

# Dont Break Gods Heart

by Zac Poonen

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*God's goal is to make us like Jesus Christ, and we can achieve this by being filled with the Holy Spirit and living a life of obedience.*

**Duration:** 58:33

**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 4:32 - 5:2, Ephesians 5:8, Ephesians 5:15-16, Ephesians 5:18-19, Ephesians 5:21

**Topics:** "Pleasing God", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life that pleases God, focusing on the need to understand His purpose and not be deceived by religious talk or earthly pursuits. It highlights the call to love extravagantly, avoid gossip and useless work, and be filled with the Holy Spirit to live a Christ-like life that exposes frauds and shines in the light of Christ.

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## Transcript

I want to turn to Ephesians in chapter 4 and we'll read from verse 30. Ephesians 4.30, God has got a goal in our life. God doesn't do anything without a purpose.

And if we are Christians, we need to understand His purpose. In the Old Testament, God's purpose for man was totally earthly. He gave them a land physically.

He gave them material blessings. He gave them many children, a lot of cattle, and overcame their physical enemies. He asked for 10% of their material things He gave them to teach them to put in first.

He asked them for physical sacrifices of bulls and goats. He told them to build a physical tabernacle and then a temple. Everything from beginning to end of the entire Old Covenant history was physical, material, earthly.

There was no spiritual healing, only physical healing. When He said, I am the Lord your healer, that meant physical healing, that's all. Now that's a great thing for some people who remain spiritually sick because they don't realize that the smallest sin, like telling a lie, is worse than getting AIDS.

Do you think there are many people in the world who believe that? Do you think there are many Christians who believe that? I don't think so. I haven't met many who believe that even telling a small lie is worse than getting AIDS. I wish there were, because if there were, we would have more Christians who enter the New Covenant.

And that to me is one of the clearest proofs that most Christians, even believers, have not entered the New Covenant because they still consider sickness as worse than sin. I believe that anybody who thinks that sickness is worse than sin is really under the Old Covenant, or probably no covenant at all. It's one way you can test yourself.

We've spoken much about the New Covenant in this church. And one way you can test yourself, whether it's all just head knowledge or whether you're entering into it, is ask yourself, are you disturbed by sin more than sickness? I mean, would a guilty conscience disturb you more than if the doctor said you've got cancer that cannot be cured? I want to live like that, that one small prick of my conscience disturbs me more than if a doctor told me you've got incurable cancer. And I believe that's the test of whether all that we hear in this church is just theory, or whether it's become real in our life.

God had a goal in the Old Testament. It was 100% earthly. He never promised them anything in heaven.

He never promised them eternal life. He promised them earthly blessings if they obeyed, and the more wholehearted they were in obeying God, the more they got earthly riches and earthly blessings and prosperity and many things like that. The whole thing turned for something far better when Jesus came.

He's promised us, not only promised us, after Jesus ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit was sent down, we read in Ephesians 1.3 that he has blessed us with every single spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. And here's another way by which you can test whether you really understood the new covenant and entered into it. Can you honestly say that with all of your heart you value heavenly riches more than earthly riches? If so, God bless you, brother, sister, your priest, almost certainly in the new covenant.

If in addition to that, you can say that you're pursuing heavenly riches more than earthly riches, boy, you're blessed. You've entered into the new covenant. A lot of us may understand these things and even talk about it, but it's all theory.

I want to say to you when you stand before the Lord, don't have regret that all these wonderful truths we heard just entered your clever mind and never descended into your heart to become part of your life. So God has got a goal in the new covenant also. And that goal is described, we have seen it many times in Romans 8.29, is to make us like Jesus Christ.

He chose us before the worlds were created, not to take us to heaven, not to make us rich on earth, not even to make us healthy. He'll make us sick, allow us to be sick if that will make us more like Jesus. That's not God's will.

God's will for us is perfect health. I believe that. Proof, Jesus Christ was never sick.

But sometimes even a wholehearted brother like Paul needed a little sickness, which he called a thorn in the flesh, because he was in danger of something, of getting proud and losing God's grace. And so when God saw, shall I allow this chap to lose my grace or lose a little bit of his health? God said, let him lose a little bit of his health. That's not serious.

I don't want him to lose grace. And sometimes God does that with his servants even today. But he never needed to do it with Jesus because Jesus was so radical, wholehearted to always give the glory to the father.

He would pray and heal the sick and do miracles. And then he would rush off to the wilderness and give the glory to the father. There are very few people who are wholehearted like that.

But if a person is wholehearted, he doesn't need to be sick because that's God's will. But basically, God's will is to make us like Jesus. And if sickness will help us to become a little more like Jesus, God does it even for Paul.

If a little financial struggle will help us to make us a little more like Jesus, to trust the father, God will allow it. But that's not God's basic will. Sometimes he permits certain things because he sees us going astray.

It's like giving us a little spanking, a little chastening. But a new covenant Christian is one whose goal is the same as God's. That means you're kicking the ball in the same direction.

You know how everybody in one team in a football game kicks the ball in the same direction. And even if the forward passes it to the quarterback, halfback, he's passing it only because he wants to go to the goal. He's got one goal in mind is, I've got to put that ball through those goal posts.

And that's how God, he's got a goal in our life. And all that zigzagging and dribbling and everything else that you see in hockey and football is ultimately get to that goal. And everything that God does in our life is ultimately to get us to the goal of becoming like Christ.

That's his goal. And when he asks us to share this wonderful message with others, and if they accept Christ, his goal for them also is to make them like Christ. God wants to populate heaven with a whole lot of people who behave like Jesus Christ.

Who conduct their lives like Jesus lived on earth. Because that's God's standard. And to start us off on that, he forgives all our past sins, blocks out our past, looks at us as if we've never sinned.

What a wonderful way to start. I come to the starting line of the Christian life, Christian race, absolutely clean. And you need to feel clean.

That's why you need to believe God's word which says you're declared righteous in God's eyes. And I never get tired of saying that because I find far too many Christians living under guilt and condemnation and discouragement and gloom. I don't believe a Christian is ever supposed to be in a bad mood one day of his life.

I made that a goal in my life that I would never be in a bad mood one day of my life. And God's helped me. And make that your goal and it'll become your goal.

If you sort of surrender to the devil and say, oh well, once in a while in this world you gotta have bad moods, I can prophesy you'll have bad moods and you'll get more and more of them. If you think that the devil is more powerful than Jesus Christ, then you better resign yourself to a grumpy, anger-ridden, lust-ridden Christian life. But if you believe that Jesus Christ is more powerful than the devil, that you've surrendered your life to Christ and greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

That the mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead comes into you through the Holy Spirit, can lift you up from all the spiritual depth there is in the world. If you can believe that, God will do miracles in your life. You don't have to be a believer of 45 years or 50 years a believer.

You can be born again yesterday. You can be filled with the Holy Spirit and let the resurrection life of Jesus lift you up from all that is of depth in this world. Including the pursuit of wealth and honor and pleasure and everything else.

God will give you enough for your needs. He'll make sure you don't get too much that destroys you. Thank God for that type of control.

You know how in many machines that operate, particularly I remember the Navy, we had these boilers that used to run the ship. There's a pressure gauge and you've got to always make sure it doesn't become too much. Because if it gets too much it can explode.

A lot of gadgets have that. Your water heaters have that type of thing. Something that regulates that it doesn't get too hot and blow up the whole thing.

Isn't that good? What would you do if you have that mechanism not working in your water heater? Blow it up. God also makes sure that you don't get too much money unless it blows you up. Isn't that good? I say praise the Lord.

Otherwise the same thing can happen to you that can happen to that water heater blowing up. So God keeps that pressure needle always in the safe area that never gets into red. Everything is designed like that.

He never allows temptation to become too much for me. He doesn't allow my wealth to become too much for me. He doesn't allow anything.

The pressure of circumstances. Nothing to become too much for me because he's got a goal. And he's the controller of the whole world and he's got that goal to make me like Jesus.

But it's not automatic. I mean if it were like the planets then I would be in perfect obedience. Thousands of years they've obeyed.

But this is where these many many exhortations come through in the New Testament. And in order to help us to obey these exhortations, God gives us the Holy Spirit. And the whole purpose of the Holy Spirit, I've said that many times from 2nd Corinthians 3.18, is to show you the glory of Jesus and to make you like that.

Please remember this. You've got to see the glory of Jesus first. How he lived, how he, his triumph over death, his triumph over the devil.

I meet lots of believers, for example, who are afraid of the devil. And I ask them this question, was Jesus afraid of the devil? Can you imagine Jesus being afraid that demons would do something to him? Never! And the Bible says, as Jesus is, so are we in this world. We're never to be afraid of witchcraft, black magic, none of these things.

They can't touch us. All the demons in hell try to get together and do black magic on me. It just won't work.

It won't work on my family. Sure, I can challenge the devil on that. It's impossible.

Can you challenge the devil on that? Or are you scared? Oh, better not challenge the devil, I don't know what he'll do to you next. You see, that's why we have fear. We don't really believe that he's been

defeated on the cross.

We're afraid. So we have a peace treaty with Satan. Oh, I won't disturb you, I won't disturb you, don't trouble me, I won't trouble you.

Lots of Christians live with this type of peace treaty with Satan. I'm never going to sign a peace treaty with the devil. No, I'm going to do maximum damage to his kingdom in my one earthly life.

I hope that's your goal too, because that's how Jesus did it. He destroyed the kingdom of the devil. He came here to destroy that kingdom.

And he's given us that job now, to continue that work, wherever we go. But you've got to be free from fear that Satan can do some harm to you. Or Satan can manipulate evil people to harm you.

That's impossible. It is impossible, because God's goal is going to be fulfilled. I was thinking the other day, just before I get to Ephesians 4.29, let me read this.

In Revelation chapter 12, it speaks here about the devil. In verse 4, his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. That's the dragon.

Now we know later on, this dragon is shown clearly in verse 9 to be the devil, Satan. So Satan, it says, pulled down one third of the stars of heaven. Now we know those are not the physical stars, because God hasn't given Satan power over any stars.

God's not going to allow Satan to put those stars down to this earth. It's never going to happen. This is a scripture that was already fulfilled.

I believe this refers to the angels. In the book of Job, you read about God talking to Job in chapter 38. He's talking about the angels as morning stars.

Angels are called stars. I believe this verse means that when the devil fell, he gathered in his rebellion one third of all the angels in heaven. They joined him in rebellion, and those are the ones who roam around the world today as demons and evil spirits that possess people.

There are multitudes of them. Because there are millions, billions of angels, and one third of them joined Satan in his rebellion. Now the point is this.

Very simple mathematics. If one third joined him, how many were left in heaven? Two thirds. So for every demon, how many angels are there? Got it? It's simple mathematics.

For every demon in the world, how many angels are there? Don't ever forget it. Say to yourself, for every demon there is in the world, there are two angels. And you know what the Bible says in the last verse of Hebrews chapter 1? Those angels have been sent to... Let me read this.

Hebrews 1.14 The angels are not only... They are messengers. The angels are messengers sent to help and care for those who are to receive God's salvation. Have you received God's salvation? God sends angels to help me and to care for me.

The angels went to Jesus when he was under tremendous pressure in the temptation. Have you read that? That when he was under tremendous pressure in the 40 days of temptation, the angels came and

ministered to him. Another time at the end of his life in Gethsemane, when he was under tremendous pressure, it says an angel came and strengthened him.

And what God did for Jesus, he will do for you and me. I believe there are angels that have protected us driving down these roads. And the angels are very busy nowadays in the roads of Bangalore with God's children moving around so fast on their vehicles.

But thank God for all of them. Thank God for these angels that protect us from accidents. Thank God for these angels that are there when any demon comes at you.

Remember you've got two angels with you. If ten demons come at you, you've got how many? Good. You guys are good at mathematics.

But this is something so real. It's not imaginary. It's real.

It's real. Somebody asked me if I feel lonely in my house now because my wife isn't there. I said there are so many angels around the house.

You've got to sort of push your way around to get from one room to the other. It's true. I heard somebody say that.

I said that's true. Me too. There are angels there in the house.

You need to recognize everybody in the world, including the heathen, recognize the presence of evil spirits. They know witchcraft. They know people do black magic.

And I tell you, most Christians I've met know more about witchcraft than they know about how many angels are there to take care of them. This is a sad thing. This is the work of the devil.

He's blinded people. God's goal is to make you like Jesus and he's even got the angels to serve you. Now having said that, that's why he fills us with the Holy Spirit.

You see, you can't live the Christian life without the power of the Holy Spirit. I don't care how much you believe. You can believe.

You can read the Bible. But I'll tell you, you'll never, never be able to live the Christian life unless you're filled with God's Holy Spirit. Even Almighty God did not expect anyone to live the Christian life without the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the person who treats that as some sort of extra, you know, like the ice cream at the end of the meal. Oh well, it doesn't matter if I don't have the ice cream either because I had my lunch. No, it's not that.

It's everything. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you've got nothing. You've got knowledge.

You're no better than anybody in the Old Testament. They didn't have the Holy Spirit there in the Old Testament dwelling in them. And I believe a lot of problems that Christians face today, their fundamental sources, they have not sought to be filled with God's Holy Spirit.

They're trying to live the Christian life and they live a good life like a lot of heathen people live a good life. And you think this person who believes in Jesus lives a good life. Because he believes in Jesus, you say he's born again.

That heathen fellow lives just as good a life. He doesn't believe in Jesus, you say he's not born again. It's all crazy.

The difference is that a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit. And I want to ask you all of you this question. Are you sure that you're filled with the Holy Spirit? If you're not, what in the world are you doing? Why aren't you disturbed about it? Why aren't you concerned that the power of the Holy Spirit is not there? I mean if you ask, if you build a house, and you ask the Karnataka Electricity Board for electric power connection, you won't get it by the way if you don't ask for it.

It's the same with God. You've got to ask for it. The only thing is with God there's no corruption.

You don't have to go bribe to receive the Holy Spirit. And you don't need an electrical contract or anything. But you apply to the Karnataka Electricity Board for electricity connection, and they don't give it to you.

What do you do? You tell your wife, let me sit in darkness. No. I've never heard anybody who does that.

They keep going to the office and say we've got to get our connection. We applied for it. We applied for it two months ago.

Why haven't we got the connection? Why can't we go to God like that? Why can't we go to God and say, God, I've received Christ in my life. Why can't I be filled with the Holy Spirit? Give me a power connection. My fridge is not working.

My tape recorder is not working. The lights are not burning. The fans are not running in my life.

Give me a power connection, Lord. I really believe you need to pray. I believe there are many of you here who need to earnestly seek God because God sees your content to live in the darkness.

That's why he doesn't fill you. And it's this Holy Spirit that's supposed to communicate to us that mighty resurrection power of Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit is the same as the power of his resurrection.

The Bible speaks about the power that raised Jesus from the dead. That means lifted him up over the worst thing the devil could do to him. Death.

God says that's nothing. I can overcome that. That's the power that God wants to give us, the power that lifts us up over fear and sin and discouragement and gloom and bad moods and every wretched thing the devil has put upon us through Adam to ruin us.

I believe that's what we need. That's why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And once, okay, now we've come to, we just finished the introduction.

Ephesians 4.29. Ephesians 4.30, sorry. Now once you receive this Holy Spirit, it says don't grieve the Holy Spirit. Don't ever do something that hurts him.

It's very easy to grieve the Holy Spirit. You grieve somebody who loves you. You can't grieve an enemy, you know that? You can make an enemy hate you, but an enemy won't feel sad about you.

When you do something wrong, an enemy rejoices. Who feels sad about what you have done? Your parents. They really feel sad.

Your mother especially will feel really sad if you do something wrong. And she's grieved. And when it says about the Holy Spirit, it doesn't say, don't make the Holy Spirit angry.

That's not what it says because the Holy Spirit is not your enemy. Please remember this, who is your enemy and who is not. God is not your enemy.

Do you believe that? Satan is your enemy. This is kindergarten lessons, but you've got to learn it again. Satan is your enemy.

He's the only enemy you have. Your mother-in-law is not your enemy. Please remember that.

Satan is your enemy. And God is your friend. Say that, you young people, that God is my friend.

God is my friend. He's always on my side. And I'm not going to have any enemy on the earth but the devil.

And the Holy Spirit can never be angry with me, but he's sad. He's sad because he's my friend. And he's so sad when he sees me worldly.

My life is not going to count for God. He's sad because he thinks of the years of regret I'm going to have in eternity when I think of the way I'm living right now. The decisions you make, the devil is very sad about some of those decisions.

Because he knows you're going to regret them in heaven. And he says, oh, this short-sighted fellow, he doesn't even realize 2,000 years from now what regret he's going to have for the decision he takes right now for a little bit of pleasure, for a little bit of doing his own will. Dear brother, sister, the Holy Spirit is sad.

He's sad when he sees husband and wife yelling at each other. He's sad because the devil says, ha ha, God, you said these are your children. Look at the way they're talking to each other in that home.

He's sad. So it says, don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God. And I want to read through a number of these verses and go through them like a little Bible study.

I want to read it in the Message Bible. Don't grieve God, it says in verse 30 of Ephesians 4. Don't break his heart. His Holy Spirit moving and breathing in you is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for God.

Don't take such a gift for granted. You know, the Holy Spirit wants to be just like breathing. Breathing is one of the most intimate things we do unconsciously all the time.

Our life is dependent on our breathing. You can go without food and water for a long time, but not without breathing, even for a few minutes. The Holy Spirit wants to be like that.

That's why he's called the breath of God. Breathe on me, breath of God. See what God did for Adam, breathe into him.

In Genesis 1, Jesus did for his disciples. In John chapter 20, he breathed upon them and said, receive the Holy Spirit. Exactly like God breathed into Adam, Jesus breathed into Adam in Genesis 1, and Jesus breathed into the Holy Spirit in his disciples in John chapter 20.

And that's what the Holy Spirit is. What the breath is to our body, the Holy Spirit is to our inner being, our soul and our spirit. Do you realize that? You've seen people with asthma struggling for breath.

It's so important. Breath is so important. It's so important that God's made it such that if our nose gets clogged, our mouth opens up automatically to breathe.

Because breath is so important. We need to recognize the Holy Spirit like that. Don't grieve him.

Don't make him sad. Don't break his heart. I really love that.

Lord, I say, Lord, I never want to break your heart. You who gave your heart to die for me, it's already broken once on the cross. I don't want to break it again by the way I live.

Okay, verse 31. Make a clean break with all cutting remarks, backbiting, and profane, ungodly conversation. Do you ever make cutting remarks to your wife or husband? We don't make cutting remarks to strangers.

We make cutting remarks to what the people we call our loved ones. It's pretty strange, isn't it? We make cutting remarks to the ones we're supposed to love. It says get rid of that.

Make a clean break with it. You can take a decision sitting there in the chair right now and say, Lord, I want to make a clean break with all the cutting remarks I make to people. Somebody you're not happy with.

And you make a cutting remark. It is meant to sting. Yeah, you know, it's like the little small little thing at the end of a scorpion's tail.

So small. Our tongue of some people is like that. And it does it so quickly that before anybody knows, the sting is gone and the poison's gone in.

Make a clean break. You're a Christian. You're not supposed to do things like that.

Make a clean break with that type of stuff. Lord, I'm never going to make cutting remarks. I've done a lot of it in my life, even after I'm born again.

And I'm really sorry, Lord. I don't never want to do it again. Don't break God's heart.

That's the heading. Don't break God's heart. Make a clean break with cutting remarks.

The Holy Spirit's there to help you. Next time you're prompted to make a cutting remark when somebody did something to offend you or you're not happy with somebody, the Holy Spirit will say, remember, you made a break with that. You finished with it.

And he'll help you right there. And then it says make a clean break with backbiting. Don't speak about people, things you would not.

I mean, if you have a responsibility for that person, like a father and mother talking about their difficult son, or elder brothers talking about some problem in that church, other than such areas where you have a responsibility, maybe if you're in office, you have to sit in the office and discuss with the other people on the board concerning some of your staff members. Those are necessary. But other than that, why do we talk about people we've got nothing to do with? What joy do you get out of tearing down somebody's reputation? Aren't you a really evil person to just tear down somebody's reputation unnecessarily? Why not say something good? You're not helping that person.

Don't break God's heart with backbiting. And then it says with profane talk. Talk that is, you know, ungodly, dirty.

Let's finish with that. Then it says instead, you know, when we get rid of something evil, we've got to replace it with something good. When you clean out your house of all the garbage, you don't keep your house empty, do you? Why does a person clean a new house? He's got to fill it with furniture.

And Jesus said, if you clean out a house, get rid of all the evil spirits and keep it empty. You'll find seven times more evil spirits come and occupy that house. Don't keep it empty.

That's what Jesus taught in that parable. Don't ever keep your house empty. Don't say it's clean.

It's not enough that it's clean. It's got to be filled. You got to first clean it and then fill it.

That's a simple point of that parable. But Jesus said a house that had an evil spirit, the evil spirit is cast out. The house was kept clean but unoccupied.

The spirit came back with seven other evil spirits and occupied it. And the man's condition became worse than before. That's happened to some Christians.

They really got born again seriously, but they didn't fill their house with something good. And the good is God's Holy Spirit and all the things that he does in your life. So, what shall we fill our hearts with? Verse 32.

Be gentle with one another and sensitive. That's a beautiful translation of tender-hearted. Sensitive.

God's spirit makes us sensitive. Sensitive to the feelings of other people. Sensitive.

Now, if I say that, how will that person feel? How will that person feel? If I say that about, you talk to your wife about her mother. Your mother is like that or your father is like that. How will that person feel? You may not feel anything because it's not your parents.

But is that the way to talk about your wife's parents to her or your husband's parents to him? No. Don't ever say such things. Be sensitive to people's feelings.

Be sensitive to their needs. That's Christianity. Then it says, forgive one another as quickly and as thoroughly as God in Christ forgave you.

I really love that. How should we forgive others? As quickly. You know we forgive, but I don't know whether it's quick.

As quickly as God forgave you. Have you ever gone to God and said, Lord, I'm really sorry about the sin he committed. Can you please forgive me? Does he say come back after a couple of days, I'll tell you.

Never. He doesn't even say come back after a couple of minutes. It's immediate.

I love that passage where it says Peter denied the Lord three times. You know that's probably the worst sin that Peter ever committed in his whole life. Even adultery was not so bad if he ever did it.

But that he denied Jesus who had been so good to him. Denied him three times saying I don't even know this man just to save his life. And he thought I've really blown it now.

I've really destroyed myself. I made a mess of my life and it's no use. And it says at that time that Jesus turned Luke 22 and looked at him.

How do you think he looked at him? I wish somebody would draw a painting. I did see a painting once of the Lord turned and looked at Peter. But the artist had no understanding of Christ.

He turned, Jesus looking like this. With a serious look. I don't believe the Lord turned and looked at Peter.

Peter would have gone and committed suicide along with Judas Iscariot. If Jesus had looked at him like that. I've never seen a painting.

The Lord turned and looked at Peter. It's a look of forgiveness, compassion. It's okay Peter, don't worry.

In a few minutes I'll be dying for that very sin you committed. I love you. Never mind, start again.

I told you I was praying for you. I knew this was going to happen. Satan's desire to have you but I'm praying for you.

And Peter went out and he wept. Wept bitterly because not just that he had sinned. But that after he had sinned that the Lord looked at him with such forgiveness.

And mercy. That broke his heart. And I want to ask you my brother, sister.

Is there somebody in the world. Who's waiting for a look like that from you? Do you get my question? Is there somebody who knows they've hurt you, harmed you. But they're not too sure whether you've really forgiven them.

And probably they're waiting for a look like that from you. It's no use just coming to the meeting and saying I want to be like Jesus. This is what it means to be like Jesus.

It means to look at people like that. Okay, it's alright. You did that against me, forget it.

Peter hadn't even confessed it to the Lord. It's okay, I'll look at you and my look will bring you to forgiveness. And repentance.

That's lovely. As quickly and as thoroughly. That's important.

It's not just quick. But it must just like God says I will not remember your sin anymore. I got to give that person a look saying listen.

It's over. It's finished. Don't talk about it anymore.

It's forgiven and I want to look at you the way God looks at me. See this is what it means when God says don't break my heart. Don't break God's heart by refusing to forgive others.

And then it says further down in chapter 5. It just goes on. It's all the same subject. Don't break God's heart.

He says if you want any help in this, not just like God forgave you. But in all other areas the imitators of God are watch what God does. That's a great exhortation.

Watch what God does. Say Lord I want to be like you. He does.

He blesses people in a way that he doesn't even come pronouncing. Hey here am I God I'm coming to bless you. He just blesses them and goes away and they don't even know it.

Isn't that how he's blessed us so many times. I've seen Christians. They get sick.

They pray for healing. They go to a doctor. Take medicines.

All that is good. It's God who has appointed doctors and created medicines on the earth for our healing. But my point is this.

When you got that treatment or you got that surgery and you got that medicine. And you got healed. Don't give the glory to the medicine.

Oh brother this new drug that was invented by some heathen guy over there. Is the thing that cured me. Why in the world did you pray then? Give the glory to God.

Watch what God does. He does something and he doesn't even let you know that he did it. He healed you and you thought it was a medicine.

It wasn't a medicine. It was God. God used the medicine.

I know. But very often we don't recognize because God is so hidden. But watch what God does and learn something from that and say Lord I want to be like that.

I want to bless people in a way they don't even know. God is not always hanging around waiting for somebody to say thank you to him. No.

He wouldn't have time for anything else if he would hang around people waiting for them to say thank you. Because they will never say it. He's got other things to do than just waiting around for people to say thank you to him.

I've got other things to do than just wait around for people to say thank you to me. No. We bless them and leave them.

That's it. Watch what God does and then you do it. Like children who learn proper behavior from their parents.

That's a great exhortation. We teach our children to say thank you. Say thank you to uncle.

Say thank you to auntie. And they learn. They don't know it automatically.

Say sorry. You stamped on that little child's toe. Say sorry to him.

We teach our children. I hope you do. Teach your children to say sorry and thank you.

And teach them to pray before they eat. Because we want to say thank you to God. And it says like little children learn from their parents.

I want to ask you who say God is your father. What have you learned from your father? I mean little children. If you ask a 7, 8 year old.

Did your parents teach you something? Sure. They'd say lots of things I learned from my parents. They taught me how to brush my teeth.

They taught me to bathe myself. They taught me so many things. I want to ask you.

You say God is your father. What have you learned from your father? Can you tell me a couple of things you learned from your father? Watch what God does. This is an exhortation.

It will change your life. Watch what God does. And you do the same thing.

Just like children learn proper behavior from their parents. And then verse 2. Mostly what God does is to love you. Isn't that great? Most of the time what God does is he just loves us.

And that's the thing we got to learn. That even if we can't do great things for other people. Here's something we can do.

We can just love them. I may not be able to give them gifts. You may not have the money to give people gifts.

You may not have the facilities to invite them home for a meal. It doesn't make a difference. Mostly what God does is love people.

And that's what we've got to learn from him. So keep company with God. Great verse.

Keep company with God. And learn how to live a life of love. I want to learn that.

You know like an apprentice. You go to a factory. Even if you got your ITI degree and things like that.

You got your diploma rather from the ITI. You learn some trade with some machine. Yet you go to that factory and you really don't know much about how it works.

And you work with somebody who's been there for 35 years. And he's such an expert. He can do it blindfolded.

And he tells you. And think if he's one of those unselfish people who wants to teach you every trick of the trade he's learned in all his life. Boy, there are few people like that.

But if you get into one of those people, you really learn something. I want to tell you that Christ is like that. He'll teach you everything.

But keep company with him. Walk with him and say, Lord, how do I do it here now? Here's this tricky situation and I'm being tempted. And many times I used to say, Lord, sometime in your earthly days in Nazareth, I'm sure you face not the same situation, but the same temptation.

Jesus never rode a scooter in Nazareth and had all types of people yelling at him. No, but he faced the same temptation in other circumstances. He never had a drunken father.

But he faced the same temptation that children of drunken fathers face in other circumstances. Our circumstances are not the same. Yours and mine are not the same.

But every human being's temptations are exactly the same. Do you know that I know every temptation that comes to you? Even though I'm not a prophet, because I know every temptation that comes to me. And Jesus knew every temptation because he was tempted with them.

And it's wonderful to say in a time of temptation, Lord, you faced this when you were in Nazareth. And I just want to do what you did there. I want to keep company with you.

And if you keep close to that master trainer, you'll be a first class Christian. In no time at all. Keep company with him and learn a life of love.

Read the Gospels and see how he loved people. He didn't heal people saying, well, if you promise to follow me, I'll heal you. Not even once.

He healed multitudes of people who are in hell today. Did you hear that? Jesus healed a lot of people who are in hell today. I feel sorry for them because they just came for physical healing and went away like those 10 lepers.

I don't know what happened to the other nine lepers. I hope they got saved sometime, but there's no indication in the Bible they did. But the one fellow got saved because he came back.

He wanted more than healing from leprosy. He wanted more than earthly blessing. And he got something more.

It's always like that. You get an earthly blessing and you don't get satisfied with that. Come back to the Lord and say, Lord, that's OK.

That's just a bonus. What about what you're going to give me? Something heavenly. You'll get something more.

So see how he lived this life of love and you keep company with him and you learn that yourself. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant.

He wasn't sort of careful. Oh, if I show too much love to this person, how will he behave? We're so cautious. Oh, you know, I've seen that particularly in the matter of giving and receiving money.

Haven't you always, now be honest, haven't you always had to pray about it before you give somebody money? Will it ruin him? How much should I give? Maybe not too much because you've got to be cautious. You've got to pray for people. OK.

How many of you have prayed when you receive money? Lord, should I receive this? We never pray when we have to receive money. But we have to pray a lot. Sometimes fast and pray two or three days.

I'm still praying about it whether I should give that money. We're just fooling ourselves. We're just downright selfish children of Adam behaving like all other selfish children of Adam.

That's all. Here's the proof of it. Are our eyes open to see it? If your eyes are open today, praise the Lord.

His love was not cautious but extravagant. And he was willing. Love always takes a risk.

He's willing to take that risk that this fellow will turn on me and spite me. What, I have nothing to do with you? That's fine. I'll still take that risk.

And if he spites me, fine. If he kicks me out, I'll go. And wait for another opportunity.

Maybe he's in need five years from now. I'll go back. Go back where? This fellow who kicked you out? That's right.

Go back to the person who kicks me out because he needs me now. Boy, that's Christianity. Have you ever done that once in your life? Gone back to somebody who kicked you out the last time you tried to help him? That's what Jesus did.

He did that with us a number of times. You know, my brothers and sisters, we haven't kept company with him long enough to become like that. We're learning a lot of theories in the church.

And like somebody said, if you spend all your life... Listen to this. There's a great man in the 17th century who said this called Fenelon. If you spend all your life accumulating all this spiritual knowledge, God will have to give you one more life to practice all this.

But there isn't another life. This is the only life. You learn and practice now itself.

God's not going to give you another life. So, let's learn from Jesus in this life. His love was extravagant.

He did not love in order to get something from us. Boy, that's great. He did not love in order to get something from me.

But he loved in order to give everything of himself to us. Love like that. He did not love to get something from me.

He loved in order to give me everything he had. That's a Christ-like person who's not out to get anything from you. Who's not interested in taking advantage of you in any way.

Who wants to bless you and has got no ulterior motives in seeking your friendship. And then further, let's read verse 3. But be careful when you talk about love, that you don't allow this love to turn into lust. You know, like some brother says, Well, I'd like to love some of the sisters.

That's a great command. Be careful there, he says. You know, Paul's very, he's inspired by the Holy Spirit because he knows some people would, you know, like people who like to witness to the opposite sex.

I always say, don't try witnessing to the opposite sex. It's dangerous. It can land you into some situations which you may not be able to extricate yourself out from.

Seek to be a witness to people in your own sex. Otherwise, this so-called love can turn into lust. And if it turns into lust, lust means a burning desire for something in your heart that can set you off on a downhill slide.

It doesn't start with sexual evil. Lust starts in the eyes and in the mind, but it goes on a downhill slide that ends up with sexual promiscuity, filthy practices, or sometimes bullying greed. Bullying greed means you demand that you want something.

It could be from your wife. Bullying. A lot of husbands are bullies.

They are bullying, covetous people. Verse 4. Though some tongues just love the taste of gossip, some tongues love the taste of gossip, Christians have got better use for language than that. I hope that can be

said about you, that I don't like the taste of gossip on my tongue.

You know, like certain filthy things come into our tongue and you don't even think about it for a second. You spit it out and say, I don't want that. Thank you.

And imagine if gossip tastes like that to our tongue, that I spit it out. I don't want it. I've got better use for my tongue than that.

Don't talk dirty or silly. That kind of tongue does not fit our Christian lifestyle. That doesn't fit our Christian lifestyle.

Verse 5. You can be sure that using people, I'm talking about using people. You can be sure that using people or religion, or use religion, or things just for what you can get out of it, or get out of them, will get you nowhere. And certainly nowhere near the kingdom of Christ or the kingdom of God.

What's that? Using people to get something for yourself. Using religion to get something for yourself. I can name, right now, people who've been in this church for years.

Their children grew up here in a God-fearing way. Their children learned to speak good English. So that they got jobs elsewhere.

Because in the earthly language itself was good. They were well-behaved. Once their children grew up and got jobs, they got their education, the parents are not to be found in the church now.

Because they got what they wanted. Their children are well off now. They don't need the church.

They are people whom you know very well. And the number keeps increasing of such people. Who've used the church for what they wanted.

And their children were small. They would never dream of leaving CFC. No matter what provocation.

But now, children are grown up. Some of them are married. They are okay.

They can afford to leave now. We don't want the church. What were they here for all along? Well, I've only said one thing.

If you stay here long enough, if you stay here long enough, all your inner motives will get exposed. This church is a little different from other churches. Everything will get exposed.

It's not an x-ray. It's a scan. MRI scan.

There's something even later than that. More expensive. I don't know the name of it.

But really powerful. That's what we've got here. Every part of your body, your internal motives will all get exposed.

However, don't be like that if you're a Christian. Verse 6. Don't let yourself get taken in by all the smooth religious talk that's going on nowadays. Don't be taken in and fooled by all the smooth religious talk that a lot of people are there telling you on television, in public meetings, in different places, which get you occupied with earthly things.

You know the devil tries to get you in bondage either to fear, listen, or to guilt about your past, or to earthly things. It doesn't matter which of the three he gets you trapped in. Get you trapped with guilt, get you trapped with fear, or get you trapped with earthly things and promise you earthly things and say you trust God for this earthly thing and that earthly thing instead of trusting God to be more Christ-like.

Don't get taken in by all that smooth religious talk. God gets furious. This is verse 6. God gets furious with people who are full of religious sales talk, but want nothing to do with Him personally.

God is furious with people who got religious sales talk, but don't want to keep company with Him. I want to ask you whether you got religious sales talk, whether you sing choruses, which are so nice to sing, but it's all talk. Don't even hang around people like that.

I love that. Verse 7. Don't even hang around people like that, because you'll become like them. I want to keep company with people who are serious in their Christian life.

Then it says in verse 8, you groped your way through all that darkness and that murk once upon a time, but no longer. Once upon a time you were groping around in the darkness in that murky waters, but now you're out in the open. Verse 8. The bright light of Christ makes your way plain.

You're in the bright light of Christ, so no more stumbling around. Get on with it. I love that.

Get on with it. And verse 9. The good, the right, the true. These are the actions that are appropriate for daylight hours.

That which is good, that which is right, and that which is true. Verse 10. Figure out what will please Christ.

Figure out what will please Christ, and then do it. Verse 11. Don't waste your time on useless work, being mere busybodies with busy work, the barren pursuits of darkness.

It's not enough to be busy. You've got to be busy doing something that lasts for eternity. Expose those things for the sham that they really are.

Verse 12. It's a scandal when people waste their lives on things they must do in the darkness where no one will see them. Is there anything in your life which you have to hide from others? Something secret? Some account books which you don't want anybody to see? Secret account books? Things in the darkness? It's a scandal that people waste their lives on doing things like that, that they have to do it in the darkness.

Verse 13. Rip the cover off these frauds. There are frauds in the world, and our duty is to live a life that exposes these frauds, and see how attractive they look in the light of Christ.

They don't look very attractive at all. And that's why when I hear preachers preaching some fantastic things, they say, oh, we gotta be like Jesus. I sit there and I say, yes.

You gotta be like Jesus in your attitude to money, first of all, brother. They forget that. They talk about everything else.

Rip the cover off these frauds by your way of life. Verse 14. Wake up from your sleep.

Climb out of your coffins, and Christ will give you light. We're not supposed to live our life in a coffin. Climb out of those coffins, and watch your step.

Verse 15. Use your head. Make the most of every opportunity you get.

Verse 16. Because these are desperate times. I believe if that's what Paul said in the first century, how much more in the 21st century.

These are desperate times. Time is short. Make the most of every chance you get.

Verse 17. Don't live carelessly. Unthinkingly.

Make sure you understand what the master wants. Verse 18. Don't drink too much wine.

That cheapens your life. You know that too much wine cheapens your life? Alcohol. Drink the spirit of God.

Huge drops of him. Like taking a deep breath. Breathe in the spirit of God.

Verse 19. Sing hymns instead of drinking songs. Sing hymns.

Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything. Find some excuse to sing a song to God the Father.

Any excuse to sing a song of praise to God. Sing praises over everything to God the Father in the name of our master Jesus Christ. And finally verse 21.

Out of respect for Christ be courteously reverent respectful to one another. My brothers and sisters, what I have read to you this morning is true Christianity. And the Holy Spirit has come to help us to live this life.

If you do one of these things which are not written here, you break God's heart. One of these things is written that you shouldn't do. That's how we break God's heart.

When we don't do the things we're told to do, we break God's heart. Don't break God's heart. Seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Do you know that this is the life you can live? We don't speak much in the church sometimes about hope. Hope is different from faith. Faith is something I have right now.

Hope is I'm going to get it. Okay. You don't have faith.

Have you got hope that this life is going to be yours? You're going to be. You're going to make a clean break with all those wretched things we spoke about. You're not going to break God's heart.

You're going to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. Let's just bow our heads in prayer. While our heads are bowed in prayer, I want you to think about the things that you heard.

There may be different areas that God spoke to you. And remember, the Holy Spirit showed you the glory of Christ right now from his word. All that you saw was the glory of Jesus Christ, the way he lived.

Now, he says, will you allow me, the Holy Spirit says, will you allow me to make you like this? Will you say, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Write your laws upon my mind and my heart.

Do it in my life, Lord. Do it in my life. Make a beginning today and do it in my life.

I really want to do it. I'm going to go away from this meeting with tremendous hope. I'm not going to be the same anymore.

I'll never be the same anymore. By the grace of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I'm hungry for God now. Heavenly Father, we are hungry for you.

We want more of you in our life. We don't want to break your heart. We don't want to do things that we're going to regret 2000 years from now.

Please give us grace. Give us grace. Give us wisdom, especially these young people.

Don't let us be taken in by all the religious sales talk going around us, even in the name of Christ. Let's not be fooled by things that deprive us of your highest and your best. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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