

Discipline In Our Family Life

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of self-denial, obedience, and faithfulness in following the example of Jesus. It highlights the need to avoid conceit, fix hope on God, be generous, and be rich in good works for those who are wealthy. The speaker encourages self-denial and teaching children the value of self-denial rather than indulgence. The importance of living a righteous life, being honest, and not judging others is also emphasized.

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Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:17, Luke 2:51, Romans 13:1, Hebrews 4:15, Psalms 37:25, John 16:13, Matthew 7:1, Proverbs 16:3, 1 Timothy 3:4

Topics: "Self-Denial", "Generosity and Righteous Living"

Description

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Transcript

When you put on the AC, I have to be careful. Because you guys live at 65 and I live at 75. Yesterday I made the mistake of not bringing my jacket with me.

I'm wiser today. The thing is, it's not that we... I find if I'm shivering, I have to concentrate on what I'm saying. But God is good.

Every experience he takes us through. One thing we have to learn. Never complain against others.

As long as you live in the world, people will make mistakes as a result of which you suffer. We're not living in a perfect world. Your husband may make a mistake.

Your wife may make a mistake. Your children make mistakes. People you work with make mistakes as a result of which you suffer.

But if you believe that God is in control of everything, if you believe that his sovereignty extends even to the hairs on your head, and if you believe that he cares for you more than the sparrow that falls, it is impossible, I mean impossible, for you to complain against any human being. There's always a purpose.

Maybe you're in a rush to go to work in the morning and your wife didn't make breakfast in time.

Don't complain. Say, Lord, maybe you want me to fast today. Thank you.

Maybe I love fruit too much and you're trying to deliver me from that. It is impossible when you're serious about becoming like Jesus that God will allow you to slip and fall. He'll help you.

But you have to be serious in your life that I want to be like Christ. I want to walk as Jesus walked. And don't think of the last three and a half years of his ministry like most Christians think.

He preached great sermons. He cast out demons. He healed the sick.

No, no, no, hang on. Don't jump into college before you've gone through school. You can't go to university.

You've got to start in the kindergarten. And you know what that means in terms of following Jesus? Start with the first 30 years of his life, not the last three and a half years. We do know something about the first 30 years.

It is hidden, but it is revealed to those who are serious to find out. Most Christians are not serious about the first 30 years of Jesus' life. I was not for almost 16 years of my Christian life.

The only life of Jesus I knew was the last three and a half years, how he did fantastic things. And, you know, when people seek for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, that's what they seek for. Oh, I want a great ministry.

There was a great man of God. I think his name was Samuel Brangle in the 19th century who was a pastor in Boston. And he heard about the great ministry of D.L. Moody and how D.L. Moody testified how when he was baptized in the Holy Spirit, suddenly things changed in his ministry.

You know, Moody was a preacher, preaching the gospel to many unconverted people, but he used to see two old ladies sitting in the front row praying. And he went up to them afterwards one day and said, I'm glad you're praying for the sinners here. She said, Mr. Moody, we're not praying for the sinners.

We are praying for you, that you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And that's what went him seeking. And he began to seek and pray and seek and pray.

Nothing seemed to happen. And one day, he says, as he was walking down the streets of New York, he suddenly felt the Spirit of God coming upon him and he rushed to a friend's house nearby and said, Give me a room. I've got to be alone.

And he locked himself up in the room. And he says, wave after wave, the Spirit of God came upon him. And he went out and he says he preached the same sermons.

And hundreds were converted. So Samuel Brangle heard about this and he began to pray for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And he yielded everything, everything.

Lord, all I have and am is yours. Nothing happened. He finally said, Lord, show me.

Is there anything else? And the Lord said, yes. You want to be a famous preacher like Moody? Give that up. He hadn't realized that.

Very often, even today, when people hear about the baptism in the Holy Spirit from somebody, they say, boy, will it make me a famous preacher like that person? And I want it. You won't have it because you're seeking your own. And that's the reason why hundreds and thousands of people never get what God wants them to have.

They're not willing to be the part of the body that God has made them. They want to be like some other person. I work with a number of co-workers and I have to tell them, don't try to be a preacher like me.

God wants only one Zach Poonen in his body, the body of Christ. He wants you to be you. And to have the unique gifts which God wants you to have.

So when Bringle gave up that, God filled him with the Holy Spirit. And then the next thing the Lord told him was, give up your pulpit here in Boston and go and join William Booth in England in the Salvation Army. So he crossed the Atlantic and went to England to join William Booth, who founded the Salvation Army, which was reaching the drunkards and the prostitutes and bringing them to Christ.

And William Booth was a man who knew God. And he didn't care if a man was a famous preacher from some Baptist church, from a church, an American church. He told Bringle, anybody who joins the Salvation Army, he's got to spend a long, maybe a year or so, polishing the boots of all the others.

That's all you do. You don't preach. So go down to the basement.

For the next year, you'll be there, polishing the shoes of all the other brothers here. That's what he did. He was filled with the Holy Spirit to polish people's shoes.

From there, he grew up to be a great saint and one of the most powerful preachers in the Salvation Army. God's ways are different from man's ways. He takes us through difficult paths.

If you seek great things for yourself, you'll never get there. I always tell people, my own fellow workers, my fellow elders, remember you are called to be a washer of feet. Our Savior, on the last day of His life on earth, was not chairman of some organization or director of some organization, no.

He was washing the feet of His disciples. On the last day, at the height of His ministry, He was at the feet of His disciples, washing them. Aim for that.

Go down. God's greatest blessings are not in shelves on higher and higher. God's greatest blessings are on the lowest shelf.

That's why many people don't get it. They're looking for the high places. Seek to be a washer of feet.

I say that's what I seek to do. When I counsel people, I want to wash their feet. When I preach a sermon, I seek to wash their feet.

But some people say, Brother Zach, you preach so hard sometimes. Yeah, that's because there's so much dirt on your feet. I have to use a rough brush to scrub it all off.

Otherwise, it'll remain dirty. But I'm still a washer of feet. I want your feet to be clean.

Absolutely clean. Seek to be a washer of feet, all of you, brothers and sisters. Don't spoil your children by giving them everything they want.

I believe there's a generation of children growing up in rich countries like US who will never become the men and women of God that they should be because they have never known poverty and struggle. What should I do? What should you do? Make your children poor? No. I remember I have four sons and my wife and I were very poor when we were married.

We were so poor that for four years we could not rent a house. We had to stay in one small room and we had to move around other people's houses. That's not exciting.

It's pretty humiliating. I stayed in my dad's home a long time. It wasn't easy for my wife.

The devil would taunt me and say, what a grand house you had when you were an officer in the Navy. Look where you are today. I said, Lord, I never chose this.

You called me. I would never have left the Navy if you hadn't called me. You called me.

I'm happy to accept this. I never knew why God took me through those paths for so many years before he gave us a place to live in on our own. But I discovered later on, in the last 40 years, that God took us to minister to the poorest people in the villages in India.

In two places where there was no church for 2,000 years. No Christians. Extremely poor people.

Many who live on two meals a day. And some of them are so poor that when they get married, they cannot have a house of their own. Then I knew.

I could be a forerunner for them. It was years later that I knew why God took me through that path 20 years earlier. So that I could tell these people, brother, I've been through what you're going through now.

I'm not preaching theory. I can tell you how to be a Christian. When you're so poor that you have to live in somebody else's house.

I will not preach theories to you. God took me through it. Do you want to be an effective servant of God? You have to go through things which others don't go through.

If you're not willing to pay the price, God will say, OK. I won't disturb you. You live your comfortable life.

Do what you like. And so, as we grew up, our children had to struggle. They had to use the same shoes that their older brothers used.

The same school uniforms that their older brothers used. Because we couldn't afford new ones. I had to take three of them on my scooter to school.

And other people took their children to school in cars. I said, fine. I couldn't give them money for buying snacks during the break time.

I said, no, we'll send you something from home. You are not like some of those rich children. It was good for them.

Very good for them. You think self-denial hurts our children? The very best thing. And they grew up learning to be careful.

Not to waste any. And when we are faithful with earthly things, God gives us spiritual riches. And so what? If my children didn't have all those things when they were small.

I remember when my dad was dying. When my oldest son was only 12 years old. My dad was a very God-fearing person.

And when I joined the Navy, he hoped that I would go to the top. And when I told him that I'm quitting, he said, fine, I'm happy. If you're going to serve the Lord, I'm quite happy.

Then I started serving the Lord and I began to have this international ministry, traveling here, there, all over the place, different countries. And my dad was excited. Because my dad was a committed Christian.

He was the first chairman of the Billy Graham meetings in India in 1956. And he was delighted. He told me, you got a gift like Billy Graham.

He said, you can be used around the world. And then he saw me one day in 1975. Shuck everything.

Throw it all out. Never go anymore to any of these international conferences. I said, God's called me to build a local church.

And he saw me sitting in my house with eight or ten people trying to build the body of Christ. And he could not understand. He said, you're wasting your time.

You're ruining your gift. I said, Dad, that's what God's called me to do. God's not called me to be Billy Graham to use my gift to become a famous preacher.

He's called me to build poor people into a local church. I told the Lord, Lord, all the rich people go to the big cities. Send me to the villages where nobody goes.

And that's exactly where he sent me. More than 50% of our churches are in the poorest villages of India. I'm very thankful.

And I've gone there every year. Many of those places, 40 years. And it's not easy to travel in India in buses and all that.

But when I see the saints of God and my wife comes with me and takes care of the medical needs of the poor women and children there, it's been an exciting ministry all these years. But he trained us for us through grinding us. So, my dad told me, you won't be able to educate your children at this rate.

It won't take any money from anyone. I said, Dad, if I see God's kingdom first, God will give my children the education they need. I'm not going to go violating the principles that Jesus and Paul lived by just to educate my children.

No, I'll leave that in God's hands. And sure enough, God took care of them. They all got scholarships to study in colleges.

There hardly had to be anything for their education. God has got the whole future planned for you. Some of you are worried about your children.

Teach them to seek God's kingdom first. And seek God's kingdom yourself. There's a wonderful verse that I can give all of you who are concerned about the future of your children.

In Psalm 37 verse 25. Psalm 37 and verse 25. Not only your children, your grandchildren.

I have grandchildren. I'm concerned that they will also grow up to be witnesses for Christ. It says in Psalm 37 verse 25, most of David's Psalms he wrote before he was 30 years old as a shepherd.

Sometimes when wandering around from cave to cave he wrote some Psalms. But this he wrote when he was nearly 70, just before he died. And he says in Psalm 37 verse 25, I was young, now I am old.

But I've been observing things and I've seen one thing. That a righteous man is never forsaken by God. And his descendants, means his children and grandchildren.

I've never seen them begging for bread. And in today's terms that means I've never seen the children of the righteous looking around for a job. Forget it.

I've never seen the grandchildren of righteous people hunting for a job. Forget it. Because it's through a job that we stop begging for bread.

What a wonderful verse. I proved a little bit of in my life. My wife and I decided we will never borrow money.

50 years we've never borrowed one rupee from anyone. When we had little we lived with little. When God gave us more we used that.

But we put his kingdom first. God will test you. And sometimes financial struggle is a way in which he tests you.

If you pass amazing results will come. But if you compromise you'll miss out on what God has for you. We decided we'd never buy things which we could not afford.

We never believed in buy now pay later. A house mortgage is not a loan because your house is there for the money you spent. You die and your wife will not be in debt because you didn't sell the house.

There's no debt there. If you take a car loan and you've insured the car for the same amount there's no debt there. But if you take and borrow money to go on a vacation at the end of it what do you have to show? Just a lot of hot air that's all.

Or you can write something on Facebook about the wonderful places you saw but you're in debt. Not worth it. We decided and we've never been in debt I'm 79 years old.

I've never been in debt even a single day of my life. Because of one verse Romans 13.8 Oh no man anything. We took every word of God seriously.

Not only God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. Wonderful verse. But also Oh no man anything.

We took both verses equally seriously. And we've reaped the benefit of it. And not only us I've taught that in all of our churches we teach people not to be in debt.

When we build church buildings we don't get into debt. In the poorest villages, in the cities God's taking care of us. Not by begging and asking.

People gave Jesus money, he took it but he never asked for it. People gave Paul money, he took it but he never asked for it. Every need God is here, my God shall supply all your need.

Philippians 4.19. We need to experience that. Have you got a few experiences like that? In your life? Then some of you may say but what shall we do who are earning so much now? Do we have to make ourselves poor to teach our children? No, no, no, no, no. My own children asked me that.

They earn more than I was earning when I was their age. I said you don't have to become poor. You think all the poor people in the world are spiritual? You think all those homeless people who stand on the streets, are they spiritual? No, poverty doesn't make anybody spiritual.

We've got millions of poor people in India, they're not spiritual. They're carnal. Unconverted.

I said what you can teach your children is self denial. It's not through poverty that you become spiritual, it's through self denial. That means when you go to a store and your children ask you for something you say no my son you don't need that.

You have enough at home already. And it may hurt them a little bit to deny themselves. I remember one of my children once asked me for a pair of Nike running shoes.

I said I'll get you a cheap Chinese equivalent of that which is pretty good but which is about 20% of the price. They said no I don't like it. I said sorry.

He cried. I said you can cry as you like but that doesn't put money in my pocket I can't get it for you. He's following the Lord today.

You don't need Nike shoes to follow the Lord. I'll tell you that. I would not get into debt.

I could borrow and please him. I said sorry. Teach your children self denial.

Even if you're wealthy. You don't have to buy everything you can afford for them. You'll ruin them.

I tell you I've seen this. Rich believers, their children are ruined because their parents give them everything. They drive a car which they never spent one cent on.

Even the gas is paid for by their parents. Fine. I hope their children will follow the Lord.

But ask yourself whether you're teaching your children self denial. Think of the first 30 years of Jesus' life. What could he afford? Why did almighty God send his son to a poor carpenter's house to grow up in? I've seen poor carpenters' homes in India.

Carpenters in America are rich. They're wealthy. Some of them are millionaires.

But in Israel, if you wanted to know what a carpenter was like, go to a carpenter's house in India. I've seen it. And I look at that home and I say this is the type of home Jesus grew up in.

He didn't have a private bedroom to retreat to when things got hot in the house. He had four brothers and two sisters who did not believe in him, who probably irritated him day and night. He had no bedroom to retreat to.

Rich people's children have bedrooms to retreat to when there's problems with the other children in the house, not Jesus. A son of God, God could have arranged a very rich person's house for his son to grow up in. He said no.

If he is to have a ministry, he has to go through poverty because most people in the world are poor. Most people in the world are not rich. And if he doesn't experience that, he will not be a forerunner.

He'll be a forerunner for a few rich people, but he will not be a forerunner for all humanity. Learn something from that. I was not born into a poor family, but when I quit my job and got married I was poor.

God, in his wonderful way, arranges circumstances so that we struggle. That's the best thing for us. And you still follow the principles of God.

And if we can teach our children self-denial, that's the greatest lesson. Don't think, don't envy those young people. Don't envy those other children whose parents are rich.

They can have everything. Don't envy them. Wait 20 years and see where they are.

Useless to God and useless to man. Be thankful if you've got parents who refuse to give you certain things that you asked for because they wanted you to grow up Godly. It's very, very important to teach our children to stand up for the Lord, to teach our children to stand for the truth in school where so many wrong things are being done nowadays.

Don't teach your children to be popular. Jesus was not. He was despised and rejected by men.

That was the training for the most fantastic ministry of three and a half years that the world has ever seen. And that is how God will prepare you. Turn with me to 2 Corinthians in chapter 1. The secret of all effective ministry.

In one verse. You see it here. In one verse.

He uses the word here comfort in 2 Corinthians 1.3. The God of all comfort. And whenever I read the word comfort, I think of the last four letters of that word. F-O-R-T.

Fort. A fort is a strong citadel that the enemy cannot attack. So, I get the word strength from comfort.

God who comforts us means the God who strengthens us, makes us like a fort against all the attacks of Satan. The God, let me read it like that in verse 4. 2 Corinthians 1.4. The God who strengthens us in all our trials and afflictions. Purpose is so that we will be able to strengthen other people with the same strength which we got in our trials from God.

See that word comfort comes again and again and again in verse 4. This is the secret of all effective ministry. It's not sitting and studying the Bible into the late hours of the night. Yes, do that.

But if you only study the Bible and you don't go through trials in your life, you're like a person who eats and eats and eats and eats and never does any exercise. Does he become strong? No. What has he become? I believe fat is a bad word and obese, let's call it by a decent word.

Obese. It's not good. You're not strong.

You can be pushed down with a finger. That's how a lot of Christians are who read and read and study and study and study and study and never gone through any trials in their life. They've been carefully protected.

They avoided trials, avoided difficult circumstances and they expect to have a ministry. Not in a hundred years. I'm sorry.

Oh, we'll associate ourselves with Brother Zag. Won't help. Won't help.

Sorry. It will not help. You can't live on the experience of trials of somebody else.

You can know all the teachings and you can teach those teachings but you will not have the ministry God wants you to have because this is the way God gives us a ministry. He strengthens us in all our afflictions. That's a strong word.

Affliction. Have you been through affliction? Affliction. Being afflicted by people.

By circumstances. Standing up for the truth and therefore maybe not getting a promotion in your job. That happened to me in the Navy.

Getting bad reports because you stand up for Christ and you tell, I have to say to my senior officers, I'm sorry sir, I'm a Christian. I can't do that. Okay.

Well, you know what report that man is going to write about you for your promotion. You won't get it. I said, fine.

I want to be promoted by God, not by man. Do you stand up for God like that in your office? Do you do things to please your boss so that you can retain your job? Do you compromise? Well, you can sit in this meeting but God will never use you. That I can prophesy right now.

He sees you as a third rate compromiser who's seeking your own. You can't follow Jesus. Not in a hundred years.

Jesus was trained in all types of circumstances in those 30 years at home. And he lived in a poor home. I presume they had one room where all those boys, five boys and two girls slept.

And Jesus grew up there. And he had to work and help his mother. I think Joseph died pretty early.

His mother was widowed and he had to work as a carpenter to support the family. He struggled. This is the Son of God.

Thus he was trained for the most fantastic ministry the world has ever seen. And at the end of 30 years, he had never preached a sermon, never cast out a demon. But there are two things he did.

Listen carefully. In Luke chapter 2 here's what he did in those 30 years. People call it the hidden years, the silent years, but if you look for it there's something written in Scripture about what he did in those hidden years.

First of all Luke chapter 2. When he was 12 years old, he was in the temple and he already knew the Scripture so well. That's one thing we learn. How did he know the Scripture so well when he was 12 years old? There were no printed Bibles in those days.

He didn't have a Bible at home. Today we have a Bible at home. And children don't even know the Bible even when they're 25 years old.

Here is somebody who knew the Bible when he was 12 years old, enough to challenge the scholars of his time. That's what it says here when he went to the temple. He was sitting in the temple when he was 46, Luke 2.46 and you know, asking questions from the Bible scholars of his time.

And they were amazed at his understanding and the answers he gave, when they were stuck for the answer he gave them an answer. Can you imagine a 12-year-old teaching these white-haired white-bearded old people something about Scripture? Where did he learn it from? There was only one place where there was a Bible in those places and that was the synagogue. When they had the Old Testament, one copy of it written on parchment.

Very expensive. Can you imagine how much it is for a handwritten Bible written on parchment? The whole Old Testament, how expensive it was. Nobody could afford a copy.

Printing was discovered 500-600 years ago. Nobody had a printed Bible before then. And way back in 1 AD when Jesus was born there was a copy in the synagogue.

And I can imagine Jesus as a little 6-year-old boy going up to the rabbi in the synagogue and saying, Rabbi, can you read something for me from the Scripture? The rabbi would be so excited. The 6-year-old boy wants to come here and learn something. He said, sure, my son.

And he would open up and read something. And Jesus would say, I think that's enough for today. I just want to remember that.

Can you read that again, rabbi? Yes, I'll read it again. I'll come back tomorrow. And after he finished helping his mother at home, he'd come back to the synagogue and say, Rabbi, can you continue where we stopped yesterday and read some more? The rabbi, there was no other child like that in Nazareth.

He went every day. He still had to go to school to get his education, but during little spare time in between, probably 20 minutes, he'd go and read the Scriptures. Hear the Scriptures read day after day after day after day.

And by the time he was 12 years old, he knew the Scriptures. When I was converted and I was baptized in 1961, I said, Lord, if you could learn the Scriptures in 5 years, between the age of 7 and 12, I'm sure with a printed Bible, I can learn the Scriptures too. And I spent the next 5 years, till I left the Navy, 1961 to 66, really studying the Scriptures.

I'd get up every morning, kneel down by my bed and pray for a little while. And then I'd sit at my table, before I went to work, with a notebook and a Bible open and a concordance that I would study. And then I'd go to work.

When I finished my work at night, again, I'd spend quite a bit of time studying. When I finished, I'd kneel down by my bed, pray and go to sleep. I could sleep peacefully.

Do you have trouble sleeping? Try reading the Bible and kneeling down and praying before you go to bed. And when you get up in the morning, what do you think of first thing in the morning when you get up? Pick up your phone. Why not say, like Samuel, Speak, Lord.

Your servant is listening. That message on your smartphone can wait. The world will not collapse if you look at it 20 minutes later.

And over a period of time, I came to know the Scriptures. And Jesus was my example. And then, after he came back home and says, here's the other thing we read, Luke 2, 51.

He went down to Nazareth and continued in subjection to Joseph and Mary. He obeyed Joseph and Mary for 18 years after that. And when Joseph died, he was obeying Mary.

And I'm sure he had to do so many odd jobs in the house to help his mother. So much of work to be done. And when he wanted to go and play at the age of 12 with his other friends, I'm sure he enjoyed playing games with his friends.

His mother would say to Mary, Jesus, I want you to help me here. Mary, I want you to help me cut the vegetables or go and get some water from the well. And he'd do that.

Finish that with Joseph and then go and play. Okay. Cut out 20 minutes of his playing because he's got to help cut the vegetables at home and bring some water from the well.

I thank God for young people who are being brought up like that. And not young people who are taught to do nothing at home. Mommy does everything.

I feel sorry. Honestly, I feel sorry for such young people. Jesus did all these things.

And then as a carpenter, he had to learn to be honest, never cheat his customers. He wouldn't sort of cover up any defects in the wood. He made a table, never defects in the wood.

He'd tell the thing, hey, there's a little defect in this wood here, but so you don't have to pay me that price. It's a little less. I'm not going to put some putty there and make it look okay.

No. If you want, I'll change it. You can pay the full price.

I'm sure he suffered a lot of losses as a carpenter because he was absolutely honest. And if he made a little stool or something for a widow and the widow would say, how much did that cost? He'd say, there's no cost. You can keep it.

Do you think he would become the richest carpenter in Nazareth like that? Working like that? No. His aim was not to become the richest carpenter. No.

His aim was to be a blessing to others. And he was. And if a little child came into his carpenter shop one day and broke something he had made, he wouldn't get all upset.

Why did you come here and break it? No. He'd pick up the child and kiss it and say, it's okay, son. I can make that again.

God bless you. Do you think that child would ever forget this wonderful carpenter? Never met another one like that. That's how he drew people to God.

By self-denial. These are the things I learned from the hidden life of Jesus. Jesus said, when the Holy Spirit has come, he says that in John 16, he will take of the things of mine and show it to you.

There's a verse like that in John chapter 15 and 16. Read it sometime. The Holy Spirit, when he comes, he'll take the things that are hidden of mine and show it to you.

And he showed it to me. How he lived on it. You know that it says in John 7 verse 4 and 5, his brothers did not believe in him.

Imagine that. Mary would have told his younger brothers, this spoiled up brother of yours was not born like you fellas. He's born of a virgin.

I never knew any man. The Holy Spirit came on me. He said, oh mom, don't tell me another story.

I don't want to hear all that. They despised him. They irritated him.

Can you imagine four brothers and two sisters ganging up on you in your home as a little boy and irritating, irritating you? You know how people are. When they see somebody doesn't get irritated, they are determined who's going to get them irritated first. Let's see.

And they try the whole day and they didn't succeed. Okay, we'll try again tomorrow. They try again tomorrow and they didn't succeed and they're getting worked up because they're never able to irritate Jesus.

They try for a whole year, it doesn't work. And they try for 30 years and it didn't work. What is the greatest miracle that Jesus did? Not that he raised Lazarus from the dead.

He never got irritated for 30 years and constantly provoked by his brothers and sisters. He never sinned. You know how difficult it is to live without sin for 24 hours? Never losing your temper, never getting irritated, never murmuring, never grumbling, never getting anxious.

He lived like that for 30 years as a man. Don't say as God because the moment you say he did it as God, it's a lie and then you won't follow him. But when I understood that Jesus came in the flesh, he's tempted like me.

He never sinned. Hebrews 4.15 and in the next verse it says, therefore, therefore what? Therefore let us also go to the throne of grace, it says in the next verse. So we can get the same grace to help us in our time of temptation.

I said, wow! You mean that can help me? Yes! Hebrews 4.15 and 16. Go and read it sometime. And I said, Lord, that's the way I want to live.

I don't care if I never become a preacher or any such thing. I want to live like Jesus lived in those 30 years. And it took me a while to come there because I had grown up in this false Christianity that taught the main thing is evangelism, evangelism.

Go out, go out, witness. It doesn't matter how you live. It doesn't matter if you love money and you are defeated and angry.

Witness, witness, witness, witness. I lived like that. I mean I could impress people perhaps but I brought a whole lot of half converted people into the church.

Or quarter converted people. But it's been different since I understood the way Jesus went. I've seen people really converted.

At the end of those 30 years, he was tempted many times with money as carpenter. And like any young man, he was tempted with all the pretty Jewish young girls in Nazareth. But he would not depile himself.

And those Jewish girls were all modestly dressed on like the girls of today. But he would not gaze at them. He would keep his mind pure for 30 years.

And at the end of it, the father who had been watching it all the time, as far as we know, he never had a vision or any such thing in those 30 years. No angels coming to help him. It was all by faith.

My father is watching me. There's no evidence of it. Every morning, he would get up, meditate on the father.

And at the end of 30 years, one day, suddenly, the heavens opened and said, this is my beloved son. I've been watching him for 30 years. I'm well pleased with him.

And he went out from there into the most fantastic ministry the world has ever seen in three and a half years. Delivering people and laying a foundation that's lasted all these 2,000 years. And Jesus says, follow me.

Deny yourself. Follow me. Teach your children to deny themselves.

Follow Jesus Christ. This is our calling. This is how we build the church.

This is to walk as Jesus walked. And leave it to God to decide what ministry he gives you. Jesus had ministry of so many things that he did in the Gospels.

But that was his ministry. It included dying on the cross. A lot of people think we'll have the ministry of Jesus.

What about dying on the cross for the sins of the world? That was part of his ministry. Don't have high thoughts about yourself. That you're going to raise the dead or any such thing.

Just say, Lord, I want to start with the first 30 years. Just to be obedient. To be faithful.

To be subject. In his case, he was subject to the authority the father placed on him. His earthly father and mother.

Who's the authority God has placed over you? Be subject to them. Are they perfect? No. Do you think Joseph and Mary were perfect? I'm sure Jesus saw Joseph and Mary getting angry with each other.

How many of you believe that Joseph and Mary fought with each other? Did they? Any Roman Catholics here? Who believe that Mary never fought? She was an old covenant Jew. I've seen new covenant Christians married couples fighting with each other. Where is the question of an old covenant Jew before the Holy Spirit came? They fought with each other.

And I don't know whether they apologized. And the wonderful thing, Jesus saw it. And he did not despise them.

He still submitted to them. Has God put an imperfect authority over you? In your office perhaps? A crooked boss? As long as you work in that office submit to him. If you're not happy to submit, quit.

Find another job. But the Lord never supports rebellion against authority. Whether in a church or in an office or to the police on the streets or anywhere.

Romans 13 says every authority is ordained by God. Those are the things I learned from Jesus' hidden life. Tempted in all points as we are submitting to authority.

At the end of it the Father says I'm well pleased with you. It's a good thing to pray. I mean I ask the Lord sometimes Father, can you say about me that I'm your beloved son in whom you're well pleased? That's what I want more than anything else.

Long for it my brothers. Much more than for a ministry. Long for those words from your heavenly Father.

That he's well pleased with you the way you treat your wife. The way you submit to your husband. He's well pleased with you.

The way you bring up your children. He's well pleased with you. Those are the important things.

Don't look for a ministry. That'll come. God wants to give you.

He'll give it to you. But at home. Jesus was at home for 30 years.

Don't despise that. The way you live at home with your wife. Nobody sees it.

But it's very important. The way you live with your husband at home. Very important.

The basis of all effective ministry. This is what I've taught for the last 44 years. Your ministry begins with the way you behave at home.

The way you bring up your children. I told the Lord when I was beginning to preach, I said Lord, if my children go astray I'll stop preaching. Because the Bible says if you can't bring up a few children at home how are you going to bring up a hundred people in your church? A lot of people preaching today who haven't brought up their own children properly.

Do you know 1 Timothy 3 says they are not qualified to be elders in a church? Read it. If a man cannot bring up his own children how can he lead the house of God? But do you think people care for the word of God? No. No, no, no, no.

Yeah, that's not important. I can ignore that. You can? Okay, you'll reap the consequences of ignoring God's word.

And there are so many dumb believers who sit and listen to these preachers whose children are all wayward and going astray and think this man is a great man of God who's going to teach me some wonderful things. What's he going to teach you? He hasn't been able to bring up two children properly in his house and he's trying to teach a hundred people in a church or sometimes ten thousand people in a church. We live in a generation that has completely ignored the word of God.

That completely violates God's principles on finances. That begs and pleads with people to give money, money, money, money, money, money. Can you imagine Paul preaching like that? When Jesus saw a big

crowd he didn't say let's pass the offering back around.

No. He says let's talk to them about discipleship and thin this number down to a smaller number of those who follow the Lord. That's how Jesus preached.

But where do you hear such preachers today? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. And I remember when I when we started our first church I said Lord I want to prove one thing in our country. Those days I was not thinking of going anywhere else.

Not even outside of my own city of Bangalore. I said you started a small church here and I want to prove one thing here that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever. That we can build a church by the same financial principles that Jesus and the apostles followed.

And we have proved it now for more than 40 years in about 100 churches in the poorest villages, rich cities, among PhDs. We have PhDs in our church and we have unlearned women who cannot even read and write. But who love Jesus.

Yeah. The whole range. People who live in five bedroom houses and people who live in a house which is just one room totally.

Everything. That is sitting room, bedroom, dining room, everything. Yeah.

God has all types of people in his church. We are not communists who say no let's equalize the wealth. Let's cut off all the fingers and make it the same size.

Why did God make some fingers longer than the other? We don't believe that. He said God did make the fingers a different size and he has allowed some people to earn more than others. Some people who live more comfortably than others.

We are not communists. But we teach people to care for one another. Are there rich people in the church? Sure.

Were there rich people in the early church? Turn with me to 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and chapter, sorry 1 Timothy 6, 17. Paul tells Timothy there are rich people in your church. Let me give you some instructions how to tell them, what to do them.

Don't make communists out of people in your church. No. What should rich people do? They don't have to give away their wealth.

They don't have to empty their bank account. What should rich people do? Number one, don't be conceited. Don't be proud.

Oh, by my smartness I made all this money. Garbage. Number one problem with a lot of people who make money is I was smart and clever and I made money.

Not fit for a Christian. Let the worldly rich man think like that. Don't be conceited.

Second, don't fix your hope on the stock market and the uncertainty of your riches. Fix your hope on God. It's advice to rich people.

There were rich people in those days who has richly supplied you with all things to enjoy. I like that word, enjoy. You know that God gives us material things to enjoy? He doesn't say, don't ever eat an ice cream.

Be a wholehearted Christian. I eat ice cream. Occasionally.

Not too frequently when you get older. For health sake. But God doesn't say, never go on a vacation.

Don't get into debt and go on a vacation. By all means. Take your children out once in a while.

He gives us things to enjoy. That's our father. There's nothing wrong in enjoying.

But don't get into debt to enjoy. Don't enjoy at the expense of other people. And if God has not given you enough and God has given somebody else, let him enjoy and you live with whatever you have.

We could not afford many things other people could and we told our children, sorry, we can't do the things for you other people, rich people can do but we're happy with what we have. And our children grew up happy. And then tell these rich people to do good.

Verse 18. This is instruction for all the rich people here. To be rich in good works.

Just like you're rich in money. Also be rich in good works. With all the money God's given you.

Rich people be generous. Don't be stingy and miserly. Be ready to share.

Not just thinking of your own need. There were rich people in those days and Paul gives detailed instructions how those rich people should be. Because if they do that, they will store up for themselves for the future a wonderful treasure in heaven and they will be able to take hold of life which is life indeed.

Can rich people take hold of life which is life indeed? Yes, if they follow these instructions. So these are the things that we need to bear in mind. We need to learn.

It's not poverty. It's self-denial. To accept your circumstances and say, Lord, you arranged my circumstances like this.

I want to accept it. I don't want to ruin my children by giving them a whole lot of things that all the rich people's children have. I'll tell you something I've seen through the years.

The children of rich believers are the most spoiled children in the world. Yeah, I've seen it in some CFC churches. Parents are so rich.

They give their children this, that and the other. Ruin them. And those children could have grown up to have a fantastic ministry in God's kingdom if the parents had been a little wiser.

Not made their children poor but taught them self-denial. Son, you've got to wait a little before you have that. I know the law says you can have it right now but in our house we teach you to wait a little.

You can pout and make a face. Okay, do what you like but I want you to grow up to be a godly young man and a godly young girl. Dear brothers and sisters, you're not going to get godly children by giving them everything they ask for.

Be loving and firm and seek God. And I believe we need a generation growing up in this country and in every country to carry on the work that's carried on through all these generations. In every generation God has had godly men and women.

Not many but a few who have maintained the standards of scripture, the standards of God's word and the standards of the apostles. There have been very few but there's a great shortage. I remember, I'll tell you one couple of stories in closing.

One is being faithful in our own life and the other is not judging other people. I remember once many, many years ago when I was coming back from abroad and I had certain items in my bag. In those days the customs duties were very strict in India and a lot of people would hide what they had in their baggage.

And the Lord said to me, don't hide anything. Put it right out in the open. As soon as they open your bag they can see what's there.

Declare it. And you know what the Lord said to me? I can give you enough money to pay customs duty. I have no shortage of money but I do have a shortage of righteousness.

Don't add to that shortage by being unrighteous. I'll give you any amount of money to pay your taxes and your customs duty. I said, Lord, I'll do that.

And that's what I did. And some of these customs duties, people were corrupt and I would tell them, I'm a servant of God. And he would say, put the money less.

I said, no, I'm a servant of God. He said, I'm also a servant of God, he would say. I said, well, I believe in speaking the truth.

I do not believe in cheating. I've never regretted it. You will never regret if you honor God.

Be upright. Don't add to the shortage of righteous people in the world. There's a great shortage.

I had a verse, not a verse but a statement written in front of my table for many years. The happiest people in the world are those who judge themselves always and never judge other people. I don't need it anymore now because it's written in my mind so firmly.

The happiest people in the world are those who don't judge others. Judge themselves always. There was this old couple and the man was a bit concerned that my wife is getting a bit hard of hearing, I think.

So he went to a doctor and said, what should I do? I think my wife, we're old, my wife's getting a bit hard of hearing. So the doctor said, do this. The next time when your wife is in the kitchen cutting something, go 20 feet behind her and ask something.

No reply. Go to 10 feet. Ask the same thing.

No reply. Go 5 feet. Ask something.

And go near her. Come and tell me the result. So he decided to practice that.

His wife was working in the kitchen, 20 feet behind her. He asked her, honey, what are we having for lunch today? No reply. He comes closer.

Honey, what are we having for lunch today? No reply. He taps her on the shoulder. Honey, what are we having for lunch today? Three times I told you, chicken.

Oh. You should be getting your, and the wife said, you should be getting your hearing checked. Lesson, don't judge others.

The problem may be with you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us to live.

Seeing the footsteps of Jesus, I believe you can build wonderful churches with all the people sitting here. Help us to be gripped by the life of Jesus. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/UUI4Q_eg-kk.mp4

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