

Being a Light in the World Young People

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of young Christians being distinct and shining as lights in a dark world through their actions and faith.

Duration: 57:34

Scripture: John 9:5, John 17:11, Acts 2:1

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Christian Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being the light of the world as Jesus instructed, highlighting the transition from Jesus being the light to believers being empowered by the Holy Spirit to shine brightly. It challenges Christians to stand out in the world, live a life of purity and obedience, and seek the assurance of being children of God and being filled with the Holy Spirit. The speaker encourages seeking God's power through the Holy Spirit to overcome discouragement, praise God fervently, and be bold against spiritual attacks.

Transcript

We all know that Jesus said I am the light of the world. We all know that Jesus said I am the light of the world. But what many people don't know is that Jesus said in John chapter 9 and verse 5 that I am the light of the world only as long as I am living in the world.

And he left the earth nearly 2000 years ago. So then he stopped being the light of the world at that time according to this verse. You know sometimes Christians believe a lot of wrong things.

And when I show that in scripture people think that we're preaching some strong and strange doctrine. Most Christians don't read the Bible carefully. So they never read a verse like this.

That Jesus was the light of the world only as long as he was in the world. But some people will say no, Jesus is still in the world today. But see what Jesus said in John 17 and 11.

For everything there is an answer in scripture. Jesus said in John 17 and 11, I am no more in this world. I believe his words.

He is not in this world, he is in the right hand of the father. The Holy Spirit is in the world. So when he said in John 9 and 5 that I am the light of the world only as long as I am in the world.

When he left the earth at the ascension, there was no light. But 10 days later the Holy Spirit fell upon 120 people on the day of Pentecost. There were tongues of fire on top of each of them.

And they became the light of the world after that. Because light is something you have to see. If you can't see it, then there is no light.

No one had seen God at any time. So even though God is light, nobody could see that light. But then Jesus came and they could see him.

That was light. And then he went off. There was no light.

Because nobody could see him. But then the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost. And they could see 120 people.

They were like candles that were lit. And the tongues of fire on top of their head were just like the light on top of the candle. And this is not against scripture.

But Jesus himself said in Matthew 5 verse 14. He told his disciples. You are the light of the world.

But those 120 people on the day of Pentecost have died and gone away. They are also not here now. Paul died.

But then there was a Timothy. He continued to be the light. And many others.

And like that in generation after generation after generation God has always had a light for him. And now we have come to our generation. And God has got a light.

He raises a light up. Whenever a Christian church compromises and does not preach the whole truth. See look at this bright light that is shining on my face right now.

It's so bright that you can't even look at it for too long. That's how the church was on the day of Pentecost. But now most churches have become like this zero watt bulb.

You see these night lamps. You can hardly see anything. Why is that? Because they have not proclaimed the whole counsel of God.

They preach a little bit and not everything. For example, 99% of churches in the world today do not preach what Jesus taught about money. We were just singing a song about being freed from the love of money.

I asked who wrote that song? That's amazing. Why would you write a song like that? Brother Vincent said the original song was not like that. Our brothers have changed it now.

See it's very difficult. Nobody writes such songs. Jesus spoke many things which are not fully preached in the church today.

For example, one of the things he said we should do everyday is take up the cross. Everyday he said we must take up the cross. Many of us think it's very important to take a bath everyday.

That's good. If it's very hot you can take two baths a day. But I'll tell you something, if you don't take a bath everyday you don't sin.

You may smell a little but you won't sin. So I'm not saying you shouldn't have a bath. I'm just saying what I'm trying to say is that it's more important to take up the cross than to take a bath everyday.

Whenever you have a bath, from today, as the water falls on you say yes, brother Zach told me I must take up my cross also everyday. No, I didn't say it. I only reminded you what Jesus said.

So I'm just telling you there are so many things like this we never hear about. Many years ago in Bangalore there was an interdenominational meeting on discipleship. I just went to listen to what they were all preaching.

So they broke up into small groups to discuss what does it mean to take up the cross. After it was over, the moderator gave the conclusion of all these ten groups. He said the conclusion of the ten groups is we don't know what it means to take up the cross.

We cannot know that. This is the condition of Christianity. What type of light is this? It's like a zero watt bulb.

God wants a bright light to shine for him. See what happened now when that light went off? God always gives us some example whenever we are preaching. It's gone.

That's how it is in Christianity. I didn't tell them to turn it off by the way. I don't apply such things.

I'm a servant of God. I'm not a magician. But listen to what God is trying to say.

Christianity has become like that. It's not the way it should be. It's coming up a little bit now.

But it should be very bright. That's God's will. So that responsibility lies on you.

Because you are the new generation. I'm sort of getting older generation. But that doesn't mean I won't shine as a light.

Even if I live up to 90, I'm going to be a very bright light for God. But you all have a big responsibility to be the light now. Now what is light doing? It drives away the darkness.

Light is different from the darkness. There is no fellowship between light and darkness. The darkness is black, the light is white.

The point is, it's different. And you young people must be different from the other young people around you. In college, in school, in your neighborhood.

What does it mean to be a light for Jesus? It's not first of all just going and giving tracts to everybody. I'm not saying you should do that. You pray and if God leads you, give a tract to someone.

But your life must be different. That's what I say. When people look at you, they must say, this is different from us.

The way you talk, the way you dress, the jokes you laugh at, the type of friendships you have, must all be different from the others. You know, even a simple thing like when a young girl does not wear any ornaments, that looks so funny in the world. Because in the world, they start wearing it from the time they are three.

Here is a teenage girl going to college, about to get married and she's not even wearing anything. She's looking like a widow. That's it.

There's something different. And also she dresses very modestly, not according to all the worldly fashions where they wear tight dresses. There's something different about such a girl.

And people see that and say, that person is different. And you'll find she has less trouble with the boys trying to run after her. They think she's different.

A lot of girls have a lot of trouble with boys in college nowadays. Because they dress in such a stylish way and the boys are attracted to them. How do you think Mary, the mother of Jesus, she was maybe 18 years old when Jesus was born.

18 or 19. Younger than many of you here. Why do you think God chose her? God looked all over Israel and said, I must choose one girl to be the mother of Jesus.

Supposing Mary was wearing all these tight fitting dresses like today's girls, do you think God would have chosen her? No. No, not that one. Or if she was all this laughing, joking, jumping around and fooling around with boys, do you think God would have chosen her? Or if she was all this laughing, joking, jumping around with boys, do you think God would have chosen her? No.

There was something modest about Mary. Even as a young 19 year old girl, the eyes of the Lord went to and fro and picked her up. I want to say to you sisters, you must be like that.

See, God may be preparing some young man to be his servant in this land. For that young man, he needs a good wife. Who knows how to live simply and be a support to him.

God wants to train you. That is the greatest thing you can do for God in this country. I know with my wife, I believe God trained her from the time she was a very young girl to be my wife.

And because of that, for 37 years, she has been such a good wife to me. That has made my ministry more than double. But if she was a stylish, proud type of person who wouldn't talk to simple people, then God wouldn't have chosen her to be my wife.

So, I am not saying these things are sin. All I say is, God may not choose you for his best. He may say, okay, you can only get second best.

Do you want God's best or do you want his second best? The same thing with you young brothers. See, you got to be different from the other young men around you. Think of how Jesus was when he was in school.

When my children were going to school, that's what I told them. I said, think of how Jesus was when he was 12, 13 years old and going to school. You know, in school we have friends.

All children have friends in school. And I am sure Jesus had friends. But what sort of friends did he have? Do you think his friends would have been all the rich people coming with their fancy dresses? They didn't have cars those days.

Maybe they had chariots ridden by horses. The rich people used to send their children to school. I don't think Jesus was mostly friendly with such people.

No, I am not against rich people's children. But generally speaking, I found rich people's children are very proud. They think they are superior to all the other children.

I don't think Jesus would ever have mingled with such children. I don't think Jesus would have mingled with such people. I think he would have mingled with the poor, somebody whose clothes are a bit torn or who is a bit lame.

Somebody who is a bit lame or stuttered in the streets. I think, you know, such people nobody wants to make friends with. And Jesus would have gone near such people.

You want to be like Jesus from the time you are 12-13 years old? I used to tell my children this. See, if you are good at Maths, look for somebody in your class who is very poor and is always failing in Maths and go and sit with him and teach him something. Don't just be happy you got 100%.

That's not going to get you anything in heaven. But learn to help others. And you know, you start like that, God will reward you.

I have seen that. You know, one of my boys used to do that. After the class was over, school was over, he would sit with one of those boys and one of those poor boys who was not good at Maths and help him with his arithmetic.

And today God is using him to preach the word. I want to tell you, be faithful to try and be like Jesus in your school. Do you think Jesus would have laughed at all the dirty jokes other boys were saying? He would have just left that company and gone and mingled with other people.

So, the boys in the school said, hey this boy is different. Many people called him some bad names. He was different.

From childhood he was different. And I want to say to you, you can be different. You can have a desire for God's word.

People must see that you are different. Don't be ashamed to be different. See, we never had any television in our home in the years when our children were growing up.

I never took them to any cinemas. So, when they used to go to school, in the school they were all talking about some latest cinema, some story over there. My children would be dumb because they didn't know anything about it.

Then they would have quiz programs with some questions about the film stars and all that. My children would get zero. Or some film song which somebody was singing.

So, I used to tell my boys, we are different, that's all. I am not going to take you to the cinema just for you to win that quiz competition. It's better you don't get any prize there.

If you live a God fearing life, He will honor you. See, if your parents have not taught you that, I want to teach you that. Honor God when you are young.

God will honor you. I tell you, I mean I look at you just like I look at my own children. I always felt that the young people in the church are my own sons and daughters.

So, I would say to you like my own sons and daughters, be different from the others in your school and college. Don't imitate them. Because you have to be a light.

It doesn't matter if they laugh at you. It doesn't matter if you don't know all the worldly things they know. And nowadays there are so many dirty jokes, dirty pictures, all types of things.

They circulate in school and college. You know that all the talk among young people now is about sex. Because that's what they see in the cinema.

That's all they read in their dirty books. There is a great area where you can be different. Where you can keep yourself pure.

I know it is much more difficult for you to keep yourself pure today than it was for me 50 years ago. And I know it is more difficult for you than it was for my children when they were in school 20 years ago. It's much more difficult for you because the world has become so evil.

The Bible says, here is a wonderful promise for all of you. If you don't know this verse, you must remember it in 2 Corinthians 12 verse 9. You know one of the things I'm really happy about people in our church that everybody comes to the meeting with the Bible. When I turn to a verse, I see you all looking down, which is a very good thing.

I preach in some churches in America. And I say, let's turn to this verse. They are still looking at me, they don't have a Bible.

It's pathetic. I have to tell them, listen, please bring a Bible to the meeting. That's a very good habit.

And whenever you hear a verse quoted in the meeting, turn to that verse. And study that Bible. If I were to show you the Bible, I would say, I'm going to show you my first Bible, the first Bible that I bought about 46 years ago.

And almost every page got underlined, color, shading, and I studied it so much. Because I studied it, compared it with another verse. So here is a great verse.

2 Corinthians 12 verse 9. When Paul had a great difficulty, which was not solved. He had a physical sickness, which God did not heal him from. Sometimes God does not answer our prayers.

I can't say he doesn't answer. He does answer, but the answer is no. I can't say he doesn't answer.

He does answer, but the answer is no. God answers all prayers. I've said it in many places, I don't know if I've said it here or not.

How many lights are there in a traffic signal? Three. First, what color? Red. Then? Orange.

Green. What does red mean? Stop. Orange means? Get ready, but wait.

Of course, in India, nobody obeys that, but that meaning is wait. Green means? Go. So, when you pray, you'll get one of these three answers from God.

No. Wait. Maybe next year you'll get it.

Or, yes. So he answers every prayer. And the wonderful thing about heaven's traffic lights is the power supply never goes off.

It is always one of these lights will be there. Never. In Bangalore also sometimes power goes off, you don't know what is red or green or you don't know anything, what is happening.

Heaven's traffic lights are always burning. Every prayer, every prayer you ever pray, will get an answer. It will be red, orange or green.

And if it is orange, don't follow all these Indian traffic rules, you just wait. It means wait. Supposing you are 14 years old, you say, Lord, give me a good wife.

What light do you think God will show you? No, I don't think he'll show you red. He'll show you orange. Don't think he'll show you green.

And don't rush when it is orange. Because you can have an accident. That's always what happens to young people when they rush, when God says wait.

Accident, definitely. But supposing you are saying, Lord, I want a man. This girl is such a beautiful girl.

But only thing, she is not born again. And she likes me also very much. She likes me also very much.

What light will shine then? Only the girls are answering, I am asking the boys. What will he show? I hope you'll remember that when your time comes. Don't marry an unbeliever.

Even if your parents take a torch light and show you green light, don't go by that. You say your parents, that is only torch light. God's light says red.

So God says, don't marry an unbeliever. A Christian is to be different from the rest of the world. I think I first gave my life to Jesus when I was 13.

But I didn't know whether he accepted me. That's the first time I said, Lord Jesus, come into my heart. But for six years, I was never sure whether Jesus accepted me or not.

And when I was 19 and a half, that's when I was sure, oh, I'm sure Jesus has accepted me. But during those six years, I must have asked Jesus to come into my heart maybe 100 times or 500 times, I don't know. Because I grew up in a God-fearing family.

If you ask me today, when were you born again? I don't know. I know when I was sure. That also date I don't remember.

Sometime when I was about 19 and a half. One day, I was reading John chapter 6. And I was reading verse 37. In the last part of that verse, It says, the one who comes to me, I'll never cast out.

And I said, Lord, I've come to you many times. At least 100 times. And the Lord said, I never cast you out.

And I said, Lord, today, I believe that. Do you believe that? Do you believe that Jesus has not cast you out? You know, even though I may have first asked Jesus to come to my heart when I was 13, Even though I may have first asked Jesus to come to my heart when I was 13, Until I was sure, I could not grow in the Christian life. Until you are sure that Jesus has accepted you, you will not grow in the Christian life.

You know, some people can say the exact date they were born again. You know, some people can say the exact date they were born again. Some people can say the exact date they were born again.

I can't say that. The date is not the important thing. So, if you don't know the date, don't think you are not born again.

If you don't know the date, don't think you are not born again. When is your birthday? I don't know. Oh, then you are not alive.

You are dead. No. There are a lot of people in our villages, even your parents, some of them, they may not know their birthday.

So what? Are they healthy? It doesn't matter if you don't remember your new birthday. Are you healthy? That's the important thing. Not date.

Even baptism in the Holy Spirit. Some people remember the date. But the important thing is, are you filled with the Holy Spirit today? So remember, when you come to Jesus, He will never cast you out.

If you have come to Jesus anytime in your whole life, in sincerity, Lord Jesus, I want you to come into my heart. Forgive my sins. Make me a child of God.

The day you said that sincerely, He did. He accepted you. You say, but I never felt anything.

I've never felt anything either for 46 years. I live by faith, not by sight. Which is better? To see or not to see? Is it better to see Jesus physically and believe in Him, or not see Jesus and believe in Him? Tell me, which do you think is better? What do you think is better? Is there a verse like that? Is there? What verse? That's in John chapter 20.

I'm very proud of you young people. You all know the Bible. John chapter 20.

29. Jesus told Thomas, He said, unless I see, I won't believe. Okay, the Lord said.

Verse 29. Because you have seen, you have believed. Blessed are those who did not see and still believe.

So, Thomas was not as blessed as we are. It's difficult to believe that, right? They say, oh, how lucky they were to see Jesus and hold His hands and all that. We think they are more blessed.

But I believe what Jesus said. That the one who is more blessed is the one who has not seen. I've never seen.

I've never seen an angel, I've never seen Jesus. But I believe. And my faith is strong.

It gets stronger and stronger and stronger. I've never heard God speak to me in my this year. I've never seen vision of angel or any such thing.

God has not transported me to heaven anytime. I've lived by faith for 46 years. And my life is strong.

God has given me victory over sin. God has given me light on His word. I don't need these other things.

So, don't get discouraged when other people say, I saw this, I saw that, I saw an angel, I saw a vision. Look at their life. Even though they say they see so many things, they still love money and live for this

world.

They fight and quarrel in their homes. What is the use? I'm more blessed. Because I've not seen.

And God has given me victory. And I don't fight with anybody in my home. I don't fight with anybody in the world.

Not because I saw an angel, it's because I've never seen anything, I believe. But I want all of you to be sure that you have become children of God. And there are two ways to be sure.

And you need both. Like all these electric wires, you always find two wires. You'll never get electricity with only one wire.

It's positive and negative. You always need two wires. And in the switch, when those two wires touch, the light comes on.

So, there are two witnesses like that. One is what God's word says. If Jesus says, him that cometh to me, I'll never cast out.

The second, is the Holy Spirit inside says, you are a child of God. So, you need both witnesses. And the light comes on.

So, people ask me, how to know I'm a child of God? I say, I'll never tell you. Because I'm not one of those witnesses. God's word and the Holy Spirit, these are the two witnesses.

No, I have never gone to anybody and said, oh, you're a child of God. Who am I? Who am I to say that? God's word must tell you that and the Holy Spirit must tell you that. So, don't go to man for that assurance.

And the second question people ask is, how to be sure I'm baptized in the Holy Spirit? I'm not going to tell you. I'm not like these Pentecostal pastors just force you to speak in tongues and say, okay, you got baptized in the Holy Spirit. God's word and the Holy Spirit, that will tell you whether you're baptized in the Holy Spirit.

That's why my life is so strong. For nothing, I sought assurance from man. I said, God, you got to give me an assurance.

It took me about six years to be sure that I was born again. That's like taking six years to lay a foundation. Foundation is solid.

I was never shakes. If I had got an assurance from some man, then my house would be shaking today. Same way with the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

It took me about 10 years before I was sure. No, it need not take that much time for you. It may take one day.

The time is not the important thing. You must be sure. See, there are two things you must be sure of.

One, you've become a child of God and your sins are all forgiven. Second, that God has filled you with his Holy Spirit. And you don't have to wait till you're 50 years old.

I've heard of young children, 10, 12 years old who pray to God and they're filled with the Holy Spirit. They sought God on their own. I've seen young people come up to me and say, God met with me.

15 years old, not even baptized in water. They heard about baptism in the Holy Spirit in the meeting. Without talking to their parents or anything, they sought God on their own.

And God met with them and filled them with the Holy Spirit. God can do that for all of you. You pray to God and if you find some other sister, some other brother who's got the same desire, pray together with them.

Go to some lonely place, go and sit under a tree or somewhere and pray. You know, God sees your heart and he will meet with you. And it makes a lot of difference in your life when you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's like the power coming in. You know, like you build a house and then you need electricity. So in the same way, you're born again and then you need power inside that house.

Supposing you study the Bible and you understand so many things in the Bible, but you don't have power. That will be like you have the mic, fan, bulb, television, camera, speakers, only electricity is not there. What is the use? So if you study the Bible, you've got all this knowledge and doctrine, but you don't have power.

But see how, when you get power, everything starts working. So all these things we study in the Bible become living when we get filled with the Holy Spirit. And you ask God, say, Lord, I will never be happy till you give me the assurance that you've filled me with the Holy Spirit.

And God, if he gives you the gift of tongues, you take it. See, you know what the gift of tongues is? It's just a language with which we praise God. Like, you know, whether it's Tamil or English or Hindi, they're all different syllables we put together and Tamil or English or Hindi, what that language is, we put together each syllable.

Like in English you'll say table, that means this. In Tamil, you'll use another phrase. It's just two syllables.

Me-jay, that's table. All languages like that. It's just different syllables put together.

And speaking in tongues is also like that, it's just another language where God gives us words to put syllables together to praise him. I've spoken in tongues for more than 30 years. Almost never in public.

To me, it's like a secret love language between me and my bridegroom. It's like if I tell my wife I love her, I'm not going to say it in front of you. I don't say it in the mic.

I'll tell it to her privately. It's like that, you talk to Jesus. And it's like a secret love language between me and Jesus.

And it relieves my heart of all the discouragement and pressure. Do you understand it? No, I don't understand it. Because it's not coming through my mind.

It's like this. My heart is full of desire to praise God. All the tremendous pressure of discouragement.

Some sorrow. Or maybe you failed in an examination. And your heart is heavy.

See, our heart can be full due to many reasons. It could be full of sorrow because you failed. Or you were expecting 40% and you got 95%.

So your heart is full of joy. So heart can be full with many things. And then you want to express it to God, sorrow or joy, whatever it is.

Because he's like such a good friend. Whenever something good happens or something bad happens, you first run to your good friend. And you cling to Jesus and say, Lord, I failed in my exam.

And he understands. He won't shout at you like your parents. Or you say, Lord, I was only expecting 40% and I got 95%.

It's amazing. I can't believe it. Everything, go to your friend first.

Then we want to praise him or express our sorrow to him. But you know how normally we pray? From our heart, the desire goes up to the mind. From the mind, there's a small pipe called the Tamil language.

Or English language, any language. So this big tank of water is full of pressure. A small pipe.

A few words. Lord, I praise you. Thank you.

Hallelujah. Finished. What else to say? Okay, say it again.

Praise you. Thank you. Or like the Pentecostals, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

That's all. Two or three words. That's all.

But God sees your great desire to praise him. God cuts off this pipe. A small pipe.

And he gives us straight from our heart, a bypass, straight to the mouth. Big pipe. So many words coming out.

Not just two or three words like thank you and praise you and hallelujah. Endless. And that gives us tremendous joy.

And also, the other time I used tongues, and I'm facing evil spirits. I want some boldness. It's a help.

See this brother, he'll tell you his story of what happened when he went to Bangladesh. Brother Vincent, when he was in Bangladesh and he landed up early in the morning in some station. Okay, you tell the story.

Okay. In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus. Praise the Lord.

So sometimes, it's good to have this weapon. Because the devil attacks, you don't know when. How? God has, gives us these secret weapons.

When we are full of thanks to praise God, we are full of sorrow. See, I used to be a person who was very discouraged. After I started speaking in tongues, last 30 years, I never get discouraged.

So I want to encourage you, seek God to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You may not become a preacher like me. That is a special gift God has given me.

Because that is my function in the body of Christ. If you can't speak, that's not bad. Tongue can, this hand can never speak.

But is it useless? Tongue can speak. So I'm like the tongue. You may not be like the tongue, but you can be very useful in the body of Christ.

You must seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit. God, you be like a light in the world. In the olden days, they used to put oil in the lamp, and that is a picture of the Holy Spirit.

Today we put electricity into the lamp, and that is a picture of the Holy Spirit. So I want to encourage all of you. You are the people God is going to use in the future in Tamil Nadu.

You young brothers and sisters. So from your youth, be different, like Jesus was different. Let's pray.

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