

# Building the Body of Christ - 2 Jesus Is Our Example

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living like Jesus lived, with security in our father's love and being filled with the Holy Spirit, in order to show Christ in every part of the world.*

**Duration:** 57:26

**Scripture:** Luke 11:13, John 1:14, John 14:9, John 20:21, Romans 8:15

**Topics:** "Body Of Christ", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the concept of the church as the body of Christ, reflecting on how Jesus demonstrated the glory of the Father during his time on earth. It highlights the importance of believers understanding their role in showing the world what Christ is like, focusing on living a life that reflects God's character. The sermon also delves into the significance of believers being filled with the Holy Spirit to live a holy life and the need to have a deep assurance of God's love as a caring Father.

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## Transcript

The reason why the church is called the body of Christ When we think of the body of Christ, we think of the first body of Christ, which is Jesus himself. He lived as the body of Christ in Israel for thirty-three years. So only the people in Israel could be blessed or could see him.

But once he went up to heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit, so that his body could be seen everywhere in the world. So the church is supposed to show what Christ is like in every part of the world. Now, most Christians haven't understood that.

They've been used to going to church from childhood. They don't know what is the purpose of the church. Many people think the church is just to go around doing a lot of good to people.

You know, run hospitals and schools and things like that. Or help the poor people on the streets. All that is good.

But we need to see what is primary. It's not even preaching the gospel. If you look at John chapter 1, it says here that Jesus, verse 14, was the word that became flesh.

That was Jesus Christ. And lived among us. He lived among us and he demonstrated the glory of the Father.

So, that is what the first body of Christ did. He lived in the midst of people and showed the glory of the Father. Because, it says in verse 18, no one had seen God at any time.

So, somebody had to live on the earth to show what God was like. In the Old Testament, people only explained what God was like. Even the great prophets, they could only explain, God is like this.

They could say that God is holy, God is loving, all that. But no prophet would dare to say, God is like me. The first person who said that was Jesus Christ.

So, you want to know what God is like? Jesus said, you want to know what God is like? Look at me. He told his disciples, if you have seen me, you have seen the Father. He told his disciples, if you have seen me, you have seen the Father.

And what is the main reason that Jesus Christ came to this earth? And before he was killed in this world to atone for his sins, much before that, for 33 years, he showed the world what God is like. Then he died for the sins of the world. So, that is what the first body of Christ did.

So, when the church is called the body of Christ, that is to show the world what Christ is like. Because Jesus said, as the Father sent me, so send I you. The Father sent him to show the world what the Father was like.

And Jesus has sent us into the world to show the world what he is like. So, if you want to know what your calling is, you are a child or a man or a woman, it is to show other people what Christ is like. If you don't do that, then all our going for meetings and evangelism and activities is all a waste of time.

Supposing Jesus behaved in a very bad way in his home and then began to preach about God. That would be like a lot of Christians today. They don't behave properly at home, but they get up and preach so many wonderful things.

If Jesus had been like that, could he have said, if you have seen me, you have seen the Father. No, he couldn't have said that. He could not have said that.

Then he would have been like the Old Testament prophets, who could say, don't look at how I live, but listen to what I say. That's what most Christians say today. Please don't look at how I live.

Don't check up on my home life. Just listen to what I say. That is the clearest proof that such Christians and churches are living in the Old Covenant.

That is the clearest proof that such Christians and churches are living in the Old Covenant. We come into the New Covenant where we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Please don't misunderstand me.

I am not talking about speaking in tongues. I am only talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit. The unclean spirits make people unclean.

The evil spirits make people evil. Why can't the Holy Spirit make us holy? It's one of the greatest deceptions that the Holy Spirit only makes people speak in tongues, but doesn't make them holy. That is insulting the Holy Spirit.

To say that evil spirits do a perfect job of making people evil. But the Holy Spirit can't do such a perfect job. The difference is this.

That man surrenders to the evil spirit 100%. Believers surrender to the Holy Spirit about 10%. That's the problem.

The problem is not with the Holy Spirit, it's with believers. If you allow somebody to clean up 10% of your house, only 10% of your house will be clean. The other man allows the evil spirit to pollute his whole house, his whole house becomes filled with the evil spirit.

That's why you find evil people are very wholehearted. But the disciples of Jesus are not so wholehearted. Think of all these businessmen whose only interest in life is to make more money.

They work so hard. Early morning till late at night they work to make money. I'm almost certain that at night they dream about making money also.

But how many Christians dream about promoting the kingdom of God? What you dream about is usually an indication of what is really uppermost in your mind. We can fool everybody when we sit in a church that we are very holy. That you are very holy.

But you can't fool your inner man that knows what you are really interested in. And that inner man knows what you are interested in and that will give you that type of dreams at night. If he sees that even though you outwardly look holy, inside you are interested in sex, he will give you dreams about sex at night.

If he sees that even though you outwardly look holy, inside you are interested in sex, he will give you dreams about sex at night. If you are not interested in your wife but other women, he will give you pictures of other women in your mind and dreams at night. And he will give you dreams about making money.

So, our dreams are a pretty good indication of what your greatest desire really is. So I was thinking, if there were a few Christians who were as wholehearted as those businessmen are, we would have some wonderful churches on the earth. But for many Christians, church is sort of a small corner of their life.

It's not central. I'm not talking about having more meetings. Some people think more meetings means more spiritual.

No, it's not true. There are many monks and nuns who pray every day and have meetings every day. They are not the most spiritual people on the earth.

It's when you are gripped by the calling that people must see Christ in you. That is our calling. And every time we fail in that calling, we have to repent and weep.

So remember, that is our calling as the body of Christ. What the first body of Christ did 2000 years ago, we have to do today. That's what we saw yesterday.

Jesus said, the works I do, you will also do. So what are the works Jesus did? We are thinking of what he did in the first 30 years before he went out into his ministry. He was interested in God's word.

And he was subject to whatever authority God placed over him. But I want you to see the secret of his life in those years. Sometimes when we read the Bible very quickly, we miss some of these things.

I want to encourage you all to read the Bible slowly. Listen to what I am saying carefully. It's better to let the Bible go through us once in our lifetime, than we go through the Bible 50 times in our lifetime.

It's better to let the Bible go through us once. Than we read the Bible 50 times in our lifetime. Because you read the Bible 50 times, it just increases your knowledge.

For the Bible to go through us means, everything written there becomes true in my life. That means, I claim every promise. I obey every commandment.

Then this word will become flesh in me also. That's how it was with Jesus. Every promise that was in the word, he claimed in his life.

Every command that God gave, he obeyed. That is our calling. I don't know whether you see it like that.

If you see it like that, your life will be very happy. Jesus was the happiest person that ever lived on this earth. If you really follow in his footsteps, then we will be as happy as he was.

But the secret is, to claim every promise, and to obey every commandment. That's the meaning of the whole Bible going through us once. That's the meaning of the whole Bible going through us once.

I was thinking, why did God not remove all our enemies? Then how will God's word be fulfilled, which says, love your enemies? How can you love your enemies, if you don't have any enemies? If nobody curses you, how can you bless those who curse you? How can you do good to those who do evil to you, if nobody does any evil to you? So I have learned to thank God for my enemies. They helped me to obey one scripture. They helped me to obey one scripture.

I thank God for those who curse me. Because they helped me to obey the scripture, which says, bless those who curse you. When people come and gossip to me about other people.

Yeah, that's also good. Because it helps me to obey one word. Because it helps me to obey one word.

Which says, don't judge by what you hear. That's Isaiah 11, verse 3. Don't judge by what you hear. So if I don't hear gossip, how will I fulfill that verse? So if I don't hear gossip, how will I fulfill that verse? People come and tell me all types of things.

I say, okay, I listen to it, but I'm not going to judge. I'm not going to pass a judgment on that. But most human beings are not like that.

As soon as they hear, they judge. Because we like to believe the worst. Because we like to believe the worst things about other people.

The race of Adam is like that. All the children of Adam are like that. If you hear something good about somebody, you find it difficult to believe it.

If you hear something bad, you say, yeah, it must be true. When we become Christians, God turns us around. Then we would rather believe something good than believe something bad.

No, we prefer to believe what is good about other people than what is bad about them. So, this is what it means to become like Christ. So I want you to see the secret of his life.

How did he live like this for 30 years? It wasn't easy for him. Because we read in Mark chapter 6, something about his home. Mark 6, verse 3. The first thing you learn, he was a carpenter.

Which means his home was a very poor home. He didn't have a private bedroom all to himself. And he had four brothers, their names are all written here.

He was the eldest. Then next to him was James, and Joseph, and Judas, and Simon. So James and Jude, the first and the third, are the ones who have written the letters of James and Jude in the Bible.

But they were not converted in the beginning. They got converted after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And it says here he had sisters, verse 3. I don't know how many.

Sisters means at least two, maybe more. So that means he had at least four brothers and two sisters, younger to him. So think of this house.

The father and mother. And then Joseph must have died long ago because we don't hear about him. Joseph.

So he must have died when Jesus was a young man. No, Joseph died. Joseph died when Jesus was young.

So it was his mother, and his four brothers and two sisters. He was the oldest man in the house. He had the responsibility to take care of a family of seven other people.

None of us have such a big responsibility. To look after a family of seven people, that's quite a big responsibility. To have a widowed mother.

And on top of that we read in John chapter 7. Verse 5. That Jesus' brothers did not believe in him. You know, Mary would have told them. Told the other children.

Your eldest brother especially, he was not born through Joseph like the rest of you. He was born in a special way in which nobody in the world was born. The Holy Spirit came upon me and produced him.

You think those brothers believed it? If your mother told you such a story, would you believe it? He said, Mom, don't tell us such stories. That's what all those brothers said. And sisters.

And they made fun of him. They must have troubled him in so many ways for all those 30 years. But he never sinned even once.

If you ask me what is the greatest miracle Jesus did, it's the fact that he never sinned in such a home for 30 years. So many Christians, I have heard them complain like this. Oh brother, there is nobody in my home who is a believer.

It's so difficult. It's so difficult. My brothers trouble me, my mother troubles me, my sisters trouble me.

Jesus is your example. Look how he lived. He was tempted just like us, it says.

If I want to build the body of Christ, then I must seek to understand how Jesus lived on this earth. And say, Lord, I want to live like that. And the whole training of Jesus was in a home where other than his mother, nobody believed in him.

And all children know. Supposing you have four younger brothers and two younger sisters who are always irritating you. If you have a husband or a wife who is always troubling you, even to live one week without sin is difficult.

Imagine living 30 years like that without sinning even once in your thoughts. Do not even have one bad thought about your husband or wife or about your family. Or about your brothers or sisters.

Or brother-in-law or mother-in-law or anybody. I tell you, even one day is difficult. So many Christians say, follow, follow, I will follow Jesus anywhere, everywhere.

It's all rubbish they are singing. And then there are many Christians who sing that I will follow Jesus completely, but this is a lot of nonsense. Where are you going to follow him? Why not start following him in your home first? The Bible says that if a man cannot take care of his own home, he can't take care of a church.

That's 1 Timothy 3. So, if I can't live this life at home, what's the use of telling other people about it? See, a lot of people say, we must give the gospel, give the gospel to everybody. I agree 100% with that. Because Jesus said, go into all the world and preach the gospel.

But he also said, as the father sent me, so send I you. That means, when you go out and preach the gospel, do it the way I did. I showed people what God is like and then preached the gospel.

I showed people what God is like and then preached the gospel. Jesus didn't say, don't look at me, just listen to my message. That is old testament.

But the prophet said, listen to the message. They never said, look at my life. Jesus was the first person who said, follow me.

The next person who said that was Paul. He said, follow me as I follow Christ. Nobody in the old testament could dare to say that.

We have to follow Jesus and Paul. Follow me as I follow Christ. So, we see that Jesus lived in that home, such a difficult home situation, in such purity.

There were two secrets of his life. One, he had such security that his father loved him. He knew, I am the son of God.

He didn't live in doubt about that all the time. He was absolutely sure, I am the son of God. God is my, the father loves me.

The second thing, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. So, I want to say to you, if you want to live like Jesus lived, you need the same two things. You need to be absolutely sure that your heavenly father loves you.

You must be absolutely sure that you are a child of God. One whom God loves, not one whom God is always angry with. Secondly, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Like the way Jesus was filled. Jesus never spoke in tongues. Jesus never spoke in tongues.

This gift of tongues was given to us by God because we are weak through our bodies. This is a very good gift. I see that it is very effective.

But it is because we are weak physically. Jesus never needed it. And when we get to heaven, we won't need it at all.

So, that's not the major thing. The major thing is that the Holy Spirit helps us to live a holy life. So, let's look at this first thing.

Luke chapter 2. Luke chapter 2. Remember what Jesus said at the age of 12. He said, Did you not know that I must be in my father's house? Just think about that. Do you see something special? Something never mentioned in the Old Testament.

God's house. That is mentioned in the Old Testament. But my father's house? Never.

That's the first time in the Bible that anybody says about God, my father. Or my father. Jesus was the first person who walked on this earth who kept on talking about God as my father.

And after his resurrection, he told Mary Magdalene, Go and tell my brothers I'm ascending to my father and your father. His father has now become our father. That was the number one secret of Jesus' life.

Theoretically, we all believe that God is our father. But to know it really, many Christians are like orphans. Let me take an example.

Supposing when a child is born, his father is in some far country. His father is in some far country. Soon after marriage, a few months after, his father had to go away.

So the child is born. The father is in some far country. And for 16 years, that father never comes back.

And you ask this child, where is your father? Is he living? Is your father living? Yeah, he's living. Where is he? Far country. Have you seen him? No.

This is how many Christians are. And think if that child's mother also went off to a far country. And think if that child's mother also went off to a far country.

And this poor child just lives alone. Where is your father? Where is your mother? They are far away. Once in a while I can telephone them.

Can you imagine how such a child will grow up? Like an orphan. So many other children around, they can go to their father and mother whenever they have a need. But this poor child doesn't have a father or mother.

That is exactly how many Christians are. Yeah. They have a father up there in heaven.

But they do not know whether he can come and help them in all their practical problems on the earth. Many Christians have got a very helpless God who doesn't help them at all. If they have a problem, this God cannot help them.

If they have a sickness, this God cannot heal them. They have to depend 100% on human beings for everything. Or their own resources.

If they have a financial need, this God is helpless. He can't help them. This God doesn't seem to be bothered whether you have a job or no job.

This God can't help your children in any way. What type of God is this? What type of God is this? But you ask yourself if this is not true of your experience. But you ask yourself if this is not true of your experience.

We go to some church and we tell our children to believe in this God. But the children are trying to believe in a God who doesn't seem to help them in any way. It's like saying, children, your daddy is in a far country.

Of course, he never sends us any money, never does anything, but he is there. And you think those children are going to have any confidence in such a father who doesn't care for them one bit? I'll tell you honestly, many of us are raising our children like that. I'll tell you honestly, many of us are raising our children like that.

And we ourselves are like that. And the first thing we need to experience is what Jesus knew from childhood. I don't have an imaginary father in heaven, I have a real father.

I don't have an imaginary father in heaven, I have a real father in heaven. I have a real father in heaven. You may think you know that.

You may think you know that. But I'll tell you my testimony. But I'll tell you my testimony.

For 16 years of my life, after being born again, I lived like that. After I was born again, I lived like that. And all those years, I was insecure and defeated.

And my home life was miserable And my home life was miserable My home life. My home life. It was because I didn't know God is my father.

If you had asked me, I'd say, yeah, God is my father, but I did not know the reality of it. And one day, I read this verse. You know, many crises in my life, it's one verse of scripture that has changed me.

Many times. Fifty years ago, I read a verse in John 6, 37. That him that cometh to me, I will never cast out, the last part.

I doubted my salvation for so many years when I read that verse, I believed it. You know, some of you children here, young people, you may not be sure that your sins are forgiven. Here's what God's word says, if you come to Jesus, he will not cast you out.

He will accept you. If you believe it, like I believed it 50 years ago, you can be sure. But even after I was sure that my sins are forgiven and Christ has accepted me, I had so many anxieties and fears and doubts in this world.

I was afraid of the devil. I was afraid of the future. There were so many concerns in my mind, anxieties.

I used to be discouraged and depressed often. And when you're like that, you get angry with people also very quickly. If you're like that, that's exactly how I was as a born again believer.

But something happened, a little over 30 years ago, I saw another verse, 34 years ago, Luke 11, verse 13, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? That was another thing, I'd asked God to fill me with the Holy Spirit hundreds of times. Just like earlier I asked Jesus to come into my heart 500 times, then one day I was sure Then I said, Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit, fill me with the Holy Spirit, fill me with the Holy

Spirit. I was never sure.

Till one day I believed, how can God refuse that to me, if he's my father? And I believed and I was filled. So much we miss by not believing. You can have the city corporation connect water to your house, but if you don't open the tap, you won't get the water.

You have to open the tap. That's faith. That is faith.

The water can come right up to your house. You don't open the tap, you don't get it. Your house is exactly like some other house which doesn't have a water connection.

It's faith that makes the difference. Then the next thing that happened in my life was, I was so insecure, like an orphan. Till I read this verse in John 17 and verse 23.

John 17, 23 is one of the greatest truths in the whole Bible. I personally believe it is the greatest truth in the whole Bible. Like a little child would say, You ask him, what is the Bible saying? Jesus loves me, this I know.

That is the greatest truth in the whole Bible. And that's what we see here in John 17, 23. The father loves me, just like he loved Jesus Christ.

Now you can hear that, you've probably heard me say that many times. But it's like people hear the gospel hundreds of times, but they never respond to it. I mean you heard that Christ died for your sins many times, but one day it hit you and you were born again.

You didn't get converted the first time you heard Christ died for your sins. I mean I heard it from childhood. I mean 4-5 years old I heard Christ died for my sins.

But I was 19 before it became really true in my life. I knew God was my father from childhood. I was taught at home from childhood to pray our father who art in heaven.

I used to always pray that prayer before I got out of bed even when I was 6, 7, 10 years old. Our father who art in heaven. But it wasn't real in my life.

I had this powerful almighty father in heaven who would not help me in anything. Who was pretty helpless. But one day I believed it.

I am not an orphan. I have a father in heaven who loves me just like he loved Jesus. Like Jesus could pray to the father for anything he faced on the earth.

I can pray to the same father for anything I want. Like an earthly loving father who doesn't give his children everything they ask for. I think I loved my children very much but I never gave them many things they asked for.

I give them what I know is good for them. They can ask me for anything. You know your 3 year old can sit on your lap and say dad get me an aeroplane, a big one, real one.

Or I want a real elephant in my house as a pet. They can ask for anything and we can also ask our father for anything. But all the stupid requests we don't give our children.

But what is good for them. They say mummy I am hungry or I am thirsty. We always do something.

Oh mummy my leg is always paining can you see what's wrong with it. See those things you don't delay in answering. Immediately you do something.

Do you have a father in heaven who doesn't care about these things? Many Christians are like that. The secret of Jesus life was when he said father he knew he had a father there. I want to tell you the Holy Spirit comes to give us the same assurance.

See Romans chapter 8 verse 15 The Holy Spirit comes within us and cries out the last part of verse 15. Abba father. Hey Abba which means like daddy.

It's like a very intimate word. It's like a very close intimate relationship between a child and his father. I want to ask you do you know God like that? That is the main secret of a victorious life.

To know that God in heaven is my own daddy. I can have a thousand problems on this earth. There is not even one of them which my father cannot solve.

He can solve all of them. He can do everything. Do you know God like this? We carry burdens which we are not supposed to carry.

Which we should cast on God. Because he cares for us. Do you live like that? Do you know I am supposed to live on earth without a single burden on my heart? When you travel in a train.

Do you allow your 2 year old child to carry some heavy suitcase? No. You carry that. Because he is so young.

I find life is so wonderful when I have learned to trust God like a little child. I say Lord these burdens are too heavy for me. I am a child.

You carry it. Look at the number of believers who are weighed down with worries and anxieties. Have you heard that little poem of two birds talking to each other? One bird is talking to another bird.

Why are these human beings always so worried and anxious about so many things? The other bird says. Maybe they don't have a heavenly father like we have. We are so happy we can sing the whole day because we have got a father in heaven.

We don't have a bank account. We don't have any storage. But we get food everyday.

We don't have a bank account. We don't have any storage. But we get food everyday.

These human beings have got a lot of money in their bank account. They have got a house, everything. But they are so worried.

Maybe they don't have a heavenly father. Think about that. Heavenly father.

Help us to know you better. As a father. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

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