

Enduring Till the End

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the importance of enduring faith that maintains a good conscience, obeys God, and persists in prayer despite challenges.

Duration: 59:21

Scripture: Romans 1:5

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Perseverance Of Saints"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of true faith, highlighting the marks of faith such as maintaining a good conscience, obedience out of faith rather than fear, dependence on God, endurance, and entering into God's rest by looking to Jesus amidst life's storms and distractions.

Transcript

We've been thinking the last three Sundays of the marks of true faith. If you remember, we saw first of all a good conscience. Anyone who has true faith, the kind of faith the Bible talks about, will maintain a good conscience before God and before men always.

If you don't do that, the Bible says you make shipwreck of your faith. You're on the rocks. The second thing we saw was faith results in obedience.

The Bible speaks about the obedience of faith, which is different from obedience in the Old Testament, which is out of fear or expecting a reward. All that is gone. So the type of gospel being preached today where people are asked to trust God in order to get a reward is an Old Testament faith, which is a deception.

It's a counterfeit. And we've got to be alert to it because it's leading people back to the old covenant. It's like leading people back into the wilderness instead of into Canaan.

And that's why people who live like that live defeated lives. And the third mark of true faith we saw last time was dependence upon God. We saw the picture of the branch in the vine, a wonderful picture of faith where the branch is helpless, can't do anything.

We saw the example of Abraham who tried to help God. People who have true faith don't try to help God. They let God help them.

So today we want to look at another mark of faith and that is endurance. Faith brings endurance or patience. Let me show you a verse in James and chapter 1 and verse 4. It says, endurance have its perfect result so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

In James it says patience. Patience and endurance are the same thing. That means you never give up.

If you want to be perfect, ask God to make you more patient. We're all impatient people and impatience has come because of unbelief. We don't believe that God makes everything work for good, for my good.

I mean if somebody delays doing something that I ask him to do which he's supposed to do for me and he doesn't do it or he delays in doing it and I get impatient, I'm at that moment saying this particular thing God is not making work for my good. All the other things he is but this particular thing when this in this particular moment the devil's taken over. No sir, the devil never takes over.

God runs this universe and if your life is yielded to God, God runs your life including the delays that other people make, you never need be impatient. It all depends on whether you believe Romans 8 28 that all things that most important word in that verse is A-L-L-R and I'll tell you honestly I have met very few Christians in my whole life who believe that word all. For most Christians Romans 8 28 says God works most things for our good.

Even that most people don't believe but all. Be one of those who say all. All means all.

It's like when the bible says he forgives all our sins, what does it mean? Most of our sins. All. So when it says all things work I believe it's as complete as God's blotting out my past sins is hundred percent.

I believe the same word of God which says all things work together for good. I have faith in that. It's hundred percent.

That's why I'm patient. Think of the story of Joseph. When he was in jail he asked Pharaoh's butler after helping him and to get out you know explaining his dream.

He said when you go to Pharaoh just remember me but he didn't. Bible says in Genesis 39 the last verse and he completely forgot. Imagine a man who supernaturally explained a dream to you just yesterday or three days ago and you forget about it completely.

It's not normal. I don't think you and I would do it. If somebody supernaturally explained a dream when you were in prison and you were about to be hanged and three days later that dream is fulfilled and you get out of prison I tell you you'll remember that man for the rest of your life.

How did Pharaoh's butler forget? God made him forget because Joseph was only 28 years old. He had not completed his training in the prison to be ready to be the ruler and God made sure that Pharaoh's butler would forget until he was ready. Should we get upset with Pharaoh's butler for forgetting? Should you get upset with somebody who promises to do something new for you and forgets to do it for two years? No.

That's faith. Faith endures patience. It says here let patience have its perfect result so that you can become perfect.

I want to be perfect and it says lacking in nothing. So let's turn to Luke chapter 18. Luke's gospel chapter 18.

Here it says you know Jesus was talking about people who pray and then give up. Does that sound familiar? We've all done it concerning something or the other. You pray and then give up.

Even though we may be praying for something we are absolutely sure is God's will. I mean if you're praying for something which you're not sure it's God's will then it's okay to give up after a while because you're not sure. There are a lot of desires we may have in our heart which are not God's will.

But think if you're praying for something like Lord I want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Is that according to God's will or not? I want to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to know what it is to die every day to myself.

Take up the cross. Is that in God's will or not? To know what it is. I want to overcome sin.

I don't want any sin to rule over my life. I want a pure thought life. Are these things according to God's will? Sure.

There's no doubt about it. Why do we give up? Why do we? Lord I want to get victory over my anger. Why do I give up praying after some time? This parable is for you if you're like that.

That applies to almost all of us who are honest. He told this parable to show that at all times men ought to pray. That does not mean that we must be on our knees all the time.

Jesus himself was not like that. And don't use that verse to say that we should pray frequently because that's not what it says. We should have long hours of prayer.

That's not what it says. A lot of people interpret scripture in different ways. I prefer to take Jesus exactly the way you said it.

You got to pray always which means it's not a question of being on our knees. It's not even a question of speaking to God all the time because we can't do that 24 hours. Jesus himself didn't do it.

We've got to sleep. We've got to work. We've got to eat.

We've got to drink. We've got to do so many things. We've got to speak to people so much like I'm doing right now.

But behind it all there is a constant prayer, a spirit of prayer. And that's what he's talking about. That's the only way this verse can be fulfilled.

You cannot fulfill this prayer by, you cannot fulfill this verse by praying six hours every day. Six hours is not enough. He said 24 hours.

You pray all night once a week. You think you'll fulfill this verse? No sir. All times.

Now can you think of something that you do all the time without even being conscious of it? Breathing. Sometimes you are conscious and you want to take deep breaths and do little exercise. Deep breathing exercises especially people have lung problems.

That is specific times of prayer. People who have spiritual lung problems need to have specific times of prayer. And all of us is good to have some breathing exercise.

But that's that's not the only time you breathe. That's the time you're consciously breathing. Taking deep breaths.

But you're breathing all the time. Most of the time unconsciously and you're doing so many other things while you're breathing. That's one of the best illustrations of prayer at all times.

Because if you stop breathing you die. And if you stop praying in this way you'll die. Men ought always to pray and never to lose heart.

Never to get discouraged. God didn't answer me. Never to give up.

I've often thought about that thorn in the flesh that Peter had and that Paul had. You know sickness. Every time I get sick I pray.

I pray Lord heal me. Every single time. I never say Lord okay sure we'll keep this sickness.

No. I always pray Lord heal me just like Paul prayed. When did Paul stop praying? You see after three times? No.

After God gave an answer. It happened to be after three times. But if God hadn't given an answer after 30 times he'd have prayed the 31st time.

That's the point. He prayed until God said I'm not going to take away that sickness. You're going to keep it.

That's good for you. Because because of this you will be humbled and you'll get grace which is better than hell. That's a lovely passage that teaches me that grace is better than hell.

I firmly believe it was a thorn in the flesh. It was a sickness Paul had. I have no doubt about it in my mind.

But there I see that God's grace is sufficient. And so he says I'll glory in my weakness. This sickness makes me weak.

That's fine. If it's something God has permitted with a purpose. So this is what I pray when I'm sick.

I say Lord either give me healing or give me something better than healing. Something more of your grace. I would encourage all of you to pray like that for every single sickness and ailment you ever have in your life.

Don't give up. Lord heal me. I used to pray like that for my children.

Heal them or something better than healing. So men are always to pray. Never to give up.

And then he told this parable. See the reason why I'm mentioning this is because at the end of this passage. I'll mention that first then you'll understand why I'm bringing this parable up.

In the last sentence in verse 8. See what it says. But when the son of man comes will he find faith. See he's talking about faith on the earth.

Will he find what faith. Faith to get money. Oh you'll find plenty of that.

It's not real faith. Will he find this type of faith. And now I'll explain what this type of faith is.

It endures. Never gives up. It never gets discouraged.

Will he find such faith. Now I want to say a lot of people are losing this faith. And they're going for that counterfeit faith.

Which is the faith of the Old Testament. Trust the Lord and obey him and he will bless you, reward you, give you all types of things. But this is the faith of the New Testament.

And when he says that before his return. The time just before his return. This type of faith is going to disappear on the earth.

That's the meaning of will he find. Will he find means will he find a few who have this type of faith. I want to be one of those.

Don't give up. I've been a believer 50 years and I tell you I'm determined to go on till the end. Not only go on to the end.

I want to climb higher every year. I don't want to be like these you know shooting stars that burn for a while and then you see them 10 years later you don't know where they are. I've seen lots of preachers and servants of God like that.

Think of the example of people like Paul and Peter. They just kept climbing. Never ended.

Every year was they were more glorious than the previous. Make that your aim. There's a I come back to Luke 18.

I want to show you a verse before I go and get there and that is Hebrews 13. Hebrews in chapter 13. There's a lovely verse here about whose faith we should imitate.

Don't imitate the faith of certain type of people. Hebrews 13 7. Remember those who led you. Who led by example.

Who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the result of their conduct. Conduct is life.

How they behave. Look at their behavior and if you see their behavior is Christ like. Imitate their faith.

But if you see a man talks a lot about faith and he gets upset easily and doesn't mingle with poor ordinary people. Only with big shots or great Christian leaders or something like that. I don't want to imitate their faith.

I want to see the result of their conduct. I say what type of conduct has this guy's faith produced in him? What is his attitude to money? I want to see that. I don't want to just blindly imitate some preacher who impresses me with his eloquence in the platform.

No. Consider the result of their conduct and then imitate their faith. If only Christians had obeyed that simple verse.

We wouldn't have so much of deception among millions of Christians today. Consider their conduct. What is the result of their conduct? And another translation says see how they ended their lives.

See how what is the end result of their life. In other words, I mean we don't have to necessarily wait till a person dies. Paul said even when he was alive follow me as I follow Christ.

But he wrote that when he had already been a Christian for maybe 25-30 years. So he was pretty much along the way. And if you see that a man 25-30 years is climbing, it's a good person to follow.

And you find every year he's going higher. A good person to follow. He's going the right direction.

So then you know how he's going to end. The tragedy today is so many people. I believe is a very important verse for today.

So many people who start so well and get a lot of fame with their preaching ability and eloquence and a few churches they are able to build. All of a sudden it's discovered that there's some secret sin in there. But I'll tell you what surprises me.

What surprises me not how that great preacher fell. What surprises me is how these dumb 10,000 people in this church couldn't see that 15 years before it happened. That's what's surprising.

And you got the slightest bit of discernment. You'll be able to see when a man speaks whether he's speaking from his life or from his head. Something we must develop in the last days.

Consider the end of their conduct. Where is it going? Then imitate their faith. Otherwise don't imitate it.

I don't follow every Tom, Dick and Harry who calls himself a believer or a preacher. I'd have destroyed myself long ago if I had done. I remember when I was a young Christian the Lord told me if you can find someone who's following me, follow him.

And if you can't find anyone who's following me, look at me, just follow me. That has been the most helpful advice I ever got from the Lord in my younger days. If you find someone who's really following Jesus in his life, follow him.

But if you can't find someone like that and they're very rare, then follow him. Paul said, follow me as I follow Christ, he said in Philippians 3.17. And also look at other people who walk like I do. So let's get back now to Luke 18.

We're talking about faith. Remember what we read in Hebrews 3? Imitate their faith. I have met a number of people who want to preach like I preach.

And I say, don't, don't waste your time. God wants only one Zach Funin in the church. He doesn't want another.

I even tell my children, you're not supposed to be like me. You're not supposed to preach like me. Not at all.

You must be yourself. See how these fingers, God made all five fingers different. All different.

That's God's wisdom. You see 10 trees planted down a road. All 10 trees, maybe the same seed grew up different.

You see 10 buildings, apartments, blocks that man has made down the road. They're all alike. Man's work is like that.

It's cloning. Exactly. Make something exactly like somebody else.

No. Imitate their faith. Not their preaching ability.

No. I remember, you know, when we are young, we sort of tend to want to preach like somebody else. Usually for honor.

You don't get much honor by imitating somebody's faith. Because that just changes your life. And I've discovered through the years, and I remember as I was growing up, and I said, Lord, I never want to preach like anybody else in the world.

I don't want to preach like the Indian preachers I've heard, the American preachers I've heard. I want to study the life of Jesus and try and preach like he preached. Try to picture how did he speak? What is the way, the method of his speaking? And in each of us, different aspects may come out.

So dear brothers and sisters, seek to imitate a person's life and faith. Now let's get back to Luke 18. Jesus told the story of a judge who was a man who was not a God-fearing man, and a widow.

The point here is the widow. Notice how in the Gospels, whenever Jesus spoke about the church, and here the church is the widow. The church is not the judge.

The church is the widow. Jesus always pictured the church as something, as our believers, as people who are very weak. Here's a widow who has no male member in her house, because if she had a son, the son would have gone to the judge.

And she probably doesn't even have a daughter, because the daughter would have gone to the judge. She has to go herself. Why does this 70-year-old widow have to go herself? Because she was childless, perhaps, and the husband has died.

And this is a picture of the church, helpless. Do you ever feel disappointed? Oh, I don't have influence in this world, and I don't have so much money. Brother, you're qualified to be a part of the church.

Think of Jesus said about the church like sheep in the midst of wolves. Which is the church? The wolves or the sheep? The sheep. The helpless ones, that's the church.

The widow, that's the church. The branch, the helpless branch, that's the church. Always Jesus took pictures like that.

Take salt, for example. You see the other salt of the earth. How much salt is there in a plate of food? Have you seen these big banquets? There's so many big, big dishes of chicken and meat and rice and chapatis and all that.

Small, little, teeny-weeny bit of salt. That's the church. Always weak, helpless, but boy, what a powerful effect that salt can have.

As soon as you put a little bit in your mouth, you know whether there's salt in it or not. That's the power of the church. Weak, helpless, small, despised by others, but powerful because we are in contact with God and the others are not.

So this widow goes to the judge and notice what she asks for. Give me protection from my enemy, verse 3. Now remember at the end Jesus said, will I find this type of faith in the earth? Faith for what? It's not faith for money. It's not faith even for healing.

It's faith for protection from my enemy. Deliver me from evil. That's what Jesus taught us in our prayer.

Protection from my enemy. My enemy is the devil and he's trying to encroach into my life in different areas. He's already encroached so many areas.

I've got to get it back from him. And I get the picture of a widow who's got, maybe her husband bought a bit of land and house and she's living there and her husband is dead. And this greedy neighbor, wicked man, feels, ah, this widow's husband is dead.

He's got no children. I can little by little occupy her property. And moves the fence more and more, moves his fence more and more and more.

And this widow sees that guy's fence coming more and more into her property. And she's, she can't fight with this powerful mafia man who lives next door to her. She goes to the judge.

Give me protection. I mean, if she could handle it herself, why should she go to the judge? If she could have gone and bashed him up herself, she can't. The church can't go and bash up the devil.

Sorry. We got to go to God and say, Lord, give us protection against our enemy. It's not only the devil, it's our flesh.

I hope you know that the flesh is also much stronger than you are. This thing, which the Bible calls the flesh, our nature, which we inherited from Adam. It's more powerful.

And when you try to fight with it, it's like a widow fighting with some mafia dog. You can't. You won't succeed.

But if God helps you, you can handle 10,000 enemies like that. That's the picture here. Going to God and say, Lord, protect me against my enemy.

I'm not going to God and say, Lord, give me more property or give me a better car. I'm saying, protect me against my enemy. Will the son of man find faith like this when he comes to the earth? Will he find people whose primary prayer is, Lord, protect me from my enemy, that my heart is not defiled, that I keep my heart pure? He won't find it.

Very rare to find it in India, very rare to find it around the world. And it says here, now remember, this judge is not a picture of God. Jesus is trying to contrast if an evil, corrupt judge does something for this widow, how much more a perfect heavenly father will do for you.

That's the contrast. So remember that. And so she keeps on going, you know, she keeps going and banging the door in his house.

And he opens it. What do you want? I want protection against my enemy. Get away.

I don't have time for you. She comes back at two o'clock in the morning, bangs and bangs and says, what do you want? I want protection from my enemy. Get away.

Don't disturb my sleep. She comes back again next two o'clock in the morning. This guy gets fed up.

I better do something. And he does. And then he says, here, verse six, hear what this unrighteous judge answered.

An unrighteous judge was willing to help this widow against her enemy. But giving God a loving father will not bring justice, verse seven, for his elect. See, it is justice for us to have total victory over the enemy.

That's what I see here. Justice. You're not asking for any favor.

This widow wasn't saying, give me more of his property. No, I don't want his property. I want my own.

Justice is to ask for your property. Do you know that it is justice to ask the Lord to free you 100% from the oppression of Satan, 100% from the lust of the flesh? That's justice. It's not a favor.

I'm not asking God a favor when I ask him to set me free from lusting with my eyes or from anger or love of money. It's my right. It was purchased for me on Calvary.

It's my legal right. This property was purchased for me by my Savior. And this is the boundary.

And I say, I've got every right. The devil's encroached, encroached on all sides and made me live in one little corner. I tell you, believers are living in one little corner of their property saying, and they sing songs like Jesus saying, hold the port for I'm coming.

And these guys are struggling there. That's not the picture. Hold the port for I'm coming.

You're being oppressed now. What do we read in, you know, this wrong picture we have of the devil oppressing. We are somehow holding on.

I hope Christ will come soon. It's not like that. It's quite the other way around that Jesus said.

I will build my church. And listen, this is how most people understand it. I'll say how most people understand it.

I will build my church and the gates of the church will somehow survive the onslaughts of the enemy. Is that what it says? No. The gates of hell will not be able to stand against the church.

Do you know the difference between the gates of the church somehow struggling, hold the port for I'm coming. The Lord saying, no, the Lord is not saying hold the port for I'm coming. I don't sing that song by the way.

He says, take the battle to the enemy gates. The strong man has been bound, go into his house and spoil his property. Take away the things which belong to him, which actually belong to the Lord.

That's the picture I have. I've seen so many believers live in fear. What will the devil do to me? What will the devil do if I do this or if I do that? We don't have to fear.

This is justice I'm asking for. Father, give me what is rightfully mine. 100 percent victory in my conscious area.

As the conscious area increases, I'll have more and more. Do you think God will not bring about justice? But not for everybody. That's the sad part.

Not even for all his elect. I believe many of us sitting here are the elect of God. But God will not do that for you.

Unless you qualify. For his elect who cry to him day and night. For them he will do it.

And if anybody's sitting here who is not only the elect elect who cries day and night, God give me justice against my enemy. Give me my right. The devil's encroached into a whole lot of areas in my life.

I want to drive him out completely. He's not going to rule any area of my life. He's not going to rule any area of my home.

I'm not even going to lose one of my children to the devil or the world. I'm amazed how so many believers can sit comfortably with their children unconverted. And I'm surprised that so many other believers are sitting satisfied because their children are converted and baptized.

Oh thank God, my boy, my daughter got baptized. Is that enough? Jesus said make him disciples. We must not be satisfied if our children are baptized in water.

That's just coming to the starting line of the race. We've got to make sure they're running the race. I mean if your son managed to get into the Olympics and managed, unlike any Indian, to get to the 100 meters final and you're watching this on television, my son is there at the 100 meters final and the gun is shot and all the others run and he's standing there and saying hi, you'd be terribly disappointed.

Why are you satisfied that your son or daughter got to the starting line, that they got saved, they got baptized? I would never be satisfied. They must run the race. They must be disciples.

This saved and baptized is just for our honor. Oh people in the church will think, oh brother Zach's son is not yet baptized. I couldn't care less what people in the church think.

What does God think? Dear brothers and sisters, train your children to be not just born again and baptized but disciples of Jesus, to serve him, to live for him, and not one of your children or two, all of them. Give me justice against my enemy. He's Lord.

The devil's coming and croaks in some area of my property, which Christ purchased from me on the cross. It happens to be part of my family. Give it back.

And how often should you pray? Day and night. I can give you a written guarantee that God will give you back all the property the devil took away from you in your life or your family, but not if you take a sluggish thing and you're satisfied. All the believers in the church think my children are born again.

I tell you, you'll have terrific disappointment when you stand before the Lord. Let's have a faith that endures till the end. Lord give me back that which belongs to me.

And here's a promise. I love this. It's the words of Jesus mouth.

Heaven and earth will pass away, but this word will not pass away. I tell you, I like it when Jesus says, I tell you, this is not Zach Foonan. Jesus saying, I tell you, verse 8, God will bring about justice for them.

Speedily, quickly, that problem you're facing in your home, in your life, in your health, in any area, speedily, quickly. Do you think that God is on your side or the devil's side? What do you think? Even if you're bungled up and messed up things in your life, even if you fail them. I want to tell you one mark of faith is to believe that God is on my side, even when I fail.

You know, when Peter was going to deny Jesus within the next 12 hours at that last supper, Jesus said to Peter, you're going to deny me three times within the next 12 hours, but I'm not going to pray. I'm paraphrasing his words. I'm not going to pray that you shouldn't fall.

Peter, you're such a proud fellow, you need to fall. It's the last resort to break you. I tried every other way to break you, didn't succeed.

The last which God hates, sin. Do you know that God tries to break you through financial difficulties, through things going wrong, circumstances going wrong, and a difficult husband, difficult wife, difficult children, difficult boss, difficult neighbor. You didn't realize through all these things God was trying to break you and you never got broken, never got broken.

The last thing which God doesn't like to do is to allow you to sin. Then you're really broken. Look at these great preachers.

They finally fall into adultery, then they're broken. You think that's God's will? He tried to break them for 25 years in other ways. They wouldn't heal.

It's sad when God has to break a man through adultery. It's sad when God has to break Peter through denying Jesus three times, but sometimes pride can be broken no other way. That happens, brothers and sisters.

It happens in our life. God has to break us, but what the Lord told Peter was, what I am praying for you is that when you do fall, when you hit rock bottom, I don't want your faith to fail. Have you read that verse? Just a few pages on Luke chapter 22.

Verse 31. Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission. I like that, that God has to give permission to Satan to sift us.

Satan can't sift me. Sorry, he can't. He's got to get permission from God.

Isn't that a comfort to know that Satan can't tempt you to do something terrible without permission from God. The Bible says God will not allow us to be tested beyond our ability, and I believe that verse. It was within Peter's ability to overcome this temptation, but he didn't.

He was not faithful. Otherwise, he could have overcome because God never allows us to be tested beyond our ability. Sometimes, you know, we may look at certain circumstances in our life and say, oh, if only that hadn't happened, I wouldn't have failed.

Can you think of instances like that? If only that person hadn't done this, I wouldn't have failed, and I get upset with that person. Don't get upset with that person. Have you read? I don't have time to show it to you.

It says in the Gospels that John could enter the high priest's palace because he was probably related or more influential. When Peter came to the high priest's gate, the security guard said, who are you? I don't

know who you are. Get out.

Peter had no influence. He was just an ordinary Christian man. John came to the gate and said, he's my friend.

Let him in. He came in and denied the Lord three times because John got him into the courtyard. Don't blame John.

You can have circumstances like that where somebody else did something and said, oh, if only he hadn't done that, I wouldn't have fallen. No. God has made you fall to break your pride.

Don't blame anybody else. And Peter, Sam and Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat, verse 32, but I have prayed for you, not that you don't fall, but I prayed for you that your faith may not fail. So that even when you have fallen and hit rock bottom, which is needed to break you, Peter, because I'm preparing you for a great ministry on the day of Pentecost, and you will not be able to handle the pride that swells your head on the day of Pentecost unless you're broken today.

That's why God breaks us. God breaks us because he's got a fantastic ministry out of us, and if he doesn't succeed in breaking it, he will not be able to give you that ministry. A truly broken man will never be proud, no matter how much God uses him.

But if he's not broken, a little thing can puff him up. So if you find little things puff you up, brother, sister, you know the answer. You need to be broken more, where the praise of men or the praise of believers doesn't affect you.

So I'm praying that your faith may not fail, which teaches me that God even allows a person to fall, but he doesn't want his faith to fail. And that means to me, Peter, when you hit rock bottom, remember God still loves you. I love you.

That's faith, to believe that God loves me, believe that Jesus still loves me. Even though I have messed up my life, I denied the Lord, I did such a terrible thing. Don't give up hope.

You can come up from there. Think where Peter came up from rock bottom all the way to be the great apostle on the day of Pentecost. You can come to a great ministry from there.

Now, if you're a leader already and an elder, and then you fall, it's a little more serious. You can be restored to fellowship with the father, but I don't know whether you can be restored to ministry, depending on how deep you've fallen. For example, I wouldn't have much respect for Paul.

After he wrote all those letters, he suddenly fell into adultery with some girl. I wouldn't have much respect for his writings. Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you and consider the end result of their life, then imitate their faith.

We don't judge the others, but I want to follow those who have ended well. I don't want to follow those who start well. Many who start well, good, I'm happy for them.

It's like, you know, I find a lot of zealous young people. I've met a number of zealous young people here in this church, and I say, listen, I want to wait till you get married and have a couple of children, then I'll tell you whether you're really zealous or not. Right now, you don't have any responsibilities.

You can appear, but when you face certain trials, let's see how you both get through them. So, the end result of their conduct, I pray that your faith may not fail. It's one of the primary marks of faith is that I know God loves me, no matter how much I've fallen.

I'm going to come back to him. I'm going to come back to him. Do you remember the last youth camp? Sandeep was speaking to the youth.

Oh, some of you are not there, but Sandeep was speaking in one session, and he read out a poem that he had written. I'll never forget it. He said, I don't remember the exact words, but he said, there are times when I can't come running back to you.

I can't come even walking back to you. I'll come crawling back to you, Lord, but I'm going to come back, but I'm falling. If you can't come any other way, come crawling back and say, Lord, I messed up my life, but I know you still love me.

I know Jesus loves me. That's faith. Another aspect of faith here, which helps us to, you see, if you don't have that faith, you won't endure till the end.

You'll give up. Some little fall, you'll get discouraged, and discouragement is the way by which Satan weakens us so that we can't fight against him. I remember in my younger days, I used to get discouraged very frequently after being a believer, and I found always when I got discouraged, it would lead to further sin.

I would lose my temper, and I would get angry with my wife. Is that surprising? I never lived in victory from day one. It took me years to come to victory, but I thank God I got here.

Cry day and night, brothers and sisters. Cry day and night. Many nights, I have wet my pillow with my tears, not because of the way other people hurt me.

I finished with that long ago. I never repeated, Lord, I let you down today. I didn't live the way in my thoughts, usually in something in the thoughts, some wrong attitude or some judgmental attitude, perhaps.

Oh, my Lord, forgive me. I want to be totally like Christ. I want to say to you in Jesus' name, cry day and night.

Your Father will bring justice for you. Believe that. Yeah, Matthew chapter 14.

Peter again. Another beautiful picture of faith in the New Testament. I told you one of the pictures of faith is the branch dependent on the tree helplessly.

Here's another beautiful picture of faith, and that is, it says in Matthew 14, 25, in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came walking on the sea. To me, this is a picture of an overcoming life. Why can't we walk on the sea? Because of the law of gravity that pulls us down.

Why can't we overcome sin? Because the law of sin and death that pulls us down, which is exactly like the law of gravity, wherever we go, it pulls us down, pulls us down. Jesus overcame that, walked on the sea. But do you know the greater miracle here? That Peter walked also.

I say that's a great one. Jesus walking on the water is not such a great thing for me. Peter, a guy like me, he walks on the water.

This guy was denied Jesus three times. That encourages me. He said, Lord, if it's you, verse 28, tell me to come and I'll come.

I like that attitude. If the Lord can find that faith in some of us. Lord Jesus, you came to earth made like me in everything apart from sin and tempted like me, you overcame.

Bid me to come also. Tell me to come, to step out of the security of my life and my boat and step out in faith and say, Lord, if I look to you, I can also overcome the law of gravity like you did. Like you're doing, I can do it.

That's faith. And only one out of the 12 disciples had the faith to say that. Say, Lord, if you can do it on earth, I can do it too.

He did not live on earth as God, even though he was God. He did not use his heavenly credit card when he was on earth. He lived as a man, never using his resources as God.

As God, he forgave sins. As God, he accepted worship. But he never lived and overcame sin as God.

He overcame as a man. That's why I can say, bid me also come to you and step out. I can also overcome.

That's faith. And now notice where, what happened to Peter. And it says, but verse 30, seeing the wind, he became frightened.

He took his eyes away from Jesus onto somebody else. That's when you fall. See, so the, what I see here is Peter just fixing his eyes on Jesus, walking, walking, walking, walking, wonderful.

The wind, the waves, he sinks. There's a lesson there. If you want to endure till the end and reach Jesus when he comes, you got to make sure you look only at him.

Don't look at the circumstances. Don't be disturbed by what you read in the newspapers or what you hear the television reporters saying. It doesn't make a difference.

If you listen to all that, I guarantee you'll sink, particularly nowadays. Are you disturbed when you read something in the papers? Peter also sank. You're not the first person.

Fear. Peter also, it says he was frightened. Don't look at the wind and the waves.

If you want to endure till the end, look at Jesus. And also don't look at other people. You can lose your faith by looking at other people.

People can threaten you. When people threaten us, we look at Jesus. Say, Lord, nobody could kill you till your time came.

Nobody could even capture you and take you to jail till your time came. No, I can walk like you. He who says he abides in Christ must walk as he walked.

This is faith, to believe that Jesus came to earth, made, Hebrews 2.17, made like his brethren in all things. Hebrews 4.15, tempted like his brethren in all fights. Walking on the same water.

Do you believe at that moment Jesus was walking as God or as man? Walking as God, there's no problem. The miracle, Jesus walking on the water is a miracle. God walking as God over the universe is

not a miracle, but a human being walking on the water is a miracle.

And that's what had made Peter have faith to say, you can do it, I can do it too. That's why I believe in victory over sin. If you can do it, Lord, I can do it.

And the devil has been a master for 2,000 years to tell believers, oh, he did it as God. You can't walk like him. And that's why you have believers with bad moods, discouraged, gloomy.

I remember I used to have bad moods, discouraged, anger, everything was there. But about 35 years ago, 34 years ago or so, I got faith that Jesus came in the flesh and he walked, he was tempted like me in all points. And I said, Lord, if you can do it, I can do it.

And I tell you in Jesus' name, it's the truth I say before God, I'm never in a bad mood. 365 days of the year, I ask my wife to tell you the truth. Ask my children.

They're the ones who know me the best. I can stand before God and say, it's gone. I don't say, I got victory.

I say, Jesus keeps me from falling. That's my testimony. When I was a child, I spoke like a child.

When I grew up, I put away childish things. When I was a child, I said, I got victory over sin. Today, I say, Jesus keeps me from falling.

It's true. And he can keep you. Say like Peter, Lord, I trust you and keep your eyes on him and you'll endure till the end.

If you're worried about this person's opinion, that person, you know, you don't realize how much we are enslaved to the opinion of other believers. We think we are free from people's opinions. I'll tell you, there are circles.

First, we are free from the opinions of the world. Ah, I don't care what all my worldly friends say. Great.

You come inside another circle. Now I'm only concerned about the opinion of my believers. Then the time comes when you get rid of all the Babylonian believers and now you're concerned about the opinion of the Jerusalem believers.

That's also a slavery. And then, you know, the circle gets smaller and smaller. Ah, now I'm only concerned about the opinion of my elder brothers.

That's also a slavery. Get into that circle where it's only you and Jesus. Then you'll really be free.

Lord, now I'm really free. I'll tell you it's a battle. It's not easy.

Because, and even if you get there, you find every now and then you slip back into one of these other circles. I'm being honest. I found it like that in my own life.

And I said, Lord, it's, I'm determined. I'm going to stay in that most holy place where it's only God and me. That's it.

It's a wonderful place to be. Initially, we are in the altar core trying to impress all the other believers. Then we get into a holy place where it's only the priests and the people who are there.

But finally, we get into the most holy place is only God. So that's the meaning of looking at Jesus. I'm not a look at the reports and what's happening in the world and circumstances and global warming.

And I mean, there's a little island I heard in the middle of the Pacific, number of islands called Tuvalu. Have you ever heard of it? I never heard of it till the other day. Tuvalu, T-U-V-A-L-U.

It's about eight, nine islands or something like that. And they are concerned that if things get hotter on the earth and the ice in the Arctic and the Antarctic melts, the whole island will be wiped out. The country will disappear under the ocean.

Maldiv Islands is another country that's fearing that. Supposing I was living in the Maldives and all this conference going on about global warming and all the people talking about this, that, and the other and all the powerful nations not bothered about giving up. What would happen? Supposing I can't migrate.

I have to live in Maldives all my life. I would look at Jesus. I say, Lord, when Peter went underwater, you took care of him.

So if Maldives goes underwater, you'll take care of me. I believe that. Somehow or the other, you will arrange some supernatural rescue for me if my time on earth is not yet over.

If my time on earth is over, that's fine. What I want to say is, you cannot drown if you're trusting in Christ in sin or anything. It's a wonderful life.

Faith, endure, endure. Lord, I'm looking at you. I'm going to come to the end.

And this is the only way our heart can be at rest. Let me read this in closing. Hebrews in chapter 4. Hebrews chapter 4. There's a lovely expression here.

Verse 3. We who have faith enter into rest. We who believe enter into rest. If your life has got any type of unrest, turmoil, the wicked are like the troubled sea, always casting up the dirt.

It's the last verse of Isaiah 57, I think. The wicked are like the troubled sea, always casting up the dirt from the bottom. There's a lot of dirt at the bottom of the sea, way down at the bottom.

But when the storm comes, it breaks up all that dirt from the bottom and brings it up. It's like when a husband and wife have a fight. All the dirt that happened 20 years ago, what happened is all dug up from the bottom and there's a storm.

The wicked are like that. Those who have faith, they're at rest. It's going to be the biggest storm of all.

I won't remind my wife even of what she did yesterday. Leave alone what she did five years ago. You won't remind your husband about what he did yesterday.

Are you like the troubled sea? The wicked are like the troubled sea, casting up the dirt from the bottom. If you have been like that, pray that you'll enter into rest. We who believe, enter into rest.

Lord, I believe that maybe you're breaking me through my husband or wife or child or anything. I believe all things work for my good. I'm going to be patient through this trial.

I'm going to be at rest all the time. We who believe, enter into rest. One more verse, verse 10.

The one who has entered his rest has rested from his own works as God did from his on the Sabbath day. It speaks about the Sabbath day in verse 9. The Sabbath, the meaning of the Sabbath is not Saturday. I disagree totally with my seven-day Adventist friends.

Sorry, that's not it. It's this Sabbath insight where nothing disturbs me. I am at rest.

I'm living with God in a perpetual Sabbath inwardly all the time. We who believe, we who have faith. I'm not looking at the winds and the waves and the people and what they think, what they say, what they don't say.

I'm looking at Jesus. His opinion about me alone matters. I remember in the beginning when I used to read about different people who write articles against me and criticize me and call me a heretic, false prophet, antichrist, and all that.

I used to read those articles. At the beginning, I used to get a little disturbed. Not with them.

I said, Lord, I'm going to struggle with this and come to rest in this. And the Lord said to me, I want to bring you to the place where no matter who says what against you, there won't even be a flutter in your heart. Even a feather will not shake in the wind.

That's rest. And what is even greater, the Lord said, I want to bring you to the place where when people praise you to the skies, there won't be a flutter either. That's more difficult, by the way.

I said, Lord, I want that life. Where there won't even be a flutter in my heart, but it's exactly the same whether somebody calls me a devil or a prophet. Can you come there? You got to seize from your own works.

Say, Lord, I trust you. I look at Jesus, the winds and the waves, winds of criticism or praise. It doesn't make a difference.

I'm looking at Jesus. I will not sink. I will not sink in pride.

I will not sink into a bad mood. I will not sink into discouragement. There is a life.

There is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God. It's a place where sin cannot molest. Near to the heart of God.

Let's get there. Jesus wants to bring us there. Let's pray.

My life is about in prayer. If God has spoken to you, my brother, sister, give glory to Him. Respond to Him.

He doesn't want you to agree. He wants you to yield and say, Lord. He wants you to cry day and night.

Say, Lord, I want this life. I don't want the enemy anymore to encroach into property that belongs to you. I'm sorry that I've allowed the enemy to occupy so much of land in my life that should belong to you.

But no more, Lord. I've heard you speak to me today. Help me.

Thank you, Father. In Jesus name. Amen.

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