

# Be Faithful to Our God Given Vision

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of remaining humble and dependent on God, even when we are prosperous, to avoid the danger of pride and spiritual decline.*

**Duration:** 1:11:12

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:3-6

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Righteous Living"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of following the teachings of Jesus as outlined in the Sermon on the Mount. It highlights the need to overcome anger, lust, love money, speak the truth, love enemies, and live in righteousness that surpasses that of the Pharisees. The speaker urges the new generation of leaders to focus on discipleship, teaching obedience to all that Jesus commanded, and to trust in God's sovereignty and authority over all things.

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## Transcript

So we've come to the last day of our three-day conference. I want to turn with you to Deuteronomy and chapter 8. We began with this on the first day. We looked at Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 3 where it says, verse 2 rather, when you shall remember all the way in which the Lord your God led you these 40 years to humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, to see whether you would keep his commandments or not.

He humbled you and fed you with manna to teach you, but man does not live by what proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. And then he goes on to say in these 40 years, your clothing did not wear out on you nor did your foot swell these 40 years. That speaks of material provision.

We have never preached a gospel of wealth. Come to Jesus, he'll make you wealthy. We have never preached, come to Jesus, he'll heal all your sicknesses.

But we always pray when people are sick and we have seen some remarkable healings, instantaneous healings, and healings from the door of death when doctors give up hope. But those are the crumbs that fall from the table, we don't talk much about them. But it is true, we have proclaimed that if we seek the kingdom of God first, all our earthly needs will be added to us.

That we have proclaimed. Not that God will make us all millionaires, thank God he doesn't, may ruin some of us, but that he will meet our earthly need in the sense of we won't be starving, we won't be out on the streets. But God has done much more than that for all of us.

When I think of how we started, we were all very, very poor when we started. Extremely poor. All the brothers and sisters who started CFC were extremely poor, including me.

That's how we started 40 years ago. But many dropped out, I don't know what their condition is. But I know that those who have come and been a part of CFC, God has prospered every one of them.

And that is a mark of God's provision, cost of living has gone up. When we started, nobody had a car. I was the only one who had a scooter, and that was because I had it from my naval days.

Nobody had a telephone. We had one in our house because my wife was a doctor, you're allowed to get a phone, and it was very difficult to get a phone. This is how we started, and for years it was like this.

We're not glorying in it. There's no glory in poverty, just like there's no glory in wealth. We're just describing history, that this is how we started.

We never cared for those things. We loved one another. It didn't matter whether we traveled by bus or cycle or scooter.

Today, we have 60, 70 cars. It's just the same to me, like in the old days, it doesn't make the slightest difference. God has provided our need.

God has disciplined us, verse 5, like a man disciplines his son. He has brought us, verse 7, into a good land, a land of abundance, where we have eaten food, verse 9, without scarcity. We have not lacked anything, that we can testify.

Now, the danger is that we face, all of us, and I'm beginning to sense it already, in some who are in CFC, I don't know about all the other churches, I know about Bangalore, who started very poor, and God has prospered them and their families beyond expectation, even though we have not preached prosperity. Now, the danger is, when you have eaten, verse 10, and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord. Don't take any credit for it yourself, and beware, verse 11, lest you forget the Lord your God, lest you stop reading the Bible as much as you did 40 years ago, lest you stop seeking the prayer and fasting for the power of the Holy Spirit, like you did 40 years ago.

Because now you can sit back and relax, and when you have eaten, verse 12, and are satisfied, and many of us have built good houses, and lived in them, and your bank account has multiplied, and your cars have multiplied, then your heart becomes proud. And you lose the grace of God, God becomes your enemy, because he resists the proud, and it doesn't matter if it's CFC proud person, or a godless proud person in the world, God resists the proud, beware. I can see that danger already in some people, maybe in others as well, but I have already seen in some, even elders, a declining grace, not like the old days.

It's a dangerous sign, where the anointing is not like it was in the early days. God gives his grace to the humble. It's easy to be humble when we are poor, when we are struggling, but when God blesses in abundance, he has a warning.

Moses gave to the Israelites before they entered the land of Canaan, and they did not listen to him. They became proud, and you see what happened in the book of Judges. As long as they had a good leader like Joshua, he kept them in the place where God wanted them to be.

They saw miracles, Moses and Joshua, but once Joshua was dead, another generation came up, and you read the history in the book of Judges, constant defeat. The giants ruled the land in most places, CFC, churches, beware that that doesn't happen to you. That doesn't happen to us.

These things are written for our instruction. It's very easy to sit back and say, wow, what a wonderful work God has done. When you think of the wonderful work God has done, I tell you what you should do, what I keep telling all my elders, don't sit back on your easy chair.

Fall on your face before God. Many times when I wake up in the morning, that's what I do on my bed. On my face before God, say, Lord, I'm a nobody.

Till the end of my life, I shall be a nobody before you, and I shall be a nobody in the world, and I shall be a nobody before my people, my fellow believers. I shall be a worshiper. I see these dangers.

I see what happened to many men who started so well. I mentioned about King Saul. Beware that you don't become proud and you forget the Lord who brought you out of the house of slavery.

Think of the days when you were defeated by sin. You never knew anything about the new covenant. You were a slave.

Think of the days when your home life was in a mess. You were struggling financially. You came to the church and you were not only blessed spiritually, you were blessed materially.

Don't forget, verse 15, how the Lord led you in past years through a land full of fiery serpents and scorpions. If you have been protected from the attacks of Satan, those are the scorpions and serpents. It's because you've had faithful elders who have constantly warned you these 40 years, rebuked you, corrected you.

That's why you've been preserved. The elder brothers themselves have been preserved that way through constant correction and rebuke. He has preserved us in the midst of serpents and scorpions.

In times when there was no water, he brought water out of the rock. In the wilderness, he fed us. And the purpose of all that was to humble us.

Otherwise, you might say, verse 17, and I hope none of us say this, my cleverness, my ability has brought me all this. Well, remember those of you who have prospered in the last 40 years, who came to the church rock bottom poor, living in one room apartments, and you live in grand houses today, you shall remember verse 18. It is the Lord your God who has given you power to make that wealth.

I want to say to you, if it shall ever come about, that you forget the Lord and live for money, still keep self as the center of your life. I testify against you today, the 4th of October, 2014, that you shall surely perish, like the other churches and denominations, that you look around you that the Lord has made to perish, because they did not listen to the voice of the Lord, and you did not learn from them. I tell you the secret, be a nobody, especially elders, be a nobody, don't seek honor in the church or anywhere else.

And one more thing, seek fellowship with your fellow elders. I know some of you elders don't get along with each other. I feel sorry for you.

You are in danger. This may be a last warning for some people. You are in danger.

Holiness without fellowship with others is a deception. True holiness brings fellowship with others. It's a curse to be a wanderer like Cain.

Alone. Why was he alone? Because he thought, I'm right. There's nothing wrong with me.

Don't murder people with your tongue. Cain murdered Abel and became a wanderer. Mind your own business.

Judge yourself. If you don't have responsibility for another brother, don't speak against him. Speak and correct and criticize and discipline those you have responsibility for, your family, your children.

If you're an elder in your church, you have no responsibility for those other elders and those other churches. Leave them alone. Let God judge them or let God speak to them through whomever has responsibility for them.

These are little warnings, my dear brothers, because I fear. I tell you, I have a real fear as to how things can go. We have not yet had persecution in this country to a great extent.

It may come. If it comes, that will be our protection. And we may not be in such danger.

But since it has not come and we are prospering and we're doing well in our jobs and houses and lands and everything else, we are in danger. It's good to recognize danger. If you recognize the danger, you can protect yourself from it.

But that is the fear we have. And then what can happen is that when we go astray, we can still speak the same words. I have seen, I have studied church history, and I've seen people speak the same words that the founder of their movement spoke, but it's not the same line.

Martin Luther was a great man of God. He didn't have all the light we have, but he had the courage to stand against the entire Roman Catholic Church and proclaim justification by faith. Many people tried to kill him.

God protected him because he had a ministry to fulfill. He stood for God. He faced tremendous pressure.

He had a wife who had been an ex-Catholic nun, supported him tremendously, would encourage him. Some of you wives don't realize how much pressure your elder brother, if your husband is an elder brother, faces in his ministry. Martin Luther was so tremendously under pressure with the devil harassing him that I heard, I've read that somewhere, that at one time for two days, two full days, he was so gloomy and depressed because he had no fellowship.

There was hardly anybody who would stand with him. And his wife did not know how to encourage him. So one day she dressed in black and came to him.

Martin Luther, you know, black was usually worn at funerals. Martin Luther said, who died? He said, don't you know God died two days ago? Then he woke up. That was a good wife, a helper.

Then he realized, why am I sitting so gloomy? Is God dead? He isn't. Why am I acting as if he is? And he rose up and continued his work. He stood alone for many years and then others joined him.

But I believe that if Martin Luther came to the world today, he would not join the Lutheran Church. It's not what it was the way he started it. Years later, you know, the Catholic Church threw Martin Luther out and Martin Luther started the Protestant churches.

And a couple of hundred years later, God raised up, because the Protestant church has declined, God raised up in England a man called John Wesley in the 1700s. And the churches which Martin Luther started threw out John Wesley. It was a repetition of history.

So he would preach in the open air. Godly man who would get up at five o'clock every morning and go and preach to people before they go to work. And God protected him in amazing ways.

You know, you can't, a man of God is immortal until his life's work is done. They could not kill Jesus before he was 33 and a half. They could not do it.

They tried once to throw him over a cliff. They couldn't kill him. It's a wonderful thing to be in the center of God's will.

If you're in the center of God's will, you can even be in Afghanistan or Iraq today. Nothing will happen to you. But if you're not in the center of God's will, you can live in the safest place you think in the world.

I don't know what that is now. Is it New Zealand or someplace like that? It's certainly not America. And you can still die outside God's will.

The center of God's will. That's where John Wesley lived. I read a story about him that, you know, people were so angry with him because people were getting converted and those who were selling alcohol and all lost their business because people are getting converted.

And they knew that John Wesley is the cause of all that. And so they wanted to kill him in a very subtle way. They knew that he always rode his horse.

They rode horses those days. He rode a horse in a certain path back home at night and he'd come galloping along. They tied a rope across two trees so that as he came galloping along, the rope would hit him and he'd be knocked off the horse and he'd fall down and die.

Break his head or something. But just as, you think God doesn't see all this? As John Wesley was galloping along the horse and coming down that road, an ant bit him in his leg really hard and he bent down to scratch his leg for a few seconds and passed under the rope. He couldn't see the rope.

What all God will do to keep his servants alive until their life's work is done. Live in the will of God, my brothers and sisters. Those who seek honor and money are not immortal.

But those who seek to live in the will of God until their hour comes, nobody can touch them. But if John and he started the Methodist church, great movement of God in his days. But if John Wesley were to come to earth today, he would not join the Methodist church.

They don't preach the holiness he preached. There are many other offshoots that have come out of the Methodist church that claim to have an experience of holiness, but I've seen a lot of them. I moved with a

lot of them.

I don't see holiness there. A hundred years later, I'm not telling you about everyone. There's another example.

A hundred, 150 years later, God raised up a man called William Booth, England, who had a great concern for prostitutes, for drunkards, for poor children who are being made to work day and night in factories and not given money and for little girls who were being brought from the poor villages in England to London being offered a job. And when they came here, these people would put them into some prostitute house, and the poor parents did not know what was happening. And this man had a burden to reach these people for Christ.

But when he would bring some of these drunkards in the Methodist church to get converted, as a young man of 24 years old, the people sitting in the Methodist church would move away saying, we don't want any drunkards here. John Wesley saved drunkards, but 150 years later, the Methodist church didn't want them. So they threw out William Booth, and he had to go and start another church called the Salvation Army.

But if John, if William Booth came today, he would not join the Salvation Army church. No. It's not what it was.

He cared for the salvation of people. At the same time, he cared to feed them, help them. And if you get the chance, read his biography.

He's an amazing man. He's challenged me so much that I felt that if I lived in England 150 years ago, I would work with him. It was very difficult to expose the crime that was going on in these prostitute houses where agents were drawing little girls, and he wanted to publicize it in the newspaper.

But nobody would publicize it unless there was a real story. So you know what he did? He sent some of his men as clients into these prostitute houses. He said, just go there and get the information and come out.

Pretend that you're a client. And he would go, they would go, one young man would go to these prostitute houses as a client, and they would send him into a room with a girl. And he would go there and say, I don't want to touch you or anything.

I don't want anything. I just want to hear your story. And I've come to find out, and he'd write down the whole story and say, okay, I'm going.

They would publish it in the papers. Can you imagine people how furious? They wanted to kill William Booth. The alcohol shops were closing down because of William Booth.

They would march on the streets. Amazing ways of preaching the gospel. They'd carry a coffin down the streets, and a man would get up from the coffin and stand up and say, Jesus conquered death.

These are the ways they preached the gospel those days. And with emphasis on music and a real man of God. And he trained his children.

His wife was equally a support for him, but it declined after he died. It's been like that. The great movement, even in India, when it began about 80-90 years ago, mostly in Kerala, those early Pentecostals

were poor.

There was a great revival also in Maharashtra with Pandita Ramabai, Hindu convert, where the spirit of God fell upon poor child widows. You know, they used to marry them as children. The husband would die, and they'd be widows and thrown out by the parents.

And Pandita Ramabai would pick them up. And she was a spiritual woman and would get these. They were all mostly young girls, illiterate, Marathi speaking, didn't know anything else.

They'd pray and seek God. And the spirit of God would fall upon them, and some of them would speak in English. Some of them would speak in Hebrew and Greek, which Pandita Ramabai understood.

It was a repetition of the day of Pentecost. And the same thing happened in Kerala. And they were mostly poor people.

They would tie them to trees and whip them. They would throw a dung upon them. In one case, they pulled out the dead body of a child of one of those believers and put that dead body at the doorstep of that believer a few days later.

This is how they troubled them, tortured them. But they loved God. They lived for God.

They were poor. And the devil saw it. And the devil saw this thing will shake the whole of India if it continues.

So I've got to corrupt it. And they went after money. They went to Sweden.

They went to America. They went here and there, and they collected money, and they sent their reports. And the split came between the leaders in India, because one chap got a car and the other chap didn't have it.

And said, where did you get that money from? They were all poor. And the division came, and it's been division ever since. The devil succeeded.

These things are things that we must watch for our instruction. Every group says, it happened to others, but it won't happen to us. If we walk in humility, particularly the elders, brothers and sisters, if you walk in humility and you walk in brokenness, always recognizing that you're a zero.

You will always be a zero. It's Jesus who adds value to us. If Jesus is a one and he stands next to me, I become ten.

Otherwise, I'm a zero. You remove him, I'm a zero. I illustrated that once to the children some years ago at a conference.

I said, some of you children are very smart. You come first in the class. Some others are good at athletics.

You come first in the races and the games, or you're good at cricket or football or something. Some of you others feel inferior, because your rank is so low in the class, or you can't get into the school team. But do you know there's a verse in Daniel, which says that all the inhabitants of the world are zero.

That's a great verse. Daniel 4.35, in case you did not know it. Daniel 4.35, when Nebuchadnezzar, who had been humbled, who thought he was a great man, God humbled him and bring him to the level of the

animals.

He came to his senses finally after seven years and he said, now I know, verse 35, all the inhabitants of the earth are zero. Great. The day you get that revelation that Nebuchadnezzar got, and you keep that revelation before you, it'll be your salvation.

Some of us think we are one, or at least half. No, we are zero. Do you come among the inhabitants of the earth? You are a zero.

Nebuchadnezzar got light from God and that's why he said it. And he had another revelation. He says God can do anything in the hosts of heaven or among the inhabitants of the earth, and no one can stop his hand and no one can ask him what he has done.

It's one of the most amazing expressions of the sovereignty of God in the whole Bible. And it was given to a man who was a heathen king and God humbled him and reduced him to the level of an animal and then he learned a lesson. He came to his senses.

And one of the things he discovered when he came to his senses is that all human beings are zero, including me, the biggest king of Babylon in the whole world. I am a zero. That's a great revelation when you get it.

So I told these children, I said, I want to teach you a lesson. I said, one of you children, okay, let's pretend this is the one who comes first in the class. And I put a big zero.

I said, all the zero in front of you, that's what you are. Here's this other child who comes first in the hundred meters. Zero.

What about this one who scores a century in cricket? Zero. And here's me, the great preacher. I said, zero.

We're all the same. There's only one person who's got a one. That is Jesus Christ.

I said, when I put Jesus with me, what do I become? I get some value. I can become 10. And I called one of these other little children.

I said, when I have fellowship with you, what do we become? 100. Not 20. Not 11.

100. Let's have fellowship with one more. 1,000.

You see the value of fellowship? Don't forget that. That's what's happened to all these groups in the centuries. And we see the pathetic condition of Christianity.

The devil has led Christians all the way back to the old covenant, where they preached prosperity. Deuteronomy 28 is the gospel of prosperity and health and wealth. The health and wealth is found in the Bible, in Deuteronomy 28.

You read it. Study it sometime. But it's not a new covenant gospel.

The new covenant gospel is as poor, yet making many rich spiritually. That's what you read in Paul telling the Corinthians about his own experience. Well, if God has given us more, God has prospered many people in our midst also.

I'm not telling you to give all your money away. But be careful, my brothers and sisters. Don't be a miser.

A miser is very definitely under the control of the devil. People who are happy to come to CFC saying, oh, here we have no offerings, a wonderful place to be in. Or this is the place, I've got a lot of daughters, so I'd like to be part of CFC because here you don't have to pay dowry.

Are these the reasons why people join a church? I remember in the early days, some people would come to us and say, do you have a burial ground, by the way? I said, no. We allow the corporation to come and take our dead bodies and throw it somewhere. You still want to join our church? No, we need a burial ground.

Okay. There are other churches that have got burial grounds. Do you have a marriage license? No, no marriage license.

We get some lawyer to come and sign. Oh, you want another church? Please go. A lot of people who join a church for various reasons.

In America, they see if there is a big parking lot so that they can park their cars when they come to church. A small church, very few parking lots, this is not the church for me. All types of reasons why people select a church.

Oh, one is just across the road. Why have you chosen CFC? Ask yourself. Don't forget the way the Lord led you.

Turn with me to Jeremiah chapter 6. I want to say, I'm speaking all this for the new generation. Woken up, everyone, all new generation. By the way, I didn't create that.

I think God wanted you to hear it. He does some amazing things. I'll never forget.

It's the only time in my life I had this experience. I was preaching in Canada about 13 years ago in a big tent. Revival meetings for, you know, particularly for a group of people who belonged to a sect, who lived in a community and their leaders were, held them all in tight.

Nobody was allowed to have money. The money was all kept with the leader. They would work hard and the money would go to the leader.

They live in little communities of 100 people. They were called Hutterites. Some of them began to hear the gospel and they got converted.

We sent a bunch. Some of them began to listen to my tapes. Once when we sent a bunch of our tapes, the leaders took it and burnt it.

So some others organized this meeting in Canada. I was speaking there every day for a number of days. There were these young people coming to the meetings from that group and their leaders were sitting outside the tent to see who is coming so that they can punish them and they go back to their colony.

They all lived in a colony. I normally don't give an invitation for people to come forward because I usually tell people don't stand up, sit down and count the cost and then decide later on whether you want to be a disciple. But once in my life I gave an invitation and that was there in Canada and that's, I felt there was a need for these young people to take a stand in the presence of their leaders watching them.

There was a need for them to stand up boldly. So it was the last meeting and I said, now we're going to bow our heads in prayer and suddenly there was a mighty rushing wind that came right across that whole tent. I've never experienced it before or since.

It reminded me of the day of Pentecost and I knew I must ask these people, the spirit of God is here. I must ask these people to come forward take a stand for Christ. And I said I want you to come forward those of you who want to give your life to Christ.

One person who came forward, fear he knew that he'd be thrown out of his family, thrown out of his house as soon as he went back that night without any money and then another and then another and then another and we baptized all of them. There were 35 or something of them the next morning in a river nearby and they were thrown out and there were three little churches started there. So Jeremiah chapter 6, the Lord says in verse 16, stand by the ways.

There are so many ways in Christendom today. Ask for the old paths, the ancient paths, the paths that the apostles walked. Christianity was called a way in the first century.

Ask for that way. In the Acts of the Apostles you find it where the good way is, the new and living way that Jesus opened up. Walk in it and you will find rest for your souls.

But in those days the Israelites said we will not walk in it because new way is better. I said watchman over you saying listen to the sound of the trumpet, a warning from God's watchman. They said no we are not in any danger.

That's why the Lord brought disaster. Verse 19, upon the people. Jeremiah was the last prophet God sent to Israel to warn them against being sent to Babylon as punishment.

But he did not succeed in keeping the nation back from going to Israel as judgment. They went. Jeremiah warned them for 40 years.

He preached and preached and preached and preached. But still most people went into Babylon. But there were a few young men who listened to Jeremiah.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, whose names were later changed in Babylon to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. But these four among others, but these four particularly listened. They were 17-18 years old.

Jeremiah was an old man and he told them be faithful, obey the Lord, don't dishonor him, obey the little commandments. That's why Daniel decided not to disobey God and eat food that God had forbidden at the king's table. So Jeremiah did succeed with a few.

There was a remnant. God always has a remnant even though the majority go astray. I want to say to all of you, dear brothers and elders and a new generation of elders coming up, never seek for numbers.

God is my witness that for 40 years in our churches, I have never been interested in numbers. If somebody went away, I never went after him to call him back because most of them went away because they were offended. Like the prodigal son, the father, the love of the father was seen in the fact that he never went after the prodigal son.

He never sent him any money. He never sent him any food packets. And if he got a message from someone, hey, your son is now at the level of the pigs.

The father would have said, let him eat what the pigs eat till he comes to his senses and comes back home. That is the love of God. And when he came back, wow, he's made a feast.

That's God. So I've learned from Jesus' example not to go after those who leave. The rich young ruler left.

He said, okay, goodbye. Somebody else said he wanted to go and bury his father first. That means wait till the father dies, bury him and then follow.

Take your time. Your father may live another 50 years. Let him live.

You bury him and then come. I'm not going to force you. Another one says, can I go and say goodbye? No time for that.

Jesus says, it's amazing. You want to follow me, follow me right now. He never went after anybody, but he did go seeking for those who were hungry.

When there was a Zacchaeus sitting up in a tree, as Jesus walked down that road, the Spirit of God told him, stop. There's a man called Zacchaeus sitting in the tree there. You know, Jesus was like us when the Spirit of God spoke to him, go to his house.

So he said, how did he know his name? Zacchaeus, come down. And he went to his house, even though people wondered why Jesus went to the house of a tax collector. Another time when the Jews would never walk through Samaria, because that was like a low caste group of people they despised, Jesus said, today I have to go through Samaria.

When they were hungry, Jesus told his disciples, you go to the restaurant and eat some food. I'm, I don't feel let of the Spirit to come with you. And he sat at a well.

He was reaching out for one woman, divorced five times, despised by everybody. Yes, Jesus cares for divorced people too. He's unlike many of today's Christians.

He has compassion for those who have messed up their lives. So I see that he never went after people who heard and heard and turned away. But he had compassion for those who were longing.

That's been my prayer too. I say, Lord, I will not run after those who have come to CFC and heard so much, stuffed, and then bite the hand that has fed them for so many years. We don't have anything against you, brother.

God bless you. Go and preach what you have heard here and get some honor for yourself. Get some fame, make some money perhaps by the messages you heard from here.

I'm not interested. There's no copyright on what I say because I didn't produce it. I got it from heaven.

How can I keep a copyright on it? But I won't come after you. But there are others I go looking for all over the world. One man, one person.

Among the hundreds of emails I get, sometimes there's one person I feel, I must write to that person. There are hungry, needy people who are looking for these ancient parts, the way the apostles taught. And

we want to do it exactly like it's written in the New Testament.

You know, Jesus said, we must go into all the world, every nation, Matthew 28. This is the ancient path. Jesus said, first of all, verse 18, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples, baptize them and teach them to do all that I commanded you. Very clear commission. The other side of the commission is Mark 16.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Evangelism, evangelism, evangelism. I praise God for every missionary that has come to India and brought souls to Christ.

I praise God for missionaries who labored and translated the Bible into many Indian languages. I praise God for people who have brought others to Christ in this land. But I've also traveled the length and breadth of this country.

From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, I've traveled from Gujarat to Mizoram. I have traveled and I have seen the shallowness of so much of Christian work. That's what made me turn away from all of that 40 years ago.

I said, Lord, I can't change this country. It's too big. But in one little corner of Bangalore, I can light a candle.

One candle can't give light to the whole of India. But I can light a candle. I shall be absolutely faithful to proclaim the wonderful news you taught me of an overcoming life.

And one or two joined me. And the Lord asked me, if everybody leaves you, even in this small group and you're left alone, will you still proclaim what I have taught you? I said, yes, Lord. I shall proclaim it in India if I have to be all alone.

I never thought of anything outside India. But, you know, one candle can light a thousand other candles. If they want their candle to be lit, it's available.

It's free. And one by one different ones have come and lit their candles and gone and lit other candles. And some, their lamps have died out.

They were careless. They are left with a doctrine which they preach. They're seeking honor.

And God has given up on them and they don't even know it. What one proof of that is they have become lonely without fellowship. They're going the way of Cain.

The Bible speaks in Jude about people who've gone the way of Cain. It's a warning to believers in the book of Jude. Those who've gone the way of Cain, there are three dangers mentioned in the book of Jude.

I want you to just look at them. Three dangers. Jude, just before Revelation, woe unto them, verse 11, because they have gone the way of Cain.

They've gone along the error of Balaam, perished in the rebellion of Korah. Three Old Testament examples that warn us. The way of Cain, the error of Balaam, and the rebellion of Korah.

I've seen all three. The way of Cain, the way of arrogance, of judging other godly people, killing them with their tongues. Abel was a man of God.

Cain was jealous of him. The way of jealousy, the way of backbiting, the way of false accusation. What happens to such Cains? They become wanderers, alone, without fellowship.

The error of Balaam, that is going after money, wanting more and more money, especially religious people, wanting to preach to get money. That's what Balaam did. And the third is the rebellion of Kaer Korah.

Those who are not willing to submit to God-appointed authority. Korah was a relative of Moses. He said, how dare, who do you think you are? God has chosen all of us.

In the body of Christ, all of us are equal. That's the spirit that Korah had. God said, God had already said that earlier.

He says, all of you are not like Moses. Yeah, you may all say you're my people. God said, with Moses, I don't speak with visions and dreams and all that.

Visions and dreams are for ordinary prophets. But Moses, I speak face-to-face, as a man speaks to a friend. I don't want God to speak to me in visions and dreams.

I'll tell you, some people glory in that. I had a vision. I had a dream.

You know why God speaks to you at night in a dream? Because he can't speak to you when you're awake. You're too busy with other things. If you were alert during the day to hear what God was saying, he wouldn't have to speak to you at night.

God said that in Numbers chapter 12. He said, I don't speak to Moses in visions and dreams and all. I speak to him face-to-face, as a man speaks to his friend.

And I say, Lord, that's what I want. Let the others glory in their visions and dreams and the angels they saw. I don't see angels.

I see Jesus. I want to speak to God face-to-face. Korah rebelled against Moses.

He didn't recognize how God had manifested his presence with Moses so mightily in his ministry, and he didn't seem to value that. He didn't recognize it. It's a tremendous grace if you can recognize what God has done in somebody else, which he's not succeeded in being able to do in you.

Don't rebel. These are the dangers. The way of Cain.

I've seen people go that way and become lonely. I fear that. I fear that for people who started humble and do valued fellowship.

But today they have become big in their own eyes. They don't even know they've become big in their own eyes. But the proof of it is that there's no longer fellowship.

I want to ask you, my brothers, you know, some people have dropped out of our churches who were with us for many years. I know the reason. Jealousy.

How can you make the 11th hour laborer equal to us who came in the first hour? Uh-huh. You came in the first hour. And brother Zach is appreciating those who came in the 11th hour.

Not me. God is appreciating. That causes jealousy.

Beware of being jealous of people who came to the church 20 years after you and who have an anointing that goes beyond yours. If you value the glory of God, you will fall on your face and say, thank God for such people. But if you're seeking your own honor and name, God will expose you.

Those are the people who get into a spirit of rebellion. Of Korah. The way of Cain.

They become lonely. So it's very important as a new generation of leaders, I want to warn you, be careful from all these examples. Preach the old time gospel.

Not the old time gospel, which was preached 100 years ago, but that which was preached 1900 years ago by the apostles. Not by the elder in Laodicea. That was also 1900 years ago.

Not by the elder in Sardis, who had a name that he was alive. But the gospel preached by Paul and Peter and John. They obeyed Jesus' command to go into every nation, make disciples, that is a commission, and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

That's another thing people have gone astray. They baptize in the name of Jesus today. No.

They baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. And then teach them to do every single thing I commanded you. That's part of the great commission.

That's why we preach the Sermon on the Mount so much. And I hope the new generation of leaders will fulfill this great commission. That you will not only make converts, but make disciples.

If they are converts, lead them on to become disciples. And a disciple, you read the conditions in Luke 14, 26 to 33, basically three. Number one, that you love Jesus more than anyone on earth.

When you bring a person to Christ, you've told him to repent of his sin, receive Christ as his Savior, which is the same as receiving the Holy Spirit. And then ask him to open his whole life to be filled with the Holy Spirit, which is the next step. But then teach him to love Jesus more than his father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, everybody, including his brothers and sisters and everybody else.

That is the number one condition of discipleship. Jesus said, if anyone loves human beings more than me, he's not worthy of me. Do you think all over India that there are preachers who are teaching disciples to do, teaching believers to do that? No.

That's why we preach it in CFC. Second, Luke 14, 27, teach them to die to themselves every day. To deny themselves and take up the cross.

So first of all, to love Jesus more than everybody on earth. And second, to love Jesus more than themselves. That's the second condition of discipleship.

Everything centers around loving Jesus. The Bible says, if anyone does not love Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. 1 Corinthians 16.

To love Jesus more than every human being. Number one, more than your wife, more than your parents, more than everybody. And second, to love Jesus more than yourself.

So that in the time of temptation, when somebody irritates you, you love Jesus more than yourself and you don't get irritated back. And third, Luke 14, 33. To love Jesus more than all material things.

More than your house and more than your car and more than your bank account. And he's not telling you to give them all up, but he says love me more than that. We don't teach people to be hermits and sannyasis who go out into the desert.

No, that's not what we teach. Jesus was not like that. We are not followers of John the Baptist who dressed in camel skin and ate locusts and honey.

No. We are followers of Jesus. And we live in the midst of the world and are witnesses for Christ, but we don't love material things.

We use them. Jesus used material things. Jesus had a savings account.

Unfortunately, the banker was a crook, but he had a savings account. He didn't spend all the money he got the same day. If he spent all the money he got his gifts the same day, then he wouldn't have needed a bank.

Judas had a bank. And there was quite a lot of money in it because he could swipe so much money and still people didn't know it was disappearing. If there was only 10 rupees in it and he took away the 10 rupees, he discovered it pretty quickly.

But there was so much money in that bank that even after Judas taking, but he used it faithfully. And that's the thing. He lived simply.

He was faithful with money. Not just righteous with money, but faithful with money. That's what we got to teach.

That's how a person becomes a disciple. And then after that we got to teach them all the things that Jesus commanded. And that is in Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7 primarily.

Where Jesus said, let me just show you one or two things there. In Matthew 5 20. By the way, the very first thing, Matthew 5 3. The first thing he said in the Sermon on the Mount is, you're really blessed if you are poor in spirit.

And that has many meanings. Poor in spirit means a constant awareness of my own need. Not somebody else's need.

I am a needy person. Such a man is blessed. I want to live like that all my life because it says the kingdom of heaven is mine.

And I want to tell you in my life, I have possessed many treasures from the kingdom of heaven. Because I've got the master key. The master key is being poor in spirit.

Like the Amplified Bible says to rate yourself as insignificant. Rate yourself as a zero. That is poor in spirit.

And go and open every door in the kingdom of heaven and I become a very wealthy man spiritually through the years. I've been able to share my riches with my wife and children. Spiritual riches.

And God has provided me all that I need materially as well through the years. But that's not the main thing. The riches of the kingdom of heaven begin there.

Teach people to be poor in spirit. Teach everybody in your church to rate themselves as insignificant zeros. Teach everybody in your church to live with a constant sense of their own need.

Not somebody else's spiritual need. That they constantly go to God and say I need grace for today. Many other things in the Sermon on the Mount.

Verse 20. Your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. They prayed.

They fasted. They read the Bible. They did missionary work.

And the Lord said that's not good enough. What should we do? Pray more than them? Fast more than them? Pray four hours a day? No, we have never taught that. We only taught what the Bible says.

Pray always. 24-7. There's no verse in the Bible which says you must pray for two hours or four hours.

There's a verse which says pray always. 1 Thessalonians 5 17 18. Luke 18 verse 1. Pray always.

We preach that. All these super spiritual prayers of teaching people to pray for two hours or four hours and all. We have never taught that.

If it is not in the word of God, okay, you want to do it, do it. But don't preach that as a doctrine. But your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees means not in quantity.

Not you pray so much more or fast so much more or give so much more. No, in quality. Many people don't think of that.

Your righteousness must exceed in quality. That means the Lord says, okay, I'll explain to you what I mean. Let me first of all give you two examples the Lord says.

Number one, the Pharisees said you shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. I say don't get angry.

Number one, teach everybody in your church to overcome their anger. First example Jesus took. This is not my example.

It's Jesus. And the Lord says I'll give you another example. The Pharisees said don't commit adultery.

I say to you don't even look at a woman verse 28 to lust after her. So when Jesus said your righteousness must be more than the righteousness of the Pharisees to get into God's kingdom. What are the first two examples he took? First two.

Not go to church every Sunday. Not sing new songs of praise. But overcome your anger.

Overcome your lusting after women. Do you wonder now why I have spoken so much against these two things? I'm just trying to teach people to do all that Jesus commanded. It's the great commission he's given me.

I don't know whether he's given it to you. He gave it to me. Teach them to do all that I commanded.

Teach them that their righteousness must be more than the righteousness of the Pharisees. I was a slave to anger. I was a slave to lusting with my eyes just like every other man and most human beings are slaves to anger.

And I said Lord, I don't want to be like that even after I was born again. But I said this is not the way for me. I don't care how long it takes.

I'm going to by the grace of God. I'm going to overcome in these areas. One hundred percent.

I can move on to other areas. I know that some of you are satisfied because you overcame it fifty percent and you sit back. God bless you brother if he can.

But I've decided that I'm going to pursue these things one hundred percent. I'm going to press on to perfection every day. If I slip up, I'm going to get up and say I'm sorry.

I'm going to apologize to the people I hurt. But I'm going to get up and press on to perfection. I hope you're teaching people in your church that.

I hope the new generation of elders coming up will not backslide from this. Teach them to do everything I commanded. Anger and sexual lust number one and two.

And then he went on to speak about living properly in the family, not having a spirit of divorce. Family life very important. It's not enough saying, oh, I didn't legally divorce my wife.

But don't live at home as a divorced person. Live in fellowship with your husband and wife. And then he spoke about truthfulness.

Your yes must be yes. Your no must be no. Verse 37.

Teach your people to speak the truth. And to love their enemies. To forgive them in verse 43.

And then chapter 6. Verse 24. Not to love money. These are some of the things which Jesus taught.

Not to be anxious. Verse 25 to 34. Not to judge others.

Chapter 7 verse 1. Teach them to do. And I'll tell you something. It takes years and years and years of repetition.

Some preachers don't like to repeat their messages. And I'll tell you why. Because they seek their own honor.

They say, oh. People will say, oh, Brother Zach doesn't have any other sermon to preach. He's saying the same old thing.

Yeah, that's right. Until you obey the Sermon on the Mount for 40 years, I'll preach the same thing. Because I'm not here to get a reputation for preaching new things.

I'm here to teach you to do every single thing that Jesus commanded. You know how swimming instructors teach children to swim? Again and again and again. Move your hands like move.

Hey, that's what you told me yesterday, sir. No, you do it again. It may take you a whole year just to learn how to move your hands properly.

It may take you another year to learn how to breathe properly. I'm going to every single day. I'm going to teach you that.

Those guys know. Because they're not seeking honor. So many preachers.

Elders. Oh, I've already preached that last Sunday. I can't preach it today.

How many of you have the boldness to get up and preach the same sermon the next Sunday that you preached the last Sunday? Because you feel people have not obeyed it. There would be a prophet. There are very few.

Because we seek honor so much. Even if the Lord tells you speak that, you'll say, no Lord, I already preached that last Sunday. What will they think of me? Can you imagine? We call ourselves servants of God.

I hope you elders will have the boldness. If the Lord tells you to preach exactly the same sermon next Sunday, get up and preach it. That's how a swimming instructor next week the same lesson again.

That's how people teach addition in the kindergarten classes. Same lesson again. You haven't learned how to add 25 plus 37.

Well, you got to learn now again and again. I hope we have a generation of people growing up who don't care for the opinions of men. And the only one to please Jesus Christ who's sitting in that front chair listening to what they are preaching.

Teach them to observe all things I commanded you. One last thing I want to say before I move on and that is Matthew chapter 28. Before he said, go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them and teach them to do everything I commanded you.

He said, I want you to know one thing. Otherwise, you won't be able to do it. And that is Matthew 28 18.

All authority in heaven and earth is given to me. I believe totally in the sovereignty of God. I'm a firm believer in the fact that my heavenly father runs this universe.

The devil is never in control in any situation in my life, never. That's why I can rejoice always and give thanks for everything. Whatever may happen, my father in heaven is in control.

All types of things, small things, practical things. We've seen that even in the buying of this land and construction of these halls, which are small things compared to an overcoming life. But even in the little things you've seen our father in heaven is in control of everything.

The silver and gold is his. There is no sickness he cannot heal. I believe in such a God.

I don't live in panic. No matter what may happen, God is in control. He will never allow a single trial to come into my life, which is too much for me.

There may be some big trial that I cannot handle today and the devil says, can I send it into his life? God says no. Next year, he'll say no, no, no. Maybe five years from now, God says to the devil, okay, now he's

ready, send it.

Isn't it wonderful to have a God like that who checks whether the needle goes into the red anytime? Reduces the pressure. It's wonderful to have a father in heaven like this, who's always checking the boiler pressure to see if it goes into too much so that it doesn't explode. We have a father like that.

All authority in heaven and earth is given to me. Therefore, go. If you don't believe that, don't go.

Stay at home. Raise chicken or do something like that. But don't go trying building churches.

No, you won't be able to do it. All authority in heaven and earth is given to Jesus Christ. God the father is our father.

He's sovereign. He defeated satan on the cross 2,000 years ago. He has forgiven my past so completely, so completely right up to this moment that he says I won't even remember it.

I won't even remember it. Do you have a father like this? You do, but I don't know whether you believe it. I believe it.

That's why my life is at rest. I bungled up and done so many wrong things in my life, but God says no, no, no mention. I don't remember it.

This is my father. This is your father. Let's rejoice in him and my dear brothers and sisters.

Let's preserve the church God has raised up in this land to proclaim the truths which are not being proclaimed by so many churches. Please continue in the next generation to continue proclaiming it faithfully seeking nothing for yourself. Seek for the old paths.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Our heavenly father we thank you for your word, for your holy spirit, for fellowship, for the warnings and encouragements you constantly give us to keep us on the right path. Preserve us Lord till the day you return that we shall be able to meet you with joy and not shrink away in shame when you come.

That we can hear from you the words well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord. Oh, we long to hear that and all the trials and sufferings of earth will disappear in a moment when we look at your face.

Thank you in Jesus name. Amen.

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