

Balance of Truth - 3

by Zac Poonen

To build a balanced Christian life, we must prioritize the Lord Jesus, our family, and our church, and seek fellowship with wholehearted people in our church.

Duration: 59:20

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 16:15

Topics: "Balance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living out the gospel in our daily lives, especially in our workplaces. He encourages believers to be a testimony through their actions and attitudes, showing love, integrity, and kindness to others. The speaker also highlights the significance of being knowledgeable about the gospel and having a strong foundation in Scripture. He mentions two books that can help believers understand the gospel better. Lastly, the speaker mentions the two sides of the great commission, which involve preaching the gospel to all people and the importance of belief and baptism for salvation.

Transcript

We have covered, first of all, the balance between faith and works and you need to see where the imbalance is in your case. And then we saw a need to be balanced between love for God and love for man. There's a place for both.

And then we saw grace and truth, the glory of God seen in Jesus Christ. We also saw the necessity of both the fruit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We saw that when the Bible speaks about love in 1 Corinthians 13, it's not talking about love by itself.

It's talking about love, 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 teaches us that love is the way by which we must exercise the gifts. It's not just love by itself. 1 Corinthians 13 is not a chapter by itself.

Lots and lots of Christians who love 1 Corinthians 13 have no interest in chapter 12 and chapter 14. Then they haven't understood the scriptures. You know, all the cults like to take one chapter or one verse.

You remember that Corinthians was a letter. Supposing you got a letter from your father and you just read page 13. And you don't read what's on page 12 or page 14.

You can get it completely out of context. If you want to understand page 13, you must read page 12 and page 14. So I believe that is one of the most misquoted passages of scripture.

Everybody loves quoting 1 Corinthians 13, but they misquote it because most of these people who quote it have no interest in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. That's one extreme. And on the other side, you have a whole lot of people who claim to exercise the gifts of the Spirit and leave out 1 Corinthians 13.

Their favorite chapters are chapter 12 and chapter 14. This is the sad thing in Christendom. Some like 1 Corinthians 13, that's all they want.

And some are only in 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 14. That's all they want. Whereas if you want the whole truth, you must have all three chapters.

And when you, the danger of being only in chapter 12 and chapter 14 and ignoring chapter 13 and 1 Corinthians is that you have all these counterfeits going around today pretending to be the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Have you noticed, for example, in the healing crusades on television or in public, have you seen how completely different they are from the way Jesus healed people? In all these so-called healing crusades, some guy was probably healed of some invisible sickness or something which you can't even make out. They make him come immediately, stand before the pulpit and say, and the whole purpose of that is to show, I am a great healer.

But Jesus never did that. Because His aim was not to show, I am a great healer. He was so sad that this fellow is sick.

And He was so delighted that this fellow is healed. He said, that's enough. Nobody needs to know that I'm a healer.

You don't even have to tell anybody. I'm just so happy that you're healed. That is the spirit of Christ.

That's because He had love in His ministry. I have never seen that in all these healing crusades. Everywhere they pull people up to the platform because the guy who is preaching is so insecure, has got such an inferiority complex.

He feels that most people don't trust him at all, which is probably right. And he wants to prove that he's a healer. The whole purpose of these things is that.

So don't be deceived by that. And in order to produce that, have you noticed this also, there's a working up of the emotions with one hour of music and people you see on the television, different people crying and all that. And then when they are in that high emotional state, Jesus never did all that.

The apostles never did all that. This is all psychology. It's all to fool people.

Don't be deceived by it. It's because 1 Corinthians 13 is missing in their understanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. There's absolutely nothing in scripture, in the New Testament, that can compare with the type of healing meetings that go on today.

But multitudes of Christians go and sit with their mouth open, thinking this is a great man of God. And then they say, oh well, at least the gospel is being preached. Which gospel? They say, well, Jesus is being preached.

I say, with Jesus. Is that the image of Jesus that you want India to see? I don't want India to see that image of Jesus, because that's not the real Jesus. So, I don't believe it's the real Jesus being preached in many of these places.

I want you brothers to know that emotion has replaced the power of the Holy Spirit in most charismatic Pentecostal circles. That's not the power of the Holy Spirit. I sit there and I say the whole thing is emotion.

It's not the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It's a psychological building up through music particularly. And music and money have replaced the power of the Holy Spirit.

You remove music and money out of these systems, the whole thing collapses. But if you removed music and money from the apostles, nothing would collapse. They would continue in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Just check this out. This particular ministry that appears to be great, take music and money out of it. All the music and all the money out of it.

What's left there? And then you go to Jesus and look at His ministry and take music and money out of His ministry. Everything is still left there. Take music and money out of the ministry of the apostles.

Everything is still left there. That is the genuine power of the Holy Spirit. These are all substitutes.

A lot of you perhaps don't know the scriptures and therefore you don't understand the balance. I'll give you one bit of advice. Never read a verse by itself or a chapter by itself.

See it in its context. So don't go to chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians. Read chapter 13, chapter 14.

So today we want to consider another area where we need to balance and that is our personal life and our church life. We need to find a balance between these two. Individual life and body life or personal life and church life.

That's the first thing I want to think about. See, there are two extremes here. There are some people who are only interested in their personal life.

I want to pursue holiness, holiness. They think only about themselves and of course they go for the occasional meeting but they don't seek to build fellowship. And then there are others who find their entire joy only in always being with the brothers and sisters.

These are two extremes and you need to see which side your balance is tilting. And because there could be people with both sides emphasis here, we need to grow in our personal life and we need to grow in our fellowship with believers. If you're only growing in personal holiness without fellowship with believers, I want to say to you that your holiness could be a deception.

You know, like the monk. The old days, some churches used to have monks who would sit in the monastery and just keep praying day and night. That's not Christianity.

Jesus was not a monk. He was always check everything with Jesus. Was Jesus like that? Did Jesus heal like that? Did Jesus place so much emphasis on music? Did Jesus place so much emphasis on money? Was Jesus a monk sitting all by himself? At the other extreme, was Jesus always with people that he had no time to be alone with his father? That was also wrong.

There were times when he would get up early in the morning and go alone to be with the father. And then of course he was with people. So in the balanced Christian life, we need to have a personal growth in holiness along with, it's like two legs, growth in fellowship with other brothers and sisters in your local church.

That's very important. So if you are just a meeting attender, you know, you just come to the meeting and go, you can't say that is fellowship. You attended a meeting, you received something valuable.

You can't say you built fellowship. Fellowship is not sitting in a meeting. See right now you're not having fellowship.

Not at all. You're just listening to me, just like you sit in a cinema theater and watch people sit in a cinema theater and watch a movie. In a cinema theater, they don't have fellowship with the people sitting next to them.

Their whole attention is concentrated on something that's happening up in front. They watch that and maybe two, three hours they entertain and then they go home. A lot of Christian meetings are just like that, like a cinema theater.

They come there and then they watch this performance up in front by a pastor or whatever it is, all the music leaders and the message and all that, and then they go home. We can't say that such a church has got any fellowship at all, even if there are 10,000 people there. I'd rather be in a church with 20, 30 people.

I remember in the early days when we started, we were all about 20, we were about 10 when we started, then 20, 30, and boy our fellowship was really good. But as the numbers have increased, you find very often the quality of fellowship drops. That's unfortunate.

I want to say one more thing in this matter of fellowship. Don't try to fellowship equally with everybody. That's impossible.

Like we considered yesterday, your degree of fellowship with other people will depend on how much they are walking in the light and how much you are walking in the light. So naturally, your fellowship will be more with some people and less with some people. Jesus used to preach to the multitudes, different people would come to him with a need, he'd meet their need and go away, but he never had much fellowship with those people.

They would get their need met and they'd go. So that is one ministry of the church, where people come, visitors, so many people, they have a need, spiritual or whatever it is, we meet that need, they are blessed and they go. But then after that was over, Jesus would meet with 12 people alone.

That was fellowship. And then sometimes he would take three of them by themselves to have a deeper fellowship. So I see that even Jesus didn't have fellowship with all the people who were blessed by his ministry.

So we can't, particularly in a large crowd of people, I see that Jesus limited himself to very few people who are wholehearted. Why did he choose those 12? Not because he liked their faces or they were rich or don't seek fellowship with people because you like somebody's face or they speak the same language or they are rich or some stupid thing like that, reason like that. No, he prayed and he saw that these were the most wholehearted, I believe, including Judas Iscariot at that time when he was selected, the most

wholehearted people in Israel.

And so you must seek fellowship with the most wholehearted people in your church. It may be a small number. And among the most wholehearted, there'll be a still smaller number of three out of the 12 with whom your fellowship will be deeper.

I mean, that's been like that with me through the years. There are some people with whom I've had much closer fellowship. And among those, there are some with whom, still smaller number, with whom I had a much closer fellowship.

That's exactly how it was with Jesus. But when it comes to serving, we serve hundreds of people. So if we don't follow this principle, what will happen in your local churches, there will be no fellowship.

And where there's no fellowship, there will be no body. Your church will not be a body. It will gradually become a congregation.

And if the devil can't destroy the message, he will destroy the fellowship. So then you can get up and preach the same message, but the devil's quite happy because no fellowship is being built. You get a hundred people sitting in the church and you're a little delighted that your church has grown in size from 20 to a hundred.

I'll tell you who's the happiest of the lot, perhaps the devil. Because he says, no, these guys will never build any fellowship. They're just excited that a hundred people are coming to the meetings and they're just preaching.

Everybody listens and goes home. Perhaps you had more fellowship in the days when you were 20. So what shall we do? Drive everybody away? No, Jesus never drove anybody away.

But in that group of 80 or 100, you must look for those who are most wholehearted. And if you're an elder or you're an older sister, a godly, wholehearted older sister, you must look not for all the young sisters. Most of the young sisters may not be interested.

They may be interested in other things. But look for those who are wholehearted, radical, who want to love Jesus. Seek fellowship with them.

And if the other sisters don't want to have fellowship with you, ignore them. Forget about them. They're not going to amount to anything.

The people who will do something in the church are not the ones who just come regularly to the meetings or sing well or any such thing. It's those who are radical, wholehearted disciples of Jesus in their personal life. And such people will always value the fellowship of an older brother or an older sister.

So those are the ones we must concentrate on if we want to. We must have a balance here. If you don't have this balance, let me tell you again, you will not build the body of Christ in your locality.

It'll be just another congregation. And there are multitudes of congregations in Christendom. God called us together from the beginning to build a body.

It takes time. Jesus had to take time to be with the disciples. Our life in the villages is much better, but in the cities life is so busy that many people now go to work early in the morning, come late at night.

It's very difficult to have time. And therefore, you must organize your life and say, Well, Lord, how can I do this? How can I find time to build fellowship with not everybody, but with those who are wholehearted and radical? Take time to fellowship with them, to pray with them, particularly in the early days of a church. I remember when we started here in the early days, we had some wonderful times of fellowship and prayer together and sort of laid a foundation.

And that is so important. And when we do that, again, we need to have a balance that we don't ignore our families. This is the very, very tricky area in these days.

How can I find the balance between family life and church life, between personal devotion, reading the scriptures and walking with God and fellowshiping with others and making disciples? And there, you know, there's no standard answer because all of us have different amounts of free time. All of us work different hours. But if you have a responsibility in a church, you certainly need.

Please remember that those who are elders, if you're going to follow Jesus as your elder brother, remember, please listen, Jesus did not only preach. He preached and he built a brotherhood of 12 people or 11 at least. So if you only preach and you haven't built a brotherhood of 10 or 11 people, you haven't really built a church.

Your church is a preaching center. Now, I believe the world needs preaching centers. And there are many places where we can say that church is just a preaching center where people come and they listen to a message and they go away.

And I have a fear that many of our churches are gradually becoming preaching centers because we're not probably concentrating now on gathering the leaven, on building fellowship. That sort of has slipped out of our priority list. And so there's a little imbalance coming in compared to how it was in the early days.

And I believe we need to restore the balance. Ask God how you can do it. Identify people who, you know, if you're a leader, identify people who will respect your authority.

Don't waste your time with people who don't respect your authority. Don't waste one second with them. Let them come and listen to the message and go home.

You see, Jesus could not have worked with those 11 people if they did not respect his authority and submit to him. And if you're a godly older sister, I have to say to you, don't waste your time with young sisters who don't respect you or value you as a godly older sister. Just let them go.

I mean, if they want to go to hell, let them go to hell. If they want to be worldly, let them be worldly. Just leave them alone.

Seek for fellowship and seek to work with those who respect you and who value the godliness that they see in you that you have acquired over so many years, that you can communicate to them that will protect them. The others don't want it. They're too proud.

Let them go. That's what I would do. I wouldn't waste my time with someone who has no interest in fellowship.

So, you shouldn't have a complaint that somebody doesn't respect you. There were thousands of people who didn't respect Jesus in your church. There may be people who don't respect you.

Don't waste your time with them. They won't amount to anything. I give you a written guarantee, such people will not amount to anything.

They'll come, attend the meetings, sing songs, listen to the message and go home. The way of the New Testament is Jesus building fellowship. And among the eleven, there were the three.

And I believe that through the years, many of our churches, in our desire for outreach, we have slipped up in this matter of building fellowship where people get related to one another and are functioning together as a body. Even though there may be a hundred people in your church, the real body there may be only ten or eleven people who do the job. I want to encourage all of you to identify those ten or eleven, concentrate on them and work to build them up.

Now, this matter of time for our family and time for our ministry, I want to share with you that in the Christian life, the Lord Jesus must be first and second must be our family and third must be the church and the ministry. Now, many people don't follow that order. They think they are spiritual and they put the church above their family.

No, that's not the biblical way. And that's why a lot of people, their family life becomes a mess. And they're trying to continue to have a ministry in the church.

That's exactly what the devil wants. It's the Lord first. I mean, that's the principle I have followed all these thirty years.

The Lord Jesus has been first, my family has been second and my church and ministry has always been third. And that is what has preserved me and my family. It says in 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 5 concerning an elder, it says here, if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of the church of God? He's talking about having his children in control with all dignity, verse 4. If an elder brother cannot keep his children under control with all dignity, he's not fit to be an elder brother because if he can't bring up three or four children in a godly way, how is he going to bring up thirty, forty people in his church? Or a hundred or two hundred people in the church? It'll be impossible.

He'll be a preacher. That church will be a preaching center. He won't be a shepherd.

He won't be a spiritual father. He has no time and he has no ability because God gave him three, four children at home and they're in a pretty messed up state. What in the world is such a man going to be a spiritual father to a hundred people? He'll be a total failure.

That's what he's saying here. If you can't bring up your children, three, four children, right, don't have such high thoughts that you're going to build up a hundred, two hundred children in the church. You just can't do it.

If all churches had followed this principle, I think a lot of people would have quit the ministry and we would have better quality people in leadership. So what do we learn from that? The family must come before the church. This is the training ground for ministry in the church.

So that teaches us that our family life must come before church life. Now, because a lot of people have confused the Lord and ministry, they think putting the Lord first means putting ministry first. No! To be devoted to Jesus is not the same as doing ministry.

For example, if I'm paralyzed, I can't do any ministry, but I can be devoted to Jesus. So if Jesus and ministry are combined, then if I'm paralyzed, I'm not devoted to Jesus. You need to separate these two.

Jesus first, my family next, ministry third. It's something like, you've heard me use the example of a three-story house. Foundation is the love of God for me.

First, the ground floor or the first story is our personal life and walk with God. And the second story is our family life. And the third story is the church and ministry.

So if you don't build the second story properly or the first story properly, and you try to build the third story, it's going to be confusion. Have you ever heard anyone, seen anyone building the third story before they build this first and second? I mean, nowadays they have pillars and all, but in the olden days they would have bricks and you just couldn't build second or third story before you built the first story. Because that has to rest on this.

So please remember this order in your life, because I believe it will save you from a lot of misconception and a lot of guilty feelings. Some people, when they do something for their family, they say, oh, I'm neglecting the ministry. You're not.

You must care for your family. If you cannot take care of your family, you cannot serve God. We must find a balance here.

Of course, there are some people who are so devoted to their families that they have no time for doing anything for the Lord at all in their ministry. That's another extreme. That's where the balance is tilted the other way.

So I've seen both types of people in our churches. Those who neglect their family in order to always do something for the ministry and those who are so taken up with their family that they have no time for the ministry at all. Many times I've said to young people, I don't know whether you're wholehearted.

I'd wait till you get married and have a couple of children. Then I'll tell you whether you're wholehearted or not. Because most people that I have met become backsliders when they get married.

All their interest in ministry evaporates when they get married. I don't know why. It shouldn't be like that.

So there are two extremes here that we can go to. See, Paul says here in 1 Corinthians 7, the other side of what I just told you. And that is, what I just told you was that if you can't take care of your family, how can you take care of your church? Now what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7 is, brothers, verse 29, the time is short.

So those who have wives, married people, should be as though they had none. Have you read that verse? Has there ever been a time in your life when you had a wife but you had to be as though you didn't have a wife? Because it was necessary for the ministry. There have been occasions in my life like that.

Where I had a family, but it had to be as though I didn't have that family because there was something I had to do. That's the other side. This is the balance.

And he says, I want you to be devoted to the Lord without... There's a beautiful phrase in verse 35, I want to promote and secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. Undistracted devotion to the Lord. So you see, both are found in scripture.

Jesus once said in Mark chapter 7, concerning this subject, Mark chapter 7, he said in verse 10, Moses said, honour your father and mother. But you say, verse 11, if a man says to his father or mother, whatever money I had to give you for your financial support, I'm sorry dad, I've given it to God. Sorry, you guys, dad and mom, you got a star.

Sorry, can't pay the house rent, you got to get into debt. I had money to give you, but I gave it to God for his work. And Jesus said, you don't permit, you Pharisees, teach them that type of false devotion to God.

And you don't permit him to do anything for his father and mother. You have cancelled the word of God with your wretched traditions. What was Jesus saying? Take care of your old parents.

And to give money to God is not more important than taking care of your old parents. How many people understand that? If you talk to many Christians, they think giving money to God is better than taking care of old parents. Jesus said no.

There are a lot of wrong concepts in Christianity because people are religious, not spiritual. The Pharisees were religious. And so they had all these religious ideas of being devoted to God.

Ignore your parents, ignore your wife, ignore your children, and go and do something for God. That's one extreme. The other is, just spend all your time with your, just listen to what daddy and mommy say, don't worry about what God says, and just spend all your time with your wife and children, no time for the ministry.

So in both these areas, there must be a balance. And we cannot dictate to one another how to find it, but you must say, Lord, help me to find this balance. Don't let your relationship with your wife get strained.

Then you can't have the ministry. If it says you don't live with your wife in an understanding way, God won't listen to your prayers. And if you don't spend time with your children, and they become wayward, your whole ministry is destroyed.

The devil's done that with so many preachers. I remember, you know that, those of you who've known me for the last 30 years, you've seen right from the early days, I've traveled a lot, sometimes weeks on end. Sometimes I've been away from home four or five weeks at a time, when my children were small.

But I'll tell you something, there was one thing I always planned my trips around. If my children, any of them, were taking part in any event in school or in sports or anything, or an examination, which is important, you know, like a board examination or something, I'd always make sure that I'm there. Because I was traveling so much, that I did not want my boys to grow up and say, Dad was so busy serving the Lord, he had no time for us.

I want to ask you, my brothers, do you have spent so much time in your office, that you don't have time to be friends with your own children? So much time in your work, that you don't have time to be friends with your own children. One day your children will say, Dad was always so busy with his work, he didn't have time for us. Mothers who go to work sometimes, their daughters grow up and when the daughters become teenagers, they say to their mom, you had no time for me when I was three years old and I have no time to talk to you now.

So many cases like that. So in all these things, in the difficult world in which we live, where there's so much of pressure to work and so much of pressure to earn money to survive, we must really seek God for

wisdom. And the Bible says, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask God to find a balance of personal devotion, to find a little time with God alone reading the scriptures.

However little the time, find a little time every day to be alone with God. Don't say because I like to keep one hour for God. You may not get one hour.

If you get only five minutes, take five minutes. I used to carry a New Testament in my pocket with me when I was working in the Navy so that I could read it here and there when I was waiting in a bus stand or government offices, when you go for a permit or something. Wonderful time to spend time alone with God before they call your turn.

Take these opportunities. Carry a New Testament or something with you. Don't say we don't have time.

There is time. If you pick up the fragments that are here and there during the day. So time alone with God, time with the family, with the children, time for the Lord's work.

The wise man is the man who has learned how to balance all this. And in addition, it's our secular job. You know, we need to, all of us are working people.

And how shall I balance my office responsibilities with church responsibilities? Or if you are doing business, my business responsibilities with church responsibilities. And I tell you, we have some absolutely unique examples in CFC. In your elders who manage that so well.

Office responsibility with church responsibility, business responsibility with church responsibility. I mean, not just for one or two years, they've done it for many years. And follow their example.

It is possible for us to balance office work with church work without getting sacked. It's possible for us to do business responsibility with church responsibility without losing out on our business. If you seek God for wisdom, you'll get it.

So I really believe these are areas where we need to find a balance in your personal life and church life. Say, Lord, teach me. Both are important.

This balance must be perfectly level. And each of you know which side it is imbalanced right now. Okay, we go to number six.

There are many, many areas of the Christian life where we could think of balance. But we decided to think of only six of them in this Bible study series. And the sixth one is the balance between evangelism and discipleship making.

Evangelism and disciple making. This is also an area where we need to be balanced. And we need to see where we are imbalanced.

Perhaps in the opposite side of where other people are imbalanced. See, there are two great commissions in the New Testament. And I want to show them to you.

There are actually two sides of one coin. It's one great commission with two sides. One is Mark's Gospel, chapter 16 and verse 15, where it says, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creatures.

To all human beings, the gospel must be preached. And he who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned.

Notice that baptism is not mentioned in the second part of that sentence because baptism is not necessary for salvation. And then, in connection with this type of evangelism, you've got to see the whole context. In connection with this type of evangelism, where a man is going out to preach the gospel to people who have never heard the gospel, the Lord says, you know what I'll do? I will accompany you, and these signs will accompany those who have believed.

There will be casting out of demons. You can't go into the unreached villages of India, preach the gospel, if you don't know how to cast out demons. It's not enough to know that Jesus died for the sins of the world.

When a person is possessed with a demon, there's no use counseling that person. You never see Jesus counseling a demon-possessed person. He always casts out the demon.

And when you meet a demon-possessed person, you've got to cast out the demon, not counsel him. He's not ready for counseling. So, they'll cast out demons, they will speak with new languages, and they will pick up serpents, I believe.

That means that they will be protected from many dangers that you face when you go out to unreached areas with the gospel. Boy, they really need to be protected from all the dangers. And, when they drink any deadly poison, means that when you go out to these unreached areas, you know you're not going to get hygienic food, the water is not going to be boiled, and all types of dangers and diseases.

You have to trust God to protect you from the food and water that you eat and drink, and from the dangers, physical dangers, of going into villages riddled with snakes and all types of things. And, they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover. I believe that goes on today, not in the healing crusades, a lot of that is counterfeit, but in the places in India where missionaries are pushing the frontiers of the gospel.

You understand what I mean by that? That means they are moving into unreached areas where people have never heard about Christ. In those places, the sick are being healed. By whom? Not by any well-known healer.

I believe that even the dead are being raised in some of those places. Amazing miracles are happening, even in India. But it is in those places, like it says here, those who are taking the gospel out to the places where it has never gone.

I believe in those places miracles are taking place. 99.9% of these so-called miracles in these healing crusades, I don't believe. It's my personal conviction.

But in these other places, it is taking place. I remember once when I went up to Bihar, and I met a brother there. And I said, he was in a completely unreached area.

He was a Tamil brother. Unknown person. Completely unknown person.

He was working in some mission group. I don't even remember his name now. And I asked him, how many people come to your church meeting? He said, about a hundred people.

I said, all Hindus? He said, yes, all of them. How many of them are saved? None. I said, none? And they come every Sunday? Yeah, they come every Sunday.

What do they come for? He said, because so many people are being healed. That's why they come. And gradually, of course, he had just begun the work there.

Little by little, through the healing process, after some time, some people will get saved. I can believe that. I mean, you can't fool these hundred people to come every Sunday if something is not happening there.

It's not emotion and music over there. Something is actually going to happen. Some demon-possessed person is delivered.

And the people come. It takes time for them, finally, to break with their traditions and their religion and finally accept Christ. That may take a long time.

But these things are taking place wherever people go out with the Gospel. And you won't find that here in Bangalore because this is not a frontier area for evangelism. But if any of you people want to experience it, go out to some place where the Gospel has never gone.

Go there. And I guarantee you, the weakest person among you will see these miracles take place through your ministry. That's one side of the Gospel.

Going out, reaching out, God accompanying us, and like it says here, the Lord worked with them, in verse 20, confirming the word which they preached with the signs that followed. That's one side of the Great Commission, evangelism with signs following. I'll tell you this, my personal testimony.

If God ever called me to be an evangelist, that's what I wanted to be initially, but he never gave me that calling, to North India, I will never go there if God does not give me the gift of healing. I don't think I could do it. Can you imagine going into North India to some fellows, all people never heard about Jesus, and I go there and I gather these people and tell them, you know about 2,000 years ago in another country, one little baby was born.

He was born without a father. And only a mother. Spirit of God came upon him.

And he grew up and he's actually God. And he healed the sick and he died for your sins, you know. And he rose up and they said, where is he? He's gone to heaven.

And he said he's coming back. And the fellow says, you expect me to believe this story? And that is the gospel. Then you have to say, I'll prove to you that he's alive.

Is anybody here sick? Let's see whether Jesus is alive or not. Let's see whether in the name of Jesus, this demon who's troubled this person for so many years, whether that demon will respond to the name of Jesus, who won't respond to the name of any other God. And then they know, oh, this Jesus is alive.

This is evangelism. This is the way it was done in the early days and this is the only way that Jesus ever meant it to be done today, not with intellectual convicting people of this and that and the other convincing people. It's all a very shallow type of evangelism.

Okay, the other side of the Great Commission is Matthew chapter 28. Matthew chapter 28. Jesus said the other side of the Great Commission is verse 18.

All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Now you also go into all the nations of the world and make disciples. Hey, this is different.

It's different in the sense that it's the other side of the coin. If you take any coin, one side doesn't look like the other side, but it's the same coin. So here's the Great Commission, the other side of the Great Commission.

When you go into all the world and you converted these people with signs and wonders and casting out demons, don't stop there. Go on. Make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And in this aspect of the Great Commission, there is no mention of tongues or healing or demons or supernatural protection from poison or snakes or nothing. That was in that side of the Great Commission. In this side of the Great Commission, the emphasis is on obedience to God's word.

After you make them disciples, teach them to obey every single thing I have commanded you. And as you do that, I'm going to be with you till the end of the age. Now you got a clear picture of the Great Commission that Jesus gave.

Evangelism and making them disciples, which is more important. It's like asking which side of the coin is more important. You got to fire up your coin.

I said both sides are important. So here is in evangelism, let me repeat again. It's evangelism that's confirmed with signs and wonders and healing and casting out demons and speaking in tongues and all that.

On the other side of the coin, you have making them disciples and baptizing them and teaching them to obey every single thing that Jesus taught. You know what that means? That means you got a crowd of 50 people in your church. 50 people.

You got to make sure that every one of them loves all their enemies. Every wife there submits to her husband. Every husband there tries to love his wife like Christ loved the church.

That every one of them speaks the truth all the time. Their yes is yes, their no is no. Every one of those 50 people submit to their bosses in their place of work and reflect Christ in their behavior.

Every one of these 50 people forgive everybody, love their enemies, bless those who curse them. Every one of these 50 people ought to be free from the love of money. Every one of these 50 people have to overcome anger.

Every one of these 50 people have to overcome the lust of the eyes. And every one of these 50 people have to learn to give. Every one of these 50 people have to learn not to judge anybody.

Every one of these 50 people have to learn to pray in secret without telling anybody about it. They have to learn to fast in secret without telling anybody about it. They have to learn to give in secret without telling anybody about it.

All 50 people have to be free from anxiety. Do not be anxious. All 50 people need to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

it, and I haven't finished yet, there are lots and lots more commands that Jesus made. Can you show me a church like that? Okay, forget 50. Can you show me a church with 20 people like that? I tell you, it's not easy.

It's much easier to do evangelism. Just go and convert people, pray for them, you accept Christ, okay, let me move on to the next village. This is laborious, and that's why very few people want to do it.

This is not against that. No, this is what is to follow from that. So, to use another example, is it easier to have children or raise children to be godly children? Having children, any idiot can have children, there's no problem.

But to raise them to be godly children, boy, that is a lifetime's job. That is it. Evangelism is having children.

Disciple making is raising them up to be godly men and women. Which is more important? What would you think of a mother who just keeps on having children and dumps them on the street? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. I say, please stop.

Please bring up some of these. No time for that, we got to have children. This is today's evangelism.

Brother, how many children you got? This is what one evangelist asked another. I say, two godly ones. Isn't that better than 20 whom I got and threw out on the street? Where are they today? Can you imagine asking a father, where are your children? I don't know.

As soon as I was born, I left the place and went. Who are these people who produce children and wander away? They are not fathers. They are immoral people.

They go all over the place producing children and wander off. This is today's evangelism. You ask these evangelists, where are these children? You said you brought 1000 people to Christ.

Where are they? I don't know. It's not my business. It's not your business.

What type of father are you? Produce children and just throw them on the street? I don't know. I hope somebody would take care of them. It's absolutely terrible.

So, we have to go and pick up some of these children from the street and raise them up. That's what we've been doing. And when we try to do that, people say, why aren't you having more children? I say, it's enough job we have to try and bring up the children which you fellows have produced and just thrown on the street to raise them up in a godly way.

You want us to produce more. You know, I used to think, India has got only 2% Christians. As I travel around the country and saw the quality of Christians, I said, thank God it's only 2%.

Because if it was 50% this type of Christians, the name of Jesus would have been dishonored much more. What we need to do is to raise the quality of the Christians before we have some more. Imagine, if the quality of Christians that you have seen in India, India was flooded with 50% of Christians like that.

I believe the name of Jesus would be dishonored much more. Thank God it's only 2% that are dishonoring the Lord's name. Now, this is so important.

To make people disciples. That does not mean, I want to say another thing here in this matter of balance. That does not mean one cannot do the other.

At the same time, for example, here in a church we are concentrating, gathering people together, making disciples. But, everyone in that church needs certain people in their circle of friendship, in the office, in

their neighborhood, relatives. Every person sitting here has got a little circle of people you know, whom nobody else in this hall knows.

Right or wrong? There are certain people I know, whom none of you know. And there are certain people you know, that nobody here knows. Who is going to give those people the gospel? Nobody here, because they don't know them.

You. And when I say give the gospel, if you are working in an office, it's not just going around dishing out rags to everybody. If you are working in an office, you are going to see them over a period of time.

It is living there in such a way, that when you say something, it has got weight. Because they have seen your life, at least for one or two months. You don't have to wait for 25 years.

In one or two months, you can have a testimony in an office that this person is different. This person just doesn't go around speaking evil about others. This person doesn't laugh at dirty jokes.

This person is hard working. This person is helpful. This person came up to me once and asked me, why are you so discouraged? Nobody in this office asked me for 10 years that question.

Just this new person who came along asked me, hey you are looking a bit discouraged, can I? And when I told him that I had some children sick at home, he said, can I pray for that sick child? Nobody ever did that for me. You know how there are openings, if you look for it, that God will give you to do evangelism. Right there.

To tell somebody just a few words, just to show the love of Christ. One day, maybe two weeks from now, they will open up to listen to something more. Or perhaps one day you will get an opportunity to give them a little booklet, to explain to them the gospel.

And for that you need to know what the facts of the gospel are. And that's why if you don't know the facts of the gospel clearly, I would encourage all of you to get a little copy of that little book, The Real Truth, and read through it. It's well worth the two or three rupees you may spend on it.

To read through it so that you know the facts yourself, even if you don't give that booklet to somebody, that you know those things, and good foundation. These two books, if you read through them and you know the verses, where they are, you can be a witness. And even if you can't preach the gospel to somebody, you can bring people to the meeting.

You say, but in the meeting we don't preach the gospel. Why would you do? You don't have to keep on telling people that Christ died for your sins. It says in 1 Corinthians 14, have you read that verse? In a church meeting, where they are not preaching the gospel, where they are prophesying, it's something like a Friday meeting, where people come together and they are sharing what is on their heart.

1 Corinthians 14, it says here, when somebody comes in, all are prophesying, verse 20, 1 Corinthians 14, verse 24, everybody is prophesying, they are not preaching the gospel, it's a church meeting, and they are getting up and sharing something from the word, and while they are sharing something from the word, an unbeliever, unbeliever, enters, I mean he just was walking by, he came into the church meeting, and he listens. Now what's he hearing? He's not hearing that Christ died for your sins, you know, that's probably not the subject. But as he comes there, he's convicted by what he hears, because every man's need is the same, and he falls on his face and says, boy, he doesn't say I understood the gospel, he says God is here,

I can sense that.

Then we can explain the gospel to him, the man can get saved. So don't think that it's only where the gospel is preached that you can bring a person to the meeting. He must come to a meeting where he senses the presence of God, and he says, hey, I got a peace in my heart when I went to that place, I'd like to go there again.

And that's how they may open up to the gospel. And I believe that we have failed a lot in this area, this is an area where we are very imbalanced, and I want to encourage all of you to really seek to be a witness. We're not all evangelists, God has called some, very few to be evangelists, but he's called all of us to be witnesses.

Where we work, where we live, to be witnesses for Christ. So let's take that responsibility seriously from now on and say, Lord, I thank God that I'm in a church where they teach me to obey everything that Jesus has commanded, but I want to do my little part to perhaps bring a friend along, somebody in my place of work. Maybe you can start, maybe you can't start with the Hindus and Muslims first, maybe you can start with the nominal Christians.

That's easier. They also need to be converted, they also need to hear the gospel, as God leads you, but it's something which we must pray and say, Lord, will you please use me? You don't have to be able, but you have got to be available. You say, Lord, I'm not able, but I'm available.

If you will give me a chance, I'll speak a word for you. I often used to think when I was in the Navy and I used to witness to everybody I met. And of course, a lot of them would make fun of me and call me all types of names.

But I used to sing that song to myself, I'm not ashamed to own my Lord. He was not ashamed to hang for me on the cross. And I would often think of that.

Jesus was not ashamed to be stripped almost naked hanging there for me. And I said, Lord, I will not be ashamed to speak of you. Jesus said, if anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this evil generation, I will be ashamed of him when I come back.

I want to ask you, my dear brother, sister, do the people in your office know that you're not an ordinary Christian? You're a real Christian. I could not preach when I was in the Navy, but I'd keep a Bible there or somebody else would Christian book. And if it was my own office, I'd hang a Christian calendar so that people would know what I stood for.

I mean, you go to these banks and offices and they've got all the Hindu calendars. Why can't we have a Christian calendar? They are not afraid. They're not ashamed.

They have all these marks on their forehead to say, I'm not ashamed to let all of you know who I belong to. It's Christians who are ashamed. And I really believe we need to pray that God will fill us with the Holy Spirit and make us unashamed witnesses for Christ so that our Christianity will be balanced, balanced in all these areas.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, give us each one wisdom to balance these different areas. We know it's possible.

We know that it's possible for every one of us to balance our secular work with our church work and our personal walk with you, with our fellowship with others, family life, with ministry responsibilities, and evangelism with discipleship, building fellowship. Lord, help us, we pray, each one. You see our hearts.

Help us to be your witnesses in this nation where you have placed us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12019.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/balance-of-truth-3/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net