

# Being In The Body Of Christ (Tamil)

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of striving for spiritual perfection and reaching the highest level of maturity in Christ. It highlights the need to press on towards perfection, not settling for a basic understanding of salvation but aiming to become like Jesus in every aspect. The speaker discusses the significance of being part of the body of Christ, embracing diversity, and fostering unity through love, compassion, and thankfulness.*

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:12, Philippians 3:15, Matthew 5:9, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Colossians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Topics:** "Spiritual Maturity", "Unity in Christ"

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## Description

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## Transcript

We want to reach the highest level that God wants us to reach here on this earth. Paul said in Philippians in chapter 3, there is a beautiful expression here. It's somewhat similar to what I said in the last session.

I used the illustration of an inheritance that we may not have claimed fully. That we are missing out on something that Jesus purchased for us on the cross. Here, Paul uses another example.

He says in verse 12, chapter 3, verse 12. He says, I have not obtained everything yet. I have not become perfect.

I am perfect in my conscience, but I am not perfect in what Christ wants me to be. I have not become perfect in my conscience, but I am not perfect in what Christ wants me to be. In verse 15, he says, let us, as many as are perfect, have this attitude.

See this contradiction. In chapter 3, verse 12, I am not perfect. Three verses later, some of us are perfect.

That's like saying, I got 100% in mathematics. Can you get more than that? Can you get more than that? To get 100 out of 100 is to get perfect scores. I got perfect scores in mathematics.

But I am only in the second standard. I am not perfect in mathematics. Next year, I am going to learn even more.

To get 100 out of that, I have to struggle even more. Five years from now, I have to learn even more. Then, I am going to get 100 marks.

Every year, I am going towards perfection in mathematics. I don't want to get marks of 40% in each class. I don't want to be like those believers who just want to somehow get to heaven when I die.

You tell me, what type of children do you want? Do you want children who say, well daddy, if I get 40% and get promoted to the next class, that is enough. Do you want children who say, well daddy, if I get 40% and get promoted to the next class, that is enough. He gets 40%.

He is the last rank in that class. But he gets 40% and gets promoted to the next class. What do you tell him? My son, You got 40% and got promoted to the next class.

Can I say that I am proud of you? Some believers are like that. I just want to go to heaven when I die. That's all.

But there are other believers who are pressing on to perfection. Like this question I have asked sometimes. Suppose you have two students in a class.

One got 40%. The other got 99%. Who will be happier and who will be more sad? When they come home with the results.

Who will come home jumping with joy and who will come home sad? The one who got 40% or the one who got 99%? You know the answer. The one who got 40% is happy. Mummy, I thought I would fail.

But I passed. I got promoted. I thought I would sit in the same class next year.

But no, I am going to the next class. But the one who comes with 99%, his head is hanging down. But the one who got 99%, his head is hanging down.

What happened? If I had got one more mark, I would have got 100%. There are Christians like this. There are Christians who get 40%.

My sins are all forgiven. I am on my way to heaven. Praise the Lord.

Every year they sing the same song getting 40%. And there are others. They are a thousand times better than these.

They are weeping at night on their pillow. Oh Lord, I slipped up and I got angry for a little while today. Oh Lord, I slipped up and I had a dirty thought today.

You know these are two types of Christians. Paul belonged to the second category. He says, there is only one thing I do.

In verse 13, he says, there is only one thing I do. I am forgetting how many marks I got. I am pressing on to perfection.

I haven't become perfect. I haven't completed my study in mathematics. I haven't completed my study in mathematics.

My conscience is perfect according to the light I have got now. Paul wanted to get 100% in the first standard. He wanted to get 100% in the second standard.

He wanted to get 100% in the third standard. He wanted to get 100% in the fourth standard. He wanted to get 100% in every class.

During the year when he was in that class, maybe he made a few mistakes. But he learned from those mistakes. In the final exam, he got 100%.

In the next class, again when trying to learn some mathematics things, he makes mistakes. In the final exam, 100%. And like that, he goes to B.Sc. Mathematics, M.Sc. Mathematics.

And he reached up to M.Sc. Master of Science Mathematics. And he says, no, I am still not ready. I have got Ph.D. now.

Then he goes up and gets Ph.D. Mathematics, 100%. Then he goes up and gets Ph.D. Mathematics, 100%. So, Paul, have you made a mistake now? No.

There is a thing called post-doctoral studies. These third, fourth standard students don't know what that is all about. Think of the passion to become totally like Jesus Christ in every area.

To have the same attitude to money that Jesus had. To look at every woman in the world, pretty or ugly, just like Jesus looked at them. Do you know that Jesus looked at pretty and ugly women the same way? A soul to be saved.

A sinner who needs to be saved. Or if they are saved, a saved sinner who needs to become perfect. That's how we are to look.

The way Jesus looked at his enemies. Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing.

So, perfection is to have the same attitude and look that Jesus had towards everyone and everything in the world. The same way he looked at Pharisees and hypocrites. You generation of vipers, how will you escape the damnation of hell? If you are not like that, you are not like Christ.

Or when you see people making money from poor people in the temple in the name of religion. When you listen to these television preachers who are getting money out of poor people. If you don't have the anger that burned in the heart of Jesus, you are not like Christ.

See, a lot of Christians are not like Christ. They can watch all this on television and say, yeah brother, we don't agree with that. Jesus didn't walk through the temple when all these fellows were swindling the poor people, selling sheep and doves and say, yeah, I don't agree with that.

That is another Jesus. And I tell you, many Christians are following another Jesus. Paul wanted to be like Jesus completely.

He uses this expression in verse 12. That I may lay hold of that which Christ laid hold of me for. Listen to this expression.

Christ laid hold of me. So that I may lay hold of something. Do you know what He laid hold of me for? What did He lay hold of you for? Why did Jesus lay hold of you? Was it to take you to heaven? That may be your 40% understanding.

Basic pass marks. That's what I thought in the early days of my conversion too. Because my kindergarten teachers didn't teach me properly.

But then I studied the Bible myself and I saw what Christ laid hold of me for. He laid hold of me that I might become like Him 100%. He did not lay hold of me to take me to heaven.

He laid hold of me to make me like Him. Concerning that, Paul says, I haven't reached there yet. That's a huge mountain peak.

But I'm pressing on, I've climbed quite a bit. I'm not looking back and congratulating myself for how much I've climbed. I'm looking more at how much more I have to climb.

I want to tell you a little secret of spiritual progress. If you are always looking back and saying, What a lot of things the Lord has done for me. What a lot of things the Lord has done through me.

If you are an elder brother, look at the number of people now coming to my church. Brother, you will never, never in your life attain what God wants you to attain on this earth. Brother, you will never in your life attain what God wants you to attain on this earth.

You need to forget all that has been accomplished in you and through you. Forget completely. Always have this attitude.

He had already been a Christian for 35 years. Probably just 2-3 years before he died. He says, I'm pressing on, I'm pressing on.

I find as I grow older, My passion to reach the top of the mountain becomes more. I say, Lord, I don't know how many more years I've got, but I've got to reach the top of the mountain. I'm already sure I'm going to heaven.

I've got no doubt about that. But I haven't become totally like Christ. And that's the thing which Paul was pressing on to.

So, in our last study, we considered the full gospel is, first of all, getting a clear conscience and being justified. That we have been placed in Christ. Christ is in us.

Praise the Lord. This wonderful truth, I am in Christ. See, I'll tell you something.

Please listen carefully. One of the fundamental problems with Christians today is they live individual lives without fellowship. They think Christianity is just an individual thing, like I said now, becoming like Christ myself.

That if I just live all by myself and try to become more and more like Christ, it's okay. I'm not bothered about other people. That will be if you have this imbalanced understanding of only Christ is in me.

Most of us think only of that. Most of the songs we sing are about Christ lives in me. But if you keep on thinking only of that, it's like a one-sided gospel.

You know, I see many Christians like that. There's another side of the gospel where we have to have fellowship with others and build the church. That understanding can come only if you begin to think of this other side, that I am in Christ.

Christ is in me is an individual thing. Brother, I don't care about you. I mean, you may have your problems, but Christ is in me.

I'm okay. Brother, I don't care about you. I mean, you may have your problems, but Christ is in me.

I'm okay. When I am in Christ, Here I am. I'm in Christ.

But there are many other things in Christ too. Here's another brother. He's also in Christ.

Here's another brother. He's also in Christ. I'm not alone here.

There are so many people in Christ. I'm not alone. We are all together.

But we have to have fellowship with them. I don't like his face. I don't like his language.

But God has thought about it. Malayalees get along with Malayalees. Tamilians get along with Tamilians.

And the Anglo-Indians will only be with the Anglo-Indians. And different caste and race and all that, they all try to meet with the same people. If it's a language problem, okay, I can understand.

You know how I even speak the little bit of Tamil I can speak today? Because I refuse to be a Malayalee. I said I'm a Christian. I have to meet so many brothers and sisters in Tamil Nadu.

I can't say, brother, I don't know your language. I can't talk to you. So even though my Tamil grammar is all wrong, I still speak.

And I know my good Tamil brothers and sisters will forgive me for my wrong Tamil. Okay, he's at least trying, even though his grammar is all wrong. I say the same thing.

If I go to a Hindi-speaking brother, I try to speak to him in Hindi. Because in Christ, there is no difference. I want to ask you.

Are you a Tamilian first or a Christian? Are you a Malayalee or a Christian? Are you an educated person or a Christian? Are you uneducated or a Christian? In Christ, all these distinctions disappear. They may be there, but they don't affect our relationship. It's a wonderful thing to be in Christ.

But if I only think Christ is in me, then I can ignore others. There is this other side of the truth. I am in Christ.

And when it comes to Christ in me, I chose it. You chose to have Christ in you. I said, Lord, come into my life.

But when you say, I am in Christ, it's Christ who has chosen who else is there to be with you in Him. And He may choose some people who are not exactly like me. But if Jesus has chosen Him, how can I reject Him? We need to meditate more on this wonderful truth, that I am in Christ.

It is another side of the gospel. The whole of Ephesians is about that. And if we don't think of that, we will never be able to build the church the way God wants to build.

You will build a Tamil club. Or a Malayali club. Or a graduates club.

Or a poor people's club. There is no such thing. The church is all types of people.

They are all together, one in Christ. One in Christ. So, you know, there are, let's think, there are at least two sides of the truth.

Christ in me. And I am in Christ. And when I see Christians who are only thinking of Christ as in me, I am living my own holy individual life.

And I have completely forgotten about this other side of the truth, that I am in Christ along with all these other people who may speak a different language or different culture or whatever it is. The picture I have in my mind is, You know, I like to think of everything in pictures. Because that's how Jesus taught.

He taught in pictures. He talked about light and salt and vessels and so on. And trees and houses with a foundation.

So, I try to picture this in my mind. This fellow who only thinks about Christ is in me but doesn't think of he is in Christ. This is like a picture outside a gymnasium.

Have you seen these gymnasiums where you see this man standing like this with a picture of all muscles all over? I mean, he has got hundreds of muscles. I never even knew there were so many muscles in the body. But this picture is a little different.

This is a man with one side all muscular, left side. The right side is all skin and bones. And you say, Come and join this gymnasium.

He says, No, thank you. I don't want to come to this gymnasium. This is the Christian.

Christ is in me. What about you being in Christ, brother? Along with all those other people. Oh, you see, it's too difficult, brother, to live with these people.

I mean, seeing them once on Sunday is enough. I don't want to see them anymore. What are you going to do in eternity? You are going to live with them forever? You say, he is different from you.

He says, you are different from him. I was in Kerala yesterday. And there, a brother said a nice story, which I remember.

I don't remember it exactly, but I'll tell you how I understood it. You know, there were two people traveling in a ship. And they had to share these passenger ships where you get little rooms to stay.

These two people shared a room. One man was a bishop. And he had a lot of money and all with him.

So he looked at this person sharing his room. He said, I don't know whether it's safe to keep all the money in my cabin with this man. He looks like a crook.

I'll go to the captain of the ship and ask him to put it in the safe deposit locker for the journey. So he went to the captain and said, I'll keep all this safely because there's another man staying with me. I don't know

who he is.

The captain said, sure, I'll keep it for you. He said, but before you came, the other man came with his money also. He said, one bishop is staying with me.

I don't know what that other man is. I'll keep his things also. You think that other brother is not so spiritual, right? You know what he's thinking about you.

Yeah, it's good for us to humble ourselves. Think, what is the other fellow thinking about me? Maybe the same thing I'm thinking about him. It's a wonderful thing to discover how Jesus can eliminate all these distinctions.

He united us in one body. We're not perfect. But we help one another to grow to perfection.

I ask people this question. Who is the best brother in a church or sister? The one who can build fellowship. That is the best brother.

He may not be a great preacher. He may not be a great preacher. But he is the best brother.

Jesus said that he will be called his sons of God. Who is he going to call his sons of God? Matthew 5. Verse 9. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. So, peace means, you know, there's constant conflict everywhere in the world among Christians.

Even those who separate themselves from everything else say we are now one in doctrine. Even those who separate themselves from everything else say we are now one in doctrine. We have separated ourselves from many dead institutions to receive the full promise of God.

Even those who have left the other churches like you, are you united now? So, doctrine has not made us one. This is where it's the greatest miracle of all when God can make people into one body. So, we come to a perfect conscience and we are justified but that's not enough.

So, we come to a perfect conscience and we are justified but that's not enough. Many have received the fulfillment of the Holy Spirit. Haven't you heard many people say, Brother, what we need is the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

But what happens? It becomes an individual thing. Let's see what it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. 1 Corinthians chapter 12 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 13 By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body. So, the baptism of the Holy Spirit leads us into one body. If Jesus baptizes you in the Holy Spirit then the Holy Spirit baptizes you into the body of Christ.

If Jesus baptizes you in the Holy Spirit then the Holy Spirit baptizes you into the body of Christ. The word baptism in English means dipping. It's an old Greek word which they brought into the English language.

It means, in Greece if a man dipped his hand in water he'd say, I baptize my hand in the water. If a man dipped his hand in water he'd say, I baptize my hand in the water. The baptism of the Holy Spirit in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit leads a man into the water.

If the Holy Spirit baptized us the Holy Spirit's anointing the Holy Spirit's anointing and the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body means He puts us into the body of Christ. So there is no such thing as baptism in the Holy Spirit without being baptized into the body of Christ. We hear so much about We must be baptized in the Holy Spirit Come to Jesus brother and ask him to baptize you in the Holy Spirit Yeah, that's one side of the truth What is the other side? Ask the Holy Spirit to baptize you into the body of Christ Where have you heard somebody preach Brother you need to be baptized into the body of Christ It's here, 1 Corinthians 12 By one spirit we are baptized into one body When you get in there Verse 13 There is no Jew No Greek No Tamilian No Malayali No educated No uneducated No rich, no poor No slave, no free It's the body I am very thankful that when God Started the work in Bangalore in our home To build the body of Christ there That he brought together people who were so different We were different in Education level We were different in our culture We were very few But among these few there were Malayalis, Anglo Indians, Tamilians Even within 4 families As it grew Then there came Telugu's and Kannadiga's And different cultures and languages Different levels of education Different levels of wealth And different outlooks People from different religious backgrounds But baptized into one body Now if you are living in a village where everybody speaks Tamil Like most villages in India The small villages, everybody speaks the same language You can't have people with different languages in your church, obviously That doesn't matter But you may have, and everybody may be poor But still there are so many differences among you We are not all the same And God puts people who are different Puts them together They can be their old religion They may have different caste levels And they are one in Christ It doesn't mean that their differences disappear No, it is still there The differences are there But we are one It doesn't mean that in the church We make all the rich people share their wealth with the poor That is communism, not Christianity Jesus Christ was not a communist He didn't start the communist party He started the Christian church He didn't say that everybody must equalize their wealth Maybe we can do that with wealth But how can you equalize everybody's education If you have a highly educated person and a low educated person How will you bring them all down to equal? God doesn't change these external things But we become one The Greek may remain a Greek The Malayali may remain a Malayali The Tamilian may remain a Tamilian The rich person remains rich The poor person remains poor But God will provide his need And the rich will help the poor also Educated will remain educated And some who are doing lowly jobs will remain doing that But they will be one in Christ They will love one another They cannot become equal Externally Like the five fingers What does communism say? This is not good All the fingers must be equal Take a knife and cut all the fingers to the same level Then see how neat it will look It will look neat Communism says cut it all equal But that's not the way God made it He made it all different sizes What to do? He didn't make all of us the same height Do you think God could have done that? Of course he could do it Have you seen these small ants that crawl on the ground Small brown ants They are all the same size 100 of them will be the same size You show me 100 human beings who are the same height Anywhere God doesn't do it like that We are different The color of our skin is different So many things God doesn't change all that But he makes us one That every one of these fingers can work together And do wonderful things That is the picture of the body We may be different But each is connected to the head, Jesus Christ And function together That's the body And in every locality Where God brings people together He wants to show the world See these people how they love one another They are my disciples That's what he said He didn't say all men will know you are my disciples When they see how rich you have become Or they will all know you are my disciples When you all get PhD's No They will know you are my disciples When you love one another Not when you can all preach I have said numerous times in our churches Nobody should try to preach like me When I was young and stupid believer I wanted to preach like some others I admired Because my kindergarten teachers Did not teach me properly But when I understood That I was a part of

the body of Christ I said Lord I don't want to preach like anybody else I don't want to preach like those Preachers who hold a mic And run up and down the platform And I don't want to preach like some of those Dead preachers Who speak as if it is a funeral I don't want to preach like them If there is somebody I want to preach like It is like Jesus Christ that's all I want you to see also that Your gift may not be preaching Even if your gift is preaching God has not called you to preach like me You don't have to translate like brother Vincent Even if you try you won't be able to I will tell you that It is a gift God needs only one Dr. D. Vincent in the body of Christ He needs only one Zac Mone in the body of Christ He needs only one of you Whatever your name is And you must not try to be like him or me Or somebody else That will be like the hand saying I wanted to be a tongue always I want to talk But I can't speak with my hands What will be the result If you are a hand You won't be able to do it Many foolish believers Want to copy someone else's ministry You don't have to do it God has prepared you from childhood From your mother's womb for There are some brothers Who are outstanding evangelists I can't do that I was once travelling with a brother In a train Not in this country In another country He was a friend of mine Good brother We sat in the train And he completely forgot about me He was witnessing to the person sitting next to him He started becoming friendly And started giving the gospel to him I said this is amazing Even if I try I can't do it But when he gets into the pulpit He can't preach like me also That's the other problem So then I realized God has given him one gift He has given me another gift I thank God for this dear brother Who can do something I can never do Even if I try for a hundred years I won't envy him I will support him in his ministry And I know he supports me in my ministry He told me once That brother Brother Zack I can't preach like you But if you go somewhere I will carry the suitcase for you And come with you But I know even if he carries the suitcase He will be witnessing to people As he comes along It is a passion he had A God given passion Which I can never duplicate Because that's not my calling He wasn't proud of it He never told me to be like him If he was proud of it He would have been foolish If I am proud of my preaching And expect others to preach like me I am foolish Isn't it wonderful That God has put different people With different gifts in the body of Christ Do you know one of the major ministries In a conference like this The most important May be preaching But one of the important ministries Is cooking the food Imagine if he said there is no food here Everybody just stay here for the meeting You may be able to do it But the children will suffer Thank God for people Who have a gift of cooking I don't have that gift If I go to the kitchen Nobody will come for the conference after that If I cook anything I don't go there I don't have that gift I don't want to try to do anything there I don't have that gift I don't want to try to do anything there God has given different people In the church How wonderful it is We can work together The great thing is Respect the brother And the gift given to him Endure him No need to compete with him No need to be jealous of him And don't try to show That you are better than him And don't tear him down When he makes a mistake You also will make a mistake In your ministry We have to be merciful to one another We have to be merciful to one another It is a great ministry in the body To forgive one another Christ is everything He is all and he is in all So what should we do Have you been chosen by God Verse 12 Are you holy and beloved Then here is what you should do Have a heart of compassion To that other person And a heart of kindness A heart of humility A heart of gentleness A heart of patience Bear with him Forgive her Forgive her And if he has done something wrong And you got a complaint He did this wrong against me Verse 13 The Lord had a complaint against you Thousands of complaints he forgave you You should do the same thing And with that attitude Put on love which is the perfect bond of unity Because the peace of Christ Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart To which you were called in one body And the last word Be thankful for your brother Be thankful for your sister Be thankful for your wife Be thankful for your husband God is trying to make us one This is part of the full gospel Where Christ dwells in the middle I want to ask you This last two words Be thankful Have you ever knelt down by your bed And said Lord Thank you for my wife When

she is not listening That means you are really saying it to God When you are alone If you have never done it Do it Do it tonight Kneel down alone before God And say Lord Thank you for my wife And sisters Kneel down and say Lord I thank you for my husband And then name your children One by one And say Lord I thank you for giving me this child And I am this one And this daughter And this son Thank you Now we can make the circle bigger Lord I thank you for this elder brother in my church He is not perfect Nobody is perfect Paul was not perfect But I see so many good qualities in him He does not take any salary For his work in the church If there is no other good quality At least he has got that good quality And I see so many other good things in him Forgive me Lord That I have only pointed out The little little mistakes And Lord I thank you for my fellow elders I want to thank you for them And then make the circle bigger Think of the ones who are close to you This brother This sister Thank you This is obeying the command In verse 15 Which says You are called in one body Be thankful You just do this And I tell you It will completely transform Your relationship With your wife Children Everybody We were in that old tree Called Adam And we got the habit Of criticizing Fining fault Fining fault The Holy Spirit Cut us off from there Put us in Christ And he has taught us To be thankful Let's pray Heavenly Father Help us not to be One sided Christians Developed on one side But skinny on the other side Make us balanced Beautiful Christians To know what it is To have Christ in us And also to know That we are in Christ We pray in Jesus name Amen

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