

Balanced Christianity 1. Grace and Truth

by Zac Poonen

The key to a life of purity and happiness is living a life of obedience to God's will, not by doing service or ministry.

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Scripture: Genesis 1:27, Job 1:8, Psalm 90:17, Matthew 7:22-23, John 1:14, Acts 15:36, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Christian Living", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a balanced Christian life, focusing on the need to grow in maturity and manifest the beauty of Jesus in our daily lives. It highlights the significance of not just reaching out to others but also nurturing and building up believers who are already on their way to heaven. The speaker stresses the value of all scripture, teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness to equip believers for every good work, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to Christian living.

Transcript

I want to read to you a verse in Psalm 90. It's the only psalm that Moses wrote. Most of the psalms are written by David.

But there's a beautiful prayer that Moses expresses here or a desire, let's say. In the last verse of Psalm 90, in the King James Version, it's read like this, let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. And it's based on this verse that we sing that very well-known chorus, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

All this wondrous compassion and purity. I believe the big problem that concerns the Lord is not so much that the world is not being reached with the Gospel. I come from a country where 98% are non-Christians.

And I've traveled the whole length and breadth of that land. And my problem, as I see, as I see, is not that we are only 2% Christians. I discovered very early in my ministry that the problem was that the quality of life of those 2% was so pathetic, so pathetic, the testimony of Christians, that I was thankful that it was only 2%.

That there were not more people dishonoring the name of Jesus in our land. See, very often when people think of the spread of Christianity, they always count numbers, statistics. What percentage of a country is Christian? It means absolutely nothing to God.

That's one of the things I've discovered. I mean, I've been in full-time Christian work for 50 years. I've traveled many lands, and I am speaking from my experience.

It's not numbers that God's looking for. Because if it were numbers, the Lord would have made the way a broad way. Because He said very clearly that it's along the broad way that more people go.

But He said the way to life is narrow, and very few find it. So, as I've served the Lord, I look for those few who want to walk the narrow way. I personally don't believe God's excited about mega churches.

I don't believe that God is excited about people who have made coming to Christ and salvation so easy. That's what I mean by a broad way, where you attract the wrong type of people. For example, take this gospel which is very popular today.

The gospel of health and wealth. That means you come to Jesus, He'll heal all your sicknesses. He will make you wealthy.

Your standard of living will go up. You'll get a better car and a better house. And I've asked myself, is there a single human being in the whole world of any religion who does not want more money? Or who does not want better health? Nobody.

The richest people in the world want more money. The beggars in the world want more money. The sick people want to be healthy, and the healthy people want to be more healthy.

So, if it is true, please listen very carefully. If it is true that the primary thing that Jesus came to give was health and wealth, who would reject Him? Nobody would reject Him, because everybody wants it. All 7,000 million people in the world will want to be Christians.

Does that look like a narrow way? We must use our mind. God's given us intelligence to understand. The Bible says Jesus was despised and rejected of all men.

He came to the world and they did not receive Him, they crucified Him. Why did they crucify Him if He was offering health and wealth? I mean, even if a person has to give up something to get health and wealth, look at the number of people in the world who sacrifice so much to make money in their business, who spend so many late hours in their work. And look at the sacrifices people are willing to give up junk food and all to get health.

They enjoy junk food, but they give it up for the sake of health. People are willing to make sacrifices if they get health and wealth. So if Jesus was offering health and wealth, everybody would respond to it.

But that's not what He was offering. He said that every single person who came to Him without exception, if they wanted to follow Him, they would have to die to themselves every day. Die to their own self-will, to their own choices and do the will of God.

That's what it means to follow Christ. He himself said in John 6 and verse 38, I've come from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me. This is the one big difference that took place when Jesus came to earth.

When He was in heaven, equal with the Father from eternal ages, as the second person of the Trinity, He could say, I do my own will. I do my own will all the time, because it is the same as the will of my Father. There was no conflict of will between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

And Jesus could say, I do my own will, because it is the same as the will of my Father. But the moment He came to earth as a man, like us, we all know that we have a will that very often gets into conflict with the will of God. And Jesus came with a will, not with sin.

There was no sin in Him. But He came with a will of His own, which if He chose to do, He would sin. We need to understand that.

He was tempted throughout His life to do His own will and He never did it. And you know, even in the last day in Gethsemane, the great struggle was, Father, not my will, but Thine be done. And it says He prayed for one hour.

So, it's this which we have to die to if we want to follow Jesus. To follow Jesus means to walk in His footsteps. That means I choose a life where I don't do my own will, but do the will of God, as I understand it.

And that understanding of God's will will grow as we walk with the Lord. We don't know all of God's will as soon as we start, but it'll grow as we walk with the Lord. And God doesn't ask us to be perfect, but He does ask us to, in the area where we have light, to do His will.

It's not an impossible command He gives us. It's like when a child goes to school. In a kindergarten class, he only needs to know what's taught in the kindergarten.

He doesn't need to know what's taught in the fifth grade or tenth grade. In the kindergarten, he can get a hundred percent. Why can't he get a hundred percent to spell C-A-D as cat or B-A-D as bat or two plus two is four.

That's all he needs to know. I mean, multiplication and division and geometry and algebra will come later. And when he comes to that, he can get a hundred percent there too.

So the Christian life is like that. When you start the Christian life, there's very little you know of what God's will is. It's like the kindergarten.

And that is the only area where God wants you to do His will. A more mature saint will see many things in your life where you're not doing the will of God. But if he's really godly, he won't judge you.

It's like a tenth grade student won't judge a kindergarten student for not knowing the things he knows. There's a growth in the Christian life. Birth and growth, these are two different things.

Joining a school and graduating are two different things. In the same way, the Christian life, there's a time when we are born again. It's like joining school or just like being born.

Then from that point onwards, we grow or go to a higher class, whichever illustration you use. And I quoted this verse, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in us because there is an ugliness about a lot of Christians. And the ugliness is not physical, it's spiritual.

When they claim something and don't live according to that claim, it's ugly. Or when they overemphasize one side of truth and ignore the other or devalue the other, it's ugly. The beauty of Jesus is seen in a perfect balance.

And it comes many places in Scripture. I want to show you first of all in John chapter 1. John's Gospel chapter 1 and verse 14. It speaks about the time when God became man.

The Word became flesh. And when it uses the word flesh, see this is a, it doesn't mean sinful flesh. Jesus did not have sinful flesh.

We are born with sin. We have a sinful tendency from birth because we have a father and mother who descended from Adam. Jesus did not have that sinful tendency when he was born because he did not have an earthly father.

It's the Holy Spirit who did the job of the father. And there was, and the angel said that holy thing that will be born of you will be called the Son of God. So that was the difference between Christ and us.

But he did have a will of his own like us, because of which the Bible says in Hebrews 4.15, he could be tempted just like us. And that is our encouragement. Because if Jesus was not tempted like us, he could never say to us, follow me.

It would be like an angel flying across a swimming pool saying, follow me. I'll teach you how to swim. I'd have to tell that angel, get rid of your wings first.

Be subject to the law of gravity like I am, being pulled down. Then get into the water and teach me. So if Jesus could float across this world, not tempted like me and says, follow me, I'd have to say the same thing to him.

Lord, you don't feel the pull, which I feel, of wanting to do my own will. I'd say you never felt that. And he'd say, I did.

That's what he'll say to you. I did. I did feel it for 33 and a half years.

The pull to do my own will, the pull that you and I face every day. When somebody's angry with you on the road, there's something in your will that responds to it. That's what leads to conflict at home.

That's what leads to secret sexual sin. The pull of your own will. Now, sin is not various different things.

Basically, the root of sin is doing your own will. That manifests itself in anger, bitterness, jealousy, sexual sin, stealing money, all types of things. But the root is, I want to do my own will.

I want to do what pleases me. That's how Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. God's will was, don't eat of that tree.

Eve's will was, I want to eat it. That's the root of sin. I don't want to do God's will.

I want to do my will. And Jesus was tempted in more difficult circumstances. Adam and Eve were tempted in the garden.

Jesus was tempted in the wilderness after being hungry for 40 days. Again, tempted with food. Food was as attractive to him at the end of 40 days fasting as that beautiful tree was attractive to Eve and made her mouth water.

And the devil tempted him, eat. You got power. Jesus said, no.

I don't see that to be the will of God right now. And even though I fasted for 40 days and my whole body is craving for food, I will not do my own will. That is the first thing recorded of Jesus in his earthly ministry.

Teaching us that this is the way we want to follow. How many people want to go that way? We say, that's a very miserable way having to deny ourselves. You really believe that? Do you believe that Jesus' life was one of the most miserable lives anybody lived on earth? I don't think so.

It is the most wonderful, the most beautiful, the most glorious life that anyone lived on the earth. And the secret was he never did his own will. That's what the devil tries to hide from us.

He keeps telling us that if you do your own will, you'll be happy. Has it made you happy in your married life, husband and wife seeking to do their own will and always clashing with each other? Has it made you happy in your personal purity, in your private life, doing your own will? No, it's made us guilty and unhappy. And we look back.

Tell me honestly, even if you have not lived a very long life, look back over your life. What are the areas of your life which cause you regret today? Honestly, what are the areas of your past life that you feel really sad and sorry about today if you're a Christian today? It's not those times where you helped others and did good and did what was upright and did what is honest. No.

You're happy about those areas. The areas of your life that cause you regret are the areas where you did not do God's will. You did your own will.

And for years and years and years and years the memory comes back to you. Oh, I did that. Is that making you happy? I mean, that should teach us that doing our own will is the cause of all our problems.

So Jesus says, I can show you a better way. I can show you the way God wanted man to live. That's why he came to earth in the flesh, which means with self-will, which he never yielded to.

So when it says here in John 1.14, the word was made flesh. All it means is he came with a will of his own. But it's made very clear in Romans 8 and verse 3 that he came only in the likeness of sinful flesh.

He didn't have sinful flesh. He came in the flesh, which was not sinful. He had his own will.

If he had yielded to it, it would have been sinful. If he had yielded to it even once, that's why I say the greatest miracle that Jesus did on earth was to live 33 and a half years without ever yielding to his own will. That's what makes me admire him.

And I see that that was the secret of that beautiful and most wonderful life that accomplished and finished the entire will of God in 33 and a half years. And with the father could look down and say, I'm well pleased with him. Very often we think that God is happy with us if we do a lot of things for him.

You know, God did not make Adam because he wanted another servant. It's a wrong understanding. He had millions of angels before he made Adam.

He had millions of servants who were worshipping him, doing anything. If he told an angel to do a thing, they would obey immediately. God did not create man because he wanted another servant.

He created man because there was something that man was going to manifest which no angel could manifest. He made man in his image. Not a single angel among all the millions were made in his image.

Do you know that? Angels have got intelligence, they've got power, they've got a will of their own. That's how one of the angels became the devil. But they could not reflect the image of God.

It's like saying a bulb can bring light. But if you pass electricity through this table, it won't bring any light. It doesn't have the capacity to produce light no matter how much electricity you pass through this table.

But that bulb has the capacity to give light if you pass electricity through it. And man had the capacity to partake of God's nature and become a son of God if he allowed the Holy Spirit to come in. So see the contrast between a bulb and a table.

That's the difference between man and angels. And that's why it says in his own image he made man. So it's not because he wanted another servant.

It's not because he wanted the Garden of Eden to be tended. That was a job God gave to man. But that was not the reason why he created him.

He created him because he wanted a race of people who would manifest his nature. We need to be gripped by that. That's written in Genesis chapter 1. He made man in his image.

And that's what got ruined by sin. And so today we have a lot of people who think they are pleasing God by serving Him. Sometimes they sin and they try to make up for it by giving some money in the offering box or going and serving Him in some way.

You cannot bribe God with your service and try to get Him to forgive your sin. There's no connection between your life and your service. One must flow out of the other and the life must come first.

And that's why you see in Jesus' life at the age of 30 when He was baptized and He hadn't done a single thing what we would call service. He hadn't preached a single sermon by then. He hadn't cast out any demons.

He hadn't healed any sick person. Yet the Father from heaven said, I'm well pleased with you. I'm never tired of teaching this because I still find that so many Christians, even those who've heard me for so many years, are not gripped by this.

It's one thing to hear something and to understand it. It's quite another thing to be so gripped by that it changes your whole life. And that's why I never get tired of repeating it.

That the Father was happy with Jesus at a time when He was 30 years old when He had never done anything which we call ministry. Why do I say that? Because a lot of Christians today think that they're going to make God happy by ministry, by the amount of money they give to God's work. Jesus didn't have much money to give the Father.

He was a poor carpenter. He got four brothers and two sisters at home and a widowed mother. He had to take care of all of them.

I'm sure there's very little money left. It was not through money or through ministry that He pleased the Father. What did Jesus do in 30 years that could bring such approval from the Father in heaven that He could publicly say, this is my son in whom I'm well pleased? Only one thing.

We know that in all those 30 years He was tempted just like you and me. And you and I know how difficult it is to live one single day without sin. One day.

24 hours without speaking a single sinful word, without doing a single sinful action, without having a single sinful thought, without having a single sinful attitude towards anybody throughout the day. And fifthly, without having a single sinful motive in anything that we did. In thought, word, deed, attitude and motive.

These are the areas we sin. Can you think of one day you live like that? One single day. It's so difficult.

Because our self is always pulling us in the wrong direction. And Jesus denied Himself. Day after day after day.

Can you imagine the ways in which His younger brothers and sisters would have teased Him and irritated Him at home? Numerous ways. We've all seen small children, how they tease one another and all that. And He never sinned.

He never responded in the way that they would treat Him. And He lived like that at home. He wasn't, He didn't, you know, He was in a poor home.

He didn't have a private bedroom like some of our children have to retreat into when things got tough and hot in the house. No. All those boys slept in one bedroom.

Where could He retreat? There was no place to retreat. He lived in purity. God put Him under really difficult circumstances.

And He never sinned. And it didn't matter if He had not done a single thing of what we call ministry. The Father was happy with Him.

Do you believe that you can stand before God one day some of us feel limited because we say, I don't have a gift. I wish I had a gift. I could preach or I could do something for the Lord or travel the world and preach and bring people to Christ.

That's not what God's looking for primarily. If only you could understand this. It's your life.

And that's what we see from the 30 years of Jesus, that the Father can be pleased with you even if you don't do anything we just call ministry. If you overcome sin, every day. That's a message that's hardly preached because the emphasis everywhere is saved to serve.

Saved to serve. What are you doing for the Lord? We should be asking what are you being for the Lord, not what are you doing. We're called to be, not to do.

We're saved to manifest the glory of Christ, not primarily to serve Him. You may say, is service unimportant? No. But service is the overflow of our life.

Like I've often said, in the Old Testament, God's Holy Spirit could not penetrate our spirit. The spirit is the deepest part of us, by the way. Man is body, soul which is our mind and emotions and our spirit is the deepest part of us and that part was shut off.

Just like the most holy place in the tabernacle was blocked off with a veil and God could not enter man's spirit because self-will, man's self-will obstructed it. And because there was sin there and that sin could

never be removed until Jesus shed His blood. So God's Holy Spirit could never dwell in people in the Old Testament.

But yet you know that God used many people in the Old Testament mightily Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, what mighty servants of God but with not one of them could God say, I'm well pleased with your life. There were sins that Moses committed. Elijah, he got depressed and discouraged and said, Lord take away my life.

John the Baptist even doubted whether Jesus was the Messiah when he was locked up in prison. Even though they did a tremendous ministry God was not entirely happy with them. And then you see Jesus who never did any ministry for 30 years and God says, I'm well pleased.

If we can see these things clearly. So what happened on the day of Pentecost? On the day of Pentecost man could finally have his sin cleansed by the blood of Jesus so that God's Holy Spirit could now penetrate the innermost part of man and enter his spirit. Till then it was covered.

It's like if this glass is covered with a lid and I pour water on it, not a drop will enter the glass. Not a drop will enter this cup but it'll flow out. It can flow out in rivers depending on how much water we pour and that's what Old Testament ministry was like that.

The Holy Spirit was upon people, not inside people, upon people and it'll flow and bless thousands. Moses blessed millions. But it wasn't inside.

Samson is a classic example. His heart was full of adultery. The inside of the cup was dirty but boy did he bless people.

Israel, he was a judge in Israel that delivered Israel all the time. But when Jesus came it was a different type of ministry. It wasn't just the Holy Spirit upon where the heart was dirty and God blessed people.

It was from within. For 30 years that cup was clean and then ministry was not being poured upon but from within. The cup, the Holy Spirit from inside overflowed and blessed millions.

That is the difference between Old Covenant ministry and New Covenant ministry. That's why Jesus said in John 7 38, he who believes in me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. In the Old Testament the rivers of living water flowed from over.

That's the big difference. And if this was emphasized in Christendom, we would have a completely different type of ministry. You wouldn't suddenly hear of pastors after so many years of serving the Lord falling into sin.

Why is that? Because they only emphasize ministry from external. I think a lot of Christians are experiencing this Old Testament type of ministry. They are gifted, they can preach wonderful sermons, move a lot of people but then one day they fall into sin.

Why is it? Because the Spirit is not coming from the innermost being. It's on top of them. Now that's possible for many of you to be like that.

Is ministry important? Was there any greater ministry than Jesus had? In three and a half years he accomplished more than other people do in hundreds of years. But it flowed from within. And it's when ministry is only upon and we don't have a life that backs it up, that ministry is a struggle.

I remember the years in my own life when I was a born again but defeated Christian. Do you know you can be a born again but defeated Christian? Defeated in your thoughts, defeated in your, maybe not defeated in outward actions, maybe your outward actions are good and pure, but defeated in thoughts, defeated in attitudes, defeated in motives, defeated in words. We are very careful with actions.

You know that's why we can keep ourselves from adultery and theft and the Ten Commandments, most of them are actions. But very difficult to keep ourselves pure in thought, word, attitude, motive. And a lot of Christians can be impure in thought, word, attitude, motive and still have a ministry.

Bless others because they're communicating information and people are saved because of the information. And they're happy with that. That's the tragedy.

The tragedy is not that they are imperfect. The tragedy is they are satisfied being imperfect. You know it's like a student who's very intelligent, who could get a hundred percent in mathematics, satisfied with forty percent.

In India, forty percent are pass marks. Oh, I got forty percent. I'm happy.

I think a lot of Christians are like that. I passed. That means I sinned but I confessed it and the Lord's forgiven me.

And then the next day I sinned and I confessed it and the Lord's forgiven me. Twenty-five years later you say, I sinned still but I confessed the Lord's forgiven me. Fifty years later they say, I still sin but I confess the Lord's forgiven me.

When are you going to finish with it? Is there a better way or is it only that Old Testament way of forgiveness? There is a better way. So I'm trying to show you how this self-will, if Jesus called us to deny that will and to walk as He walked. And I'm trying to show you that that is the most wonderful life you can ever live.

I want to expose the lie of the devil who's told us that sin is enjoyable. Is there a pleasure in sin? Do you know that the Bible says there is pleasure in sin? The Bible doesn't deny it. Moses rejected the pleasures of sin but it's called the passing pleasure.

Think of the sins that you have committed that you're aware of. Can you tell me how many of them gave you lasting pleasure? Even if you cheated and made money and that money has given you a lot of comfort, that annoying sense of guilt that you have, that you made money by cheating and exploiting and is it giving you pleasure really? You live with that sense of guilt. It's like driving your car with your foot on the brakes.

It's moving all right but scraping. That's how a lot of people are living. The pleasures of sexual sin and every other type of sin, it's passing.

In a few minutes it's over. Once it's over you live with guilt for years. The pleasure is only for a short time.

The problem it causes is forever and ever and ever. It's like taking a little bit of poison. It may be enjoyable at the time.

It's like drugs. People take drugs. It's enjoyable at that time but blows up their mind and destroys their life for years.

Sin is exactly like that. We can think low or less of a person who's, what a foolish person who goes to drugs. But do you know there's no difference between a man who commits sin and a person who takes drugs? Absolutely no difference.

That guy doesn't take drugs. He pays money for it. Quite a lot of money.

Why does he do it? Because he gets a little pleasure out of it. He doesn't think of the consequences that will blow up his mind and his life in the future. But that's exactly what a lot of people do when they commit a sin.

Think of all the sins they've committed in the past. It has brought pleasure for a while but brought guilt and heaviness and discouragement and so many things and still we go on doing it. It's like that person going back to the drugs.

Even though what he's taken has already harmed him, he still goes back to it. There's really no difference between that person and a person who doesn't, who takes sin lightly. That's how the devil fools man.

And that's why we need the light of God to shine clearly in the church. And I'm sorry to say it's not allowed to shine clear enough in the church. In the church they talk about helping the poor and that's all great.

But a lot of people who live in sin and help the poor. Ministry is not the main thing. Do you know, I mean, think of a contrast to what Jesus.

Jesus didn't do any ministry for 30 years and the father was pleased with him. Now I want to tell you about some other people, thousands of them who did a lot of ministry. Jesus said in Matthew 7 and verse 22 and 23 about, I think hundreds of thousands of people who will stand before him in the final day and say, these are his exact words, many will come to me, Matthew 7, 22 and say, Lord, I did a lot of ministry in your name.

I prophesied in your name. I cast out demons. How many of you have cast out demons in Jesus name? Percentage must be very, very small, not even 1%.

How many of you have done not one miracle, but many miracles? We get down to zero, probably nobody here. Supernatural physical miracles in Jesus name. We did them and the Lord doesn't say to them, no, no, no, you're bluffing.

You never did all that. It's as it were the Lord saying, I know you did all that. I know you did a lot of service for me.

You preached in so many places and you did this and you did that and you traveled and you sacrificed a lot to serve me, but I still want you to get away from me. Go to hell, all of you. Despite all the ministry you did for me, despite all the places you sacrificed and served me, depart from me because there was sin in your life.

Only one reason. How many Christians believe this will happen? What is a balanced Christian life? A balanced Christian life is where your ministry comes out of your life, not by itself. The ministry is important, but it must come out of our life, otherwise it's worthless.

And you see that here. That's why I drew the contrast between Jesus having no ministry for 30 years and the Father saying, I'm well pleased with you. And these people who did such fantastic ministry, which, I

mean, if you met a man like this, or even saw a man like this on television, prophesying, casting out demons, doing many miracles, you would stand in awe.

And if he's doing it in Jesus name, you would say, that's not a heathen. That's a real Christian who's doing miracles in Jesus name. You think he's a great man of God.

What a surprise you'll get one day when that man, you see that man being sent to hell. Not for his ministry, but because he did not deal with sin in his life. Jesus said, heaven and earth will pass away.

My words will not pass away. Now, these are not the type of things that you hear in your local church. You ask yourself, have you heard your pastor tell you this from Matthew 7, 22 and 23, that some of those television preachers you see on the screen will probably go to hell because there's sin in their life.

You know, the sin in their life can be hidden for a long time. Then suddenly it comes out. Somebody divorces his wife.

That doesn't happen overnight. Somebody falls into adultery or sexual sin. That never happens overnight.

It's a result of years of impure thinking. Years of watching pornography in secret, which you never thought that powerful preacher preaching in your pulpit was watching pornography in secret, did you? It suddenly becomes manifest. And think of, for every one person manifest, like there are the 10 others who are not yet exposed, who are clever to hide their sin.

But one thing you can be sure in the final day from these examples, that in the final day, it is not your ministry that's going to matter. And it's good to know that now. So, you don't have to be discouraged if you don't have a gift of ministry.

You really need to repent if you're not serious about sin in your life. So, this is the balance. So, when we talk about the beauty of the Lord our God, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

That beauty has to be seen in our life first. And that's why God sent his son to earth to live a holy life for 33 and a half years and to have ministry for three and a half years. Now, you who are good at mathematics, tell me, what percentage is that? Three and a half divided by 33 and a half.

One tenth. Ten percent. In Jesus' entire life, his ministry was only 10 percent out of his 100 percent.

It's a life that backed up that ministry. If your life is not 10 times better than your ministry, there's something seriously wrong with you. If your ministry is what impresses people, boy, the way he preaches, or the way he does this, or the way he helps the poor, any type of ministry.

If that's what impresses people, something is wrong. Your inner hidden life, which nobody can see, your thought life, your private life, the way you talk to your wife at home, or your husband at home, the way, the things you watch on your computer, on the internet. If that is not 10 times better than your ministry, I want to tell you, my brother, sister, you probably never hear it from any other preacher, there's something seriously wrong with your Christian life, and you better set it right now.

That's the purpose of our conferences. We are not here to entertain people. We are certainly not here to collect money.

We are here to help people like most preachers. We are here to change people's lives and to show them the way of life, a balanced Christian life. Think of the balance there is in our body.

If you were to draw a line down the middle of our body, there's a beauty in balance. It's not just that I have two ears, they're the same size. It's not just that I have two eyes, they're the same size.

It's not just that I have two hands, two arms, they're the same length, two legs, they're the same length. The beauty is not just in having two of each item, but they are equal in length and size. Think if one of your eyes was big and one of your ears is big, how ugly you would look.

You can still say, I have two eyes. And I found this in this matter of doctrine. When people talk about doctrine, you can have all the doctrines we can.

I've seen through the years, I'm a Bible teacher, so God's made me that. So I understand this better than others, those who are not gifted that way. Truth is like a human body.

It's the truth of scripture. There are many things in the scriptures, but not all have the same importance. Or are given the same amount of emphasis in scripture.

For example, your heart is more important than your nails or your little finger. You can live without your little finger all your life, but you can't live without your heart. The kidneys and many internal organs are more important than others.

The hidden parts of our body are more important than the visible parts of our body. We can live without almost all the visible parts of our body, but the hidden parts of our body we cannot live without. Teaching us that the hidden part of your Christian life is a million times more important than the visible part of your Christian life.

I hope you understand that. That's the lesson I get from my human body, that the hidden parts are far more important than the visible parts. And in the visible parts also, there's ugliness.

If there's an imbalance, if one side is very muscular and the other side is skin and bones, that's ugly. And yet that's what we see in so many Christians who over-emphasize one side of truth and ignore another. So it's not that they don't have truth.

They have truth, but they over-emphasized one and under-emphasize the other. The result is ugliness. Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

There was a balance in Jesus' life which made it beautiful. Turn back to John 1.14 that I was showing you. John's Gospel 1.14. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we saw something.

It's not just we heard, we saw. People must see something in you, not just hear. When Jesus said, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, Acts 1.8, you shall be my witnesses.

I hope you understand the difference between bearing witness and being a witness. Most Christians who, Pentecostals who emphasize the baptism in the Holy Spirit, I emphasize it too. Very often they say, you shall bear witness.

That's not what Jesus said. In other words, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you'll start speaking and telling others about Christ. More than that, Jesus said, you shall be my witness.

Do you know the difference between being a witness and bearing witness? Bearing witness has only got to do with what I say or what I write. But being a witness refers to my life. His being a light.

It was not like that in the Old Testament. It says here, we saw his glory. We didn't just hear him.

John 1.14, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, John 1.14, and there's a balance in it full of grace and truth. You see the balance there? There is an ugliness if it is only grace. There'd have been an ugliness if it was only truth.

The beauty was in the balance that was in Jesus. The glory of God was balanced with grace and truth. Truth is that which is firm, unmovable, like the bones in our body.

Very important. Grace is like the flesh that covers the bones. I mean, to use an illustration, every illustration has got its limitation.

So, don't take it too far. But I find this is helpful to understand. Truth alone will not make you attractive.

Truth alone is a skeleton. How would you feel if you see a skeleton walking up to you in the middle of the night? You don't feel exactly excited. But that is how people felt when the Pharisees started coming near them.

The Pharisees had a lot of truth. You can't do this on the Sabbath day. You can't do that.

You can't do the other thing. Truth, truth, truth, truth. And you saw that man coming up to you.

It was exactly like a skeleton walking up to you. You feel like running. Do you know that Jesus had all the truth from the scriptures that the Pharisees had, plus other things the Pharisees did not know about? He had every bone in the body, but that body was covered over with flesh.

It's like seeing a very attractive, gracious person who is a skeleton inside, but you don't see the bones. You see this beautiful person walking up to you, this gracious, smiling person. You don't run away from that person.

Does he have bones? Does he have truth? Sure. But he's not always, you know, torturing you with truth. He's got truth, but it's covered over with beauty, grace and truth.

And you need to ask yourself whether you're imbalanced here. We need both. And if there's a tendency towards imbalance, then there's the other area that we need to correct.

Do you know there are a lot of advantages in not having bones? There are disadvantages. And it says you won't be able to stand up, you'll just collapse to the floor all the time because you've got no bones. But there are advantages.

You can squeeze through any opening. Star-shaped opening, you can go through. Round opening, you can go through.

Square opening, you can fit into any opening. And people who don't have a value for truth, Christians, they can fit in anywhere. They can fit into a church with any doctrine.

It doesn't matter if you, the church doesn't have all the doctrines of scripture. Oh, that's okay. I can fit in here.

They don't have some bones in their body. They can squeeze into a star-shaped opening. They can squeeze into a round opening.

They can squeeze in anywhere. But if you stand for all of the truth of scripture, if you believe that God did not make a mistake when he wrote the Bible, that it's not that some parts are unimportant. Oh, baptism in water, that's not so important.

Okay. It's like saying certain bones in your body can be removed. Why? To help you to fit into some church opening that doesn't allow you to go through if you hand on to some truth.

There are many other truths like that. Christendom has been divided into so many denominations because some emphasize some truth and ignore others. And yet it's all in scripture.

Who wants the whole truth, everything in the truth, everything in scripture, every bone in my body, which bone in your body would you like to dispense with? There are more than 200 of them. And about a hundred of them are in your feet, in your hands. Which one would you like to get rid of? I don't want to get rid of even one of them.

Every one is important. And to me, it's exactly like that in scripture. I go through scripture.

Every doctrine in scripture is important. Whether it's the truth that Christ alone died for my sins, or whether it is the truth that a woman should wail her head when she prays or prophesies. One is very unimportant compared to the other.

But it's true. It's like a small little bone in my finger. Not as important as the bones in my leg.

I agree. But I don't want to get rid of it. Where are the Christians who say, I wanted every single truth in scripture.

I don't want to get rid of even one of them. I know in many churches, if you get rid of some of them, you'll fit in through that opening. Sure.

You don't realize you're compromising. Do you think you can sacrifice one part of God's truth and still get all of God's blessing? I don't believe that. You think God made a mistake? I know that there are other people who make the little finger 12 feet long.

See, for example, people, to use an illustration, there are some people who say that every Christian must speak in tongues or speak in other languages. I don't believe it. The Bible has got a very clear word in 1 Corinthians 12, which says, do all speak in tongues? No.

Are all apostles? No. Do all do miracles? No. Do all speak in tongues? No.

It's such a clear answer there. And yet people twist it and go around it. And they say, so when you take a small gift like tongues, just using one example, you can either make it 12 feet long.

You know what a nuisance you'd be right here. If you had a little finger 12 feet long, you'd be just hurting everybody all the time. You wouldn't be able to get in and get into any vehicle.

You wouldn't be, you'd be a nuisance everywhere you go. And people who make this one doctrine 12 feet long are a nuisance wherever they go. Don't let them disturb you.

Then there are other people who react against that and say, let's cut it off altogether. Does that solve the problem? No. I'm very thankful for a little finger.

Sometimes I find it useful. So there are some churches that say, get rid of that gift. We don't want it.

Keep it in its proper place. The beauty of balance is that truth, everything has got a proportion. And if you, of course, you've got to study the scriptures or you got to listen to somebody else who knows the scriptures, who will explain it to you.

Very, very important. That is how you become a balanced Christian. Otherwise you don't realize that you're imbalanced because you're sitting in the midst of imbalanced people.

You think you're okay, but you're missing out on something in the Christian life. I personally believe what the Bible says in 2nd Timothy chapter 3. Let me read this verse to you. 2nd Timothy chapter 3, it says, all scripture, this is verse 16, all scripture.

Think of all of scripture. From the first verse in Genesis to the last verse in Revelation, all scripture is inspired by God. Who am I to say which part is important, which part is not important? And all scripture, 2nd Timothy 3.16 is profitable.

Is there a part of scripture which is not profitable? You may say some is more profitable than others. I agree. My kidneys are more important than my little finger.

Oh, that I agree fully. And I agree there are some parts of scripture which are more important than others. I fully agree there.

But my point is, which part can I get rid of? You tell me which part of your body you want to get rid of. Even if you think some of them you can live without, do you want to get rid of them? Let's be honest. I believe God loves honest people.

If you will treat the body of scripture like you treat your own body, and you will not be so quick to dispense with certain parts of scripture saying, oh, that's not so important. Ask yourself which part of your body you dispense of saying, I can live without that. Yeah, there are a number of things in scripture you can live without, but it will not be a complete body of truth.

And you're insulting God by saying, well, he put certain things in scripture which are not important. Or the other alternative, the only other alternative is for you to say, I don't believe the Bible is the word of God. Then you better be honest about that.

Then you can do what you like with it. I don't believe the Bible is the word of God. But for you to say, I believe these 66 books are the word of God, and then to pull out things from it saying that doesn't apply for today.

You are absolutely dishonest. I'll tell you that to your face. And you wouldn't think of even removing one nail from your body and you dare to remove certain parts of scripture is unimportant.

No wonder God sees that you don't fear him. And he does not give you further revelation. You'll live with a limited amount of revelation.

I'll tell you this is the saddest thing I've seen with so many Christians. They've got a certain amount of minimum revelation. It's like I passed the kindergarten, I can now read, I can add and I can subtract.

That's enough for me. How many of you would be happy with your children having passed kindergarten, they've learned to add and subtract and read. Enough.

Son, that's enough. You don't need to go anymore. We would never do that with our children.

But we're satisfied with ourselves. It's just a limited amount of truth, the bare minimum to get to heaven when I die. Can you think of anything more selfish than that? That Jesus came to earth to live this life to demonstrate how we are to live and gave his life on the cross and I come to him and say, Lord, what is the bare minimum I have to do to please you? How many of you would have a happy marriage if you tell me, tell your wife, listen, what is the minimum I have to do to please you? I'm not going to do any more than that.

And you tell your husband, what is the minimum I have to do to keep you happy? I'm not going to do anything more than that. You're not going to have a happy married life. You may exist without divorce, but it won't be very happy.

The happiest marriages are the husband and wife. They say, hey, listen, I want to please God and I want to make our married life as happy as possible. I'm willing to sacrifice anything for it.

Those are the people who have a very happy marriage relationship with Jesus Christ too. So all scripture is inspired by God, is profitable for teaching, profitable for reproof. Reproof means the rebuke, correction.

If you don't get reproof and correction from scripture, something is missing. If your pastor or teacher does not reprove you and correct you from his pulpit, if he just wants to keep you happy because he wants your offerings, something's wrong with that type of teaching. You should get out of that church as soon as possible.

Because scripture is meant for reproof and scripture is meant for correction. What type of teacher would that be who sees a student going astray in some problem he's doing and, oh, I don't want to correct him, he'll get offended. But a lot of pastors are like that.

A lot of preachers are like that. They don't want to offend people. They'd rather offend God.

I have no right to preach God's word if I'm not going to correct people. I got to go and do something else. I want to say to all of you, you have absolutely no right to preach God's word if you're not willing to reprove and correct people as well in addition to teach.

All scripture is given for teaching, reproof, correction, for training in righteousness, not to make people healthy and wealthy, but to train people in holy living so that the man of God may become perfect, adequate, equipped for every good work, means every work that God wants me to do. That is the purpose of scripture, all of scripture. That is why I don't neglect any part of scripture.

So, a balanced Christian is one who takes all of scripture and gives the right emphasis to each part of it, like truth. The fingers must be, little finger must be this long, the legs must be this long, the eyes must be this size, the ears must be this size, and then you see a beautifully balanced body. Our understanding of truth in the Bible must be like that.

Which are the ones which are more important? For example, the Bible speaks a lot more about humility and purity in the New Testament especially, and loving one another, forgiving one another. It talks a lot more about those things than about even physical healing. Do you know that? Someone asked me once, many people have asked me, Brother Zak, why don't you give a sermon on physical healing? I said, show me one sermon that Jesus preached on physical healing.

Not even one, do you know that? He healed thousands, but he never preached one sermon on healing. That is the balance of scripture, that if a man has a gift of healing, he should heal. He doesn't have to preach.

The problem today is we've got thousands of sermons on healing, but hardly anybody healed. It's the opposite of Jesus. And a ministry that is the opposite of Christ, there's a word in the Bible for it, anti-Christ.

If I'm like Christ, I will heal hundreds of people, but not preach on healing. That's what he did. If I'm anti-Christ, I'll preach hundreds of sermons on healing, but heal nobody.

That's unfortunately what's happening today. But Christians are sitting, oh perhaps one in million get healed, I may be that one in a million. Nobody came to Jesus like that.

We mustn't be fooled, my brothers and sisters. Let me say this in conclusion as we close the session. God sent his son to earth, not just to die for our sins on the cross.

He did that and that's very important, that's the beginning of our Christian life. We can say we begin our Christian life where Jesus ended his life, on the cross. Those last six hours of his life on the cross is where we begin our Christian life, with our sins forgiven.

But from there, then we go to the beginning of his life and see how he lived for 33 years. So God sent his son to earth, not only to die for our sins, but to show us how he wants us to live every day on earth. The beauty of the life of Jesus is to be seen in us and that is what is so little seen among Christians.

And that's because so little preached. The emphasis is always on reaching out and bringing some more, one more person to Christ. I'm all for it, but it's like having another baby.

What's the use having another baby if you're not able to take care of the babies you already have in your home? You're not caring for them and bringing them up to maturity. Does a married couple just get married just to have a lot of babies? Don't you have more respect for someone who maybe had only a few, but brought them all up to maturity? And that's God's purpose. The new birth is only the beginning.

We're not here to just go and convert people. We have to bring them up to maturity. Even the Apostle Paul, who was probably one of the greatest evangelists that Christianity has seen, had such a passion to reach the lost.

Yet you read in the Acts of the Apostles that he once told Barnabas, let's go again to the same people and see how they are doing, how they're growing spiritually. And you say, hey Paul, they already converted. Why do you want to go back to them? Why not go to some others who've never heard the gospel? Let me show you that passage so that you know I'm not just inventing stories.

I never do. I have a scriptural support for everything. You read in Acts of the Apostles in chapter 15 and verse 36.

Paul said to Barnabas, after they had already gone on a missionary trip and planted churches, brought people to Christ, some years later he says, let us return, Acts 15-36, and visit the brothers in every city in which we have already proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are. That's he was saying, we brought these babies to birth, now we want them to grow. So we want to go and see and make sure they're growing and help them to grow.

But do you know when he said that? He said that when a whole world remained without having heard the gospel. Is it important to go and build up believers who are already converted, who are already on their way to heaven, who are already singing my sins are all forgiven, I'm on my way to heaven. Why do we need to go back there again? Why not go to people who haven't heard? Like some people use this very catchy expression made popular by some famous Christians.

Why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once? That sounds very right, no? Why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once? Paul didn't believe it, that's all I'm saying. You know, you get caught up with that phrase because you haven't read the bible. I don't get deceived by that phrase because I've read the bible.

I follow the apostles. If you had told Paul at this point, why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once? Paul said, listen, the Holy Spirit's asking me to go and build up those disciples and make them wholehearted Christians because a newly born babe, if he's not brought up to maturity, he can be a disgrace to the name of Christ. He will turn people away from Christ because he doesn't know how to manifest the beauty of Christ in his life.

That's why I said I'm thankful there are only two percent Christians in India because the two percent itself is such a bad testimony. Imagine if there were 50 percent, there'd be more disgrace to the name of Christ. So I say my goal is to see that there are at least a small percentage of Christians who are really outstanding witnesses for Christ so that the name of Christ will be honored.

That people will see, even if there are so many crooks, here are some real Christians. It's like when the devil went to God and told him about all the crooks that were in the world, God said to him, yes, but have you seen Job? He couldn't point out a thousand people, but he could point out one. Have you seen Job who lives in that street, in that town? Have you seen a man like him? Perfect, upright, turning away from evil.

Look at the way he's got 10 children, he's brought them up all in a godly way. Have you seen a man like that? And that's how he shut the devil's mouth. And I believe even today, it's not the Lord's not looking for numbers.

He's looking for one here and one there, whom he can point out to the devil and say, have you seen him? Yeah, Satan, you pointed out to me a thousand hypocrites, but have you seen that person? Have you seen that person? Yes, Satan, you've shown me so many people whose lives don't match up with their preaching, but have you seen this person? Have you seen that person? Do you want to be one like that? Then you must seek to have a balanced Christian life. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we pray that You will let these truths sink deep into our hearts.

I know how much the devil would like to take it out of our minds as soon as they've heard it. But watch over it, Lord, let Your Spirit remind everyone here about this again and again and again, even when they go to bed tonight, so that it'll grip them and change our lives, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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