

# (Come Up Higher) Choosing the Heavenly Over the Earthly

by Zac Poonen

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*We must prioritize God's word and live a life that is pleasing to Him in order to be overcomers and receive the reward of a place in heaven.*

**Duration:** 57:18

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:41-42, Acts 14:22

**Topics:** "Financial Stewardship", "Spiritual Freedom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not letting money become our master. He compares money to a servant and highlights that whether we are rich or poor, it is crucial to have control over our finances. The speaker also discusses how the devil uses advertisements and temptations to make us believe that money is essential for happiness. However, the speaker encourages listeners to trust in God and not let money dictate their emotions or actions. Ultimately, the message emphasizes the need to make money our servant and not our master.

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## Transcript

We are on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. He called himself a fellow partaker in not only the kingdom, but in the tribulation. The apostles taught something which I want you to notice in Acts 14.

We tend to have forgotten that. If you were to ask somebody, how do you enter the kingdom of God, most people would say, well, believe. That's right.

But if you were to ask the apostles, they would say something else. In Acts 14.23, in addition to faith, he said, it says here, they encouraged them, they strengthened the souls of the disciples, Acts 14.22, encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, through many tribulations, we must enter the kingdom of God. Have you ever heard a message that through many tribulations, we enter God's kingdom? That's what the apostles preached.

A lot of things that we hear in Christendom today are not what the apostles preached. And do you know why so many preachers can preach all that rubbish and get away with it? It's because they know that 90% of the people sitting here in front of me don't read their Bibles carefully. That's why they can get away with

it.

I saw a leaflet put out by one of the well-known Indian preachers, and he was asking for, saying, support my work. You know, that's a very common thing. Support my work.

And he quoted a verse there. He who gives to a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. Matthew 10.41. And I, as soon as I saw it, I said, there's no such verse in the Bible.

Did you know that when I quoted it just now? You see, that's the thing. 90% of people don't know the Bible. There is no such verse in the Bible which says, he who gives to a prophet will receive a prophet's reward.

What it says is, he who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. That means when a prophet comes and speaks, you receive a message. Yeah, well, then you can get a reward too.

It's got nothing to do with giving money. And the next verse, it says, the verse after that, if you give a cup of cold water, it's not to do with money again. If you give a cup of cold water to a disciple, you will not lose his reward.

But they have taken a little bit from here and little bit from there and mixed it. I've never seen such deception like that. And this is the tragedy today that so many preachers know.

You put a verse like that, he who gives to a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. Matthew 10.41. They know that 99% of believers will never look up that verse to see whether it's true or not. I don't even need to look up that verse to know it's not in the Bible.

You know, brothers and sisters, if you don't want to be deceived in the last days by wolves who come in sheep's clothing, get to know your Bibles. That's the only way. And that's why I say you must never go to a meeting without a Bible.

And every verse that is quoted, look it up. Read your Bible regularly. Get familiar with it.

That is how I have been protected from a lot of deception. So John says, I'm a partaker in the tribulation and the kingdom. That's how the apostles understood it.

There is no question of partaking in the kingdom without going through trial. And John was the only one of the apostles alive. All the others had died.

See, imagine this man who had lived so closely, moved around with all the apostles. Now all the apostles have died. There's nobody with whom he can share his burden.

The apostles understood. But can you imagine John sharing his burden with the elder in Laodicea or the elder in Sardis? They don't have the burden that John had. It was so rare for him to find elders who carried the burden he carried in his heart.

There was an elder in Philadelphia. There was an elder in Smyrna. That's about it.

It's very rare to find, even today, those who are leaders who share the burden that the apostles had. They sought to lead people to an overcoming life. The message, the last message that Jesus gave to the seven

churches was be an overcomer.

Be an overcomer. What have we got to overcome? Sin and the world. Jesus said to his disciples, in the world you shall have tribulation.

John 16.33. But be of good cheer. Don't get discouraged. I have overcome the world.

So don't be afraid of tribulation when it comes. And tribulation can take various forms when you seek to live for God's kingdom. You know, if you're living for earthly things, you probably won't have any tribulation.

But if you're going to live for heavenly things, tribulation can take various forms. In places like China, it can mean being locked up in jail. And even in some parts of North India, it can mean being beaten up and in some cases being killed.

But for us, it hasn't come to most of us here, or almost all of us, we haven't come to that state of being beaten up or killed. It can be in little things like, because you're faithful to the Lord in your office and you live by heavenly principles, your boss doesn't like it, the world hates anyone who shows them that this world is not everything, but you live by heavenly principles. And so persecution and tribulation can take small forms in your office.

And those are the places where God tests you to see whether you're faithful, to see whether you live by heaven's values or earth's values. Do you know that the Bible begins with man, as soon as he is created, being tested? That's how the Bible begins. As soon as man was created, he was put into a garden and tested.

And he failed the test. He failed the test because he chose what was earthly over what was heavenly. Remember that.

He chose something which appealed to him, and he rejected the word of God which said, don't take that. And throughout history, throughout the history of man, that has been the temptation. It was with Jesus.

He was also tested with something earthly, food. You need food, you need bread. Why don't you think about that? And Jesus said, no.

Word of God is more important than bread. If Eve had said that to Satan, the word of God is more important than this earthly thing, she wouldn't have sinned. And if you take that attitude, the word of God, what God has commanded, is more important than anything earthly.

You won't sin either. It's because we take the word of God lightly, that we sin. You know, there's a verse in Ephesians 4.31 which says, we must put away all anger.

How many of you have taken that one word seriously? Put away all anger. You say, it's difficult. Is it possible that God will give us a command which is impossible to fulfill? I took it very seriously.

I said, I want to put away all anger. It says here, Ephesians 4.30, don't make the Holy Spirit sad. Don't grieve God.

Don't break his heart. Get rid of all anger. I said, Lord, am I breaking your heart, keeping a little bit of anger in my heart? Yes.

But Lord, I don't want to break your heart anymore. You see, I'm reading from the Message Bible. Don't break his heart.

Get rid of all anger. Verse 31. That's the word of God.

If I take it seriously, I say, Lord, I'm going to take that seriously. When do I get angry? Some earthly thing has denied me by somebody, and I get angry. That earthly thing may be something of mine that was stolen, broken, damaged.

And that's more to me than God's command. Or it may be my honor and my reputation, which is so precious to me, and somebody robs me of it, and I get upset. Dear brothers and sisters, take the word of God seriously.

Take every command of God seriously. That is how Jesus lived. And that's why he never allowed any earthly thing to take precedence over God's word.

That is how Eve sinned. This earthly thing, this beautiful tree, it's so attractive, means more to me than God's word. This is how believers marry unbelievers.

Oh, this person is so nice. Well, that's fine. But is the person born again? Does the person love Jesus with all his heart or her heart? You're not worried about that.

You're just worried that you fall in love with somebody. Well, you will reap what you sow. You can't avoid that.

If you decide on the basis of, oh, I'm in love with somebody. I couldn't care less for God's word, which says, an unbeliever, you must never marry an unbeliever. You think you're going to get away with it when you despise God's word like that? No.

It's not possible. I mean, you can repent. But I know the number of people who messed up a wonderful life for God that they could have lived, because they despised the word of God.

They wanted to satisfy their lust for something earthly. Marriage is an earthly thing. Please remember that.

There's no marriage in heaven. Jesus said that. And if marriage means so much to you, that you can even despise God's word, I don't think you should call yourself a Christian.

No. Marriage is good. The Bible says that.

And it's better to marry than to burn. But I'll tell you this. If you're going to marry an unbeliever, one who doesn't love Jesus with all his heart, you're despising God.

There are many things like that. You know why Adam sinned? We know why Eve sinned. Because she chose that earthly thing above the heavenly thing.

The heavenly thing was God's command. The earthly thing was this tree. And when she was tempted, I'm sure her conscience told her, come up higher.

But the devil said, come down lower. That's the voice we hear all the time. Come up higher, come down lower.

Come on, satisfy your bodily lusts. She decided to come down lower. And all her children have been going down ever since.

Adam, why did he sin? The devil didn't come to Adam. No. The devil saw there's no need to come to Adam.

This guy loves his wife so much that he will disobey God to please his wife. Are you like that, husbands? Does the devil feel, I don't need to come to this man? This man is so afraid of displeasing his wife that he'll even disobey God. He will disobey God for the sake of peace at home.

So the devil didn't come to Adam. He just sent Eve with the fruit. And he knew that if Adam said, no, I'm not going to eat that, there would be a fight.

And to avoid the fight, he said, never mind, if you disobey God. What does it mean to please your wife? It's something earthly. Do you know the number of Christian husbands who are rejected for God's service because he sees that they are wife-pleasers like Adam? And if you read in Genesis, when the Lord met with Adam, what he told him was, not you ate of the tree.

The Lord said to Adam, because you listened to the voice of your wife and not my voice, your whole life you're going to struggle. The ground is cursed, you won't get fruit from it, you'll labor hard, thorns and thistles will come upon it, all because he listened to the voice of his wife. I want to ask you, my brother, sister, is it possible that there's a lack of fruit in your life because you listen to the voice of your wife more than the voice of God sometimes? For the sake of peace at home, you ignore the voice of God? I'll tell you this, peace at home is not as important as peace with God.

I remember one brother whom I said, brother, you know, I feel that the one exhortation I have for you is, be the head of your home. And he said, brother Zach, if I do that, there'll be war at home. I said, fight the war, win it.

If there's a war, there's a war. I mean, the battles of the Lord have to be fought. So that we establish very clearly who's the head of the home.

Jesus Christ, not a wife or a husband. Christ is the head. And if in order to establish the headship of Christ I have to fight a battle, I fight a battle.

I don't fight it with carnal weapons. No. I don't carnal weapon, yelling and screaming and shouting and calling people names.

No, no, no, no, no. That is to use the devil's weapons. No.

We fight with spiritual weapons. We take our position and say, no, God's voice is more important to me than the voice of any of my wife or any of my children. Do you try to please your children and allow a whole lot of things in your home, which you know that Jesus would be unhappy with? Ask yourself.

I mean, once your children leave home and they go and set up their own home, they can do what they like. But when they are in your home, you need to decide whose voice is going to reign in your home. The voice of God or the voice of your children? Children are foolish.

They may want all types of things in the home. They may want to read all types of books and listen to all types of music. What are you going to do? Just allow it for the sake of peace? You won't have peace.

I guarantee you'll have lifelong misery. Is it possible that you can get peace by disobeying God? Impossible. You get peace when you obey God, when you are firm about the things that you know God values.

If Jesus Christ were to walk into your home, he must be happy with everything that's going on in your home. I mean, I want my home, I always wanted my home to be like that, that Christ could walk in by surprise any day. He would find that I have nothing to be ashamed of, the books I'm reading or the programs you watch on television or anything.

Christ can sit right through it. That's how we must, that's where I say that the things of heaven are more important. So in the book of Revelation, turning back there, you read in the book of Revelation about people who are purchased from the earth.

I want you to turn to Revelation 14. When John was asked to come up higher and to look at things from heaven's standpoint, the Lord showed John certain people who were overcomers, who were not like the ordinary believers. There are ordinary believers and there are overcomers.

Did you know that? You know, this is one of the things in Revelation chapter 4, we saw the Lord said, come up here and I will show you certain things. And one of the things that the Lord showed John when he lifted him up there, he saw things in their proper perspective. He saw people the way God saw them.

He saw believers the way God saw them. He saw the churches the way God saw them. In Revelation chapter 7, when John was lifted up, this is what he saw.

He said in verse 9, after these things, Revelation 7 verse 9, I looked. This is from his heavenly standpoint, remember. This is not from the earthly standpoint.

From a heavenly standpoint, he looked and he saw a great multitude. These are all believers, which no one could count. From every nation, all tribes, peoples, tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes.

This is obvious. They are all believers. And remember, the number of believers in heaven is going to be such a great number that you cannot even count them.

And they will be there from every single nation and every single tribe and every single people and every single language on the face of the earth. But you may say, well, there are some languages where people haven't heard the gospel. That may be true.

But if there's one child that has died in that group, there's somebody from that group in heaven. If there's one miscarriage that took place in that group, that child, if there's an abortion that took place, Look at the millions of abortions that are taking place in the world from every tribe, the miscarriages. They are going to play heaven.

It doesn't matter what religion they are. They are babies. They are redeemed, justified, exactly like we are justified.

You know how you and I are going to go into God's presence? Because Jesus' righteousness has been put to our account. My account is zero. My account is actually minus.

But Jesus puts his millions, his righteousness to my account and I'm accepted before God. Now can a baby also have a bank account with millions? Why not? The day a baby is born, you can open a bank account in his name and put millions of rupees in its account. Well, that's what God does.

I'm accepted before God on the basis of the righteousness, not my own righteousness. And that baby is also accepted because it never consciously sinned. So, since babies have died in every tribe and tongue and people and nation, there are going to be people from every tribe, tongue and people and nation in heaven.

But these babies who died, they are not overcomers. They never overcame anything. They didn't even know what sin was and they died.

I don't want to go to heaven like that. I want to go to heaven as an overcomer. I don't want to say, oh, if I go to heaven, it's okay.

No, it isn't. It's not okay for me. That's what John saw.

So, Revelation 7, they cry out with a loud voice, verse 10. And what do they say? Our salvation is entirely due to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. That's all we can say.

Because of the Father and the Lamb of God who died for my sins, I'm there. And they are people who have been cleansed. Their robes, it says in verse 14, were made white in the blood of the Lamb.

That's how they got white robes, those babies and us. Now, the Lord showed John from this heavenly position, John, I'll show you another group, which is much smaller. Those are the overcomers.

Here's the big crowd of believers who never overcame. But here's another crowd. In Revelation 14, in the Message Bible, it reads like this, I saw something and it took my breath away.

It took my breath away. That means I was so amazed after seeing this crowd of multitudes of people who could only say, Jesus saved us. Here was another crowd.

What was it that took John's breath away? See, that's an expression in English which means, I was so surprised to see such a group of people. What was it? A number that can be counted. I mean, if you've gone up to even fourth standard, you can count up to 144,000.

It's a number that can be counted. And they were standing with Jesus, with the Lamb of God. And these are not people who just say, well, my sins are forgiven.

Remember in Revelation 7, their only testimony is, our robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb. Our salvation is due to God who has been very kind to us. Good.

We all start there. But these people went further. They have the name of the Father on their foreheads.

And the name of Jesus on their foreheads. Name speaks of character in their earthly life. They were bold to confess the name of Jesus.

There are very few Christians like that. You know, whenever I see Hindus with their marks of their God upon their foreheads, coming to the office with lions, they are not ashamed. They say, that's right, I worship this God.

Or the Hindu girls who put the red mark on their foreheads and into their hair. They say, I'm not ashamed. I worship this God.

But Christians are often ashamed to acknowledge that they belong to Jesus Christ. I remember traveling in a train from Chennai to Bangalore and I saw a Muslim family sitting around me. A man and his wife and children and he, it was a, you know, Brindavan, just seats.

And he asked his children to move away from that one bench. And he, on that bench, he spread his mat and he knelt down on that mat facing Mecca and prayed. He was not ashamed.

I tell you, I was challenged. The Hindus are not ashamed to identify their God. The Muslims are not ashamed to be publicly seen praying.

But Christians are so ashamed to be known as disciples of Jesus. And we are the ones who got the true God. Why? Is it because you think they will deny you a promotion? So be it.

Let's not have that promotion. I don't want a promotion in my office, which I can get if I have to deny Christ. I don't want it.

That will never be a blessing to me. I don't want an increment which I have to get at the cost of hiding the fact that I am a disciple of Jesus. No.

I don't want any benefit in this world if the price I have to pay for it is to, no, deny. See, this is the difference between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the Antichrist. Immediately before this, in chapter 13, it speaks about those who follow the Antichrist.

And those who follow the Antichrist are given an option. They say, the Antichrist says, you can either take, chapter 13, verse 16, whether you are small or great or rich or poor, men, freemen or slaves, you got to get the mark of the Antichrist, but you have an option. You can put it on your forehead or you can put it inside your right hand, where you can fold your hand and nobody will see it.

You have an option. You don't want anybody to see it? Keep it in your right hand. Nobody will see it.

Or, you can put it on your forehead. The devil says, you can be a secret follower of mine or an open follower of mine. To have it in your right hand means you're doing things that are wrong, but you don't want anybody to know it.

How do you get the mark of the devil on your right hand? You do things with your right hand that are sinful, but nobody in the church knows it. You do things with your right hand, in private, that are sinful, nobody in the church knows it. It's not on your forehead.

The sin you committed is not written on your forehead. The devil says, no need, it's in your right hand. It could be any type of sin.

It could be sexual sin. It could be signing a false statement. It could be anything, and nobody in the church knows it.

You come to the church with the mark of the devil on your right hand and nobody knows it. And even when you raise your hands to praise the Lord, nobody knows it. The devil says, I like secret followers.

They are my best agents to destroy a church. Then there are others who are open followers of the devil. You know, the Satanists, the immoral people, the people who are leading people astray with alcohol and dirty movies and all that.

They are open followers of the devil. But you may not be like that. You may have the mark of the devil in your right hand.

But when it comes to Jesus, he doesn't give you that option. That's the contrast. If you follow the Lamb, it doesn't say you can have the name on the forehead or in your right hand.

No, sir. You have to have it on your forehead. That's the only way.

These are the overcomers. There are no secret followers of Jesus. It's open.

I'm a disciple of Jesus Christ. And in those days, in the early days, if you were a disciple like that, you'd usually get thrown to the lions or burnt at the stake. I mean, today we are worried about losing a promotion or an increment.

They were thrown to the lions for being open followers of Christ. And something else about this 144,000, it says they sang a new song in verse 3. And no one could learn this song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. What does it mean to be redeemed from the earth, redeemed from earthly things? They allowed the Holy Spirit to lift them up higher.

See, when God created Adam, He made Adam of the same dust that the animals are made of. The cows and the dogs and the pigs, they're bugs made of the same dust that you and I are made of. He took the dust and made a man, it says.

But He breathed into that man a spirit, so that man became a living soul. So man now became one who had a body made of dust that pulled him down to the earth, and who had a spirit that pulled him up to heaven. And in between is the soul.

So the man is a soul, a living soul, with a spirit pulling him up towards heavenly things, and a body pulling him down towards earthly things. And in his soul, he decides which of these two pulls he's going to respond to. That is temptation.

Temptation is this pull. That's how Eve faced it. She stood before the tree, and the dust part of her was drawn to the dust in the tree.

That is also made of dust. It's the dust part of us that is drawn to pretty faces. You know what a pretty girl is? A particular arrangement of molecules, if you know chemistry.

That's all. A certain arrangement of molecules. And you are drawn to this particular arrangement of molecules.

And there's another voice in your spirit which says, that's not your wife, you're not supposed to be looking at her. You decide in that moment whether you are going to be drawn to the things of earth, or the Lord says, come up higher. In every temptation, you definitely hear a voice saying, come up higher.

But you may not respond to it. And if you don't respond to it, we remain in this low ground forever and ever and ever. No matter how much knowledge we accumulate, even at the end of this conference, you can

understand all about heavenly things, and never get anywhere.

It's the same with money, and all the attractive things that money can get. I'll tell you something. Money is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

The point is not how much money you earn. That's not the point. The point is, is that money your servant or your master? You can be a poor man, and money may be your master.

Or you can be a rich man. It's like one man has got one servant in his house, another man's got 20 servants in his house. But he makes all those 20 servants serve him.

That's okay. But he's only got one servant in his house, a poor man, and that servant runs the house. It's not a question of how much money you have.

It's not a question of how much you earn. You can have 20 servants, you can have 50 servants. The point is, do they run your house, or do you run them? Can you honestly say money is my servant? It'll never be my master.

Then, you are free. You are redeemed from the earth. These 144,000 were redeemed from the earth.

The things of earth were there. They lived in the midst of it, but they would not allow them to be, the dust part of them to be drawn to the things of earth. The Lord, when he made Adam, he said, you must rule.

Everything on earth must be under your feet. Gold. Very precious.

On earth, they put it on the heads. And in heaven, the streets are made of gold. It means you walk on it.

It's under your feet. To teach us that heaven is made for those who have learned to put gold under their feet now. Have you learned it? It doesn't matter how much gold there is.

If you have plenty, put it all under your feet. So that's the point. Redeemed from the earth.

That means nothing of earth. I use the things of earth, but they are all my servants. There are many legitimate things on earth.

I don't believe there's anything sinful about living a comfortable life. But if any of you become a slave to any of those things, then you can't really be a disciple of Jesus. The problem is not the things.

The problem is, are they controlling you? Or are they your servants? If you say, I cannot live without this. Something earthly. You're wrong.

The only person we cannot live without is Christ. If I have him, whether I have the things of earth or don't have the things of earth, it's the same. That's the position we must take.

There was a great saint of God called Madame Guillaume. She understood this so well. She wrote a song which we sometimes sing, which says, There is no place on earth which is more attractive to me than another.

That is a true disciple of Jesus. I don't have any. If there's something on earth that attracts you, I'll tell you that that will, to some extent, hinder you from being a disciple of Jesus.

It may not be something sinful. It may be something good. You know, Abraham had two sons in the beginning.

One was Ishmael, born out of sin. You know, I would say he committed adultery with his maidservant and got a child called Ishmael, born in sin. And then he got another son, Isaac, born as a result of God's promise.

And when God said, Send Ishmael away, that was easy. Yeah. What is sinful must be sent away.

And I think many of us have done that. But the difficult thing is when God says, Now get rid of Isaac too. Ah.

I have to get rid of Isaac? What God has given? Good things? Do you know it is good things that hinder people from being disciples of Jesus? If Abraham had said, Lord, I can understand sending Ishmael away, but not Isaac. Isaac is good. He's not evil like Ishmael.

It's what you gave me. Yes, Abraham, it's what I gave you, but that thing made of dust called Isaac. Isaac is also made of dust.

That thing of earth called your son means more to you than me. He has become the darling of your heart. And now, once upon a time, you said that you cannot live without God.

Now you say you cannot live without Isaac. He has taken the place of God in your heart. You got to get rid of him.

You got to kill him. What does the Lord teach Abraham? Nothing on earth must be more to you than Jesus. That's why Jesus said, if you want to be my disciple, and you love father or mother more than me, you are not worthy of me.

It's the same thing that he told Abraham. If you love Isaac more than me, you are not worthy of me. I want to ask you, is there anyone you love more than Jesus? Your husband, your child, anyone you love more than Jesus? You think that's a good thing? That's the thing that will hinder you from growing spiritually? And that's the thing that will hinder your children from growing spiritually? I never want to love my children more than I love Jesus Christ.

I never want to love my wife more than I love Jesus. And I never want my wife to love me more than she loves Jesus Christ. Our life at home will be supremely happy if both my wife and I decide we're not going to love each other more than we love Jesus.

Is that true of you? Is that the basis on which you are planning to get married? Or that you are married? That Christ is going to be central. That's the foundation of a godly home. It's not just that you have family prayer and read the Bible.

A lot of places where they have family prayer and read the Bible, Christ is not Lord. The Lord is always saying to us, come up higher. Make me first in your life.

Do you think that will make your home unhappy? Far from it. It will make your home a little bit of heaven on earth. I can tell you that.

I decided years ago, Christ will be Lord of my home. No child of mine, no wife of mine will ever be more to me in my heart than Jesus Christ himself. And the same for them.

I don't want my children to respect me more than they respect Christ. No. I don't want my wife to respect me more than she respects Christ.

So that's the thing that came to Abraham. And where Abraham offered up Isaac. This is in a place called Mount Moriah.

And we read from in 2nd Chronicles chapter 3 verse 1 that that was the spot at which God said, the temple must be built. There is one place where the house of God was built in the Old Testament, the place where a man decided that God is going to be more important to me than anything earthly. Do you want the church to be built in your locality? Well, he's got to find a man who is like that.

Who says the things of heaven are going to be more to me than anything of earth, even the good things of earth. See, we can enjoy the good things of earth, but when we say, I cannot live without it, then there's something wrong. Did God want to take away Isaac from Abraham? No.

But he wanted Abraham to be detached from Isaac. That's all. He doesn't want to take away all the good things you have.

No. I tell you, he's given me a lot of good things in my life. But God is my witness.

I'm not attached to any of them. If he takes them away one day, I say, the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. I've often thought about that.

Today I live in a house which is fairly comfortable. Supposing the Lord burns it up one day and I have to go and live in a little shack. I tell you, God is my witness.

It means nothing to me. No. Because these things are my servants.

Nothing must be your master. Everything must be your servant. That's the way to come up higher.

Where the pull of the spirit becomes more than the pull of dust. The pull of dust is always saying, come down lower. And the devil is saying, that's right.

He makes you feel that something of earth is very important. Haven't you seen these advertisements that teach you that you cannot live without this? And you get fooled by the advertisements? Just ask yourself, how did man live for six thousand years without that? I mean, it's so obvious an answer, but many people don't think of that. Yeah, you can use that.

You can use that. But if that means so much to you, you'll become a slave. What if you buy a washing machine and your wife does something wrong and blows it up? That's a lot of money.

What are you going to do? Have a fight? Or laugh it off and say, well, I suppose God didn't want us to have that washing machine. Praise the Lord. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. And it's not just rich people who can say that. It's a hard attitude.

There's nothing wrong in having a washing machine. There's everything wrong in being attached to it. There's nothing wrong in having Isaac in your home.

There's everything wrong in being attached to it. The question is not what you have. The question is what are you attached to? Is there anything on earth that means so much to you that you would even sacrifice God for that? You know the people who say, Brother Zach, I don't have time to read the Bible.

Is that really true? No, my life is so busy. I sometimes feel like telling them, Do you want me to pray that God will show you how you can make time in a busy schedule by asking him to make one of your children sick and admit it in hospital and you suddenly find you can make time for visits to the hospital and things like that? It's a question of priority. God's word is not a priority.

A sick child in a hospital is a priority. Don't ever say again for the rest of your life, I'm so busy. I don't have time to read the Bible.

Say the honest truth. You know, God loves honest people. And if you try to play the fool with God and say, Oh God, I don't have time.

He'll say, Don't bluff me. You can bluff all your other believers. You can't bluff me.

Speak the truth and say, God, reading the Bible is not a priority in my life. That's the truth. Okay.

God says, That's fine. At least you're honest now. I'll tell you something.

God loves honest people. He'll help you to make it a priority if you acknowledge the real reason. But if you keep playing the spiritual game and say, Oh, I don't have time.

I don't have time. He'll never help you. Say, Lord, it's not a priority in my life.

There are other things which are much more important in my life. Okay. And because we don't, we don't, for Jesus, He said, Man shall live by every word that proceeds from God's mouth.

And I'll tell you what the word proceeds from God's mouth is. Come up higher. Come up higher.

Every day you hear it when you face a temptation. And the temptation says, Come down lower. And you hear the voice of God saying, Come up higher.

Listen to that word. Even if you don't read the Bible, you know the principles of the Bible. See, I'm not talking about the reason why we need to read the Bible is to know the mind of God.

And once we know the mind of God, if we can understand, this is more important, to listen to the voice of God than to yield to the pulls of my flesh. You can become a spiritual man. This is temptation.

The two voices, your spirit saying, Come up higher, and the voice of your body saying, Come down lower. And if you are not more spiritual than you are today, it's because you have responded to that other voice saying, Come down lower. Come down lower.

So often. And if somebody else is ten times more spiritual than you, it's not because he got some special gift or something. It's because he made a number of decisions where he responded to the voice that said, Come up higher, higher, higher.

And so he's somewhere, and you're down here. Both of you had faced exactly the same temptations. So that's the thing.

You know, if the devil can make you realize that something on earth is very great, you can't do without it. See, that was what he tried to convince Eve in the Garden of Eden. Eve, you just can't live without this.

You don't know what you're missing. You gotta have this. I tell you, you gotta have it.

It was an advertising game that went on there in the Garden of Eden, bombarding her mind with thoughts. See, this will make you wise. See, it makes your mouth water.

See, this is good for you. You'll be like God. It's exactly, it's an advertising game.

This is what you need. You cannot live without it. Yeah, don't take all those words which God has said seriously.

This is what you need. And she fell for it. She fell for the devil's advertisements.

And all her children suffer the consequences. Who said that our children will not suffer the consequences of the wrong decisions we take? Is that true when you look around the world? Do you think Eve's children never suffered the consequences of her decision? Do you think a drunken father, his children don't suffer the consequences of his drunkenness? And a God-fearing father, don't you think his children receive the benefits of his fear of God? We make our children suffer or we lead our children to God. It means so much.

Our children are born with Adam's sin. They didn't commit sin. They are born with it.

Yeah, there are certain consequences. But because Jesus has died, we can be freed from all those things. If the devil can make you feel that something on earth is so important, he has got you.

He has convinced the whole world that sex is so essential that you cannot live without it. You know what I have meditated on many times? I'll tell you reverently, honestly. I say, Lord Jesus, you were tempted so many times in the sexual area.

The pressure must have been so great on you when you were 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and you resisted it. You know how the pressure gets relieved in the sexual area when you yield to it. Okay, it's over.

Then you confess your sin and ask God to forgive you. But he never yielded. Not once.

I say, Lord, what an example. I want to follow you. How much he was tempted year after year after year.

Who said sex is absolutely essential? Jesus and Paul proved it was not. If the devil can tell you that plenty of money is absolutely essential, we need money to live, sure. Jesus needed it.

Paul needed it. We need money to buy our food so that we don't depend on others, etc. But if the devil can succeed in convincing you that you'll be happy only if you have plenty of it, he's got you.

I tell you, he's got you. If you can make it your servant and say, Lord, whether you give me plenty or little, these are going to be my servants. Whether I have one servant or five hundred servants, money will be my servant.

It will always be under my feet. I will never let it rule me. I will never let it make me lose my temper or get anxious or any such thing.

I will never lose my joy because I lose money. I will never let my joy be increased because I got money. Then you know it's your servant.

That's one of the things I decided. I said, Lord, I remember years ago, many years ago, somebody gave me a gift. Some money, somewhere.

And, I mean, it was not to save me from starvation. I had enough. But somebody gave me a gift.

And the Lord asked me, Are you happy? I said, Lord, I'm ashamed to say I am. I'm ashamed to say I am. That some money increased my joy.

Will you please deliver me from it so that money doesn't increase my joy, the loss of money doesn't take it away. My joy is in the Lord. If I have something, praise the Lord, I can use it.

If I don't have it, praise the Lord, just the same. God decided that I shouldn't have that. You know, this is the way to freedom.

This is the way to fly. God wants us to be like the eagles in the sky. Those who wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles.

Come up higher, the eagle hears. And the eagle responds to that and flies up. But if you want to get those wings, you have to listen to the voice of God.

And detach yourself from these chains that tie you down to earth. I'll tell you, these are chains. Sex is a terrible chain.

You don't realize, you're like an eagle created by God to fly, but tied down with a chain. Tied down with a chain of money. And yet, you can have plenty of money and still be like an eagle.

You can enjoy sex in your married life and be like an eagle. You got to keep them all under your feet as servants. God has provided us richly, it says in 1 Timothy 6.17, all things to enjoy, but none of them are supposed to rule us.

And if I respond to the voice of God, I'll always go higher and higher and higher. Dear brothers and sisters, don't let the devil fool us anymore. While I head about in prayer, let's respond to whatever the Lord spoke to us today.

His yoke is easy, His burden is light. Whatever He tells us is for our good. He doesn't want you to give up your job.

He doesn't want you to close down your bank account and give it all to the church. No. He says you can keep everything, but make them all your servants.

Don't let anything on earth rule you anymore. Make everything your servant. Keep everything under your feet.

Let Christ alone be your... That's what He says. He has given us richly everything to enjoy. Enjoy it, but you'll enjoy it to the maximum if you make Christ your head and don't let any of those other things sit on your head anymore.

He hasn't called us to be hermits or sannyasis who live in a forest. He's given us many good things to enjoy, but make them all your servants. Heavenly Father, help us we pray.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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