

# (Come Up Higher) the Place of Wisdom

by Zac Poonen

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*The heavenlies is a place of spiritual blessing, power, and wisdom, where every spiritual blessing is available in Christ, but we must agree with God that our old man is corrupt and fit to be crucified to experience it.*

**Duration:** 58:45

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:14, Romans 6:6, 1 Corinthians 1:5, 1 Corinthians 6:5, 1 Corinthians 15:4, Ephesians 2:5, Philemon 1:16

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the idea that as believers, we have a choice to make each day. We are not capable of making someone spiritual or taking them to heaven, but we can show them the way. The speaker highlights the concept of being a new person in Christ and not feeding the desires of our old flesh. He uses the analogy of two dogs inside our hearts, one black and one white, and explains that the outcome of the battle between them depends on which dog we choose to feed. The sermon also references the tabernacle and its significance in representing salvation and the different parts of our relationship with God.

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## Transcript

We're continuing our study in Ephesians, under the title, In the Heavenlies. So the word heavenlies occurs a number of times in Ephesians. We saw first of all in Ephesians chapter 1, that we are blessed, verse 1, chapter 1 verse 3, with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, in Christ.

So the heavenlies is a place of spiritual blessing. And then we saw yesterday, that God's power, in Ephesians 1, verse 19 and 20, that his power has lifted us up together with Christ, and he raised him from the dead in heavenly places. So the heavenlies is a place of power.

And we saw that the greatest manifestation of God's power, first of all, in a nutshell, what we saw the first day was every blessing of the Holy Spirit is available in heavenlies, in Christ, if I claim it. And yesterday we saw that the greatest manifestation of God's power was when he raised Jesus from the dead. And that is the power, it says in Ephesians chapter 2, that raised us also when we were dead.

God was rich in mercy, verse 4, verse 5, chapter 2, verse 5, when we were dead, he made us alive together with Christ. You know, this is one of the great truths of scripture, that in some way that you and I can't fully grasp. Take for example, I think most of us have had no difficulty in recognizing that the sins we

commit now, in the last 20 years, or 50 years, were put upon Christ 2000 years ago.

How could that happen? How can the sins you committed in the last 50 years be put upon Christ 2000 years ago? Because with God, there is no future. There is no past or future with God. His name is not I was, or I will be.

His name is, I am. I am that I am means, I have no future, I have no past. With God, we can say God lives in an eternal present.

Eternal present. What happened millions of years ago is present. What's going to happen millions of years later is present.

So, your sins which you may have committed today, which you ask God to forgive, in God's eyes it was there 2000 years ago. It was not in the future, it was in the present. So he could put it on Christ.

That's why even the sins that we may commit in the days to come were all put upon Christ. In the same way, we ourselves were crucified with Christ. That also, how? I mean, we are living now, how could we be crucified 2000 years ago? Because with God, there is no future.

He lives in an eternal present. So, in order to deliver us from the death that came to us through Adam. You know God is a righteous God.

And even though he doesn't have to answer to anybody, his nature is one of justice. So he can't ignore sin. I mean, he could have just forgiven us without Christ dying.

And nobody would question him, because there is nobody to question God. Why did he say, no, somebody has to pay the punishment for sin? Whom is he trying to please? No one. But because he is so just.

You know, this is amazing, that he doesn't have to answer to anybody, but justice demands punishment. It's something wonderful, you know, which when we get God's nature, even if I don't have to answer to anybody, I'm still going to be righteous. That's part of God's nature.

It's not because somebody is watching me, or because I have to answer to somebody, or because somebody is watching me. That is all the characteristic of Adam's race. With God, there is no such thing as, I have to answer to somebody, I have to give an answer, why I did this, or... No.

It's righteous, so it must be done. That's why Christ had to die on the cross. And in the righteousness of God, he had to get rid of this cursed thing that we got from Adam.

And the only way was to put it to death. So he united us with Christ on the cross, and when Christ was buried, this old man of ours was also buried, that's what we testify to in baptism, and when Christ was raised from the dead, we were in that resurrection that took place the first day when the apostles went and found Jesus had risen, I also rose with him. This is one of the great truths of scripture, and therefore, scripture says in Romans 6.11, now consider yourself dead to that past life.

It doesn't mean my free will is taken away. I must every day choose to accept what God did in Christ on the cross. Because if it is automatic, then God has taken away my free will.

You see, for example, the planets, they obey God automatically. They don't have free will. They obey God split-second obedience.

But God doesn't want us to be like that. He wants us to choose, do you want to be with Christ for eternity? And every day he makes us choose, do you want to deny yourself today, do you want to take up the cross today? Or do you want to live for yourself? You are filled with the Holy Spirit last week, still, you are free. To sin today if you want, God gives us total freedom.

Somebody once asked me many years ago, Brother Zak, in all the years that you have known God, what is the greatest characteristic of God that has blessed you, that impresses you, that challenges you? And I say the greatest characteristic to me, I didn't even have to think, is the fact that he gives me complete freedom to be myself and to do what I like every day, even after I am saved, even after I am filled with the Holy Spirit. What is the result of this? I'll tell you. Listen carefully.

It's made me give other people the freedom to be themselves. And not only to be themselves, to do what they like. There is not one of you sitting here, even elder brothers, who can say to me that I made you do something, saying you got to do it.

Never. There is not a single person sitting here who can say to me that I did not give you the freedom to be yourself. In fact, I encourage you to be yourself.

Many people when they come to me for advice concerning anything, concerning marriage, concerning job, concerning going here or going there, I always tell them, see, this is my advice, but don't do what I say. All of you who come to me for advice know that I have said that. Go to God and see if that's what God wants you to do.

You know why? Because I have learned from God. That's the way he is. But that's not the way religious people are.

There are many people sitting here who are very religious. I can see it in their faces. A lot of sisters, older sisters are pretty religious.

I would advise you young sisters to stay clear of them. There are older brothers, elders who are very religious. And one mark of religious people is they force themselves on you.

They give you advice when you don't want their advice. Stay clear of such people, whoever they are. Out of curtsy, you can listen to them.

But you don't have to do. Don't get into a fight with them. You know, I often give advice to people who are married.

I remember when I got married, my father-in-law used to give me a lot of advice every time I went to their home. He would tell me, listen, I never once argued with him. I listened, listened, listened and never did what he said.

Then next time he would give me more advice. I listened, listened, listened and never did what he said. After some time he stopped advising me.

Isn't that a better way than fighting and arguing and saying, no, I don't agree with you? Be wise. So if somebody gives you advice, yeah, listen. You don't have to do it.

If you don't feel free, don't do it. Be wise. Don't get into fights with people.

Be wise. If somebody wants to impose themselves, if some older sister wants to come and give you advice, listen to it. Thank you, sister.

Don't do what they say unless you are convinced. God gives you freedom. He gives people freedom to go to hell.

So voluntarily, I choose, I accept, Lord, I agree with you that you condemned this race of Adam on the cross. You put it to death. You buried it.

I agree with you completely. How do I prove that I agree with him completely? Every day I reckon this old man to be dead. That's how I say I agree with God.

Many Christians don't agree with God. How do I know they don't agree with God? They allow the old man to live. That's why Jesus said you got to take up the cross not once for all, but every day.

So even though we partake of God's nature, this is a mystery. You know, you can say, we use the example of a pig who always loves dirty things and a cat who loves clean things. But it's not that simple.

Because we find that even though God has changed our nature, we are made partakers of the divine nature, yet we still have a flesh. And there's a conflict between the two. God has allowed it to exist.

He could have destroyed the flesh as soon as we are born again. He's going to destroy it one day when He comes again. You know that.

When Christ comes, this flesh is going to be destroyed. He could have done that when we are born again too. Why didn't He do it? He didn't do it because He wants to give us freedom to choose.

You still have, even though you're born again for 50 years and you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you still have the choice today to disobey me if you want. I really love that. That's God's nature.

And if you are really godly, that's the way you'll be towards other people. But you say, they're harming themselves, shouldn't I stop them, pull them back? There are people going to hell. God doesn't pull them back.

He says, go. Do you know how many millions went to hell yesterday? Not one or two. Millions.

Did God catch them by the neck and pull them back? No. Be like God. I'm like God.

If somebody wants to go to hell, I say go. I'll try to stop you, but I'm not going to catch you by the neck and pull you back. I'll try my best, but I'm not going to.

I'll shake you, I'll warn you in every very strong word, but I can't stop you from going to hell, and I can't stop a believer sitting here who's going to be a hypocrite. You can sit here and talk wonderful language, be an absolute hypocrite in your private life, I can't stop you. Go ahead, be a hypocrite.

Because you will reap the consequences of it, not me. I can never make anybody spiritual, I can never take anybody to heaven, but I can show them the way. So God gives us freedom.

Each day you choose. I agree with God that this old man, in fact in baptism that is what I testified, even though you may not have known it. You're testifying baptism, I agree 100% with God this old man is not fit to live.

But God's made me a new person in Christ, that's the one I want to live. And the other old flesh of mine, I'm not going to feed it. No, I'm not going to feed it.

It's all a question whom you feed. It's like that man in the jungle who got converted. Somebody asked him afterwards, how do you find it after you've received Christ as your savior? He said, well I find two dogs inside my heart.

One black dog and one white dog. And they asked him, which is the dog that's winning in this battle? He said, that depends on which dog I give food to. So that's it.

Whichever dog you feed, that's the one that's going to win. So that's the crude way in which he explained what the Bible speaks about the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. So even though we are crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, raised up with Christ, and it also says here, made to sit, verse 6, in the heavenly places in Christ.

It's not me struggling to get up there. No. I can't climb up to heaven.

He did it all. He lifted me, but I have to choose whether I want to live there or live here. I'm choosing every day, whether I will allow this old man to come up.

You know, this is why some Christians, not some, many many, in fact the vast majority of Christians, I would say, behave worse than many non-Christians. Haven't you seen that? The way some Christian husbands and some Christian wives who are very religious and pray all the time, behave at home, it is worse than the unbelievers. They are not Christ-like.

I mean, you ask yourself, why is it that you are not patient and overcoming your temper at home? I'll tell you, you don't agree that your old man should have been killed. You're saying, God, you crucified my old man with Christ, I don't agree with it. Remember that the next time you get angry and upset with your husband or wife, you're telling God, you may say that I should be crucified with Christ, I don't agree with it at all, I think my old man is pretty okay.

That's the only reason you sin. That is the only reason you sin. And you will keep on sinning till the day comes when you agree with God that your old man is only fit to be condemned and crucified and buried.

The day you agree with God, you will come to victory. The old man is a lover of money. You keep on loving money, you're saying, I don't believe the old man should be crucified, I think he's pretty good.

When you're selfish, think only of yourself. The old man is a very inconsiderate person. The old man, Adam, is something that only thinks of himself.

He makes life difficult for others, but he thinks of my comfort. You know, thoughtlessness, thoughtlessness about the burden I'm being on others is one of the primary characteristics of the race of Adam. It's not adultery and murder.

Don't do those things. Are you thoughtless? You don't think about the burden you're bringing to other people? That is the proof that you're saying to God, I don't believe that my old man should be crucified, I

think I'm okay. A true Christian is very thoughtful and considerate about the people he lives with.

Always, he's trying his best not to be a burden to others in the church. He's always seeking. He may not do it perfectly, but his heart, his desire is that.

I want to as far as possible. That's how Jesus was. Have you noticed one little thing it says about Jesus? I don't have time to show it to you.

When he rose up from the dead, it says there that the napkin that was around his head was neatly folded and kept there. You think the angel did it or you think Jesus did it? What do you think? You think the angel did it or Jesus? Jesus. Why did he do it? Why not just throw it around like the way you throw some of your clothes around in your home? Why did he fold it neatly and keep it there? I'll tell you, because that's the way he always did it from the time he was a child.

That's the way he always did it. And I learned something from that for myself. That I've been in different homes and I say, I must keep the room I stay in.

I remember I lived in a home when I was a young naval officer. I visited somebody's home and that was more than 40, 42, 43 years ago. And that family's daughter, who's a grown-up person now, told me, she said my mother remembers one thing about you when you came to our home 42 years ago.

That when you got out of bed, your bed was neatly done and folded and kept. But somebody came to the room, the room was all tidy. You know where I learned that from? From Jesus.

Holiness is consideration for other people. I'm not saying cleanliness is the most important thing. It's true, cleanliness is next to godliness.

But my point is, you know, we can be very careful about so many things concerning ourselves. Like, I want to drink filtered water. It's good because I don't want to get sick.

But what about consideration for other people? What about you children? Are you considerate about your parents at home? The old man is not at all considerate. Not at all considerate. I think many of us, I've been guilty of this, many of us husbands are very inconsiderate about our wives.

So when I say, Lord, I agree this old man is corrupt, good for nothing, has to be crucified, I agree, I want to accept my position as dead, buried with Christ, and then I will experience what it is to be seated in the heavenly places. Many of us would like to sit in the heavenly places, but you know the old man can never sit in the heavenly places. If you believe the old man is still fit to live, why, you gotta live in the earthly places then.

And that's why so many people today preach a gospel of earth. Every blessing is earthly. In Israel it was like that.

Every blessing was earthly. Why? Because the old man was not crucified in Old Testament times. It's only when Jesus died the old man was crucified.

So what could you tell people whose old man was still alive? We'll bless you with earthly things. I mean what do you offer a little child as a reward? A chocolate or a toy? You can't offer a toy to a 25 year old person. No.

In the same way, in the Old Testament God had to bless Israel with toys and things like that, wealth and prosperity and health and all that to make them happy. But now that we are mature, God treats us like sons. The old man is crucified.

We are raised up and seated with Christ in the heavenly places. I'll tell you this, you will know what it is to live in the heavenlies when you accept God's verdict on your old man. I agree with you 100% Lord.

This old man is utterly corrupt, evil, fit to live to be crucified and buried. I accept it and I'm going to reckon myself to be like that every day. You'll suddenly find yourself lifted up to heavenly places.

You don't have to go there. Do you know there's not a single verse in the Bible which says that Jesus raised himself from the dead. We sing a song, Christ arose.

Hallelujah Christ arose. It'll be difficult to find that verse in scripture. Try and find it.

There are 101 hymns I've discovered which people write which are written by people who haven't read the Bible. I told you yesterday a lot of people say the earth was created in 6 days. I said show it to me in the Bible.

The earth was made in 6 days, created in a moment. Do you know what it says about Jesus? The father raised him from the dead. You read through the Acts, God raised him, God raised him, God raised him from the dead, God raised him from the dead.

It never says he arose himself. Never. And if that is the case, Jesus said I have power.

He said in John 10, I have power to lay down my life, I have power to raise it again. He said that. But he never used that power.

He only used his power to lay it down. Raising up God did. What is that for me? In baptism, I yield for somebody to push me into the water.

But it's somebody else who lifts me up out of the water. I don't lift myself up. That is the meaning of resurrection.

I say Lord, my duty is to agree with you that I should die. It's God's business to raise me up and put me in the heavenly places. If we die with him, we shall live with him.

That's the principle. I don't have to lift myself up. I don't have to struggle.

I'm going to have the mind of Christ from today onwards. I'm going to look at things from God's viewpoint. You will not be able to do it.

It's a psychological trick. Okay, I'm going to look at things from God's viewpoint. No.

You must be willing to die. God will lift you up and put you in the heavenly places. That's the secret.

So if I'm not willing to die, I can't get up there. You can train your mind to say, okay, I'm going to look at people from God's viewpoint. I'm going to look at things from God's viewpoint.

But if you're not willing to die, if you don't agree that your old man is stinking, filthy, fit to be crucified and condemned, the way your old man speaks, the way your old man is inconsiderate, the way your old man

behaves is filthy, corrupt. If you don't agree with that, all this business of being in the heavenlies will only be fury. Now I want to move on.

Today we want to speak about wisdom. The heavenly places is a place of wisdom. It's a place of blessings, it's a place of power, it's a place of wisdom.

Ephesians in chapter 3, we read here about a great mystery that was hidden throughout Old Testament times. And he says here, Ephesians 3, 4, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ. Mystery is a secret that can be understood only by divine revelation.

In other generations, this mystery was not made known to the sons of men. Why? Is it because people in the Old Testament were not clever? I think Solomon and Daniel were much cleverer than you and me. They were clever.

But even a man like Daniel, who was the wisest person in the Old Testament, just by the way in case you didn't know, many people say as wise as Solomon. Those are again people who haven't read the Bible. Do you know what God says in Ezekiel 28 about the devil? You are wiser than Daniel.

God considered Daniel wiser than Solomon, just by the way. There are many, many things we discover in scripture when we read it carefully. If we allow our mind to be influenced by the world's opinions or by our church traditions or by the hymns we sing.

It's one of the things I decided in my life. I will never allow my knowledge of script, knowledge of truth to be influenced by the hymns I sing. They may be wrong.

Or by the traditions I got from any church. I'm going to allow my mind only to be influenced by the Bible. You know all of you say the Bible is God's word, but I don't think all of you believe it.

Because if you did, you'd have some problem singing the songs that some of us sing. You'd have some problem with some of the traditions that you heard from your church. Our whole mind will be changed when we accept scripture.

So in the Old Testament, wise people could not understand this mystery. So it's not something that you can understand by listening to me or by intelligence. It comes by revelation.

What is this mystery? And it looks like something very simple. When you think of mystery, you say, boy, this must be some great truth. And the truth is only this.

It has now been revealed, Ephesians 3.5, to the apostles and prophets. There were no apostles in the Old Testament. I hope you know that.

And the prophets in the New Testament are different from the prophets in the Old Testament. The prophets in the Old Testament revealed the future. The prophets in the New Testament reveal the mind of God concerning the present.

And to be specific, here is the mystery. The non-Jewish people should be heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus along with Jewish people. And that doesn't sound like a great mystery, right? Now let me explain the mystery to you.

Because he goes on to say, this mystery, I was made a minister, verse 7, by God's grace. And I'm actually, verse 8, the least of all the saints. In Paul's opinion, he considered himself the last of all God's children.

And God gave him grace to preach this wonderful truth and to bring to light, verse 9, the administration of this mystery. That means the stewardship. That means, you know, God gives you money to distribute to others.

That's the meaning of administration. That means to share the truth of this mystery with others, which for many ages was hidden in God. So that, here's the word again, the wonderful manifold or many-sided wisdom, the many-colored wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

There is a wisdom that I can manifest when I live in the heavenlies. Wisdom is different from knowledge. Even Bible knowledge.

You can have a lot of Bible knowledge and no wisdom. The, to the Corinthian Christians, Paul said in one Corinthians, in chapter 1, he said to them, you are enriched, verse 5, in all speech and all knowledge. What do they have ability in? Ability to speak, and have the ability to speak, great knowledge.

Now, we as human beings, even as Christians, are very often impressed when a man has got a lot of Bible knowledge, or secular knowledge, or scientific knowledge, and in addition, he's able to speak. The Corinthian, if you went to the Corinthian church, there were great speakers there. There were people with great knowledge.

But, to the same church he says, chapter 6, and verse 5, I say this to your shame. Isn't it a shame? Isn't it sad? There's not even one wise man among you. When brothers have fights, there's not even one wise man who can settle that dispute.

Instead, you go to court. So, these people had plenty of knowledge, plenty of ability to speak, but zero wisdom. Is it possible that you may have a lot of knowledge, Bible knowledge, but not much wisdom? Very possible.

Wisdom is found in the heavenly places. Knowledge you can get by sitting in a conference, and if you've got a good mind, you grasp it, you listen to a CD, or read a book again and again, and you got the information. And you can pass out that information to others in your sermon, and think that you're preaching the same message.

No, you're not. You're passing on the same knowledge, but it's not wisdom. If I were to compare knowledge with wisdom, it's something like this.

Knowledge is a very beautiful 3D picture of a plate of chicken biryani. Wisdom is the actual chicken biryani. Which would you prefer? Knowledge is a 3D picture of a fire that gives no light, no warmth.

Wisdom is actual fire. There's a lot of difference between knowledge and wisdom. Don't pass on knowledge to people.

You can't build a house with knowledge. You need to build a church with wisdom. Here in the heavenlies, this wisdom of God is manifested through the church.

Now you say, let me come to this mystery. What is this great mystery that is hidden from ages, that the Gentiles, non-Jews and Jews should be one? Is that such a great mystery? Now I'll explain to you. We live in a country where there's this wretched caste system.

And even though Mahatma Gandhi called them Hari Jans, which means the people of God, and he called them all sorts of names, he couldn't get rid of the system. And the government has passed all types of laws banning the system, but you go into the remote villages of India, the thing is still being practiced. Because there's such a tremendous difference between the upper caste and the lower caste.

In the olden days, I mean even now, they won't drink in the same cup, and they won't sit in the same hotel, and in the olden days it's even worse. You wouldn't let the shadow of that man, lower caste, pass by you. Now much worse than that was the distance between Jew and non-Jew.

We have a little understanding of it, if you know the caste system in the villages. It's much worse. The distance between Jew and Gentile was the greatest distance between any two human beings that ever existed in the world, Jew and Gentile.

And when Jesus stretched out his hand on the cross and died, he was bringing Jew and Gentile together to become one body. You go to the villages of India and try to make high caste and low caste one body, and you'll find how difficult it is. And that's why they have separate churches for the low caste, and separate churches for the high caste.

Separate churches for the tribal people, separate churches for the educated people, because they recognize they can never be one. The caste system will continue, even in the church. You see how it's a mystery? It is a real mystery.

Try and make Malayalees and Tamils one. It's not easy, I'll tell you that. Or Malayalees and Anglo-Indians one.

It's pretty tough. There's resistance on both sides. It's not easy.

Have you noticed in conferences how you always move towards people of your own community? I don't. I've seen the mystery. I'm not a Malayalee, by the way.

I'm a Christian. Full stop. There's no brackets, something else.

No. I'm a Christian. And it makes no difference to me whether a person is a Westerner, Easterner, Malayalee, Anglo-Indian, Tamil, educated.

I can enjoy fellowshiping with someone in the villages of Tamil Nadu who can't speak one word of English as much as I can, fellowship with the person who has the most highly educated PhD. I'm a Christian. I find my unity with people not on the basis of language, community, culture.

It is really a mystery. It was a mystery 2000 years ago and it says it was not made known to past generations. I say it's not even been made known to this generation.

You see what a mystery it is? And if you think people of the same community can be one. You think all the Malayalee churches are all united? You think all the Tamil churches are all united? You think the Tamilians get along with each other? You think the Malayalees get along with each other? Okay, let's narrow it down. When they become married they become one.

Tell me husbands and wives, are you one? Don't answer. You see how difficult it is for husband and wife who nowadays they go for love marriages. I can't live without you.

That's what they say. Six months after marriage they're sick and tired of each other. Why in the world did I marry you? Don't be fooled by all these cinema stories about falling in love.

I'll tell you, there's only one love that is real love and that is the love of God. And it's not saying, oh I fell in love, what to do? I love this boy, I love this girl. You'll never have a happy marriage that way.

I can give it to you in writing from day one. You'll never be one. You'll always be arguing.

You think you're arguing just because this is the first one or two years of adjustment. It's not one or two years of adjustment. Fifty years from now it'll be the same.

There's only one way to be one and that is to be crucified with Christ. Then you'll be one. If you're not crucified with Christ you'll never be one.

Wisdom is in the heavenly places, not down on this earth. And you can get to the heavenly places only if you die. And that is the wisdom where two people can become one.

Now to be one in heaven, it's like that old jingle which says, to live in love with saints above, won't that indeed be glory? But to live below with saints we know, well that's a different story. Yep. That's a different story.

But to live in love with saints above, boy, that'll be glory. Do you know what the Lord is showing the angels in heaven? Do you believe that the Lord is trying to teach something to the angels in heaven and to the demons in the heavenlies through you? I'll tell you, Ephesians 3.10. The manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church. Have you seen one word there called now? Is that in your Bible? So that the manifold wisdom of God might now, right now, not in the future, right now, be made known through the unity in the church to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places.

There are good rulers and authorities. It's like God saying to Michael and Gabriel and all those archangels, hey look at those two fellas down there. That guy's a Malayali and that guy's a Tamilian.

Have you seen how one they've become with each other? You can't see that in the world. That guy is westerner, that person easterner. Completely different cultures.

Have you seen how they become one in the church? They've died to their old, what they were in Adam, that made a difference between them. They've become one. Have you seen that husband and wife? So different from each other in their temperament, their outlook.

But see how they've become one. They have died with Christ. And Michael and Gabriel look at that and say, boy, how do you think? Because they don't see that anywhere else on the face of the earth.

They see everybody fighting, grumbling, quarreling, and in the midst of it they see two people who have become one. And then God points it out to Satan and all his hosts and says, look at those two people. When Satan says to God, look at these people who call themselves your children.

They fight and quarrel, their husband and wife, they quarrel, they sit in the church and talk about the new covenant, but see how they behave at home. And God says, that's absolutely right about all these people.

But look at that couple.

And look at that person. And look at that person. I know 90% are like this, but look at this.

I want to ask you, my brother, sister, can God take you and your home and show his manifold wisdom to the angels and the demons through you and say, see how these two people are one? That's the challenge that comes to me. I'll tell you honestly, I'm not living here before your face. If I did, I would be a first-class hypocrite.

A lot of people come to the church, they live before the face of man. They'll be hypocrites. If you're more worried about what Brother Zach thinks about you than what Almighty God thinks about you, I'll tell you right now, you'll be a hypocrite till the day you die.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, not the fear of Brother Zach. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. When you say, God, I'm more concerned what you think about me.

That's the beginning of wisdom. What are the angels saying who watch me all the time? When you try to lock yourself in some room and commit some sin, you know who else is in that room? The angels. They're watching you every moment.

The demons, they're watching you every moment and they're just waiting to tell God, ah, see that child of yours in that room? You're supposed to be a child of God? See how he's behaving when you yell at your husband or your wife or your children? The angels and the demons are listening. Brother Zach is not listening. He's far away.

He'd be more careful if I were there. But the angels, the demons who are looking for the wisdom of God in these people who claim to be sitting in the heavenlies and all the wonderful things they sing on Sunday mornings, look at the way they behave. What can God say? God could point one man.

There were many religious people in the days of Job. Many great preachers like Eliphaz, Bildad, Elihu. Elihu was better than the others, but God could not even point to Elihu.

Zophar, none of them. But he said, Job is different. And the devil came to God and said, look at that fellow, Eliphaz.

Preaches such a lot. Have you seen his life? Look at Zophar, look at Bildad, look at Elihu. And God would say, that's right.

What you say is right, Satan. But have you seen Job? He's different. And so, when the devil says to God, look at that family, look at this one.

They also go to CFC. That guy is even an elder in CFC. His wife is supposed to be an elder's wife.

They're pretty proud of that. But look at the way they behave themselves. Look at the way they handle money.

And God says, that's right. But have you seen this one? And have you seen this one? And the devil says, look at these people, so totally inconsiderate, the way they live. God says, that's right.

But have you seen this one? Have you seen how considerate they are? How thoughtful they are? Dear brothers and sisters, I want to ask you honestly, does that challenge you? This is what it means to live before the face of God. Elijah said, as the Lord God lives before whose face I live, I say to you, wisdom is to dwell in the heavenly places. In the Old Testament, there was a picture of this in the tabernacle.

The tabernacle was a big compound, something like this compound, let's say. It was about 150 feet by 75 feet. And big compound, that is called the outer court.

And there was a gate, only one gate, speaking of Christ as the only way. And coming into the tabernacle court was like a picture of being saved. Because out there, as soon as you come in, you see the altar of sacrifice, picture of Calvary, and a bowl of water, picture of baptism.

That's all. So some people are just occupied with Jesus died for my sins, take baptism, they stay there. Then, inside that tabernacle was 45 feet by 15 feet, little smaller than this building, not so broad, 15 feet by 45 feet, what is called a tent.

And that tent was divided into two parts. The part towards the gate was 30 feet by 15 feet, and the inner part was 15 feet by 15 feet and 15 feet high, a cube. And that cube was called the most holy place, the other was called the holy place.

So you came into the outer court first, and then you entered if you wanted to go little further in the Christian life. That's the picture. I'm not satisfied with just being my sins forgiven and to be baptized in water.

That's not enough. I'm going to press through into the holy place. In the holy place, there's a table of bread, symbolizing God's word.

I want to study God's word, I want to know God's mind. And on the other side, there's an altar of incense, speaking of prayer. I want to pray and trust God.

And also there's a lampstand with oil that makes the light burn. I want the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and I want to serve God. These are not all believers.

These are believers who are not happy being forgiven and baptized in water. They want to press through to the baptism in the Holy Spirit, to study God's word, to pray, and to be useful in God's service. They're busy in that place, serving God.

That's a second category of believers. But then there was the most holy place, which is not open to anybody in the Old Testament. It's a picture of being in the heavenlies.

That's why it was not open in the Old Testament. Nobody could get to the heavenlies in the Old Testament, so there's a veil there. And when Jesus died on the cross, the veil was rent, symbolizing, hey fellas, now you can go to the heavenlies.

Why do we say that's a picture of the heavenlies? Because God dwelt there. In the most holy place, the fire of God was there on top of the tabernacle. That is a mark of God's presence.

That was the most important place to go to. But there, there was no crowd there. In the outer court, there was a crowd.

In the holy place, there was a crowd of priests serving, busy. But in the holy place, you had to go one by one. If the high priest went in there, he couldn't take his wife there.

He couldn't say, God, my wife's a good friend of mine, can I bring him in? No, sorry. You've got to come here alone. Do you know that to go into the most holy place, you've got to go alone? You can't take your son there.

You can't walk in with your son, you can't walk in with your wife, you've got to go alone and say, God, I want to worship you. You are everything to me. Nothing on earth is any more important to me.

Comfortable life, if I have it, well and good, but it's not important to me. Money, if I have it, well and good, but it's not important to me. I already have a hundred sets of clothing.

I'm amazed that believers have a hundred sets of clothing and still want more clothing. You know, some people have such a craze, always buying, buying, buying, buying, buying unnecessary things. See, God doesn't satisfy them.

You know how Jesus spent his money? John 13 29, buy what you need, give to the poor. Only two things for which Jesus spent his money. John 13 29, buy what you need, give to the poor.

If you have a hundred sets of clothing and you need a hundred and first set also, by all means buy it. Don't judge other people. No.

You may not have a car, some people in some countries need three cars. I've seen that, they need it because there's no public transport. I don't judge them.

Don't judge anybody else. But you live by this principle. I'm not preaching what I don't practice.

I tell you before God, I'm not preaching what I don't practice. I buy what I need, I give to the poor. I want to follow Jesus.

If you don't follow Jesus in the area of money, you'll never follow him anywhere. The test of whether you're following Jesus is in the area of money. God doesn't tell you what you should need, that's up to you.

We all live at different standards of living. It's perfectly right for one man to have one bedroom house, another man to have a ten bedroom house perhaps. That's not for us to judge.

Each person decides where they're going to live. We're not communists. You know how communists are, we're all equal.

Make all fingers the size of the small one, cut it off. That's communism. God says no, I make them all different sizes, but they work together.

So we're not communists, we're Christians. Many people think Christianity is communism, it's one of the biggest lies. Communism has been a failure, Christianity has been a success.

Making all equal does not solve the problem. Leave it the way God made it, but work together. Philemon was a very rich man.

Onesimus was his slave, not even a servant. Onesimus never got any pay. When the church meeting started, they were brother Philemon and brother Onesimus.

Both could share God's word equally, and if Onesimus was more gifted, he would get up and share powerfully, and Philemon would sit and listen. Once the meeting is over, because the meeting was in Philemon's church, once the meeting is over, Onesimus became a slave. He would call Philemon sir.

In the meeting, brother Philemon. In the house, sir. This is it.

Have you understood that? You know, I have seen different places where believers work for other believers. I have almost never seen a place where it has succeeded. I have had believers who have employed other believers.

I have asked them, how has it been, employing this believer in your firm or your company or your business? They say, brother Zak, they just take advantage. They say, oh, I am your brother, take advantage. These people have no clue about being crucified with Christ.

They have no clue what the Bible says. If your boss is a believer, you should work harder for him. The Christian world is full of people who want to take advantage of others, except those who have got into the heavenlies and who have got wisdom.

Wisdom is never to take advantage of others in any way. I made that a rule in my life, that no man will ever be able to stand in the day of judgment and point to me and say, brother Zak took advantage of me financially. Nobody.

Nobody will be able to point to me and say, brother Zak waited for a hand out from me. No. Even though I am in full time Christian work, even though many of you are in secular jobs, many of you have depended more on the church to help you when your families are sick, not me.

I trust my heavenly father. Many believers, they depend on the church. Oh, let everybody in the church know I am poor.

Well, you don't have the, is your heavenly father different from mine? Do you know what it is to trust God and never let your needs known to any man? I have done that for 40 years and I have proved that God is faithful. Dear brothers and sisters, we miss so much in the Christian life. We live according to the foolishness of the world, not according to the wisdom of God in the heavenly places.

Die with Christ and he will lift you up and make you sit in the heavenly places. If a believer does a work for you, make sure you pay him more than you would pay an unbeliever, not less. That's Christianity.

Do you have that wisdom? Or do you say, oh, this is a believer, I can, give me a discount and give me a cheap fare. Well, he's got to support his family too. And you're a rich man, why don't you give him a little more? That is Christianity.

Yup. Wisdom is to learn to be considerate, to be learned to be thoughtful, and it is thus that we become one with each other. That's how a husband and wife can be one.

To be considerate, thoughtful. If I speak like this, will it hurt my wife? Will it hurt my husband? Will it hurt my children? Then let me put the same thing in another way. I'm not speaking as one who's never made a mistake.

I've made many mistakes. I know times when I have said something rudely to somebody and I've gone away. Immediately the Holy Spirit has convicted me and said, you could have said the same thing in a

gentle way.

I said, Lord, I'm ashamed of myself. But, you know, every time I say that and I hang my head in shame, I get a little more wisdom. But if I don't hang my head in shame and I say, no, he needed to hear that, then you will remain the same foolish, stupid person you always were.

I would advise you to hang your head in shame and say, Lord, that was my mistake. I'm sorry that I spoke like that. That's not the way Jesus would speak.

I know I've been in situations where even if it's a petrol bunk or somewhere, I didn't speak the way I should have. And I go away from there and the Holy Spirit says, that's not the way Jesus would speak. I have spoken to some poor people and the Lord has said to me, would you have spoken to that person like that if he was a rich man, influential man? No.

You spoke rudely to him because he's a poor man in society. I hang my head in shame and say, Lord, you're right. That's how I got wisdom.

Little by little, I still haven't got it all. In the heavenly places, you're quick to acknowledge your foolishness. Lord, that was my mistake.

These are some of the most difficult words for a husband and wife to say to each other. Try saying it. You'll find it very difficult for your mouth to say it.

I'm sorry, that was my mistake. Please forgive me. Those are ten of the most difficult words that can ever come out of the mouth of any husband or wife.

You want to hear it again? I'm sorry, that was my mistake. Please forgive me. If you don't believe it, try saying it.

Your mouth will move and you can't speak. I tell you, it's very difficult to say it. And it's even more difficult to say it from the heart.

Wisdom comes when you acknowledge your foolishness. Lord, I was very thoughtless there. And then go to your wife and husband and say, I'm sorry, I was very thoughtless, the way I conducted myself in my home all these years.

Please forgive me, it was my mistake. It wasn't your fault. I burdened you by making you do so many things.

I should have helped you. I found fault instead of encouraging you. How many of you wives encourage your husbands? Do you think your husband is such a saint, he doesn't need any encouragement? You know, there's nobody in the world who doesn't need encouragement.

Everybody needs it. Wisdom is to learn to encourage people. It's to learn to appreciate people.

You know how human beings appreciate and how Jesus appreciated? When Jesus saw someone, he saw him for the first time. He's an unbeliever, Nathaniel. Unbeliever.

Imagine appreciating an unbeliever. Boy, there's a man in whom there's no guile. Would you say something like that to a Hindu or a Muslim? You're too holy, right? Jesus would say it.

And here Jesus sees another military man who worships idols perhaps, who doesn't know anything about the Bible. A Roman centurion. Supposing you see a Hindu military major.

You say, boy, you've got real faith. I've never seen faith like you have among Christians. Would you ever say that? No, no, no, no, no.

We are so holy. Jesus would appreciate a Roman centurion. He would appreciate a Canaanite woman.

The Canaanites were supposed to be killed by the Israelites years ago, but they didn't all get killed and through their descendants, this one woman came who was demon possessed and Jesus went to heal that woman's daughter. So woman, great is your faith. You know how we appreciate, I've seen many people come to me and appreciate like this.

Brother Zach, I don't want to puff you up, but I think I really appreciated your message. Can you see Jesus saying that even once to people? I don't want to puff you up, Roman centurion, but I think your faith was great. You know why we say that? I'll tell you why.

Because we ourselves get puffed up. We think everybody in the world gets puffed up too. It's not true.

You may get puffed up, other people don't. It's because you're a sun seated snob that you get puffed up and other people don't. They know how to give the glory to God.

We just don't know how to appreciate people. Tell me, when was the last time you sent a thank you note to somebody who did something for you? Spiritually, have you ever appreciated someone who's blessed you spiritually? It's wisdom. Jesus said if somebody gives a cup of cold water, I'll say thank you for it.

We've been blessed in the church, our children have been preserved, but we take it for granted. How many of you have gone to somebody who has blessed you immensely spiritually, even once in your life, and said brother, I'm so grateful. And if you find it reluctant to say it, have you ever written a thank you note to somebody? A really appreciative thank you note.

I remember I met once a brother who used to be in our church for many years, who grew up as a child in CFC and left with his family. And when I met him in America, I asked him, I said you've been so many years in CFC, from childhood you grew up, you were blessed there. Now I know you've left, but have you ever written one letter to brother Ian Robson, thanking him for all that he did for you? The next day he wrote an email, thank you.

Never again. It was a legalistic fulfillment of something which I told him to do. There was no appreciation there.

If it came from the heart, there would be such a sense of gratitude to people who preserved you spiritually in your younger days. We're not in the heavenlies, we're very much down to earth, where everybody's selfish, self-centered, think only of themselves. Oh, if a doctor healed us of some sickness, boy, we would thank him every time we meet him.

But spiritually, we don't value our spiritual lives so much. That's why when somebody helps you spiritually, you don't appreciate it as much as a doctor who did some surgery on you. That is the clearest proof that you value your body more than your spirit.

So be it. But those who want to have years to hear, I want to encourage you, in the heavenly places, spiritual things are more important than physical things. I have greater appreciation for men like Brother Buxing, who helped me so much spiritually, than for any doctor who ever did anything for me.

Because I value my spirit a million times more than my body. I don't dwell on earth, I dwell in the heavens. In the heavens, the river of God is full of water, the trees of God are full of sap.

There's no shortage, there's an abundance. Brothers and sisters, come up higher. Heavenly Father, what a thank you have called us to in Christ, to live in a place of blessing, a place of power, a place of wisdom.

We want to live there all our days, not just for one or two days, all our days. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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