

# (A Heavenly Life) 1. Seated in the Heavens

by Zac Poonen

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*Living a heavenly life means to prioritize our relationship with God and to live according to His will, demonstrating our faith through actions and prioritizing our relationship with Him above all else.*

**Duration:** 56:38

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:17, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37-39, Mark 2:21-22, Luke 9:62, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:2

**Topics:** "Heaven"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the challenges Christians face in the changing world. He emphasizes the importance of focusing our minds on godly thoughts amidst our daily tasks and responsibilities. The speaker also highlights the need to resist the temptation to judge others and instead strive to speak and think with kindness and love. He shares a personal anecdote about a driving incident to illustrate the importance of responding in a Christ-like manner. The sermon concludes by referencing the examples of Jesus and Peter, who continued preaching about the kingdom of heaven despite the challenges they faced.

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## Transcript

I want to share with you, God willing, over the next three Sundays, what I believe is a word which is appropriate for the time in which we live with many changes happening in the world around us. How are we to live as Christians at this time? In our own country where there's a lot of persecution of Christians, people being killed in some places just because they were Christians. And in addition to that, we have all this uncertainty about jobs and money problems.

And it's only going to get worse as we approach the end, not better, no matter what people say. Because whenever man drifts away from God, you know, he moves closer to the devil. And the devil's out to steal, kill, and destroy.

God is a God of love, but he has made things difficult on earth so that people don't imagine that their home is here, that we were created just for this earth. And that's the reason why he shakes many things. Look at Hebrews 12, verse 26, it says, His voice shook the earth, and that's in the Old Testament times.

But now he has promised, once more I'll shake not only the earth, but also heaven. Then it says, this yet once more denotes the removing of things that can be shaken as of creative things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. So, what it means is, if your dependence is on creative things, then

God's going to shake that dependence by shaking those creative things on which you're depending.

Whether it's money or property that you bought, hoping that it will increase in value and one day you can sell it and make a lot of money or anything earthly that you depend on, especially for Christians. Now, it may not affect unbelievers so much because just like you don't discipline your neighbor's children, you discipline only your children, right? Your neighbor's children may do exactly the same thing and you don't touch them. It's like that with God, if you're really a child of God, you're born again, you become a child of Almighty God, he treats you like his child.

And he does not want you to put your confidence in creative things, but in him. That's why he allows us, many things around us to shake, so that, say, the Lord says, don't build there. That's a shaky foundation.

And he's going to shake every creative thing, so that there are things which will never be shaken. And the Lord says, build here, build here, because this will last for eternity. That's the message of the two men who built on rock and sand.

You're going to build for eternity or you're going to build for time. Sand is shaky and a lot of things on earth that are shaky, they don't look shaky in the beginning. If they looked shaky in the beginning, that foolish man would never have put his foundation there.

It didn't look shaky. It started to shake when the flood came. And a lot of things on earth that happened to us can be likened to the flood.

It shakes the foundation and it's as if we're God saying, hey, you're building on the wrong foundation. That's good for us. I mean, if I'm building a house on a wrong foundation, I'd like to know right at the beginning, not after I build ten floors.

It's too late to discover that. I don't want to know when I get to heaven that I spent all my life building on a wrong foundation. I hope you don't want to discover that then.

I say, Lord, show me now before I waste the one life you've given me. It says about Abraham in Hebrews chapter 11, about what he was thinking in his mind. Even though Abraham lived in the Old Testament, he had a vision of something that was eternal.

And so even though he was probably a rich man, he had such a lot of, in those days wealth was in cattle and lands and things like that. And he was a fantastically rich man. He had more than 300 servants.

Can you think of somebody who's got 300 servants? That's how rich Abraham was. And the Lord told him to leave all that wealth he had accumulated in 75 years and come as it were into a desert land. And he followed.

And it says in Hebrews 11, the last part of verse 13, that such people, he's talking about Abraham, by the way, in verse 8 onwards, all the way down, he's talking about Abraham. And he confessed in the last part that there were strangers and exiles on the earth. While Abraham, when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, it's as it were he was saying, I spent 75 years accumulating all this money and building all these, I don't know how much property he had there.

And now a God in heaven has told me to leave it. I'm going to obey him. And in that action, I confess that this earth is not my home.

If it were my home, I'd say, Lord, let me stay in Ur of the Chaldees. There are many, many situations in life where we're tested. And very often the test is, is your home here or in eternity? Why do you worry so much about this thing? It's not going to matter much 2,000 years from now.

Why are you fighting about something that won't matter, make a slightest difference 2,000 years from now? Why are you living for something instead of living for something else that will make a difference 2,000 years from now? And those who say such things, you see, when it says they said, did Abraham go down shouting, hey, I'm a stranger and exile on the earth? No. I don't think he said it even once as far as I know. I don't read that.

I'm saying that in the Old Testament. When it says they say such things, it was by their actions. Like the proverb says, our actions speak louder than our words.

And Abraham didn't go around shouting to everybody, hey, I'm a stranger and pilgrim here. His action, his decisions, when he left Ur of the Chaldees, people thought he was a fool. And his nephew Lot came along with him, even though God hadn't called him.

Partook of the blessings of Abraham and Lot became a very rich man. And their servants started fighting. And Abraham told Lot, let's not fight.

Now, he could have said, hey, listen, God's the one who called me here. Remember that. So I'm going to take a bit of this land.

You can move over to that side. He didn't say that. Because he was a stranger and a pilgrim.

Even when he went to the land, God had promised. He said, Lot, I don't treat you as my nephew. You're much younger than me.

But he said to him in Genesis 13, I'll never forget those words, we are brothers. Imagine a 75-year-old man telling his 25-year-old nephew, you're my brother. A godly man is always like that.

He doesn't treat anybody as smaller than him, inferior to him. And he always lets him have the first choice. In the small things of life, like passing through a door, we say, you first, or you have to wash your hands at a wash basin.

We say, go ahead. But this is not a small thing. This is very important.

Who's going to get the best part of the land? Go right ahead. Think of the number of Christians who fight when it comes to distributing the father's property when the father is dying. Where are the Christians who will say, go ahead, you take what you want, give me what you don't want.

Yeah, dear brothers, that's the way. By our actions we testify then we are strangers and exiles on this earth. We don't grab for anything.

And it says here, those who say such things by their actions are making it clear to all these other people by their actions that they are seeking another country. That their real estate is in another land. It's in heaven.

And then it speaks about what Abraham was thinking in his mind. Now, this doesn't come out in the Old Testament. By our actions, we demonstrate what we're thinking about most of the time.

In verse 13, you talk about thinking. If they had been thinking, he's talking about all these people he's mentioned before, Noah, Abraham, Enoch, all these people that he's mentioned in the previous verses, just three of them. If these people, like Enoch and Noah and Abraham, had been thinking of this earth, like Abraham or the country from which they went out.

I mean, if Abraham was always thinking, hey boy, what a lot I left there in Urudicales. You know, like Lot's wife turned around and looked at Sodom and said, boy, what a lot of stuff I left there. She became a pillar of salt.

But Abraham, if he had been thinking of those things, he would have returned. If he had always been thinking, you know, just think of this verse for a moment. Meditate on it.

One of the things I've been encouraging people to do of late is read the Bible slowly. Please, let the Bible go through you more than you go through the Bible. Read it slowly.

If they had been thinking, now if Abraham had left Urudicales and he had come out, he came to Canaan and he was always thinking of Urudicales and Urudicales, what I left and what I gave up for God and what, you know, a lot of Christians think like that. Then you know what would have happened? One day when an opportunity arose, he would have gone back. But as it is, they desire a better country that is a heavenly one.

And wherever God sees, whether it's Abraham or you or me, seeking a heavenly country by our actions. That means we don't fight with flesh and blood over anything earthly. Our mind is not always thinking about the earthly things we can gain.

But we desire another land. Our home is in heaven. It says, therefore, therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God because he has prepared a city for them.

Why did he? Now you know. Why God called himself the God of Abraham. That's not written in the Old Testament.

There we read he's called, I'm the God of Abraham. Here it tells us the reason why he's called the God of Abraham and saying that he can... You can put your name there. I can put my name, God of Zachariah.

If God sees that by my actions and decisions, I'm living for heaven and not the earth. All of us would like to say God is my God. I hope so.

But here it says God is not ashamed to be called their God because they are seeking a heavenly country. You know, this is the main message of the New Testament, of the New Covenant. Throughout the Old Testament, you read about so many kingdoms.

Kingdom of this, kingdom of that, kingdom of Israel, kingdom of this, kingdom of that. But one thing you never see in the Old Testament is the kingdom of heaven. You don't even find that phrase.

Even once in the Old Testament. So all the multitudes of earthly kingdoms, the kingdom of the Philistines and the Midianites and the Amorites, the kingdom of Syria, the kingdom of Egypt. Yup, so many kingdoms.

The thing that's missing in the Old Testament is the kingdom of heaven. And then you turn to the pages of the New Testament and as soon as the New Testament opens, you see the last prophet of the Old Testament coming and saying, Fellas, turn around. The kingdom of heaven is coming.

It hasn't yet come. But it's coming pretty soon. Just in a few years, the kingdom of heaven will come to this earth and that will be unlike any other kingdom that you've ever known in all your life.

And if you want it, turn around and face it. And don't live for these earthly kingdoms that you've been living for. That is the message of John the Baptist, repent.

And that is why he is called the forerunner of Jesus Christ because he prepared people for the coming of Christ by saying, turn around, turn around, turn around. The kingdom of heaven is coming. Someone is coming who is greater than I. He's going to lead you into the kingdom of heaven.

Of course, you know that very few people responded to that call. Even when Jesus was on earth, we read that when John the Baptist died, as soon as John the Baptist died, you know, when people died in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, it was like, we can say they finished their leg of the relay race. And they had that bet on in their hand and they passed it to the next person.

And Jesus took it up. And so, you read Matthew 4, as soon as John the Baptist, as soon as Jesus heard John the Baptist has been killed, he went around preaching Matthew 4, 17. Turn around, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And then Jesus died and rose again and Peter took that bet on and preached about the kingdom of heaven. And Paul and throughout the centuries, there have been people who have taken that bet on in the relay race from people who have died in the previous generation and said, hey, we're in the kingdom of heaven now. After the day of Pentecost, they didn't have to say the kingdom of heaven is near.

They were saying the kingdom of heaven has come. It's here. The kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God.

You see, for example, in Matthew's gospel and Mark's gospel, chapter 9. Matthew calls it the kingdom of heaven. In all the other gospels, it's called the kingdom of God. It's the same thing.

The kingdom of God is the area where he rules. You know, in the olden days, wherever a king ruled, that was his kingdom. And so the kingdom of God is the same as the kingdom of heaven.

And Jesus said this. Mark chapter 9 verse 1. Truly I say to you that some of you who are standing here will not taste death until you see the kingdom of God after it has come with power. The important word there is power.

It's the same word Jesus used in Acts chapter 1 verse 8 when he said the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall receive power. That's when the kingdom of God came to earth. So what happened on the day of Pentecost is very significant.

Like we sing in that song, Heaven Came Down. The Holy Spirit brought heaven down. For 33 and a half years, Jesus was on earth and he had brought heaven down, but it was only in himself.

He couldn't communicate it to others. There was an atmosphere of heaven around Jesus wherever he went. It must have been wonderful living in that home for 30 years.

But you know, you can be so blind. It says his brothers didn't even believe in him. Somebody can have the atmosphere of heaven around you and others who don't have a taste for heaven would say, ah, there's nothing there.

That's how it is. How many people in Nazareth do you think, among all the hundreds of people who lived there, realize that the one, that young man walking there is the son of God? No one. He looked just like them.

He wore the simple clothes that they wore. He lived in a poor house. He earned just a little money as a carpenter.

Nobody recognized that this is heaven on earth. You have to have eyes to see it. His own brothers would not recognize it.

Mary knew it, but his own brothers didn't recognize it. You can live in such close association with and in the same house with a man of God and you may not respect him. You're the loser.

But I think that's what made his brothers repent tremendously after the resurrection. We know that his brother next to him, James, became the leader of the early church. He must have repented, oh God, how blind I was.

You lived in my house for 30 years and I didn't even know it. I opposed you, made fun of you, teased you, irritated you. But I'm going to repent radically and I'm going to make up for the rest of my life for all the years I lost.

And he became a mighty man of God. He's the one who wrote James. And Jude, the one who wrote Jude, he was another brother of Jesus.

And the interesting thing I see there is they never call themselves, you read in their letters, brother of Jesus. No. James, a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yeah, there was a humility about these men. There always is about people who have been touched by heaven. There was an arrogance about them before they knew Jesus.

So there was Jesus, heaven on earth for 33 and a half years and so few people knew him. And not only that, when he went into a synagogue and brought heaven to that synagogue, they chased him out and said, that's the devil. He's the prince of devils.

People who knew their Bibles, who read their Bibles, who sang the songs, the only people on the face of the earth who knew the true scriptures, they thought heaven was hell. And blind Roman soldiers would have their eyes open and say, hey, this is the son of God. Now, what I want to say is, learn a lesson from that, brother.

You also in your time living on this earth, there may be a man of God living next door to you and you may not even recognize him. Just like those Jews never recognized Jesus because he doesn't look any different. There can be an atmosphere of heaven which you may not recognize because you don't have a taste for heaven.

Because your mind is not thinking of heaven except on Sunday mornings. Your mind is occupied with all types of earthly things. And if you're like that, I assure you, you will not be able to recognize the man of God.

I mean, you can temporarily recognize when some prayer of his is answered. There were people whom Jesus healed. He said, oh, this is a great prophet.

But how long did it last? Just for a little while and they forgot all about it. And they're the ones who finally crucified him. Now the wonderful thing Jesus told his disciples was, it's better for you that I go away.

Because as long as I'm here, though you fellows can taste heaven in me, it won't get inside you. You will still be earthly minded. You'll have the smell of earth in your conversation, in your thinking.

You'll smell like an earthly person. And I tell you, in heaven's sense of smell, that is stinking. I wish we'd realize that.

How careful we are to shower and take a bath and use deodorants and perfumes so that all the smells that come out of our body don't get us a bad name. You know that an earthly minded person stinks before the angels of heaven. They hold their noses.

A chap calls himself a child of God. There was an aroma about Jesus Christ which is heavenly. He never fought with any earthly person.

It's one mark of a heavenly person. You know in heaven they don't fight. They just don't fight.

You won't get two angels fighting each other. That's the demons who are always fighting with each other in hell. And that's one mark of a heavenly minded person.

He does not wrestle with flesh and blood. See God promised Abraham that he would give him two types of seed. I want you to notice Hebrews 11.

When he and his wife had no children. His wife, I don't know how long they were married. Maybe 40, 50 years.

No children. He was nearly 100. He was 99.

Sarah was 89. No children. But God had told him some years before that.

Hebrews 11 verse 12. I will give you descendants like the stars of heaven and the sand which is on earth. Notice that.

Two types of seed. Abraham you're going to have seed like the sand on the earth and like the stars in heaven. Why did God say that? Because God was saying Abraham you're going to have an earthly seed and a heavenly seed.

The earthly seed will be like the sand on the earth and the heavenly seed will be like the stars in heaven. You're going to have two types of seed. One is going to be physical and the other is going to be spiritual.

God is very exact. And he gave promises to that earthly seed and he's given promises to the heavenly seed. The earthly seed was Israel.

The nation of Israel. It was like, you know it's a figurative way of saying like the sand in the seashore. So many.

And there were many earthly promises that God gave to that earthly nation. And when they disobeyed they were punished in an earthly way. They would lose their territory.

You read that in the book of Judges. You read that in the book of Kings. And they would repent and come back.

They would get their territory back. They would be able to defeat their earthly enemies because their entire promise was earthly. They were like the sand of the earth.

And when they crucified Christ 40 years after that they were scattered to the ends of the earth. But God said just like when he sent them to Babylon he said after 70 years I'll bring you back. But this is a much greater crime.

He said I'll bring you back to many many years and it was nearly more than 1900 years. Nearly 1900 years. From 1780 when they were brought back.

Where? To Israel. They're not going to heaven. They're the sand of the seashore of the earth and they're blessed with earthly things.

God's given all those people a lot of human intelligence. They are some of the most intelligent people in the world. Some of the greatest scientists have been Jewish people.

It's an earthly thing. A lot of prosperity. Some of the world's greatest bankers have been Jewish people.

God blessed Abraham. There's no doubt about it. Earthly seed with earthly blessings and so many.

You see that little nation of Israel that came out of nowhere about 60 years ago. It's got abilities which surpass even India and so many other countries. Amazing.

It's the blessing of God. None of them will go to heaven. That's not the promise.

But then God gave another promise to Abraham. You'll have also seed like the stars of heaven. And that's what we read in Galatians that we who believe are that spiritual seed.

If you turn to Galatians we read here in chapter 3. Speaks about justification by faith that we get just like Abraham got. Galatians chapter 3 and verse 29. And if you belong to Christ then you are Abraham's descendants.

You belong to Christ. So you are Abraham's spiritual descendants. Not like the sand on the seashore but like the stars in heaven.

According to that promise. And the same promise that God gave Abraham of an earthly blessing is now for us Galatians 3 and verse 14. Christ verse 13 became a curse for us.

Verse 14. So that the blessing of Abraham might come to us who are not Jews. Who are not part of that earthly sand of the seashore.

But us who are like the stars in heaven because we are going to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Not the promise of Canaan. Not the promise of a lot of money.

Not the promise of all our enemies being defeated. Not the promise of many children. Not the promise that you won't have any miscarriages.

Not the promise that you'll have a lot of flocks and your business will prosper and you'll have health and I'm the Lord your healer. Not all those things. But the promise of the Spirit.

It's very important for us to understand this. Now let's turn to Ephesians in chapter 1. Verse 3. He says Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. What did Israel say? God of Abraham.

For us it is God of the Lord Jesus Christ. Very important difference. God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Very important difference. Because this God and Father we are not we don't talk about God of Father, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

That's why I don't even call God Jehovah. That may be his name but it's like I said if one of my children came to me and said Mr. Poonen I'd say what's wrong son? Are you angry with me? You call me daddy always and now you call me Mr. Poonen. You see, isn't that your name? It is my name but my children don't call me by that name.

They call me father. That's why I understand the spirit in which people sing these songs about Jehovah Jehovah Jehovah but I don't sing them. I have nothing against them.

I'm not a legalist but I call him dad. I have discovered that 95% of Christians at least I've met have absolutely no clue that the old covenant is abolished 2000 years ago. It's like finding somebody in some corner of India who still thinks that India is living under the British Empire which we got rid of more than 60 years ago.

A lot of Christians like that say hey listen you know the old covenant is abolished 2000 years ago? Call him dad if you're born again. He's the god and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us not with earthly blessings. Read it carefully.

The blessing of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual blessing means blessing of the Holy Spirit. Every single blessing of the Holy Spirit is mine.

But where is it? It's in heaven. In Christ. It's in Christ in heaven.

If I want it I have to take my place there that means my mind like Abraham fixed on those heavenly things in Christ I can have it all. I can have every blessing of the Holy Spirit in Christ. A lot of people who are seeking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit Where is your mind brother? What do you want the baptism of the Holy Spirit for? For some earthly blessing? For some earthly thrill? For some physical emotional experience? No.

You shall see the kingdom of heaven coming in power. The Holy Spirit comes to bring heaven into our hearts. Heaven into our mind.

Just like Abraham when he left to accrue to the Chaldees. What is he thinking? And I say if the Holy Spirit is not changing your thinking you are not baptized in the Holy Spirit. There's nothing wrong in that.

Seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Or you maybe were once but you switched back to the old covenant. A lot of people who hear something about the new covenant get all taken up with it for one week and then go back to the old covenant again.

No, Jesus said that. They drink the new wine and then they say the old is better. Brother I'd rather have that old testament gospel which prosperity and healing.

That's what I want man. All this pie in the sky of heaven and all you talk about and divine nature and all. Forget it.

The old is better. Do you know the number of Christians who say that? God says okay there are enough preachers to feed and satisfy the minds of these people who say the old is better. Okay, go ahead.

I'm not going to preach that. And some people want a little patch of the new to stitch on to that old garment. It won't work.

It'll tear your life. You got to throw away the old garment completely he said. You got to have new wine.

You got to have a new garment. You know what that means? The old garment was being occupied with earthly things. The new garment is being occupied with heavenly things.

God has blessed us with every blessing in the heavenly place in Christ Jesus. Most Christians who take a little bit of that new garment, want to patch it to their old garment. Jesus said it'll tear.

And I want to say that's why your Christian life is tearing. That's why you're so frequently discouraged. That's why you're depressed.

That you don't get victory. That's why you have bad moods. The garment is tearing.

And then you come on Sunday and put another patch and stitch something. It lasts for a little while and it tears again. It'll keep on tearing till you realize you are not called to live with that old garment.

The Holy Spirit has come to put you in Christ. You know, we very often think much about Christ in me. That's also true.

Colossians 1. I think it's verse 27. It says, Christ in you the hope of glory. That's great.

I thank God that Christ lives in me. 1 John says, greater is he that is in you than that he that is in the world. That's a bold confession we have.

Christ lives in me through the Holy Spirit. The moment you're born again, the Spirit of Christ comes in. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is when you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

But Christ comes in. The Spirit comes in the moment you're born again. If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, the Bible says you don't even belong to him.

Romans 8-11. But, it's like a, you know, you think of a say a hotel room, hotel building across a river with a hundred rooms and one room is lit. Is there light in that hotel? Yes.

Is it full of light? No. But in every room, all the hundred rooms in that hotel is lit. Boy, what a sight.

Our heart is something like that. We receive Christ into our life, the Spirit comes in to one room. We've got 99 other rooms where Jesus says, I stand at the door and knock.

I won't force my way in. If you open the door, I come in. If you don't open the door, I stay outside.

But Jesus is in my heart. One room is lit. Because that's all you want.

How many of you really open the door to let Jesus come in when he knocks? He knocks at the door which says, let me see all these videos you have at home. Let me see. Let me go through them and watch.

No, Lord. Don't come in and check that room. Let's go to some of the other rooms.

Or let me have a look at your finances. Where you are spending your money and how you are using your money and how you are earning it. No, Lord.

Not that room. Let's go to some other rooms like, you know, praise and worship. Let's go to those rooms.

Don't go to these inconvenient rooms like the books I read and the movies I watch. Those are rooms where we don't want Jesus to come and interfere. We'd rather live in darkness.

Let me see. Oh, God, baptize me in the Holy Spirit. Yeah, pray two contradictory prayers.

He will come into every room that you open if any man hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in. So it's like that. Christ comes in but he's not filled.

But the other thing the Bible says in Ephesians particularly is I'm in Christ. God places me in him and whatever happens to Christ happens to me if I take that place. Now, like many other things in scripture, it's a wonderful truth the Holy Spirit wants to show to us.

And because God lives in eternity and there's no time with him, I am that I am, he said. For him, past, present and future are all present. We can't understand that.

But things that happen, you know, the creation of the world for example, of the universe. I mean, God sees it as right now. Or the end of time where the devil's casting the lake of fire and Christ is raining on the earth.

God sees it right now. Just think of that. It'll bring a lot of rest into our minds.

And this is the God who has become our father, our dad. And so when, let me use an example. Me, Christ, this Bible.

In Christ. I'm in there. Christ died on the cross.

I'm in there. I died with him. He was buried.

I was buried with him. You say, but that happened 2000 years ago. I wasn't even born.

No, no, no. God lives in the eternal present. And in God's mind, you were there even before he created Adam.

Christ was raised up from the dead. I'm in Christ. I was raised up with him.

40 days later, Christ ascended up to heaven. I'm in him. That's the great truth in Ephesians.

I'm in Christ. And that's why it says in Ephesians 2, we were dead once. Verse 1, we were not in Christ, but we were in our trespasses.

And in our sins. And in the world. But God put us to death with Christ and then verse 6, raised us up with him and seated us with him and in him in the heavenly places in Christ.

If I see, Lord, this is what you've done for me. It's an inward thing. It's in my mind.

God has shown me that not only my sins were taken by Jesus on the cross. I mean, how is it you accept all that? Because you committed those sins in this century. How did Jesus take the punishment for that 2,000 years ago? Have you ever thought of that? How can today's sins be forgiven 2,000 years ago? Because you are in.

Because God lives in the eternal present. And if we take this position in Christ in the heavenly places, the Holy Spirit comes to make that a reality in our life. And that's why the Bible says in Colossians chapter 3 verse 4, you have died and your life, verse 3, your life is hidden with Christ in God so, verse 2, set your mind on the things above and not on the things that are on the earth.

Now, you couldn't give that exhortation to an Israelite because his mind is always occupied with earthly things. Now, you know, we have often said in this church, we cannot evaluate how spiritual another person is because we don't know what goes on in his mind. But I want to tell you right now, you can evaluate yourself.

Now, they have all types of tests where you yourself can find out at home whether you are... you don't need to go to a hospital to find out what is your blood pressure and whether you got diabetes or not, whether you are pregnant or not. You don't have to go anywhere. Everything at home.

Tests right at home. So, here is a little test to find out whether you are heavenly or not. And you can do it right at home.

You don't have to come to the meeting. Just ask yourself, what does your mind think about most of the time? I mean, when you have finished all your earthly tasks, like if you are working, if you are driving, you got to concentrate on that. When you are working in an office, you got to concentrate on that.

If you are a mother with children, you got to take care of that. You got to provide your needs at home. You got to go to the market to buy things.

You got to get... pay your children's school fees. You got to get admission for them in college. There are many things.

We need to use our mind for all these godless places on the earth. But when our mind is free from all these necessary earthly things, where does your mind go? That is a test by which you answer for yourself. Whether you are earthly minded or heavenly minded.

And I'll tell you a lot of people who think they are very spiritual and you think they are very spiritual. If only you could get into their minds and look at them, you'd be very surprised. Preachers, pastors, bishops, full-time workers.

If you get into their minds, they are thinking of money. They are thinking of earthly honor. They are thinking of respect from people.

They get offended when people don't show them the respect that they think they deserve. Not that they deserve, but that they think they deserve, etc. Are you like that? Brother, I don't care how well you sing,

you're earthly minded.

I don't care how many people in this church think you're a wonderful spiritual person. You are earthly minded. If you fight with your marriage partner, husband or wife, about what? Earthly things? You are earthly minded.

A spiritually minded man, it says in Ephesians 6, verse 12, does not wrestle with flesh and blood. Flesh and blood means human beings. I don't fight with human beings.

If somebody wants to come and yell at me, he can keep on yelling. I'm not going to yell back. I don't care who that is.

Because my mind is not... What is he yelling about? Some earthly thing? I'm not going to fight with him about it. No, because our mind is there in Christ. The Holy Spirit has come.

The Bible says to renew our mind so that we are occupied like Abraham with a country which God has prepared for us. God is not ashamed to be called our God. I told you that this is a word that you need for the time in which we live.

I believe it's really true. Dear brothers and sisters, let me say to you in Jesus' name, at least from today onwards, if you have not lived like this in the past, here is the best preparation you can make for the future. Now, there are preachers who say it's going to be a lot of shortage of food in the future, so stock up a lot of food.

I mean, it's alright in western countries where they get all this thin food. What are the poor people in the villages of Tamil Nadu going to do? You know, I have an advantage that when I travel to these very wealthy countries and I hear all these fantastic messages people preach, I always ask myself will that work in that little village where we have a church? If it doesn't work there, I say it's not the gospel. And those guys have never lived in that village, so they don't know.

But I can check. Does that work over there with those brothers I know over there? You talk about stocking up thin food and toilet paper and things like that. What is all this for those people there? That's not what you need for the future.

What you need is to allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind, so that your mind is set on the things above. That's why Jesus said, you know, he said in Matthew 6 31, don't be anxious about what you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall wear. Don't worry.

When Jesus says to me, don't worry, it's like saying to me, don't sin. Okay, I'm not going to sin. I'm not going to worry.

Because all the non-Christian people eagerly seek for these things. But your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things. So, let me paraphrase these words.

If you are the worrying type, you say, I have to worry about something. Okay. The Lord says, I'll give you something to worry about.

Worry about seeking God's kingdom first. Verse 33. If you really are the worrying type, you want to worry about something, worry about how to seek God's kingdom first and his righteousness, how you can be more of his righteousness.

Concentrate on that and all these other things will get dropped into your lap. I believe that's the greatest word we can have for the future. Allow our mind to be set on the things above.

I want to say this, brothers and sisters. When our mind is like that, we will behave to each other in a heavenly way. I'll behave to you.

Listen to me. Just like I'll behave with you in heaven. Okay.

Even if you behave with me in a different way. I'm going to behave with you just like I'll behave with you in heaven. If I won't yell at you in heaven, I'm not going to yell at you here.

Because I've decided. The kingdom of heaven has come, brother. Sister.

It came. You can open your heart to it. When you're saying, Lord, fill me with the spirit of God to baptize me in the Holy Spirit, where your actual prayer is, Lord, make me heavenly minded.

Is that what you were praying? Or were you praying for some tingling down your spine or some electric shock that somebody got or speaking in tongues? Yeah. It's the spirit of heaven coming down into our hearts, making us heavenly minded. And I want to carry the atmosphere and the aroma of heaven wherever I go.

The firmness of heaven. I mean, God is very... Heaven is a place of holiness. There's no playing the fool.

I think there's a lot of humor in heaven. I think we're going to crack a lot of jokes, clean jokes in heaven. I believe that.

Because humor is such a good thing. I can't believe the devil invented it. It's like music.

Music is such a good thing the devil didn't invent it. The devil misuses it. The devil didn't create anything.

So, but holiness is the very atmosphere of heaven. And you will desperately long to be holy if your mind is set on the things above. And you'll have... I'll tell you another thing.

You will never be on the streets. You'll never starve. And not only that, your children will be blessed.

And your grandchildren. If the Lord tarries. I can't understand how anybody else would want to live any other way.

You know, I've sometimes been to some young people's rooms and I see some big poster of some cricketer or baseball player or some musician or what's worse sometimes some rock musician with all those demonic dresses. Because that's their hero. Those are their heroes.

They want to play cricket like that person. They want to bat like that person. They want to comb their hair like that person.

Maybe some film star. Imagine if Jesus became your hero. You want to live like him.

You want to speak like him. You want to talk like him. You want to behave to others like him.

You want to have all your attitude like... In everything like him because he's your hero. Imagine if you had... If we could get a photograph of Jesus. You can't get it but if we could.

But we can have it in our mind. A mental picture of what Christ was like. And I have it in the room of my mind.

And I say, Lord, you're my hero. Everything you did, that's the way the one person who lived on earth with heaven ruling his mind. Never behaved for a single moment in a non-heavenly way.

And that's why when he came into a temple which is supposed to be a little picture of heaven on earth and he saw people there making money, he chased them out. Of course. Because he was heavenly minded.

You can't do all this. You're going to do that in the marketplace. And that's what we say to pastors and preachers today.

Don't come to the church and make money. Go there. Go and do some business.

Make money as money as you like. Don't come here to the church and try to teach people that you got to tithe, you got to tithe, you got to tithe and collect all their money. Become rich yourself.

Don't do it here. That's the atmosphere of heaven. Because Jesus said his house is to be a place where there must be an atmosphere of heaven.

And when there is an atmosphere of heaven in our personal life it will flow over into our home. And it will flow over into the church. So if we want a heavenly church that's certainly what we want and I believe that's what God wants our church to be a foretaste of heaven.

That people who come here and mingle with us get an aroma in their spirit of heaven. And that has to start with our mind. With the individual people sitting in this church.

That you say Lord I want your Holy Spirit to control my mind in seven days a week and then I'll bring that atmosphere to the church. Do you know that whether you know it or not there is a spirit that you bring to the church. You can bring your body.

You can dress up your body and make yourself look nice. That's great. But there is an aroma that you bring which is the aroma of your spirit when you come to a meeting.

And that can be the aroma of heaven. If you spent the previous six days before you came here with your mind set on heavenly things. If that's uppermost.

If you can say to Jesus. You know heaven is really Jesus. It's not a golden streets or mansions.

It's Jesus. That's heaven. Where Jesus is that's heaven.

My heaven is Jesus. It's not golden streets. I don't care whether the gates are pearl or wood.

I don't care if the streets are concrete or gold. If Jesus is there that's heaven. I don't care whether the temperature of heaven is 120 degrees or whatever it is.

It makes no difference. Jesus is there. Everything is okay.

Whom have I in heaven but thee. And on earth there's no one that I desire beside thee. Boy, that's heaven.

And when your mind is like that everything you seek to do, the bible says if you do your work in your office, do it as unto the Lord. And whatever you do, wherever you go. And I had to learn this in the days when I was driving the scooter in the streets of Bangalore to behave like Jesus who drives a scooter.

That's an education, I'll tell you that. When everybody around you is not obeying the laws it didn't come overnight. I mean, when people disobeyed the laws in front of me, my first temptation was to ask him, who gave you a driving license? And the Lord said Jesus wouldn't talk like that.

I said, okay, I've got to judge myself and cleanse myself and talk a little better. And then once you start talking a little better think a little better. A kinder.

I remember years ago when I was driving down this road and one little boy I was on a scooter and this chap turned his cycle right in front of me without any warning and I had to jam the brakes and fortunately it didn't hit him. I think I smiled. And I said, Lord, please let some other scooter driver be kind to my child, my children were small those days, when he drives a cycle down this road and he turns like that.

Treat other people kindly and God will treat you and your family kindly. Be good to other people's children and God will be good to your children. Don't criticize other people's children unnecessarily.

We all have enough faults of our own. Let's seek to be heavenly minded and build a heavenly church beginning with our own mind first of all. Let's pray.

You know to live in regret over the past is the most foolish thing you can do. Not regret, but repentance. Lord, I'm sorry I want to turn around and I want to have my mind set on the things that are above.

Help me with the Holy Spirit, help me show me in practical terms what this means day by day. Help us Lord, each one. Help me, I pray.

I see need in myself to be more heavenly minded every day in everything, every detail of my life. Help me, I pray each one of us. In Jesus name, Amen.

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