

A Life of Peace

by Zac Poonen

To achieve a life of peace, one must confess sin honestly, call it by the worst name possible, and believe in the power of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Duration: 57:13

Scripture: Proverbs 16:7, Matthew 5:9, Romans 8:6-12, 2 Timothy 3:13, Hebrews 4:9-12, James 3:18

Topics: "Inner Peace", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of pursuing a life of peace in three key areas: peace with God inwardly, peace with all men, and peace in circumstances and relationships. It encourages listeners to seek a disciplined life, non-judgmental attitude, self-acknowledgement, and a life of peace amidst trials and tribulations.

Transcript

Praise the Lord, we're glad that we can come together again towards the beginning of the year, to have our focus right for the rest of this year. Starting with our watch night service, we looked at a number of messages on following Christ in the new year. So this is the fourth message in the last in that series.

I just want to review what we already covered. In the first message we spoke about a disciplined life. And spoke about the importance of being disciplined this year in three areas.

In the way we spend our time and use our time. The way we spend our money. And being disciplined in the desires of our body.

What we look at, what we speak, what we eat. So, I want to ask you, how has it gone the last 17 days in these areas? You know, new year resolutions are broken before the 7th of January. That's why I want to remind you.

Try and fast once a month, I said. You've still got 13 days, try it one of these days. It'll be good for you.

You'll be healthier. Seek God during that time. And the use of money.

Try and avoid buying unnecessary things. You'll have more money to give to poor people, for the Lord's work. For your children perhaps.

Be careful in the use of money. Something which is not necessary. Don't buy it.

And the same way with our body and our time. We have, all of us have 24 hours a day. Some people make a lot out of that.

I know a brother who I spoke to recently. One of our elder brothers. I said, brother, you work so hard.

It looks as if you've got 36 hours in a day. You do so much more than a lot of other people. Other people just waste their time.

They act as if they've got 4 hours in a day. You work as though you've got 36 hours in a day. It's amazing.

You know, there's a lot that can be accomplished. If you're just a little disciplined and get rid of wastage of time. This year can be a very good year for you.

Studying the word. So I want to remind you. Like Peter said, as long as I'm alive, I'll keep reminding you.

So that Peter said, when I'm gone, you will still remember what I said. God has given us a spirit of discipline. Then in the second message we spoke about living a non-judgmental life.

You know, like it says in John 7, 24. Do not judge according to the outward appearance. Let's get rid of that habit this year.

You look at a person and say, Lord, I don't know anything about his heart. So I can't say anything. I can't say anything from the length of his hair or the shape of his eyes or the lipstick on her face.

I can't say anything because I don't know her heart. Let's take that position. There may be a kind heart and a good heart under that very stylish dress.

Better than a selfish heart under your poor dress. So it's always good to take a humble position. You know, God is the only one who can look into people's hearts.

We know that. But we forget it. So we want to remind ourselves.

If you're married, you're lucky. You've got somebody to remind you. That God is the only one who can see people's hearts.

We've got to help one another. What does it mean when it says... I remember once a wife asking me, Brother Zach, is it right for me to correct my husband? I said, what a stupid question. Why did God give Eve to Adam? To be a helpmate.

If you see a black mark on your husband's face when he's going out to work, you won't tell him? You're not a good wife. What if you see a black mark on his soul? You won't tell him? Yeah. That is to help one another.

In this area. So non-judgmental. We're not called here to judge.

We're called here to bless and love and help. That itself will take plenty of time. And not to be a busybody in other people's matters.

A lot of judgment is by getting involved in things that don't concern us one bit. Judgment must be in the circle where God has given you authority and responsibility. You're a father.

You have a right to judge within your circle of your home, your children. If they have a problem, you've got to judge there. You're an elder brother in a church.

You've got to judge in the circle of that church. You're in an office. You're responsible in an office.

People working under you. You've got to judge in that circle. But people outside your circle.

Your neighbor's children. You're not called to judge them. How they are bringing up their children.

What clothes they buy for their children. What food they eat. It's none of our business.

They're not borrowing money from you. Why do you bother how they spend their money? Why should they live so grandly? Did they take your money and do that? No. Leave it.

Let God deal with it. I'm telling you, if you take these words to heart, by the end of this year, you'll be a much better Christian. You'll have a much better home life.

And you'll be a greater blessing in this church. And the third thing I said was, in our third study was, we need to live a life of self-acknowledgement. That means, to be quick to say, like Job said, Perhaps, I have sinned.

Perhaps, my children have sinned. Instead of always justifying ourselves, and justifying our family, it's always good to, we don't have to confess our sins to others, or the sins of our children to others, but to have this attitude, say, Perhaps, I'm wrong. So today, I want to speak on a life of peace.

That's very important in the world in which we live. Because Jesus said, There's going to be a lot of unrest in the world as we approach the end of time. And we need to have peace in two areas.

Actually, in three areas. Towards God, inwardly, and towards people. Towards God, we have peace.

We've often spoken about that, by keeping a clear conscience. If you don't have a clear conscience, you don't have peace with God. And the way to have a clear conscience is by being absolutely honest about your sin.

And never blaming anybody else. But you... Otherwise, you won't have a clear conscience. I'll tell you that.

Very often, even when we acknowledge sin, we may put a little bit of the blame on somebody else, your wife, husband, neighbor, some brother, etc. He provoked me. So what? He provoked you.

Do you know how many people provoke Jesus Christ? But he never sinned. So never make the excuse, But he provoked me. That is the excuse of four-year-old children.

We're not to be like four-year-old children, saying, he provoked me, he hit me, so I hit him. No. The provocation of others is allowed by God to test you.

Do you have this wonderful life in Christ that you boast about? You go and listen to so many messages on the deeper life, but here somebody provokes you and you get upset? Even if you don't hit him back, like the worldly people, you get all irritated inside. This year, we're going to come to peace. We're going to not

blame other people.

We're going to blame ourselves and say, Lord, I still need to overcome here. And I want to confess my sin. I'll tell you this.

Many people, please listen to me. There are many of you who are seeking a life of constant victory over conscious sin. I want to tell you in Jesus' name, it is possible.

It is possible because I have experienced it. I know people have experienced it. Unconscious sin, we will get more and more light on, but conscious sin, we can have victory.

Failure and fall is so rare, but that will come only if you take the first step of honestly acknowledging your failure and your sin. I believe the reason why many people do not come into that life of victory is because they don't honestly acknowledge their own failure and their own sin. They always put part of the blame on somebody else.

You keep doing that this year. I can give it to you in writing. You'll never get victory by the end of the year because you're always putting part of the blame on somebody else.

Can we live a life this year without putting the blame on anybody else and say, yeah, I have failed. Even if 90% of the blame is somebody else's, forget it. That's for God to judge.

Let's take that 10% of the blame and say, Lord, there is something wrong in me too. I want to confess that. I don't want to confess somebody else's sin.

I want to confess my own. To blame others is to confess somebody else's sin and the Bible has never told us to confess other people's sins. But that is what blaming others means.

I'm confessing somebody else's sin to God. You'll never get victory. Forget that.

Say, Lord, there's something in me too. And then I can have a clear conscience before God because the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. And I'll tell you another helpful thing to get victory.

I mentioned this before. You must call sin by the dirtiest, filthiest, wickedest name you can ever call it. If you looked at a dirty, lust-provoking picture of a woman, say, Lord, I had adultery with that woman.

I'm so sorry. You may have looked at it only for five seconds. You clicked on an internet pornography site.

Go before God and say, God, I'm sorry. I'm supposed to be a Christian. Here I go sleeping around with some woman.

Call it that. Don't say, ah, I just slipped up. No, you didn't slip up.

You committed adultery. Because you haven't called it that so far, you're still defeated. When you get angry with your wife, you say, Lord, I murdered my wife today.

I stabbed her. Forgive me for stabbing my wife. Have you ever said that when you got angry with your wife or husband? No.

Say, Lord, I took a dagger and dug it into her heart with those words. Please forgive me. You try that.

Call sin by the worst name possible because Jesus told us that. The Old Testament, they said, murder. I say, don't be angry.

The Old Testament, they said, don't commit adultery. I say, don't lust with your eyes. And when you're told a small lie, don't say it's a small thing.

There's no such thing as a small sin before God. It's like saying, that vessel has only got a small hole. So what? You can't pour any liquid into it.

Small sin? Every sin is big before God because it's a disobedience to Almighty God. So when we think of something as small, we'll never get victory over it. I believe many of us sitting here think anger is a very small thing.

Well, as long as you keep thinking like that, I can prophesy that in 50 years you won't get victory over it. Some of us think lusting with our eyes is a small thing. Well, you won't get victory even when you're 90 years old.

You'll be still lusting because you think something is small. It's not small. We've got to see sin the way God sees it.

Then our conscience will be clear. We confess it. Lord, it's a sin.

It's a violation of your law. It's doing something contrary to you. It's slapping God in the face and saying, God, I'm not going to obey your commands.

Forgive me, Lord. Cleanse me. Call sin by the most terrible name you can call it this year.

And ask Jesus to cleanse you in His blood and then believe that the power of His blood is greater than the sin you committed. See, once you've really confessed your sin to God and not blamed anybody else. Call sin by the worst possible name you could.

After that, and ask Jesus to cleanse you. Then, the devil's next tactic is to try and get you doubt whether God's forgiven you. No, no, no, that was terrible.

No, you've got to tell the devil by the word of your testimony. The blood of Jesus has cleansed me. I'm clean.

God doesn't remember my sin anymore. I stand before God with peace. So, this is very important.

If you want to have a life of peace this year, you must, first of all, in a vertical relationship with God, have, uh, confess your sin honestly, calling it by the worst name possible, and believing that Christ died on that cross for your sin, and say, Lord, I believe I'm cleansed. Just as you humbled yourself to the utmost before God, now you must be bold before the devil, and have confidence before God, and say, and the devil says, ah, but you got angry yesterday. That's fine.

I called it murder, and I confessed my murder to God, and he forgave me. The blood of Jesus cleansed me from that murder I committed yesterday, which people call anger, but I call murder, because Jesus called it murder, and God's cleansed me. Murder, like me, is cleansed.

Like the murderer on the cross, I can walk with Jesus in paradise. That is peace with God. You see, we don't deal radically with sin.

We don't call sin by the worst possible name. We put part of the blame on the others. That's why we've had this messy type of Christian life so far.

Shall we be a little more radical there this year? With sin? See sin as nailing Jesus to the cross. That anger is, God, Jesus, I'm going to hammer you to the cross. That lusting after a woman is nailing Jesus to the cross.

Look at it like that. I'm sure the devil doesn't want you to look at it like that, because he wants you to keep on living like that, living like that, living like that. One day you'd slip away from your salvation completely and land in his lap in hell.

I don't want that to happen to you. That's why I speak strongly. The worst thing in the world is sin.

Jesus need not have come into this world if he were only sick or poor. God could have solved our poverty and sickness problems without Jesus dying on the cross. You know that? This deceptive health wealth gospel.

Why did Jesus have to die if all that God wanted was to make us rich and healthy? There was no need for Jesus to die. He died only because of sin. No other reason.

God would never have sent his son into the world to heal the sick and die on the cross for that. Or to make poor people rich, to die on the cross for that. It was only for sin.

I need to see that. I need to focus it. It's sin, it's sin, it's sin, my sin nailed into the cross.

I want to hate it this year and I want to have peace with God through the blood of Jesus Christ. Take that seriously, brother sister. The first area of peace.

If you don't have that type of peace with God, then these other two areas I'm going to speak about will not work in your life. We need to have peace with God clearly first of all. And be established in that, that all my passions are forgiven, that I'm clothed with the righteousness of Christ, that I stand before God with boldness, that I can look straight into the face of God almighty whom the angels have to cover their face from.

I can look into his face because the blood of Christ has made me bold. Don't ever go before God with your face hanging down. That means there's some guilt still in your life.

Or you don't believe what God has said, that he's declared you righteous. One of the two. So we must always be able to look at our heavenly father with an open face every day of this year.

I want that. Even if some of you have messed up your life. I want to tell you there's more power in the blood of Jesus Christ than all the mess you've made of your life.

You can be cleansed so thoroughly that you can look at a holy, holy, holy God straight in the face. And he smiles at you and I smile at him. You know, just like a picture of myself looking at God just like a mother smiling at its little baby and the baby smiling back.

And you know the face of the mother becomes radiant when the baby smiles back. Sometimes babies are serious and the mother is a bit unhappy. But if the baby smiles back think any father or mother rejoices.

I want to smile back at God and make him happy. Because I've really confessed all the sin I know. Taken the blame completely without blaming anybody else.

Called sin by the worst possible name I could find for it. And believed with all my heart that the blood of Jesus blotted it out and he won't remember me anymore, remember it anymore. And he looks at me with love and rejoices over me and sings over me like a mother sings over a child.

And I smile back at him. Dear brothers and sisters, do that every day of this year. Smile back at God.

Then we come to the second area of peace and that is peace inwardly in relation to circumstances, situations, people all types of things. Remember what Jesus said in John 16 and verse 33. John 16 and verse 33 Jesus said, I have spoken these things to you so that you may have peace.

That was the end of all his messages. He never preached after that. Did you know that? After that he prayed in John 17 and then said let's go.

And he went to the garden of Gethsemane. At the end of three and a half years of preaching, preaching, preaching, preaching to his disciples, he said to them finally, all that I have said to you in these three and a half years is so that you may have peace in me. I said, thank you Lord.

Everything you have said to me is so that I may have peace in you because in the world where you are going to go out, you are going to have a lot of trouble. You are going to have trouble from others, you are going to have trouble from circumstances, you are going to have trouble from many, many things from the demons and from circumstances people, everything. But in me you'll have peace.

And you'll walk through this world completely unaffected by all the trouble around you. What a way to live. I praise God for that.

I've tasted a little bit of it and it's made my life a little heavenly. I'm telling you honestly. It doesn't disturb me if other people around me live like they are living in a hell.

That's up to them. Or they live as if the devil is guiding them or the devil is speaking through them. That's fine.

They are not going to affect me. You know, I think of the I often think of this picture of these people who went to the moon. You know in the moon you don't have oxygen.

So if you try to walk on the moon without any protection, you'll die because you can't breathe. There's nothing to breathe there. So these guys who go up to the moon, they live in a capsule where they've got enough of earth's air.

They're breathing the air of the earth walking on the moon because they've got this cylinder full of the air of the earth, oxygen that they can breathe and live normally and they can jump around and do so many things. But the moment they come out of their capsule, they're dead. I picture that.

That's how I want to live on this earth. That moon is a strange atmosphere for people of earth. That's why they need this earth's capsule while they are on the moon.

And when you really are born again, I'm not talking about this just raising your hand and saying I accepted Jesus or signing some decision card or some rubbish like that. I'm talking about where you've really repented of your sin, acknowledged that you're the filthiest sinner in the world, surrendered your life to Christ, made Jesus Lord of your life, not to make you rich or healthy, but to save you from the wretched sin in your life. When you're born again like that, really born again, given up your self-will and made Jesus Lord of your life, not just to take you to heaven, but to change your life.

When you've been born again like that, you know what happens? One of the things that happens is this earth becomes a strange place just like people on the moon. And the atmosphere of this earth becomes very suffocating. You sit in the office and all the filthy jokes they are speaking and the filthy billboards on the roads and it's all suffocating.

Everything, all of a sudden the television program, you want to turn it off, it's like filthy smells coming into it. The television becomes like a toilet. I don't want to see all that rubbish.

If it does not become like that to you, I'll tell you what you need. You need to be born again the proper way. You need the life of heaven to come inside you, where the earth's atmosphere suddenly becomes strange to you.

I don't want this. This is not... I mean a rat or a cockroach can go into a toilet and enjoy itself however filthy it is. I'm not a human being.

If you're a rat or a cockroach, you'll enjoy it. And if you're not born again, then there are a lot of things on television and internet pornographic sites that you'll enjoy because you're like a rat or a cockroach, spiritually speaking. I'm not.

I'm a child of God. I want to shrink back. That's how we are to be.

In me, you have peace. In the world, you'll have tribulation from circumstances, events, people, people irritate you, trouble you. I want to tell you something this year, the people who have troubled you last year will not change.

But you're going to change. Those difficult people in your neighborhood, that neighbor who you're hoping will shift, has decided to buy that house and he's going to live there forever. But you're going to change.

You're going to change. In me, you'll have peace. In the world, you'll have tribulation.

A lot of people think, forget that in the world we'll have tribulation. Jesus said that so clearly. It was the last word of the last message he preached.

It was at the last supper. Just before he prayed his final prayer in John 17. Summing up, three and a half years of preaching, it's like a man who's going to say one last sentence before I die.

Listen fellas, I preached to you for three and a half years. You've been my faithful eleven disciples. Now I want to say one last word before I go to be crucified tomorrow morning.

You will have trouble in the world. But in me, you'll have peace. Think of that as the last word of Jesus Christ.

The end of his message. That's all. Nothing more to say.

And I keep remembering that. Lord, the last word you spoke to me was, I'll have trouble in the world. So when I go out and face trouble in the world tomorrow, I say, yeah, that's exactly what Jesus told me.

When I get trouble from my office, and trouble from my neighbors, and trouble but in him, I have peace. It doesn't matter because God's going to make all those things work for my good. That's why I have peace.

That's why I don't get upset with somebody who does some harm to me because I say, you can't harm me. It's impossible. I can challenge the devil.

Say, you try and harm me. All the demons of hell, all you millions of demons in hell, try to harm me. You can't.

You cannot. How many of you have the boldness today to speak to the devil and say, all you millions of demons, try and harm me this year. You cannot.

Better not say that. He may do something. I tell you, most believers are scared of the devil.

They don't believe God's word that all things work together for your good when you love God. Or the problem is, you don't love God. But if you love God with all your heart, you can challenge all the demons of hell and say, you try to harm me this year.

You can't harm me. Whatever you do will work for my good. Everything you do will work for my good.

You can use any agent you like in the world to irritate me, trouble me, harm me, put me in jail. Do whatever you like. It will work for my good.

And it will work for the good of the kingdom of God. Maybe somebody will get converted in that jail. You cannot be defeated when you are a disciple of Jesus Christ.

It is impossible. You may be troubled. You may be hurt.

You may be injured. All that is fine. But you cannot be harmed permanently or everything will work for your good.

That's why we have peace in the Lord. I mean, if I didn't have a father in heaven, I'd be scared to talk to the devil. I'll tell you honestly.

I'll make peace with the devil ages ago. Please don't trouble me and I won't trouble you. I'll sin as much as you say.

Because I'm scared of you, Satan. These are the people who don't believe that they have a mighty almighty God as their father in heaven. I want you to get rid of the fear of Satan this year.

Totally. Otherwise you will not have peace in your heart. The devil will always put some fear in your heart.

I can do this. I can do that. I'll get somebody to trouble you.

Try it, Satan. You can't. Because God is on my side against you.

God is your creator. Don't forget that. He can wipe you out with one word.

If he hasn't wiped you out yet, it's because he's got to fulfill a purpose. We must eliminate all fear of Satan from our heart this year. One hundred percent.

There must not even be an atom of fear in our heart of the devil. He must become afraid of you. Live a life in such a way that the devil is afraid of you this year.

What a mighty power you'll be for God in this world. If you have decided that you're going to frighten the devil from now on, that the devil's scared whenever you go somewhere. You say, well, the devil will make me the target of his attacks.

Do you think the devil hasn't made me the target? He has made me and my family the target of his attacks for many years. But he hasn't succeeded. Not with me and not with my family.

He can harm us externally, but not in a permanent way. It works out for our good always. It's not just that the devil God protects us from the attacks of the devil.

He makes that work for our good. Everything. Everything.

In the world we have trouble. You may have sometimes a sickness. That's a trouble.

Even that can be turned out for good. Paul had a thorn in the flesh which was his salvation. A sickness which was his salvation.

That thorn in the flesh humbled him. Kept him from becoming proud. Kept him on his face before God.

Take it like that. Lord, we need a thorn in the flesh sometimes. Because we are in danger of exalting ourselves because God has blessed us so much.

God has done so much in us, for us, for our families, for our children. And through us is a church that we can get all puffed up and God does something to put your face in the dust. Thank God for those thorns.

It'll work for our good. That's why we have peace. There can be all types of trouble in the world, but we'll have peace in our heart.

There can be trouble from people. But we have peace in our heart. You know, when we don't have peace in our heart, do you know what it indicates? Let me show you a verse in Isaiah.

Isaiah chapter 57 is a very important verse for you to remember. Isaiah 57 and verse 20 says, The wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet. And its waters toss up refuse and mud.

There's no peace, says my God, for the wicked. You know, whenever I don't have peace in my heart, it shows that there is some type of wickedness inside me. It's always, that is the indication.

There's some type of wickedness in me. That way there's no peace in my heart. Some, I've got a bitterness against somebody.

I haven't forgiven somebody. I don't trust God about something. That's why there is unrest.

And you know what the meaning of this is? The tossing sea that tosses up refuse and mud. It's a beautiful expression. You know, I've been on the sea for a number of years.

I worked there. In the ships. And I've seen times when the sea is absolutely calm.

Really like it says in Revelation 15, like a sheet of glass. And then there are other times where I've seen the sea like a wave with a ship going up and down and up and down and you get seasick. And then when it's like that, all the if it's a shallow sea, if it's a deep sea nothing much happens.

But if it's sort of a shallow sea, all the mud from the bottom can be thrown up. Particularly if it's a river. And all the mud that's thrown in there can come up.

So, when it speaks about the waters of the sea being like a tossing sea that tosses up refuse and mud. It's talking about all those things which should have sunk to the bottom and which have not been cleared out, which are coming up. Things that happened in the past.

You know, somebody threw some rotten tire inside that. And some rotten stuff and it all, many years ago it all comes up when the sea is in turmoil. Do you find it like that in your life? Things that other people did to you come back to your mind.

The guy did it to you 20 years ago. Why are you allowing that rotten tire to be thrown up again? You're a wicked person. I'm sorry to say that.

But you are a wicked person because it says the wicked are like the tossing sea who toss up all that rubbish. The two things it tosses up, all the mud and the rubbish. Do you find your mind rubbish from the past being thrown up like that? Come to rest.

In God you can come to rest. You have to reject all that. Say, no I'm not going to think about that.

You can't stop the devil from reminding you of the evil things that other people did to you in the past. In the Old Testament they couldn't get victory over it. Many times you've heard me tell you the story of David, the man after God's own heart.

I don't have time to show you all those verses, but when you get time read 2 Samuel chapter 14, 15, 16 onwards and then read 1 Kings chapter 1 and 2 when David died. And you read there the story of a man called Shimei who cursed David when Absalom kicked David out of the throne. As David was going away, Shimei cursed him.

Say you dog and all types of names. David Somebody wanted to kill Shimei. David said no, the Lord has permitted him to curse me.

Boy the Old Testament man without the Holy Spirit dwelling in him could say that the Lord has permitted him to curse me. I won't cut off his head because if God didn't permit him the guy would have dropped dead now. Can you look at people who curse you and speak evil to you and say God has permitted that fellow to write that stinking letter to me.

God has permitted that person to speak evil to me. If you bring God into it the problem is solved. If you are an atheist and there is no God for you then you say this guy, there is no God it's only this guy and me.

And I tell you many Christians behave like atheists. Not in the meeting. They sing praises to God in the meeting but out there in real life.

But David said God has permitted this man. And then he towards the end of his life he called Solomon. And you know later on when he came back Shimei said oh I am sorry because now David has become king again.

Please forgive me I didn't mean it. Now David said okay, forgive me. I promise you I won't kill you.

But towards the end of his life some years later and he is dying on his deathbed and he called Solomon his son and said you are going to be the king. I want you to rule and I want you to be a good king and all. And there is one last thing I want to tell you.

You think it's something very important about being devoted to the Lord or something. No, no, no. That guy Shimei I haven't forgotten what he did to me.

Yeah, I feel a bit sad that I told him I wouldn't kill him but I have got to keep my word. But you didn't promise that, right? You didn't tell him you would kill him. Finish him off and make the blood flow on his grey hair and put him in the grave.

Dead. You read 1 Kings. Those are the last words that David said.

The next word says, then he slept. I tell you, I don't want to die like that. That man was in the Old Testament.

That's why he didn't have the grace to forgive people inwardly. And so God would not judge him by our standards. But if you die like that, I guarantee you go to hell.

Because to whom more is given more is required. David, so little was given. Yeah, I mean if a one year old dirty his diapers, that doesn't trouble you but you are 20 years old and you are wearing diapers, there is something wrong.

So it's like that. We are in the New Covenant. God, David was permitted to do certain things because he didn't have grace for that.

But once God gives us grace, it's something like saying if you work in an office and somebody gives you 10 rupees to go and buy something. And to another person he gives 10 million rupees to go and buy something for the office. Don't you think he is going to expect more from the guy who got 10 million than the one who got 10 rupees? It's exactly like that.

God gave only 10 rupees to David and he has given 10 million to us. He is going to expect a lot more from us than from David. You say why there is partiality? No partiality.

He gave you 10 million. He gave him only 10. That's not partiality.

That's absolute righteousness. So David can go to heaven even though he dies like that without forgiving Shimei but not you and me. See I'm just telling you that you can have unrest in your heart because of what somebody did many years ago.

We must be at peace. It says in Hebrews in chapter 4. Hebrews chapter 4 it says there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. Do you know what that is? Speaking about the land of Canaan.

I don't have time to show that all to you but if you read from chapter 3 verse 16 onwards he's talking about the children of Israel who never entered Canaan but wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and he says for us let us fear chapter 4 verse 1 let us fear. We don't have to be afraid of the devil. We don't have to be afraid of people trying to harm us but if there is something Christians need to be afraid of here it is.

Let us be afraid that God has given us a promise of entering into this life of rest and you don't enter it. That's the thing we need to be afraid of. How many Christians do you think are afraid of that? People are afraid of so many things in the world.

Circumstances, poverty, sickness people, demons. That's not what we need to be afraid of. We need to be afraid of the fact that God has promised us a life of rest and we don't come there.

That's what it says here. I've taken it seriously. Very seriously.

And I believe I've experienced something of that Sabbath rest. It made my life so peaceful. It makes my sleep at night peaceful.

Because I'm not tossing around in the bed thinking of what I'm going to say to somebody. No. Verse 9. There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

It's not a question of worshipping on Saturday. No. It's a question of having a rest in our heart all the time.

When Jesus said come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden. He's not talking to unbelievers. That's a very famous verse preached to unbelievers.

But Jesus says come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden. Unrest in your heart. Come to me.

I'll give you rest. This is that rest. The Sabbath rest of God in our heart which we must have 7 days a week 24 hours a day to always be at rest.

And let us be diligent. If you haven't got there. Verse 11.

Let us be diligent to enter that rest. I want to give you that exhortation this week. This year rather.

To be diligent to enter into that life of peace inwardly where nothing will disturb you. Where your heart will be like a sea of glass. I remember you know in the early days when people would of course people still criticize us and speak evil of us and write articles against us.

But 30 years ago it was much worse. And I remember those days when I used to read something that people wrote against me or said about me. For a little while it would disturb me.

And the Lord said I want to bring you into a life where it will never disturb you. And now when somebody says that somebody has written something against me I don't even want to read it. It doesn't interest me.

It's wonderful to be able to come to this life of rest. And then another thing the Lord said is this is only one stage where when people attack you and criticize you there's not even a flutter in your heart. I want to bring you to the place also where people praise you to the skies and there's no flutter in your heart.

That's more difficult. Work on it. That whether people criticize you or praise you is just the same.

You live before God. You know that those people don't know your heart. That's why they criticize you.

That's why some of them praise you so much. Because they don't know what your heart is. They don't know.

You live before God. I mean I'm not saying we should be super spiritual and say no no no. Accept their appreciation but don't get too taken up with it.

Don't meditate on it later on. Forget it. Live before God.

Otherwise your heart can get into unrest if you meditate too much on the criticism of people or you meditate too much on the way people praise you. Your heart will get into turmoil. Live before God's face this year.

Say Lord I want my heart to be at perfect peace. There's a Sabbath rest for the people of God. That rest comes when you find you listen to people but doesn't affect you.

Because you say always you say what it says in Hebrews 4. It's a beautiful expression here. Verse 13. It's a very favorite expression of mine.

Hebrews 4 13. Him with whom we have to do. Him with whom we have to do.

He's the only one. I don't have to do with you. I don't have to do with all those other people.

There's only one with whom we have to do. That's the secret of rest. Him with whom we have to do.

We forget that sometimes. We think that fellow's opinion is so important. Brother it is not.

You think you're a good person because somebody says you're a good person? Don't fool yourself. There's only one person with whom you have to do. You will never grow spiritually if you keep on listening and thinking that you are what other people say you are.

You know that you're such a great person or such a useless person. No. One way you'll get discouraged and the other way you'll get puffed up.

Both are dangerous. To get discouraged is one pit. To get proud is another pit.

Which pit do you want to fall into? I don't want to fall into either of them. People attack you, criticize you. That's one pit.

And people praise you. That's another pit. Steer clear of both of it.

And say there's only one person with whom I have to do. Do that brother or sister. Be quick to give the glory to God and people appreciate.

Some of you know the souvenir that these dear brothers made for my birthday. You know what I did? I knelt down in my study all by myself and I took that book and I said, Lord this is yours. It's not mine.

I don't want to touch your glory. I have many more years to live and I don't want to ruin it by touching the glory of God. Yeah, I appreciate what people say.

That's fine. We have to be very careful. The devil is gunning for us.

If not this side, that side. Be at rest. Don't get puffed up with people appreciating you.

Don't get disturbed by people criticizing you. There's only one person who really knows you. It's not even your wife.

It's Almighty God. Let your heart be at rest before him. And I want to say this, you know, I've always said this to people.

Whenever, if ever your heart is disturbed, don't open your mouth. The most dangerous thing you can do is open your mouth when your heart is disturbed. At home, or in the church, or in a meeting.

I follow that rule. If my heart is disturbed, I will not stand up and speak. I know in the old days, in Wednesday prayer meetings, when I was supposed to speak and I would extend the time of prayer because my heart was not come to rest yet, about some matter.

And some folks here wonder why we normally have 15 minutes of prayer, today half an hour of prayer, 45 minutes of prayer. Yeah, brother Zack has not come to rest in his heart yet. Something is disturbing him.

And he's not going to open his mouth when his heart is not at rest. And the same thing in your home. All the mess in your home, all the angry words, it's because you open your mouth when your heart is not at rest.

Romans 8, 6 is a great verse. The mind of the Holy Spirit is peace. You know you're the mind of the Holy Spirit when you're considering a matter, if there's peace in your heart.

Peace in your heart is so important. It's the mark that you got the mind of the Holy Spirit. When it's disturbed, you don't have peace.

Then, it's not the mind of the Spirit, it's your mind or the devil's mind. So, strive towards this life of peace inwardly. And then thirdly, peace with other people.

Hebrews chapter 12, it says in verse 14, pursue peace with all men. Not all believers, but all men. With evil people.

A Judas who's betraying you, who's selling you for 30 pieces of silver. And he comes to betray you and kisses you. Deceiving you.

You can say friend like Jesus. Friend, Judas, you can only fulfill God's purpose for my life. You cannot do anything outside of my Father's purpose.

This is the cup, Jesus told Peter, which my Father has given me. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter took out his sword to hit somebody and did hit someone. Jesus said, put your sword away.

Don't look at the postman, Judas Iscariot. See who the letter is from. From your Heavenly Father.

Aha. And it doesn't matter if Judas Iscariot brought the letter. Are you disturbed because the postman who brought a 10,000 rupee money order for you has got a grim face? So what? Let him have a grim face.

I got 10,000 rupees in the money order. It's like that, Jesus said. So what if Judas Iscariot is a betrayer? The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it? Pursue peace with all men.

Romans chapter 12 says, as much as it lies in you, as much as it lies in you, live peaceably, verse 18. As far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. See, the Holy Spirit recognizes that some people just

don't want to have peace with you.

The Bible is very realistic. He knows that you can't have peace with everybody. So it says, as much as it lies in you means, you don't create further problems.

You know like, I use the example of two hands. Sound comes when both hands cooperate. But if one hand wants to come and fight, and the other hand says, no, I'm not going to fight.

There's no sound. It tries hard, no sound. Be like that.

That is peace. Even in your home, if your wife wants to fight with you, die. If your neighbor wants to fight with you, die.

Do dead people speak? Just think about that. Do dead people speak? When we die with Christ, it's no longer I. Christ will speak, not me. I'm not saying I'll be dumb.

Christ will speak. A gentle answer turns away wrath. And I'll tell you something, it's easier to keep quiet than to give a gentle answer.

You know that? When you keep quiet, it may indicate that you're inwardly offended. You're trying to teach that fellow a lesson by keeping quiet. You teach your wife a lesson.

I'm not going to speak. But if you give a gentle answer, then you know that they know you're not offended. It's not, it's no longer I. Full stop.

No. It's no longer I, but Christ. You know the difference between it is no longer I, just dying? No.

If you die with Him, we will live with Him. There is a resurrection too. It's not just that I die.

Some people say, die brother, die brother, die brother. Yes, but let Christ live in you. Don't just keep shut, keep your mouth shut.

Give a gentle answer. That shows that you're not offended. That shows that you're not upset.

That shows you believe in Romans 8, 28 that even this will work for your good. And perhaps you can lift that person who is serving the devil a little higher. So pursue peace with all men.

And you know, if you don't fight with the person, that's peace where you refuse to clap. But if you can come together, that both hands come together, that's fellowship. That's the best.

So I say when you can work together with both hands together, that's fellowship. But if that is not possible, at least keep one hand behind and let the other guy wave and yell and scream as much as he likes. There will be no fight.

As much as it lies in you, live at peace with all men. Seek for fellowship, but if you can't have fellowship, at least peace. That should be the rule for us this year.

We're going to pursue a life of peace with God inwardly, completely undisturbed by all the terrible circumstances and events that are going to take place in 2010 in this world. Well, how do I know that? You read it. The last sentence Jesus said in his sermons.

In the world you shall have tribulation. There's going to be problems, there's going to be trials. This world is not going to get better and better.

You know what it says about the future? Let me read you a verse in 2nd Timothy 3. I'm thankful that I've got a book that tells me about the future. Then I'm prepared for it. If you don't read it, you won't be ready for the future.

But 2nd Timothy 3 says, verse 13, evil men will go from bad to worse. Deceivers, impostors will proceed from bad to worse. They deceive others and they themselves are deceived.

Preachers who preach a false gospel will go from bad to worse. They ask you for your type this year, they'll ask you for 20% next year. They go from bad to worse.

Deceivers, evil men who are seeking to harm you, you're hoping they'll become better this year? No, I'm sorry to tell you that, they're going to be worse this year. That's what the Bible says. But you, but you, verse 14, you continue in the things that you have learned and become convinced of.

Knowing from whom you have learned them. From a Paul who could say, follow me as I follow Christ. Dear brothers and sisters, many of you have known me for many years.

Very humbly I would say to you, follow me as I follow Christ. I'm not ashamed to say that. I'm not perfect.

But I follow Jesus to the best of my knowledge and ability in my thoughts, in my words, my deeds. I want to be quick to ask forgiveness from people this year. I want to be quick to forgive people this year.

I don't want to justify people this year. I want to pursue peace as much as lies it me. I seek fellowship with those who want fellowship.

Those who don't want fellowship, peace. I like peace. It's a wonderful life.

We can have heaven in our hearts, heaven in our homes. And I think of some of you young people. What a wonderful privilege to start this life when you're 15, 16.

Boy! You don't have to wait like some of these old people around us who messed up their life till they're 50 or 60 and then decided to. Maybe they didn't hear these things, but you're so lucky that you heard all this now at such a young age. Parents, encourage your children to go this way.

Please take seriously these messages I gave. These last three messages and this one. I believe it will go exceptionally well for you this year.

That is our desire. That our lives become heavenly. That our homes become heavenly.

And that our church becomes a heavenly church. We're not interested in numbers. But a church that Jesus can approve of.

A home that Jesus can approve of. A life that Jesus can point out to the devil. I'm more interested in that than anything else.

Don't pursue money so much this year. Yes, earn enough money for your family's needs. That's necessary.

But beyond that, pursue righteousness. Pursue peace with all men. And holiness in every area of your life.

Let's pray. There are some basic truths that you've heard in these four messages. If you take them seriously, I tell you, you'll have an unshakable foundation for your life this year.

And you'll finish 2010 in a much better way than your entire life so far. That I can guarantee. Heavenly Father, we know you're on our side against the devil.

We know that your Holy Spirit is ready to fill us even now as we open our beings to you. Surrender everything. Confess every known sin.

Cleanse us in the blood of Jesus Christ. And pour out your spirit upon us. That we be strengthened mightily to live for you in the coming days.

That we'll build our homes and build a church. In the name of Jesus Christ, we'll be glorified. And the fire of God will burn in our hearts more and more this year than ever before.

Thank you, Father. We know you'll do it. In Jesus name, Amen.

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