

02 New Wine in New Wineskins Life and Fellowship

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of loving God with all our heart, having the mind of Christ, and experiencing the full glory of true Christianity.

Duration: 1:00:36

Scripture: Psalm 37:25, Daniel 4:29-30, Matthew 22:37, Luke 5:15-16, John 7:40-53, John 17:3, John 17:15, Romans 5:9-10, Philippians 4:4, 1 John 1:1-3

Topics: "Christian Living", "Fellowship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life modeled after Jesus, focusing on the divine life and fellowship that comes from being saved by His life. It highlights the need to seek the life of Jesus, characterized by holiness, humility, and love, rather than being swayed by worldly achievements or doctrines. The speaker urges listeners to pursue a deep longing for the life of Jesus, leading to true fellowship and unity in the body of Christ.

Transcript

One of the wonderful things about the New Covenant is that God opens His heart and reveals it to us. We are told in 1 Corinthians 2, beautiful words which I don't know whether you have understood the depth of meaning there is there. 1 Corinthians 2 verse 9, things which eye has not seen, ear has not heard, which have not entered into the heart of man.

All that God has prepared for those who love Him. When we love God with all of our heart like we heard when Jesus is the only thing for us when everything else is actually rubbish. And I understand the word that Paul uses for rubbish is dung.

Compared to Jesus, everything the world offers is dung. That's what it means to make Jesus everything. And when we hear something like that, it's not just a message, you need to ask yourself, Lord is that true in my life? Money is a valuable thing, very useful, but can I say compared to Jesus it is dung.

The stimulation we get through sex, yeah, it's right in marriage. Compared to Jesus, even that is dung. There are very few Christians who have entered into this level of devotion to Christ.

I would say most believers who think they are whole hearted, think they are whole hearted because Jesus is number one in their life. But there's a number two and a number three and a number four. But when it speaks here about God preparing certain things for those who love Him, it reminds us of the people who came to Jesus and asked Him, what is the great commandment? And Jesus said, the great commandment is you love God with all your heart.

That is the first commandment. There are many of us who think we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we speak in tongues, it's all wonderful. Do you love God with all your heart? If you really love God with all your heart, everything else in the world will be dung for you.

If God gives it to you, you take it. If God takes it away or allows somebody else to take it away, you say well, praise the Lord, it's okay. It doesn't matter much to me in any case.

I have Jesus and in Him I have everything. It's not that we don't use the things of the world, we use many things the world gives, but they lose their value for us when we have really seen Jesus. To love God with all our heart, that is the meaning of being pure in heart.

There is a lot of difference between being pure in heart and having a clean conscience. You can have a clean conscience and yet not a pure heart. I think a lot of people like that.

They have confessed every sin and they are not aware of any sin in their life, but they don't love God with all their heart. Jesus is first, of course, but there are certain other things which are also important for them. These are the ones who in question times, you know in conferences we sometimes have question times, they ask questions like, is it wrong for a Christian to listen to this type of music or watch this type of movie or go here or go there? These are all people for whom Jesus is not everything.

I can't imagine the apostles going around asking Jesus questions like that. It's not that we become ascetics or hermits. We live in the world, we use everything in the world, we enjoy food and many other things, but they don't mean anything to us.

It's because some of these things mean so much to you that you get upset when you lose them or you get excited when you get them. For myself, I have years, years ago I remember trying to understand what it means to rejoice in the Lord always and well, I was in need financially those years going back 30-40 years and somebody gave me a gift. I was happy and the Lord would ask me, are you happy? I said Lord, unfortunately yes.

This money has increased my joy a little bit and the Lord showed me, it's because you don't love me with all your heart. It's because Jesus is not everything in your life. I want you to love me with all your heart so that if there's an increase of money, it's there but it doesn't excite you.

If you lose money, it doesn't depress you. I said Lord, I want to get there. I want to obey the first commandment.

What's the use talking about all the other commandments if I haven't obeyed the first one? I want to love Jesus with all my heart and one test is this, I say Lord, you know many times when I pray for something, I say Lord, if it takes me 10 years to get there, I'm gonna get there. It's like a challenge of a mountain. I've heard of mountain climbers who are challenged by there's a mountain I haven't yet climbed, I want to climb it.

That sounds crazy to us but not crazy to them. It's a challenge. I've got to get to the top of that mountain and this is one of those things.

I said Lord, I want to get to the top of that mountain where my joy will be steady in the Lord. It will not increase even a little bit with more money. It will not decrease even a little bit with less money.

It's a good test to apply to yourself. Supposing you heard that your salary was suddenly increased 30%, 40% or you got a promotion. Now you may think I'm being ascetic but I tell you to a true disciple of Jesus Christ, it means nothing.

He says Lord, I was able to survive with the money you gave me. Maybe now with this increase in salary, I can buy a car perhaps, have a better house. That's okay, you can do that but it doesn't increase my joy.

Zero. And through the years, I worked on it, said Lord, I'm going to come to that place where increase of money will never increase my joy, decrease of money will never decrease my joy because you are everything. Then my life became steady.

Otherwise the devil has got numerous ways to make you go up and down and up and down and up and down. I want to say to you my brothers and sisters, make the life of Jesus your goal. Say Lord, that's the life you came to give me.

Not just an improved human life, better than other people, better than other believers but the actual life of Jesus. That is what it's referred to here which I has not seen, your has not heard, not has entered into the heart of man. God has prepared for those who love him.

What do you think he's prepared for us? There's some mansion in heaven, I'll tell you honestly, I'm not interested in any mansion in heaven. Some crown on my head, I'm not interested. I'm interested in Jesus himself.

Whom have I in heaven but thee. Not a mansion, not a crown. Whom have I in heaven but thee.

And there's nothing on earth I desire beside thee. That is a worshipper. And it says here in verse 10, God has revealed these things to us through the Holy Spirit.

And one of the reasons why the Holy Spirit has been given to us we are told in verse 12. The Holy Spirit is given so that we may know the things freely given to us by God. The last part of verse 11 says the thoughts of God, no one knows but the Holy Spirit.

You know just like your thoughts, you will never share your thoughts with anybody and everybody. Even many husbands and wives, even though they love each other, they will not share all their thoughts with each other. You have to have tremendous love and confidence in a person to share everything in your mind with that person.

You won't do that with a stranger. And I'm so humbled when I realized that Almighty God gives me the Holy Spirit so that I can know his thoughts. And I say Lord I want my thoughts to be like your thoughts.

That's the only way to be at rest in an evil world. The life of Jesus, that is the new wine that Jesus came to give. Oh I see most people have missed it.

Most Christians have missed it. They talk about some experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord brother, but did you get the mind of Christ? See what he says in verse 16.

We have the mind of Christ. That means I think like Jesus thinks. I place value on things which Jesus placed value on.

He placed value on people, especially poor, helpless people. He placed a great value on them. He placed no value on money or comfort or ease.

No, not at all. I'll tell you this, you'll never be able to be a wholehearted disciple of Jesus until you say Lord I want to have the mind of Christ. I want to look at everything the way Jesus looked at it.

That is the life of Jesus. You have the life of Jesus in this measure in which you have the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ.

That is what the Holy Spirit has come to give. Do you want it? How eagerly do you want it? The devil will do everything to prevent you from having it, so that he can keep your life in perpetual unrest. So many things which have no value in eternity, he makes you place a great value on it.

That's not the mind of Christ. Jesus did not place any value on anything that had no value in eternity. He used it.

He used money, he slept, he wore clothes. In fact, one of his clothes was so good that the soldiers at the cross didn't even feel like tearing it. They tore all the rest.

But that one piece, they say this is so good, we don't want to tear it. He could wear it comfortably. He didn't have any guilty feeling about that.

But he didn't place any value on these things. It's a wonderful way to live in this world, and everything is detached from you. That is the result of a man who has come into the life of Jesus.

And I personally believe that is the mark of really being filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to say to you, dear brothers and sisters, many of you who think you are free from the love of money, I seriously doubt whether you are. Because if you were, your life would be at such rest in Christ and God would bear such tremendous witness to your life.

I believe it's the one thing that hinders so many people from following the Lord. Think back, some of you, to the days when you had very little, when you were really poor. Some of you can think of those days.

Was your devotion to God greater? Did you have more time for the Lord? Was Jesus more to you in those days? Why has it become less to you? It's a subtle power of money and material things. It has a tremendous power. Jesus spoke about the deceitfulness of riches, choking the life of God.

It's happened in many, many believers, even CFC believers. That's your choice. You choose which God to worship.

You choose whether Jesus is number one and money is number two or whether you say Jesus is everything. The rest is all secondary. I will place no value on anything earthly.

No. Christ is everything. My own comfort and convenience, unimportant.

Jesus is everything. And I'll tell you that, if you do that, your physical health will be better. Some of you are sick because you care so much for your body.

Oh, I've got to do this. I can't do this. I can't do that.

I can't do the other thing. I can't deny myself here and go and sacrifice something to serve the Lord. We try to, you know, this attitude of many Christians to do the minimum, minimum for the Lord.

All these legalists who argue about paying the tithe, 10% I must give to God. I believe they're all legalists, every single one of them. I'll tell you why.

Because a bride never tells her bridegroom, I'll give you 10%. It's a servant who tells his master, I'll give you 10% income tax. You tell the income tax people, I'll pay your percentage.

Percentage and all is the clearest proof you don't have a bridal relationship with Jesus Christ. A bride says, everything I have is yours. I remember years ago, seeking God, saying, Lord, will you show me the secret of your life? Your life on earth was the most wonderful life that any man ever lived.

That's a new wine. And I really long to find the secret of your life, your life on earth was the most wonderful life that any man ever lived. That's a new wine.

And I really long to find the secret of your life, your life on earth was the most wonderful life that any man ever lived. That's a new wine. And I really long to find the secret of your life, your life on earth was the most wonderful life that any man ever lived.

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John 17 and verse 10, it's a wonderful verse. He says to the father, and in there he was revealing his inner secret in that prayer to the father. This is the only long prayer of Jesus recorded in the scriptures.

You get a glimpse into his heart and inner secret of Jesus' life. He said to the father, all that is mine is thine. I don't give you 10% father.

10% is for those who are under the law. He had a bridal relationship with the father and I have a bridal relationship with Jesus Christ and that's why I've never believed in 10% because I'm not paying income tax to God. I'm a bride.

I'm not a servant. I'm a son. A son doesn't pay 10% to his father.

That's all for servants who pay income tax. Jesus said, all that is mine is thine. And the father said, really? Well, then all that is mine is thine.

That was the secret of his life because everything he had, he gave it to the father. The father gave himself completely to him. I tell you with all my heart, God is my witness.

That is the only life I wanted. I never wanted to be a preacher and I still don't want to be a preacher. I don't want to plant churches.

I want to be a worshipper. God can take everything else away from me. I want to be a worshipper because that's what I'm going to do for all eternity.

I'm getting prepared for eternity. And as I worship God and the cup becomes full, it overflows in maybe helping others or preaching or helping churches, whatever it is. But that's not the main thing.

The main thing is, all that is mine is thine. And all that is thine is mine. I tell you honestly, I want a life with God where he will never withhold anything from me.

Where he will say to me, son, all that I have is yours. It's one of the words which, if you turn to the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15, you know the elder son, he was complaining to the father, I've been so long with you, verse 29, I've obeyed your commands, but you never gave me a goat to celebrate with my friends. You know, these people who have complaints against God, you never answered my prayer, you never did this, you never did this for me.

And who are so conscious, I have done this, I have done this for you. And the father says, son, verse 31, all that is mine is yours. Why couldn't he enjoy it? When a father says everything I have is yours, why couldn't this elder brother enjoy it? Because he was calculating.

His mind had a calculating attitude. He compared himself with his younger brother. He said, I deserve more than him.

He said, such people are miserable. There are Christians like that. And then you find that the one who went away from the father's house is the one who gets everything finally.

Because he comes in brokenness as a sinner. I call this the story of the two sons like this. This is the story where in the beginning, the younger son is outside the house and the elder son is inside.

And at the end of the story, the elder son is outside and the younger son is inside. Why? Those who are, Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, those who are calculating, those who judge others, say, look at that fellow, he's not like me. They'll always be outside the house.

The people who are calculating the commands they have obeyed, Lord, I have done this, I have done this, they'll always be outside the house. That's what a legalist is. But the younger son, even though he had failed, he came in brokenness.

He was inside the house. He's the one who enjoyed all that the father has. So as I said, that was the secret of Jesus' life and I wanted it in my life desperately.

I said, this is the life I want to live on the earth. It's the only life I want to live where everything that the father has is mine. Because he tells me in verse 23, John 17, 23, that the world must know that you sent me and the world must know that you love them as you love me.

It's not just enough for me to know it. First, I must know it. My heavenly father loves me exactly as much as he loved Jesus.

Why? Because I have said to him, all that is mine is yours. Now there are lots of people who are going around claiming that verse, I thank you father, you love me as you love Jesus, but he doesn't. Because you have not said to him, all that is mine is yours.

You're living in a world of delusion. If you say to Jesus, all, if you say to the father, all that is mine is yours, father. I counted all rubbish compared to you and to Jesus, your son.

He will say to you, I love you as I love my son. And what I did for Jesus, I'll do for you. I remember when that truth gripped me many years ago and I said, Lord, this is what brings security into my life.

What you did for Jesus, you will do for me. But I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had, all that is mine is yours. This is the, this is the Christian life, this is the new wine.

And if you haven't tasted it, you're like the people in the marriage in Cana, either still tasting the old wine or with the wine having run out. You know, there, I see there in the marriage of Cana, a wonderful lesson and that is, they had to confess to Jesus that the wine is finished. That's very difficult for sometimes for believers to admit, Lord, I don't have joy in my life.

I do not rejoice in the Lord always. Lord, I have anxiety in my life. I'm depressed at times.

I'm gloomy. I'm in bad moods. My mind is occupied with so many things.

For myself, I have, I'm not here to judge anybody else, but for myself, I have felt that one of God's great gifts to me, believe it or not, is good sleep. It says in Psalm 127, verse 2, he gives sleep to his beloved. I know that my heart is at rest and my mind is at rest and I can sleep.

All is well between me and God. I desire nothing outside of his will and he gives his beloved sleep. I say, Lord, I want it so that I can be fresh to serve you every day, enough to serve you, that's all.

I'm not saying how much it should be. And it says here in this translation, he gives to his beloved in his sleep. That means he rewards us and blesses us even though we don't, haven't done anything for it.

What a wonderful life this is. I believe my brothers and sisters that most of us have missed the full glory of true Christianity. The life of Jesus, because we've been satisfied with something substandard.

We've looked around at other Christians and think that is a normal Christian life. It is not. For many years, I lived like that.

Till I decided to come to the scriptures and I say, Lord, I see verses. I mean, Old Testament, I don't see these verses, but in the New Covenant, I see verses like Paul sitting in a prison, in a Roman dungeon with the rats and cockroaches and mosquitoes all around. He says, rejoice in the Lord always.

I say, Lord, that's the life I want. If the Apostle Paul could have that in a Roman dungeon with all the misery around him, I can have it even if I'm living in a house surrounded by rats and cockroaches and mosquitoes. Can you rejoice in the Lord always if you're living in a house surrounded by rats and cockroaches and mosquitoes? Paul could.

That's why he wrote Philippians 4.4. Most of us think, yeah, we can do that if everything is very comfortable. Brother, you haven't understood Christianity. Sitting in that Philippian jail, not knowing what's going to happen, he says another thing in Philippians 4.6. In nothing be anxious.

He's chained to a Roman prisoner, not knowing whether they'll chop off his head or what will happen next. He says, don't be anxious. Commit everything to the Lord.

He will take care of it all. It's a wonderful life when you can say to the Lord, I desire nothing but you on this earth. Do you think he'll make you miss out on his plan for your life? Never.

And you who are married, do you think your children will miss out on what God has for them? Never. He will give you the best. He will give your children the best.

David said in Psalms 37 and verse 25, and this is an old covenant man. How much more in the new covenant? David wrote most of his Psalms as a young man, but he wrote this when he was around 70, towards the end of his life. It's one of the very few Psalms that David wrote towards the end of his life.

And he's looking back over a life that he's seen what all God has done for him. And he says, don't be disturbed because of evil doers, etc. Trust in the Lord and do good, verse 3. And he says in verse 25, Psalm 37, 25, once I was young, now I'm an old man.

But till today, and this is inspired by the Holy Spirit, I've never seen a righteous man forsaken. And I've never seen his descendants begging for bread. Begging for bread means they don't have a job.

Or they are constantly in debt. Not begging for bread means your children get jobs. It doesn't matter if there's a big recession and a high unemployment rate in the country.

If you are righteous, if you are righteous, God's word says your children will get jobs. They will not be in debt. And not only that, descendants means your grandchildren will get jobs.

They will not be in debt. Do you want this life? I want it. I want to bless my children.

Any amount of money you give to your children, they may still run into debt and be jobless and beg. But if you are righteous, your children will always have jobs. They will get the best.

They won't be millionaires. God won't ruin them like that, perhaps. But he'll give them enough.

And if they need a million to live, God will give them even that. That's not the point. The point is, he will take care of them.

I don't know why people don't want this wonderful life of Jesus, where he's everything. God's great desire when he sent his son to the earth was that all of us might have that life. But you know, you long for something only if you admire it.

There are people who hear about businessmen who started out with nothing and little by little built up that business and become millionaires. And they said, that's what I want. I want to do that.

Because they admire that. And many of them pursue that. And maybe they make it also.

And if you admire the life of Jesus and say, Lord, that life you lived on earth was the best life any human being ever lived. I want to study that life and I want to see the secret of that life. I want it in me.

A life completely free from complaining, murmuring, grumbling, no expectation from others. You know why we have so many complaints? Because we have so many expectations from others. I expect people to respect me or to do something for me.

Then I get disturbed and they don't do it. I get disturbed when they don't give me the respect I think I deserve. I mean, Jesus is not everything.

I want Jesus plus some respect from maybe younger people. I'm an old man and people should respect me. As far as I'm concerned, I call that garbage.

Respect, garbage. I must respect others. I respect older people, younger people.

I always speak respectfully. I don't think there's a single young person here who can say that I have spoken disrespectfully to them. I speak respectfully to all people, young or old.

But I don't expect anybody to speak respectfully to me. I'll tell you honestly, that's the truth. I cannot be offended if somebody speaks disrespectfully to me because I don't expect it.

I don't expect people to think of my, to be considerate towards me. Not at all. That's my life at rest.

I always love to think of this passage in John 7, where Jesus preached this fantastic message, powerful message about being filled with the Holy Spirit, rivers of living water, and so many people were blessed. And people were so excited when they heard it. Verse 40, John 7, 40.

They said, this is definitely the prophet. This is the great Messiah. Verse 41.

Of course, some were disturbed, but there were a lot of people who were excited about the message. But at the end of the message, we read in verse 53, everybody went to their own home, and nobody asked Jesus, Lord, where are you staying tonight? Your home is up in Capernaum. Here, this is Jerusalem.

Do you have a, do you have a bed for the night? Nobody asked him. Isn't that amazing? You can be so blessed by a preacher, Jesus himself, and not even find out where he's going to sleep that night. Nobody asked him.

They just all went off to their home. Was Jesus disturbed? No. It says in the next verse, we just went to the Mount of Olives and slept under the open sky.

Thank you, Father, it's not raining today. It's a great sky. I can lie down here and have a quiet rest.

And he slept without any complaint. Brother, sister, be like that. That is the life of Jesus.

This is the one I want to be like. And he comes next morning, early in the morning, comes back to preach. Verse 2. And all the people came to him, sat down, and he began to teach them, and nobody asked, where did you sleep last night, Lord? No.

They don't even think about it the next morning. I say, Lord, this is the life I want. This is the life I want to live, where I have no expectation that anybody should be considerate about my needs and my feelings and my this and my that.

Look back at your life. Isn't the reason for all your misery because somebody was not considerate to you and somebody didn't do this and somebody didn't do that? And what an unhappy life you live. Seek for the mind of Christ.

The Holy Spirit has come to give us the very mind of Christ, the life of Jesus. This is the new wine God sent his Son, not only that he might forgive our sin, but he might give us his life. I turn to Romans in chapter 5. It speaks here about two types of salvation, and I feel that many of us have experienced only one.

Please read carefully. I know I've been encouraging you to read the Bible slowly these days. Romans 5, it says, through the blood of Christ, verse 9, Romans 5, 9, we are saved from the wrath, the anger, the judgment of God.

That's great. I have been saved through the blood of Jesus Christ, from the judgment of God upon all the sins I've committed because every one of them is blotted out through the blood of Jesus Christ. I'm cleansed.

But then I go to another step where it says in verse 10, the last part, we have to be saved by his life. Have you been saved by his life or only by his blood? This is another salvation. The other is forgiveness of my sins and salvation from the judgment of God.

But saved by his life means being saved by that life of Jesus that expected nothing from anyone, saved from complaining, saved from grumbling, saved from having expectations, saved from feeling that other people must always think about me, saved from bad moods and saved from anger and saved from getting upset, saved from all the things that make life miserable for everybody else on earth. It's a wonderful life. And when you experience this type of salvation by his life in your spirit, it will even affect your body.

I tell you, you'll be much healthier. You'll sleep better. You won't get upset and you won't be in a panic.

I'm absolutely convinced a lot of health problems among believers is because they're not saved by the life of Jesus. They have no desire for it. They are in for experiences and knowledge.

Yeah, I know I'm filled, baptized in the Holy Spirit, or I know that Jesus came in the flesh. So what? So what that you know that Jesus came in the flesh? So what that you had an experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues? Are you being saved by his life every day? This is the new wine, the life of Jesus springing up like a well, saving me from everything that the devil put into Adam and that I inherited, which the Bible calls my flesh. I need to be saved from it every day.

You know, in the Apostle John, we read in 1 John chapter 1, if you want to know the type of situation in Christendom when John was living at the age of 95, that's when he wrote that letter, 1 John. You just got to read the book of Revelation chapter 2 and 3 and see what a pathetic state Christianity was in by the end of the first century. There were one or two good churches, Philadelphia and Smyrna.

It's two out of seven. How much is that? Less than 30 percent. 70 percent of the churches were bad, so bad that the Lord was going to reject them as churches altogether, spit them out of his mouth, he says.

You have just a name that you're alive, you're dead. Imagine the Lord telling an elder brother in a church, you got a name that you're alive and you're dead. This was the condition of Christendom around in John's time, and John is writing to these churches and he says, dear brothers, do you know what you need? You don't need more prosperity, you don't need more healing, you don't need more supernatural gifts.

Today everybody says, oh you need the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, you need healing, you need tongues. I praise God, I speak in tongues, I've experienced healing and I've experienced supernatural gifts of prophecy and all that, but that's not the big thing for me. It wasn't the big thing for Jesus either who experienced more supernatural things than anybody else.

It was life. Listen to 1 John 1 and verses 1 to 3. He says, this is what we are going to preach, that which was from the beginning. Way back before Genesis 1 verse 1, we have heard about it when Jesus came to

earth, we heard it, we saw it with our eyes in Him and we looked at it and we touched it.

This life that was from the beginning. Verse 2, this life was manifested on this earth, which this life which was from the beginning. We saw it in Jesus and we testify about it, this eternal life.

What was there in the beginning before Genesis 1 verse 1? What is the life that Jesus had? There was no healing, there was no doctrine, there was no speaking in tongues, there was no prosperity, there was nothing. It was life that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit had. He said that's what we preach.

We're taking you back to the beginning of time when there were none of the all these supernatural gifts and all, it was life. And that's what we proclaim. We have seen it, we testify to it, which is the life which was with the Father.

We have seen and heard and that verse 3 is what we proclaim to you. I wish there were more preachers who were proclaiming that life today. They would be like the Apostle John.

But you can proclaim it only if you have it, only if you're living it. To me it's the most exciting thing, the greatest thing that God can ever give you is the life of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. And I'm sorry that so many have missed it.

And where does this life lead us to? When two people have this life, it says it will lead them to a fellowship, verse 3. First of all, it will bring this man who has this life, verse 3, into fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. Do you know that you cannot have fellowship with the Father on the basis of a doctrine? You can take all the doctrines you believe and say, yeah, it's all correct. You don't have fellowship with the Father.

It's not just by doctrine, it's by a life that we come into fellowship with the Father. And when we come into fellowship with the Father and here's another brother who comes into fellowship with the Father, there'll be fellowship between us and there will be no strife. There will be no strife.

That is the new wineskin. You get a number of people like that together and they become what we call the body of Jesus Christ without strife, like the human body. How many years the members of this body have functioned together without fighting with each other? I praise God for a taste of that here on earth.

I can honestly say that with Brother Ian Robson and myself, we have worked together for 36 years. As God is our witness, we have never had one day of strife. We are different.

We disagree. That's like saying these two hands are different. In this palm, in this palm, the thumb is this side.

In this palm, the thumb is on the other side. Complete opposites. God didn't make this palm like this.

That would have been odd. God brings people together who are opposites and that's certainly how Ian and I are, but we've had fellowship. I've experienced that with my wife.

This is how God wants it to be, the life of Jesus. We don't sit down and check whether we agree in all the little items of doctrine. Our unity is not based on doctrine.

It's based on life. When we have life, we have fellowship. Go back to the beginning.

What was from the beginning? Chapter 1 verse 1. Let's try and use our mind to go back beyond Genesis 1 verse 1 and see what was there. There was no doctrine. There was no Bible.

There was no church. There was no New Testament pattern. There was no new covenant teaching.

There was life which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit had and it was a life of love. That life was love and they had fellowship. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit had fellowship.

Those were the only two things there were way back in eternity. Today we have a Christendom that's arguing and fighting about so many doctrines, but they don't have life and fellowship. Life is the new wine and that fellowship which builds a church is the new wineskin.

That's what Jesus spoke about. It's the same thing John is speaking about. And if you read his letter, it's very interesting.

You know that three people wrote the Gospels before John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And Luke says he even made a careful examination of everything before he wrote.

But what surprises me, I'll tell you honestly, is that none of them wrote the prayer that Jesus prayed in John 17. And they all wrote it 30-40 years before John wrote his epistle at the age of 95. How is it they missed out on that? Matthew was sitting there listening.

Mark and Luke we can excuse because they were not sitting there listening and Mark heard it from Peter perhaps and Luke heard it from different people. But Matthew was sitting there. How is it he left out John 17? And how is it that 65 years later the Apostle John remembers so much of it that he can write it down? You know what we remember? We remember the things which we really love to remember.

It's true. What our heart is drawn to, we remember. Let me give you a bad example of it.

If you have read pornographic stories or seen pornographic pictures, even for a few minutes, how is it you can remember those stories and pictures 30 years later? But so many other things that happened last year you've forgotten. Because memory does not remember everything. Memory, your subconscious tells your memory, this is very important, this man loves this, you got to store it up.

That's why it's stored up all that rubbish of pornography that you read years ago and the pictures you saw years ago, they're stored up there. Or if you've got a particular love for keeping grudges against other people who harmed you, you got absolute details of everything that they did stored up because your subconscious tells your memory, hey this guy loves grudges. He likes to tell other people details of what all they did 25 years ago and that's how you suddenly find a husband or wife suddenly telling them you remember 25 years ago you did this and you remember 13 years ago you did this.

They can even remember the dates. It's amazing because they love these grudges and the subconscious has told the memory please store it carefully and have it readily accessible anytime this man wants it. I believe that's how the apostle John retained John 17 in his mind.

It moved him when he sat there leaning upon Jesus' breast, feeling the heartbeat of Jesus and he heard Jesus say, father I glorified you on earth and now I'm praying for these people. Don't take them out of the world, John 17 15, but keep them from evil. Please sanctify them, make them holy and I sanctified myself for their sake.

Make them holy, make them holy. That was his burden and make them one. If you want to know John 17 in a nutshell, it's two prayers, make them holy and make them one.

That is life and fellowship, the divine life and fellowship. Are you gripped by it? The new wine and the new wineskin, how much of a longing, let's just ask these two questions, how much of a longing do you have for this wonderful life of Jesus where you know you may not have much that this world offers but you live the most wonderful life that any human being can ever live? Many of us say that Jesus is the greatest life that ever lived but I don't think we really believe it. I've seen, I've sometimes been to the home, some homes of young people, they have some homes where the children have a room and they have a big poster of somebody they admire, maybe a cricketer or some rock musician or big poster of somebody they admires and they like to comb their hair like that and bat like that and bowl like that and sing like that.

Irish Christians hero worship Jesus. Say, Lord, I want to do everything the way you did it. I want to see how you did it.

I want to see how you lived on this earth, how you cared for people. I want to be gripped by that life. I want to see the secret of that life and I want it in my life.

And as you pursue that, you will find that God adds to you from here and there, one or two who have the same longing and that will be the nucleus of a local church. That's how we found it in different places. That's how I've come in touch with different brothers here and there who have the same longing for a life, not for a doctrine.

But I've also seen people who start like that and God blesses them and then a little church is formed and they become proud. I've also seen that elders who become proud and they look at the church they have built and they say like Daniel, not like Daniel, like Nebuchadnezzar. It says in Daniel 4 verse 29 and 30.

Daniel 4 29 and 30. He walked one day on the roof of his palace and he looked at this wonderful church he had built, Babylon. And he said, isn't this Babylon, a great church which I have built by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty.

Do you elder brothers ever feel like that? You have done something. You look out over a sermon you preached and say, boy what a sermon I preached there. Oh what a church I built.

Maybe your children are all following the Lord and you look at them and say, boy what a family I have built. Any Jerusalem can become Babylon in a moment. That's all it requires.

Just look out over what you have accomplished and say, see what I've done. And as soon as that word came out of the king's mouth, God's judgment came upon him and he was driven away. I've seen God withdraw his grace from elders who have gloried in what they have done.

From people who have gloried in something they have accomplished. That is why I say to all of you whom God has blessed, dear brothers and sisters, keep your face in the dust. As God blessed your children in spiritual ways, material ways, put your face in the dust and say, Lord thou alone are worthy.

We are unprofitable servants. We have only done that which you told us to do. Be a worshiper.

Think more of how much Jesus loved you, more than how much you think you love him. There are dangers. The devil is there to trip us up.

But Jesus never tripped up. Never once did he sin. Never once did he become proud of his accomplishments.

We read once his fame spread because of his healing power. Luke chapter 5 verse 15 and 16. He immediately rushed off into the wilderness and got alone with his father because he was like us.

He could be tempted. We need to sometimes get away and get alone with God and put our face in the dust and say, Lord the glory is all yours. I will not touch it.

I'm nothing. I'm a nobody. I wish to end my life on earth as a nobody.

I wish to be unknown. I remember as a young Christian I wrote these words in my Bible. Dead to the world and its applause.

To all the customs and fashions and laws of those who hate the humbling cross. So dead that no desire may rise to appear good or great or wise in any but my savior's eyes. Let's go that way and preserve ourselves in brokenness and humility till Jesus comes.

Amen. Let's pray. Father what a wonderful life you have offered us in Christ Jesus our savior.

It excites us and we want to experience that more and more however long it takes and whatever price we have to pay save us from being deceived by the empty trinkets that Satan offers us. The glory of the world which he offered you and which he offers us help us to reject it as quickly as you rejected it to seek the glory of God in everything. Yes Lord India needs to see the glory of God.

India needs to see homes and churches that glorify Christ and we just say we are available to build that church. We can't do it but you can do it through weak empty vessels. Thank you you can do it so that all the glory will be yours.

We honor you. Thank you for this day and all that it has brought. We humbly thank you in Jesus name.

Amen.

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