

(Atlanta 2013) 3. Question Answer

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen discusses the relationship between law and grace, the assurance of salvation, and the importance of spiritual maturity in evangelism.

Duration: 2:16:03

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6, Matthew 5:17-20, Galatians 4:1-7, Colossians 3:17

Topics: "Law And Grace", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

This sermon discusses the dual nature of Jesus sitting informally with his disciples and standing to teach, emphasizing the importance of understanding the deeper spiritual meaning behind the law and grace. It delves into how God treats us differently in the New Covenant, transitioning us from being treated as children under the law to mature sons and daughters under grace. The sermon also touches on the significance of prioritizing God's values in our lives over worldly demands like education, and the need to interpret the Bible with discernment, especially distinguishing between historical accounts and doctrinal teachings.

Transcript

Okay, first question. Did Jesus sit or stand when he spoke? Okay, that's from me. He did both.

If you read the Gospels. When he sat, he was more informal with his disciples as a family. So, I don't know whether you have ever tried to cut a birthday cake into a hundred pieces.

It's not easy. But that's what I've got to do now. 100 questions in the short time we have.

So, everybody's going to get a very thin slice. Whoever asked a question. But that's because everybody's got to get a slice.

That's the reason. Is law and grace rival systems? As Christians, are we not to fulfill the law as well? Matthew 5, 17 to 20. Okay, I'm going to make sure the slices are equal size.

Jesus took the external law and made it inward. He didn't abolish it in that sense. He took it at a deeper level.

One way, illustrations. I like to read the Bible in pictures in my mind because Jesus so often used pictures and I find it becomes clearer. See, if you have a sickness which gives you sores in your body and you take

an ointment and rub it and takes care of it.

And then it comes in the other hand. You rub it there and it goes away. It comes in your leg.

Rub it there. It keeps them coming up. But because you've got this ointment, you are able to take care of it.

The law is something like that. It brought an ordered society because you had laws against murders, adultery, stealing. In fact, the Ten Commandments is almost the basis for most of the laws in the world.

But Jesus came with grace. That's like supposing after many years of using the ointment, you hear one day somebody's discovered an antibiotic and that you don't apply. You put it inside and it hits the root of the problem inside and then you don't get the source.

So you don't need the ointment. Why? Because the problem has been dealt with at a deeper level. So that is what freedom from the law means.

It says in Romans, I mean, sorry, Galatians chapter 5 that if you are led by the Spirit then you're not under the law. Galatians in chapter 5 and verse 18. That's like saying if you have taken the antibiotic then you don't need the ointment.

But if you don't take the antibiotic then you certainly need the ointment. If you don't allow the Holy Spirit to lead you then you certainly need the law. Okay, what is the assurance of salvation? That means basically that you're sure that Christ, when you talk about salvation, unfortunately, that's not really understood the way the Bible speaks about because the Bible speaks about being saved from sin.

But as the way we normally use it, it's almost as though we are saved from hell. So what I would say, what is the assurance that you become a child of God? When we repent of our sins, turn, repent means turn around. It doesn't mean I've overcome sin, but I've changed my attitude to sin and I've trusted that Christ died for all my sins and I've received him as my Lord and Savior.

I'm forgiven. I've become a child of God and that assurance is the Holy Spirit within us. In Romans 8, it says the Holy Spirit witnesses within us that we are the children of God crying out Abba or Daddy to heaven.

So that's assurance. It comes through two sources. One is God's Word and the Holy Spirit.

This is the double witness concerning anything. How do you know your sins are forgiven? The witness of the Holy Spirit and the witness of God's Word. Some promise in God's Word. How do you know you're a child of God? How do you know you're filled with the Spirit? Always God's Spirit witnessing within you and God's, the promise in God's Word.

For example, you being evil, if you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? We ask and we surrender everything we believe and we have a witness in our heart by the Holy Spirit. That's how every assurance comes in any level. Okay Why does it say in Acts 5, Satan filled their hearts? What type of person was Ananias when Peter addressed him? Whenever we tell a lie, the devil is the father of lies, but you know a father alone cannot produce a child.

A father needs a mother. A man needs a woman. So if the devil is the father, you got to be the mother to produce a lie.

He can't do it himself. So when you yield yourself to him, that's how a lie comes. And as I said, lying can be even without opening our mouth when you give a false impression.

Okay It says in 2 Thessalonians 2.11, we'll be deceived if we don't love the truth. God sends a deluding spirit. What is it? Those, it says in 1 Timothy 4 Where those who are evil fell away.

In the earlier verse it talks about truly behaving in the house of God. I think the question is very vague, but I think there is a protection for us if we accept the truth mentioned in previous verses in 1 Timothy 3. In 1 Timothy 3.16, before it speaks about deception, it says the truth of godliness is in Christ who came in the flesh. The humanity of Christ, the fact that he lived on earth as a man and gave, not only died for our sins, but gave us an example how we are to live.

If we follow that example, then 1 Timothy 4.1, we will not be deceived. In the secular walk of life, I've often found myself raising the bar when confronted with competition. I sense there's something wrong, seriously wrong, with how to perform in a secular life.

I believe in our secular jobs. We must do the very best we possibly can. It's a good witness for Christ if you are a very efficient worker.

Efficient worker means according to the level of your ability and intelligence, etc. I worked in the Navy. I was converted when I was in the Indian Navy as an officer, and I was a naval officer for seven years before the Lord called me out to leave my job, and I felt that as a Christian, my witness must be that in every single ship I worked on, my senior officers would find nothing wrong with my work, that all my work was perfect, better than anybody else's, not for any award or reward.

I remember one commanding officer called me once and said, Lieutenant Poonen, I can find nothing wrong with your work, but you're a very unsociable character. You don't come for the drinking parties and the card games and the dancing sessions and things like that. Of course, I said, I'm a Christian, but I told him, sir, I don't work really to please you.

I fear God and I do my work to the best of my ability, whether you see me or not or whatever confidential report you write about me, and I'm very thankful to say that all the years I was in the Navy, no senior officer ever could find anything wrong with the work I did, but I was not trying to show I was better than somebody else. I was just trying to do the best to my ability, and so I believe that should be. We're not here to compete with others.

We must do our best and leave it to God. Psalm 75 says promotion comes from God, so we trust him to promote us when he feels it's right. For those whose sleep is affected by anxiety, what advice do you give besides don't be anxious? Is it all right to take medication for sleep, depression, anxiety? See, we are not only spirit and soul.

We are body, so a lot of things in our body affect our behavior and conduct, so if there are, I mean doctors know about it, there are tablets that can help us to calm us if some people are overexcited, etc. There's nothing wrong in taking any type of medication because remember all these things which we call tablets and medicines are basically chemicals which God has created on earth or herbs or plants and things taken out from things which God has created, and God has put these medicinal values in all these

minerals and vitamin C and oranges and things like that because it's part of, it's an act of God's mercy on a earth that is cursed by sin which produces sickness, so we've got to thank God for that mercy, and whether you take it as a vitamin C tablet or an orange juice, it's all really the same whether you take it in different forms in the actual raw state or whether it's somebody conveniently puts it into a tablet. Medicine is, I believe, something God has ordained.

There's nothing wrong in taking it. It's a means by which God can heal us, so if those things help us to calm our nerves, that's perfectly okay. There's no contradiction in scripture with medicine.

2nd Thessalonians 2.7, it speaks about something restraining the man of lawlessness till he be taken away. It's the influences of God on earth through his working and circumstances and other things through the Holy Spirit, and those restraining influences are removed, and it's not that the church goes away or the Holy Spirit goes away. The Holy Spirit will always be here till Christ returns, but God restrains something up to a certain point and then removes that restraint, and then a flood of evil comes in, so that is the God's power that's restraining.

Being baptized with the Holy Spirit will give you power. Can you explain the power? Is it abstract? Does it mean ability? Jesus did not say just power. Acts 1.8, He said, you shall receive power to be my witnesses.

It's not just power. Acts 1.8 is the clearest verse I have seen to describe the evidence of the fulfilling of the Holy Spirit and what the power is for. The power is to be, B-E, which is different from bear, B-E-A-R.

To bear witness means just my lips. To be a witness means my life and my lips. So the Holy Spirit will give me power to be a witness for Christ by the way I live, by the way I conduct myself, and by the words I speak.

For myself, I was a very shy person. You wouldn't believe that now, but it is true. I never took part in public debates in school or college or anywhere, and not even in the Military Academy.

I was very reserved and shy, but when I became a Christian, I knew that I had to be a witness for Christ, and I was so scared to stand before people or to stand in the streets and preach, and I said, Lord, I've got to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's the only way, and the Bible said to seek for the gift of prophecy, which is the ability to preach God's Word in a way that will convict and encourage and comfort and challenge. That's specifically written in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, verse 1. Pursue love and earnestly desire to prophesy, and the prophesying is described in verse 3. So I did that.

I began to seek God and say, Lord, I want to prophesy. I want to be able to share, prophesy not in the Old Testament sense of predicting, but encouraging and speaking. So as I began to seek God for that, I found that God gave me that ability, and I keep seeking for it even now so that it can be sharper and more effective.

There's hardly ever that I preach a sermon where I don't go home finally at the end of the day and judge myself, and I say, Lord, could I have done that better? Imagine a housewife who's so intent on making perfect meals that every dish she cooks she evaluates and checks whether she could do it better. I think over a period of years, she'd be a first-class chef. So I find that a lot of preachers don't judge themselves and examine themselves.

I often, I'll tell you, I often listen to my own messages on the internet or on a tape to see, Lord, how did I come across there? Was that, could I do it better? Because it's just like, it's like serving a meal. I want to

do it better. I mean, I want to be the best possible cook there is, spiritually speaking.

So if you seek God and say, Lord, give me the Spirit's power to do that, now that's my calling. Now another person's calling may not be to preach. It may be something else, but we need power.

It's like every part of this body. We can say has two things. One is blood.

Blood flows into every part of this body, symbolizing the blood of Christ that cleanses every member of the body of Christ. But the other thing that every member in this body has is power. For example, if this hand is paralyzed, it's still a member of my body, but it doesn't have power.

It's useless. In fact, it becomes a burden on the rest of the body. So you can be a member of the body with the blood flowing, the blood of Christ, but no power.

What you need is power, and if this hand gets power, it will not become a tongue. It'll become a powerful hand. So some people, when they seek God for power, they say, oh, I'd like to preach like that brother.

If power would make me preach like that brother. Remember, if God's called you to be a hand, you will never be a tongue when you get power. You'll be a good hand.

If you're a mother of five or six children, you'll be a spiritual mother, not a spiritual missionary traveling the world. So each calling is different. You need to recognize you have a particular calling in the body of Christ, and the power is to fulfill that calling.

And that calling will become more and more clear to you as you seek to do whatever your hand finds to do. Do it, it says in Ecclesiastes. And as you do it, I think I took about 15-20 years before I realized what my calling in the body of Christ was, but until then I kept doing what I could.

And as I did, I found, for example, in the early days, I did a lot of evangelism, and I found that God had called me to be a teacher. I just want to say a word about evangelism because a lot of people think that our emphasis, we are against evangelism. It's not true.

In our churches, we are against evangelism that does not lead people to become disciples, and that does not lead them to maturity. Because I find a lot of evangelism today is just bring a person to Christ and just leave them, go and bring somebody else to Christ. That's like a mother who gives birth to a baby and says, okay, now I've got to get another baby, dump that baby on the street, and go and get another baby, and then dump that one on the street, and go and get another baby.

What do you think of such a mother? You're a very irresponsible mother. If you've got a baby, you must bring that baby up to maturity. That's what Paul did.

When he brought people to Christ, he brought them into a place together. He'd visit them, write letters to them, encourage them, and I think if he was living today, call them up on the telephone or do a Skype meeting with them, and that's what I do. When I bring people to Christ in the area, I bring them together, encourage them, lead them on, because I don't want to leave them babies.

Not a few parents want to leave your children babies. So producing evangelism is like producing children. Great! But bring them up to maturity, make them disciples, and teach them to obey all that you're commanded me.

So we're not against evangelism. We've got, I mean, we started off with four or five families, and we have 50 churches today. Obviously, we have done evangelism, and with hundreds and hundreds of people from all religions.

So, but we don't believe in leaving them babies. That's where sometimes people misunderstand what we stand for. Deception, like lying, is it a sin? If I dye my hair and buying my hair into an unnatural color, is that deception? No, there's no deception there.

I think, I don't believe we should look shabby, you know, with hair that's just flying around and not properly clothed. I think there's something Christ-like about being neat and tidy. I don't mean showy in a grand way that you make other people feel small or display your wealth or something with your clothing.

I don't mean that. But to look, you know, pleasant and approachable, you know, comb your hair and probably use oil in your hair or whatever it is. And I'm not against people looking attractive.

And I believe that's right, too, as far as possible. And so, I don't dye my hair, because I think there's a value in gray hair. Otherwise, but I've got no problem with somebody who does.

I don't think there's anything wrong in it. Because Christianity is not whether you dye your hair or you don't dye your hair. The deception I'm speaking about is related to spiritual things.

You see, for example, a person who's working among young people, I can presume that he probably wouldn't want to dye his hair so that they feel more, he approached him more easily because he doesn't look so old or something like that. I feel that the motive is always what God sees. Remember this.

Whenever you're in doubt about something, ask yourself, what is my motive? And to look pleasant and nice, there's nothing wrong in that. But are you planning, are you trying to deceive somebody about your spiritual state? So I was primarily talking about our spiritual condition. Ananias would not have dyed if he had dyed his hair.

He dyed because he was trying to deceive people in that church that he was spiritual when he was not. And that is not something that God approves of. God wants us to be ourselves.

He doesn't want us to pretend that we are more mature than we really are or any type of that type of deception. See, we've got to be careful that we don't become fanatics in the matter of, you know, being pleasant in our appearance and things like that. I mean, there may be some sisters who feel they must wear jewelry.

My wife and I don't believe in it, but we don't judge others who do because that's a personal choice. I'm not here to judge for other people. The important thing is, are you Christ-like in your conduct and behavior? I once, you know, a lot of people are against ladies wearing jeans and lipstick and mascara and all that other stuff.

And in our church, we believe that sisters should wail their heads. But I once said, I shocked my church once by saying, give me a sister who wears jeans and doesn't wail her head and cut her hair very short and wears mascara and lipstick and all the other things. I don't know all the other things people use, but whatever you do and really good-looking, but never gossips, never backbites, submits to her husband, is very kind and helpful and thoughtful and always out to maybe cook a meal for somebody who's sick.

Oh, give me a hundred sisters like that. Then these sisters who, you know, wail their heads and look very holy and wear white clothes and don't wear any jewelry, but go home and don't submit to their husbands and fight and quarrel and yell and scream and that's hypocrisy. So I'm not much for this.

I believe we should be modest in our apparel, but it's the inner character that's far, far more important. And if there's one without the other, then I'd say, inner character is more important. Okay, I made a promise to the Lord and I could not keep it.

And every time I remember, I feel condemned. What should I do? Will you forgive me? Of course, the Lord will forgive you. I'll tell you a true story.

It happened in one of our villages where there was a non-christian man who got converted, and you see, he had from his non-christian religion the idea that if I have committed some sin due to something, then I must make some type of sacrifice. You know, he couldn't believe that somebody else's death took care of everything, that Christ's death. He felt that he must also do something, and he was a milkman who would always, like most milkmen in India, add a lot of water to the milk when they sell it to make money.

So he did it also, and he said, as an act of repentance, I'll kill my cow so that I'll show God I really repent of it. But, so he made a vow to God, and then he suddenly realized, I've got only one cow, then how will I live if I kill it? He didn't know, he was in a real predicament. Unfortunately, there was a conference a few days later, and he met me.

He said, what do I do? I made a vow to God. I said, well, I see sometimes the three-year-old walks up to his dad and says, I'm not gonna live in this house anymore. I'm gonna walk out.

Did the dad keep that three-year-old to the word? You said you're gonna walk out of the house? Now walk out of the house. Don't stay here. No, you see, that's a silly three-year-old saying something, and I said, remember God's a father.

You're like a silly little kid who said something to God, and God overlooks it. Forget it. Don't worry about it.

He was so relieved that he didn't have to kill his cow, so remember God's a father, and sometimes we say silly stupid things because we are two years old spiritually. He ignores them. Don't worry.

I've heard you say we shouldn't look inside, but look at Jesus. Can you explain? I'll tell you what, you know, psychology says look inside, see if you've done something wrong, look back to the time when you were in your mother's womb. Possibly your mother rejected you.

All types of stupid things. You get into bondage like this. I say, look at Jesus.

There's something glorious about it. You see the perfect character, and as you see his perfect character, you see your own selfishness and pride, and you can repent of it. That's the way, and then you see something more, and you see yourself, and the Holy Spirit comes to help you to get rid of that.

That way I don't get depressed because 2nd Corinthians 3, 18 says the Holy Spirit shows me the glory of Jesus and then conforms me to that likeness. If he only showed me the glory of Jesus, I'd be depressed, but he goes the second step and changes me into that likeness. I think I'm keeping time, okay.

What do you say to a young person, young man who's struggling with sexual sin, pornography, and other sexual sins in private other than adultery? Well, I would say that first of all you've got to see that it is

serious. Now there are some people who, some say it's certain sexual sins are not so serious because you're not harming anybody else. I agree.

If you've committed adultery, that's more serious because you harm somebody else, but private sexual sins that you do on your own pornography are not harming anybody, but you are in another sense harming yourself. You know it's like if you take a blade, and you cut your hand, you can say I'm not harming anybody, so shall I do it? Well in the Bible there was a madman in a place called Gadara who would cut himself with stones, and Jesus had to deliver him. So you don't do that.

You don't harm yourself, and what you don't realize is that the more you watch pornography or practice these sexual sins, you're harming yourself in a way that you don't see. For example, if a person constantly smoking cigarettes, if he could see every time he smoked a cigarette, how is the beautiful pink lung that he got as a baby become blacker and blacker and blacker and getting worse and worse and worse, and one day will kill him with lung cancer. If he could see that, the thing is he doesn't see it after 20 years when he gets his cancer, but if he could see progressively how it's getting worse and worse and worse, he'd give up his cigarettes in no time.

Or a person who's drinking alcohol, if he could progressively see each day how his liver is getting worse and worse and worse and worse, he'd give up alcohol immediately, but we don't see it. If you cut your hand, you can see it, and that's why we don't do such stupid things. But we do a lot of things that harm us inwardly, which are actually more serious.

For example, if you keep on speaking evil about others, or you keep on losing your temper, there's damage that you're doing to your soul, which is, I mean you can ask forgiveness and get forgiven, but there'll be a scar. Supposing I cut my hand, and I say it'll heal, of course it'll heal, there'll be a scar. Then I cut another one, then I cut another time, say it'll all heal, of course.

Ultimately, my whole hand will be full of scars, because I say every wound will heal, and that's what happens to people's souls. We don't see it. We sin and ask God for forgiveness.

You're forgiven, there's a scar, and then you sin again, because you say forgiveness is cheap. I asked the Lord to forgive me. He forgives you, but there's another scar, and then you sin again, and you ask the Lord to forgive you.

Your soul is full of scars, and it's not as healthy as, you know, if your hand is full of scars, and the soles of your feet are full of scars, you're going to have a tough time doing many things in life. And that's what happens, that forgiveness is, there's a tremendous price. It's free for you, but there's a tremendous price that Christ paid for it.

So therefore, we should ask ourselves in relation to these sins, Jesus was tempted like us. One of the great verses in the Bible is Hebrews 4 15. Jesus was tempted exactly like us, and I remember when I was a young man, and I was struggling with these sexual sins, just like anybody else.

I used to say, Lord Jesus, when you were in Nazareth, you were also tempted like me, because the Bible says that, and how did you face those temptations in Nazareth as a young man, with all the passions I have in my body? I want to follow you. So my singing, follow, follow, I will follow anywhere, everywhere, I will follow him, became real, not just on Sunday, as I said, but on Monday and Tuesday, where I had to actually do exactly what Jesus did in Nazareth, when he was tempted like me. That's the thing that helped

me the most.

And 1 Timothy 3 16 says, that is the secret of godliness, to see that Jesus came in the flesh, was tempted like me, and overcame. So when I look at Jesus as an example, and ask the Holy Spirit to give me power, God can help us to overcome. Don't get discouraged, if it takes time.

If you've been a slave to any type of sin, anger, pornography, anything for many years, it may take time for you to get over it, but fight it, fight it. I sometimes use this example for young people. Here are two men, two young men, and they're invited to wrestle with a giant of a man, and one of them looks at the giant and says, boy, I can never fight with him.

I don't even try. I might as well give up. He gets into the bout, and the giant knocks him down.

He says, I'll be defeated. The other guy, he looks at this giant, and he says, okay, I can't defeat him, but I'm gonna fight. I'm gonna struggle and fight with him.

And after a great struggle, he falls down. The next day again, he struggles and falls down. Next day again, he struggles.

And five years, he keeps fighting with this giant every day, and every day he loses. This other guy, five years, just gives up. Both were defeated, but how is it this other person's muscles became stronger? Because he fought.

Even though he lost, he fought, and the very fact of struggling with a stronger person developed his muscles, and one day he'd be strong enough to overcome him. But this other guy will never overcome him, because he gives up the battle straight away. So what I tell young people is, think of sex as a sexual sin, temptation as a massive giant, much stronger than you.

If you look at it and say, oh, I'm just gonna give in, you'll never overcome it. But you say, I'm gonna fight this. Okay, I'm defeated.

I'm defeated. But you find that you got a little more strength that you don't give in so easily after a year or so, and a day will come when you'll knock that giant down. So all I say is, don't give up.

Keep fighting. That's the thing that God looks for. Do you hate it? The Bible says in Hebrews 1.9 that Jesus hated sin.

Okay, you can't overcome sin. Do you hate it? Keep hating it. Keep hating it.

Keep fighting it, and ask for the power of the Holy Spirit, and God will give you the victory. See, sexual sin is just one little segment of a huge circle called sin. So if I want victory only in this one segment, it may be difficult.

But if I look at sin as a whole, the Bible says sin shall not have dominion over you. Not just one little segment. Very often we are looking for victory in one segment of anger or one segment of sexual sin.

But if I look at sin as a whole and say, Lord, I want to overcome sin in its totality, you'll find that as you overcome in areas like selfishness or pride, you know, things which are a little more easier than overcoming pornography and sexual sin, to be a little considerate to others, to ask forgiveness when you hurt somebody. Little, little things like this. If you do, or to fast a little, maybe to overcome your love of food

or your gluttony, you'll find that the strength you get in those areas through the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to help in these other little segments where you want victory.

So always look at sin as a whole and say, Lord, I want to overcome sin in its totality. I'm a very selfish person, not at all generous, very stingy and miserly, and I'm not worried about that. I want to overcome sexual sin.

Well, tackle the things that are easy first. You know, for example, laziness to get up a little earlier in the morning just to read the scriptures. Have you heard of the story of the man who went to a godly preacher and said, will you pray that I will get up in the morning to read the Bible? So this wise preacher said, if you promise to put one leg outside your bed in the morning, I'll pray that God will help you to put the other leg outside.

But if you expect me to pray that God will lift you up out of the bed and make you stand, it's not gonna happen. It's a cooperation with God. If I want to fast and pray, what are all the points I should keep in mind? I've had many preach, but I don't have a clear idea.

See, I think in fasting there's the discipline of fasting, which we can do as a discipline, maybe once a week or something. But then we also fast sometimes when we have a burden to pray for something, some particular need in our life, and don't start with fasting for two or three days. Maybe you should begin with fasting for just one meal and then make it two meals and make it three meals.

Go at it gradually and I think a number of things will happen. I find, for example, you begin to understand, first of all, what hunger feels like. See, most Christians have never known what hunger feels like because they never fasted for one single day.

So when you think of people who are hungry in the world without food, you have a greater compassion for them if you yourself have missed a meal for just two days or even one day. And then another thing is one of the things by which we can overcome gluttony. You know, basically, we're all great lovers of food and gluttons, and we need to overcome that where our stomach should not be our God.

And then the third is, I think, it's an expression of the intensity of our desire as we seek God for some particular reason. So that's the way I would say you should go about it. And then as a discipline, I think it's a very good thing if you're a young, fit person to fast at least once a day.

And even if you're older, at least skip a few meals a week just so that you don't become a slave to food. How can you be sure if God has chosen, who God has chosen as your life partner? How can you tell the difference between God's choice and your choice? Well, first of all, we must make sure that we find someone who is of equal... The Bible says don't be unequally yoked. In the Old Testament, there was a law, don't put an ox and a donkey together under the same yoke.

Because an ox and a donkey don't work together easily. Put two oxen together. And so in the New Testament, it says don't be unequally yoked with someone who is not a believer.

Someone who is not born again. That's the first thing you must check. Is that person a child of God? Because the Bible says there are children of God and children of the devil.

And if you marry someone who is a child of the devil, your father-in-law is likely to visit your home quite often. And you can't stop that. You'll have problems.

So better not to marry someone who's a child of the devil. But even among children of God, there are different levels. So if you marry someone who is not really the same temperature spiritually, not as wholehearted as you are, you'll find you'll have to drag him or her when you want to follow the Lord.

So I say look for someone who's the same temperature approximately, who's got the same desire and passion. You can grow together. And how to know whether it's God's will? I believe primarily by a peace in our heart as we put spiritual values first.

Now the thing is the Bible doesn't give us much guidelines on this except don't be unequally yoked in 2nd Corinthians 6 14. So I feel that the principle applies not only that we don't get unequally yoked with unbelievers, but also a fair amount of equality in other areas. You know, we are spirit, soul, and body.

We're not angels. We are spirit, soul, and body. So we look for the spiritual values first and then the values of the soul, which is intellectual, social, economic, all those things, and then body as well.

Question is how much proportion, importance, proportionate importance we give to each of these. So as a general guideline, this is not scripture. This is my opinion.

I'd say when you consider a girl or a boy as possible life partner, give out of out of a hundred marks, give 50 marks for spiritual values, 30 marks for intellectual, social, economic, level, education, communication, ability, etc., and 20 marks for physical attractiveness, which is also important. Don't give zero for physical attractiveness to try and be super spiritual. That's crazy because remember you've got to look at her face every morning and or his face.

So God, so but that's not primary and so that's a rough guideline I give to people and then as you pray about it, Romans 8 6 says the mind of the Spirit is peace. So if you're thinking of the mind of the Spirit, how do I know the mind of the Holy Spirit? I'll have a peace in my heart. Romans 8 6 and if it's not the mind of the Spirit, I'll feel agitated in my spirit.

You know, there's another verse for that and I think it's Isaiah 57 and verse 20, which says the wicked are like the troubled sea, which has no rest, but it constantly throws up 20, Isaiah 57 20. So that agitation is a mark of something wrong. But peace, as I think about it more and more and I weigh the pros and cons of marrying this particular person, you know giving increased this proportion that I mentioned for spirit, soul and body.

We'll either have a peace about it over a period of time or we'll have a disturbance. One thing I would say is never be in a hurry. I don't know whether you know this verse in Proverbs 29 and verse 20, you know in in the book of Proverbs, Solomon wrote up to chapter 29, chapter 30 and 31 were written by somebody else.

You read that also there in chapter 30. So when he writes chapter 29, he's coming to the end of the Proverbs and in the book of Proverbs, he has spoken about many types of fools. A fool is like this, a fool is like this, many times you read in Proverbs and when he comes to the last chapter, he says, I want to tell you now the greatest fool of all, the one who really takes the cake for being the wins the prize for being the greatest fool of all, that is Proverbs 29 20, the one who is hasty in his words or decisions or matters.

So the greatest fool is the one who decides without waiting on God. Okay, how can I trust the Lord with all my heart in all directions, I use mostly my mind. See the heart is it's very it's very difficult for us to analyze but it's what people fall a gut feeling or something we sense which we cannot analyze with our mind very

clearly, but I mean one of the ways for Christians, for example, you know, you can you may not be a great scholar in Scripture, but you're attending a meeting and here's somebody who's supposed to be a great preacher and he speaks and even though intellectually, he's very clever, somehow you feel in your heart there's something wrong with this.

I sense that something's wrong. That's the witness of the Holy Spirit saying to be careful about this man and very often I found that when I follow that witness in my spirit or heart, years later, I find it's right. There was something wrong with that person.

So not because now don't follow your own prejudices. You don't like somebody's face or you don't like somebody not for that reason, but if you're really walking with the Lord, it's a great thing to have a witness in your spirit. Be careful and you girls, for example, if somebody's trying to be friendly with you, follow the witness in your spirit.

The Spirit says be careful about this young man. I would say be careful. You'll protect yourself from a lot of danger.

That's a wonderful thing of having the Holy Spirit within to guide us. That's where the heart is more reliable than the mind. Is it God's will? Is that is God's will to be poor for Christians? No.

I believe, I don't say that God's will is to be rich or poor. God's will is that we should be spiritually minded, become like Christ and to be rich or poor is to be like the color of your skin. Does God want everybody to be brown or black or white? No, these things don't matter.

Or does God want everybody to be five feet or six feet or five and a half feet? These things don't matter. So in the same way, there are different degrees of height, different colors of skin. There are different degrees of different economic levels.

But one thing I can say without any doubt, and I say this coming from a very poor country, India, where 80% live in the villages. So many people live on one dollar a day. I have seen through 37 years of working with many rich people and poor people with PhDs and with people who cannot read or write.

We have people in our church who cannot read or write. They can't read a Bible. Who are born again, who love Jesus.

And I've seen this, that wherever anybody seeks the kingdom of God first, puts God first in their life and says Jesus Christ is going to be my Lord. I'm going to honor him. I'm going to keep free from sin.

Every single case without exception is a hundred percent success rate. Whatever they need on earth is added to them. Food, clothing, shelter, children's education.

These are the four basic things I say. They don't become millionaires. They may not get a car.

Most of them don't. But whatever they need for their life, and needs are different. I mean here you live in the United States.

You may need a car. It's a necessity in many parts of India. It's not a necessity.

So necessities are different in different countries. But one thing I can say, if you are not getting your basic necessities, there's one problem. You are not seeking God's kingdom first.

That I can say without any doubt because I've proved it for 37 years. With people who are a hundred times poorer than many of you here, and I know it works. It's one of the things I wanted to find out when I became a Christian and we started doing our work in India 37 years ago.

I said Lord, first of all, I want to prove it in my life. My wife and I were very poor when we started out. Extremely poor for a number of years.

God took care of our needs. Then we proved it first in our local church in Bangalore, how God did that with a number of people there. But then we proved it in the smallest villages in India and some of the poorest villages in Tamil Nadu, which is one state in India.

And I saw every place, I saw Matthew 6, 33 works. If you seek God's kingdom first and his righteousness, all that you need on earth, food, clothing, shelter, a job, with the children's education, God will take care of. So if you don't have that, I say you got yourself to blame.

So it always works and it's not God's will for a Christian to be poor or rich, but it is God's will that we should have all our needs met and he does it. God did not allow Jesus to be homeless and to be sleeping on the streets. If he honored God, God would take care of him.

We have a God in heaven who is a father. But first of all, I've got to surrender my life to Christ and make him Lord of my life. How can I be born again that I've already explained, you repent and receive Christ? Can we see God? Is there anybody who saw God? The Bible says no one has seen God at any time, not with our eyes.

But we can see him in our spirits. And that's something we sense. One day, we shall see him with our eyes.

I don't know how that is. We'll see it in the future. Jesus tells us that divorce and remarriage is sinful and believers stay in such relationships.

Can they lose their salvation? And how should ministries handle such couples? I believe we have to be compassionate to people who have made a mess of their life. Jesus met with a Samaritan woman who had been divorced five times. She had five husbands.

And now she was sleeping around with a man who was not even her husband. But Jesus didn't shun her like many Christians would do today. Jesus was compassionate, but he didn't condone her sin.

And the woman caught in adultery is a classic example. The law said you must stone her to death. Jesus said, no, I will not stone her to death.

Have you noticed that story in John 8? Many people haven't noticed this. What did Jesus say? He who is without sin, throw the first stone. Everybody went away except one person who was without sin.

Who was that? Jesus. So he was qualified to throw a stone. That's what many people don't realize.

But Jesus doesn't throw stones. He didn't come on earth to throw stones. So he was saying, woman, I'm qualified to stone you.

And I will not stone you because I didn't come here to stone people. Remember that all your life. He didn't come to stone people and don't be a representative of Jesus to go around stoning people.

He said, I've come to forgive and to save you. I don't condemn you. Go.

Now we would say, a legalist would say, hey, Jesus is violating the law. When he was in heaven, he gave Moses a law that a woman who commits adultery should be stoned to death. Remember it was Jesus from heaven who gave that law to Moses in the Old Testament.

And then he comes down to earth and he doesn't keep the same law, which he said, gave to Moses, that you should stone the woman to death. So a legalist would say he violated the law. But Jesus came with compassion.

The whole purpose of that law was to teach people the seriousness of adultery. Not because God found a great delight in stoning everybody to death who commit adultery. No.

And Jesus came and demonstrated that. That's why I say, people who try to keep the letter will always become legalists. You need to understand the spirit.

Otherwise, you'd accuse Jesus himself of not keeping the law. He said, I don't condemn you, but don't ever sin again. So Jesus is very compassionate and see if people have messed up their lives and they are divorced and remarried and they have children, I will not tell them to separate because that would be making the poor children live without either a father or a mother.

And you can't, the Bible, there's a law in the Old Testament which says don't make the children suffer for the sins of the parents. So some of these situations are very tricky. And so usually, I never give a standard teaching on this from the pulpit.

I just say Jesus said divorce is wrong. If somebody comes to me for divorce, I'd say sorry, not possible. We don't allow it in our church.

Remarriage is wrong. But then I say if people are in a complicated situation, particularly where they were ignorant when they got divorced, remarried, and they got children and they come to me, well, I would deal with each case individually and we cannot make a standard rule which applies to everyone. But it must be with truth and compassion without sacrificing truth and without being, without compassion.

You said we've inherited Adam's nature. If Christ was made like us, did Christ have Adam's nature? Is Adam's nature a sinful nature? Are we born radically depraved? Adam's nature is a sinful nature. We've all inherited it from our parents.

That's why you see children. As soon as they grow up, they're fighting, they're quarreling. You don't have to teach a child to fight or to tell lies or to be selfish or to be proud.

They're naturally that. You've got to teach them how to be good, how to stop fighting, how to speak the truth. So, Christ certainly did not have Adam's nature because the Bible doesn't say he came like Adam.

There was no sin in him. The angel told Mary, that holy thing that shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God. There was not a trace of sin in Jesus' flesh.

He was absolutely sinless. But he was tempted like us. That's what the Bible says.

It doesn't say he had a nature like ours. It doesn't say he had sin like ours. He didn't.

You say well, how could he be tempted like us? I don't, I'm not, it's difficult enough to psychoanalyze our own soul. Imagine trying to psychoanalyze Jesus. I don't even attempt it.

I just believe what the Bible says and I believe he was tempted like me, and that's what encourages me in my temptation. Adam was tempted even though there was no sin in him. But Jesus was not tempted like Adam.

He was tempted like me. So he came without sin in him. He was holy from birth, but he was tempted like me, but he faced, you know, when we realize that the root of sin is not adultery or hatred or murder or anger.

The root of sin is, I want to do my own will. And that's what you see in a little child almost as soon as it's born. I want to do my will.

And that's that stubborn self-will that you need to break in your child if you want to save yourself from having problems when it grows up. We don't want to destroy a child's personality, but we don't want to break his will without destroying his personality or his temperament. His will must be broken.

Otherwise, we'll have a tremendous problem. First externally and then as he grows up inwardly as well. So it's self-will that is the root of all sin.

The manifestations are adultery, murder, theft, telling lies, deception, so many things. But the root underneath from which he grows up, my will. Now the question is, did Jesus have a thing called my will? What do you think? What was he praying in Gethsemane? Not my will.

He denied it. John 6 38 is a great verse where Jesus said, I came from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. So when he came to earth, he had this, he didn't have sin, but he had a will which he had to deny.

That's why he says to us, now if you want to follow me, you deny your will as well, take up the cross and follow me, and then you will not sin either. So you realize that the root of sin is self-will. See when a husband and wife fight with each other, it's because each have got a self-will.

It's just like children fighting with each other. One will not yield their will, the other will not yield his will. That's the cause of all conflicts between human beings.

So if both deny their will, there's no conflict. That's how fellowship comes. Okay, now that we have a new covenant, is it right for a Christian to pray or sing to God as God of gods? Or God is the God, I cannot think of anything else being a God.

Yeah, that's right. But when people say in the Old Testament, it says there's no other God like you, they're referring to the idols of the heathen. I mean, whether they call them gods, they're not really gods, they're worthless blocks of wood and stone.

It's just a metaphorical way of saying, God is above everyone. There is no other God, definitely not. That's clear.

But personally, now, I don't want to convert all of you, and you shouldn't get upset with me, but I'll tell you, I never sing a song to Jehovah because I never see that word in the New Testament. Guide me, O thou great Jehovah. I see, guide me, O my heavenly Father, because once upon a time, they did call him God

or Jehovah, but Jesus said, when you pray, see our Father in heaven.

I take that literally, and whenever I pray to God, I never call him Jehovah. It's not, you see, isn't that his name? I say, right. Supposing one of my sons came to me and said, Mr. Poonen, I'd like to talk to you.

I say, what's wrong, son? Are you angry with me or something? When he says, isn't your name Mr. Poonen? Yes, it is, but that's not what you're supposed to call me. So when you go up to God and instead of calling him Daddy, you say Jehovah, so what's wrong? Are you angry with me? Think of it. We, you know, sometimes we glibly sing things.

I've learned to be very careful in singing. I'm talking to my heavenly Dad, and I don't make a big issue over it, because I don't judge the others, because I say they're not sinning, because they don't have light on it, but I will not do it. So I don't shout out, Heavenly Father.

I quietly say, Dad. While others are singing something else. I want to be very careful with what I say.

I'm just trying to encourage you to be very exact, and I'll tell you, it'll make you exact in many areas of your life, in your Christian life, when you read the Bible. I've just learned to be very exact in dealing with God. You know, it's like saying 2 plus 2 is 4. Somebody says 4.5. I say, okay, you can believe that, but I say it's 4. I'm pretty rigid on that.

Okay, please pray for me. All I want is to seek God's will completely. How to seek Him completely? I don't want evil within me.

I really want to help my family as well. Yeah, if you're sincere like that, I would say to you, continue to seek God. You will seek Him with all your heart.

You'll find Him. Don't get discouraged, and pray for your family too, if they're not converted. How is the church raptured when Jesus' 1,000 year reign begins? Is the rapture of the church the final to be of Christ? Now, if you read the scripture carefully, there's a little book of mine there called The Final Triumph, which is a verse-by-verse study of the book of Revelation that explains it fully, if you want a detailed answer.

But this is how I understand it. There's going to be a period of tribulation, seven years, and then, we don't know exactly when it begins, but the Antichrist will arise, and then Christians will suffer. Then Christ will come, and we'll be taken up to welcome Jesus to the earth.

You know, just like if Daddy's been away from home for 10 years, and finally, one day, He says, I'm coming back. The children rush out of the gate of the house, out of the door of the house, to welcome Him in as He comes back, and welcome Him to the house. That's how we will rush out of the earth, raptured up, to welcome Jesus to the earth, to reign on earth for a thousand years, and at the end of a thousand years, some people will still be deceived, and then Christ will, during a thousand years, the devil is locked up in a bottomless pit, and then will come the great final judgment, and eternity will begin after that.

Is the God of the Old Testament different from the God of the New Testament? Can God change? I want you to see a verse in the last page of the Old Testament. In Malachi chapter 3, and verse 6, it's almost, it's the last page of the Old Testament. I am the Lord.

I do not change. Why has He put that on the last page of the Old Testament? Because God knew that people think that Jesus is some other God who's very kind, and gentle, and gracious, and different from

the God in the Old Testament. It's exactly the same.

God is strict, and God is kind, just like a good father is strict and kind, and so it's not a different God, but it's like saying when you see a person behave, treating his three-year-old child in a certain way, and treating a twenty-year-old in another way. I mean, think of you fathers. How do you treat a three-year-old son and a twenty-year-old son? I say, are you the same father? Yes, you are.

But you're treating the three-year-old in one way, and the twenty-year-old in another way. And that's the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant. If you read Galatians chapter 3 and chapter 4, it says, under the law God treated you as little children, and He kept you under the law, just like we tell our children, you got to do this, and the children don't fear God.

They don't know who God is. They fear their father, and when they grow up, then they learn to fear God. So the first step for little children is to fear their father.

So when they're under the law, there are certain rules and regulations. We make rules and regulations for our three-year-olds, which we don't make for a twenty-five-year-old. You'd make certain rules and regulations for your teenage daughter, which you won't make for her when she's married.

So in the same way, there's a difference in the way God treats us in the New Covenant from the Old Covenant, because once He gives us a spirit, He treats us like grown-ups and not like little children. It's not that God has changed, but He treats us in a different way, because He now treats us like sons. Okay, you spoke about how the church takes measures to stay away from the love of money.

Personally, how do we examine ourselves in this account? You know, in all these things, we can have an opinion about ourselves, which is completely wrong. I've heard of numerous people who go for a checkup, and the doctor says, you know, you've got cancer. Really? He says, I feel perfectly fit.

Yeah, you do feel perfectly fit, but you've got cancer. Here's the x-ray. So very often, we don't realize what is our spiritual condition.

So we may not realize that we've got the love of money, but the Word of God is like an x-ray, and if you face up to the x-ray, it'll show you what you have, and there's no use disagreeing with the Word of God. It's like disagreeing with the scan report. It doesn't heal you.

You know, you say, I won't look at the scan report. That doesn't heal us. You say, I won't read the Bible.

That doesn't heal you. It just gets worse and worse. So we thank God for God's Word that gives us a free scan of our condition.

There are many things in us which we don't realize that God's Word shows us, and love of money is one of them. And if you are honest enough to face it and say, Lord, I don't want to. If your word says that by loving money, I can't love you, that means loving the things worth, I can't love you, then I want to be free from this.

I want to tell you a little simple thing about temptation. The first temptation in the world that Eve faced, what was it? Here is a tree which you read in Genesis 3 was very beautiful, very attractive to look at, something that made your mouth water, and something that drove your senses in every way. That's what Eve was tempted with.

And on the other side was God, her creator, who had said, don't eat from it. So it was a choice between the created and the creator. And what did she choose? The created.

Now you can say, why did God make that tree so attractive? If he had made that tree full of thorns and smelly and ugly and repulsive and told Eve, don't eat that, he would have said, I don't want to go near that in any case. There'd be no temptation. Every temptation is like that.

God created versus creator versus created. You look at every temptation you face. You know, if every woman on earth was like some 120 year old hag, I don't think you'd have any problem with lusting with your eyes or any such thing.

You'd say, no problem Lord. But who has made all these young girls so attractive and pretty? God. Why has he made them so pretty? God says, to test you young men, do you want me the creator or do you want what I have forbidden? Your choice.

And look at the young men who say, I want what you have forbidden. God says, okay, your choice. I want Eve chose like that and if you want you can choose like that.

Why has God made gold and money so attractive? It's the same thing. Creator versus created. What do you want to live for? You want to spend all your time and energy pursuing that or you want to use the one life I gave you living for me? I don't mean a full-time worker.

I mean in a secular job, but putting God first, being upright, no cheating, no telling lies, being upright, no pushing down others or climbing on the shoulders of others to get on top, none of all that. Do you want to put me and my values first and let the world go after all that? And you believe that I'll give you everything you need in life. Or when you go after the created and say, I'll give a little time to God in my life because I want to go to heaven when I die, but I'm gonna live for this.

This is the temptation, every single temptation you ever face. Same thing in the Garden of Eden. I want to say to all of you, you're always facing this choice, the created versus the creator.

Choose God, you'll never regret it. You'll come to the end of your life with great joy. So that's how I, it's not that, you know, there are a lot of good things that money can do, sure.

But it's not a question of using it. I always say if you got a choice of jobs with different salaries, always choose the one with the higher salary, sure. Unless you're gonna lose your soul or do something wrong there.

It's like if you're choosing between a more convenient home and a less convenient home, choose the more convenient home if you can afford it. Nothing wrong in that. There's no virtue in going and living in a little hut and saying, I'm gonna live in a hut and live for God.

No. Whatever resources God has given you, choose a convenient home to live in, get the best job you can, best salary you can, but let God be number one in your life. That means you'll never do anything unrighteous.

You won't tell a lie, for example, to get a visa or to get a permit or get a job. That's putting God first. What about typing? Typing is a old covenant law.

You never find it mentioned after the Day of Pentecost. Jesus mentioned it in Matthew 23 to the Pharisees, but not to the disciples. To the Pharisees, he said, you type mint and dill and come in, you should do that.

But to the disciples, he said, give and it'll be given to you. How should you give? Cheerfully, secretly. How much should you give? It's up to you, as much as you can give cheerfully and as the Lord has prospered you.

And 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 says, according to how much God has given to each person, the rich can give more and the poor don't know to give anything, perhaps. They don't have anything. That's the way we have taught also in our churches.

Those who have more, if you can give cheerfully, give. If you don't feel like giving, don't give. God doesn't want a single person giving reluctantly or grudgingly.

So tithing is you know, some people say, well Abraham it says in Hebrews 7 that Abraham gave a tithing to milk his day, but it was not a law. He just chose to give 10%. He could have chosen to give 20%.

He could have chosen to give 50%. To the king of Sodom, he gave everything. He didn't give 10% to the king of Sodom.

He had won the wealth, you know, those days if you won a battle, the rule was everything the enemy's riches were yours. That's why the king of Sodom said it's all yours. You won the battle, take it.

He said no, I don't want it. He didn't give 10%. He gave him everything.

So he gave 10% to Melchizedek and the rest he gave to king Sodom and that was not his earnings. He had won something in battle and Melchizedek had brought food for his 318 servants and for himself, such a lot of food. He gave him some money.

It happened to be 10% of what he got. It was not really a law, there was no law and so if you take it as a law, you find it only in the Old Testament along with the law which says you must sacrifice a lamb, you must bring your offerings, you must go three times a year to Jerusalem, many other laws and out of all these laws, why have preachers and pastors taken only one law tight? Because that's the one which will fill their pockets. They don't get anything if you go to Jerusalem three times a year, so they leave out that.

They won't get anything if you kill a lamb, but they will get something if they tell you to pay up your 10%. So we've never preached it. I'll tell you, in all my life, I never preached tithing.

We've never practiced it in our church, never preached in our church, and we have never had a lack. In 37 years, we've conducted about a hundred conferences with free food and accommodation for all who come in poor villages and towns, cities. We've never had a lack.

We keep a box and always there's enough. Because when when you get a person's heart, he gives from his heart cheerfully to God and there's no lack in it. So we've never believed in tithing.

In the New Covenant, it's just not there. In the Old Covenant, it was how much you give, 10%. In the New Covenant, it is how you give, cheerfully and secretly.

According to the New Testament, is there any verse that says anything about family planning? No. In the Old Testament, there was. It says, blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them, though it doesn't say exactly what size the quiver should be.

So it's up to each individual. But in the New Testament, there's not a single word about blessed. I know children are the gift of the Lord and the Old Testament, by the way, there's an Old Testament chapter full of earthly blessings, Deuteronomy 28.

If you obey me, God says, I'll give you plenty of money, perfect health and plenty of children. Of course, today's preaching leaves out the plenty of children. They just say plenty of money and health.

But that's an Old Testament gospel. And then it says, if you don't obey me, you'll have curses and all types of sicknesses. But the New Testament gospel is not about children or money or health.

It's about being free from sin. So we must distinguish that. So when it comes to family planning, it's up to the individual.

You know, according to both husband and wife, decide. Abortion is wrong, because that's murder. Because once a child is conceived, that's of course, that's not an acceptable form of, because that's not family planning.

That's a family's already there, and you're killing it. Whereas family planning is before conception, or the ways in which you prevent the conception by artificial means. And there again, you need to be wise.

What is the New Testament Church? Who makes up the Bride of Christ? See, this is very difficult to say, but I only get a picture. There again, if you read my book, Final Triumph, I'll tell you. In the book of Revelation, I have to say this very quickly, make a thin slice of this cake.

Revelation 7 says, there's a great multitude from every tribe, tongue, nation, on the face of the earth, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Now, I have often thought about that, because a lot of tribes and tongues in India that still have not heard the gospel. Hundreds of them, that don't have any Bible in their language.

And I think about how in the world are there going to be people from every tribe, tongue, and people, and think of the nations of Africa, and interior parts of different remote jungles, barbarians, from every tribe and tongue, there's going to be somebody in Revelation 7. I think it's come through the many babies that die. Infant mortality rate is very high in third world countries, in Asia, Africa. So, there are probably going to be many more Asians and Africans in heaven than other races, because so many children are dying.

But I think America is catching up, because of all the abortions that are being done here. There'll be a lot of them, too. Every child that's killed like that, murdered actually, an abortion is a murder, goes to heaven.

Because the blood of Christ is attributed to that child. It's declared righteous and goes to heaven. So, there'll be a great crowd of people in heaven, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

All the children, Muslim children, atheist children, babies of every race, religion, will all be in heaven. But then, it says a huge multitude that cannot be numbered. But when it comes to Revelation 14, take your time to read these two chapters, 7 and 14.

14, it says, a small number that can be numbered, 144,000. The number is not important, but these are people. They are not people who just are cleansed in the blood of Christ.

It says there, they follow the Lamb wherever He goes. There's no lie in their mouth. And they did not defile themselves with the battle on the harlot, the spiritual harlot woman, but kept themselves pure.

That's a much smaller number. It says, they stand with the Lord upon Mount Zion. So, these are what the Bible, New Testament Revelation, calls the overcomers.

And my understanding is that there's going to be a difference in heaven. It may be all there. You know, just like there can be on earth, there's a difference.

A beggar is on the earth and a rich man is also on the earth, but one lives more comfortably than the other. And in a somewhat similar way in heaven, there may be a lot of people in heaven, but some will be spiritually closer to the Lord, because the Lord says, I'll reward people for those who are faithful on earth. So, there is going to be a difference there.

We can't say exactly, and if that is the bride of Christ, then it's a smaller number than all those who are redeemed. What does brokenness mean? How does that begin in the process of one's life? You know, it's the same thing I told you about a little child, the will being broken. And that is what God, just like we want to break the will in your child.

For example, if you don't break the will of your child when it is small, I don't mean repeat, not his personality. You can't change a child's temperament. You should not.

You should not break his personality. But you must break his stubborn self-will that he learns to obey his dad and mom, or her dad and mom. Otherwise, you're going to have a real problem.

You're going to have a headache on your hands when the kid is a teenager. It's the same. So, but if there's a broken will, you have a child who's going to grow up to listen to you and ultimately follow the Lord.

It's the same in the Christian life. If God can break your will in different circumstances, and sometimes he can break that through a difficult boss, or circumstances, or financial loss, or so many things like that. For example, you know, it could be a difficult situation in a church.

We are humbled and humiliated perhaps. But we have to go through that for God to do that. In Jesus' case, he was in 30 years in Nazareth, submitting to an imperfect Joseph and Mary.

How many times his will was broken as a little child? Even he needed it. Then God gave him a ministry. Now, I'll tell you something that I've seen through many years.

People who are unwilling to submit to spiritual authority, in their younger days, God never gives them spiritual authority when they grow older. And that's why I feel sorry for a lot of young people who don't submit to anybody's authority. In my own life, right up to the age of 35, there's a little book of mine there called the Day of Small Beginnings.

It's a little biographical book where I mention some of these things that God took me through. The Day of Small Beginnings. And there, you know, up to the age of 35, God took me through so many circumstances that humbled me and humiliated me in different church situations, etc.

I mean, God had gifted me from the time I was 23, I was preaching the word. And it gifted me in many other ways. I quit my job when I was 26.

But there were many situations where God broke me and humbled me. Then it's only after all that, when I was 35, that God began to give me authority in a church and later over many churches. So I feel sorry for young people who never allow God to do that in their life because there's not much hope that God will ever commit any spiritual authority to them.

They may drift along, you know, like you see dead wood drifting in the sea, aimlessly. I think a lot of believers are like that. They don't know where they're going.

Instead of being like a ship that's got a direction, that's the way God wants you to be. So ask God to show you how he's breaking you. How does the Lord open your eyes to scripture? How are we to preach the Bible as so it was not for knowledge, but for the heart? I've discovered one thing that if I speak from my head, it goes to people's heads.

If I speak from my heart, why are my head? It goes to people's hearts via their head. So it's not that we don't use the mind. I mean, if I were not using my mind right now, you wouldn't understand a thing I was saying.

I am using my mind and that's why you're listening. But what I'm saying is not coming from my mind. It's coming from my heart.

It's coming from my life with a sincere desire to seek your good and I hope it's reaching your heart. But if you only speak intellectually, you know, academic study of the word, it'll only go to people's heads. It won't change their lives.

They'll still live in sin. So when we come to scripture, how can our eyes be open as we read it? I'll tell you, by obedience. If you read something and you obey it, God will give you more light.

But if you don't obey it, you won't get more light. So that's the simple answer. I'm ready to pursue a truth-seeking life, but I'm so full of fear and anxiety.

I don't know where to start. Well, I'll tell you, start with the first thing God shows you in your life. Think of something and say, Lord, I want to overcome this particular thing in my life.

Start with something small. Lord, I want to overcome this. Maybe begin with just the habit of getting up every morning just to spend 15 minutes with God's word.

And if you want a little help in that, if you have an internet connection, you go to cfcindia.com and go to the verse-by-verse Bible studies there or you can get it on DVD here. 15 minutes. Just listen to those 15-minute messages.

And you can go all the way from Matthew all the way to Revelation. It may take you a couple of years to finish, but as a beginning and then ask God to speak to you. And that's the way to start.

And then I believe that freedom from fear and anxiety comes by knowing God as a father better and better. The more you know God as a father, the more you'll be free from anxiety. If you, for example, if you're a child and you've got a father who really cares for you, you wouldn't worry about a thing.

And if you also believe that your father is very powerful and got tremendous influence, for example, if your dad was the President of the United States and you had a problem and you called him up and said, Dad, I've got a little problem. He said, don't worry, I'll handle it. You go to rest.

Now the question is, is your heavenly dad more powerful than the President of the United States? It's a simple answer, yes or no, that's going to determine whether you think he can handle a problem. He can handle problems, by the way, which even the President of the U.S. can't handle. I hope you know that.

There's nothing he cannot handle. I took a series once on the miracles of Jesus and the title I gave was God can solve any problem. That's what I learned from the miracles of Jesus.

I never see anybody coming to Jesus with a problem and Jesus scratching his head and saying, boy, that's a tough one. I don't know how to handle that. Never.

So what do I learn from that? You come to Jesus with your problem. He's not going to scratch his head and say, boy, that's a tough one. I don't know how to handle that.

He's the same yesterday, today and forever. He never had to scratch his head on earth saying, I don't know how to handle that. You think he's going to do that today? No.

But you must believe. The Bible says in James 1, if you don't believe, you'll get nothing. But if you believe, there's a tremendous lot that you can get.

If somebody owes me money and when I go to return it, he doesn't want to take it back, can it be put in the offering box? Sure. No. You know, I used to answer this question to people who say I've got to return money to somebody, but I don't even know where that guy lives today.

Again, maybe many years ago, you stole money from someone. I said all money ultimately belongs to God and there's a verse in the Bible that says that, 1 Corinthians 10, 26. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, including money.

So if you can't find the temporary owner, which is that guy you took it from, give it to the original owner, which is God. Give it to him. And that's to the church.

And what if you cannot wholeheartedly accept the resurrection of Christ? Is that the fundamental basis of salvation? Yes. I believe that is the fundamental basis. Now, if you don't believe that Christ was raised from the dead, then he was a liar.

All that he said about me dying for the sins of the world was an absolute lie. Indirectly, you're saying that Jesus Christ was a liar. Then there's no salvation.

The proof that what he said was true was that he rose from the dead. I always tell people, what is the fundamental difference between Christianity and all other religions? It's not like some people are ignorant and say all religions say be kind, help the poor, do good. No, no, no, no, no.

That's the superstructure. The most important part of this building is the foundation. If this foundation were not strong, I wouldn't be sitting here.

I'd like to vacate as soon as possible. The foundation of the Christian life, the superstructure sounds very similar. Religions say help the poor, be kind, don't tell lies, be truthful, etc.

But let's go to the foundation. The Christian faith has got a foundation which no other religion has. One, somebody died for my sins and took away my punishment.

Tell me which religion in the world says that? Any religion which tells me that somebody took the punishment for my sins. Somebody paid my debt. I've got a debt of billions and billions or trillions and trillions, much more than the American deficit or whatever it is, which I owe to God.

And somebody cleared it for me. That's why I'm free. Which religion says that somebody took away the guilt of my sin? No religion.

Somebody died for my sin because that is the punishment for sin. Secondly, that person proved that what he said was true by rising from the dead. Which religion says any of their founders rose from the dead? Those are the two foundations of the Christian faith.

You remove them, Christianity becomes like any other religion in the world. That's why I say the foundation of Christianity is fundamental. On that, there may be a lot of similarities between what Christ teaches, treat others as you want them to treat you.

Maybe some other religion copied it from Christianity and said the same thing. But they don't have the foundation. Their foundation is sand.

Ours is rock. What verses led you to change your mind about pre-tribulation and post-tribulation? Well, the words of Jesus in Matthew 24 were very clear to me. That also I've described in my book, *The Final Triumph*, if you want to know more about the coming days.

Basically, Matthew 24 verses 29 to 31, which said after the tribulation, the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and etc, etc. And the trumpet of the angel and we'll all be raptured up. It's very clear in the words of Jesus.

One saved, always saved. Is it possible to lose one's salvation? You know, when people ask me that question, I say I don't want to answer that in my words, but I will answer it in the words of scripture. Revelation 3.5 He who overcomes, I will clothe him in white garments, and I will not erase his name from the book of life.

Simple question. Can a person's name be erased from the book of life? Was Jesus making empty threats? That'd be a serious charge to say Jesus was making empty threats when it's impossible. I believe what Jesus said was true.

If Jesus said a man's name can be erased from the book of life, he knows a lot more about the book of life than I do. So I suppose he knows whether it can be erased or not. I use my logic to say how can it be erased? There are a lot of things in the Bible that can't be answered with logic.

How can one person be, three persons be one God? That itself defies logic. So I don't go by logic. Another verse is Hebrews 3.14 We become partakers of Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm until the end.

What if you don't hold fast? Then you're not a partaker of Christ. There are many other verses. Okay.

Grace to overcome sin came after the day of Pentecost. Why did God command the Jews to stone those who disobeyed his command without? No, God never said you got to stone a woman or stone a man

who's got dirty thoughts. There's no such verse.

God never said you got to stone a man who's got, who gets angry. There's no command in the Old Testament saying don't get angry. That's a New Testament commandment.

There's no commandment in the Old Testament even don't tell lies. No, that's not one of the Ten Commandments. It's don't bear false witness in court against your neighbor.

That means when your hand is on a Bible don't tell a lie. The rest of the time do what you like. That's so God never gave commands in the Old Testament which are impossible.

It was all external commands. Don't commit murder. Don't commit adultery.

And those there are non-Christians who keep it. It's possible for man to keep it. I know lots of non-Christians who keep all those commandments.

You know, there are people who don't worship idols, non-Christians, who don't murder, who don't steal, who don't commit adultery. So it is possible for man to obey because he's given a conscience. But the inner life, overcoming thoughts and attitudes and motives, that was not possible through the day of Pentecost.

How do you know how to tell the difference between God's voice, our voice and the enemy's voice? Well, how do you know if there are 10 women speaking on the other side of the wall, how do you know which is your mother's voice? You can identify it. How is it I cannot identify it? What's the difference? You have heard your mom's voice for so many years. I haven't.

The more you hear God's voice, the more you'll be able to identify his voice over other voices. So we say, how do we identify God's voice? Here it is. There's one book in which we can identify God's voice very clearly.

The more I read and obeyed the Bible, the more I could discern God's voice in the little decisions of life. And that's, how do you define, how you detect your mother's voice? Okay. What do you do when your spouse is not as spiritual as you are or as much into spiritual things? That's easy.

Just be a good example. It says a man should be the head of his wife, means like a shepherd going in front of the sheep and leading, follow me. So a hireling whips from the back, the sheep, the shepherd, good shepherd goes in front.

So if you're going to be a leader like Christ, you're going to, if your wife is the type of person who loses her temper, be a good example by not losing your temper yourself, being pleasant and kind and good and warm. And not by questioning you and say, why in the world are you getting angry? That's a hireling with a whip. It's by example.

A woman, if supposing the woman is more spiritual, it says, 1 Peter 3, 1 says, do you have a husband who doesn't obey God's word? By your example and behavior you can win him. But certainly not by looking down on that person. If you look down on your spouse because he or she is not more spiritual, then you're a Pharisee.

Then you're saying, Lord, I thank you. I'm not like my husband or I thank you. I'm not like my wife.

That's the Pharisee. In the light of the Sabbath commandment, is it wrong to go out to eat on Sundays because you're making other people work? We don't keep the Sabbath today. Every day is a Sabbath and it's not a physical rest.

It's a spiritual rest. Inward rest. Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden.

I'll give you rest. So we can definitely work on a Sunday if necessary and get the benefit of others work. Another question is, are there still apostles and prophets today? Yes.

Because it's through apostles that churches are planted and it's through prophets that prophets are like those who can speak God's word directly to our heart to show us our need and to help us find the solution. This is about tithes already answered. What is the given example of giving abundant honor to the uncomely members of our body of Christ? Like it says in 1 Corinthians 12, 23 and 24.

Well, the brothers, I believe we should seek to honor brothers who are not gifted uncomely in 1 Corinthians 12, 23 and 24. Those who are not gifted. We always honor those who are very gifted in the church.

But very often we neglect those who are not gifted. Who may be sincere Christians. See in a country like India, we have a whole lot of people who just come to church to get some benefit.

I'm not talking about them. I'm talking about people who are really sincere Christians, but don't have any great gift of preaching or outstanding gift like that and I believe just by going and talking to them and encouraging them, I believe that we should always consider other people as more important than us. Not more spiritual than us, but more important than us.

What does it mean to be humble? To be like Jesus. How do we identify Christians who are humble? If you see the values of Christ in them. Christ was the humblest person that walked on the earth.

He valued every human being. He valued people who were in sin to save them. And I believe that's how we see whether we are.

We don't have to judge whether other people are humble, but we need to see whether we ourselves are. That we esteem others is more important. I prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit for years, but didn't get it.

Well, I don't believe God is waiting on you. I think you have to make sure that every part of your life is yielded to the Lord. Surrender it all to Him and then trust Him.

Open your heart and say, Lord, I want you to fill me with the Holy Spirit. If there's anything in my life not yielded, please show me and I'll do it. And then trust Him as you ask Him to fill you.

And ask Him to give you an assurance that He's filled you. See, baptism of the Holy Spirit is baptism is a Greek word which means immersion. Baptism in water.

There are two ways to get immersed. One is you get into a river. The other is you stand under a waterfall.

When you put a person into the water, it's baptism in water. When the Holy Spirit falls upon you like under a waterfall, you're filled with the Holy Spirit. That means every part of your being is surrendered to God.

And you've allowed the Holy Spirit to control every part of your life. It's like we can see a spirit-controlled life. That means you don't want to do your own will in any area.

There's no area of your life where you've not yielded to Christ. You're willing to do His will in every area and you ask God to fill you. Yeah, that's again about the same thing.

I think I've answered that. I've also answered this one. Yeah, some similar questions.

What is sex? I'll tell you a little story. Depends on how old you are this answer to this question. There was a little girl who was traveling with her father.

This is Corrie Ten Boom telling the story when she was a little girl. She says, I was traveling with my dad in the train. I was a little girl.

And I asked my dad, Dad, what is sex? And the dad said, you see that heavy suitcase there, our suitcase? Can you lift it? She said, no, I'm too small. So you're too small to know the answer to this one. You wait a little.

When you can lift that suitcase, I'll tell you the answer. What a wise father. I wish we had more fathers like that.

Okay, this is also answered. To be organized in a daily schedule, is that being anxious? No, I think that's being organized. I think we should all be more organized.

And more disciplined. There's a difference between being disciplined and Discipline is a very good thing. I think it's very important.

The people who accomplish, the Christians who accomplish the most in life Are the ones who are not only born again and filled with the spirit, but who are disciplined in their life. The way they use their time. The way they use their money.

The way they are careful in speech, etc. Yeah, this is about, I've also answered this. These are all duplicate questions.

What is it? What does the Bible mean when it refers to gold? I think gold is a picture of the divine nature in the Bible. That's all it's referring to. The picture of gold in the book of Revelation 21 is a picture of God's nature.

Gold in the tabernacle is a picture of God's nature. Baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire is exactly the same. Is playing the lottery a sin? Well lottery I suppose is where you get a million dollars, is it? Or five million dollars? In other words, I want to be the happy person at the expense of five million people who are unhappy.

And getting all their money, I don't want it. I'd rather work hard and make money myself. The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, an evil spirit.

Why does it say evil spirit from the Lord? And very often in the Old Testament, all that means is God permitted it. That means God lifted the blockage and the evil spirit was allowed to come in. Like God permitted Satan to attack Job.

There was a hedge around Job. God moved the hedge. What do we explain to a person who asks, why do we need an earthly spiritual father? There's no rule that you need an earthly spiritual guide or mentor or someone to guide you.

But I'll tell you in my own life, I'll tell you quite honestly as a young Christian, I wish I had a spiritual father to guide me because I wouldn't have wasted so many years wandering around in the wilderness. Here and there. Because I could have gone to somebody and said, hey, what do I do in this situation? So if you're fortunate enough to have somebody you can go to who's got experience, who loves you, and who doesn't want your money and doesn't want to control your life, be careful.

Anyone who wants to control your life and tell you what to do, what not to do, or who wants your money, that's a cult or a cult leader. Be careful of such people. A spiritual father would respect your individuality and your freedom of opinion.

I'll tell you how I give advice. A lot of people look to me as a spiritual father. This is how I give advice.

People come to me and say, Brother Zak, what shall I do here? I say, listen, this is my advice, but I want you to remember two factors. One, I'm more mature than you, so I may have faith to do that, and you may not be at that level to do what I have. It's like lifting the suitcase.

I can lift something heavier than you spiritually, so you don't attempt it. If you can't lift that heavy weight, take a lower weight. That's the first thing I say.

And secondly, I can never tell you what God's will for your life is, because you've got the Holy Spirit. God will tell you. I can advise you from my experience and warn you about certain dangers, or to think about certain factors.

You must take that before God, and then ask God to give you guidance, because then you'll have a direct connection to Christ. I never want to rob you of that direct connection to Christ. So that is a good, a true spiritual father will do it like that, where he does not seek to control you, but will still advise you and guide you, and if you're under his spiritual authority, would even warn you when he sees that you're drifting.

I mean, people who are under my direct spiritual responsibility, I've often told them when I was in our local church in Bangalore, I say, listen, I can't stop you from backsliding. But I'll tell you, a couple of months before you fall away, I'll warn you, because I'll see some indications of that in your life or something, and I'll come up to you and say, hey, what's happening? You may not listen to me. You may backslide and fall away.

That I can't stop you. So a spiritual father is just like an earthly father. Isn't it good for children to have an earthly father? It's like a child who's got a father saying, do I have an advantage over an orphan? Oh boy, you certainly do.

Is it wrong to celebrate Christmas or Easter in a spiritual way? Well, this is a matter of personal conviction. I personally don't celebrate Christmas or Easter, because I see they originated from heathen festivals. But over the years, Christmas has become more of a family get-together time, like Thanksgiving.

So I say, treat it like that. You want to have a Christmas tree, have it. I don't have one.

If you'll give me the freedom not to have one, I'll give you the freedom to have one. That's it. These things don't make much difference to me.

And I say the main thing, if you want to honor the birth of Christ, sure. I don't believe Jesus was born in December, first of all, because no shepherd goes out into the cold in Israel in December. That's why I think he must have been born in September.

Anyway, is it okay for us to criticize or speak evil against other ministers or ministries who are not born again? I believe we should warn against false teaching and warn against groups of ministries that are leading God's people astray. For example, if there were a bunch of kidnappers in Bangalore where I live, and my little children go to school, I would warn them. I say, hey, there are kidnappers in town.

If somebody comes to the gate of your school and say, Daddy's waiting around the corner, come with me. Don't go with him. And they may come and give you some candy.

And there may be poison in it or a sleeping drug in it. Don't take candy from strangers, because they are small children. I don't have to warn my 25-year-old son.

So in the same way, in our churches, there are many small children spiritually. They have to be warned against deceivers, because they don't have the discernment. They don't know the Bible, false teachers on television, etc.

There are ways by which you can identify them. For example, are they humble people? Are they approachable? Do they love money? Please give them these guidelines to warn them from being deceived. But in public ministry, I never use names.

People have asked me, why don't you name some preachers, TV preachers? I say, I never do that, because Jesus never named names. He said Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, but he never said Caiaphas, Annas, no. But then people say, what about Paul? He spoke about Hymenaeus and Philetus.

Yes, but he said that only to Timothy, his co-worker. And so when I'm in a closed meeting with my own fellow elders, then I mention names. I follow Jesus and Paul exactly.

If you read the Bible, you know exactly what to do. But in public meetings, you'll never find in a single message of mine, and there are 2,000 of them on YouTube. You won't find one of them where I've named the name of anyone.

And just by the way, in that connection, let me say that if you ever want to know, hear a message of mine on a particular topic, our CFC website doesn't have such as good a search machine as YouTube. So if you go to YouTube and in the search column, you put Zak Poonen on any subject, marriage, sex, fellowship, love, anything, you'll get all the answers, I mean all the sermons immediately. We thank God for Google.

Is it okay to play games with, for children, I suppose, with police cars ramming high-speed cars and nobody dies or gets hurt. It's all a game. Is it okay to play violent video games? Well, you know, there are different types in this and I don't want to give a standard answer.

I would be against any video game that's shooting people. That's, I remember in the old days when the first little video games came out 30 years ago. And they were all little things like, you know, shooting down

planes and things like that or more innocent type of games like racing cars and all.

But I find a lot of things today are, there's a demonic element in the way some of these games they look at and there's a lot of shooting and I would never get a game like that for my children. I feel you have to be very wise. There are others which are not so, which are not violent in the sense of dealing with people.

So one has to be selective in all these things because I find that a lot of things that children do, for example, I remember this that in India in the schools, in the small children, they were watching these World Wrestling Federation fellows knocking each other out and it's all an act. They don't really do it, but the children thought it was real and they try it out on their other children in their class in school and they see, I mean the children, the parents are foolish to let their children watch all that rubbish. So we've got to be very careful what we put into the minds of children.

We've got to be extremely wise. Okay, what does it mean to pray in the spirit? How is it done? There's a difference between praying with the spirit and in the spirit. In Ephesians 6, it says pray in the spirit at all times.

In 1 Corinthians 14, it says I will pray with my mind and I will pray with my spirit. My spirit. With my mind means in for me English or your mother tongue.

With my spirit means in unknown tongues, unknown languages, if God has given you that gift. God doesn't give it to everybody. But in the spirit means not in the flesh.

The opposite of with the spirit is with the mind. The opposite of in the spirit is in the flesh. That means I don't pray carnally.

I pray as a spiritual man. Putting God first. Our father who art in heaven.

Heal my backache first. No. Hallowed be thy name first.

Or what about second? Thy kingdom come. Third, thy will be done. Fourth, my earthly needs.

Give me my daily bread. Which includes food, clothing, shelter, everything. And forgive me as I forgive others.

So that's the right way to pray in the spirit. Knowing God is a father who knows control everything. How to overcome anger and impatience.

I find I don't get anger as often as outwardly, but inwardly I'm defeated. I think you've got to ask God to you know fill you with the Holy Spirit and consistently choose the way of death to self. Over a period of time death will enter into more and more areas of your life.

And you'll find yourself be able to control your tongue, control your eyes, because self is gradually dying out and Christ is taking over. It's a gradual process. That's all I can say.

There's no sudden day where everything changes. In Luke 8 14, what does it mean to bring forth fruit to perfection? I think that's speaking of the sower of the seed. That means growing up to maturity.

We should all be growing up to maturity as we obey God more and more. Okay, 1 Timothy 4 7 to 8, train yourself to be godly. How do you train yourself to be godly? By reading God's word, seeking to keep a

good conscience at all times, choosing the way of the cross, the way of death to self and the way of humility and seeking fellowship with others.

In John 13, it says washing the feet. Do we have to carry that literally today? So we need to understand what washing the feet means. What Jesus did was he did a dirty job that needed to be done for his disciples.

Those days they all wore sandals, all the roads were dusty. And I know having walked through dusty roads in India with sandals most of the time I wear when I go to the villages is very very refreshing when you come home to have your feet washed. But you know if you're wearing shoes and socks all the time, you don't need it.

What's the use? What's the point getting a man to remove his shoes and socks and say I'll wash your feet and put the shoes and socks back on again. That's pretty crazy. The meaning is do a dirty job that needs to be done.

That's what he did for those disciples. A lowly job, a slave's job. So I've told people who come to our church in Bangalore.

Yeah, I say here most of the people, this is a city church, most of the people come with shoes and socks. You don't need to get them to wash their feet. I say I'll tell you what washing the feet in our church building is.

Clean the toilets. Go to the restrooms and clean it up. That's the dirty job that needs to be done.

That's washing the feet of the saints today. Some dirty job that needs to be done. Do that for one another.

Jesus' prayer was in John 17 that his father and his motives are unquestioned. Unquestioned. If prayer is out of a sincere heart, can it also be used to edify those that hear? Yes.

Jesus' prayer in John 17 is very edifying. But Jesus was not praying in order for his disciples to hear. It was a by-product that his disciples were blessed by his prayer.

And when a godly man sincerely prays to God, as a by-product, people will be blessed. You know, there was a missionary in India called Praying Hyde. He was one of the most godly missionaries who came way back in the early 1900s.

And he was a man who spent lots of time in prayer. And I've heard a story about him. Where he'd go to one of these conferences and he'd be hours in prayer.

And then he would come to speak. And he would say, let us pray. Everybody's eyes closed in Urdu, which is the local language.

He'd just say, very slowly, our heavenly father. And the whole atmosphere was electrified. People sensed the presence of God.

All he had said was our heavenly father. Were people blessed? Sure. But he wasn't praying to them.

He was a man who had lived in God's presence. And just came and led people in prayer. What are your biblical thoughts about Christian liberties? It's a very vague question.

We are free to do everything that it's not sin. It does not violate God's word. It does not harm other people.

Okay, that's answered. When would you leave a church and look for another? When you feel it's not obeying God's word. And when you can find a better one.

There's no perfect church. In the world. You must remember that.

You heard of the young man who went to a preacher and said, Can you please direct me to the perfect church? Well, he said, Young man, I've been a Christian a long time. I've never seen a perfect church. But if you see one, don't join it.

Because as soon as you join it, it'll get corrupt. Because you've got this critical spirit. So, there is no perfect church.

So I always say, look for the best one in your locality. Where the preacher is not trying to control you. Where you have humble brothers.

They may not be great scholars. But they love one another. And that's the type of church I like to join.

Where people love Jesus. And where they've got a spirit of service for one another. And don't have any high thoughts about themselves.

It's the best church to be in. I don't care about size. Would you discuss importance of the gift of helps.

In 1 Corinthians 12. I think that's a great gift. Very few people seek for.

I think it's little, little ministries that people have, you know. Being alert to somebody's need. Somebody's sick.

Maybe they need a little. Maybe you need to cook a little meal and take it for them. That's a help.

Or some other way. You see a widow somewhere who needs a little help. Not to become a slave of people.

But I think it's a very great gift in the church to have people who quietly do little things according to the ability God gives them. Luke 22. 36 to 38.

I think this is referring to you know, if you don't have a sword, Jesus said sell your robe and take a sword. See they were going to the Garden of Gethsemane. Where the Roman soldiers were going to come with swords.

And when Peter took out this sword and they said, before they went, they said Lord there are two swords here and Jesus said that's fine. But when Peter took out the sword to cut off somebody's ear Jesus said put the sword back. If you chop off somebody's ear if you take out the sword you'll perish with the sword.

Now Peter could have said but Lord you're the one who told us to bring a sword. Yes, but I didn't tell you to attack people with the sword. I told you to bring a sword to defend yourself that when the Roman soldier takes his sword to swing at you you don't have to lift up your hand and get your hand cut.

You can lift up your sword and defend your face. So what I have learned from that is a principle. We must never attack but we can defend ourselves.

It means I don't take people to court but if somebody else takes me to court as some religious people have taken me I defend myself. I can get a lawyer to defend myself. I can take a sword to defend myself but never to attack another.

That's the principle. We are permitted to defend ourselves. You know for example Jesus said when somebody slaps you on one cheek turn the other cheek but go to the time when Jesus was being tried when they slapped him on one cheek he did not turn the other cheek.

He said why have you slapped me? They got angry with him and slapped him again. He just ignored it after that. So we ask for our rights but we don't fight.

What does it mean to receive another spirit? 2 Corinthians 11.4. It means the spirit that does not glorify Christ. The spirit that glorifies oneself or manifests itself in supernatural experiences that don't glorify Christ and there is a lot of it in the world today. Everything supernatural is not from God.

If it is from God it will glorify Christ. If I have grown weary in well-doing, less passionate not as firm convictions but want all that once again. How can I seek God to restore me? I think you should have a time of repentance and fasting and prayer and seek God and see those areas like confess every known sin clear your conscience, settle everything that your conscience troubles you about and discipline yourself to read God's word and seek fellowship with godly people.

This is answered about baptism in the Holy Spirit. Question There are groups of churches that call themselves an association for the purpose of fellowship planning churches. What are your thoughts on this? See I'll tell you we have planted maybe we means the Lord has done it about 50 churches through me and my co-workers.

It is not all through me. But we have never felt that we should become a denomination. Each church is an independent church just like in the Acts of the Apostles.

But they looked up to Paul as a spiritual father. Corinth, Galatians Ephesians and if they had a problem they'd consult Paul and say hey Paul what should we do here? You know for example in Corinth wasn't it a good thing that they could consult Paul and Paul could tell them what to do? So, but Paul did not interfere in the churches that were under Peter's jurisdiction. He didn't tell the Romans for example what to do.

But he did tell the Corinthians what to do. So they had a spiritual father in Paul but he didn't make all of them into a denomination. You see that in Revelation 2 and 3. If you look at a map all those 7 churches are just about 30-40 miles from each other but they were not one group.

Because if they were one group they would have all been corrupt or all been good. But that one was corrupt and 30 miles away one was a good church was because they were not a denomination. And that's the danger of being a denomination.

They don't all become good. If one becomes bad everything becomes bad. I'll tell you if there are 12 apples in a basket and one is rotten what happens? They all become rotten.

But if you have 10 rotten apples in a basket and you put one good apple in it what happens? Do they all become good? No. Then one becomes rotten too. So denominations don't have a tendency to become good.

They have a tendency to become rotten. So therefore God wants individual churches so that if one is corrupt over there 30 miles away this one does not become corrupt. And that's where you have the advantage of having an apostle or a spiritual father to guide and correct.

Is it biblical for a woman to have a position in a church as a pastor? Well, there's a clear verse in 1 Timothy 2 which says what a woman's ministry is and what a man's ministry is. 1 Timothy 2.12 A woman should not have two ministries. One is authority over a man and the other is to teach men.

They can teach little children Sunday school etc. but teaching is a position of authority. God has not made the woman to be the head.

But for the purpose of redemption she is to submit to the man. That doesn't mean she's inferior. 1 Corinthians 11.3 is a great verse.

God the Father is the head of Christ. Christ and like man is the head of woman. Now compare the two.

1 Corinthians 11.3. The Father and Christ, man and woman. Is Christ inferior to the Father? No. Is the woman inferior to man? No.

Did Christ submit to the Father? Yes. Should the woman submit to man? Yes. Did Christ submit joyfully? Yes, for the purpose of redemption.

How should the woman submit to the man? Joyfully, for the purpose of redemption. So that is the comparison. It's not a question of equality.

And so a man teaching is a position of authority. A woman should not teach or have authority mean an elder or a pastor. But that doesn't mean she doesn't have a ministry.

She doesn't have to feel inferior. She's not inferior at all. Because it says two verses later which what people don't read.

Verse 15, three verses later. A woman has a ministry to bring up children in the fear of God. And I don't feel inferior to a woman because I can't bear children.

Do you men feel inferior just because you can't bear children in your stomach or whatever it is? And she can imagine this. Just think of it. A woman can produce another human being out of your body.

Can you men do it? Produce another human being out of your body? But I don't feel inferior to a woman for that. That's her ministry. My ministry is to be the head.

And so same way in a church. A woman has I remember one brother who had 12 children. And he came to visit us and his wife was at home.

I said, what does your wife do? Oh, she's training 12 disciples at home, he said. I said, that's great. Here was a God fearing woman who was doing exactly what Jesus did, training 12 disciples at home.

It's a tremendous ministry a woman can do to bring up children in a God fearing way. You know Timothy would never have been the apostle he became if it were not for his mother. I have four sons who are all following the Lord today, who share the word, two of them leading churches, and that's because of my wife.

Most of the time I was not at home. She was the one who really brought them up. And I don't know where they would be if it were not for that.

I did the disciplining part. I had the rod, but she did the praying and all the spiritual stuff. I mean, I taught them the word, yes.

But I remember one of my sons telling his colleague in school, I heard it from the friend, that the prayers of my mother have kept me from falling away. Remember that, not the prayers of my father, the prayers of my mother. So there's a tremendous ministry a mother has.

Don't despise it, especially if you have children. It's a great ministry you can fulfill. If God's love is unconditional, in John 3, 16, why is it why does Jesus say, in John 16, 27, He loves us because we love Christ? There are degrees of God's love.

I love my neighbor's children, but I don't love them as much as I love my own children. I love the children on the streets, but I'll tell you honestly, I don't love them as much as my own. There are degrees of love.

We, even in the church, we don't love, we can love, the Bible says we've got to love everybody in the world, but we don't love them all to the same degree. I'm supposed to love my wife more than I love my children, by the way. My wife is in the first circle, my children are in the second circle, and others are in another circle.

And even among coworkers, we have a closer relationship with some than with others. So that's all it means. I'm extremely disrespectful to my parents.

I really need to change. Well, praise the Lord you realize that. How can I become godly? You're a great pastor and I love you.

Oh, thank you. Can you give me some references in the Bible? I think this is a young boy. I really have hope for you because you're honest, whoever wrote this.

I have tremendous hope for honest people, for children who can see their need. I'll tell you, go to Jesus and say exactly what he wrote to me. Lord, I'm extremely disrespectful to my parents.

I really need to change. Can you please help me? God loves little children. Do you want a reference? Ask and you will receive.

If you ask your earthly father for bread, he won't give you a stone. Ask God for power to live this life and he'll give you. Okay, fasting, I've already answered that.

When I meet with heathen, what should I discuss? Yeah, like start with something earthly and lead them on to something godly as much as they are able. How do I wisely introduce Christ to my non-Christian friends? By being friendly with them first of all and gradually not forcing the gospel on them. What hope is there for sincere Jews and Mormons who truly believe they are Christians? Oh, Jehovah's Witnesses and all.

Yeah, I do not believe that a person can their sincerity of belief doesn't mean anything. My duty is not to judge people. God is the judge.

What I say, if you do not believe that Jesus Christ is God and that he became a man and died for our sins and rose again, there is no salvation. Now, if a person is ignorant like some barbarian, how God judges them, I leave it to God. I thank God that I don't have to answer that.

This is about answered already. And what hope is there for the unconverted who belong to some nominal church? Again, we are not here to judge. We show Christ by our life and words but leave it to God to judge them.

And I believe the primary way which we can witness to others is by our life. This is already answered. Can we offer donations to heathen festivals? Well, you know our believers face this very often in India and I give the advice I give them.

Tell them, listen, if you are taking a collection for widows, orphans, things like that, I'll give you. But my faith does not permit me to give money for religious festivals. Bible says we should be hospitable to strangers.

How can we do that today without the dangers of being robbed and mugged, etc. Well, I think we have to be wise. It's a principle that the Bible says that we should be generous and helpful but we have to be very wise in that.

Because Jesus said be harmless as doves but wise as serpents. So where you sense a danger, even a serpent senses a danger, what does it mean to be wise as a serpent that you say, well, it may not be very wise to give hospitality to this person or sometimes even give a lift to that person in a car. We must be very wise here.

If I'm not able to find a good fellowship, can I just have virtual fellowship on the age of internet? You can never have fellowship on the internet. You can listen to messages on the internet. Fellowship requires real living people.

You can get teaching, evangelisms, I mean teaching and so many blessings like that on the internet. But fellowship requires people. So you must look for some church whichever is the best in your locality.

And if whichever is the closest to God's word. If you ask God, he'll show you which is someplace like that. How do you know that something is God's will for us? I've already answered that.

Why do I find it easier to read the New Testament than the Old Testament? Because the Old Testament has a lot of history and many things like that. I would suggest that once you get familiar with the New Testament and really get to know God, then you will understand some of the difficult passages of the Old Testament better. How can parents tell their children that God is more important than school when society requires them to be in school for 22 years? See, God doesn't mean sitting in a classroom.

That's not God. To put God first means that I have his values. He's not sitting reading the Bible for so many hours.

That his values control my whole life. That's what I teach my children. To put God first means you don't tell lies, you treat others as you want to be treated, etc.

It's not a question of number of hours studying the Bible. What do you mean by saying you don't get doctrine out of the book of Acts? It is the word of God, but it's history. For example, the Bible's Acts of the

Apostles says, Acts 2-4, they all spoke in tongues.

Some people have got a doctrine out of that. But it's not true. All don't speak in tongues.

I'll give you an example. I went to a Pentecostal church once and they said, doesn't it say in Acts 2-4, they all spoke in tongues? I said, right. But if you go further down in Acts 2, it also says in verse 44, that they shared everything with each other.

Do you share your bank account with others? No. Then I went to a Hutterite colony where they share everything, but they don't believe in speaking in tongues. So they asked me, Brother Zach, doesn't it say in Acts 2-44, they all shared everything? I said, yes.

But it says in Acts 2-4, they all spoke in tongues. You see how people become selective and then it says that Paul circumcised Timothy in Acts 16. What doctrine did you get out of that? Or later on it says, Paul shaved his head.

What doctrine did you get out of that? Paul fought with Barnabas. What doctrine is there? Acts is not a book of doctrine. It's history.

Jesus healed all the sick. That's history. All the sick are not healed today.

Let's be honest. To get doctrine, you must get it from the teaching sections of Jesus in the Gospels or the Epistles. The rest, we can get a confirmation, but we can't get doctrine.

It's very dangerous to get doctrine out of the historical sections of Scripture. Okay. If a relative has wronged me, what does it mean to forgive him? Do I have to visit him? No, you don't have to visit him.

You don't have to invite him. You know, you've got to have a heart that's forgiven him. The Bible says, pursue peace with all men.

And with some people, the best way to pursue peace is by never visiting them. Because they are quarrelsome people. What to do? Past experience shows every time you go there, there's a fight, so I want to pursue peace with all men.

You've got to be wise. You know, the Bible is very realistic. If my sister tells me to keep something secret from my mother, well, you've got to be wise.

What does it tell and what not to tell? If two relatives in the family are fighting, one comes for consolation, what should I do? Should I listen to her complaining? I think, you know, when people come to us with a complaint, we should try to be wise in the way we respond to them. You know, I tell, for example, if your wife has no victory over sin and she's always gossiping, speaking evil about this, and she speaks to you, I don't think you should tell her to shut up, because she'll go and tell that to somebody else. It's better she tells that to you, you're a godly man.

It's like if your wife vomits, throws up, it's better she throws up on your lap, right, than in somebody else's, because you can wash yourself clean. So, I don't believe if people, you know, they haven't got victory over something. It could be a relative, it could be a friend.

They come and throw up. Okay. And gradually, if you can help them, help them.

Some people need a listening ear. They haven't got victory over their problems. You've got to give them a listening ear and just bear with it and forget it.

Okay. Yeah, we need a lot of wisdom in what becomes criticism and what becomes gossiping and backbiting. There's someone here who's written about 25 questions.

I won't have time to answer all of them. Only one slice of cake for each person. Are we to be pacifists or can we fight against tyranny? I think it's a question of how you fight.

The weapons of our warfare are spiritual and not carnal. That's what the Bible says. There's a little child who said, how big is God? Bigger than the universe.

Okay. We have reached the end. Exactly 4.30. Ecclesiastes 3. What's the meaning of Ecclesiastes 3 in verse 20 and 21? You see, in the Old Testament, who knows whether the breath of man goes up or the breath of peace goes downwards? Yeah, in the Old Testament, they did not have light on what happened after death.

If you want understanding of what happens after death, don't go to the Old Testament. Go to the New Testament. There's one more about martial arts.

Is it right to take part in martial arts, dancing, Halloween? See, we have to be very careful about martial arts. If it's self-defense, it's okay, but I was asking somebody who was doing this, I said, do you have to bow down to that teacher of yours in martial arts? You shouldn't bow down to anybody. Why does he make you bow down? What's that got to do with self-defense? There's an element there which is bowing down to a human being which you've got to be careful about.

Dancing, it depends on you know, I don't believe that it's good for men and women to dance together but little girls just dancing on their own, it's okay. Playing musical instruments, etc. Halloween, I wouldn't have anything to do with that.

What about if you put an angel's outfit? Still, I wouldn't do it because the whole thing is a heathen thing to start with. So what do we ask our children to engage in? In my case, my children, I did not, we never had television in our home, I never sent them to movies or circuses and things like that but I said I'll get you any musical instruments you can play, I'll allow you to play games and anything like that, cricket or soccer, activities like that, those are the things, healthy activities which have got no sinful element in it. I believe God will give us all indoor games we can sit and play with our children.

So there are many ways in which we can make up for the things we deny themselves because we are Christians. Thank you for your patience. God bless you all.

Let's bow our heads in prayer.

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