

Everything Outside of Christ Is Rubbish

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes that all human achievements are worthless compared to the righteousness found in Christ, advocating for humility and a deep understanding of God's grace.

Duration: 57:34

Scripture: Matthew 22:11, Philippians 3:8-9

Topics: "Justification By Faith", "Righteousness Of Christ"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of valuing the righteousness of Christ above all earthly achievements or goodness. It highlights the need to count everything else as rubbish compared to the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ. The message focuses on the freedom and joy found in being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, being justified by faith, and not seeking to boast in our own goodness or works.

Transcript

Let's turn to Philippians chapter 3. Philippians chapter 3. We need to understand, you know, Paul uses this word rubbish, which you probably heard me use many times. But Paul used it first. He said he counted, Philippians 3 verse 8. He counts everything as rubbish, so that he may gain Christ and be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of my own, which came from the law.

But the righteousness, which is through faith in Christ. The righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. And he goes on to say that I might be conformed to his death.

Okay. So, he counted everything as rubbish, everything which man considers valuable. So, you know, Paul was a very clever man.

I think if he lived today, he would have been a very brilliant computer engineer or doctor or businessman or whatever it is. He had a very brilliant mind. But he counted it as rubbish.

There are very few people in the world with brilliant minds who count it as rubbish. And that's why they don't experience Christ in the way that Paul experienced him. Most of them have very superficial experience of Christ.

Paul had a very deep experience of Christ because he didn't place any value on all those things that man valued. Paul came from a very rich family. His father was a rich businessman in Tarsus.

But even that wealth, he didn't consider that as anything. He counted it as rubbish. And then, something else he counted as rubbish was the human goodness he had by keeping the law from childhood.

You know, earlier on he says in verse 6 that according to the righteousness which is in the law, he was absolutely blameless. Do you remember the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and said, I've kept all the commandments from my youth. Paul was like that.

He was another rich young man who had kept all the commandments and he was absolutely blameless once he could stand before a high priest and say from my childhood I've lived with a good conscience up till today in Acts 23. How many people can say that? I don't think any of us can say that. These people lived such a God-fearing life brought up by God-fearing parents that from childhood this man Paul kept a good conscience according to the standards of the law.

In other words, external righteousness. But that itself is a great thing. And now he says all of that is rubbish too.

Now, just like I said a lot of very brilliant minds find it very difficult to call their brilliant minds rubbish and that's why they don't have a deep experience of Christ. It's exactly the same way. There are a lot of very upright people, good people, upright who kept a good conscience from childhood and they have not considered that as rubbish.

And that's why they don't have a deep experience of Christ. Paul says all of this, verse 7, whatever things were gained for me it's all I counted as lost. In fact, I count everything as rubbish because he had seen the standards of God's righteousness and he had seen how he could get that righteousness.

And when he understood and saw, and I believe this is so important for all of us to understand, many of us in the church I wonder whether we have a clear understanding of the basis on which God accepts us. Because if we don't have a clear understanding of that we can hear so many things in the church about denying ourselves and doing good and blessing others, etc. and do all that and you don't know on what basis Christ has accepted you.

So, this is very important what I'm sharing here. So, Paul says here, I don't want, verse 9, to be found one day standing before God with a righteousness of my own. How many good, upright, righteous people, Christians, non-Christians, whatever religion can honestly say, I don't want to be found standing before God with my goodness or my righteousness.

I think there are very few. Most people, even Christians, are proud of their goodness and their righteousness. And among non-Christians too, they are proud of the fact they are good people and that's why they don't have a deep experience of Christ.

And I think that's why many of them don't find real salvation or the joy of the Lord. Because they have not counted that as rubbish. Paul did.

He says, I don't want to be found in that day with this goodness of mine, this righteousness of mine. I want to be found in that day only with the righteousness, verse 9, last part, that comes from God and the basis of faith. You know, there's a verse in Isaiah 64 and verse 6 which says that compared to God's righteousness, I'm paraphrasing it, compared to God's righteousness, the best righteousness we can produce, the best, is like a filthy rag.

Such a filthy rag that cannot be used again. That's the meaning of that phrase there in Isaiah 64, verse 6. All our righteousness. You take all of our good deeds and when you compare it with the righteousness of God, it's like such a filthy rag that you wouldn't even want to touch.

You know, something like if you go to these scooter repair shops, they have cloths that are used for rubbing grease and all that type of stuff. It's so filthy, you can't use it anymore. It's only fit for throwing away.

And when you look at that filthy cloth which can't be washed, fit for throwing away, how many of us see that our righteousness and our goodness is like that cloth in God's eyes? The problem with man is that we don't know about the righteousness of God. Our tendency is, even among Christians unfortunately, is to compare ourselves with each other. Just like the Pharisees.

We compare this stinking dirty cloth of our righteousness with somebody else's stinking dirty cloth of righteousness and maybe he's got two more dark stains on it than I have and so I feel I'm better than him. It's absolutely crazy. But that's the basis on which a lot of people feel proud of their own righteousness or goodness or how they are better than somebody else or how they are better than people in some other church.

It could be anything. Until we get a clear understanding of this, we will always have a problem with rejoicing in our acceptance before God. We have to see everything we have as human which we think is valuable as rubbish compared to Christ.

And I believe that that is what leads to a very, very satisfying Christian life and experience. Because then we have nothing of our own to glory in or no goodness of our own or anything wisdom of our own. In another passage, in 1 Corinthians 1, when Paul is explaining the gospel, he says, 1 Corinthians 1, he says in verse 30, he says, God does things in such a way, verse 29, that no man can boast before him.

If you want to know, here's a good test, if you want to know whether God has done a really thorough work in you, ask yourself one question. Is there anything that you feel proud of? Your good looks, your intelligence, your righteousness, your Bible knowledge, your so-called spirituality, whatever it is, if there's something that you feel proud of, which makes you sort of feel superior to somebody else, I have to say, God has still to do a work in you. Because his ultimate goal is that no one will boast before him about anything.

And you haven't come to that place yet because there's something you're still boasting about. Okay. And if there are two or three things you're boasting about, or you feel pretty proud of, oh, you're a long way from where God wants you to be.

God has to do a great work in you. I don't know how many years it'll take. But you better hurry up.

Because it's only when he does that work that he can really build something eternal. And that's why it's so important to understand this. That no man may boast before God.

He equalizes us. And that's very difficult for some people to accept that God equalizes us. And after equalizing us, taking the best and the worst and putting them all on the same level, he says, then, verse 30, what he's doing, he puts us in Christ Jesus and Christ Jesus becomes my wisdom.

Christ Jesus becomes my righteousness. And Christ Jesus becomes my sanctification. And Christ Jesus becomes my redemption.

Everything. My wisdom is Christ. My righteousness is Christ.

My sanctification, holiness is Christ. My redemption is Christ. Why so that, verse 31, just as it is written, let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.

Or as the message Bible says, if you're going to blow a trumpet, blow a trumpet for God. Don't blow your own. That's really a wonderful place to come to.

That's why you heard me say many, many times that the greatest virtue in the Christian life is humility. The three secrets of the Christian life are humility, humility, and humility. That means there is absolutely nothing I can boast about.

I don't consider myself senior brother. Do you consider yourself senior brother in CFC? Senior sister? Well, you got a long way to go then. That's all I can say.

I'll show you an example of some people who consider themselves senior brothers. In Matthew chapter 20, we read of some senior brothers who were in the church for many years compared to some junior brothers who came just last month. Jesus said in Matthew 20 about, he spoke a parable here about a landowner who was hiring laborers for his vineyard.

It's a picture of people being brought into the church. And there were some people whom he went and hired early in the morning at 6 o'clock in the morning. You know, the working day was 12 hours.

Laborer's day was 12 hours. They started at 6 in the morning, worked until 6 in the evening. He went out at 6 o'clock and hired certain people and said, I will give you one denarius, a day's wages for your work.

And then he went out at the third hour, sixth hour at night. That means right up to 3 p.m. he went. And then at 5 o'clock in the evening when there was only one hour left for work, he found, verse 6, some people standing around doing nothing, 11 hours, they were looking for a job, they were doing nothing.

And he said, why have you been standing around? He said, nobody hired us, verse 7. Okay, you also go into the vineyard and work. And when the evening came, he said, call all the laborers. And those, when, he said, first call those who came at 5 o'clock in the evening who worked for one hour.

And he gave them all one denarius, a full day's wages. What a good master he is. And when the people who came at 6 o'clock in the morning, they saw these guys getting one denarius for one hour's work, they did a quick calculation and they said, boy, that's wonderful.

So we'll get 12 denarii. That's what they thought. So when that turn came, they also got one denarius.

And you can imagine how angry they were. But they had agreed for that at 6 o'clock in the morning. There was nothing to complain about.

But because these other guys got one denarius too, who did less work. See, that's what always bothers us. When somebody who we think doesn't deserve what we should get, gets the same thing, that bothers us.

And we may have got what we expected, but we don't want somebody else to get more. They grumbled. And listen to this expression.

This is the thing we got to see here. They said, these last men worked only one hour and here's this expression. You have made them equal to us.

How dare you, Lord, make these fellows who joined the church last month equal to us who have been here 30 years. Boy, that's pretty unrighteous of God, isn't it? To make them equal to us. We who deserve a little respect and seniority and what do you think, sisters? Senior sisters? Senior brothers? Are you bothered that God makes you equal to someone who has come newly? If you understand this, how God makes this person equal to this, then you have understood the message of the gospel.

This parable is not talking about rewards. That is another parable. You read in Matthew 25 about someone who produced more than Matthew 25, Luke 19.

One person who produced 10 times, he got 10 times the reward. Another person who produced 5 times, he got 5 times the reward. This is not talking about reward.

This is talking about acceptance before God. In other words, you don't come to God expecting a reward. He gives it to you.

But if you come to Him expecting a reward, then you're going to get a big surprise. Because this parable was in answer to a question. That question was asked by Peter.

In the previous chapter, you read about a young man, just like Paul, who had kept all the commandments. This is the one I told you about, Matthew 19. The Lord said to him, you know the commandments, Matthew 19, verse 18.

Jesus said to this rich young ruler, you know the commandments, don't commit murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't bear false witness, honor your father and mother, etc. And he said, I have kept all these things. Verse 20.

What an upright young man he was. And Jesus said, you lack one thing. You haven't given up your wealth.

You're too much attached to your money. Go and sell everything you have. Give it to the poor.

And come and follow me. And you will have treasure in heaven. He was calling him to be an apostle.

Come and follow me. And the young man heard this statement, verse 22. He went away grieving.

He was one who owned a lot of property. He did not consider it rubbish. Like Paul.

Paul was the other rich young man who considered it rubbish. This fellow didn't consider it rubbish. He said, I better go back to that.

And that's where he missed out what God had for him. I don't know where he is. I don't know whether he got converted later on.

But if he didn't get converted, he's in hell today. And you can go and ask him in hell what he thought about his decision. And even if he managed to repent towards the end of his life and went to heaven, you can

still go and ask him what he thought about his decision.

What he missed on earth would you rather be an apostle going through struggles, building the church, used by God, maybe poor, or would you rather be a rich man living in a palace and accomplishing little or nothing for God? Be honest. What would you rather prefer? This man, even if he went to heaven, he's going to have regrets. And then Jesus said, Oh, it's so difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Now when Peter heard this and he compared himself with this rich young ruler, you know Peter was also a successful fisherman who's making money with his fish. And one day Jesus told him the same thing which he told this rich young ruler. Give up all this.

Give it away and come and follow me. Peter dropped it immediately and went. So there's quite a difference between Peter and this rich man.

And Peter is aware of that. Lord, we are not like this rich fellow. We obeyed you.

We left everything and followed you. What will there be for us? What are we going to get? And Jesus said, I tell you, if you followed me in the regeneration when the son of man sits on his throne, you're going to sit on thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel and everyone who left houses, mother, children, or farms for my name's sake will receive many times as much and will inherit eternal life. But, many who are first will be last and many who are last will be first.

And then he told this parable of the people who came first who were last and the people who came last who were first. What was the difference? The difference was the people who came first agreed to work for a payment. You do this, the master said, you do this work for me, I give you this.

They made an agreement. But the people who came last, if you read carefully, in fact all the people who came at 9 o'clock, 12 o'clock, 3 o'clock, they all made an agreement. The only group that didn't make an agreement was the fifth group.

One, two, three, four groups all made an agreement. But the fifth one, he just said, go into the vineyard. Verse 20, verse 7. No promise of any payment.

They went in, said, well, we might as well get some exercise for one hour so that our, we don't get stiff. Doesn't matter if we don't get anything. Let's bless this man and help him.

What a good attitude. Let's go and help this man and finish off some work in the vineyard. Doesn't matter if we don't get anything.

Maybe he won't give us anything. Who's going to pay for one hour? And Jesus said, the people who come with that attitude, who come to God expecting nothing, but who joyfully serve him in his vineyard, not for pay, not for reward, not doing business with God, they will get the most. Now in the Old Testament, we can say that people did business with God.

What is business? Business is, I give you money, you give me this item, or you give me money, I give you this item. It's a transaction. I give you something, you give me something of equal value.

But that's how those first four groups did it. I do some work for you, you pay me. The fifth group said, we don't want anything, we just come and serve you.

Those are the people, the people who come with that attitude and say, Lord, I'm just so happy to do something for you, I don't want anything. Whereas in the Old Testament, under the law, everything was a transaction. The Lord said, if you pay your tithes, what does it say in Malachi 3.10, the favorite verse of pastors, bring your tithes into the storehouse, and I will open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that you cannot receive it.

Is that true in the Old Testament? It is absolutely true. It is a transaction. I gave my tithes to God.

Tithes means they were all farmers those days, they didn't earn money in cash. They bought 10% of their grains and gave it to God. And God blessed their fields and they got fantastic crops the next year.

It was good doing business with God. They always made a profit. Now there are preachers saying that today.

You can listen to them on television, you can hear testimonies, you can read it in Christian magazines, how somebody says, I gave 10% to this ministry and I got a promotion or I got an inheritance or something like that. It's the same old story. The people who come first, I tell people, come on, do business with God.

I say, rubbish. I don't do business with God because he's not my master, he's my father. I don't do business with my father.

I'm in my father's business and if my father was a businessman on earth, running a shop and if I was partnering with him in his business, I wouldn't take a salary, I would just be delighted to work for him. You go to a shop and there's a difference between a man who's employed by the master and the man who's the master's son sitting in the shop. The employee will be looking at the clock, is it time for me to go home? Because he's worked only so many hours.

But the son, there's a need for him to stay up till midnight, he'll stay up till midnight. And he doesn't expect any overtime, because he's a son. You see the difference in your home, for example.

If you have a servant maid working in your home, she looks at the clock. But if you have a son or a daughter doing some work in the home, and there's a lot of work still to be done, the maid will go up when her time is up, but the son and daughter will stay up and complete the work. There's a lot of difference between a son and a servant.

And that was the difference Jesus was highlighting in the difference between these two. A servant always works for some return. And I want to say to you, dear brothers and sisters, if in any area of your life you are doing something for the Lord, thinking that you will get something back, you're in the category of those first laborers, and you will end up last.

I hope all of us here will be in the category of those last laborers who have no business transactions with God. Say, Lord, I'm just happy to serve you. Whatever it is, whether it's one hour or 50 years, I'm happy to serve you.

I don't want anything. If we think that God owes us something, then we haven't understood the sacrifice of Calvary at all. Supposing, I'll use a human illustration to explain the value of the cross of Calvary.

Supposing there's a very generous good friend of yours who, in your times of need, has kept on giving you money, money, money, money, money to meet your need. Not in hundreds and thousands, but in millions.

Yes, millions.

And supposing over a period of 10 years, he's given you, say, 25 million rupees. Okay? One day, he calls you and says, Hey, can you help me with a little work in my house? I need some work done in my house. Do you have 2-3 hours to come and work for me? What do you say? Sure.

You'll go there and work for 2-3 hours, and are you going to ask him to pay you for it? Tell me. I hope not. Are you going to expect a payment? Are you going to hang around waiting for him to dish out some more money? No! That is what Calvary is.

He's already paid such a price. It's like 25 million rupees or 100 million rupees he's given. Now, what are you expecting? You do something little for God and he's doing something for you? Shame on us.

When I understood what Calvary meant, I said, Lord, I will never expect a reward from you. If you give me a crown, I'm going to throw it down at your feet immediately. And then, there'll be such tremendous joy in your service for the Lord.

Everything you do, there'll be a spring in your step and a song in your heart and a song in your mouth and you'll be jumping around serving the Lord and you won't count it as anything because you've seen what he's done for you. And it will not be for reward. We will not ask, like Peter, What shall we get who have left everything and followed you? We won't ask that question.

I remember some many years ago, I asked the Lord for something material, material thing. We can ask for material things, you know. Give us this day our daily bread as a material request.

Don't be so spiritual as to think that God's not interested in our material needs. Provided they are needs, not luxuries. It's not give us this day our daily ice cream.

It's give us this day our daily bread. So, so long as you're asking for necessity and not luxury, luxury he may give you. That's an extra bonus and I was asking for something which I thought was a necessity in my, I don't remember even now what it was, but some material thing for my family or my children or something.

And it didn't seem to come. And I said, Lord, I have served you so many years so faithfully. Won't you do this for me? And the Lord said, No.

No? I mean, if you serve faithfully for 25 years, they'll certainly do a small thing for you. You go and work in any of these earthly corporate companies and you work there for 10 years they'll do something for you. The Lord said, No.

I said, Why? And the Lord said, because you're coming on your own merit. I have done this for you. Won't you do this for me? The Lord said, No.

That is the day I understood what it means to pray Now, I was talking the other day about what Amen means. What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus? To many people, again, it's the sign that the prayer is over. Okay, now we can say Amen.

No, but in the name of Jesus means a lot more than just the prayer is over. That's the day I understood it. It means that all that I have asked I'm not asking because I've served you so faithfully for 40 years.

I'm not asking because I've lived such a holy life for 40 years. No, I'm not asking because I've done this or that or that. No, I'm asking because Jesus loved me and died for me and I come in his name.

That day I understood it. That is why I realized that when I said, Lord, I've done all this for you so many years. Won't you do this for me? He said, No.

Right. What do you mean to come in my name? Now, some of you may not say it exactly like that, but in the back of your mind, sometimes when God does not answer a request immediately, you may have a little gripe against God, a little grumbling. I've been going to church so faithfully and done so many things for the Lord.

I've even put a few rupees in the box and God won't do this for me. He won't. No matter how much you gripe and grumble, the more you gripe and grumble, less chance of you getting anything from God.

Because you're coming in your own name. But when you come in the name of Jesus, Lord, his merit, and then you say, you mean to say that after 40 years of faithfully living for God, I have to come on the same basis as this fellow who was converted yesterday? That's right. You mean God makes you equal to him? Yes, that's right.

Does that bother you to come to that other fellow who was converted yesterday? He has to come in the name of Jesus. You have to come in the name of Jesus. Does it bother you? Then you'll be lost.

I'll tell you honestly, it doesn't bother me. In fact, I'm delighted that God has put that new convert on the same footing as me, accepted in Christ. That's all.

Everything else is rubbish. 40 years of service is rubbish. Don't ever, ever misunderstand this, because I believe this is the reason why some of you may not have enough joy in your Christian life.

When I understood this, it brought joy into my life. I'll tell you honestly, my life is one continuous stream of joy. It's a river of joy.

For many years it's been like that. I don't think anybody can take it away from me. If you find a happier man than me in the world, show him to me.

The source of my joy is not my goodness or my this or my that. It's Christ. Christ is my wisdom, my sanctification, my joy, my redemption, my everything.

I have finished living under the law. You know what the law was? Lord, I've done this. Give this to me.

You read that in Deuteronomy 28. If you do all these things, I'll do all this for you. It's a transaction.

I want to be found before God with this rubbish of human righteousness, the righteousness of the law. I want to be found before God with the righteousness of Christ. And that means I don't count anything of my own as of any value.

Now, you know, there's another parable. Jesus said so many parables to highlight this. And I believe if you understand this, it'll deliver you from a lot of you know, unhappiness in your Christian life.

Let me show you another parable in Matthew chapter 22. Jesus was great at pointing this out. Matthew 22.

He says, the kingdom of heaven. See, this phrase, the kingdom of heaven is found as soon as you open the pages of the New Testament. You'll never find it in the Old Testament.

You read, take a concordance and look up a kingdom of heaven in the Old Testament. You'll never find it. Their kingdom was a kingdom of earth.

When the Lord took the Israelites out of Egypt, did he say, I'll bless you with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places? No. He said, I'll bless you with earthly blessings in the earthly places in Canaan. I'll give you a land.

I'll defeat all those giants and I'll give you that. All blessings in earthly places. I'll give you health.

Is health a heavenly blessing or an earthly blessing? Just pray and think about that. I'll give you health. I'll give you money.

I'll give you good fields and lands and everything. I'll give you victory over your enemies. Earthly enemies.

Is that a heavenly blessing? No, it's earthly. Everything God promised Israel was earthly. Earthly enemies.

If you still have earthly enemies, I tell you, you're under the law. I finished with having earthly enemies long ago. I decided long ago because years ago when the Lord said to me from Ephesians 6.12 We wrestle not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers.

The Lord said, if you want to fight with the devil, you better stop completely fighting with human beings. Never. Don't ever fight with your brothers.

Don't ever fight with your wife. Don't ever fight with your children. Don't ever fight with your neighbors.

Don't ever fight with anybody. They won't come and fight with you. That's fine.

But you don't fight with them. You're finished with fighting because you want to concentrate all your energies for the devil. We wrestle not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers.

And when I... The more I started doing that, it took me some time to come to the place where I refuse to fight or argue with any human being concerning anything for myself. Then, I could fight the battles of God for his church against the devil and the inroads the devil seeks to bring into the church because I could concentrate on that and fight those battles against Satan. And that's what delivered me completely from the fear of Satan.

I wanted to be in the place where he was afraid of me. You want to be in that place where the devil is scared of you? He was scared of Jesus. Do you agree? But the Bible says in 1 John 4, 17, As Jesus is, so are we in this world.

I've taken that verse literally. Yeah. I believe the devil should be scared of me.

But that is if I stop fighting with flesh and blood. If you're still fighting with flesh and blood, arguing with human beings, Ha! Devil is not going to be scared of you. I said, I'm not going to fight with vegetable vendors for 2 rupees there or fight with some auto rickshaw driver for 50 paisa somewhere.

I finished with all that because I've got to fight the devil. That's the reason. It's not because I don't value the 2 rupees or 50 paisa, but it's because I've got to fight the devil and I can't afford to let some of my

energy go fighting with human beings.

You ask yourself whether the reason why you're scared of the devil and why you can't fight with him and why he seems to defeat you now and then is because you're fighting with human beings so much. It was an earthly kingdom. Everything was earthly.

Right down to the last. You know this, as I told you, the favorite verse of pastors. Bring in your tithes and I will open the windows of heaven and bless you with what? Victory over sin? No! More crops.

I don't want more crops. I want victory over sin in my life. So, right from Genesis to Exodus where the law started right up to Malachi, it was earthly, earthly, earthly.

And then you come to John the Baptist and he says, fellas, imagine, he's talking to hundreds of thousands of Jews who have only heard of earthly blessings for 1500 years and he says, fellas, repent of your sin. God's going to give you more crops? No! He'll give you the kingdom of heaven. That was a new message.

Kingdom of heaven? We're only interested in the kingdom of earth. Well, you got to repent of that. If you want the kingdom of heaven, it's coming, it's coming.

Someone is coming whose shoes I cannot open his laces. He's going to introduce the kingdom of heaven to you fellas, to those who want it. Of course, very few wanted it.

How many waited for it on the day of Pentecost? 120. And that was the coming of kingdom of heaven with power. The Holy Spirit, like we sing in that song, heaven came down and glory filled my soul.

That's what the Holy Spirit does. He brings heaven down into our hearts. And so, when Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 22, verse 1-2, is like a king who gave a wedding feast for his son.

And that's the picture of God. The wedding feast is a picture of our invitation to heaven. It's the kingdom of heaven.

He sent out his servants, inviting everybody to the feast. They were unwilling to come. These are the original people he invited.

It was the nation of Israel. They were unwilling to come. Tell them, I've prepared everything.

You fellas can be saved, all of you Jewish people. But, they paid no attention. They went one to his farm verse 5, another to his business and some killed his slaves.

This is exactly how the Jewish people treated the message of the gospel and killed the apostles. And the king was angry. And he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers.

Set their city on fire. 40 years after Christ was crucified, the Roman armies came and destroyed Jerusalem and Jewish people were scattered all across the face of the earth for nearly 2,000 years. 1900 years.

King was enraged. Because they killed his servants. Then he said to his slaves, okay, wedding is ready.

The nation of Israel that was invited was not worthy. They didn't value my invitation. Okay.

Go to the highways and as many as you find there. This is to all the other nations of the world now. Go into all the world and preach the gospel.

That's what he's saying here. And bring them in. And the slaves went out and gathered evil and good.

That means all types of riffraff. That's you and me, by the way. All the riffraff from the streets, the beggars and the hopeless fellows and good for nothing chaps like you and me.

Brought them all in. And, you know, we come in our rags. We're beggars, spiritually speaking.

Torn rags. Some filthier than the other. But all beggars.

These beggars sometimes compare their rags with each other and think I'm a little better than you. But we're all filthy. And the king, you can't come and sit in the king's palace with these rags.

That's shameful. But where can these beggars go? They don't have money to go and buy new clothes to come for the king's feast. So you know what the king did? At the gate, he had this beautiful white robe that he'd give freely to everybody who came.

So, when I come with my filthy, stinking, torn, dirty, greasy dress I put on this white robe, your dress may be a little better than mine. But when you put the white robe on, we are equal. That's the point.

And the other fellow whose dress may be better than yours and mine, well, maybe. But when he puts on the white robe, the white robe is equal to us. God is in the business of making people equal when they come into his kingdom.

And then, there was one guy, I mean, he was a little, his dress was not as filthy as the others. Maybe he was a little cleaner than the others and he had spent all his life comparing himself with the other beggars and felt that, I'm not so bad, you know, I still got a shirt and a pant. I mean, there are a few stains here and there, that's okay, but not as bad as these fellows.

So when he came along to the gate and they gave him this robe, he said, but don't put me in the same category as these fellows, my dress is okay. Maybe he had a tie. So he walks in, he doesn't feel the need for this robe, and here's this huge hall with one thousand people sitting there and it's easy to spot anybody who doesn't have a white robe.

So easy. The king comes out and looks over the dinner guests, verse 11, and he sees there a man who was not dressed in the wedding clothes. That's how I know the rest of the story which I told you just now is not written there, but that's how I know that's how they got those wedding clothes.

Just in that one little sentence. And he said to him, friend, how did you come here without the wedding clothes? Now, if they had to pay for the wedding clothes, the man could have said, I didn't have the money. That's how I know it was free.

You can read, you can find a lot in scripture when you read between the lines. And the man was speechless. He couldn't say, I didn't have money because it was free.

He couldn't say, it was not offered to me, it was offered to him at the gate. Why didn't he wear it? Because he thought he was better than the others. And the king said, bind this fellow, hand and foot, who thinks he is better than the others, throw him out.

Because many are called, but few are chosen. Jesus was teaching this parable to show that you can't get into God's kingdom without that wedding robe, which is the righteousness of Christ. That's why, now you understand what Paul said in Philippians 3. I don't want to be found at that wedding feast with my clothes, which look a little better than somebody else's.

I count it as rubbish. I want to be found there with the righteousness of God, which he has given me freely by faith in Christ, which has made me equal to all other brothers and sisters. It's a wonderful salvation for those who don't want to glory in anything, but it's a very difficult message for people who want to glory, that they are better than somebody else, who always want to show that they are better than somebody else.

Beware of that attitude, my brothers, sisters, not just when we are first converted. If you want to remain rejoicing in the Lord, overcoming, victorious, right through to the end of your life, you must determine, I will never, never boast over another brother or sister in anything. No, I will not.

I will not boast about my Bible knowledge, my spirituality, my humility, my holiness, nothing. I have nothing to glory in. I'm clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

If I have done something, it is for the Lord. It's not to show that I'm better than you. And I certainly didn't do it to earn my salvation or even to get a reward.

No. I'm not waiting for one denarius at the end of the day. I'm waiting for nothing.

I've already got millions of rupees of the Calvary's cross. He did it all for me. What a wonderful life this is.

It's amazing how God has made it in such a way like it's written in 1 Corinthians 1 that no man should boast in His presence. You see, because like I said the other day, we have two problems. If Christ forgives all my sins, I still can't stand before God.

Now many people can't understand that. Supposing all your sins are forgiven, can't you stand before God? Sorry, you can't. If every single sin, conscious and unconscious, that you've done in your entire life, is all blotted out in the blood of Christ, can't you stand before God? No.

Because you still have a sinful nature. Something the Bible calls the flesh. And you cannot stand before God with that.

Even if all your sins are forgiven. Let's assume that you confessed all your sins right now like I have. I stand before God today, right now.

With all my sins forgiven, I'm not conscious of a single sin at this moment that I've not confessed. I stand as if I've never sinned. My whole life is cleansed in the blood of Christ.

But, I can't stand before God, still, because of this flesh that I have. And therefore, what God does is, on top of forgiving my sins, He clothes me with this wedding garment to cover this flesh called the righteousness of Christ. And that is the meaning of being justified.

Declared righteous. Have you understood the meaning of this wonderful word, justified now? Justification. It's more than forgiveness.

It's more than forgiveness. Forgiveness is just dealing with the past. With justification, I'm clothed.

Now I can sit at the wedding feast clothed in the righteousness of Christ. And, perfectly accepted before God. And there is no condemnation within me.

I don't have to listen to the voice of the devil saying, that wasn't good enough, what you did. You're still not good enough. You know, a lot of Christians labor under this.

They always feel, no, I've got to produce more, then only God will be happy with me. You know, there's an Old Testament example of this. In Exodus chapter 5, you read, how, how the taskmasters of Pharaoh whipped the Israelites saying, come on, produce more bricks.

Give us more. Pharaoh said to them in verse 9, crack down on them. That'll cure them of their whining.

And later on, he told them, make bricks, the laborers told him in verse 16. There's no straw given. You keep on saying, make bricks, make bricks, go now, you got to produce the same number.

Verse 19, last part, you must not reduce your daily amount of bricks. I used to give you straw earlier to make bricks, now no straw. Go and find the straw and make the bricks.

And the number of bricks must be the same as it was last week. Whipped, whipped. You know, a lot of Christians are living like this.

Oh, I haven't produced enough. I've got to do some more. I've got to do some more, then only God will be happy with me.

I haven't produced enough bricks. I haven't produced enough bricks. I've got to collect straw.

Whatever they do, the devil whips them and says, God's not happy with you. And foolish Christians listen to this voice saying, yes Lord, thinking it's the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit.

Can you imagine the Holy Spirit saying like this, come on, make more bricks, I won't give you any straw. These are Pharaoh's taskmasters. These are demons.

Not good enough, not good enough. Whatever you do, not good enough, not good enough, not good enough. When will it be good enough? Never.

I've finished with that. I'm no longer a slave to Pharaoh or his taskmasters. I put the Red Sea, the baptism between me and the devil and I've finished with him.

And I've gone past all that. I'm now entering Canaan's land where the rain of heaven falls and God's not asking me to make any bricks. It's wonderful.

Are you living in that freedom? I'll tell you, if you live in that freedom, you will never make demands on other people. You husbands, do you make demands on your wife? She must do this, she must do that. Remember this, Pharaoh's taskmaster, you must do this, you must do that.

I hope you'll recognize that voice from tomorrow onwards, it's the voice of the taskmaster. And you are saying that to your wife, just Pharaoh's taskmaster? Saying it to your husband, not good enough, not good enough. Saying it to your children, not good enough, not good enough.

You covet that they should get good marks, not good enough, not good enough. In school and for your own honor. When will it all end? It's because you yourself have not tasted the grace of God.

God forgives us freely. He's accepted us in Christ. Now some people say, Brother Zak, if we preach all this, don't you think people will take advantage? Of course.

There will always be stupid people who will take advantage of God's goodness. There have always been millions of people like that. Such people will exist for eternity.

Let them take advantage of God and go to hell. I'm not bothered about them. Why should we bother about them? I don't take advantage of this message.

This made me so happy, and so free, that I want to serve God much more wholeheartedly than I ever did before. I want to be more pure in my life than I've ever been before after I've been clothed with the righteousness of Christ. So don't think that it will make people... Of course, there will always be people who will take advantage.

No matter what message you preach, even in Paul's day, there were people who took advantage of the grace of God. That will always be there. But that doesn't mean that we should stop preaching the grace of God by which we are saved.

Because that is the grace, the true grace, which enables us to be devoted to the Lord. It says about Jacob, he served Laban for 7 years to get a woman. I mean, he already had a wife, another one.

And it says there, in Genesis 29, 20, it seemed to him like a few days. I remember reading that verse as a young 21-year-old Christian more than 44 years ago. And I said, Lord, if Jacob can serve like that for a woman and think 7 years is a few days, I'm sure I can serve you all my life and it will be like a few days.

Today, 45 years have gone from that day and I tell you, it's been like a few days serving the Lord because I have found the grace of God. I have finished with this righteousness of the Lord. I want to encourage you, brothers and sisters, and enter into the joy of this life.

Accept it before God. Finding everything in Christ and everything outside of Christ is rubbish. God bless you.

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