

Changing Our Way of Thinking

by Zac Poonen

The Christian life is about being more than conquerors, and true spirituality is about having a right mind and being obedient to God's commands.

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Scripture: Luke 10:41

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Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being more like conquerors in the Christian life, focusing on the need to avoid complaining, serve with a thankful heart, listen to God's word, and avoid judging others based on appearances. It highlights the value of gratitude, humility, and seeking God's will above all else.

Transcript

The Christian life is one where we are always to be more than conquerors, no matter what happens. They couldn't do that in the Old Testament. I mentioned to you yesterday about the book of Joel.

Did he preserve a pure testimony? Let's look at that for a moment. God could boast about him. The first book of the Bible writes about a man whom God could boast about to Satan.

Blameless, upright, fearing God, turning away from evil, and he was rich. Some of God's people are rich. We don't seek to be rich.

The love of money is the root of all evil. But some Christians feel that if you are wholehearted you will be poor. Usually because they themselves are poor.

And then they can become jealous of spiritually minded believers who have more than them. There are people in our country who are very fine believers, perhaps better than many of us. Who do not have the money to travel from their town to Bangalore for a conference.

And that's why they can't come. Do you think they are going to miss out on God's plan and purpose for their life? Just because they don't have 200 rupees to travel here? Impossible. There is no partiality with God.

He will probably bless them in a way that none of us will get blessed. God loves his children. They are all equal to him.

Think if you had children somewhere and you had to isolate them in a room because they were sick. Wouldn't you care for them? You would probably care more for that child than the others who are healthy. God is like that.

He is a father. He is a mother. He says, even a mother may forget her sucking child, but I will not forget you.

In my early Christian years, I never lived with that assurance. I was always tossed about. I didn't know what God had done.

I always felt God was looking at me with a frown and saying, you are still not good enough. I lived under that misery as a child of God for many years. The trouble with that is, we become like the God we worship.

There is a verse in the Psalms that says, those who make idols become like them. We become like the God we worship. If you have a God who is always frowning at you, do you know how you are going to look at other people? Frowning at them.

When you see some person who is supposed to be a believer frowning at you, don't get angry. The poor guy is worshipping some idol in his mind. Not the real God of the Bible.

Not the Lord Jesus Christ, whose face shines upon us. There is a blessing that the Lord told... It's a beautiful verse. Let me turn there first.

Numbers chapter 6. The Lord told Moses, tell Aaron, verse 22, read the Bible slowly. You get so many blessings by reading the Bible slowly. I found that.

I am not in a rush. I have said this many times. I am not in a rush to go through the Bible 50 times in my life.

If the Bible goes through me once, that will do. So, what do you get from this verse? The Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to Aaron. That's all.

Just that much. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to Aaron. What do you get from that? What I get from that is that the Lord can speak to some people, like Moses, but he cannot speak to other people, like Aaron.

So, he has to tell Moses, listen, that guy is spiritually dead. Go and tell him. The elders in Laodicea, in Revelation chapter 2 and 3, they were dead.

They couldn't see their true condition. God had to send a prophet and an apostle, like John, to go and tell those elders, this is your condition. Were they under the old covenant, where God had to speak to them through a prophet? No.

They were in the new covenant. This is 65 years after the day of Pentecost. New covenant believers, unable to hear God speaking to them about their real condition.

I believe there are multitudes like that. Why do you have to wait until you come to a conference or a meeting to get your real condition exposed? Brothers, sisters, there is a better way where you can hear God showing you your condition every day. It's like getting a free scan of your inner life every day.

It's much more serious, these spiritual problems, than cholesterol and blood pressure and diabetes and other problems that scans can show you. We are so careful about all these things. People say, after you cross a certain age, you must have a check-up every year, etc.

Medical check-up. I want to say, as soon as you are born again, you should be having a check-up every day. Every day.

Because there are things more serious than blood pressure and high cholesterol and diabetes, etc. That can destroy us much more than those things. So, we need to hear God speak to us.

We shouldn't have God to say, okay, God is to tell somebody, go and tell so and so. Why should He tell him to tell you? Okay. Read the Bible slowly and you get some challenges like that.

Speak to Aaron anyway, saying, this is the way you must bless the sons of Israel. The Lord bless you and keep you, and the Lord make His face shine upon you. You know, this is how you must bless the sons of Israel.

What about today? Is the Lord's face shining upon me right now? I believe that. You must believe it, brother or sister. But you say, oh Lord, I'm such a bad person.

Well, you know you're aware of that because you have a sensitive conscience. It's that other guy who thinks he's a good person, on whom perhaps the Lord is frowning. But you have a sensitivity in your conscience that says, Lord, I feel so guilty about little things I do.

Praise the Lord. I pray that your sensitivity will increase to even smaller things. To little words and little attitudes that disturb you.

Because you want to be a burning, pure, burning bush for Jesus. And it's not always by convicting, convicting, convicting that we get spiritual. We first need to see that the Lord's face shines upon us.

That He is really, He loves us and He rejoices over us with singing. It says in Zephaniah 3, 17. He rejoices over us with singing.

Have you seen sometimes mothers singing to their little two-month-old babies who can't understand one little word of what the mother is singing? There are doctors who now encourage mothers to sing to the babies inside the womb. And there are mothers who do it. Sing to the baby.

Put your hand over your womb and sing and pray and talk to the baby. And I believe they hear. And can you, when the Bible says God's like a mother and a father, I believe He sings over us.

He rejoices over us. The favorite picture I have in my mind of God now, not in the old days. In the old days I had this frowning God looking upon me.

But the picture I have now in my mind when it says, can a mother forget her second child, Isaiah 49, 15. Even they may forget, but I won't forget you. Is the picture of a married woman who never had children for 15 years.

Picture this in your mind. A woman who had no children for 15 years. Faithful, seeking, praying.

Something like Hannah in the Old Testament. Praying, praying, praying. And I can imagine when Hannah got Samuel, baby.

How do you think Hannah looked at Samuel? This child, I call him Samuel, I asked of the Lord. I asked the Lord and He gave me a child. When she picked up Samuel for the first time after many years of having no children.

How do you think Hannah looked at? Guess. And that seriously. She was so excited.

And she probably said so many things to him which Samuel couldn't understand. She was so excited. That's how God looks at you.

And believe it or not, that's how God looks at you. You have heard so many preachers tell you lies. About how God looks at you and you believe them.

And on top of that, when those preachers tell you lies about God frowning at you. The devil comes along and says, that's right. I remember the years when I always used to feel that God's only message to me was.

You're still not good enough. If you want to destroy your children. I'll give you a prescription.

Don't take it. I'm just warning you. How to destroy your children quickly.

Whatever they do, say, still not good enough. You'll destroy them in no time. And by the time they're 18, they'll run away from your home.

Never to come back. And probably it's good they don't come back to a home like that. God is not like that.

God's not like that. If you're unfortunate enough to have a father and mother. Who only told you, you're not good enough.

Or to say, nothing good will come out of you. I want to tell you, God's not like that. He's very different.

I remember once. I've had a few dreams in my life. Which were from the Lord.

Very few. Every dream is not from the Lord. Maybe 1% or less.

My dreams are from the Lord. And one day I had a dream. Many years ago.

Where I had been speaking in a meeting. In the dream. And I was walking back to.

The room where I was staying. That conference site. And I had poured out my heart.

At the meeting. At this conference meeting. It wasn't here.

I didn't live the picture. It was in some other country. And I was walking back.

And as I was walking back. I felt really. I poured out my heart.

And I heard a voice behind me saying. In the dream. That wasn't good enough.

You could have done better. My heart sank in my dream. And I said to the Lord.

In my dream. I said, Lord. It's not wise.

When I talk to you face to face. You always encourage me. But when I hear a voice.

Coming from behind me. It's almost so discouraging. The Lord said to me.

In my dream. Turn around and look. And see who it is.

I turned around and looked. It was the devil. Imitating God's voice.

As soon as I turned around. He fled. I learned a lesson that day.

God spoke to me. Through a dream. He does speak through dreams sometimes.

That I'll never forget. That the voice that says. You're still not good enough.

You think it's the Holy Spirit. Challenging you to press on to perfection. Like it says here.

This is the voice of the Holy Spirit. Challenging me to press on to perfection. But doesn't it discourage you? It's not the voice of the Holy Spirit.

What is the meaning of a deceiver? The devil is called a deceiver. A deceiver is one. Who tries to imitate the currency note.

Exactly like that. Or if he's trying to speak to you on a phone. He will try to imitate.

The voice of your husband or wife. Who loves you so much. Or your father or mother.

Imitating so you think it is your father. It's not your father. It's the devil.

We need to identify the voice of the devil. For example. A voice that says.

Come on. Do it quickly. Don't wait.

Don't wait. Obey God immediately. It is always the devil.

God never speaks like that. He gives us time. To be sure.

If you're not sure. You're not disobedient. I hope that will liberate many of you.

So. I'm not doing what God has told me. Are you sure God has told you to do that? No brother Zach.

I'm not sure. I'm still considering. Then.

Don't do it. When you have perfect peace in your heart. That's the time you know.

That's really the Holy Spirit. You consider a course of action. And you don't have peace in your heart.

A little disturbance. It's not the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit telling you.

That's the wrong way. He disturbs us in our heart. Because there's a beautiful verse.

Remember this. Romans 8 verse 6. The mind of the Holy Spirit is always light and peace. The mind of the Holy Spirit is light and peace.

It's a beautiful verse. That's how we know the will of God today. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was outside people.

He came upon people from outside. So he spoke to people from outside. And so they had to hear God through this ear.

But the wonderful thing about the New Covenant is that the Holy Spirit has come inside. So once he comes inside he doesn't speak through this ear. But speaks from inside.

So if somebody comes to me and tells me. Sometimes you read testimonies like that. And they are true.

Like the Apostle Paul on the Damascus Road. I heard the audible voice of God with this ear. I say great.

But I've got something better. I hear the voice of God inside. There are many people who think that to hear with this ear is better than to hear inside.

You really believe that? How many of you believe that it's better to have the Holy Spirit outside you than inside you? You've got to be off your head to think that it's better to have the Holy Spirit outside you than inside you. Now why in the world do you think that the Holy Spirit speaking outside you is better than the Holy Spirit speaking inside? I'll tell you. When you hear the voice of God.

If ever you hear it. By the way, I've never heard the voice of God with this ear. And I'm not so keen on hearing it either.

One day I will when I see him face to face. But when I hear somebody saying that, it doesn't excite me. And when I was young and immature and I thought like a child, I said boy, that would be great.

Usually that feeling comes so that I can get up and give a testimony. I heard God with this ear so that I'm a big man. A lot of things is for testimony.

It's for the honor of men. Forget it. If you forget about seeking the honor of men, you know the will of God pretty quickly.

So the Lord make his face shine upon you. Lift up his face upon you and give you peace. Number 626.

That is how we know we're going in the right direction. Peace in our heart. Confirmed in Romans 8 6. The mind of the Spirit is peace.

And that's why when it comes to finding the will of God, it says in Romans 12 verse 2 that it's by the renewing of our mind that we are transformed into the likeness of Christ. I want to read Romans 12 very slowly with you and explain it. I don't want to be conformed to this world.

I want to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. And how does that happen? By the renewing of my mind. Now that verse teaches me some things.

It teaches me that being conformed to this world is in the mind. My brothers and sisters, please understand this. When a sister dresses in a worldly way, copying the models on television and in the movies, her problem is not her dress.

Her problem is her mind. You can change her dress and force her to wear some modest clothes. You have not made her spiritual.

You have just made her a bed of parrots. You've got to change the mind because worldliness, read this verse, don't be conformed to the world in your mind, but be transformed in your mind. It's the mind.

And the devil is not after your dress, he's after your mind. If he can get your mind, he can make you worldly, even with modest clothes. You know, I once shocked people in CFC by saying, I would rather have in our church a number of sisters who wear jeans, short hair, don't cover their head, and sleeveless blouses, and lipstick, and mascara, and rouge, and I don't know what all the other things they use nowadays, there's a few things they use in the olden days.

I'm not up to date on these things. Whatever it is, sitting there, but who never gossip, never backbite against others, who are helping the poor, caring for others, serving others, and praying for God's work, and burdened for the work of the Lord, and who never speak evil of others, and who have overcome anger, I would rather have a hundred sisters like that, and all these holy sisters who come, covering their heads, and wearing modest clothes, and go home, and backbite, and gossip, and lose their temper, and romantic, read romantic novels, and all that type of stuff, any day, any day, those Pharisees, who would judge these people like that. Of course, I'm not saying that I, that we should dress like that, I'm comparing that, it's like saying, if I have to lose one hand, I'd rather lose my left hand, because I use my right hand much more.

Of course, the best is to have both hands. So I say the best is if you are dressed modestly and well also, but the mind is fundamental. I hope you understand this.

True spirituality is in your mind. So often, that's why Jesus said, never judge a person according to his outward appearance. Do you know what is the most, according to my understanding, the most disobeyed command among spiritually minded believers, not among all believers, the most disobeyed commandment among legalistic believers, let's say.

I'll show it to you. John chapter 7, and verse 24. John 7, verse 24, where Jesus said, a very clear do not, but believers do.

Do not judge according to the appearance, but judge with righteous judgment. I am convinced that is the most disobeyed commandment by holy legalistic believers, who are doing everything right on the outside, who look so holy, and always talk holy words, but who judge by what they see. Jesus said, never do it.

The same God who said, do not commit murder, do not commit adultery, do not judge according to the appearance. Now, which of these commands are important, and which are unimportant? You've got to be a conceited snob, to think that you can determine which do not of God is important, and which is not important. How many of you would go and commit murder, when God said do not commit murder? How many of you would commit adultery, if you say don't commit adultery? How many of you would judge according to the outward appearance? You who judge another person for committing adultery, you say the commandment says, do not commit adultery.

He can turn around to you and say, the commandment says, do not judge according to the outward appearance. Your mouth is shut. He who is without sin, let him pass the first stone.

You know why we don't see these things? Because we don't read the Bible slowly. People fight about versions. Which version is important? You take any version that says, don't judge according to the outward appearance.

It's a crazy thing. You know how the devils got Christians fighting about versions, instead of disobedience. Disobedience.

I've had arguments with people who talk about King James Version in the United States. I said, do you know that in India, we have 20 at least major languages and 300 dialects, and Bibles in many of those languages, and none of them are King James Version. What do you do? Tell them not to read the Bible.

None of them are from the same manuscript as the King James Version. Not even one of those translations. The trouble with a lot of people who argue about these things is they've never lived in India.

They've never lived in a third world country. They never know the problems here. If you go to the Bible, you realize that obedience is more important.

Obedience. There are many Old Testament verses quoted in the New Testament. Compare them.

You'll find they're completely different. You say, hey, this doesn't look like that Old Testament verse. That's right.

Because this verse is not quoted from the original Hebrew. It's quoted from a translation called the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which is about 120 years before Christ. And from that they quote, and sometimes there's a difference, and the Holy Spirit takes it.

There are some people who got terribly upset with me because I used some paraphrases, like the Living Bible and the Messianic Bible. I tell you, the tribe of legalists will never die in Christendom. They'll always be there.

Who are occupied with versions and versions and instead of being occupied with obedience. Obedience. Which version says you should not take up the cross? Which version is there which says you can follow Jesus without dying to yourself daily? Show me one in any version of the Bible.

Every single version says you cannot follow Jesus unless you deny yourself every day and take up the cross every day, you cannot follow Jesus. I mean, that's one of the most important commands of Jesus. And so we've got to be very careful about these things.

It says about Jesus in Isaiah chapter 11, beautiful verse that many times comes to me, that teaches me what is the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and what is the mark of the fear of the Lord. You have two very important things, let me show you. From Isaiah chapter 11.

Because a lot of people say it's speaking in tongues. Is the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit? I beg to disagree. Jesus never spoke in tongues and great men like D.L. Moody and Charles Phinney were baptized in the Holy Spirit, never spoke in tongues.

I speak in tongues, but that's not the mark of being filled with the Spirit, I'm thankful for it. But I say that's not the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit. When you're filled with the Holy Spirit, Romans 5, to me is the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The love of God is shed abroad in your heart, you love Jesus with all your heart and you love other people like Jesus loved them. Then you're filled with the Holy Spirit. Otherwise you're not, no matter which tongue you're speaking.

Now Isaiah 11, it says here about Jesus, the Spirit of God being upon Jesus, in verse 2. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon, it's referring to Jesus in verse 1. From the stem of Jesse, who was the father of David, and Jesus called the son of David. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him. There's the Spirit of Wisdom, it's a 7-fold Holy Spirit described in Revelation.

Here is the 7-fold Holy Spirit that you'll read of in Revelation. The Spirit of Jehovah, Spirit of Wisdom, Spirit of Understanding, Spirit of Council, Spirit of Strength, Spirit of Knowledge, Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. Then you have all 7. These are all characteristics of one Holy Spirit.

And then he expands on the last characteristic. The Spirit of God, if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, will bring within you a tremendous fear of God. Tremendous reverence for God.

And when a tremendous reverence for God comes upon you, here is one way to know it. He will delight. He will delight in reverencing God.

A man who is filled with the Spirit will delight in reverence for God. He will not be moved by all these flippant choruses written by half-converted cowboys. This emotional type of, Oh Lord Jesus, hold me close and all that type of stuff.

He'll delight in reverence for the Lord. And then one mark of his life will be that he will not judge anything by what he sees or what he hears. Verse 3. But he will still judge.

He's not a zombie walking around saying, I don't have any opinions. He's got some very strong opinions. Jesus had strong opinions.

He called the Pharisees a generation of vipers. Sure. He called Herod a fox.

He wasn't a man without opinions. When I say it's no longer I, my thoughts have died. Christ lives in me.

Christ will have some opinions. The Christ who lives in me will look at certain people and see that they are a generation of vipers. He will look at certain people and see they are foxes.

He will tell me, don't throw your pearls before swine. He will tell me who the swine are. I won't call them that.

But he'll tell me to avoid throwing my pearls to them. He'll tell me, don't give that which is holy to the dogs. And then he will show me who the dogs are.

I won't call them dogs. No, that's not my business. But I won't give what is holy to them.

I don't go around giving holy things to people who don't appreciate them. Now what's the use putting a Bible in front of a dog? He'll just tear it apart. It's useless giving the word to people who don't appreciate it.

So, it says here that he will judge righteously, but it will not be by what he sees and hears. Now let me tell you brothers and sisters, I'm talking about having a pure testimony. This purity has to come from inside.

And it comes with a reverence for the Lord. It comes by not judging according to what we see and hear. A lot of pollution, a lot of pollution that prevents the bush from burning is because we are judging with the wrong system.

You know they say if you put red glasses everything looks red, even the grass is red. Because your glasses are red. You take it off and then you will see properly.

And we are all born as children of Adam with sort of colored glasses. We look at everybody with prejudice. We can never believe that anybody does anything with a good motive.

We can never believe that a preacher doesn't, that there are a few preachers in the world who are not interested in money. I know the number of accusations I have faced when I say we never ask for money, we never send reports, and I never made my needs known to anyone in 70 years. And we have never made our needs known in our church for 35 years.

People can't believe it. It can't be true. There cannot be such human beings in the world.

They always believe the worst about others. If you will look into your mind, you will see that you prefer to believe something bad about someone than something good. You rejoice to hear something bad about other people's children, not about your own children, other people, particularly some people you don't like, than about your own children.

Because we have this corrupt thing called the flesh, which does nothing good. You hear some little rumor about something happening in some group, you say, and you spread the story before the day is over. There's a worldly proverb that says lies and errors go right around the world while truth is still putting on its shoes.

It hasn't even started walking, but lies and errors have already traveled the world by the time truth is put on its shoes. So, this is how it is. The race of Adam is like that because they talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and most of their talk is some gossip they heard about somebody else, which doesn't help them to become holier, doesn't help anybody else to become holier.

And to have, try and have the worst possible opinion about believers whom you don't like. You know what you need, brother? You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. All your speaking in tongues is garbage.

If the Holy Spirit is not able to stop you from judging according to what you see and what you hear, I would advise you, please listen to me seriously, stop speaking in tongues and concentrate on your mind and say, Lord, I'll start speaking in tongues again after I get my mind and my thoughts right. Because otherwise you fool yourself that you're filled with the Holy Spirit. You're not.

You're not. Yeah, we have problems like that. The problems in churches, problems with elders and problems all because the mind, the mind, they think too much of themselves, they judge according to what they see, what they hear.

See, the entire race of Adam, all the information that we have today in our mind, most of it, not all of it, it all comes through our five senses, you know, by taste and touch. But most, etc., but most of our information in our mind has come through our eyes and ears. I would say almost 95% of the information we have in our mind is by what we see and read and hear.

See, that's why television is such a powerful tool, much more powerful than radio. Radio never corrupted people as much as television. Because in television you have sight as well as hearing.

And hearing is bad enough, but sight added to it, oh, pollutes you thoroughly. And all the worldly advertising media and psychologists and all know that. That's why we've got to be very careful about what you watch on television.

You've got to be careful about watching you know, the commercials that come in between these pure sports programs that you're watching. The commercial, that's, I tell you, two seconds is enough to pollute your mind. Two seconds.

Because you know, people who say that I watched a very good movie, there was only two seconds of some dirty sex scene. You know, 20 years later, you won't remember the story in the movie, but you will remember that two seconds that you saw. That's the power of evil.

And that's why we've got to be careful about our mind. Watch your mind, guard it with all diligence. But all the children of Adam have got their information by what they see and what they hear.

I remember very clearly the Lord speaking to me through this verse many years ago and saying, if you want to think like I think, Romans 12, to be renewed in your mind by the transformation of your mind, be transformed by the renewing of your mind, you have to deliberately discipline yourself. It's a discipline. You know, discipline is very difficult.

To get up in the morning and do certain things at a particular time and read the Bible regularly or do some physical exercise regularly, it is extremely difficult. It's a discipline, but those who do it, they get the benefit of it. You see, people are fit and healthy because they keep that discipline.

People get to know the scriptures and get to know God because they discipline themselves. There's no spiritual progress without discipline. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not a substitute for discipline because the Bible says in 2 Timothy 1 7, God has given us the spirit, not the spirit of fear, but the spirit of discipline.

Spirit of love and power and discipline. That's one translation of it. God gives us the spirit of discipline and He wants us to cooperate with Him in that discipline.

And one of the disciplines we need is, I see something and I say, Lord, I don't know, there could be another reason for it, I don't know. I hear something and I say, well, I don't know if it's true or not. Now, I've made numerous mistakes in this, even as an elder.

I've sometimes acted as soon as I heard something and afterwards regretted it because I discovered I didn't have all the facts. I heard one side. You know that in every situation or argument there are three sides.

What one side says and what the other side says and the truth. Which is neither what this brother says or what the other brother says who's against him. The truth is somewhere in between what these folks say.

Because we all have a tendency, unless you become more Christ-like, when you present your version of a particular problem you had with a brother or with your wife or husband, you won't tell a lie. But you will only tell that which puts you in a favorable light. Like if you have two children and they fought with one another and one says, Dad, he hit me.

Absolute truth. What he won't say is how he hit him first. That part he won't say.

He didn't tell a lie. He said, my brother hit me. Correct.

Then you have to ask him, did you hit him first? Yes. You know there are 50-year-old believers like that who will not tell the whole truth. And because they don't love the truth, God allows them to be deceived in a hundred other areas.

If you want God to save you and make you more Christ-like, love the truth. I have almost never found a believer in my life. There are a few perhaps, but very rare, who when they face a problem with another person will come and tell the whole truth.

Brother Zach, this is a situation. This is what I did. I want to tell you what I did and what I didn't do, which I should have done with the various things.

And this is what he did. Boy, I would love to have such brothers and sisters in the church. But I rarely find them.

I get emails from even elders telling me all the things that somebody else did. Not one sentence about the wrong they did. They are like God.

God is the only one who never does any wrong. And I'm sorry to say, I've met some elder brothers who acted as their God. Spirit of the Antichrist by the way.

The Antichrist, what does he do? Second Thessalonians 2. He sits in the temple acting as God. John said, there are Antichrists in our churches. They went out from among us, he says in 1 John 2. They couldn't stand there because of the fiery preaching of the Apostle John.

What was one mark of these Antichrists? They would never acknowledge an error. They would never say, yeah brother, you're right. I was totally wrong there.

Why don't they say that? Because they are God. I'm sorry to say, we have had some elder brothers whom we have had to remove in our churches because they were God in the temple. Spirit of the Antichrist, we didn't want to corrupt the whole church with the Spirit of the Antichrist.

We had to tell them to step down. We want elder brothers in our churches who will not be God who never makes a mistake but who will be humble enough to say, it was my mistake. I'm sorry.

It was totally my mistake. And who will not even be like Adam who finally admits his mistake after beating around the bush. You know, God asked him, did you eat of the tree? It was simple.

Yes, Lord, I did. No, he doesn't say that. He goes around and says, you know, my wife has problems with her.

Just look at her, Lord. She's feeling guilty right now. He took that fruit and gave it to me.

And Lord, second point, don't forget, you gave me this wife. That's the second thing. And in small letters, three, I ate it.

Exactly like our children confess. But it's not exactly like our children confess. That's exactly how some elder brothers also acknowledge this.

P.S. at the bottom. How can such children of Adam even enter God's kingdom? Leave alone the elders to lead other people into God's kingdom. No, not in a hundred years.

We have to cleanse ourselves. Stop judging by what your eyes see and your ears hear. The Lord said to me, you have to discipline yourself and train yourself now.

If you want to think like I think, if you want to speak my words, remember, my son, my thoughts are not your thoughts. However spiritual you may think you are, my thoughts are not your thoughts. My ways are not your ways.

And my ways are not according to the ways of so many Christians around. If you really want to understand my thoughts and my ways, here is the way. Get rid of this Adamic habit of forming opinions as soon as you see something, as soon as you hear something.

Be discerning. Be discerning. A lot of things you see are not like that.

I believe God has allowed the sun to rise and set every day to teach us what? Don't believe your eyes. Don't believe your eyes. The sun does not move.

I believe he allows the earth to rotate under our feet at a 1,000 miles an hour. You know right now this room is rotating 1,000 miles an hour under your feet? See, it doesn't feel like it, right? Don't believe your feelings. That's what the Lord is trying to say.

Don't believe your feelings. It's absolutely true that this ground you're sitting on right now is rotating at a thousand, you know that's faster than an aeroplane. Hardly any passenger plane, no passenger plane that can travel as fast as the earth.

The earth rotates at a thousand miles an hour. You don't feel it. The Lord is teaching us, don't trust your feelings.

Don't trust what you see. You're deceived totally. I remember the story of those two little boys standing in a garden and the older boy 12 years old said to his younger 4 year old brother, Hey, see the sun was here in the morning and now it's here in the evening.

The sun moved. And the little boy said, No. You remember what daddy told us? That the sun doesn't move, it's the earth rotating under our feet and then it gives the impression that the sun moves.

And the older 12 year old boy, smart boy, he says, No, I believe what I see. I didn't. I believe what I feel.

I didn't feel the earth rotating under our feet. And the little 4 year old boy said, I believe daddy. I'll tell you what I say.

I believe daddy. I believe what daddy has told me in his book. Not what I see.

Not what I feel. Not what I hear. They can all deceive me.

I believe daddy. Many things like that. Dear brothers and sisters, learn to hear the voice of God.

Do you remember what Jesus said about Mary and Martha in Luke chapter 10? Luke's Gospel chapter 10. It says here in verse 38, Jesus entered a village. There was this woman called Martha immediately ready to go and cook a meal.

Now I tell you, many of us think we are very spiritual because we are so unselfish in serving the Lord and others. Oh brother, I have sacrificed so much for the church. I have done so much for people.

They are not grateful to me. Are you God? God can speak like that. We can't speak like that.

We are sinners. God can say, I have done so much for my people and they don't respond to me. He has a right to say that I am not God.

And I don't want to sit in the temple like God and say, Oh, I have done so much for my people and they have not done anything for me or they are not appreciating me. We have no right to say that unless you sit like God in the temple like the antichrist. But you know, Martha was like that.

It's a very good thing to serve others. But if you have got a complaining spirit, stop serving others. Get rid of your complaining spirit first.

If you serve others and you expect them to be grateful to you, you are wrong. I remember once, I have said this before how, you know, in the early days when the church used to meet in our house, many young brothers would stay in our house overnight numerous times because they had come from long distances, they had come from distant places. They would stay there, they would sleep there, eat with us.

They would get up in the morning and make coffee themselves and go to school or go to college or go to work. They would come drenched in the rain and we would give them our clothes. It was wonderful.

We were family. But then I think of one of them who grew up and got a good job, very good job, high salary and went away to another place. And I never heard a word from him for years.

And this guy had eaten and drunk and slept in our room and everything. And I thought, what an ungrateful fellow. After all that we've done for him, he doesn't even, you know, doesn't even write a note once a year to let us know how things are going on.

And the Lord spoke to me and I'll never forget it. He said that something's wrong with you. Not with him.

I said, Lord, me? What did I do? I only did good to him. Yes. But when you expect gratitude from him now, that's wrong.

I never... You know, that's what I mean by getting light on unconscious sin. I mean, how many of you know that to expect thanks from another person is wrong? You got light on it today, right? You didn't have light on it till now. But you got it today.

Well, from now onwards it's sin. Till now it was not sin for you, but from today onwards... That's why I always say, it's a dangerous thing to come to our meetings. Because... Because you'll have more sins to confess.

If you're serious about following the Lord, it's the best place to be. But your responsibility keeps increasing. From today onwards, for example, if you ever expect gratitude, you're a sinner.

Till now, you were not. And the Lord said to me, and I said, how is it? The Lord said to me, in as much as you did it to the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. And the Lord said, when you served him, you were serving me.

But you thought you were serving him. That's why you expect thanks from him. If you realized that you were serving me, you would have expected thanks from me.

You should have brought your complaint to me. Lord, why didn't you thank me for serving that? You see what I mean? I've given you scripture for it. I got light that day.

And I decided from that day, I will never again, the rest of my life, expect any gratitude or thanks from anybody in the whole wide world. Well, they give it, but it's good for them. You know, when we thank God, it blesses us.

God's not going to become a better person just because we thanked him. We become better people, right? So when somebody thanks me for, oh, Brother Zach, I really appreciated your service, I'm thankful for his sake. It doesn't make me a better person.

No. But it'll make him a better person because he's learned to appreciate and be thankful. I mean, the Lord's taught me that so well that I decided in my life in this matter of thankfulness, you know, when the Bible says get rid of murmuring and complaining, it's not enough to cast out the demon of murmuring and complaining and then keep the heart empty.

If you cast out the demon of murmuring and complaining and keep the heart empty, what did Jesus say will happen? Eh? Seven worse demons will come inside and you'll become a bigger grumbler and complainer. You must clean your heart and fill it with the opposite of what you're casting out. You're casting out murmuring and complaining? Replace it with gratitude and thankfulness.

Ah, I found a secret. Don't keep the house empty. Don't say, I'll stop murmuring and complaining now.

Good. The house is clean. Seven, you're in danger now.

Seven demons will come inside unless you fill this house with the spirit of gratitude and thankfulness to God. So, I learned a little bit of that to thank the Lord for and to thank people also. I mean, I don't want them to be thankful to me, but I want to be thankful to them.

For what? Jesus said, if you give a cup of cold water to one of my disciples, in my name, you will not lose your reward. Imagine now in the day of judgment, Jesus sits there and he calls somebody who lived in the first century. Okay? Two thousand years have gone by and the Lord says, come, whatever your name is.

Ah, okay. Andrew. You remember, Andrew, two thousand years ago, you gave a cup of water to my servant Peter when he came to your house.

Oh, I don't even remember that. But I remember it. I want to give you a reward.

I believe the words of Jesus literally. And when I pray, Lord Jesus, make me like you. This is one of the areas.

I want to be like Jesus. Somebody did a small little good for me thirty years ago. When I meet him, or sometimes when I send a New Year greeting, there are some people with whom I, I just send a brief New Year greeting once a year.

And this is what I write. May the Lord bless you in 2010. And brother, I remember, thirty years ago when I came to your house, you drove me from here to there.

Thank you so much for that. That's about the only thing he did. But, I want to follow Jesus who was thankful for a cup of cold water.

It has made me, I don't know whether it makes him a better person, but it's made me a much better person. It's made me more sensitive to the voice of God. Your ears will get unplugged to hear the voice of God when you have a spirit of thankfulness.

The reason why many people are unable to hear the voice of God is they think they are such kings. Kings! Who can receive service from others and never give thanks. I've taken an example, supposing some big cabinet minister walks down the road, and he drops his handkerchief on the ground, and one of his assistants picks up the handkerchief and says, sir, here's your handkerchief.

He puts it in his pocket. He doesn't even say thank you. He's supposed to do that.

Now, on the other hand, say let's a beggar, one of these poor beggars with torn clothes walks down the road and drops something of his on the ground, and you, a well-dressed man, picks it up and say, here, you dropped something. That beggar will be absolutely amazed that such a well-dressed person like you would pick up something and give it to him. He would be so profuse in his thanksgiving.

He'd say, why did you do that? You know, when we don't give thanks, we act like big kings and cabinet ministers. Of course, it's your duty to serve me. When you take the position of a beggar and a nobody, you'll be thankful for every little thing, even if somebody picks up a handkerchief and leaves it.

Why was Markov so busy serving the Lord, serving the Lord, serving the Lord, and having a complaint against Mary? I say, it's better not to serve the Lord if you've got such complaints against others. And I've met numerous people like Markov. They think they're serving the Lord.

Wait till they stand before Jesus in the day of judgment, expecting a fantastic reward for all the years of service they did. I went here, I went there, I sacrificed, I did this, that. The Lord, I did all this for you.

And the Lord will say, just shut up, just hang on. He won't say, shut up, he'll say, keep quiet, or some good word like that. But the meaning will be the same.

And he will say, not Markov, but whatever your name is, you are, verse 41, Luke 10, 41, you're all bothered about so many things. You think I wanted you to serve me like that? And this person you criticize, she has chosen the good part, by the way. She didn't do so much service for me like you, but she didn't have a complaining spirit like you against her sister.

She just sat and listened to my word. Mary, do you have any complaints against Martha? Oh, no, Lord, I have so many problems myself, where do I have time to find fault with Martha? Martha, do you have complaints against Mary? Yes, I'll tell you, I've already written them down, about 15 of them. That's the one who's serving the Lord.

Don't be fooled by all these people who do a lot of activity, activity. The Christian world is full of Marthas and Marys, and you can find out who they are very easily. I'll tell you, because I've had 50 years of experience as a believer, has taught me how to distinguish the Marthas and the Marys.

So here is my advice. When you gather a crowd of Marthas together, you're always talking about, you know, we are reaching out to this country now, and we are praying for this people, and we are praying for

the Muslims, and we are praying this, and we are reaching out to this, and our website is going here, and our work is going, and we've sent missionaries to these places, and we're doing this, and we're doing that, it's like asking Martha, what are you doing? Well, I made 25 chapatis, and I made some rice curry, and I did this, and that, and the other, for the Lord, for the Lord. When Marys get together, you know what they say? You know, this is what the Lord spoke to me yesterday, it really blessed my heart.

Something, not a great thing, but I agree with this verse, it really blessed my heart, I just want to share with you, if it helps you. I love to be with the Marys, because I become rich, because they tell me what the Lord spoke to them. They're not telling me what they're doing for the Lord here and there, that makes me feel so small, because I can't do all those things that they can do, they're gifted, unlike me, I'm not so gifted like they are.

They're reaching out to this, and that, and the other, they've got missions here, and missions there. I say, Lord, please, I get discouraged when I sit with the mothers. I'm so encouraged when I sit with the Marys, and they tell me what Jesus spoke to them.

It's not that the Marys don't serve the Lord, they do. You'll see in eternity, mark my words, you will see in eternity that the Marys did more for the Lord than the Martha's. Those who don't speak about what they're doing for the Lord, but as much as speaking about what God spoke to them.

And Jesus said, Martha, let me tell you something, there's only one thing needful in life. Verse 42, only one thing is absolutely necessary, and that is to listen to my word. Mary has chosen that good part.

She sat in verse 39, listening to his word. You know, Jesus said that twice. He said that to Martha once, and before that, he said that to the devil.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by listening to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. He said it twice. More than 45 years ago, more than 47 years ago or something, I was a young 23-year-old person seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

God met with me, God spoke one word to me, and I've never forgotten it. One thing is needful. Listen to me.

Let me quote you a poem that has been a tremendous blessing to my heart in this connection. I'll close with that. The Lord says from heaven, I'm seeking for one who will wait and watch for my beckoning hand, my eye, who will work in my manner the work I give, and the work I don't give, pass by.

And the Lord says, and oh, the joy that is brought to me, the Lord says, when one like this I can find, a man who will do all my will, who's set to study his Master's mind. I read that years ago and I said, Lord, I want to be like that. I have sought to do that and it's transformed my life and my ministry.

Saved me from wasting time doing unnecessary things and enabled me to share with others what God speaks to me. Dear brothers and sisters, unplug your ears. Stop criticizing others.

Stop making judgments by what you see and hear. Stop reporting every little thing you do for the Lord. Keep it secret.

Tell people what God spoke to me and learn to listen every day. You'll be a burning bush one day. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, it's so easy to be stirred temporary just for the moment by hearing these things. Oh Lord, we are sick and tired of these temporary revivals and temporary movings. We want a permanent work that will change us permanently.

That we'll take your word seriously. There is only one thing needful. And we won't try to think that we are cleverer than you.

Help us Lord. Your ways are not our ways. Your thoughts are not our thoughts.

But we want our ways and our thoughts to be like yours. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen?

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