is not of Christ to come in, because I was so focused on COVID-19, and understanding what does all of that mean, and all of a sudden I left the back door unlocked, and Satan himself, or one of his workers slipped in, and fed me a deception that I fell for. So important. I want to take this to heart, for my own heart.

I hope you will too. I believe the secret for us is what Paul says in verse 3, that he says, it's very useful that we're given this warning. He says, the example you can learn from is Eve.

The example you can learn from is Eve, if you don't want to be deceived as well. Study what happened in the Garden of Eden. You know, we're not given a lot of detail.

I think it's, God has intentionally allowed it, to see if you take what Paul says here, as a warning to me, if I'm a wholehearted disciple of Jesus, if I am seeking to be conformed into the image of Jesus, if I'm part, if I have the new covenant life in me, and I'm a part of a new covenant church, and I, or I want to be, and I'm pursuing after Jesus, then 2nd Corinthians 11 is for me especially, not for anybody else. And I ought to meditate on this chapter and say, if I think I won't be deceived, then I'll be the first one to be deceived. If I think, I don't need to check the back door, I checked it a couple days ago, it's fine.

Then the devil will slip in. The back door might have gotten unlocked somehow. I'm a little bit OCD.

OCD means obsessive-compulsive. And when I lock the doors at house, not because I'm fearful, I triple check them sometimes. And even if I check the the side door at seven o'clock, before I go to bed, I'm probably going to go check it again, just to be certain.

I thought about that the other day when I was doing that. I said, Lord, I want to have that mentality. Is there any side door that I haven't checked recently? Especially pride, especially hypocrisy, especially seeking the honor of people.

Those are side doors that it's very easy to neglect those. I want to check every side door, make sure it's completely bolted. And the warning that we're given is us is of Eve.

I've seen a few memes, maybe you've seen it, which are titled, you had one job. And it's usually a picture of somebody that maybe they were given one job and they messed up that one job. I saw one picture recently of a when you come to a stop sign here in the US, you'll see a sign that says stop.

And then usually printed on the ground is an additional warning that says stop. Just in case you missed the sign on the road, I mean on the side of the road, you see the one painted on the ground. And I saw a picture, I don't know if it was faked or not, but it's funny, where you see the stop sign but written on the road was S-O-T-P.

Whoever it was that had the one job to get it right missed it and misspelt it. We all make mistakes like that. But that person, whoever it was that was painting that, had one job.

Just look at the sign that's right there, make sure you get the order of the letters correctly. But it's funny when you think about earthly things, but I really, this is the word the Lord spoke to me as I was meditating on this, Santos, you have one job. Don't be confused by all the other things.

The devil will try to get me confused by and taken up with so many jobs. Santos, you have one job. And let's say this was a real situation where somebody misspelt the word stop instead of S-T-O-P, he or she wrote S-O-T-P.

Why is that likely to have happened? Because they lost sight of the one job they had. Their job that day was get S over here, get the T next to it, put the O next to it, and put the P at the end. Probably, and again I'm just imagining a story here, they got a phone call in the middle of it.

And so they're sitting there on their Bluetooth while they're still painting, talking to their friend or their wife or their girlfriend or whoever, and that other thought is now taken up their minds. Or another person walks by or talks to them and they're still continuing their job. And those other thoughts and affections took up their mind.

Or there was a big accident over there half a mile down the road and while he was watching that he forgot about the order of the letters. We have one job, family, we have one job. If you're a child of God, you have one job.

That's what I see here. In the Garden of Eden, God gave them really only one command. You can read it in Genesis 2. Let's look, let's look there.

Genesis 2 verse 16, the Lord God commanded the man saying everything. That's what I see in verse 16 and the first part of verse 17. Everything.

How many trees were there in the Garden of Eden? We're told about two, but there were many, many, many, many, many, many, many trees. All of them, God says, eat all of them. You have one job, don't eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

That's your one job. But from the tree of verse 17, of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat. For in the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.

That was the one job they had. Avoid that tree. Don't try to understand why.

Don't try to figure it out. Don't try to manipulate God's words, because that's when they started to do that. Well, you know, interpretation.

That's how the devil came. He says, has God really said, your one job is to stick to what God said. Stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God very intentionally didn't explain it, didn't give them a reason, just says one job. Just stay away from that tree. You can eat out of all the other trees.

And the devil came after that one job by distracting them with thoughts of, but why that one command? I mean why? And even though there's no physical tree now, we're told in 2nd Corinthians 11, that Paul explains what that is the meaning of. If the one job for Adam and Eve was to not eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Paul says, your one job is to make sure that, what is to eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil then today, to make sure that nothing comes between you and Jesus. That's your one job.

Nothing between my soul and the Savior. Nothing. Worldly pleasures, pride, station.

Oh no, nothing. That's your one job. Don't get taken up.

If you're gonna think about COVID-19, make sure your one job is to make sure that that doesn't come between you and Jesus. That's the point of COVID-19. Otherwise we've missed our one job.

Well, is it from the Lord? And you know, understanding, is it the right time? Is it the end time? And this and that. And oh, the government's overblowing it. Or no, they're under blowing it.

Or is it coming between you and your devotion to Jesus? Then the devil's deceived you. He's deceived me, if he has. And I've been vigilant as this thing has spread, and as word of it has spread, to make sure, Lord this is not going to come between me and you.

Absolutely not. Devil's a subtle enemy. I mean, it's good to stay informed about what's going on in the world.

We take precautions. We protect ourselves. And we've made changes about our lives, because the government said so.

But more importantly, because we believe God has said so. God has directed us to change things, so that it doesn't spread in our church family. Yeah, that's good.

But even that must never come between me and my devotion to Jesus. So Paul's very clear that to eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to be deceived by the devil, as Eve was, is to allow anything to come between Jesus and me. Because, he says, I betrothed you to one husband.

As a virgin, as a pure virgin. What does that mean? I've thought about what does it mean to have a simple, pure devotion to Jesus. What does that really mean? First of all, I think it means that Jesus Christ is the only thing that I ever boast about.

Because that's what he actually says here, in the previous verses, the end of chapter 10 and going into chapter 11. Look at that here in a minute. But let me give you a picture.

Let's say there's a woman who is very famous. She's a famous singer, or actress, or CEO, or just a very accomplished woman as a single woman. And then she gets married.

She gets married to somebody, but maybe the world doesn't know about that much. This person, he's from a faraway kingdom. We don't know much about him, but she married him.

And then one day you meet her on the street. He says, hey, there's that singer, that famous singer. I used to listen to her songs.

Or that CEO, or that accomplished person. I read about her life, and what all she did. And you go up to her, and meet her, and say, tell me about you.

She says, I have only one thing to tell you. I have a wonderful husband. I wish you could meet him.

This is a pure virgin. This is somebody who is simply and purely devoted to Jesus. All the other things that she's done in her past life, all the other accomplishments, are absolutely nothing to her.

You meet her and say, hey, I have your CD here. That means nothing to me. I have a husband.

Oh, I think about him all the time. Oh, here's his picture. Let me show you.

Let me tell you about him. Let me describe him to you. This is simple, pure devotion to Jesus.

And I've been testing my words, brothers and sisters. I've been testing my words, and my thoughts especially, and my attitudes to see what is coming out. When people talk to me, they say, Santhosh, tell me, what motivates you? Is it my life? Is it my wife? Is it my children? Is it my home? Is it the local church we're a part of? Is it some ministry? Is it something I've done, or something I wish I could do? Is it an

ambition, a goal I have? No! I have one thing to tell the world, and that is that I'm married to the most wonderful person that exists.

I want that to be more and more the case, that what pours out of me, not some manufactured, oh, simple, pure devotion to Jesus. Yeah, you know, we can have such Christianese words that makes it sound like I'm devoted. Test yourself, brother, sister.

Close your eyes for a moment if needed, and cast aside your thoughts, and ask yourself, is Jesus really whom you are simply and purely devoted to? That's it. Because he says, verse 12, 2nd Corinthians 10, verse 12, we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves, but when they measure themselves by themselves, notice how many times the word ourselves and themselves comes in this verse. It's almost like a tongue twister, intentionally, I think.

When they measure themselves by themselves, they compare themselves with themselves, and they are without understanding. They're ignorant. They're fools.

Yeah, you know what's interesting? A little side note here. I've noticed, especially with this, because churches can't gather, a plethora, an abundance of posts by pastors, and church leaders, and things like that, pushing their agenda, and wanting to say what they have to say. And now you can just do it from the comfort of your home.

You know, we're not here to despise that. We should use every possible means that we can, but even in our doing that, even in our use as a church of social media, and YouTube, and things like that, to spread the gospel. That's our only purpose in using it.

Even in that, let's check our motives. What is it? It's easy to tell people across the other side of the world about our church, because you've got Facebook now, you've got YouTube, but what's your motive? What's our motive behind that church? Let's examine that first of all, ourselves. Is it to make a name for ourselves? To compare ourselves? Oh, that church has a YouTube page, and a Facebook, so we should too.

Or, oh that church does it like that, so we should do that. He says, if you do that, you're a fool. You know, we have a saying in our family, that we shouldn't use words that mock somebody, and ignorant, calling somebody ignorant, is not a good word we allow in our home, but it's a biblical word.

The Holy Spirit says, you're ignorant. Take it to heart. If you're comparing yourself with anybody, about anything, they have so much money, I don't.

Or, I have so much money, thank God I'm not like that. Or, I'm so spiritual, they're not. Look at that person that fell into sin.

Look at those people in the world. Look at those deceived people. I mean, social media is full of people posting about how they're right, and everybody else is wrong, no matter which side of the argument you take.

Comparing themselves with themselves. I mean, you could even argue about how you use the right translation of the Bible. Comparing yourself with somebody else, and the only purpose in doing that, now I'm not, I'm saying use a biblically accurate translation, yes, by all means, but what is your motivation in talking about even something like that, which is good? What is your motivation even talking about Jesus

Christ, and your life, your Christian life? Is it to compare yourself with somebody else? Verse 17, here's, remember Paul's preparing us to see what it means to be a pure virgin.

The mark of a virgin is he boasts in the Lord. Verse 17, 2nd Corinthians 10, 17. He who boasts is to boast in the Lord, for it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.

And he says, listen, I'm going to make it sound foolish to you. Chapter 11, verse 1, continue. He's continuing that thought about not boasting in anything else except Jesus.

He says, I'm gonna make it so plain, it'll sound like foolishness to you. I married you to one husband, Jesus. Why are you talking about all the other things of your past, of your bachelor days, of your unmarried days? Here's what it means to be a disciple of Jesus then.

You boast in Jesus alone. I ask you, are you born again? It's a very simple question. Now, I'm not asking you to, you know, doubt whether you're really saved.

If God has given you the assurance of salvation, praise the Lord for that. He's given me that. But test yourself to be, if, to see if you be of this faith that Paul had.

Where to be born again, to be a Christian, to be a disciple, all of these words that have become so devalued in the world in which we live. To be born again very simply means this, to be married as a pure virgin to Jesus, simply and purely devoted to him. And if I'm not, you can say I'm born again and put all those tags on myself and it means nothing.

Because I betrothed you to Christ as one husband. This is how we handle jealousy. Paul was sort of defending himself but he really is saying I'm not defending myself, I won't defend myself.

Because there are other people that came to the church in Corinth, probably, let me guess how, in the first letter that Paul wrote, he corrected the Corinthians very strongly. He rebuked them. Have you ever had anybody rebuke you like Paul rebuked the church in Corinth? He was a father to them.

I've had men in my life who rebuked me and I'm thankful for it. I still do and I preserve that relationship because I need a spanking every now and then, as did the church in Corinth. I need to be corrected, I need to be guided.

But there were some false apostles who weren't really fathers, who came to them and said, hey listen, this brother Paul, you know, notice how, you know, aren't you a little bit offended that he corrected you like this? And they used that as a hook to try to get in and say, don't listen to him. You know, this overemphasis on brother Paul, let's put it aside. And they used the fact that Paul had corrected them as a church and given them a spanking.

You know what that would be like? Me correcting one of my children because they disobeyed. And you saw that and because you had a false motive with my son or daughter, you came to them quietly and said, hey, your dad doesn't really love you, right? He spanked you. That would be an evil man or woman that would ever do that.

When they see a father or mother correcting their children and to use that as a hook to try to get into that son or daughter's heart to turn them against their father and mother. And yet that's going on in churches today. And the devil is doing that to turn people first of all against Christ and then against the true apostles

of Jesus who correct and rebuke according to the leading of God because they're fathers.

They have the heart of a father. Don't ever let that happen to us. Let's not never let that happen to us.

But this is how we can be free from any jealousy. Paul said, I'm not going to defend myself to you church and Corinth. I've been a father to you.

You know that. But I will refuse to compare myself and defend myself as an apostle compared to those people who are false apostles. This is how you can handle when false accusations are thrown at you.

Have people accused you falsely of something? Here's how to handle it. Be simply and purely devoted to Jesus. Will you allow their accusations and their slander and defending your honor and your reputation to come between you and your devotion to Jesus? Don't let it.

That's how the devil will kill two birds with one stone. He will get them to go to hell by their sin, their slander, their evil speaking. And he will get you also to go to hell by losing your devotion to Jesus over what they did.

Lord, they said those things about me. They did those things to me. Now that's all I can think about.

And that has clouded my devotion to Jesus. Oh, fight against it. Brothers, sisters, fight against it.

This is how the serpent deceived Eve. You know, turn over to Philippians chapter 3. The mark of a bride who is simply and purely devoted to her bridegroom is this. She has forgotten and refuses to boast about anything in her past.

Who else was, you know, who else did I think I might marry? What other interests I have? No, none of those things. I have one thing and one thing that captivates my heart and my eyes, my affections. It's my bridegroom.

Paul says similar words in verse 7. But whatever things were gained to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. And he had a lot of things in his bachelor day. He lists them.

Verses 4, 5, and 6. He lists his bachelor days just FYI. But saying, I counted it as loss. It's kind of like Paul saying, hey, that stuff I flushed down the toilet.

I'll just spend three verses to tell you what it was. But it's flushed down the toilet in my heart. Whatever things were gained to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but rubbish, dung, flushed down the toilet, so that I may gain Christ and may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, that righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. In other words, he says, I've also flushed down the toilet self-righteousness, somehow thinking that God is pleased with me because I did this or I did that. I've been a good boy.

I've been a good girl. No. The fact that I'm not aware of any conscious sin in my life.

Let me say that again. The fact that I'm not aware of any conscious sin in my life. That's my honest testimony.

I'm not aware of any conscious sin in my life. If I was, I would have repented of it already. Jesus Christ has cleansed me.

I'm not saying I don't have any sin. There are sins I'm not aware of. But everything the Lord has shown me, I've confessed and repented off.

I've found mercy and forgiveness and salvation and justification. But the fact that I'm not aware of any conscious sin in my life, even that I count as a loss compared to knowing Jesus. I don't come to Jesus and look at myself or look at others on the basis of the fact, well, thank you Lord that I'm not struggling in that sin.

Sometimes as elders in churches, we get people coming and confessing to us sins in their life and asking for prayer. But every time I hear that, I pray, Lord help me never to forget who I was when you picked me up. And even the fact that I may not be struggling in that and I'm not struggling in that thing is not something that I count as something I can boast on in.

My only boast is Jesus loves me. This I know. The Bible tells me so.

And I love him with all of my heart. Have you really counted everything as loss? See this becomes more difficult for us the longer we walk with Jesus, I think. This is the greater danger for us.

As Jesus Christ increasingly sets us free from the sins of the past and we start to experience victory over sin and the true salvation that the Bible talks about. This is the danger. This is what will prevent us from our one job.

It's this that somehow I think I'm acceptable to God today because I'm walking in victory. We must press on to victory. We must continue to persevere and we'll continue to do that by God's grace.

But while we're doing that, let's never boast in the fact that God has forgiven us or saved us from sin. Our boast is Jesus Christ himself. Yes, included in that is the fact that he's forgiven us.

But my boast is Jesus Christ. That's what keeps me going. So first of all, Christ becomes our only boast.

Secondly, we get taken up with Christ's interest. You know Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7. Let me show you this verse quickly. He's talking about virgins, physical virgins and unmarried women keeping themselves pure from marrying a man on this earth.

He's talking about physical marriage. But that word virgin comes in this passage. 1 Corinthians 7 verse 34.

33 and 34. He's talking about the difference between the married and the unmarried. The physically married.

He's saying I wish that all were like me because 33 the one who is married is concerned about the things of the world how he may please his wife and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, the virgin. There's that word virgin which Paul says I want you to be I presented you like a virgin.

Here we read about the mentality of a virgin. The virgin, the characteristic of a virgin physically and we can apply the same spiritually is this. She is concerned about the things of the Lord that she may be holy both in body and spirit.

This is the attitude of a virgin. I'm concerned only about the things of the Lord. If I read about COVID-19 I'm concerned only about the things of the Lord and I fit that, that news that I read into the context and the the universe if I could use that word of this one thing and that is I'm concerned only about God.

So the mark of a virgin is that she's concerned only about the interest but Christ's interest. I want to tell you how the devil will bring other interests. You cannot be solely interested in the things of Christ if you're interested in your family.

If you're only thinking about your family. Jesus said that Luke 14. I've started to see the word disciple and discipleship in the same context of simple pure devotion to Jesus.

I believe they're the same thing. To be a disciple of Jesus don't be confused or miss it by thinking it's anything else except this. A disciple is one who is solely devoted to his master or her master and that word virgin, that word married is the same word, same concept essentially.

That to be a disciple is to be solely devoted to Jesus and I fit everything else into that devotion to Jesus. If it doesn't fit into devotion to Jesus I have to let it go. So very simply if your thoughts about what's going on in the world around us, what's happened, why it's happened, what's going to happen doesn't fit into this narrow perspective of devotion to Jesus you might as well stop thinking about it and if you find that it's taking you away from that narrow perspective don't read about it.

Refuse, tear down any high thought that is a way that doesn't fit into this narrow paradigm of simple pure devotion to Jesus. Everything. Now Jesus says in Luke 14 verse 26 do you have a wife? Do you have a mother? Do you have a father? Do you have brothers? Do you have sisters? Do you have, are you alive? All of that must fit into this paradigm of being devoted to Jesus.

If your wife or your husband and affection for him or her ever comes between simple pure devotion to Jesus you must let go of that affection. I'm not saying, I'm not saying God's saying divorce but you must never allow that affection for your wife, your husband, your brother, your sister, your father, your mother, your children or even your own self to come between to affect this simple pure devotion to Jesus. If you're afraid of obeying God out of fear of what your husband or your wife will think you may not be a simple pure virgin.

You may not be a disciple. If you're afraid of how it will offend your brothers and sisters who while we grew up together we have such good memories they'll be offended if I take that stand on that conviction. I want to tell you according to what Jesus said not what I said you may not be a disciple.

You are not a disciple. Father, mother, oh they're elderly and I'm afraid of offending them and what will they say and yeah we've had you know they took care of me when I was young but Jesus has even your close relatives and all the good things that they've done for you come between you and simple pure devotion to Jesus. Beware this is the spirit of the Antichrist.

He says in verse 27 you must so first of all your affections, your choices. How do you make your choices? Is it based purely on simple pure devotion to Jesus? Should I go on this vacation? Should I buy that thing? Should I spend my time on this? Should I watch that movie? Should I read that book? Should we do this? Should I send my children here? Should I do that? Should I spend my time doing this? How do we make our choices? Is it simple pure devotion to Jesus or and that's what it means I believe when he says carrying your own cross and coming after me. That means I've given up my own will.

I don't say well we must have this food. We must go out to eat at least a couple times a week or we must have that movie or we must subscribe to this channel or we must at least have that or we must buy these clothes. All of these things we must, we must, we must.

If you haven't denied your will which is what taking up the cross means you're not simply purely devoted to Jesus. How I make my choices and finally my ambitions. Verse 33 if you haven't given up your possessions are you worried about what this pandemic will do for the economy because of your job? Because of it's coming in the way of your goal that you had or some ambition you had or that you might lose your house that you are proud of or your cars or your job or the wealth you have? Has that come between you? Is that why you're worried and fearful about the economy? Because I might lose this comfortable life I have now.

My dear brother, dear sister this is the spirit of the Antichrist and many Antichrist have come. It grieves me when I see pastors rebuking so-called churches, their churches saying don't forget to give during this time even though you're not coming. That's what they're more worried about.

Make sure your tithing hasn't stopped. It should be as clear as day that that's the spirit of the Antichrist. I mean that don't care if he claims to speak in tongues or he has such a ministry or anything that should be as that should be like great you know kindergarten understanding of the spirit of the Antichrist.

Asks for money. You cannot be my disciple if you haven't given up all your possessions. This is a good time to live as if we are in the Great Depression.

I think that's how I would interpret Luke 14 verse 33. This is a good time to live as if we're in recession. Which is what? The Christian, the disciple of Jesus who's simply and purely devoted to Jesus should always be living in recession.

Carefully. Recession. That means I've given up my possessions anyway if God has allowed me to have it yes that's great.

If God has made you a millionaire that's fine if you've done it righteously but live as if you're in a recession. Live carefully. Live frugally.

If God has left allowed you to have very little and you're barely making it. Live frugally. Live like you're in a recession.

Because that's what Jesus said. You've given up all your possessions anyway. That's what it means to be in a recession.

You don't have possessions. So whether it's there in the bank or there in your house or there in your yard or not it's not there in your heart. In your heart you're in a perpetual recession until Jesus comes when it will be abundance.

When the economy will boom. So don't look at the stock market. Don't look at what's going on with all these things.

Yes invest, save, give, earn by all means. But in your heart let it be recession. And the other thing about Christ's interest.

I want you to see it's easy to get deceived by this and you know the devil's a smart enemy. There's a lot of people that speak turn to Philippians chapter 2. Speak about simple pure devotion to Jesus in some mythical, mystical, theoretical kind of way. Oh devotion to Jesus and I you know just talk about these mystical devotions to Jesus as such and I spend time meditating and I go out in the wilderness or become a monk or you know I'm not here to mock any of those things but let me say it very plainly that is not simple pure devotion to Jesus as the New Testament describes it.

Under the Old Covenant sure Nazarite, grow your hair out, grow your beard out, eat you know stay away from all those good goodies. That's fine. That's Old Testament simple pure devotion.

New Covenant simple pure devotion is not any of these things. It's being taken up with Christ in a very real and practical way and it's not that Jesus Christ you know it says you taken up with Jesus Christ as a head and I picture it like this there are some Christians who think they can be taken up with Jesus Christ as a head that's sort of this disembodied head floating around the space. Jesus is not a disembodied head.

I hope you know that. I mean it seems almost ridiculous to have to say it but it's so easy for the devil to bring that delusion in our thinking where Jesus Christ is this head and I'm devoted to Jesus but I could care less about his body on the earth. It's one.

Jesus Christ the head has united himself with a body that exists on this earth all over the world and to be committed to the interest of Christ is to first of all to be committed to know what does the head think but also to care about his body here on this earth to make the interest because Jesus Christ the head cares about the body and if somehow I think well I care about Jesus and I'm devoted to Jesus but I have no time to be integrated into a local body and to be built in into fellowship with other believers then I'm fooling myself that I have a devotion to Jesus because Paul says Philippians 2 verse 20 and 21 Paul commends Timothy among all his workers as the best. Paul says Timothy was the best worker of them all. Paul had a lot of workers we read about many of them Epaphroditus and others now I don't think Paul is necessarily comparing the good workers with Timothy and saying that they're bad but there's one thing that distinguished Timothy above all of them.

Timothy was the one person that Paul could hand over the torch and say now it's yours Timothy I planted all these churches you preserve the purity of the sound doctrine you received from me don't let anybody deceive you others will come and they'll mock me and they say oh Paul you know he fancy words and all that no here's this other thing taken up with that no Paul Timothy hold fast the truth you've heard what convinced Paul that Timothy was the one whom he should hand the torch over to there was one thing he tells the church in Philippi I have no one else he says verse 19 I hope to send Timothy to you shortly because I have no one else of kindred spirit verse 21 they all seek after their own interest not those of Christ Jesus wow you mean Paul's co-workers it's possible to have worked with Paul I don't want to read too much into this but this is how I understand it very plainly as a warning for myself today it's possible to have worked with the greatest apostle of all time Paul himself it's possible to have worked with him and still have been deceived with the spirit of the Antichrist that's how I interpret Philippians 221 with 2nd Corinthians 11 verse 4 even the co-workers of Paul himself not just a member of his one of his churches a co-worker of Paul something came between them and devotion to Jesus they you know we understand that sometimes people wrote Paul's letters down he had a scribe maybe it was one of those co-workers and the scribe who's writing it down I'm aware I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve from the simple pure devotion to Jesus my your eyes will be turned away from simple pure devotion to Christ Corinth the person writing it himself missed it I'm not preaching at anybody but myself as a preacher of these very

truths I live in the godly fear that I could be deceived by Jesus deceived by the devil not by Jesus the Bible does talk about God deceiving some that's another message but deceived by the devil and he says here though the thing I wanted you to see in verse 20 is this I have no one else what what was the mark that Timothy didn't seek after his own interest but the interest of Jesus it wasn't some like I said mystical oh I don't seek after my own interest I seek after the interest of Jesus but it doesn't look like anything practically I just sit there and pray and sing songs of devotion and Jesus I love you so much and devoted to you give me one simple pure devotion to know and follow hard after you and I sing those songs and continue with my self-centered life even though I think I'm not self-centered because I'm not living it out how did Timothy live out that we're told in verse 20 I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your Philippi church welfare I want to ask you dear brother dear sister as you're listening to this do you care about the church that God has planted you in and if you're not do you have a burden to be planted in such a church to see God build up a local church in your area and that becomes your interest because you're simply and purely devoted to Jesus and if you're part of a local church whatever whether you agree with them completely or not do you care about the interest of that church do you have a burden for the church that that the church will be built up that not even one person will be backslidden I'm not talking about social welfare I'm not talking about their physical needs yes that's secondary but most importantly do you have a burden for the churches of Jesus Christ you pray for them the local church that you're a part of in churches across the world that God allows you to be aware of in a specific way if not perhaps you have the spirit of the Antichrist perhaps something has come and clouded your simple pure devotion to Jesus the head who cares deeply about his body the church can you speak evil I mean this is I'm just talking about having a burden what about speaking evil can you gossip about the finger of Jesus Christ body when he cares about it so deeply can you can you speak evil about another one of God's children even once can you think an evil thought about that other child of God when the head cares so deeply if you can carelessly even your wife or your husband or another brother or sister in the church or another believer who's a true child of God perhaps you have the spirit of the Antichrist perhaps I have the spirit of the Antichrist I do have the spirit of the Antichrist if I allow that to come in between me and simple pure devotion to Jesus I think I'll end there we have enough to think on judge ourselves on it's not a message of condemnations a message of hope you have a bright girl maybe the next message I'll talk a little bit about what how we can remind ourselves of that simple pure devotion to Jesus

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