

Discovering the Root of Sin

by Zac Poonen

The root of sin is the desire to be like God, and true repentance and deliverance from sin require understanding and turning away from this root.

Duration: 1:15:49

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Matthew 1:21, Matthew 11:28, Philippians 2:5

Topics: "Sin Nature", "Spiritual Freedom"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and highlights the need to be saved from sin, not just forgiven. It discusses how many Christians live in the 'Old Covenant' by only experiencing forgiveness of sins, lacking true salvation from sin. The speaker challenges Christians to seek deliverance from various sins like anger, lust, bitterness, and the love of money, emphasizing that true salvation involves being saved from sin. The sermon also delves into the concept of conscious and unconscious sin, urging believers to seek forgiveness daily and to be aware of their need for continual cleansing. It contrasts the behavior of acting like God, which is the root of sin, with the humility and servanthood exemplified by Jesus Christ.

Transcript

You shall call his name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. That's the very first promise in the New Testament. There was no such promise in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, they could only hope for forgiveness of sins and sins being covered. But there was no promise that they could be saved from their sin. So, if you say you're a Christian and all you have experienced is the forgiveness of sins, whether you know it or not, you're living in the Old Testament.

Now, in the language of the world, that would be like living in the Stone Age. You know, when people are not living in the current world and the advancement that there is in society and science and all that. They're living in the Stone Age.

This is the Computer Age. And nobody who lives in the Computer Age wants to live in the Stone Age. But Christians are not living in the New Covenant.

They're living in the Old Covenant. Because they don't know what it is for Jesus to save them from their sins. They're not saved from their anger.

They're not saved from their lust. They're not saved from pornography. They're not saved from bitterness.

They're not saved from the love of money. They're hardly saved from anything. And they imagine that they're saved from hell.

It's one of the greatest deceptions of all. There is no salvation from hell without salvation from sin. And just by the way, there is not a single verse in the entire New Testament which says that Jesus came to save us from hell.

That's not the meaning of His name. Many people use the name Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. It's become such a popular thing.

In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus. Every prayer ends in the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus. They rebuke the devil in the name of Jesus.

But if you ask some of them, what does this name Jesus mean? Here it is, in the very first page of the New Testament. You shall call His name Jesus, Matthew 1.21, because He will save His people not in their sins, but from their sins. So, every time I pray in the name of Jesus to the Father, I'm saying, Father, I'm praying this prayer in the name of one who came to save me from all my sins, so that I don't live in sin anymore.

Is that the way you pray? Or is the name Jesus like a mantra, some dialogue, magic word? By which a lot of children's fairy tales, where people use a magic word and something will happen. That's how a lot of Christians use that name. They don't even know what it means.

So, I find many people don't know what salvation from sin is because they don't know what sin is. If I were to ask you to define for me, what is sin? What did Jesus come to save us from? My guess is that most of you won't be able to define sin. We can say certain things are sin, but those are the fruits of sin.

What's the root of it? You know, like a tree produces mangoes or apples, because it's an apple tree or a mango tree. There's a root which produces a certain type of fruit. And the Old Testament law could not deal with the root of sin.

That's why people couldn't be saved from sin. Forgiveness of sin is something like this. Here's a tree that's producing bad fruit.

And you take a scissors and cut it off. That's all the law could do. Then it again produces the same bad fruit, cut it off.

And next time again it produces the same fruit, cut it off. That's how a lot of Christians are living. Sin comes out of their life.

They ask the Lord, please forgive me. It's cut off. You're going to do the same thing tomorrow.

It comes out again, cut it off. Can you say that such a person has been saved from sin? Not at all. But the sad thing is that so many Christians are satisfied with that life.

I'll tell you my own experience. I was born again when I was 19 and a half years old. Really born again.

I knew that Christ had come into my heart and my sins were forgiven. I was baptized when I was 21. I left my job in the Navy when I was 26 to serve the Lord full time.

But I was not saved from my sins. I was forgiven. I had no doubt about that.

But I was still defeated by sin. Right up to the age of 35, I thought there was nothing better than that. When I studied the scriptures, I found King David also had forgiveness of sins.

He says that in Psalm 103, bless the Lord of my soul who forgives all my sins. But he couldn't say, bless the Lord who gives me victory over my sin. He forgives my sin.

But when I see Bathsheba, oh, I fall. But then I go to God and ask Him to forgive me. That's how many Christians are.

Lord, you've forgiven my sin. But when I see some pretty woman, I fall again. But please forgive me.

This is King David's experience. That is Stone Age, B.C., before Christ. What is the whole purpose of Christ coming and the gift of the Holy Spirit? A lot of people talk about speaking in tongues.

Is that all that we get more than David had? Is your testimony only this, bless the Lord of my soul who forgives all my sins? Or is it I come in the name of Jesus? You know, David never knew about Jesus. He never knew about one who could save him from his sins. None of the people in the Old Testament knew that.

So, we need to understand what exactly was the purpose of Christ coming. I'll tell you, I discovered it 16 years after I was born again. And the reason was, I was sick and tired of my defeated life.

And I learned one thing from that. The reason why many Christians never come to a victorious life is because they are not sick and tired of their defeated life. I mean, if you can live in a pigsty, and you're quite happy to live there, just have a bath every day and go back and live in the pigsty, you're welcome to do that.

The life where you fall into sin is exactly like living in a pigsty. And when do you want to leave it? When you're sick and tired of living in that pigsty and say, I want to live a clean life. I don't want to live in this filthy muck called sin.

Then when you're sick and tired of it and cry out to God, then we'll be delivered. There's an Old Testament example of that I'll show you in the book of Exodus. In Exodus chapter 2, we read the children of Israel, they were in Egypt.

Do you know that they lived in Egypt for 430 years? And most of those 430 years they were slaves. These big pyramids that you see in Egypt today, do you know that a lot of them were built by Israelites? Who were made to slog and slave from 6 in the morning till late at night, carry those big stones and build the pyramids which people look at today. They think the Egyptians built it.

The Egyptians didn't build it. The Israelites built it. They were the slaves for 400 years.

And why did God allow them to be there? When did He deliver them? Those Israelites were supposed to be children of God, but they were slaves. Egypt is a picture of the world and Pharaoh is a picture of the devil. And they were slaves to the world and the devil exactly like many Christians are today.

Slaves to the pleasures of the world, the sins of the world, the riches of this world, the honor of this world, the power and position of the world. They seek it exactly like that. And there was a day that came finally in the lives of those Israelites when they were delivered.

And I wanted to see when that came. In Exodus chapter 2, it says here, in the middle of verse 23. Exodus 2 verse 23 in the middle.

The sons of Israel sighed. Sighed means, Oh God, how long are we going to be slaves? That's a sigh. They sighed because of the bondage.

And they cried out, Oh God, how long are we going to live in this bondage? And their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. They're sighing and they're crying. And God heard their groaning.

And God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And God saw the sons of Israel and God took notice of them. And the very next verse you read, God met with Moses in the burning bush and said, Come, it's time to deliver Israel.

Now, I want to apply that to Christians who are slaves to sin and to the world and its lusts and its passions and its pleasures. And they seem to be content in that defeated life as slaves to sin, slaves to their lusts. But in the middle of all these Christians who are slaves to their lusts, here and there, you'll find some Christians, very few, some Christians who sigh.

Oh God. Is this all there is to Christianity? That I have to live defeated? That I have to keep sinning with my eyes and my tongue and my thoughts? Is that all there is in salvation? And they cry out, Oh God, won't you deliver us from this? And the cry of these few Christians who cry like that comes up to God. And God hears their groaning, verse 24, and God remembers the covenant that He made with the blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary, a new covenant in His blood.

And God takes notice of these few Christians here and there who are sighing and groaning, who don't want to sin anymore. And He takes notice of them. And He delivers them exactly like He delivered those Israelites from Egypt.

What was He waiting for? He's waiting for that cry and that groaning, that longing to be free. But where He finds the vast majority of Christians quite satisfied with their defeated life because they believe there is nothing better. God leaves them in Egypt, defeated by their sin.

So, I want to ask all of you sitting here, either you are free from sin, you have been saved from it, or there should be a cry coming up from your heart, Oh God, when are you going to deliver me? Or you're quite satisfied to be defeated. Everybody sitting here is in one of these categories. And you alone know which category you're in.

See, we can hide our sins from so many people. But we can't hide it from those who live at home. Your wife knows whether you have victory over sin.

Your husband knows whether you overcome sin. And people in the church don't know because they see you only for 2-3 hours a week. And I'll tell you who knows best of all, your children.

Your children know very well when they grow up. The reason why the children of so many believers have gone astray into the world is because they have seen that their parents were first class hypocrites who

preached a lot of stuff but never lived it at all. And that's the reason why most Christians' children go astray.

I've seen it around the world. People who, believers who look so holy just wait till their children grow up. And let's see how those children behave.

Let's see how those children live. And you know pretty soon whether the parents lived in honesty at home. There's an ancient book written by, it's not in the Bible, but it's written by a very godly Jewish man in Old Testament times.

And he wrote in that book, don't, I'm going to paraphrase his words, don't assess a man until you see how his children have grown up. Then you can decide what type of man he was. Some of you who have small children, I like to wait till they grow up.

Then I'll know whether you've lived a different life at home or not, or whether you were a first class hypocrite, sitting in church pretending to be a very fine Christian, but living a totally different life at home. Nobody in the church knows. But the children do.

And why is it you live like that? Because there's no sighing and groaning in your heart to be free from these things. That dishonor God. So, we read a verse in Matthew chapter 3, which John the Baptist, you know, John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ.

And he preached a message of repentance. In fact, all the prophets, every true prophet of God always preached repentance. There is no prophet who does not preach repentance.

Not in the Old Testament, not in the New Testament. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ and he preached repentance. Repentance means turning around from sin.

Now, you cannot turn around from sin until you know what sin is. You know, if you think sin is just gambling and drinking and going to the movies, you give up that, you've given up sin. I can show you a million people in India who never drink, who never smoke, who never gamble and never go to the movies, who are non-Christians.

Have they repented? No. Sin is much more than watching dirty movies. It's a lot more than that.

And until you know what sin really is, you can't say you've turned around from it. Maybe you've given up some bad habits. I mean, there are people who give up smoking when the doctor says, if you continue smoking, you'll die of lung cancer.

And they give it up. It's not because they fear God, it's because they fear death. John the Baptist said this.

He says, in verse 10 of Matthew 3, Matthew 3.10, The axe is laid at the root of the tree. And this tree which is not bringing good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire. That's the way Jesus saves us from sin.

In the Old Testament we can say the law was like a pair of scissors. You know, there's a lot of difference between a pair of scissors and an axe. You can't cut down a tree with scissors.

You can cut out the fruit with scissors. So, many Christians, all they've got is a pair of scissors. As soon as some sin comes into their life, they cut it off.

Oh Lord, the blood of Jesus, cleanse me, cleanse me, cleanse me. They can't stop the fruit from coming out. It comes out in various sins in their life.

They themselves know it's sin. Their conscience tells them that's sin. That's a very thought.

That word you spoke is a sinful word. And that attitude towards something in the world, towards money or honor, opposition, it's sinful. But it comes forth and we say, Lord, cleanse me in the blood.

You cut it off, cut it off, cut it off. Is this all there is in the Christian life? John the Baptist says, no, there's more than that. What you need is an axe.

Jesus did not come with a pair of scissors. He came with an axe to lay at the root of the tree and tear out this tree which is not bearing good fruit, which is what this thing we got from Adam, called our human nature or what the Bible calls the flesh, and cut it down and throw it into the fire. You can't make the tree better.

Some of us are trying to refine the nature of Adam. You can't do it. That's a human self-improvement program that they teach in all the management seminars and big corporations.

How to treat your employees better and how to get more customers. Sales people are taught how to speak to people and how to be nice to others. That's not Christianity.

That's just refining human nature. And a lot of Christians who sit in churches are listening to talks that tell them how to improve their human nature. Be kind to others, be good to others.

If you've got a car, bring some old ladies to the church. They do all these good works. It's refining human nature.

It's just like we teach our children, say thank you, uncle, and say I'm sorry for doing that. It's just refining of human nature. It's not cutting down the tree.

It's just trying to put a good front. That's not Christianity. They teach that in the management seminars and corporations.

Christianity is something completely different. Jesus says, this nature you inherited from Adam is evil. It's corrupt.

Nothing, like Paul said in Romans 7.18, there is nothing good that dwells in my flesh. It's got to be cut down. So, Jesus comes with an axe.

And you know, when you cut down the tree, then this fruit stops coming. And that's a better way than keeping on going around with the scissors every day. And we're always afraid whether somebody would catch some bad fruit coming out of us.

That's how a lot of Christians live. They live always trying to keep good testimony before other people in the church. Nobody must see anything bad coming out of my life.

As soon as it comes, cut it off. You don't have to have all those worries when the tree itself has been cut down. So, when you look at the root of sin, I want to show you something.

Some of it you may be already familiar with. But it's good to see the root of sin. Where did sin begin? Let's turn to Isaiah chapter 14.

The one who was the head of the angels once upon a time, before Adam was even created. He is called here the star of the morning, verse 12. We don't know his real name, Isaiah 14.12. That word star of the morning is translated in the Latin as Lucifer.

And so, people somehow think that's his name. We really don't know what his name was. It's not given anywhere in the Bible.

But let's call him Lucifer. Okay. What did he say? He was the head of the angels and he said in verse 13 and 14, You said in your heart.

It's interesting that sin did not begin with spoken words. It was just in the heart. In his heart, he said, I will ascend.

I will raise my throne above the stars of God. And ultimately, verse 14, the last part, I will make myself like God. I want you to listen to that phrase.

I will make myself like God. That is the root of sin. When I want to be like God, that's the root of sin.

And that's how Lucifer became the devil and he was thrown out immediately from God's presence. And sometime later, we don't know how much later, God created man and woman. And you know the story.

He sent them into the Garden of Eden. And the devil came in the form of a snake. In a snake.

He came in a snake. And the devil can possess human beings. The devil can get into animals.

You know, once Jesus cast 2000 demons or more into 2000 pigs. So the devil could get into animals too. And here the devil got into a snake.

And he spoke. It's the devil speaking to Eve. And what was his temptation? It wasn't just eat from this tree which God has forbidden.

Disobey God and what He has said. Because if you do it, what is it in verse 5, Genesis 3, 5? You will be like God. You see the temptation? Tempting man to be like God.

The same thing he had himself years ago which made him the devil. He wanted this new race of humanity also to become like him. And he knew the way to make them like him to be cast out of God's presence.

He knew why he was cast out. He was cast out of God's presence because he wanted to be like God. He said, if I can get these people to want to be like God, they will get thrown out too.

And he tempted them saying, you will be like God. And Eve fell for the temptation. Which temptation? To be like God.

And Adam was standing next to her. He heard it. Be like God.

And so he also ate of that tree. So that's the root of all sin. The desire to be like God.

When you come to the New Testament, you know the Bible says in the last days before Christ comes again, there will be a world ruler called the Antichrist. But John the Apostle says, let me read that to you, 1 John 2, verse 18. Children, it is the last hour.

When was it the last hour? 95 A.D. Before the end of the first century, it was already the last hour. Today, we are in the last minute. Children, it is the last hour.

And you have heard, 1 John 2, verse 18, that the Antichrist is coming. But long before he comes, even now, there are many Antichrists that have already arisen. And that's one proof that we are in the last hour.

Now what is the mark of the Antichrist? Antichrist means against the spirit of Christ. And he says there are many Antichrists. That means there are many people who have the same spirit, even though they are not the final Antichrist.

There are many people who have got that same spirit, that the final Antichrist will have. And where were these people sitting? They were not sitting in Caesar's palace. They were sitting in the church.

See what he says in the next verse. These people with the spirit of the Antichrist were sitting in our midst, in our churches and they went out. If they had belonged to us, really, they would have remained with us.

Verse 19. But they went out in order that it might be shown that they don't really belong to the body of Jesus Christ. Now why did they go out? How did they sit there and finally go out? They went out because there was a strong preaching of people like John.

The type of preaching we don't hear nowadays in many pulpits. Nowadays a lot of preaching in the pulpits is psychology and self-improvement and a lot of music, a lot of emphasis on money. Money, music and psychology have replaced the part of the Holy Spirit.

Money, music and psychology. That sums up what happens in most churches today. An emphasis on money, an emphasis on music and psychology.

The Antichrist sits there comfortably because sin is not exposed. And these Antichrists, what is their basic desire? You can understand it when you understand what is the spirit of the final Antichrist. Let's turn to 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. In 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2, it speaks about the Antichrist.

I was going to finally come. He's called here the man of sin, the son of destruction. In 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2, it says here that the day of the Lord, don't be deceived, verse 2, the last part, that the day of the Lord has already come.

The day of the Lord hasn't come. Jesus has not returned. And let me tell you something, he says, let no one deceive you because that day will not come.

The day of the Lord, Christ will not come until first the man of sin is revealed. That's so clear. The son of destruction.

That's the Antichrist. What are some of the characteristics of this Antichrist? He opposes and exalts himself over every object of worship. That means he wants to be worshipped, just like Satan, Lucifer, wanted to be worshipped.

See, God is the only one who's got the right to be worshipped. Even the angels do not accept worship. We read in Revelation that when John the Apostle fell down before an angel, the angel said, get up.

Don't worship me. Only worship God. That's what a true angel and a true servant of God would say.

Don't worship me, worship God. But the Antichrist, he exalts himself and wants to be worshipped. Do you know when you want people to admire you, you've got the spirit of the Antichrist? Did you know that? When you want people to admire you and respect you and honour you.

I'm not saying if they do it, they may do it, but when you want it, people may admire you and respect you and appreciate you, you can't help it, but if you desire it, you've got the spirit of the Antichrist. A man who's got the spirit of Christ does not desire it. He does not desire any such honour from men.

If you give it to him, it's fine, but he doesn't desire it. When people want to be leaders in a church, that's the spirit of the Antichrist. He may not know it, but it is.

The spirit of Christ is not one who wants to be a leader. The spirit of Christ is one that wants to be a servant, to wash people's feet. If you have a great desire to wash people's feet, that's the spirit of Christ.

If you have a great desire to be honoured in the church, to be exalted, to be a leader, that's the spirit of the Antichrist. You can detect it pretty quickly. And all of you can know whether you've got the spirit of the Antichrist or the spirit of Christ.

But this person, the Antichrist, wants to be exalted, to be worshipped by people. And see, it says here, he takes his seat, 2 Thessalonians 2.4, in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. That's the same root of all sin.

Wanting to be like God. We saw that with Lucifer. We saw that's how he tempted Adam and Eve.

Be like God. And in the final day, the Antichrist is going to also say, I'm like God. You must worship me.

You must respect me. And so, when John says there are only little Antichrists sitting in our churches, they are not the final Antichrist, but they've got the same spirit. And what is that spirit? Wanting to be like God.

You know, in Revelation, we all know the number 666. And many people have wondered, what does it mean? Revelation 13, verse 18, the number of the Antichrist, the number of his name is 666. I'll tell you the spiritual significance of that.

Six is the number of man, because man was created on the sixth day. God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When man, whose number is 6, wants to be like God, the Trinity, you have 666.

Man who wants to be like God, the Trinity. That's the number of the Antichrist. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2, that he sits and wants to display himself as God.

You can never be saved from sin till you get out of your system the poison that came to our first father and mother Adam and Eve, the desire to be like God. What does it mean to be like God? Let me just mention a few things. One, God never makes a mistake.

Never. He never has to apologize to anybody. Because He never makes a mistake.

If you have never apologized to your wife, you're probably God, right? If you find it difficult to ask forgiveness from your husband, you're probably acting like God. Because God is the only one who never makes a mistake. And you live at home acting as though you never made a mistake.

You find it so difficult to ask forgiveness from somebody, because you're God in your own thinking. You're one who never makes a mistake. You try to give people the impression that you've never made a mistake.

This is the spirit of the Antichrist. All human beings make mistakes. Jesus said, pray like this, our Father who art in heaven.

You don't have to repeat it, but this is the spirit in which you must pray. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. How frequently do we have to pray that prayer? Is there any request in that prayer that teaches us how often we should pray that prayer? Can you think? Is it once a year? Or once a month? Give us this day our daily bread.

So obviously that's the spirit of every prayer that we should pray every day. He didn't ask us to pray for our bread once a week. Or once a month.

Or like a monthly salary or weekly salary. Give us this day our daily bread. And also daily, forgive us our sins.

That's the next request. As we forgive those who sin against us. So obviously we should be praying every day for the forgiveness of our sins.

But you say, well, Brother Zach, you talk about victory over sin, at the same time you say praying for forgiveness of our sins every day. That's right. There are apparent contradictions in the Bible, which are not real contradictions, because we don't understand scripture or write.

There are two types of sins that we all have. One is conscious sin, and the other is unconscious sin. When the Bible speaks about victory over sin, it only speaks about victory in our conscious area.

You cannot have victory in your unconscious area, because you don't even know it is sin. It's like a student who studies in a lower class, he studies addition. He studied mathematics.

He studies addition and subtraction, and that's all he's conscious of. There are other things in mathematics, like multiplication and division. He hasn't come to that yet.

That's next year. So, you can't hold him guilty for not knowing multiplication and division, because he hasn't come to that yet. And when he gets an examination in his class, he's not going to be given a question on multiplication and division.

He's only going to be given a question on addition and subtraction. You know how it is with your children when they go to school. Then he goes to another class and he learns about multiplication and division.

Then he'll get questions on multiplication and division, but there are still higher things, like algebra and geometry. They won't give him questions on that, because that's in the next class. This is how we progress spiritually, too.

The areas we have light on, where we are unlike Jesus Christ, that's the conscious area of sin. But there are a thousand areas where we don't have light, where we are totally unlike Christ. But you don't have

light on it yet.

And you won't get light on it if you don't get a promotion to the next class. You know, a person can sit and fail in the first grade for ten years. Now, we rarely find a child in school who sits in the same class for ten years.

But I've seen a lot of Christians who sit in the same class for ten years. If you lost your temper, if you used to lose your temper at your wife when you were married, and after thirty years you still lose your temper, you aren't sitting in the same class for thirty years, even though none of you do. Aren't you? You're supposed to have got victory over sin long ago, but you've been sitting there for thirty years.

If you lusted after women with your eyes and on the computer ten years ago and you're still doing it, you're sitting in the same class for ten years. When are you going to get out of it? That's what I mean. God wants you to progress, but you're sitting in the same class.

And you're not sighing and crying, Oh God, deliver me from this slavery in Egypt. That's why you're still a slave there. But there are a few who sigh and groan and cry that God hears their sigh and cry, like it says in Exodus 2, and He delivers them.

And you think there is no deliverance because you yourself have not been delivered. There is deliverance and people are experiencing it here and there, and you think they are bluffing. They are not bluffing.

They sighed and groaned and cried and they got deliverance, but you seem to be quite content with your defeated life and that's why you're sick. There is a higher life and God is always calling us saying, My son, my daughter, don't live in that low level that you've lived for so long. Come up higher.

But there are only very few who respond to that call. Most people are satisfied with that low defeated life. Do you know that your home is supposed to be a foretaste of heaven? For people who live there.

A foretaste of what heaven is like. The love, the joy, the peace, the humility, the purity of heaven. Is that what you're experiencing? Is that what people come to your home and taste of? Do your children who grow up there get a foretaste of heaven? Many Christian homes are a foretaste of hell.

How in the world do we find so many believers today divorced? Divorce is from hell. 100%, not 90%, 100% from hell. How is it there are so many divorces among Christians? And they get married again, get divorced again.

Pastors divorced. This is hell. And you've got writing Christian pulpits.

There are pastors who speak in tongues who are divorced. What type of tongues is that? That's a demonic tongues. Divorce? I can't understand it.

It's amazing how the devil has fooled Christians left, right and center. They think the important thing is preaching and shouting and praying and music. No, it isn't.

It's purity. And if that's not there, what you've got is hell. So, there's a verse in 1 Corinthians 4 where Paul says, he talks about victory in his own life.

It's an amazing statement. I wonder how many Christians would be able to say this. 1 Corinthians 4, verse 4. Remember, this is a human being.

Born of the race of Adam, just like you and me. But he has experienced such salvation in Christ. The name of Jesus who came to save from sin.

It's become so real for Paul that he can say, 1 Corinthians 4, verse 4. I am conscious. See the word conscious? I am conscious of nothing against myself. What a word.

I am not conscious of a single sin in my life. People think that's boasting. Well, if it was boasting, then we've got sin right in the middle of the Bible.

Can you imagine the Holy Spirit making Paul commit sin right in the middle of the Bible? When he says, I am conscious of nothing against myself. That's not boasting. That's giving a testimony.

What Jesus has done for me, he has fulfilled the meaning of his name. He has saved me from conscious sin. I mean, if you have not experienced it, it's because you don't believe it.

Have you read that last verse of Matthew 13 which says, Jesus could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Did he want to do mighty works? Yes. Did they need mighty works? Yes.

Did he do it for them? No. Imagine, Jesus wanted to do it for them. They needed it and he still didn't do it.

For one reason, they did not believe. Do you remember what Jesus asked the two blind men, you read in Matthew chapter 9, who came to him and he asked, what do you want? I want my eyes to be opened. Before I do that, do you believe that I can do this for you? Supposing they said, we're not too sure, Lord.

It's tough opening blind eyes. Not too sure that you can do it. Do you know what he would have said? He would have said the same thing that he told them.

According to your faith, be it unto you. They would have gone away blind. Because their faith was at that level, Jesus can't do it for them.

But why did their eyes get opened? Because they said, yes Lord, you can do it. If another blind man had said, I'm not so sure, he would have gone out blind. But these guys who said you can do it, they went out with their eyes opened.

Why is it some blind man's eyes got opened and some blind man's eyes did not get opened? You know the Bible speaks about people whose blind eyes were not opened? Matthew 13 verse 58. He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. There were blind people there in Matthew 13 in his hometown who came and he asked them the same question, do you believe I can do this for you? And they said, well, we're not so sure.

In his hometown. We saw you growing up here as a little kid. We saw you when you were 10 years old, 20 years old.

We saw you in the carpenter shop. We're not so sure whether you can do it for us. According to your faith, be it unto you.

They remained blind. In some other places they said, sure, you can do it. Their eyes were opened.

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. The Lord asked you the question, do you believe I can deliver you from your anger? Well, not so sure, Lord. My father had it, my grandfather had it, and I've also

had it for many years.

According to your faith, be it unto you. You'll always be angry until the end of your life. Another person says, what is it you can't do, Lord? I believe you can do it.

He gets delivered. Not because you are a greater sinner than him. He was probably worse.

His temper was much worse than yours. How did he get delivered? He believed that Jesus could do it. Jesus didn't ask the blind men, can you just struggle and try to open your eyes? No.

Do you believe I can do this for you? He's not asking, do you believe you can struggle and overcome your anger? No. He said, do you believe I can do it for you? And you say, not so sure? According to your faith, be it unto you. Another person says, sure, Lord, you can do it for me.

I can't do it, but you can do it for me. According to your faith, be it unto you. That's what Paul says.

I'm conscious of nothing against myself. But, Paul, what about your unconscious area? He goes on there to say, that doesn't mean I'm completely free from sin. No.

Because the Lord examines me, verse 4, in a whole lot of areas when I'm not conscious of. That is true victory. That in areas, according to the level of my education, if it is only multiplication and addition, I get a hundred percent.

If you give me problems in division, in geometry and algebra, I'm sorry, I can't do that yet. That's after a couple of years. But at my level, I'm getting a hundred percent.

If your eight-year-old son gets a hundred percent in mathematics, do you think he knows everything about mathematics? No. You know that. But according to the level of his education, he's getting a hundred percent.

How much can he get? Two hundred percent? No. You can't get more than that. That's what Paul is saying.

According to my conscious level, I'm completely free from sin. Next year, God will give me a little more light on the areas of my life and He'll save me from that. This is sanctification.

You know, in the Old Testament, there's a beautiful illustration of the children of Israel going to the land of Canaan and killing the giants and occupying the land. A land that belonged to God was ruled by Canaan. You know, God had told Abraham four hundred years earlier, this land is yours.

This is for your children. But who was ruling there? Giants of Canaan. It didn't belong to them.

It belonged to Abraham. Because God, who owns the whole earth, had decided this little strip of land called Canaan belongs to Abraham. I've given it to him.

But the land that was given to Abraham and his children was being occupied by giants of Canaan. And the Lord said to Joshua, who was a descendant of Abraham, go and occupy that land. It doesn't belong to them.

It belongs to you. And Joshua went in, in faith. Let these relax.

Joshua means savior, just like Jesus. Let the Israelites in and said, let's kill these giants and occupy this land that belongs to us. But did they kill all the giants in one day? No.

Which giants could they kill? The ones they saw. They couldn't kill the giants that were hidden in the caves. Till they came out of the caves.

Then they could kill them. There were giants they could see and then further up in the north of the country, they hadn't seen those giants yet. Maybe one month later they went there and saw some more giants and they could kill them.

They could only kill the giants they could see. How can you kill giants whom you cannot see? Then some of those giants would finally get poked out of their caves. When they came out, they'd be killed.

And little by little, over many years, over 20-30 years, they killed little by little by little by little and occupied the land more and more and more and more. See, that land of Canaan is a picture of our body, which should belong 100% to God. It is meant to be the temple of the Holy Spirit, just like the land of Canaan was meant to be the possession of the seed of Abraham.

But this body, just like the land of Canaan, instead of belonging to God, has been occupied by the giants of the devil. Some of the names of those giants are bitterness, unforgiving spirit, jealousy, pride, love of money, dirty, illegal sexual acts and dirty thoughts. They have ruled this body.

Angry words, bitter words, acting like God. These are some of the giants that have ruled this life. And God says to us, in the name of Jesus, drive them out.

This body of yours belongs to God, the Holy Spirit, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Why do you allow these giants to rule there? Why do you keep on allowing the giants to rule? Drive them out. Will you drive them out in one day? No.

Joshua did not. You drive out the ones you can see. And as you drive out the ones you can see, then only you will be able to deal with the giants you cannot see.

For example, Joshua is still tackling two or three giants here. And if he doesn't finish with them, how is he going to tackle those other giants that live in the northern part of the country? He'll never get there. You got to deal with the giants you see.

That's conscious sin. And those giants you cannot see yet are unconscious sin. You'll see them when you deal with the conscious ones.

That is scientific. It's progressive, little by little by little. Or to use another illustration, it's like 90% of our life we are unconscious of.

I mean, even the psychologists have discovered that. We are conscious only of a small area of our life. It's like a cube of ice.

You put a cube of ice in a glass of grape juice, you see only 10% of it. 90% is hidden. Our life is like that.

You can see 10%. You think you are very holy but it's only in 10%. 90% is all hidden.

Then it's full of sin, that 90%. But if you could take a knife and slice off that top 10%, what would happen to that piece of ice? Some of it will come up. Some of it which is hidden will come up.

You'll see another 10%. And you slice off that 10%, what happens? Some more comes up. This is how God gives us more and more light on the areas of our life which are unchrist-like.

We start off our Christian life with total unchrist-likeness. Like it says in Isaiah, from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet, there's nothing good. But then Christ comes in and we get a little light on 10% of our life.

If you never deal with it, if you don't slice off that top part of the ice cube, you'll never see any more for the rest of your life. But if you slice off that top 10%, you'll get a little more light on something more. Not the whole thing but a little bit.

And you deal with that and you get a little more. This is like occupying the land of Canaan, little by little by little. So when Paul says, I'm conscious of nothing against myself, he's saying I've sliced off the part of it which I can see.

I've killed the giants whom I can see. But there are a whole lot of giants still living in the land. As I see them, I can kill them.

As I get more light and something comes up, I deal with that. So it's progression. Paul progressed.

This is the meaning of, I'm pressing on to perfection. So, this is how Jesus delivers us progressively from more and more sin in our life. And that's why we always need to pray every day.

While having complete victory over conscious sin, we have to say, Lord, forgive us our sins. Because there are so many things in my life that I don't even aware of, which are unchristened. I want you to forgive me.

I want you to cleanse me from unconscious sin. I don't know whether many of you understood this verse. It's a very well-known verse but most people don't understand it.

1 John chapter 1. I'll tell you, I got light on these things only after I began to really cry out to God and sigh and groan like those Israelites in Egypt. Lord God, deliver me, deliver me, deliver me. I cried and groaned for years.

I said, I'm determined to have the experience of the name of Jesus in my life. To be saved from sin. And I got light on this verse.

1 John 1.7. It's a very familiar verse. Let me read to you. First of all, verse 6. Then we understand it.

If we say, now we got to read very slowly. Sometimes we don't understand scripture because we read it too fast. I'm going to read very slowly.

If we say, we have fellowship with God and we walk in darkness. You know what walking in darkness means? It means committing conscious sin. Committing conscious sin.

That means sin which you know to be sin. And you do it. If we say that we have fellowship with God.

And we walk in darkness. We are telling a lie. We are not practicing the truth.

But, if we walk in the light. That means in the conscious area where I have light. And that's different for each of us.

Because children are in different classes. All of us may be in different levels spiritually. If we walk in the light that we have.

As He is in the light. Then we have fellowship with God. Can you have fellowship with God when you are living in conscious sin? No.

We have fellowship with God. And after having fellowship with God, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. What sin is that? Unconscious sin.

Which you still need to be cleansed from. Even when you have fellowship with God. Because you are cleansed from conscious sin.

Conscious sin we can confess. If we confess our sins. He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But I cannot confess my unconscious sin. The blood of Jesus takes care of that. That's how we fellowship with God.

Now what does it mean to behave like God? It's not just, as I said, if you never ask forgiveness from anybody, you must be behaving like God. God is the only one in the whole universe who never has to ask forgiveness from anyone. Jesus Christ was the only one who walked on this earth who never had to ask forgiveness from anyone because he never sinned.

And when you imagine that you never hurt your wife or your husband by anything you do, you must be acting like God. I cannot count the number of times I have had to ask forgiveness from my wife and from my children. Have you ever asked forgiveness from your children? I punished my children sometimes in anger.

That was a sin. The discipline was right, but the anger was wrong. God disciplines us, but he doesn't discipline us in anger.

He disciplines us in love. I have to ask forgiveness from my children. I said, Lord, I will ask forgiveness from anybody in the world whom I hurt.

Because I am not God. I want to have zero of the spirit of the Antichrist in me. I want to be like Jesus.

And when I am not like Jesus in sinning, Jesus never sinned, I will immediately repent. To me, sin is like getting a thorn in my foot. If you get a thorn in your foot, how long do you take to pull it out? Do you pray about it for five minutes to see whether I should pull it out or not? Do you wait till the evening? Some people confess all their sins in the evening.

It's like getting about five or ten thorns in your foot and say, I will wait till the evening to take them all out. You got to be off your head. I take out a thorn as soon as it gets into my foot.

And I confess my sin as soon as I am aware of it. And I ask somebody's forgiveness as soon as I have hurt them and I know I have hurt them. I don't wait till the end of the day and then ask forgiveness of my wife because I am such a proud person.

I tell you, when you are reluctant to ask somebody's forgiveness, there is only one reason. Your pride. And when you are proud, you are behaving like the devil.

You won't hear it so straight from any other preacher perhaps, but I am telling you the truth. It was good for you. You want to get rid of that root of all sin? You want to lay the axe to the root? Your life will be heavenly.

I found that. My home, I will tell you honestly before God, I am not trying to fool anybody, is a foretaste of heaven now. But it wasn't like that when I first got married.

No, it wasn't. I was defeated. Just like anybody else, like a lot of Christians.

But I was born again. My wife was born again. But we were defeated.

And I got sick and tired of that life. And I said, Lord, I sighed and I groaned like those Israelites in Egypt. And God delivered me.

You are missing something which Christ purchased for you on the cross. And you have missed it for many years. But if you listen to the word of God tonight, perhaps you can enter into your inheritance.

But if you want to just live and put up a front before other Christians that you are a very holy person, you can continue like that. And be a hypocrite for the rest of your life. The alternative is you can have a heavenly life in your heart and in your home.

And when it is in your heart and your home, gradually it will be in your church as well. Where you don't act like God. You acknowledge sin as soon as you are fallen, you confess it.

You don't wait. You know David waited. Imagine a man committed adultery and killed a woman's husband.

And do you know when David confessed his sin? After one year. After the baby was born. That's how we know.

You know Psalm 51 is written about one year after he committed adultery with Bathsheba and killed her husband. How is it possible for a man, and a man who is supposed to be a man after God's own heart, to commit adultery with some woman, kill her husband, marry her, and not even feel he has done anything wrong. If that's possible for David, I tell you it's possible for you.

Can you think of things that you should have confessed to people long, long ago? When you really encountered the real Jesus. He doesn't even have to open his mouth. You are aware of your sin.

You remember Zacchaeus? Jesus never said, hey Zacchaeus, you have cheated so many people. He never said it. Zacchaeus saw Jesus.

Immediately he was convicted. All the names came in his mind of all the people he had cheated. And he knew he could not have fellowship with Jesus until he had settled all that.

And he said, Lord, I'm sorry. I'll give back all that money. The Lord never told him anything.

I'll give back all the money, four times, those whom I have cheated. And all the people whose addresses I don't know, I'm not going to conveniently keep that money. It's not mine.

I'll give it to the poor. So that I don't have a cent in my bank account which I have not righteously earned. Where did he learn that? Did Jesus give him a big lecture on sin? No.

He just met Jesus. And I'll tell you this, when you meet the real Jesus, you'll feel convicted. When did Isaiah get convicted of the fact that his lips were unclean, that he was not speaking proper language, words? He didn't get a lecture from God.

He just saw the Lord. Most Christians have not seen the Lord. That's why they don't get convicted of their sin.

When they see the Lord, they don't need a lecture on their sin. They will immediately be aware of sin in their life. And they'll confess, Oh Lord, I'm a man of unclean lips.

When the Apostle John, even at the age of 95, when he saw Jesus on the Isle of Patmos, he fell at his feet like a dead man, aware of so much uncleanness in his life. Unconscious sin. Suddenly he becomes conscious when you meet the Lord.

Most Christians that I have met do not live in the presence of God. Because if they live in the presence of God, they'll be aware of sin in their life. Most Christians are more aware of sin in other people's lives than in their own.

That only shows that they're close to the devil. You know the name of the devil? The accuser of the brethren. Do you accuse other brothers and sisters because you see sin in their life? It's because you're close to the devil.

You didn't know it till today, you know it today. When you accuse a brother and sister of their sin, the devil says, Ah, let's hold hands. You and I. Just do it.

You're doing my job for me. You know the number of believers who are doing that? Helping the devil with his work of accusing this person and that person and the other person. Jesus, when you see him, you become more aware of your sin than of the sin of other people.

You say, Oh, poor sin. For I'm a man of unclean lips. There are so many ways in which we behave like God.

That's a rude of sin. When a husband is like a dictator to his wife and treats his wife like a slave, he's acting like God. He's got no right to behave towards another human being like that.

When an imposter says, Give me your money and he pockets it, he's acting like God. We're supposed to give our money to God, not to an imposter. But when he takes your money to live in a grand style himself and to get his private jet planes and build big houses for himself, he's acting like God.

He's got no right to take your money. Your money is to be given to God, not to some lying imposter's pocket. Look at the number of people on television who are asking for your money.

They're behaving like God. If he were an honest man, he'd earn his own money, earn his own living and not ask you for your money. Why can't he work and earn an honest living like you're doing? There's so much of deception in Christendom today.

You know the Apostle Paul, if there was a man who deserved to get money from people, it was the Apostle Paul. He slogged and slogged and slogged and served God, but he wouldn't take money from people for himself. He said, give it to others.

And he said, the reason why I'm doing, I want to read this in 2 Corinthians 11. He says, why is it that when I was present with you, verse 9, and I was in need, 2 Corinthians 11, 9, I was not a burden to any one of you. And he says, nobody will stop me of my boasting, verse 10, in all those regions of Corinth.

Why do I do this? And the Living Bible paraphrases this beautifully, verse 12. I do it to cut the ground from under the feet of those preachers who say that they are serving the Lord just like me. Those preachers who say they are serving the Lord just like me, I challenge them to preach the way I preach, Paul says, without taking collection from people.

You know, we planted churches in India and other countries for 35 years now. 40, 50 churches. And let me tell you something, in none of those churches, in any of those 35 years, have you ever taken an offering.

Never. When God has met our needs, we just keep a box at the back, those who want to give can give, those who don't want to give may not give. Because we felt that this is the way God wants it.

The Apostle Paul never asked anybody for money. Never. He was a servant of the Lord, not a servant of men.

And I believe that's the mark of a true servant of God. God called me to serve Him when I was in the Navy, when I was 26 years old. I'm 71 now, it's nearly 45 years.

Believe it or not, in 45 years, I've never once asked anybody for money for my needs or the needs of our ministry. Never once. Not in a letter, not in speech.

Because we recognize people have to give their money to God, not to a man. I'm not God and I don't want to act like God in the spirit of the Antichrist. There are many ways in which people act like God.

When a pastor wants to tell people, this is what God says, you must do this. He's acting like God. Do you know what the Bible says? In the Old Covenant, prophets had that authority.

But in the New Covenant, it says in Hebrews 8,11, they will not teach everyone their neighbor saying, know the Lord. All shall know me personally, directly. All these false prophets who go around saying, thus said the Lord, the Lord told me to tell you this.

I know cases in India where people tell somebody whom to marry. Thus said the Lord. Amazing.

And there are stupid believers who believe it and go and do what they hear. This desire to act like God to other people is found in so many pastors. It's found in so many people who want to act like God.

They want to control their wives and in some cases the wives want to control their husbands. They're acting like God. You have no right to control another human being.

We can give advice. You know, people come to me for advice. A lot of people have confidence in me.

They come to me and say, Brother Zach, what do you think I should do? I said, well, I can't tell you what God's will for your life is because I'm not God. I can give you some advice. I want you to take that advice before the Lord and ask God whether He wants you to do it.

And I won't get offended if you don't listen to me. John Wesley was one of the greatest men of God that Christianity has seen. He is the founder of the Methodist Church.

And he once told all his co-workers and Methodists, he said, Remember this, my brothers, you do not sin if you don't do what I say. You sin when you disobey God, not when you disobey me. That was a man of God.

There's so much of this wanting to be God to other people. It's the root of all sin. When I want to act like God and not be a servant.

You know what it says about Jesus? Let me read this in closing. Philippians chapter 2. This is the opposite of Lucifer. Philippians 2, verse, have this attitude in you which is in Christ Jesus.

What is that? Though He was God, He did not consider that equality with God is something to hold on to. He didn't come to earth and say, hey, fellas, I'm God. No.

He gave it up and became a man. And because He became a man, it says, He became a servant. He became a servant of others.

A bond servant. That teaches us the only position a man is supposed to have is that of a servant. So you can either have the spirit of Christ and be a servant of others, or you can have the spirit of the Antichrist and be like God to others.

When you sit in your home like a king and expect everybody to serve you, that's not the spirit of Christ. That's the spirit of the Antichrist. A lot of husbands like that.

A lot of wives like that. A lot of pastors like that. They expect other people to serve them, serve them, serve them.

Have they got the spirit of a servant? You know, we need to get light on these things. To have the spirit of Christ is to be a servant. I'll give you one illustration in my life.

I used to be in the military where if the parade was at 6.30 in the morning, if you came at 6.31, they teach you such a lesson you'll never forget for the rest of your life. You'll never be late again for the parade. That's how it was in the military everywhere.

And I, in the church where I was in Bangalore, we'd have a service at 9.30 and people would stroll in at 10 o'clock. And it really bothered me. I said, Lord, in the military parade we'd land up in Bangalore one minute late, but here we are coming to the church of Almighty God and we stroll in whenever we like.

And it used to disturb me, disturb me, disturb me that these people are strolling in till one day the Lord set me free. You know how He set me free? He said, I've called you to be a servant. And if you're serving, say, in a king's palace, remember you're a servant, and the king says, breakfast is at 9.30. I must be there at 9.30 and put all the plates out and breakfast table ready.

And supposing the king strolls in at 10 o'clock. What do I tell the king? Hey, king, why are you late? I dare not ask him. I'm a servant.

He can come whenever he likes. And the Lord said to me, many people in your church are like kings and queens. Let them come whenever they like.

You're the servant. You must be there at 9.30. And let the kings and queens stroll in whenever they like. Maybe one day some of those kings and queens will become servants like you and have the spirit of Christ.

Then they'll come on time. But if they remain kings and queens, they wouldn't care less for God. They'll behave like God and walk in whenever they like.

Then my heart came at rest. Thank you, Lord. I'm set free now.

I'm not bothered what time they come. I hope some of these kings and queens will one day become like Jesus Christ, dear servant of others. It's just one area.

If you examine your own life, you'll find there are many areas where you act like a king and a queen. God wants to make us servants. The root of all sin is to want to be like God.

If you want salvation, be like Jesus Christ, who was a servant of all people. Learn to wash the feet of your wife. I don't mean literally, but that spirit of serving one another.

Learn to wash the feet of your brothers and sisters. Be a servant. That's the way to be saved from sin.

Let those who want to be kings remain as kings. Those who want to be queens remain as queens. It's up to them.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that your word gives us light. And we can walk in that light if we want to.

Or turn away from that light. I pray that at least some here will walk in that light and their lives will be transformed. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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