

# Birth of Cfc - Seeking for God's Highest

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's highest in church leadership and personal faith, drawing from historical examples and personal testimony.*

**Duration:** 46:12

**Scripture:** Romans 6:14

**Topics:** "Church Growth", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon reflects on the origins of a church that started in a small group of overcomers who left a declining church to seek a deeper devotion to Christ. It emphasizes the importance of prioritizing Jesus above all else, even when faced with rejection and opposition. The speaker shares personal experiences of surrendering fame, material desires, and seeking the anointing of the Holy Spirit, highlighting the need for genuine transformation and a fervent love for Jesus amidst challenges and criticisms.

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## Transcript

For those who are newly here since the last, say, five or ten years, you may not know how this church began way back in August 1975, which is before many of you were born. But if you read church history from the beginning, there's always been something starts so wonderfully and then it gradually declines. That's how it was even with the churches that the Apostles planted.

If you read in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3, those were churches that the Apostles planted. Ephesus was one of the best churches which Paul himself planted. But by the time, about after Paul died, 25 years later, or 20, yeah, about 20-30 years later, it's become so bad that the Lord says, I'm going away, because you guys have left your first devotion to Christ.

So throughout history, there's been something started so well, but the Lord says, those who overcome, I'll be with them. So in the church of Ephesus, there were a few who overcame. They were usually, you know, not the old senior elders, but maybe the younger ones, who were devoted and came to the Lord.

And they got fed up with the deadness of their church. And finally, when they sensed that Jesus has moved out of that church, because the Lord said to Ephesus in Revelation 2, if you don't repent, I'm going to take away the lampstand, means I will move out. So a time came in Ephesus when the Lord moved out.

The Lord had moved out, and they couldn't sense it, because the spirit had gone. But these people who were overcomers, who were the spirit of the bride, the bride recognized the bridegroom has gone. So what does the bride do when the bridegroom has left the hall? They leave also.

So I can imagine that a few people left Ephesus and started meeting separately in some house. And I can imagine the big church despised that group. They're saying those guys are rebels and won't submit to authority, and they wanted to be leaders here, and they couldn't.

So they went off and started their own, all types of things, and spread false stories about them. But they just ignored them. And that little group met in that house.

And over a period of time, while this big church declined into corruption, that church began to grow. The Lord was there. And then you give 60-70 years, and that church becomes big, and same history is repeated all over again.

What happened to the first one happens to the second church in Ephesus. And that becomes big, and then the Lord says, well, you're going the same way, so I'm gonna leave. And they leave, and then again a few group of overcomers leave, and that becomes the third church in Ephesus.

And this is how most of these denominations have started. Some have started because somebody wants to, you know, start his own group and become a leader. There are that type also.

But true movements of God have arisen with little groups that are fed up with people not obeying God's Word, and going through a ritual, etc. So when you get time, you can read about church history, how Martin Luther did that. He was a tremendously brave man.

I don't know how many people would have the guts to stand against a worldwide Roman Catholic system and come out and say, you guys are wrong. And they had so much power that kings of those days were appointed by the Pope, and they had power. You could easily kill Martin Luther if you wanted.

But it's only because one king protected him that he survived. But that is God's plan. God had a plan for that man to survive, to proclaim salvation is by faith, not by giving money to the church.

But then the movement he started also declined. And some of the Lutherans used to fight against the Anabaptists who baptized people in water because Lutherans baptized children. And they fought against them, and then the small groups of these Anabaptists came who stood for the truth.

So it's a very interesting thing to study how throughout history there's always been little groups. There are a couple of books that describe this. One is called the Pilgrim Church by Broadbent.

Another is the Torch of the Testimony by John Kennedy, which describes how these little groups came out throughout history. There's always been a testimony for Christ on this earth, but it's never been in the big groups, not even today. It's in the small groups that have come out and stood for the Lord, and they stand for the Lord 60-70 years and they decline.

That's always the case. And it's very difficult. I remember once when I take a study of this, and somebody asked me, Brother Zag, what's going to happen to us after 60-70 years? I said I'll tell you.

I said every group in history has always said this happened to others, but it will not happen to us. I don't say that. I say it will happen to us.

But before that happens, God has to raise up some zealous, wholehearted young people who the present generation of elders may have died and gone on, but a group of young people who are zealous and wholehearted through whom there will be a witness for the Lord. There will always be a witness for Christ. Because the second church in Ephesus came out of the first one.

They didn't come out from somewhere else. From that first one. And the third church in Ephesus came out of the second one.

It's always, you know, there's a death and a resurrection, and another death and a resurrection. That's how always the church has been preserved. So that's how it was in my case.

You know, I was converted when I was 19 and a half, and I had a great ambition when I joined the Navy, and that was to go right up to the top. And I worked hard and worked hard. I was not converted, but I said I'm determined to go to the top.

And when I was 19 and a half, something happened. Christ came into my life. And it was not just a small thing for me.

It was a complete radical change in my life that my whole ambition turned around 180 degrees, and I had no more interest in going to the top of the Navy. I remained there because I had to earn my living. But I said from now on I'm going to be a Christian in the Navy.

I'm going to be a witness for Christ here, and if I'm going to be a bold witness for Christ, I'll never go to the top. That I know. But I want to live for the Lord.

And that's what changed the direction of my life at that time. And I had to take some steps like water baptism, because I came out of an Orthodox Church that didn't believe in it. And people would tell me, why do you want to leave the Orthodox Church? Those other people in the other groups are already converted.

Stay here and convert these people. And I thought that was the right thing. So one and a half years I didn't get baptized.

But every time I knelt down to pray, the Lord will say to me, you're not listening to me. Why should I listen to you? I got fed up. I said I'm going to get baptized.

I don't care which church throws me out. I'm going to obey the Lord and get baptized. And I realized that you can't be a blessing in a church by disobeying the Lord.

No. That's human philosophy. So I obeyed.

And I said, okay. And that was a crisis in my life. And I got baptized.

Suddenly something took off in my life. I began to be a serious Christian. And I can say that I really started studying the Bible only after I got baptized.

Seriously. And so I began to study the Bible intensely. And then I found, the next thing I found, was a lack of power in my life.

And I began to seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And I was in an assembly that didn't preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They said, you got to go to the Pentecostals.

They're the ones who preach it. I said, sure. I don't know who the Pentecostals are, but I'll go there.

So somebody took me there to one of those meetings. And one of those pastors said, keep saying hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, endlessly, and you'll speak in tongues. I said, no.

I'm not going to do that. That's not what they did on the day of Pentecost. And I went to the meetings.

It was all yelling and screaming. And I didn't see godliness there. I saw the pastors loving money.

And I came back to my room in the naval base. And I said, knelt down and said, Lord, I don't want that. It doesn't touch me as the real thing.

There's something missing there. Give me the real thing, even if I had to wait 10 years. I want the real thing.

I don't want to just babble something and say, I got baptized in the Holy Spirit. And I prayed, and I fasted, and I prayed, and I would study the scriptures. And God met with me.

I have to say, I didn't speak in tongues then, but God met with me and gave me the anointing of the Spirit to preach God's Word within two years after I was baptized in water. And I believe I was anointed. And I began to preach with great power when I was 23 years old, because the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it's amazing what the anointing of the Holy Spirit can do.

I am surprised how people think that they can preach God's Word without being anointed to the Holy Spirit. You've got to be crazy. It's like trying to drive a car without petrol.

I mean, nobody's so crazy. But people think they can, oh yeah, I can preach. Even if I'm not baptized in the Holy Spirit, just study the Bible and preach.

Those are the people who bring death into churches and into Christianity. I know the difference it made in my life. It became so easy in the olden days before to preach a message was like pumping a hand pump.

But once I was anointed, it was like rivers flowing out. I want to tell you another thing. It's possible to be anointed and to lose the anointing.

I've seen that also. People are anointed and rivers began to flow through them and then they became proud and they thought, I'm somebody, I'm anointed. And then you watch, you listen to them after a while and they're a bit dry.

You don't want to listen to them anymore. Death has come in. The anointing is not something that you receive once and that's it.

You don't fill your petrol tank once and that's it. You have to keep it full all the time. You want your car or scooter to run.

That's how it is. So I moved on from there and one day God called me for a service. I was only 24 years old and God told me, quit your job and come out to serve me.

And nobody supported me in my local church. I mean nobody encouraged me to do that. When I wondered whether God really called me and when I put in my resignation, the Navy did not accept it.

And everybody in my assembly, the assembly I was going to, said, see, if it was from God you'd have got released. You're not released. It's not God's will.

And I tell you, you're really discouraged when you're 24 years old and everybody in your church tells you you're wrong. That's how I felt. Well, I sought the Lord.

I'm glad I didn't listen to them. And the Lord spoke to my heart and said, what did Moses do? And Pharaoh said, I will not let you go to serve him. I got my answer.

He kept on going till he got, Pharaoh released him. So I got my answer. I said, I don't despise these brothers in my church.

They are elders. I respect them. But they don't seem to be in touch with the Lord.

There are many good churches that are correct doctrinally. They preach about new birth and baptism of the Holy Spirit. But you sense that the elders don't know Jesus.

They don't know the Lord. There's no sense of, there's not a fragrance of Christ in their life. So I don't despise them.

I was young and I had to submit to them. But I said, I'm not going to listen to them. I've got my whole life ahead of me and I'm not going to ruin it by listening to these people.

And I'm glad I didn't listen. I'm glad I listened to the Lord. I applied and applied and after two years the Navy let me go.

And you know, I thought, I really can imagine how dumb we are. I thought Christian work must be heaven. Every Christian worker must be such a heavenly man.

So I came in the midst of Christian workers and I found it was so different. I joined an assembly and I found that they didn't believe in the anointing of the Spirit. The messages were boring.

I found the full-time workers there going after the rich people to get money. And I was very disappointed. When I said, Lord, I'm going to seek you.

I was young, 26 years old. And I worked with a very godly man called Brother Buxing. But he was traveling all over.

I'd meet him only once or twice a year. I appreciated his life and teaching but I couldn't be with him all the time like Timothy or something. So I had to sort of seek God on my own most of the time.

And then the Lord led me to get married. And we were so poor that I couldn't afford house rent. And fine, I said, Lord, I'm going to serve you.

And the devil would keep on taunting me, saying, see what you could have been if you were in the Navy. Here you are struggling. You can't even rent a house.

I said, fine, Lord, I didn't choose this. I said, Lord, you called me. I did not choose this.

You called me. And fortunately, my dad was a poor pensioner. He'd get about 350 rupees a month from government service pension.

But he had a room to spare in his house so I could stay there. And that's how we lived, my wife and I. Two, three years we struggled and survived like that. I could never buy any clothes, neither of us.

I'd have two or three shirts that I would keep for special meetings. So people would always see me in the same two, three shirts. I said, fine, because I never wanted to go to a meeting with any torn shirt, lest people treat me like an object of charity.

And always the Lord told me, even when you have nothing, give people the impression that you have plenty. Then they won't treat you like an object of charity. But I find a lot of Christian workers, they are objects of charity.

I've seen that in many places. The rich people say, oh, this poor bro, full-time worker, okay, let's give him some money. It's like giving money to the beggar.

And the Lord showed me something. He said, that's how so much of Christian work is in India today. The dignity of a servant of God, who is far greater than all the rich people in that church, who is in touch with Almighty God, who is a son of a Heavenly Father.

That dignity, I have to tell you, honestly, I saw in only one man in India, and that was Brother Buxing. He had that dignity. And I said, Lord, that's what I respect.

So I said, that's the way I want to go. I'm not going to be an object of charity. I'm not going to let people think, even if I'm nothing, I won't let people know it.

And God preserved us. Those are wonderful days, and those are days in which we learned to prove God. Both my wife and I, and we had a little baby, and we didn't know whether we'd have enough milk powder to buy for that child.

But God, we survived. We never starved. But I'll tell you, through all those difficult years of struggle and poverty, we learned to know God in a wonderful way.

And the pressures that came upon Annie and me pushed us closer to each other. It was good. Pressure is good if you don't let it come between us, between you and your wife, and separate you.

Let it come from the outside. We had misunderstandings from her parents and everything else. Everything worked out for good.

But then, you know, I was getting gradually fed up with what I saw in churches and Christian work. I saw churches caring for those who were rich. Every church I went to, to tell you honestly, the board members and the elders would always be the richest people in that church.

Every church I went to, Protestant, Brethren, Pentecostal, Catholic, anything, the elders will always be the richest people in that church. I said, this is funny, because the elders in Jesus' time were all fishermen and some of the poorest people. So I said, this can't be right.

There must be something wrong. These people value money and position and honor. And I decided that time, I said, Lord, if ever I'm going to build a church, the rich people will not be the elders.

That's for sure. We look for the godly, the humble, those who fear God. And even if they are the poorest, they will be the elders.

And that's the joy that God has given me to see, particularly in many of the village churches that the Lord has planted through the years in Tamil Nadu. People who are so poor, like, struggling to survive, are elders in the church and the rich people sit there. I'm so delighted in our conferences when we have people who can't speak English, probably.

In our conference, I mean, even this last year and previous years, who can't speak English, but who get up and speak in their local language, because they're not so educated. And we have PhDs sitting and listening to them. I said, that's the church.

But I didn't see it in the early days. And I longed to see the true body of Christ. I had the burden in my heart for 10 years before I saw it.

From 1965 to 1975, it was like carrying a baby in the womb. I said, Lord, I want to see it. I don't know whether I will live to see it, but I want to see it.

I don't want to be satisfied with anything less than the best. You know, I'll tell you something in the Christian life, to all the newcomers I say, if you are satisfied with anything less than God's best, that's all you'll have. You'll never get anything more.

But if you see something in God's Word and you don't see it around you in Christianity, and you say, I'm not going to be satisfied with that. I want to see what's in God's Word. You'll get it.

That's how it was with me. I wasn't satisfied, and everybody thought I was being extreme and idealistic, and you'll never see that on this earth, Brother Zach. I said, okay, you can say all that, but I see it in God's Word.

I see it in the early church. And I saw, as I studied God's Word, there was a word that came to my heart in those days, which is very, very powerful, from Colossians in chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1 says in verse 17 and 18 about Jesus Christ. He is before all things.

In Him all things hold together. He's the head of the body, the church. He's the beginning.

He's the first person who rose from the dead. And the purpose is, purpose of all this, is so that He can have the first place in everything, that He might have the preeminence, the first place in everything. Jesus Christ will have the first place in everything.

And I saw something there. God Almighty, His heart's desire is to see Jesus Christ having the first place in everything. I felt God say to me, if you make that your passion in life, that Jesus Christ will have the first place in everything in your life, in your home, in your ministry, I'll back you.

Till the end of your life, I'll back you. I said, Lord, I'll do that. I don't care what the cost.

I don't care what I lose. I don't care who throws me out or who rejects me. Christ will have first place in my life.

But when I looked around at Christianity, I'll tell you what I saw. Most churches, I saw money at the place. Money had replaced Christ.

Money was the important thing. How much is the offering? We've got to get people to give. Send letters to America and Europe to get them to support money, money, money.

I saw Christian workers and I met a lot of them as I traveled around India. And I'm not exaggerating when I say that more than 95% of the Christian workers I met were doing Christian work for a living to get a job. Hardly any of them were educated enough to get a job in this, in the world.

If they were educated, they'd go out for a job in the world. If they were uneducated, they came last in the class, the parents would send them to Bible school, go and be a pastor. And so Christian work got a bad name.

In Kerala they think, oh pastors means these low class people who didn't have anything else to do, they become pastors. And it's true. Many of those churches, it's all these low class, uneducated people become pastors.

All the rich people dominate them because they're the ones who pay the money for the salary. And I saw the corruption in Christianity. Christ was not center.

Christ was not having first place in everything. It was money, money, money. And even the big, big churches always wanted money and how to get more money.

We want bigger buildings and bigger this and outreach. And if you send somebody out into the mission field, you've got to collect money for them. I never see this in the Gospels.

I never see one single place where Jesus or the apostles going around saying, we've got to get money, we've got to reach the world, we've got to get money. What Jesus said is you've got to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then you'll reach the world. And I said, I'm going to stick to the Scripture.

Money is not going to have the first place in my life or in any ministry of mine. I'll never ask for money. I will never send a letter in my life to anybody telling me need.

When I have nothing, I will pretend that I have everything. And God tested me. I'll tell you, He tested me.

I have never starved. My wife and I have never starved in all these years. We've never sent a report or a letter or we never became slaves to any rich man.

Nobody could control my life with money. No. And I saw that it was very difficult.

As I said, Brother Bakhshin was the only man I ever met who was free from that. And there may be one or two others here and there. I don't know.

I never met them. All the ones I met were seeking honor, seeking position. They wanted to join some big denominations so that they'll get a name there and climb the ladder.

I had no interest in climbing any ladder at all. I just wanted to have Christ to have first place in my life. And the other thing I saw was another thing which replaced Christ in many churches was music.

There's much more today. Music, music, attract the young people. The way to attract young people is by music.

And I saw music had absolutely no place in the New Testament. In the Psalms, yes, that is the Old Covenant. Where in the New Testament do you find, get good musicians so that you can build the church? Never.

Christ has given the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, not musicians. Why isn't that mentioned there? It's not one of the gifts of the Spirit. But where do you see a Christianity that says music is not important? So I said, Lord, it seems to me this Christianity has gone completely astray.

And you know when you think like that what other senior people say, Brother Zach, you think you're the only one who knows the truth? We've all been Christians for so long? That's what Annas and Caiaphas would have told Peter and Paul, Peter and James and all. You think you're the you young fellows, thirty-year-old fishermen, you think you know more than us? We have been the high priest here for so long? Thank God they didn't listen to Annas and Caiaphas. And I saw another thing in Christendom which had replaced Christ.

A lot of churches were interested in pleasing the politicians. They would have politicians sitting on the platform for their public meetings. That's like Jesus asking Herod and Pilate to come and sit on his platform and he spoke and before Jesus speaks he says now Herod will come and say a few words or Pilate will come and say a few words.

Can you imagine that? Or now Judas Iscariot will come and tell you about the needs of the work. But this is what I saw in Christendom. I never see it in the Gospels.

And I said is this Christianity the same as the Christianity in the New Testament? Not at all. This is black, this is white. That was the difference.

So people say no it's not possible, you can't have anything perfect on this earth, Brother Zach. I say okay, I can't have anything perfect, at least let me press on towards it. That's how I got fed up with everything that I saw.

I didn't claim to be better than anybody else. I was defeated by sin on top of all this. It's not that I was better than them.

I saw things in Scripture which I myself was not able to experience. But I said these guys are older than me. They've been serving the Lord 20-30 years.

They're not experiencing it either. How can I waste my time following them? They lead me astray. So I went to the Scriptures.

I met a godly man. I would try to get close to him. I read many godly books.

But finally I saw that all this thing that has replaced Christ money, music, psychology. That's another thing that has replaced Christ. Many churches.

Eloquence. There's a lot of difference between eloquence and anointing. I don't think many of you also can make the distinction.

You got to be humble to distinguish between eloquence and anointing. You think if a man can speak very well, he's anointed. Well then the politicians are the best, most anointed people then.

They hold people's audience, grip audience for two hours. Anointing is different. Anointing changes your life, draws you closer to Christ.

Eloquence just impresses you. You say wow. You listen to an eloquent man and say wow what a wonderful preacher.

You listen to an anointed man and you say boy what a wonderful Savior. I want to get close to Jesus. That's the difference.

So I saw all these things had replaced eloquence and Bible schools and knowledge and all you know Bible knowledge. All these things had replaced Christ. It was being fed up with all this that finally led to CFC being born.

I'm just telling you the origins of it. You got to be fed up, not only fed up with what you see around, but fed up with yourself. I've often said to people if you're only fed up with your local church, don't come here.

When you're fed up with yourself and your defeated life, then come. So I was not only fed up with what I saw around me, I was fed up with myself more than anybody else. I said Lord I'm defeated.

I'm defeated in my thought life. Externally my testimony is good. I'm not running after women or cheating anybody in money and all that, but my thought life, my inner life was not pure.

I said Lord is this the way I got to live? And you know a time came in my life and I said Lord I'll stop preaching, because then what can I preach if I can't lead people to godliness? I see things wrong in others what I see more wrong in myself. So I'll find a secular job. I'd quit the Navy already a few years ago, but I'll go and find another secular job and go and sit in the back of a church.

I'll still follow Jesus, but I will not preach, because what I'm preaching is not true. And that's when Ian and I were in this Baptist Church, pretty fed up. I don't know how he was, but I was pretty fed up with my own life.

And we used to pray together, two needy souls, desperately seeking God, not knowing what God had in store for us, except that God arranged circumstances in such a way, even that when we had come to the zero level in our life, God sent someone to meet with us and turned the direction of our life, turned the direction of my life. And I was baptized in the Holy Spirit afresh and began to speak in tongues. I had never spoken in tongues before.

But before that, I want to tell you this as well. I had already built up a reputation, even though I was an absolute hypocrite inside. I was not living what I, but I was very gifted.

So I was traveling the world, Australia, Europe, preaching in America, Japan. I'd written six books. I had a weekly radio program that was going all over Southeast Asia, and I was a backslider.

You know it's possible to be that? I went to Australia for a Deeper Life Convention in this defeated state, but I could preach. I could really preach well. And I preached so powerfully there, that the Christian newspaper there said, we've never heard anyone preach so well in Australia.

I kept that paper. I still have it with me to remind me how you can be a top-class hypocrite and fool everybody with your preaching. But I was fed up, and I said, Lord, I don't want that.

I want reality. And I said, Lord, if you will only give me a reality in my life, I'm willing to chuck everything. So just like when I was in the Navy, I chucked my career.

Here I was in Christendom, in the eyes of others, like an ascending star, becoming a famous international preacher. God said, chuck it. And that's the second thing I gave up.

Fame in the world first, and then fame in the Christian world. And we started meeting in our house, because the other church threw us out for preaching the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And all of a sudden, these invitations I was getting from here and there disappeared, because the news went round.

Zac Poonen is speaking in tongues. He's become a heretic. See, now it is more accepted.

Forty years ago, it was not so accepted in India. And then the news went round that Zac Poonen is also teaching that Jesus came like us and was tempted. Oh, another heresy.

And then the news went round. Not only that, he's also started a small group of his own. Finished.

That's the end of him. Good. When you're rejected by everybody, you've only got God left, right? My wife and I said, Lord, we've only got you now.

Everybody else has thrown us out. And the Lord asked me a question. If everybody chucks you, throws you out, will you still stand for the truths that I have revealed to you? And I said, yes.

I began to experience then the reality of sin shall not rule over you. I used to get angry. It's gone from my life completely.

It's true. I can say before God I never get angry with my wife. I don't know how many years ago was the last time I ever raised my voice at home.

It's all forgotten. Years, ages. I used to be so discouraged in those days.

I can tell you before God the last 40 years I've never been discouraged. I'm tempted to, but I keep on speaking in tongues till the discouragement goes. I never speak in tongues in public.

I don't want to impress people. I'm Pentecostal, by the way. I'm charismatic.

Why? You want to impress you? I'm not interested. It's a private love language between me and my bridegroom. Why should I say it to you? What you speak love words to your wife, do you want other people to listen to it? No.

That's why I don't speak in tongues in private, in public. I do it all the time in private. It's changed my prayer life.

I can lie down in bed in the morning when I get up and just keep praying to the Lord in tongues. To me that is what Paul said. Paul said in the church I'd rather speak five words in a known language than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue, but in private he says I speak in tongues more than all of you.

See, when you follow scripture you have the balanced understanding and experience of all these things. And in the beginning it looked as if everybody would reject us. We were rejected.

We were called heretics. The people put out tracts saying that the head of the serpent is in 16 Dacosta Square, which is my house. And we used to have a magazine called Hidden Treasures those days.

And I remember once when I went to Kerala they've distributed a tract called Hidden Poison. I remember when I went to Tamil Nadu one place. All the Pentecostal pastors there joined together and published a tract saying the false prophet has come to town.

And they distributed it outside our meeting place so that people wouldn't come. So I sent a word to them if you give me a few copies I said I'll give it to everybody inside the meeting hall also so that anybody who's scared go home now. I'm not afraid.

If God is with me let the whole world be against me. I will overcome. That is the faith the Lord gave me then and it is there with me today.

I don't want the support or the approval of a single human being. I did not need it 42 years ago and I don't need it now. That's why I'm not impressed by numbers.

I'm not impressed by a building. It means nothing to me. To tell you honestly in those days when we met in our house when we opened the offering box there'd be two rupees inside it.

Those were such blessed days because we had the presence of the Lord. We used to pray and fast every holiday. We would pray and fast.

We don't do that now. We become more posh. Did I hear you right Charles that you rode on a cycle from Koramangala? How many of you have come here on a cycle from Koramangala today? You see the difference? Koramangala, you know where that is? What's it 25 kilometers? More than that.

Cycling. See those are the type of people whom God brought. They were hungry.

They didn't say we'll go if it's convenient. If somebody gives us a free bus ride we'll go. This building doesn't impress me.

Some people come because it's a nice place, air-conditioned. It doesn't mean a thing to me. We had more anointing of the Spirit in those days.

We had fasted and prayed. We got to know the Lord those days and I want to say to you newcomers, seek that. Seek that.

Don't be bogged down by the shallowness that you see in some people who came to CFC years ago, who are backslidden, who have become rich but who lost the power and that fervent love for Jesus. Don't look at them. Look at Jesus.

God bless you. I want to sing a song which is a very favorite song of mine. Some of you brothers can come and help me, you song leaders.

It's called, By and by when I look on his face, beautiful face, thorn-shadowed face, I'll wish I had given him more. When I look at Jesus' face one day when he comes again and I look at my life and see what I gave him, I'll wish, in that day I'll wish I had given him more. Think of it now because now is the time.

Come please. Beautiful face, thorn-shadowed face. By and by when I look on his face, I'll wish I had given him more.

More, so much more. More of my life than I ever gave before. By and by when I look on his face.

I'll wish I had given him more. By and by when he holds on his hands, welcoming hands, nail-pierced hands. By and by when he holds on his hands, I'll wish I had given him more.

More, so much more. More of my life than I ever gave before. By and by when I look on his face.

I'll wish I had given him more. In the light of that heavenly face, light from his face, beautiful face, in the light of that heavenly place, I'll wish I had given him more. Now let's sing it with meaning.

More, so much more. More, so much more. More of my life than I ever gave before.

By and by when I look on his face. I'll wish I had given him more. Now let's bow our heads.

It's really going to be true. I sing that to myself often. I wish I had taken my life more seriously.

I wish I had taken sin more seriously. Many years of my life I regret, but no longer. I want to take this word seriously.

I will not look around at the bad examples of Christians I see around me anymore. I'll keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, where there's no disappointment. And I don't want, at least from a certain point in my life, I don't want it to be said, I wish I had given him more.

In the past, yes, but from a certain point in our life, we should be able to say, Lord, I don't wish that anymore, because I did give you everything. I didn't hold one thing back from you. Heavenly Father, help us all to take our Christian life more seriously.

Life is so short, you're coming back soon. We're going to see you face to face. We want to be ready.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/ZArUqoKJ2Vo.mp4>

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