

(Come Up Higher) Seeing Things From God's Viewpoint

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing things from God's viewpoint and perspective, and of renewing our minds to think like God, in order to become like Christ and find God's will.

Duration: 56:11

Scripture: Revelation 4:1

Topics: "Spiritual Maturity", "Gods Will"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for believers to set their minds on heavenly things rather than being influenced by the world. He highlights the importance of discerning between soulish emotions and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The preacher also addresses the issue of finding God's will, stating that becoming more like Christ makes it easier to discern His will. Additionally, he addresses the problem of borrowing money due to worldly influences and encourages believers to take responsibility for their actions and seek forgiveness from God.

Transcript

Even though we don't have this exact scripture, come up higher in exactly that way anywhere in the Bible, we do see something very similar to that in Revelation chapter 4. Revelation chapter 4 verse 1 begins like this, after these things, and that's a very important phrase, after these things, I looked and behold a door was standing open in heaven and the first voice which I heard was like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me that said, come up here, come up higher. John, you are standing on earth and as long as you stand there, when you look at things around you, you are being persecuted, you're in the Isle of Patmos, things look very bleak, the Roman Emperor is still ruling, Christians are being persecuted, and the worst part, John, is that even those churches that you planted, they are in a very backslidden condition. Think of the church in Ephesus that Paul planted, they have left their first love, the others left his first love, they're a big church but they don't love me like they did before, they are taken up now with programs and activities.

Think of the church in Pergamos where they've got the prosperity gospel, the teaching of Belal, how to preach and make money. Think of the church in Thyatira where the elder's wife Jezebel is running the show, there's a strong woman in that church and nobody can quiet her, she runs the church. Think of the church in Sardis, there's no sign of life in that elder, he's just got a name.

And then think of the church in Laodicea, churches that the Apostles planted, pathetic, they think they are spiritual, but Jesus is outside the door of the church in Laodicea, saying if anyone will open the door, I will come in. Imagine a church where Jesus is standing at the door and knocking, that's the church in Laodicea, Revelation 320. They think they are rich because they got a lot of money, they're not like the old days when they were poor, they're rich and they got plenty of goods, they think they have need of nothing, they got so much knowledge, John, but they are pathetic.

And John says, oh Lord, I tell you, it's pretty discouraging for anyone who's planted churches to see those churches in a pathetic condition. It's like if you have children and you find those children not studying properly, wayward, with bad friends, that's exactly how John felt when he looked at these churches. And there was persecution, we would have thought that persecution should purify the church, but it wasn't bad enough to purify the church in Laodicea or in Thyatira or Pergamos or Ephesus, they were worldly.

And John looked at all this and you can imagine that he was discouraged, Lord, what's the use? I've labored for you 65 years, is this going to be the end result of it all? The Lord said, come up here, you've got to look at these things from heaven's standpoint. And I think what the Lord showed him there was, when he went up to heaven, looked at it from heavenly standpoint, he saw that even though these churches were in a bad condition and the elders were all, some were lording it over others and they were bossy and just more interested in preaching and in their position than in being servants and shepherds, just like a lot of churches and elders today. The Lord said to John, but John, there are some overcomers in these churches.

You know that? To each church, the Lord said, there are some overcomers who are overcoming the spirit that they see in the church. They are not the elders. Some of them are younger brothers and the elders will not let them speak or let them have, but they've got a spirit, John, that loves people.

And that's what John saw. And there was hope for the future because there were overcomers in the younger generation. And that's what the Lord is looking for today.

Many of those who started working from the sixth hour in the morning are satisfied, but God is looking for those in the younger generation, men and women who will really be overcomers in their life, who will overcome sin, who will overcome the spirit of the world, who will be satisfied with Jesus alone and himself. And I want to tell you this, my brother, sister, even if you bungled up your whole life, you mess up your life, even if you're like the woman of Samaria, divorced five times and now sleeping around with a man who's not even your husband. It's amazing that Jesus could use even a woman like that to bring a revival in Samaria.

Who would have ever thought of using a five times divorced woman who was sleeping with a sixth man now to bring a revival in Samaria? I tell you, God's ways are not our ways. And some of these people who look so wretched and miserable in their heart, I can imagine that woman in Samaria must have divorced because she was looking for something. She didn't find it in her first husband, so she chucked him.

She said, I'll find happiness in the second one. She didn't find it there. Chucked him.

Third, fourth, fifth, and said, okay, better not to get married, I'll just stay around with a man. Still not satisfied. What she really needed was Jesus.

You know, there are a lot of people, you look at them, why are they in broken homes? They're looking for something which they'll never find in a man or a woman. They have to find it in Jesus. Those of you who are looking for satisfaction in your husband or your wife, I can tell you right now, you'll be disappointed.

Some of you, I don't need to tell that, you already know it. You'll find your satisfaction in Jesus. And when you find your satisfaction in Jesus, you'll really have a very happy time, even in your home.

That's the secret. So John, for that you have to come up to that heavenly viewpoint and see everything from there. God looks at things so different from the way we look at it.

Come up here, the Lord says. Are you in a messed up situation? You know the word of the Lord to you? Come up here. Come up higher.

But you say, Lord, I messed up my life so badly. You come up here and I'll show you how even the mess you made of your life was part of my education that I was giving you so that when you meet other women like that in the world who are divorced five times, you will not despise them like the other holy believers do. You'll be able to help them.

Do you know there are a lot of broken lives in the world? A lot of broken, unhappy marriages? A lot of children who've been abused when they're small parents who don't bring up their children properly? There are many people like that who suffered a lot in their homes and their backgrounds. And God maybe has trained you through the mess you made in your life to be able to help such people. God's ways are not our ways.

You know someone, so don't think, I'm not saying you should go and make a mess of your life. I'm saying if you've already made a mess of your life, then God can use that for His purpose. Because He can give you a heart of compassion for people which someone who was brought up in a very holy, pure way will never have.

He can have it if he gets close to Jesus. But I found generally speaking, sometimes I look at some people who were brought up in very good homes. They never bungled up their life.

They never did anything wrong. And it's good. That's the best way to grow up.

Provided they become like Jesus. But unfortunately many of them become Pharisees. And they look down on others whose lives have been messed up.

God has to do a work in us. And the way He does is by lifting us higher and see everything the way God... To come up higher means you look at people the way God looks at them. What that means is, if it's a Mary Magdalene who was probably an immoral woman, had seven demons inside her, when she's delivered from the demons and cleansed in the blood of Christ, God sees her as a saint and says, that's the one who must be the first human being to see the resurrected Jesus.

And if God asked you and me to select the first person to see Jesus, I'm sure none of us would have selected Mary Magdalene. I know who I would have selected. I would have selected Mary, His mother.

She suffered so much in our life. She should be the first person to see the resurrected Jesus among all human beings. But I realize that God's ways are superior even to my ways.

I think Mary should be the one. But it's not. I've seen sometimes in different churches where you think, yeah, that's the person who's really going to be spiritual.

And I discover over the period of years, he's not, she's not. It's somebody else. We have so many human prejudices.

They all disappear when we come up higher and look at things from God's viewpoint. Even our circumstances, so many things that cause problems in your home. Just imagine if for a moment you went up to heaven and said, how is God looking at this particular problem in my home? Maybe somebody is sick, maybe there's a financial difficulty, or whatever thing there is.

I say, Lord, how are you looking at this right now? This is the secret. Come up higher. You know, in Colossians chapter 3, the same thing is said in other words, Colossians chapter 3 and verse 1 onwards.

It says, If you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things and not on the things that are on the earth. See that verse? Let your mind come up higher.

Do you know that one of the most important parts of our personality that God uses in this day is our mind? And one of the most important parts of our body which God uses in this day is our tongue. Please remember this. The most important part of your body that God wants to use today is your tongue.

That's why there were tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost on their heads. God is saying, this is the instrument I'm going to use in these days, preaching of God's word. That doesn't mean only from the pulpit.

How many of you sisters may never stand in a pulpit, but you use your tongue? People say you use your tongue more than men. Well, why not use it in a good way then? Your tongue to bless people, a soothing tongue, Proverbs says, is a tree of life. It's very interesting.

There's a tree of life mentioned in Genesis chapter 2. And then you read about the tree of life in Proverbs, and it's a tongue. It's from this tongue that people can come to the tree of life. And that's inside your mouth.

And James 3 says that the same tongue can be set on fire with the fire of hell. And we have heard a lot of that. Words that people speak that have come straight from the pit of hell.

Angry words, evil words, gossiping words, backbiting words, straight from the pit of hell. We are surrounded by that. Murmuring words, complaining words, critical words, accusations, murmurings, all types of things.

Now, I've sometimes thought, you know, if I actually were to physically go up higher and stand with God and look at this world, and I could hear all the sounds going on in the world, you know what I would hear? Murmurings, grumbings, complainings, accusations, even accusations of God, why did you allow this in my life? Accusation against one another. If I could see the world, I would see husbands and wives fighting with each other, even in Christian homes, children rebelling against their parents, parents being unmerciful to their children. What a rotten world.

The Lord says, come up here and see the condition of this world the way I see it. And I have placed you in the midst of that world to be a light for me. So that's why you need to be careful with your tongue and your mind.

Like it says here, set your mind on the things above. You know, in our human personality, there's mind and emotions. Mind is what we think and understand.

Emotions are what we feel. You know, you can hear a message and feel excited or feel angry. But Jesus, he never tried to stir people's emotions.

He always spoke to the mind. If you read the messages of Jesus in the Gospels, you never find him saying, trying to whip people up, saying, Hallelujah, Hallelujah. He was not trying to reach people's emotions.

He was trying to reach their mind. He was saying things like, if you earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to your children, don't you think your heavenly father will give good gifts to his children? That's a message that goes to my mind, not my emotions. Jesus never tried to whip up people's feelings with emotion and shouting and yelling.

There are preachers who can do that, usually politicians. Politicians do that because they get people all excited to get a vote. And preachers do that to get money.

Politicians also do it to get money. But Jesus never did it. Because he knew that emotion is like, you know, you put a little bit of powdered soap into a bucket of water and stir it up and there's a lot of froth and soap bubbles and all that.

You come back a half an hour later, you see it's all just soapy water. All the bubbles and froth have gone. That's emotion.

We have churches today that have majored on emotion. And some people, many Christians, cannot distinguish between the fullness of the Holy Spirit and fullness of emotion. Emotion is a part of the soul.

It doesn't make anybody spiritual. That's why, you know, I was puzzled when I saw, I looked around almost all the denominations and leaders in India. I've traveled the length and breadth of this country.

And I've seen Indians in other countries too. And I have seen something, or you see it on television. The biggest lovers of money among Christian preachers are those who speak in tongues.

That's what my observation. You can disagree with me if you like. But I've seen that.

And who whip up emotions in their preaching. They are the biggest lovers of money. They are the people who take maximum money from the poor people and live in a rich standard themselves.

That itself shows me this whole thing is wrong. How can a man be filled with the Spirit of Christ and become a bigger lover of money than he was before? He should love money less. And I say that's not the fullness of the Spirit.

It's not the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Maybe some other spirit. And I don't want that spirit.

That's what cured me or warned me about the danger of a lot of what's called charismatic Christianity and Pentecostalism today. I'm not saying there's nothing good in it. There's some very fine people.

But a lot of them don't have discernment between what is soulish and what is spiritual. Emotions are not Holy Spirit. Jesus never tried to whip up people's emotions, but he did speak to the mind.

And if you've heard my preaching and the preaching in our church, we are always seeking to reach your mind. We're not trying to get you all excited and leave you with soap bubbles that disappear half an hour later. But to reach your mind, it says you set your mind on the things above.

How do you find the will of God? It says in Romans chapter 12, Romans chapter 12, how do we become like Christ? The will of God is that we become like Christ. And the more we become like Christ, the more we'll be able to find the will of God. Many people ask me, Brother Zach, how can I find God's will? I'll tell you.

The more you become like Christ, the more easier it'll be to find God's will. Okay. Second question, how do I become like Christ? Here it is, Romans 12, 1 and 2. First of all, give your body to God as a living sacrifice.

That means every part of your body, not as a dead sacrifice. You see, that's the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant. In the Old Covenant, every sacrifice was a dead one.

You could not offer a live bullock to God. You could not offer a live lamb to God. It had to be killed.

Every sacrifice in the Old Testament was a dead one. But now, we are in the New Covenant, and so we are to offer a living sacrifice. A living sacrifice means while I'm alive, I give my body to God.

To kill this body and say, okay, now I'll never commit sin with my tongue, doesn't mean anything. It's when I'm alive and I have choices that I give my body to God. It's like, I like that little prayer that I read somewhere.

Maybe you heard it. It's a little humorous prayer. Well, Lord, for the last six hours, I've never gossiped.

I've never spoken evil. I've never hurt anybody with my tongue. I've never done anything wrong with my tongue, but now I'm getting out of bed, and now I need a lot of help.

You got it? See, when we are fast asleep, we hurt anybody. We're not speaking anything evil. It's when we are alive that I have to be a sacrifice.

Every moment, a living sacrifice. I have to die there. When somebody speaks to me in some way, ah, that's the moment for me to die and be a living sacrifice.

In my body. When I'm tempted with my eyes, that's the time for me to die and be a living sacrifice. That's the first step.

And then, I have to give my mind. What's our goal? To become like Christ. I give my mind, verse 2, in my mind, I don't allow my mind to think like this world.

Down here, I need to come up higher in my mind, and in God thinks. That's the meaning of being renewed in your mind. To look at things from God's viewpoint.

That's the meaning of renewing our mind. To come up higher. See, our mind is so down to earth, lower.

Why? Because we have grown up like that. Maybe your parents put all types of worldly values into your head. I'll tell you, that's why children who have been given worldly values by their parents from childhood, oh, what a battle it is when they grow up.

To break free from that. Some of you who are praying that your children will become spiritual, you ask yourself, who gave them those worldly values in the beginning? Wasn't it you? You drilled a whole lot of worldly values into their mind, and now you say, hey Lord, take it all away. It's like feeding poison, poison, poison, poison into somebody, and then you go to the hospital and say, can you please give my son a stomach wash? No, God can do it, and the hospital will do it.

But first of all, acknowledge your sin. Lord, I don't blame my children. I was the one who put those worldly values into their head.

And I need to repent first of all. I'm sorry. I want to put some heavenly values into them now.

And those of you who are so lucky that you're newly married and you hear these messages in the church, running or your children are small, you are so lucky that you can put heavenly values into the minds of your children, make it easier for them when they grow up. If anybody here has a child that is unconverted, ask yourself what is the reason? If anybody here is a child who is not a wholehearted disciple of Jesus, ask yourself what is the reason? What values did you put into their head when they were young? Did you discipline them like a heavenly father disciplines his children? Or did you allow them to go their own way? Did you instruct them? Did you fight with your wife at home and show them that those things are not serious? We need to repent first. I believe God can do miracles for our children, but the parents must repent first.

And say, Lord, we put all types of wrong values into their mind. They saw all types of wrong things in our home. So we want to repent first.

And then perhaps something will happen with our children. Maybe they heard you criticizing the brothers in the church in your home. Oh, I'll tell you, that is one of the greatest sources of evil.

I tell you, there are a number of people I know in CFC who have spoken evil of the elders and others in their homes. Well, there is one law of God that you cannot change and I cannot change. To sow, you will reap.

Brother Zach, pray for me. I sowed potatoes, but I want tomatoes at harvest time. I'm sorry, I don't have that faith.

You can repent and start sowing tomatoes now. Then there's some hope. I don't have the faith that God will change the laws of nature.

No, we can repent now, but we got to acknowledge our fault. We should not pretend that we did not sow anything. I believe God is against dishonest people.

And a lot of us can be so thoroughly dishonest that we blame our children where we should be blaming ourselves. Don't let your mind be conformed to the values of this world. Change your value system.

That doesn't mean don't use the things of this world. Jesus taught us to pray for material things. After we have prayed, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

Yeah, once we got our priorities right, we can pray, give me this day my daily bread. And not only me, Lord, give my fellow believers, give us this day our daily bread. And not only me and my fellow believers, give us our children our daily bread.

In other words, what am I saying? Lord, help me to get a job so that I can earn my daily bread. I don't want to be dependent on others. I don't want to be dependent on good people in the church to help me in my time of need.

I want to work with my hands and support myself. And I want to educate my children. Why? Because I want them to earn their daily bread.

I don't want them to grow up and become parasites on society, depend on, depend on, for handouts from other people who are nice people around them. No, I don't want even one of my children to grow up like that. I want them to earn their daily bread.

Because we are taught to give us this daily bread. It comes from heaven. So that's why we believe in educating our children, so that they can get their daily bread when they grow up, instead of wandering around, struggling and waiting, borrowing from here and borrowing from there and borrowing.

Do you know the number of people in CFC who borrow money as if they haven't heard against this? You know why? Because their mind has been affected by the world. The world says, you can't live without this. You can't live without that.

You can't live without the other thing. And they go for those things. And they suffer.

And they say, oh brother, please pray for me. What shall I pray for you? That you should get tomatoes when you sort potatoes? Humble yourself and say, Lord, I deserve to reap what I have sown. But please forgive me and help me to do it right in the days to come.

But if you are unwilling to take the blame, I don't believe you'll ever finish with reaping. There's a wonderful promise, I want to come back to Romans 12, in the book of Amos. In the book of Amos.

You know where Amos is? Psalms, Proverbs, Amos. Got it? Hosea, Joel, Amos. Okay.

Amos, it says here, about a time when the plowman will overtake the reaper. Where's that verse? It's a very lovely verse. I'm just looking for that.

Yeah, it's towards the end, that's right. 9.13. Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when the plowman will overtake the reaper. Do you understand the meaning of that for your life? That means you will stop reaping what you have sown.

And the plowman, the man who's coming, plowing the new seed, he'll overtake the reaper. Your reaping is finished. Hallelujah.

Praise the Lord. And the mountains will drip sweet wine. You claim it, claim it.

And say, Lord, I'm looking for the day when the plowman will overtake the reaper. There will be no more reaping. It's over.

And those of you who haven't yet gone down that bad road of sowing all types of things in yourself and your family, please take this to heart. Don't be conformed to the world. What do worldly people think about? Don't think like them.

If someone were to open up your mind, and someone were to open up the mind of a thoroughly worldly person, would you find both of you thinking about the same things? The same values? The same way you want to take revenge on others? The same way you get anxious and worried when somebody threatens you or your boss tries to do some harm to you? And you react in your mind exactly like the atheist reacts in his mind. I'll tell you honestly, what I've seen in the lives of many people, Christians, is that even though they believe in God in the church meetings, in a difficult situation in life, their reaction is exactly like that of an atheist. It's as though God is not there, I have to do everything on my own.

Is that what you sing and talk about in the church? Be gone, unbelief, my savior is near, and for my relief will surely appear. His love in time past bids me to think that he will leave me at last in trouble to sink. Each sweet Ebenezer that I have in review confirms his good pleasure to carry me through.

He will not take me halfway through the river and dump me there and say, I've had enough of you. I have a father who is not going to dump me. Because supposing, you know, I've asked this question to people.

Supposing you knew, suppose some of you who are married 15-20 years, or even 10 years, or even 5 years, or even 1. If you knew every stupid thing that your wife would do before you got married, would you still choose the same wife? Don't raise your hands and don't give the answer. We don't want any fights at home today. But ask yourself.

I think there are many people in the world who would say, oh boy, if I knew all that she is going to do, I would have thought twice and married somebody who may turn out to be worse than her. But the point is this. I'm only using it as an illustration.

Jesus, when he married me, he knew every stupid thing I would do for all of my life. Everything, even the things I'm going to do tomorrow, next week, next year. I hope I won't do too many foolish things.

And I'm not perfect yet. I may say something foolish or stupid, but he knows it. And knowing it all, he says, I want you.

That's why I'm sure he's not going to throw me away. Because if I say to him, Lord, did that surprise you? That stupid thing I said or did? Oh, not at all. I knew that long ago.

I still love you. I'm going to change you. Isn't that a comfort? Yeah, it is to me.

So, the Lord wants to change our mind and lift us up higher and see how God looks at me. He looks at me as one who, he knew everything about me and he still chose me. Don't ask me why.

It's like going and asking an ugly, illiterate, stupid, lame girl, why did this handsome king marry you? I don't know. Was he blind? No, he wasn't blind. He knew everything, but he still chose me.

It's something like that. The wonder of it, the wonder of it. Sometimes we lose the wonder.

I never want to lose the wonder of the fact that the Lord chose me. The Lord says, come up here, come up higher and see from here. Don't be conformed to this world and its way of thinking.

We have a Father who cares for us, who loves us and knew everything about us. He knows everything that's going to happen in the future. He's made provision for it.

Come up here and see things from here. It makes a world of difference when you come up higher and look at things from God's viewpoint. You know, I believe this is a matter in which we have to allow the Holy Spirit to change our way of thinking.

This come up higher is essentially in the mind. One day, my body will also go up to be with Jesus. It will physically go up higher, but that day has not yet come.

But till that day comes, my mind can go. I can have a rapture in my mind, where I'm taken up like John was. He was physically on earth.

Like they say, even if your head is in heaven, but your feet must be on the earth, so that everything we get affects our life on the earth. Don't think like the world thinks, but let your mind be renewed. Then you can understand the perfect will of God.

And that is how you'll be transformed, it says. Transformation into the likeness of Christ cannot take place if we don't allow the Holy Spirit to lift our mind higher. It's a choice that we make.

It's a choice that you have to make every day. When I face a situation, I say, okay, looks pretty bad. Let me see how God looks at it.

Oh, immediately your view of that difficult situation changes. Anything. That guy, I can't trust him.

He's scheming to harm me. I don't have a plan against me next. He's pretty powerful, and I'm pretty weak.

That's from the human level. Okay, let's look at it from God's viewpoint. That evil guy is like a speck of dust.

You think God can't handle him? You think God can't deal with him? You think God doesn't know the plans he's making in his mind against you? Or whatever he's planning to do? You don't need to have any fear. Everything changes when you have your mind lifted up to view things from heaven's standpoint. I believe as we approach the end of time, if there is one thing that we need more than anything else, it is to have our mind lifted up to view everything and everyone from heaven's standpoint, the way God looks at it.

The devil. Recently the Lord told me, in my heart, as there was a time when you were afraid of the devil, from now on the devil is going to be afraid of you. I said, boy, this is fantastic.

The devil afraid of me? Have you met believers like that? Who are sure the devil is scared of them? And the reason is, not because I'm much smarter than you or know the Bible more than you, but I'll tell you what, I believe some things in the Bible which you don't believe. That's the reason. It's faith that makes the difference.

Not maturity or many years of walking with God. No. It's faith.

And I'll tell you what I have faith for. 1 John chapter 4. It says, there is no fear in love. Verse 18.

1 John 4.18. There is no fear in love. What does that mean? You see that little children, little babies, who will only go to their mothers, fathers, they will not, they'll scream if you put them in the hands of a stranger. They know that in the hands of their mother and father, there's perfect love.

They have no fear. Even little children know that. And we need to find ourselves in that.

You know that verse in John 14.1 where Jesus says, You believe in God, don't fear, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. I never forget seeing a picture in the living Bible, children's Bible, of Jesus holding a little child and saying, don't be afraid, I love you, trust me.

That's a picture I saw years ago. And I always want to be like that little child leaning on Jesus' shoulders and saying to me, don't be afraid, just trust me. You may need that word in some situation that you face in the days to come.

Don't be afraid, just trust me. Be like that little child leaning on Jesus. See, that's why heaven is so free from fear.

There is no fear in love, because that perfect love of God casts out fear. But fear involves punishment, means I'm always afraid that God will punish me for something wrong I did. I absolutely or there are a number of people sitting here who have that type of fear.

I've done something wrong, so God will punish me. There are people who say, oh, maybe I've committed the unpardonable sin, and maybe God will send me to hell. Fear always is linked with punishment.

You don't trust God. He's not dependable. He's not at all trustworthy.

You are, of course, so trustworthy, but not God. No wonder your life is so miserable, unhappy, grumpy. You make life miserable for people around you in your home.

You know how much sweeter your home can be, a taste of heaven on earth? If you rejoice in the perfect love of God, Him holding you like a little baby saying, don't be afraid, just trust me. Perfect love casts out fear. Fear of anything, fear of the future, fear of the devil, fear of your boss, fear of circumstances, fear of sickness, fear of cancer, fear of road accidents, fear of anything.

It says in the previous verse, because as Jesus is, so also are we in this world. That's how I know the devil's afraid of me, because I believe that. If I were to ask you, was the devil afraid of Jesus? Every one of you would say, of course he was.

Why isn't he afraid of you? Do you believe this verse? As Jesus is, so also am I. Not in heaven. If that last phrase, in this world, were not there, I would think, yeah, maybe one day in the future. No, right now in this world.

I believe that. And the Bible says, according to your faith, be it unto you. It's not according to your desire.

It's not according to your prayers. It's not according to the number of meetings you attended. It's not according to how much you understand in your head.

It's according to your faith. Be it unto you. My brothers and sisters, let's trust God.

Not for the stupid things these television evangelists tell you to trust. But for these type of things that will make you a ruler on this earth, a conqueror. God planned for you to be a conqueror.

He planned that you should be a ruler. Everything should be under your feet. That's God's will.

So whatever may be, okay, you know, the Lord told John, come up here. I know the churches are like that. I know the elders are like that.

The elder in Laodicea is like that. The elder in Sardis is like that. But John, don't get discouraged.

Just come up here and see. The church that I'm building, the gates of hell, will never prevail against it. In the 32 years that we've built the church, churches, I faced many, many problems in many churches.

Most of you don't know anything about it because I don't share it with you. I share it with the Lord. And I've had to think much about it, problems with elders, with people, and how to discipline people, how to restore people, etc., etc., etc.

And I say, always say, Lord, the church you build, the gates of hell will never prevail against it. That's impossible. So even if I see situations like a Laodicean church in something that I've planted, or the Lord planted through us, or some elder like a Sardis elder with just a name that he's alive but he's dead, that's fine.

Doesn't matter what people say. Lord, I believe there are some overcomers there. I see things from your standpoint.

The Lord says, come up here, don't get discouraged. My church will not be defeated by the devil. It will not.

I'll tell you this. I don't know what type of complaint you have against the people in your church or against the elders in your church. Are you discouraged because of that? You know what the answer is? Come up higher.

Come up and see from God's viewpoint. Do you think God's purposes can be frustrated? No. The devil has been defeated on the cross already.

You've heard me use this illustration. I love to use it because it is so relevant. You know, like we had this India-Pakistan cricket match where India won the series.

And India said, think of the match where India won. And supposing I've seen that already, live. And somebody who was working during the day comes back in the evening to see the rerun of that, and he doesn't know the result.

He's going to be in a panic when he sees the wickets falling or the other batsmen scoring many runs. When I sit there relaxed. And he thinks I'm unpatriotic.

Aren't you an Indian? Don't you, you concerned about? No, I'm thoroughly Indian, but I'm relaxed. Why? Because I've seen the end. I saw the result.

This is only a replay. And the wonderful thing that happened on the cross of Calvary was that Satan was defeated. Do you know that for nearly 16 years after I was born again, that wasn't a reality to me.

If you'd asked me is it true, I'd have said yes. But it hadn't gripped me. My mind wasn't gripped by the fact that Satan was defeated.

Completely defeated. God allows him to do a lot of things, but it's a defeated person. And he can fool the believers who don't know that he's defeated.

I told you about that demon-possessed woman who came to my house. I didn't know she was demon-possessed. I thought she was just a unbeliever.

But when I told her to say, tell the devil you were defeated on the cross. She turned around to me and said, I was not defeated on the cross. That's when I knew it was a demon.

And the demon was cast out. I told her, now say it. And she said it.

Satan, you were defeated on the cross. That's one thing I learned that day. That the devil does not like to hear that he was defeated on the cross.

And I decided that day that I'll tell him that as often as possible. And I'll teach others also to tell him, Satan, you were defeated on the cross. You got no power over me.

You can't touch me. I'm seeing things from heaven's standpoint. It looks as if, you look at things on earth.

It looks as if who's winning the elections, anti-Christian forces. That's okay. It doesn't disturb me.

You know, the apostles, you know who was ruling Rome? In the time of the apostles, it wasn't a nice, Christian-favoring emperor. For 300 years, God allowed evil, wicked, anti-Christian emperors to rule Rome. And the Christians, what did they pray? They didn't say, Lord, change the emperor.

They said, Lord, give us boldness to be witnesses for you in this generation. I said, that's it. I leave it to God to decide.

I said, we pray, God will change governments if possible. But if in his great wisdom, in some situation, he allows some anti-Christian government to come to power, like in China, for example, our own brothers and sisters, your brothers and sisters are suffering under an anti-Christian government in China. And no matter how much they pray, the communists have ruled there for 50 years.

Or 60 years nearly. And their prayers haven't changed the government. But some of the finest Christians in the world are found in that country.

God's ways are not our ways. I'll tell you that. So, when I see things from heaven's standpoint, I see God is not interested in giving us a comfortable life.

He's interested in having a pure testimony for Christ in every place. And that's why, I mean, those of you who were here 30 years ago, you heard me say 30 years ago that persecution would come to India. Well, we see it coming.

I'm not surprised. I mean, when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, what did Jesus say you should do? Stand up, lift up your heads. For your redemption is drawing near.

When you see deception among Christian preachers with false signs and wonders and false healings and all that, stand up, lift up your heads, your redemption is drawing near. Jesus said this would happen. False

prophets, when they say men will be lovers of money more than lovers of God.

It says that in 2 Timothy 3. What should I do when I see that? I don't have to waste my time complaining about it. I don't. I just stand against it and I say, Lord, I lift up my head.

Your coming must be pretty soon. Because I see people around me, preachers, lovers of money more than lovers of God. And I see deception.

I see false miracles. Deception. I see the elect itself almost being deceived.

So many people, many will fall away. I see that happening. Doesn't disturb me.

It just means that we are approaching the end. In the same with persecution. You'll be hated by all nations because of me.

And I see that happening. I say, great. When you look at things from heaven's standpoint, everything is different.

Everything is different. The trouble is, we sit and study the Bible and we are looking at everything from an earthly standpoint. And we are trying to use human ideas to manipulate and change things.

No, God's ways are different. I've come to see the truth of that verse. In Isaiah 55.

It's a very important verse that all of you, if you don't know it, you must know it. Isaiah 55. It says here, verse 6. Seek the Lord while he may be found.

Call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way. And the unrighteous man, what should he forsake? His way of thinking.

Let's put it like that. Give up your present way of thinking. And return to the Lord.

Because, verse 8. My way of thinking is not your way of thinking. Now put those verses together. Give up your way of thinking, verse 7. Because, my way of thinking, verse 8, is not your way of thinking.

And if you want to know how much different my way of thinking is from your way of thinking, here it is. Verse 9. As the heaven is above the earth, so different is my way of thinking from your way of thinking. Okay, let's ask this question now.

What is the difference between my way of thinking as a Christian and God's way of thinking? It's not just a little bit, one foot difference. No. It's the millions of miles between heaven and earth.

And the only way I can make my way of thinking God's way of thinking is to allow the Holy Spirit to lift my mind up to heaven. So that I let everything and everyone from God's viewpoint. You know what the result will be? When I see a man scheming to do evil against me.

Whether it's taking me to court or malign me or do anything. I look at him like a man who's got cancer. If you go to the cancer hospital and you see a man with sores full of cancer, are you angry with him or do you feel sorry for him? Tell me.

How many of you will be angry with him? Oh, you've got cancer. No, you feel sorry for the poor man. His life is being destroyed.

And you say, thank God I don't have cancer. That is how I look at these people who try to harm me and hurt me. They can't hurt me.

That's impossible. It's impossible because there's a filter around me called, what's it? Romans 8, 28. It's better than an aquaguard filter.

You know, I've seen these aquaguard filter salesmen. They'll bring their equipment and pour dirty water one side and clean water. They can drink it.

I say, boy, this is wonderful. Here's Romans 8, 28. Somebody does try to harm to me.

Comes out as good. Wonderful. So why should I be upset with him? Are you upset with somebody who's doing good to you? When you get upset with somebody who's trying to harm you, that proves a number of things.

One, it proves that you don't believe in Romans 8, 28 at all. Second, it proves that you believe the devil is more powerful than your God. Because your God can't handle this powerful work of the devil.

And third, it may also prove that you don't love God. Because Romans 8, 28 is only for those who love God. You're not called according to his purpose.

Is that what you believe? I don't believe that. I believe I love God with the little love I have. I believe he called me according to a certain purpose.

I believe the devil was defeated on the cross. I believe that my God is almighty. There's a book a man wrote many years ago called Your God is Too Small.

I like that title. I can say to hundreds of believers I have met, Your God is too small. It's not the God of the Bible.

Come up higher. Can you imagine the angels getting into a panic because the devil is doing something on the earth. They know it's all a replay.

They've seen the final result. I've read Revelation chapter 20. I know the final result.

Dear brothers, everything changes when you come up there and you see this man who's trying to do evil. He cannot do evil to me, but he's destroying himself. Don't you think he's got cancer? Of course he's got cancer.

Look at him as somebody who's got cancer. Some fellow who's wild and angry and yelling and shouting, maybe your wife or your husband. Cancer.

AIDS perhaps. AIDS. Jesus can heal.

You know everything changes when you allow the Holy Spirit to lift up your mind. Say, let this unrighteous man give up his way of thinking because my way of thinking is as high as the heaven is above your way of thinking. Lord, lift me up and let me stand by faith on heaven's stable land.

And like it goes on to say, I have no desire to live in the low plains for my ears have caught the joyful sound of saints who are living on higher ground. I want to live there. Have your ears caught the sound of one or two saints here and there who seem to be living in an altogether different plane than you are? And

it's the same Jesus who took them there.

The same Jesus can take you there. It's faith. Lord, I believe you can do that for me.

It's not got to do with merit or whether you were a five times divorced woman or someone who was brought up in a very nice way. Jesus is the same. He came to save sinners.

There's hope for us all. Let's pray. My dear brothers and sisters, please respond to whatever God said to you this meeting.

Call upon the Lord as near. And you know he is near because you heard his word very clearly. If you heard it clearly, you can be sure he's very near.

That's the time to call upon him. Say, Lord, I want to respond to you. I want to forsake my old way of thinking.

I want to think like you think. I want to see things from your viewpoint. I want my mind to be renewed.

To look at things from heaven's standpoint concerning everything in the days to come. I know now, Lord, that all the cause of the mess in my life was because I did not allow the Holy Spirit to make me think the way you want me to think. Please help me, Lord, that this will not be just a temporary, transient decision, but something permanent.

Thank you, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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