

# Ambassadors for Christ - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

---

*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of balancing inner spiritual life with outward ministry while recognizing personal boundaries and the responsibility of presenting believers as pure to Christ.*

**Duration:** 56:10

**Scripture:** Malachi 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Corinthians 12:14-15, 2 Corinthians 12:18-19, 2 Corinthians 13:9, Colossians 1:28, Titus 3:13

**Topics:** "Evangelism"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of humbling ourselves and seeking God's face. He encourages the listeners to respond to the teachings they have heard and to ask God to reveal areas in their lives that need to be settled with Him. The speaker also highlights the need to trust God in difficult situations and to have faith that He can solve problems in supernatural ways. He references the verse in Matthew 13 where Jesus could not do many miracles because of the people's unbelief, prompting the listeners to examine their own faith. The speaker concludes by urging the audience to expect God to do miracles in their lives and to believe that He can confirm His word supernaturally in their homes and churches.

---

## Transcript

I'd like to turn again to 2 Corinthians. We were considering what it means to be an ambassador for Christ and a co-worker of God. Let's turn today to 2 Corinthians and chapter 10.

I believe it was the Holy Spirit who inspired the Apostle Paul to write this book to show us something about his inner values and his life. We can read much from the Acts of the Apostles about the external things that Paul did. We know that there was hardly anybody who had such a passion for souls like Paul had as an evangelist and the burden he had as an apostle and prophet and teacher to build those souls into a living expression of the body of Jesus Christ.

And yet, with all that external activity, we don't see anything about his inner life in the Acts of the Apostles. And if you read only the Acts of the Apostles, you will think that it's all this external activity that is the main thing. I believe in Paul we see that perfect balance between a man who had such a lot of passion for souls to win people to Christ, to build up the body of Jesus Christ, and at the same time, who had this inner life and walk with God.

And that is why he is an example for us. Today, sometimes we find people at two extremes, some people who are involved in a lot of activity and don't have an inner life or walk with God, and then other people who are only concentrating on their inner life and walk with God and don't have any external desire to spread the kingdom of God. So in Paul, who said, follow me as I follow Christ, we have this perfect balance.

And I believe that God has given us 2 Corinthians for us to see the inner life of the man who did this work. And that is the way God wants each of us to serve him. We looked at a number of things.

We've looked at about 14 characteristics in his life so far, and we want to look at another seven this evening. In chapter 10 and verse 5, let's read verse 4 and 5 together. The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. He was, he's talking here about thoughts, and he's talking here about fortresses. You know what a fortress is? Fortresses in the thought life that need to be destroyed.

So, we could say, here's another characteristic of the Apostle Paul, he destroyed wrong thinking patterns. He destroyed wrong thinking patterns. We all have certain ways of thinking, and some of those ways are not God's ways of thinking.

And if we don't destroy them, we'll find that we begin to serve God according to those ways we think are right. And you need to ask yourself where you got these thinking patterns from. Is it from scripture? Then you're okay.

But a lot of our thinking patterns are not from scripture. I don't know whether you realize that all of us, because we have grown up in a society which is basically non-Christian, we have absorbed into our thinking from childhood certain ideas which are not godly, which are not Christian. For example, in our country, the way women are treated, almost like slaves, that's not in the New Testament.

But even in Christian homes, sometimes you find a husband does not treat his wife as a fellow heir of the grace of life, like we read in 1 Peter 3, verse 9. I found very few Christian homes, even in India, where husband and wife are like partners who pray together. For example, if you find something in the Word of God, do you share it with your wife? You may share it with another brother. Why don't you share it with your wife? Because we have grown up in a culture where we don't think of our wife as a partner.

She's just a slave who's got to do the cooking and look after the children and various things. And we have thinking patterns where the husband, for example, will never do the jobs of the wife. For example, take care of his children, that's all the wife's job, to bathe his children.

Why can't the husband do these things? There are a lot of wrong concepts we have, that's just one area. India, and in so many Christian weddings you see in India, Hindu patterns. Have you noticed that Christian women can sometimes wear a mark on their forehead, the Hindu mark, but you'll never find a Muslim girl wearing it, never.

Christian girls put it, but not Muslim girls. The Muslims have more of a concern for their religion and culture than Christians. Christians tend to compromise in most areas, and there's a lot of Hindu ideas and opinions, thinking patterns that have come into our mind from heathenism.

And that can affect the way we build a church. See, for example, in heathen thinking patterns in India, we have a guru, who is a great man of God, and all the others are disciples who sit at his feet. There's no brotherhood in Hinduism between a God-man and his disciples.

The God-man must be respected, almost worshipped, and a lot of God-men like that in Hinduism, you read about some of the famous ones, and they have their disciples who sit and listen to them. You know that in Christianity, also in India, there are certain people who behave like God-men. There are big people out there, and there's no brotherhood, and it's very easy for us in our local churches to become like this, little God-men, who are there to instruct everybody, and there's no brotherhood.

That's not the body of Jesus Christ. I'm just giving you some examples about how wrong thinking patterns which we have absorbed from our society, it's not only in India. You go to Western countries, they've got their heathen culture, which is also not Christian.

We must make sure that all these thought patterns are destroyed, various ways of thinking. For example, I have found that most of the theological thinking in India has come from Western books. Whatever the American people write in their book, we believe and we swallow 100 percent as if it is right.

And that develops through the years, a certain thinking pattern in us, which may not be according to Scripture at all. I want you to consider that. Where did you get these ideas from? The ideas by which you are serving the Lord and where you proclaim certain truths, is it from God's Word or is it from our society or from other theological books that have come from the West? And the result is we can have certain prejudices in our heart, which is very difficult to break down.

A prejudice, a certain idea. I'll give you one example in my own life. When I grew up as a young Christian, I grew up in a church which taught that Jesus will come secretly before the tribulation and take us all away and then there'll be seven years of tribulation.

And I blindly believed it. But I don't believe it anymore. As I studied the Scripture, I found that is not true.

I couldn't find a single verse in Scripture to support it. And I said, well, I'm willing to get rid of all these wrong ideas I got from American books and from my denomination. I want to see scriptural support for it.

I took baptism. I grew up in a church that taught infant baptism and I found in Scripture doesn't teach it. So I've got to destroy that wrong thinking pattern and take Scripture.

We have to be a little bold if you are going to do it. But you'll find that you grow in the knowledge of God when you obey what God shows you. Take this matter of, I don't know how it is in your villages, but I found in a lot of our village churches, people are not serious about keeping time.

Now, I can understand that if they don't have a watch or they don't have many people in our villages are poor and they don't have an understanding of time. But I believe to be on time for something is a divine virtue. It's a matter of consideration for other people.

Supposing you say that you will meet a certain person at a particular time, a Christian person will always seek to be there on time so that you don't keep the other person waiting because consideration for others is a Christian virtue. But I find in our Indian society, you know, we can be late for a meeting, we can be late for an appointment. It is not taken seriously.

So these are our thinking patterns affect our life and we've got to destroy wrong thinking patterns. Paul did that. He had a lot of wrong thinking patterns as a Jew.

He destroyed them when he began to follow Jesus. You could apply that to many other areas. Let me point out a second point here.

Chapter 10 and verse 13. Paul was a person who recognized he recognized his boundaries. It says here in verse 13, we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere or the circle or the boundary which God apportioned to us.

A measure to reach even as far as you, instead of fear, we could say circle. Paul says, I don't want to boast about things beyond the circle God has drawn for me. God drew a circle for Paul's ministry.

Do you know that he drew a circle even for the ministry of Jesus Christ? Jesus couldn't go anywhere he liked. To preach, there was a circle drawn for him. And that's why 99 percent of the time Jesus was only in Israel.

Only once or twice he went outside to Tyre. And Syrophenicia, outside Israel, a few occasions where God wanted him to go, but Jesus recognized that 99 percent of the time God wanted him to be in Israel. And Israel is such a small country, smaller than Kerala.

And he lived there all his life, the son of God who had come to earth to do such an important job. He stayed in the boundary that the father drew for him. He did not go to Rome.

There's nothing sinful in going to Rome, but he didn't go because it was outside his boundary. Paul recognized his boundary. He recognized his boundary in terms of where God has called him to work.

He recognized his boundary in terms of the gift God had given him. You know, God has drawn a circle around us in many, many areas, and if we can understand this concept of boundaries, I believe it can make our life much more effective and the life of other people with whom we work much happier. A lot of conflict between husband and wife comes because each person does not recognize their own boundary.

A lot of conflict between parents and children come because they don't recognize their boundary. A lot of conflict between Christian workers comes because we don't recognize our boundary. God has given that brother a gift and God's given me this gift.

God's given me a sphere into which to work. He's given that brother a sphere to work, and I need to respect the sphere and the gift God has given to another person. Paul recognized his boundaries.

The same applies even in the matter of money. You know, Christianity is not communism. In communism, they say, well, at least theoretically, they used to say we must all equalize everybody.

And the rich and the poor, we must share everything and make it equal. We must all live in the same type of house and things like that. But Jesus never taught that and the apostles never taught that because Christianity is not communism.

God has drawn a circle around certain people and given them the ability to earn more and to have a lot of money. And there are certain other people whom God has somehow, I don't know all the reasons, has made poor. Now, even though the Old Testament preaches prosperity and says the Lord will bless you abundantly and your bonds will overflow.

Yet in the same five books of Moses, it also says many times, but there will be poor people among you. So there were poor people even in the Old Testament where prosperity was preached. So the poor, the rich people had an obligation to the poor to help them.

Now, if God has drawn a certain circle around me financially, that means my monthly income is so much, that's a boundary. I must learn to live within my boundary and God will test us in many, many ways to see whether we are content to live within our boundary. Paul said, I've learned to be content when I have little, I'm quite happy.

One day, I don't have money to buy food. That's fine. Today, my circle is only so small.

I praise the Lord. Another day, God may give Paul money to have a good meal. Fine.

He always learned to live within his boundaries. Not only applies to money, it applies to ministry, it applies to all our labors. It's very important to recognize what is the boundary God has drawn around me.

Sometimes God may make our circumstances such that we are not free. To move, for example, a mother with a number of small children. She cannot move much.

Her boundary is so small. She's most of the time in her home. And a lot of women rebel against that and say, well, how can I serve the Lord if I'm just sitting here? I've got to go out and do this, that and the other.

No, you've got to recognize your boundaries. If God has given you children to look after, then those are your primary ministry. So many things like this, I find recognizing the sphere, the circle which God has put around me, which may be small, and the circle God has put around another person.

You know that parable where you read that the master gave one mina to one person and five, one pound to one person and five pounds to another. He gave five times. So that person had to produce five pounds and this person had to produce only one.

So we find in that parable in Matthew 25 that God doesn't give the same, doesn't draw the same circle of boundary around everyone. It's different for different people. And we need to recognize that.

And therefore, I don't need to compare myself with the other person who's got five times bigger gift than I have. I don't have to try and have somebody else's gift. When we are young, I remember when I was young, I wanted to preach like other people, but I thank God that didn't last long.

And I said, Lord, I don't want to preach like anybody. I want to be myself. With the way you made me, I don't want to have somebody else's burden, somebody else's gift, somebody else's ways.

I want to be myself. And that is what brought rest into my life. And I decided not to copy anybody else just to be myself.

And I want to encourage all of you, my brothers and sisters, don't think that that other person's ministry is better or gift is better. No, that is what God has given him. But what God has given you is what what what he wants you to do.

The finger is not like the eye, but the finger must be a finger and the eye must be an eye. We must recognize our boundaries and respect other people in other areas. Then I want to show you a third thing here in Second Corinthians, chapter 11 and verse three.

Paul longed to present believers. As pure virgins to Christ, you know, the Bible says that believers are the bride of Jesus Christ. And Paul was a minister of the church, and he says in chapter 11, verse two, the last part, I want to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

That means when he looked at the people, he said, these are people whom God has given me to prepare to be the bride of Jesus Christ. And that's the way you and I are supposed to look at those whom we serve. These are people whom God has given me to prepare to be the bride of Jesus Christ.

And Paul took that responsibility very seriously. He said, I have to present these people one day to God as pure as pure virgins. In another passage in Romans and chapter 15, Paul says.

He says, I'm a priest and he uses the example of the Old Testament, Levitical priesthood. And he says, you know, the Old Testament priesthood, the priest, the sons of Aaron, whenever they offered a sacrifice to God, they had to make sure that this sacrifice was perfect. There was to be no defect in that sacrifice.

The lamb should not be blind or lame or anything. That was the priest's responsibility. Some man brought an offering and the priest has to examine that lamb on every side, then only offer it.

He cannot offer it to God without checking up that there is no blemish in that lamb. If he did, he was going to commit a sin. Now, Paul says here, when I take these believers who have come to the Lord.

I'm going to present them as an offering to God, Romans 15 and verse 16. He says, I'm a priest ministering to God and I have to make sure that the offering this time, I'm not offering lambs or oxen, I'm offering these believers to God. And just like that Old Testament priest was so careful to make sure there was no blemish in that lamb, he says, I, as a priest, have to be very careful that these people who might offer up to God, that there's no blemish in them.

And that's why I work with them. I want to ask you. Do you work like that with the people who God has given you? God's given you, first of all, a wife and children, wife and children.

If you're a husband, a father, God has called you to present them as without blemish to him. It's very easy to say, I'm the father, I'm the leader, I'm the head of this house. But what is the responsibility of the head of the house? You say, I'm the priest in this house.

What is the responsibility of the priest? The priest's responsibility is to make sure this offering is totally without blemish. It's very easy to criticize and say this is wrong, that is wrong, that the other thing is wrong, but I have to present it as a pure virgin or without blemish to God. And if God has given me a church, I have to offer it as a pure virgin and without blemish to God.

And that's why to tell you honestly, I'm scared to have a large church because I say, Lord, unless you raise up other shepherds, how will I be able to present all these people as pure virgins to Christ? I don't want to glory that I've got a church of 5000 members. I'll be answerable for 5000 people before God. How do I know whether that fellow who's sitting in the corner there is got any blemish in his life or not? It's a very serious responsibility to present believers as a pure virgin to Christ.

Paul had this great burden, he says in chapter 13 of 2nd Corinthians, he says, this is what we pray for, 2nd Corinthians 13 and verse 9, that you may be made perfect, that you may be mature or complete or perfect. His great longing, like he says in Colossians 128, was to present every believer perfect in Christ. And a person who follows Jesus command to go into all nations and make disciples, that is the Great

Commission.

I believe the Great Commission is not followed by 99 percent of preachers. Do you know what the Great Commission is? Matthew 28, verse 19 and 20. When you go into any nation, into India or any part of India, we are India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Burma, any nation, the Great Commission is make them disciples.

That means those who follow Jesus, who love Jesus supremely, make them those who take up the cross every day, baptize them and then after that teach them to do every single thing that I have commanded you. Teach them to love their enemies, teach them that their yes must be yes, their no must be no, teach them not to love money, teach them not to judge other people, teach them not to pray to impress other people or fast to impress other people, teach them to be merciful, teach them to be poor in spirit, teach them to be pure in heart, teach them not to lust with their eyes, teach them to control their anger and every single thing I've commanded you. In other words, if you really follow the Great Commission, your longing will be to present these people whom you have made disciples as a pure virgin to Jesus Christ.

Or as a offering without blemish to God. But I find very, very few churches in this country where that type of preaching is going on. We are happy with large number of sheep.

Oh, we need more sheep, more sheep, more sheep to offer as a sacrifice to God. And we're always in the burden trying to get more and more sheep to offer to God and not bothering to find out whether these sheep are without blemish. Do you know that if an Old Testament priest did that, he'd have been thrown out and probably killed by God for continuously offering to God sheep with blemish.

I would rather offer 10 sheep to God without blemish than thousands of them who are just full of blemishes. I don't know how many Christian workers have this passion of the Apostle Paul as a priest who offers up people without blemishes, those as one who is seeking to present people as a pure virgin to Jesus Christ. I want to show you further in 2 Corinthians 11, in the same point, he speaks about what it is that leads people astray.

What do we mean when we say a person has become a backslider? When does a person become a backslider? We think a person becomes a backslider when he starts smoking or drinking or starts going to the cinemas? No. 2 Corinthians 11 3 says Satan seeks to lead people astray from simple devotion to Jesus Christ. A person becomes a backslider when he stops loving Jesus Christ with all his heart.

That's when he's a backslider. He may still do evangelism. He may still be a full time worker.

He may be very zealous morning till night, giving out tracts and so many things. But if his heart has lost that fervent, passionate devotion and love for Jesus Christ, he is a backslider. And many Christian workers are backsliders.

Yeah, they are doing a lot of work. They don't smoke. They don't drink.

They don't go to the movies. They are reading the Bible every day. They pray.

They fast and pray. They do everything. But in God's eyes, they are backsliders because that love for Jesus, which they had right at the beginning when they started serving the Lord, is gone.

Is it possible, my brothers and sisters, that some of you had a fervent love for the Lord once upon a time and your serving the Lord was such a joy and a delight? You did not do it to impress men. You did not do it

for money. You did it because you love Jesus Christ.

You did it because Jesus gave his life for you, that you were willing to give everything to him. It was like that 20 years ago, perhaps. How is it today? You're still doing so many things, but the love has gone.

I want to say you're a backslider. You need to come back. Satan has led you astray, it says in verse three, from that simple devotion to Jesus Christ.

What does a husband expect from his wife? To do a lot of work in the house or to love him, first of all? What does Jesus expect from you and me? To do a lot of work for him, first of all? No, to love him. I say, Lord, I want to love you with all my heart and everything that I do. Even if I do a little, let me do it out of love.

Do you know that every work that you do for the Lord, which is not out of love, is going to be a dead work, worthless? The Lord has no value for work done, not out of love. Number four, second Corinthians chapter 12. We read in verse seven, twelve verses one to ten, he speaks about a thorn that the father gave him in his flesh.

And this speaks about discipline that God sends into our life. It was a discipline that Paul needed, a chastening, you know, like we spank our children. Why do we spank our children? To protect them from wrong ways.

Why did God give Paul a thorn in the flesh? Because to protect him from pride. So we see another characteristic of Paul. He accepted discipline from his heavenly father.

And it was painful, just like a spanking is painful for our children. This chastening or discipline was painful for Paul. If you get a thorn in your flesh, that's painful.

We don't like it, but Paul accepted it. It was to protect him from becoming proud. We don't know what that thorn was.

It may have been a sickness that he prayed three times, Lord, heal me, heal me, heal me. And he didn't get an answer. It may have been some somebody who was constantly persecuting him.

You know, this expression thorn in the flesh is also used in the Old Testament, in the book of Judges, where the Canaanites who lived, whom the Israelites did not kill in the land of Canaan, who kept on troubling the Israelites. The Lord says they will be like thorns in your flesh. They'll keep on troubling you.

Sometimes God allows people to be like that, to keep on troubling us. It may be some religious fundamentalist group that God allows to be like a thorn in the flesh, to keep on harassing us and troubling us. And we pray, Lord, destroy them, Lord, finish them, do this, do this.

And he doesn't, God doesn't answer. Well, he does answer. He says, no, I'm not going to do it.

And he allows them to be there just like a sickness. But the purpose, what is the purpose of this thorn in the flesh? God can remove that thorn very easily. We may be in circumstances where you find some person is like a thorn in the flesh to you in your locality, always harassing you.

He's a messenger of Satan, we are told here, this thorn in verse seven was a messenger of Satan. A messenger of Satan, that means it's not from God, it's from the devil, this opposition, this persecution, this

anti-Christian group. Or an anti-Christian authority or government, whatever it is, could be a sickness, it could be anything.

It could be other Christians who are opposing us, speaking evil about us like a thorn in the flesh. And you pray and pray and pray, Lord, we bind Satan, we remove this, we rebuke, we resist, we stand against it. And even after years of praying, the thorn remains.

And the purpose is to keep us weak, dependent, helpless, dependent upon God, very good for us. It's very good for us to be like that. And that's God is sovereign.

He can remove that sickness in a moment. He can remove persecution in a moment. He can remove anti-Christian forces in a moment.

He's almighty, he's all powerful, but he doesn't do it. He says, I will not remove that thorn, but I will give you my grace and my grace is sufficient for you. And that's the thing we can prove in those difficult circumstances and manifest through our life that grace can conquer any limitation.

Grace can conquer any opposition. The opposition is there. My enemies are there.

But like David said, thou has prepared a table for me in the presence of my enemies. He has not removed the enemies. The enemies are there, but God has prepared a table for me and I have grace.

And I believe that all of us, particularly if God has blessed our ministry and has gifted us, are in tremendous danger of spiritual pride. If God has not blessed your ministry and you are a total failure, then, of course, you are not in danger of pride. But if God has blessed you in any way in your life, maybe your children are growing up in godly ways.

Oh, you are you can be really proud of that. Do you know how many parents I've seen in my life? Christian parents were so proud. You can smell it.

You can feel it. They are proud. My children are godly compared to that other Christian workers' children.

People are proud of their ministry. See what God has accomplished through me or this church I have built. See these spiritual people here.

Spiritual pride is so close to us that we all need a thorn in the flesh to keep us down on our face before God. It may be a sickness, maybe opposition, maybe persecution. It may be anti-Christian elements.

It may be threats to our life. We pray and pray and pray and that thing still remains there. Go to 2nd Corinthians 12 and see the purpose for it.

God has a purpose. Accept it. Paul accepted it.

Not only accepted it. He says, I'm content. Verse 10.

I am perfectly content with what were the thorns, weaknesses, insults, distresses, persecutions, difficulties. How many of us can say we are content, well content with persecution? We are well content with physical weakness because I've got a stomach's infirmity like Timothy or some other sickness like Paul. Or I have constant difficulties in my life, financial difficulties that could be like a thorn in the flesh.

Lord, I'm perfectly content because that is your will for me. So we find that he accepted this as a discipline from his father. Then number five, chapter 12, verse 12.

He says the signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance by signs and wonders and miracles. Paul expected God to confirm his preaching supernaturally. And I believe we must expect God also to confirm the word we preach in a supernatural way.

It need not be by raising the dead or with handkerchiefs from my body going and healing the sick. I'm not dictating to God how he should do it. I'm not saying, Lord, the way you did it for Paul, you must do it for me.

I never pray that. I'm not even saying, Lord, the way you did it in the acts of the apostles, you must do it today. But I do pray, Lord, when I preach, you must convince people that this is from God, that this is not just a man's opinion.

You must confirm that word in some supernatural way to these people. How you do it is your business. I'm not here to dictate to God how he should do it.

But I want to encourage you. I believe that in our country, as we work in difficult places, we must expect God to confirm the word we preach in a supernatural way. Even with signs and wonders, if he wants to do it that way, let's leave it to God how he does it.

But let it not be that because I cannot believe and I don't expect God to do it, therefore nothing happens. Now, let us trust God to do something supernaturally for difficult situations. You come into a home where you find a very difficult, complicated situation for which there is no answer.

And you are the pastor or the shepherd whom they look up to. There you must have faith, Lord, you are going to answer this and solve this problem in some supernatural way. I don't know how you're going to do it, but I want you to do it.

See, that's our calling to trust God in these difficult situations that people find themselves and to create faith in their heart that almighty God can solve that problem for you. There's a word in the last verse of Matthew 13, which says, God, Jesus could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. And I've often thought of that verse, Lord, in some situation, is it because of my unbelief that you cannot do something? Do you have a difficult son or a difficult daughter in your home? Many people have difficult teenage children.

And it looks as if all your teaching and instruction, they are rebellious and they don't listen to daddy and mommy. Have you ever expected God to do a miracle? Have you ever expected God to do something radical and to change that rebellious son or daughter of yours? Or it could be a complicated situation in your church and you say, well, it's been going on for years. Well, I don't care if it's been going on for hundreds of years.

We want to believe God that God will confirm the word we preach supernaturally in our home, in our church. And I believe all of us need to have some experiences like this in our life so that we know that we're not wasting our time. We are dealing with an almighty God who does not always work the way we want him to work.

No, God's ways are not my ways. That's why I don't tell God, you must do it like this. But I believe that God is sovereign.

And if we have a sense in our heart as to what God wants, good. But if we don't know what God wants, we can say, Lord, do it your way, but confirm your word supernaturally. We must believe that.

We must trust God. We must trust God in our country that the heathen will know that Jesus Christ is Lord. One of the prayers in our church we have prayed for many, many years is that God will break the backbone of idolatry in this land and make the heathen know that Jesus Christ is Lord.

If he wants to do it with signs and wonders like he did in the first century, do it, Lord. Do it your way. We're not telling you how to do it, but we are asking you to do it and we are trusting you to work supernaturally on behalf of your people.

You know, the apostles were not afraid to ask God, Lord, confirm your word supernaturally. Let these people know that I am your servant. Don't let them think that I'm just a babbler here.

Let these people know that I'm your servant. That's what Elijah prayed. He said, Lord, let them know that you are the true God, that I am your servant.

And some of these difficult places where we go and preach the gospel, it's good for us to pray like Elijah prayed on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings chapter 18. Let these people know that you are the true God, that I'm your servant and that I've only told them what you told me to say. We must expect God to do that more in the days to come.

It's quite possible that the Church of Jesus Christ in India has limited God by unbelief. And then we have all these counterfeit signs and wonders. We don't want to have any part with that, but we want to have a genuine manifestation of God's power in our midst.

Paul believed, and if he had not believed, these type of signs and wonders would not have been done in his life. Then number six, chapter 12, verse 14 and 15, Paul was a father to God's people. He said to them, he said, now I'm coming to you for the third time.

And he says, I'm not expecting you to give me anything. No. Do you go to people expecting them to give you something? And he says, I'll tell you why I'm not expecting anything from you.

Because children don't have to save up money for their parents. Who saves up money for their parents? No, parents save up money for their children. Verse 14.

So he says, parents are the one who have to take care of the children, not children take care of their parents. So he says, I'm very happy to come and be spent for you because I'm a father. And because he was a father, we read here that when he came into their midst and he found in their midst, verse 20, strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances.

Verse 21, he says, God will humble me. Have you ever read that verse? Why should God humble Paul when the Corinthians have got jealousy, anger, dispute, slander, gossip, arrogance, disturbances? We should say the Corinthians should be humble, not Paul. But he says in verse 21, God will humble me.

It's something like this. Supposing one day the teacher, where your children go to school, maybe your nine year old son or daughter is in school. And the teacher says, I want to see the parent of this boy.

And the teacher says, you know, your son is very bad in his behavior. He's always fighting with people, hitting them, spitting on them and misbehaving and calling them all types of filthy names. What will you tell the teacher? Will you say, well, that's his business.

That's not mine. Will you say that or will you come back home weeping that your son is like that? Why do you feel like that? Because you're his father, you're his mother. But if the teacher tells you some other boy is spitting and fighting and quarreling, then you don't feel sad.

Why is that? Because you're not his father. When you see people in your church fighting, quarreling, disputing, arrogance, slanders, gossip, disturbances, does it humble you? If it does not humble you, you're not a father. If you're a father, it will humble you.

The behavior of the Corinthians humbled Paul because he was a father. It's almost as though he's presenting these children and God saying to Paul, Paul, what type of children you have brought up here? What type of children have you brought up for me? And Paul says, I'm sorry, Lord. I want to mourn.

Verse 21, I want to mourn for the sins of the people in the congregation. Now, mourning for our own sins itself is a wonderful thing. But imagine going further than that, where we begin to mourn for the sins of people in our church because they are not spiritual and they are my children.

A lot of preachers are not fathers to their congregations. They are teachers. You know the difference between a father and a teacher? A teacher says, will humiliate a child.

He's not bothered if that person is a gossip and a slanderer and one who fights and quarrels and misbehaves. He says, that's not my child. You're a useless child.

Get out of this class. The teacher is not bothered. He's the father who weeps at home for his child.

The teacher doesn't go home and weep for that student who is bad. And when we have a church where people are quarreling and fighting and they are not spiritual, if you're a teacher, you will go home and sleep peacefully at night. If you're a father, you'll go home and weep at night.

And you and I know whether we are fathers or teachers, Paul said. You can have ten thousand teachers, but you have only one father, one Corinthians four. There are not many fathers in Christendom in India.

We have multitudes of teachers. And you know, another difference between a teacher and a father, a teacher always works for salary. Oh, it's very important.

If you don't get salary, I won't come for work. How much salary does a father get for being a father? There's a lot of difference. You know, God calls us to be fathers.

And that's because he was a loving father like that. He could also be strict. You know, a father is not only loving, he could also be strict with his children.

For example, he says. We're chapter 13 and verse two. He says, when I come again, the last part of us who I won't spare anybody.

And again, in verse 10, he talks about the severity with which I'm going to treat you because of the authority the Lord has given me. See, we can be strict as a teacher or strict as a father. Many preachers are like strict teachers.

They will not build up the body of Christ, the body of Christ, like a family. If you can't build up a family, it won't be the body of Christ. Many churches are like classrooms where strict teacher is there with a rod.

But the church is meant to be a family and there's a lot of difference between a strict father and a strict teacher. We ought to be strict. I believe that we must not allow nonsense in the church, but the strictness must be the strictness of a father.

That's what Paul had. OK, lastly, in chapter 12, verse 18 and 19, he says, I urge Titus to go and sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and walk in the same steps? Now, what I want you to notice finally in Paul's life was he reproduced himself in his co-workers.

And I believe this is where we could finish. The success of your ministry is seen when you can produce another man like you. Another man who's got the same vision, the same burden, the same love for Jesus, the same desire for purity, the same spirit of humility and service.

Paul produced a Titus, he says, we walked in the same spirit and in the same steps. Here was another person who behaved just like me. I didn't take advantage of you and he didn't take advantage of you.

We were exactly the same. Can you show me two or three of your closest co-workers? Let me see them. Let me observe them for some time.

And I will tell you what type of person you are. Because your co-workers, the type of... I don't mean all the people who sit in your church. There are babies in every church.

We don't bother about them. But the two or three co-workers that are closest to you, they will indicate what type of person you are. They have become like you.

If you are sacrificial, they will be sacrificial. If you are arrogant, they'll be arrogant. If you are not serious about your Christian life, they will not be serious.

If you love money, they love money. We reproduce after our own kind. And if you want to know what type of person you are, just look at your co-workers, your closest co-workers.

And in them, you will see a reflection of yourself. I ask sometimes... I remember a father once saying that he saw his child, his older son, speaking in a very rude way to his younger brother. And he was disturbed by it.

To see his older son speaking in a rude way to the younger brother. But when he went before the Lord and thought about it, he saw that he himself was speaking like that. And he had only reproduced a son just like himself.

And sometimes when you see some weakness in a co-worker of yours, if you go before the Lord, the Lord may show you that person is exactly like you. He has acquired certain qualities from you. The way he treats his junior workers is exactly the way you have treated him.

He doesn't have a spirit of humility and service because you don't have a spirit of humility and service. He doesn't believe that junior co-worker is equal to him because you have not treated him like you're equal. You have treated him like a junior person.

He treats the other fellow like a junior person. How is it that Jesus was able to produce such wonderful apostles? Because he himself was like that. What we are, we reproduce in others.

This is the new covenant way. It's not just teaching. It is a father or a mother.

Paul says, I'm like a mother, Galatians 4, laboring in pain like a mother about to deliver a baby until Christ is formed in you. New covenant ministry is not just preaching and teaching like in a classroom. It's like a father and mother producing children just like ourselves.

And if we are spiritual, they will be spiritual. Now, I believe this is what India needs to see. Godly men and women produced by godly leaders, people who seek the kingdom of God first because their leaders seek the kingdom of God first.

People who are free from the love of money because their leaders are free from the love of money. People who love Jesus Christ and will give up everything for him because their leaders love Jesus Christ and are willing to give up everything for him. So you see, everything depends on us.

It all depends on us. May God give us grace to humble ourselves and seek his face. Let's pray.

And while I heads about in prayer, I want to just encourage you to respond to some of the things you heard in these days. Perhaps there's a lot of things that have been mentioned, and maybe you need to go back later and read through your notes again and ask God to show you those specific areas where you need to settle matters with him. Let's ask God to give us grace.

Heavenly Father, apply the truths that we have heard to our lives and remind us of these things. It's difficult to absorb all of it in a few moments, but we pray that you remind us of these things in the days to come. That you can find pleasure in our lives and that through our labors, you can find a body, an expression of the body of Jesus in different parts of this land and other lands, we humbly ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. That is [www.cfcindia.com](http://www.cfcindia.com) and at [punan.org](http://punan.org) forward slash Zach. That is P-O-O-N-E-N dot O-R-G forward slash Z-A-C.

For video messages, audio messages and books by Zach Poonen that can all be downloaded freely. Our mailing address is Christian Fellowship Center, Forte da Costa Square, Bangalore, 560-084-INDIA. If you would like to receive a weekly message by Zach Poonen by email, please send us your email address to [cfclit@touchdellindia.net](mailto:cfclit@touchdellindia.net). That is C-F-C-L-I-T at T-O-U-C-H-D-E-L-I-N-D-I-A dot net.

The Lord bless you richly.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8278.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/ambassadors-for-christ-part-3/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

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

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

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**