

A Bridal Relationship

by Zac Poonen

Jesus teaches us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and to deepen our connection with Him by knowing Him as our Heavenly Father.

Duration: 56:45

Scripture: Exodus 39:32

Topics: "Intimacy With God", "Kingdom Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the invitation of Jesus to come to Him and find rest from religious burdens. He encourages listeners to walk and work with Jesus, learning the unforced rhythms of grace. The preacher highlights the importance of having a strong connection with God and responding to His call. He also discusses the need to seek God's kingdom and righteousness rather than pursuing worldly desires, trusting that God knows and provides for our needs. The sermon references John 20, Psalm 42:7, and 1 Corinthians 14 to support these teachings.

Transcript

I want to turn to John's Gospel and chapter 1. This was just after Jesus' baptism, when he began his ministry. John the Baptist had just said about him, verse 36, John 1, 36, Behold the Lamb of God! And two of John's disciples heard John speak, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, What do you seek? Now, I don't know when this took place.

It's probably, if Jesus went into the wilderness immediately after his water baptism, this probably took place after that one day when John said this. It says the next day, John, this is after his baptism. And the first question, one of the first questions that Jesus asked anybody at the beginning of his ministry was this question.

It's a very good question for us to think about. In John chapter 1 and verse 38, What do you seek? He asked this, not of every Tom, Dick and Harry that was around there. He asked this of two disciples who wanted to follow him.

And I trust most of us sitting here are like those disciples, wanting to follow him. But Jesus knows that people can follow him for various reasons. And so whenever he sees people following him, he says, What do you seek? When he sees you come to this meeting, he says, What do you seek? And when he sees that you choose a particular church over the many other churches that you have an option to choose, he

asks you, What do you seek by coming to this church? And you have to give an answer to him.

It's the Lord who comes seeking after us. You know, Jesus taught that in the story of the lost sheep, that all we like sheep have gone astray and the Lord as a good shepherd comes seeking for that lost sheep. But there has to be a seeking on our part.

There is a verse in Psalm 42 which says, Deep calls unto deep. And I understand that to mean that something deep within God's heart calls to something deep within my heart. And if there's something deep within my heart that cries out to God, then we have a connection.

But if God from the depths of his heart calls out to us and we don't have a response from the depth of our heart, then there is no connection. The thing I have observed with many Christians is their connection with God is very superficial. It's like a very thin string holding up something very heavy and you don't know when it will break.

That's how many people's connection is. Because it's so thin, it's breaking all the time and they've got to tie it up again and it breaks again and breaks again. And some people are satisfied with that type of a Christian life where the string breaks, the connection with God is gone, you tie it up again.

It breaks again and you tie it up again. But God's will is that we should have a very strong connection with him and his deep calls unto our deep and we must respond. So the question he asks is, what do you seek? And we must have an answer for that.

At the end of John's Gospel, this is the beginning, when you come to the end of John's Gospel and you see after his resurrection, this is the beginning of his ministry and after his resurrection is another new beginning because it's a new creation. There he had just come out of the waters and the temptation. Here he's come out of the grave in John chapter 20.

And this time he finds Mary Magdalene waiting around in that garden near the tomb when all the other disciples had come and looked and gone away. It says in verse 10, John 20:10, the disciples went away again to their own home because it was pretty early in the morning and their sleep was disturbed. I don't know, they got up at four o'clock in the morning or something and they said, we've got to go back to sleep.

We can't find Jesus, I don't know what's happened. But Mary also had got up early and she was not going to go home to sleep because if Jesus was laid in that tomb and somebody had taken him away, that's what she thought. She didn't know he was raised from the dead.

Even though he said that many times, they didn't believe it. She thought somebody had taken his body away and she was determined to find it. And there was something in her heart, even though she had been a demon-possessed woman with seven demons inside her and probably because of those demons lived an immoral life, I don't know.

But there was when she was converted and she saw how much the Lord had forgiven her, her sinful life. I often think that if the thief on the cross had been taken down from the cross and he had been released at the last minute and he had lived, I think he would have lived a very wholehearted life because he was forgiven so much. And Jesus says, the one who is forgiven much, loves much.

The one who realizes he's been forgiven much. We've all been forgiven much. Is there anybody here who has been forgiven little? Nobody.

But the realization of how much we've been forgiven varies within all of us. It varies tremendously. And that's why there is a different degree of love for Christ.

There's a different degree of something coming out of the depths of our heart to the Lord. Because we are not so sure how much we've been forgiven. And so there's nothing crying out from our depths.

Mary Magdalene had been forgiven a tremendous lot. She was something like that thief on the cross, a sinner who had been forgiven. And so she couldn't just go away and sleep like the other disciples.

Maybe they were not, you know, I don't think Peter, James, and John were such criminals or lived an immoral life. They probably lived an upright life. They were forgiven but they didn't have that awareness of being forgiven so much like Mary Magdalene.

And so she stayed there. And Jesus comes to her with the same question. In verse 15, with a slight change.

Not what are you seeking, but John 20 verse 15. Whom are you seeking? See that's how the Gospel of John begins and ends. What are you seeking? Whom are you seeking? As soon as he's resurrected from the dead.

As soon as he begins his ministry, he starts asking, what do you seek? As soon as he's raised from the dead, he again asks that one person who is looking for him. Whom are you seeking? God seeks for us but he cannot have a close connection with us unless there's something in us from the depth of our heart that reaches out to him and says, Lord, your face I will seek. You said to me to seek you and your face I will seek.

So we see here, that is what Mary was seeking. She was seeking Jesus. She wasn't seeking anything else.

When Jesus began his ministry, sorry, when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. The first sermon in the New Testament. That's the longest sermon.

He speaks there also about seeking. And I want you to turn to that. The first time that word seek comes in the New Testament.

In connection with what we were just considering. Jesus said in verse 32, the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things. Gentiles means non-Christians in today's language.

People who don't know the Lord, who don't know the Bible. The non-Christians, the people in the world, let's say the people in the world. Eagerly seek for some things.

When we say non-Christians, it's not exactly a right word. Because 90% of Christians are also Gentiles. They are not really disciples of Jesus Christ.

They eagerly seek. What do the worldly people eagerly seek? See, everybody in the world is seeking for something. And we can ask ourselves, what do the people in the world eagerly seek for? Because Jesus spoke about it.

All these things the Gentiles eagerly seek for. Here he spoke about, verse 31, about food and clothing. And we can certainly say that those people in the world eagerly seek for rich food and rich clothing.

It's a big thing for them. Maybe women more than men, they're never satisfied with the number of clothes they have. They always go, wherever they go, they want to go shopping and buying.

Even though they got plenty. And food. You know, wherever money comes, you find a multiplying of all types of restaurants.

Because that's what they want. Food and clothing shops. All these things the Gentiles eagerly seek.

And that's not all. In order to get those things, they need money. So you have to first seek for money before you can go to all those fancy restaurants and buy all that fancy clothing.

So they are seeking after money. And very often to get money, you need a position or power. Then you make money.

You know, be a politician or some big shot. And so they seek for position and honor and money. All these things the Gentiles seek.

What about us? We're supposed to be disciples. And the Lord asks us a very searching question today. If He were to stand before you today, and you're standing before Him, stripped of all the religious outward pretense, and He asks you, what are you seeking down in the depth of your heart? What are you seeking? He said, this is what you should be seeking, verse 33.

This is what Christians, disciples, should be seeking. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. And all the other things that you need will be added to you.

He will add to you exactly how much you need. See, I've discovered that through the years, I have really, God is my witness, I've really tried to live by verse 33 for many, many years now. And I've discovered that God regulates how much I get.

That's very good, because if I have too little, I may be thinking all the time about it. If I have too much, I may be lavish. And also, He knows when to give us.

See, I'll tell you, one of the great fears I have these days is of young people earning such a fantastic amount of money. They don't know how to spend it. I'll tell you honestly, I'm so thankful that when I was a young person, I did not earn the type of money a lot of young people are earning today.

I mean, if you're really spiritual and wholehearted, it can't touch you. You know, like the Apostle Paul said, I know how to be rich, and I know how to be poor. I know how to abound in prosperity, and I know how to get along with very little.

But you've got to get to Paul's level to be able to say that. Not everybody can handle that. Most people tend to seek God when they have need, when they have some type of pressure, and they tend to be more careful.

Isn't it true that when we get more money, we tend to be more careless with money? It doesn't mean much to us. So, I'm really scared when I see the way a lot of young people are earning today. But if we leave it to God, if I seek God's kingdom first and His righteousness, that's the passion of my heart.

In other words, the deep within me calls out unto the deep of God. Let me show you that verse in case you don't know where it is. It's in Psalm 42 and verse 7. Deep calls to deep at the sound of your waterfalls.

You know, so, something within me calls out to God in response to His call for me. And so I have a very deep connection with God. If I'm seeking what He has told me to seek, seek His kingdom first and His righteousness.

And it's obvious from these passages that I should not be seeking those things which the Gentiles are seeking. But the Lord knows that I need them. He said that here very clearly.

Your Heavenly Father, verse 32, knows that you need these things. Why do the Gentiles seek them? Because they have no Heavenly Father. I mean, think if here are two, say, eight-year-old children.

Two eight-year-old boys. One has a very rich father and the other is an orphan. Father and mother are both dead.

The one who is an orphan, he has to go seeking for so many things. He has to seek for a place to stay. He's got to seek for food.

He's got to find a job. At the age of eight. But the one who's got a rich father and mother, his father knows what he needs.

And his father provides. That's the contrast here in verse 32. The people of the world are orphans.

They don't have anybody to care for them. So they have to go seeking. You know, you see these small boys going picking up things from the garbage bin and going here and seeking for food and seeking for something or the other.

That's the picture of the world. Of everybody in the world. They're seeking, seeking, seeking.

And in the midst of it is the child of God. He's got a rich father in heaven. His father says, your father knows that you need those things.

Which these people are seeking for. Your father knows that you need those things. That orphan has to go seeking for it.

But this person is not an orphan. And it's in such situations that we really discover whether our knowledge of God as a father is only theory, only a ritual where we say father. In fact, most Christians don't even pray to the father.

Jesus said when you pray, say our father in heaven. Most Christians don't even pray to the father. I'm not saying it's wrong to pray to Jesus.

You can pray Lord Jesus, that's fine. But it probably indicates that you don't know the father. You know the Bible doesn't teach that Jesus is our father.

Jesus said my father and your father. And supposing your father died and you had a good elder brother, very good elder brother. It's not the same as having a father.

I'll tell you that. You can have a very good elder brother who cares for you. But it's not the same as having a father.

Jesus is my elder brother but I also have a father. It's good to have an elder brother and a father. How many of you know the father? Jesus said I am the way.

No one comes to the father but by me. You know the whole purpose of his coming was that through him as a way we can come to the father. That is the reason why the veil in the temple was torn because the father was inside.

And the veil it says was Jesus' body, his flesh. And through that veil we come to the father. Your heavenly father knows that you need these things.

And I'll tell you this. The test is this. If you don't know the father you will seek all the things that the people in the world seek.

And you'll be very happy when you get them. We live in a generation of Christians that are seeking. What do you think the preachers today on television and in the great so called mega churches are telling people to seek? Well, if you read about it or you watch Christian television you know what all the preachers are telling people to seek.

And ask yourself. Aren't the Christians being told to seek exactly what the worldly people seek? The preachers say Jesus can give you a better house. Well, that's exactly what everybody in the world is seeking.

Anybody who is working is looking forward to the day when he can build a house and settle down. Or people who have vehicles, want a better vehicle, maybe a scooter, car, anything that Jesus can give it. That's exactly what everybody seeks.

A person's salary increases, he gets rid of his scooter and buys a car. That's fine. But I'm not saying there's anything wrong in that.

I'm just saying that that's what people are told that Jesus will do for you. They are told that Jesus will... What about health? That's another thing people are told that Jesus will give you. Is there a single person in the world who doesn't seek for health? They eagerly seek it.

Look at the lakhs of rupees they spend on hospitals and doctors to get health. Health and wealth are what the entire world is seeking. They are eagerly seeking it.

And we live in a generation today where preachers are teaching Christians to seek for the same thing. Even though it's the very first thing he said about seeking in the Sermon on the Mount is all these things the Gentiles seek. And he asks you when you come to him and become a disciple, what are you seeking? Why are you coming after me? Whom are you seeking? Are you seeking me? Or seeking something I can give? You know, A.B. Simpson who wrote that song, Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord.

It was a crisis he had in his life, where he found he was seeking for blessing, not the Lord. He was seeking for it, not him. And a lot of Christians, even when they seek for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, it's an it.

Are you seeking it? Or are you seeking him? There's a lot of difference. Even when you seek for the blessing of the Lord. The Lord's question after his resurrection was, Whom are you seeking? So, the whole purpose of Christ's coming was, he came to earth seeking for a bride.

Sometimes we lose sight of that. He came to earth looking for a bride. And he wants a bride who wants to marry him not for his money, but for himself.

I mean, there are millions of girls in the world who want to marry a man for his money. And there are people who want to marry Jesus for health or wealth or something. But, you know, such marriages, there's no love really.

The woman loves the money and loves all the things that her husband can buy her. But then you hear of other stories of people who love one another so deeply, they don't have much in this world, but they really deeply love one another. And their happiness doesn't depend on what they can get from each other.

It's just each other. And that's how the Lord wants us to seek him. What do you seek? Whom do you seek? What are you seeking me for? Because you've got something for me.

Once Jesus turned around to certain people who were following him and told them in John's Gospel, chapter 6. John chapter 6, verse 26. He said, I know why you are seeking me. It's not because you saw the miracles and you saw that I was the Son of God.

The miracles were to confirm that Jesus was God's Son. But because you ate of the loaves and you were filled. Don't work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life.

These are such clear statements in scripture and yet we hardly find much preaching nowadays on it. And that's the reason why many Christians don't have a deep connection with God. And that's why they are easily shaken.

You know one mark of having a deep connection with God is you are not shaken when in a time of trial. And I believe one of the reasons why God allows some trials to come our way is to show us that our connection with him is not as deep as it should be. Because we are not seeking him.

Maybe we are seeking it. Whatever that it is. You may say well I'm not seeking the it of money and health.

I'm seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You can be seeking it as a thing. A power.

Boy other people have got this power. I want that. Let me urge you brothers and sisters.

Seek for him. He has come seeking for a bride who will marry him even if they get nothing from him. It's enough Lord I have you.

See what David. I believe this is one reason why despite all his mistakes he was a man after God's own heart. He said in Psalm 27.

Psalm 27 and verse 4. I'm asking God only for one thing. Isn't that great? I'm asking God for only one thing. One thing and only one thing.

To live with him my whole life long and to behold his beauty. This is a girl who is in love. It's like those wonderful love stories we have read in our younger days.

Where you know some poor couple fall in love with each other. They only have each other. They don't have much money or anything.

But they really love one another. And they say well I'll stay if you are in a hut. I'll live in a hut with you.

That's enough. I just want to sit and see your face. We look at each other.

David loved Jesus. Loved God like that you know. And there was something deep within David that cried out to God and something deep within God cried out to him.

He slipped up. He was under the old covenant. We don't have to slip up like him in the new covenant because he didn't have the Holy Spirit within him.

He only had the Holy Spirit upon him. But we have him within. And he cries out from within.

This should be our longing. Lord I'm only seeking one thing. That I can be with you all the time.

Will you grant me that? That wherever I go you are with me. Imagine what a lot of problems will be solved in your life if you decide that you just want the Lord's presence with you wherever you go. You go to these difficult government offices and the Lord is with you.

You drive down the road and the Lord is with you. And wherever you go you go to a home and the Lord is with you. All the time.

David says that's all I'm seeking. Lord I want to be with you. All the time.

Paul was in prison. The Lord was with him. It says about Joseph when he was in prison the Lord was with him.

When he was in the palace the Lord was with him. It didn't make a difference where Joseph went. If Joseph moved to the palace the Lord was there.

If Joseph moved to the jail the Lord was there. And then he moved again to some palace the Lord was there. The Lord was with Joseph because that's what he wanted.

And I believe Joseph had that type of longing from the time he was 17 years old. Imagine he had dreams about God when he was 17 years old. What are most 17 year old young men dreaming about nowadays? Usually something filthy.

But Joseph had dreams of God at the age of 17 which means that there was something deep within his heart as a 17 year old boy that longed after God. Though he was not in the new covenant. He had that bridal spirit.

And that's what I want to encourage you. The bridal spirit that responds to the bridegroom seeking after us. As I've encouraged you many times, read the Song of Solomon as a picture of Christ and you.

I really love that. It's the first book in the Bible that I studied. I didn't know which of the 66 books I had to study.

I was baptized in 1961 January and I didn't take the Bible. I used to read my Bible regularly for a year and a half before that when I was born again. But it's only after the baptism that I really took Bible study seriously.

And I was in a ship out at sea. Probably see a believer once in a month or something. And I was the only believer on that ship.

And God knew what he had in mind for me 40 years later. I didn't know that. And he in some wonderful way ensured that in that cabin I lived in on my ship.

I had the Bible and one thin little commentary on the Song of Solomon. It's all I had. So it's not because of some divine leading that I went to Song of Solomon.

I had nothing else to study. That was the only book I had. I didn't know how to study the Bible.

But I had this book. And so I said okay, this is the only, I can't understand all the other books in the Bible. So let me study Song of Solomon.

And boy, if you look at my first Bible I still have it with me. All types of notes I wrote on that Song of Solomon. I think it's the most thickly written pages of my Old Testament in there.

And I saw there that right from that time, 46 years ago, the Lord was drawing me into a bridal relationship with him. And teaching me to live only for his honor. Only to seek his favor.

And only to be with him wherever he goes. And not to think of ministry. There is a little bit of ministry mentioned in Song of Solomon.

You know, the bride says, let's go to the vineyards and see how they are. But it's always let us, not let me go and check up something. No, no, no.

Let's both go together to the fields and to the vineyards and let's see how it is. Whom do you seek? What do you seek? Do you come to a church just to get a good message? Or do you come to this church because you say, Lord, I want to meet with you. I want the word of the Lord to bring me in touch with you.

I have always felt, you know, many, many, many groups have sought to have a New Testament church. The brethren. The brethren assemblies.

They, from the beginning, when they started 150 years ago, they said, we want a New Testament pattern. The Pentecostals. I mean, these are two groups particularly that really sought for a New Testament pattern.

And the brethren have some of it and the Pentecostals have some of it. And when I was converted, God took me to the brethren. And see, their understanding of pattern was that the meeting must be like this.

You sing and somebody shares a word and you sing something and somebody prays and informal. They call that the leading of the spirit. The dead is anything.

It can't be the leading of the Holy Spirit. Have you heard people say like this in a public meeting? I've heard it many times. Those who are led by the spirit, please lead in prayer.

I never pray whenever I hear that. I mean, if they had said if anybody wants to pray, they'll pray, then I'll pray. But when they use this spiritual language, those who are led by the spirit, it's all super spiritual self-deception.

Jesus never said anything like that. And so, you know, there was this understanding that if it was all informal, it was the Holy Spirit. It wasn't.

It was dead is anything. And so the Pentecostals reacted against that. I said, this is all dead.

We don't want this. You know, the early Pentecostals in India were brethren people initially. And they, I think they had a genuine experience with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the beginning, but then they got

taken up with emotion.

That was intellect and this was emotion. Both were not Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit is not in our mind, it's not in our emotion.

He's deeper than that, in our spirit. Deep calls unto deep. And the deep is something far deeper than mind and emotion.

That's what makes our life solid. You know when Jesus said, the wise man and the foolish man both hear my words, but the wise man digs deep, it says in Luke chapter 6. That is the Sermon on the Mount in Luke 6. It says 47 or 48, it goes deep. He goes through the sand till he hits rock.

Whereas the foolish man just doesn't dig so deep, he just lays it on the sand. What is the sand? The sand is this intellectual understanding of truths or emotional excitement about truths. That's all sand.

Intellect and emotion, it's all sand. You go deeper than that till God's Holy Spirit touches your spirit, where your will is yielded. Then you hit rock.

And that's what's got to be blasted. You know, you build a foundation on sand, you don't need any dynamite to blast anything. You just dig even as a spade will do.

But when you hit rock, a spade is not enough. You got to blast it. And what's got to be blasted is our will, our seeking our own interests, our seeking eagerly for the things that the Gentiles eagerly seek for, our own will.

It's got to be blasted and broken. Then the Holy Spirit comes in. But in 1 Corinthians 14, you know, I also was seeking from those days, New Testament church, and I found the answer here in 1 Corinthians 14.

To me, after 48 years of studying the Bible, let me give you in one verse, what is the mark of a New Testament church. New Testament church meeting. I'm talking about a meeting now.

It says here in verse 24, it's not all speaking in tongues. And that's in verse 23, it says, the whole church assembles together and everybody speaks in tongues. You know which group that is.

And people come in, they'll say, you're mad. That's right. But here's another church where the word of God comes forth prophetically, and a person, an unbeliever comes in, or an ungifted man.

Ungifted man means a man who doesn't believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He comes in there, and he's convicted. Word of God is like a hammer.

Word of God is like a fire that burns him. And his secret, you know, the secret selfishness, and the secret pride, and the secret jealousy, and the secret worldliness, all gets exposed in the meetings of the church. I mean, he came to the church, and suddenly he finds and hears the word, the secret sins, and the wrong attitudes, and the love of the world, and all that gets exposed, and he falls on his face and says, boy, God is certainly here.

God is certainly, verse 25, God is certainly among you, is the mark of the New Testament church. That's why in the Old Testament tabernacle, it was not the, there was a pattern. And if you read Exodus, chapter 39 and chapter 40, you read it sometime, 18 times, you'll see this expression.

Moses did as the Lord commanded him, as the Lord commanded him, in just two chapters, 18 times, he made the curtains as the Lord commanded, he made the boards as the Lord commanded, he made the altar as the Lord commanded, he made this as the Lord commanded, and at the end of it, it says, thus, Moses finished the work, and the glory of the Lord came upon the tabernacle. You know, that was the mark of that Old Testament tabernacle. It wasn't just the pattern.

The fire of God was there. If some Philistine had got a copy of the book of Exodus, they could have made a tabernacle exactly like that. We can make one today like that.

Because all the descriptions there, length, material, everything. But there's one thing the Philistines would not have been able to produce, and we can't produce either. That's the fire of the glory of God resting upon it.

That you can't produce. And I'll tell you, you know, you can do all the things that a Christian is supposed to do. Sing the right song, speak the right language, and everything, and everything, etc., etc.

But there's one thing you cannot duplicate, and that is the presence of God. We can come to a church and say, oh, in this church we pray like this. Okay, I'm going to pray like that.

In this church we behave like this. Okay, we behave like that. It's a pattern.

It's good. The tabernacle also had a pattern. I'll tell you this, brothers and sisters, there was a time when that glory departed.

But the tabernacle was still the correct pattern. Pattern didn't change. The glory went.

The temple was made according to exactly as God spoke to David. It was exactly there. But one day the glory went.

And so that's the thing. When you lose that bridal spirit, when your longing is not that God should be here, what do you seek? Whom do you seek? I say, Lord, I seek you. I don't want to just come back from a meeting and say, well, that was a good message.

I sort of got all stirred up. For how long? A week? Till the next meeting comes along. I say, Lord, the trouble is I don't meet with you.

I want to meet with you. And that's the question the Lord's asking all of you today. Whom do you seek? What are you seeking for? Just a nice message? Or Jesus himself? There was a time when Jesus was walking down a road and huge crowds were pressing around him.

And suddenly Jesus says, who touched me? I said, what do you mean who touched you? Everybody's touching you. He said, no, no, no, no. Everybody's crowding around me.

But one person touched me by faith. Because I felt something going from me. Power.

Blessing somebody. I've often thought of that crowd as a picture of a meeting. Here we are, all sitting together, crowding around Jesus.

He's here. The Lord Jesus is here. He is as much here right now as if he were here physically.

And we crowd around him. But here and there, somebody touches him by faith. Somebody with a deep longing responds to the deep longing he has.

And those are the ones who meet with him before they go home. I wanted to be like that, not just in a meeting. I wanted to be like that every day of my life.

I'm in a bride and a bridegroom. What a world! You know, there's a difference between a wife and a bride. We're going to be the Lamb's wife one day.

But on earth, we're called the bride. And there's something wonderful about the bride. Because have you ever seen a bride who is depressed and gloomy? I've seen wives who are depressed and gloomy.

But brides who are depressed and gloomy, I've never seen one. Brides are always excited and, hey, I'm the bride. So I thank God that I'm the bride.

One day I'll be the wife, but then in heaven there won't be any opportunity to get depressed. So it's okay to be a wife there. But right now I'm a bride.

Think of that. Think of the day when you got married. If you really loved your wife or husband.

What a day that was. I remember my marriage day. It was really exciting.

Because I was marrying somebody I loved very much. And it's the same with my Christian life. I want to be a bride every day.

Excited that I can be with Jesus. I mean, it doesn't matter if I can't do much for Him. I want to say that, brothers and sisters.

Don't feel discouraged that you can't travel the world like some other brothers can. It doesn't matter. What did David say? There's only one thing I long for.

I want to be with you. What do you seek? Whom do you seek? Let me show you a couple of verses. Whom Jesus is inviting to come to Him.

Matthew chapter 11 and verse 28. Come to me. Not every Tom, Dick and Harry.

I want to say that not everybody is invited to come to Jesus. Only those who are weary and heavy laden. And I will give you rest.

You know, those who are sick and tired. Frustrated with their own Christian life. Do you feel like that today? Do you feel you're putting up a front? Because you belong to CSC.

You're supposed to be spiritual. And so you have to put up a front of rejoicing. And you're not like that.

You're pretty fed up and frustrated. And so many things wrong, going wrong. And you don't seem to have any victory.

You say, well, no hope for me. I want to tell you the good news. You're the one whom Jesus is calling.

Those who are weary and heavy laden. Those who are sick and tired of their... Frustrated of their life. And says, I will give you rest.

Here in the Message Bible it says, Are you burnt out on religion? Are you burnt out with religion? With rules and trying to behave like a Christian. And all the things that religion requires you. A lot of people are burnt out on religion.

Says, come to me. All of you who are burnt out on religion. Come to me and get away with me.

Let's go away together somewhere. This is the Bridegroom calling. Let's go away together somewhere.

And you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me.

Work with me. And watch how I do it. I like this.

If you can understand this English. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. Unforced means there is no compulsion.

Rhythm is a musical word. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. Heaven is going to be a place of music.

I will not lay anything heavy on you. Or something that doesn't fit for you. I know exactly what fits for you.

Keep company with me. This is again the voice of the Bridegroom. And you will learn to live freely and lightly.

Like I say often, there will be a spring in your step. A song in your heart. And a twinkle in your eye.

Because you are walking with Jesus. Every day. It's meant to be like that.

If you haven't got there. Don't get discouraged. Are you weary and heavy laden? He invites you to come.

I took some years. Number of years to get there. But I tell you.

I'm a very happy man today. Because I've learned to walk with Him. And any time the Lord asks me, What are you seeking? I say, I'm not seeking anything.

I'm seeking you. What do you want? I want you. That's it.

I think of another verse in John 7. Where Jesus told us who could come to Him. As far as I know. These are the two places where Jesus said, So and so can come to me.

One is those who are sick and tired. Or they are defeated, frustrated. Or their own failures.

The other is in John 7 verse 37 to 39. John 7 verse 37 to 39. He said, If anyone is thirsty, come to me.

See, He didn't come for the righteous and satisfied. And people are okay. He came for those who are thirsty.

There is something deep within that cries out. Lord, my soul thirsts after you. Like the psalmist says, Like the deer pants for water in a dry land.

My soul thirsts for you. I want to ask you. My brothers and sisters.

How many of you have ever said that to God even once? Lord, like the deer pants for the waters in a dry and thirsty land. My soul longs for you Lord. I don't care if I don't have a new car.

Or a better house. Or any such thing. Or money.

Or you'll take care of my needs. Exactly what I need. But I long for you.

How many people in the world are longing for Jesus? I know a lot of people are longing for what Jesus can do for them. The most common greeting used in the world in every religion is, God bless you. God is supposed to bless.

We want God's blessing. What He can do for me. What about God Himself? May God Himself be with you.

That's what we need. Lord, I'm thirsty for that. If you bless me, that's another thing.

But I'm thirsty for you. I want you. I want you more than anything else.

And one mark of such a life will be rest. We read in John's Gospel chapter 16. He never said that life will be easy for a disciple.

John 16 verse 33. He said, All these things I spoke to you so that in me you may have peace. Because in the world you'll have tribulation.

But don't get discouraged. I've overcome the world. What did Jesus promise His disciples? Tribulation.

He told all His disciples, I'm not promising you an easy life. I'm promising you tribulation. And every one of them was killed.

We don't know about John. Even John was persecuted pretty badly. They had tribulation.

All the time. Think about it. Paul says he's lost count about the number of times he got imprisoned.

He lost count about so many things like that. Persecution here, there and everywhere. He didn't promise them an easy life.

That was promised to the Old Testament people. Abraham was not imprisoned. David was not imprisoned.

God didn't say all that. But New Testament says, Which one was not imprisoned? Peter, James was killed in prison. Paul was in prison.

He told them that. He said, if you follow me, in the world you'll have tribulation. If you're seeking a comfortable, easy life, which all the Gentiles are seeking, just forget about being a Christian.

Be a Jewish disciple of Moses. That's okay. But you can't be a disciple of mine.

Because if you follow me, in the world you'll have tribulation. But in the midst of it all, you'll have peace in me. And he told them, why the world will trouble them.

He said in John chapter 15, verse 18. If the world hates you, you know it hated me before it hated you. And the reason the world does not love you, is because you don't belong to it.

If you were of the world, the world would love you. But because you're not of the world, and I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. My brothers, I think we have, we have it, most of us, fairly easy, good time we have.

But some of our brothers in this country also are facing persecution, because they are Christians. The world doesn't love Jesus Christ. I'll tell you that.

The world did not love Christ in the first century. It does not love Christ in the 21st century. And if you really stand for the Lord, Jesus chose us out of the world, the world will hate us.

The world in your school will hate you. The world in your college will hate you. The world in your place of work will hate you.

They'll try to trouble you in every possible way, because you're not of the world. We're like fish out of water. How many of us feel like fish out of water? You know how, have you seen a fish when it's outside the water? Just always restless, flapping, flapping, because it's not comfortable there.

And the Lord says, that's exactly how you'll be if you're a true Christian. You won't feel comfortable in this world. And if you don't feel comfortable in this world, you're blessed.

But he said, that doesn't mean you'll be restless like that fish. In me, you'll have peace. There'll be a deep inward peace, even though the world hates you, and they persecute you.

He said here in verse 20, if they persecute me, they'll persecute you also. If they persecute me, they'll persecute you also. Yeah.

They persecuted me first. And so they persecute you. Why did they do that? All these things they do to you, verse 21, 15, 21, because they don't know the Father.

They don't know the Father, that's why. But we are blessed, we know him. And we know Jesus is our bridegroom.

And he says, come to me and I'll give you rest. I want to encourage you, my brothers and sisters, in the days to come, we're going to face tribulation in India. If you're a true disciple of Jesus, it won't be easy.

And we need to learn before that day comes, how to have a deep relationship with our bridegroom and to be at rest in our hearts. And that can't come overnight. We have to work on it.

And I want to encourage you to start working right now. Work on it so that when that day of persecution comes, we'll be unshaken. Because we have a deep connection with our bridegroom.

Now let's pray. When our heads are bowed before God, I want to encourage you to respond. And like that woman, touch Jesus by faith.

To reach out and say, Lord, I want to touch you. I want to have a bridal relationship with you. I want to lean upon you and live this life.

There's only one thing I seek, Lord, that I might be with you all the time. Wherever I am, I can look at your beauty and see your beauty and be your worshipper. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16928.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/a-bridal-relationship/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net