

Faith in the Resurrection

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in the resurrection of Jesus and making Him first and last in our lives to overcome the fear of death and live a victorious Christian life.

Duration: 57:30

Scripture: Acts 1:21

Topics: "Resurrection Faith", "Self Denial"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of believing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and how it should impact our lives. It highlights the need to be witnesses of His resurrection by understanding the significance of dying to our self-life daily, trusting in God's power, and standing back to let God's wrath deal with situations. The message stresses the importance of denying our self, taking up our cross, and following Jesus, believing in the resurrection from the dead as a key aspect of our faith.

Transcript

I want to turn to Acts of the Apostles in chapter 2. In Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 it says when, sorry chapter 1, when they were gathering together to select an apostle to replace Judas Iscariot. This is what they said. I want you to notice this because what was the most important thing that they were looking for? And I believe that's what the Lord's looking for in us also.

Acts chapter 1 and verse 21. It's necessary that are the men who accompanied us beginning verse 22 with the baptism of John etc. that one of these must become with us a witness of his resurrection.

That's what they were looking for. They wanted someone who was going to be a witness of his resurrection. And if you read through the Acts of the Apostles again and again the Apostles spoke about being witnesses of his resurrection.

Now they were thinking of being physical witnesses of his resurrection. But we need to know that in our spirit, in our heart, just as really as those apostles saw with their eyes. And it's quite an amazing thing that our calling is to know in our heart without a shadow of our doubt.

It says in Acts chapter Romans chapter 10. What is it that we must believe in order to be saved? Now I would say 99% of Christians if you were to ask them that question, what do you need to believe in your heart in order to be saved? They would say you must believe that Christ died for your sins. I want you to

read here in Romans 10 and verse 9 and 10.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus Christ as Lord and believe in your heart what? That God raised him from the dead. You will be saved. If you believe that Christ died I'm sorry to say you're not saved according to this verse.

If you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. For there's a reason with the heart a person believes. Do you know that our heart has got eyes? We read in Ephesians 1 verse 17 and 18 that Paul prayed that the eyes of the heart would be enlightened.

Just like we've got eyes in our body, we've got eyes in our heart. There are things we can see in our heart which we can't see with our eyes. The Bible says that eye has not seen nor ear heard nor has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him but that's 1 Corinthians 10 verse 9 and 10 God has revealed them to us by his Spirit.

Where does he reveal? Where does he speak when we say God spoke to us? We've got ears in our heart. When Jesus said he was ears to hear let him hear what was he talking about? He wasn't talking about these physical ears which all of them had. He was asking how many of you got ears in your heart to hear? When the Bible says in Hebrews chapter 5 that there are many things concerning Christ coming in our flesh and being a man and our example which you want to share with you but you become dull of hearing.

How are they dull of hearing in the ears of their heart? Our heart has got ears and our heart has got eyes and that's completely different from our human eyes and human heart, our human ears and human eyes, our physical eyes and physical ears. So when it says about Jesus for example that he would not judge by what his eyes saw or his ears heard. That's how all human beings come to decisions.

That's how they get their information or their eyes see or read what their ears hear. Almost all the information you've got in your mind has come through your eyes and ears 99% of it anyway. But Jesus wouldn't he'd get that information that way but he wouldn't take a decision that way.

He would take a decision by what the eyes of his heart saw and what the ears of his heart heard and if you can develop that one habit from early on in the Christian life to yeah by all means receive information through your physical eyes and ears but never come to a conclusion through just that information. The reason why multitudes of born-again believers go astray is because they base their discernment and judgment purely on the basis of what their eyes have seen, physical eyes and ears have heard and they don't try to see in their heart. They don't try to hear in their heart.

Jesus said concerning Mary when she sat at his feet and Martha was busy serving. Jesus said Mary has chosen the one thing needful and what was that? To listen. Where do we listen? In our heart.

So in the same way we see in our heart and I have to see in my heart as clearly as the Apostles saw Jesus risen from the dead coming into their midst. That is the thing that will change our lives. That's the thing that will make our Christianity triumphant no matter what we face and I'll tell you something.

With the things that are going to come upon India and the world in the days to come you and I are going to need a lot of that type of vision of the risen Lord believing in our heart that God has raised him from the dead. That will deliver us from all fear of death. Fear of death is the biggest fear that all human beings have.

We have many other fears but they're all inferior to the fear of death. They all lead to the fear of death. If a man is delivered from the fear of death other fears disappear.

It's like we read in the Old Testament when Goliath was killed all the other Philistines ran away. You didn't need to kill all the other Philistines. You just had to deal with Goliath, finish with him, all the other Philistines ran away.

They could have been thousands but they were all dependent on Goliath their leader. The reason we have many fears we try to conquer this fear and that fear and the other fear it'll never work. We got to conquer the fear of death.

When that's conquered the other Philistines will disappear but if you try to kill the Philistines one by one by one by one boy that's a job. The hundreds of thousands of them deal with the leader. It says in Scripture when David killed Goliath the other Philistines ran away.

So how do we deal with the fear of death? When we recognize as it says in Hebrews in chapter 2 that Jesus came in our flesh verse 14 since the children share in flesh and blood Hebrews 2 14 he also took part in the same that through death he might render powerless the one who had the power of death or the keys of death that is the devil. You've heard me say this before that's the verse that teaches us that the devil had the keys of death all from the and he got it from Adam. When Adam submitted to the devil instead of submitting to God the devil got the keys of death over all human beings.

Somebody had to come of Adam's race but without Adam's sin and that's how Jesus came born of a virgin and took the keys of death from Satan that's what it says here. When did he take it? If he had only died he could not have taken it. The meaning of he took the keys was he conquered death.

He rose up from the dead and he took the keys and we read in Revelation chapter 1 when John the Apostle was there before Jesus on the Patmos it says in Revelation 1 17. Can you imagine a man who's walked 65 years with God like John still having some fear in his heart? I like the honesty of these Apostles. See we try to pretend sometimes that we don't have any anxiety we don't have any fear and the more we pretend the more we live defeated.

God hates those who pretend. God hates those who are hypocrites. He's the enemy of hypocrites but people are honest.

Honest about their struggles. Honest about their fears. They get deliverance.

Honest about their sins and here's John saying admitting that he was a little scared. I don't know what he was scared of he'd been he'd been persecuted and sent to the Isle of Patmos but when Jesus says don't be afraid. Why does he have to say that to someone who's not afraid? You didn't have to ever go to Jesus and say don't be afraid.

He was never afraid. Why did Jesus have to say to 95 year old John don't be afraid? Because he was afraid of something and he places his right hand on him and said don't be afraid. Whatever it was I'm the first and the last.

I was dead but I'm alive and therefore I have the keys of death. How did he get it? Because he died and rose again. Conquered death.

That's so important to understand that the key to that door called death. In whose hand is it? It's not in the hand of the devil anymore as far as God's children are concerned. It is in the hand of the devil for those who are not God's children.

If you're not a born-again surrendered child of God. If Jesus Christ is not Lord of your life like it says here I'm the first and the last. I'll tell you this if Jesus Christ is not first and last in your life then the devil has the key of death as far as you're concerned.

But he doesn't have the key of death as far as I'm concerned because Jesus Christ is first and last in my life. There's nothing outside of Christ that I have any interest in on earth. Many believers have interest in other things that's why they die before their time because the devil used the key.

I'll tell you this is the reason why we have so many fears. You know the underlying reason? With all our religion Jesus Christ is not first and last. Sometimes he's not even first.

Other things are first. Some human being is first. Job is first.

Property is first. Money is first. Some ambition we have for the future that's first.

Go ahead. I guarantee you live in fear till your dying day. It doesn't have to be like that.

I'm talking about born-again Christians whose only interest in life is to go to heaven. Jesus never called such people. He called people to be his disciples to follow him where he is first and he is last.

You know what the first commandment is? You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart. But believers are like little children. You tell them to color a circle completely red.

They don't color it fully. They take that red crayon and do it and you need that patches, patches, patches in that circle. Not fully colored red.

That's how believers are. They don't love God with all their heart. Here and there, here and there a little bit.

They love God. No wonder they have a hundred and one problems. No wonder they never come to a life of victory over sin even though they hear about it day after day after day after day.

No wonder they get offended with something. I've heard of people who got up here after 20 years and testified they were offended with the elders. 20 years! They should have overcome that in one year.

How is it they get offended? Because Jesus Christ is not first and last. The problem is not with the elders. The problem is if those people, Christ is not first and last in their life.

And I tell you if they continue like that, their future is going to be miserable. And when their future is miserable, their children's future is going to be miserable too. If you love your children, I'll tell you this, love God with all your heart.

Let Christ be first and last in your life and you'll raise children for whom Christ is first and last too. Don't you want that? What's the use just feeding them, clothing them, giving them a good education if you haven't given them the most important thing in life? To make Jesus Christ first and last. Search your heart.

This is real. We're dealing with reality here. I'm the first and I'm the last.

So you don't have to be afraid. I say Lord I want to accept that. I want you to be first and last in my life as far as God is concerned.

If you were to go to the Father, He doesn't have any interest in anything other than Christ being first and last. He's going to sum up everything in this world in Christ one day. And when you what we call church is not this rubbish which is called churches nowadays, buildings and denominations.

The church as far as God is concerned is a little replica of that kingdom of God. A little group of people. See not everybody sitting here is what God considers a church.

I'll tell you that. I'm sorry to disappoint you but I'll tell you whether God considers you part of the church or not. A little group of people for whom Christ is first and last.

If you happen to be in that category you're there. If not, you're not. God doesn't have any interest in people who are not wanting to put Christ in first and last.

Especially if they claim to know Him. God has a lot of compassion on all those non-Christians. Millions of them in the world who don't know about Christ.

He doesn't blame them. He's got compassion on them. They haven't heard.

They haven't heard the wonderful truths of what Jesus did. They haven't heard about His love. They don't know about His death on the cross and His resurrection.

He has compassion on them. But what shall we say about people who sing His praise every Sunday morning and talk about the cross and the resurrection and all the wonderful things and say He's everything everything but He's not everything in their life. There are other things which they are interested in.

You say how can we live on this earth if you have no other interest but Christ. I'll tell you this, if Christ is first and last, I guarantee you'll never starve. You'll never sleep on the streets.

He'll care for you. If there's one loaf of bread only left in the town, it'll come to your house. He takes care of His children.

He's the owner of heaven and earth. I believe that. And even if the whole world turns against you, you won't have any fear because He'll be with you.

What better life can you live? And what's the use of all the millions in the world if you're going to live with anxiety and fear and tension and your children grow up wayward. What's the use of all that? I don't want it. So the most sensible thing you can do is to make Christ first and last.

You know that God has got our interest at heart in everything. Faith in God means I believe that everything He has commanded is for my good. That's faith.

You know just like our little children, you tell them to do something they don't do it because they don't believe it's for their good. Is there any child, every person is selfish. The child is selfish.

If he knows it's for his good he'll do it. Sure, anything that he, a child, even a child knows it's for his own good, he'll do it. Why is it children don't obey parents? When we know, when we tell them to do something good for them, they don't think it's for their good.

Whether it's to do their homework or going to have a bath or anything, they don't think it's for their good. Big things and small things. Why do so many teenage children not listen to their parents concerning advice? Why do they have to go and make a mess of their life before they learn a lesson? So many millions of teenagers, girls and boys around the world, who make a mess of their life before they learn that their parents have got more wisdom than them.

In practical earthly matters. It's because they think my parents they're not really seeking my good. They say dad doesn't understand.

Mom doesn't understand. Well that may be true in some cases but you certainly can't say that about God. He understands us thoroughly and whatever he says is for our good.

I'll tell you, some of you may nod your head and say I believe that. Well if you'd really believe it, you'd read the Bible to find out what he has said which is for your good. And if you don't study the Bible carefully, don't tell me this rubbish that you believe that God has commanded everything for your good.

You're not interested in finding out what he has said. It's just words. You're a hypocrite.

If you really believe that what God has said in his word, everything is for my very best. I would diligently study that word. Think of these students who go to training classes for a whole year to prepare for IIT examination or for the medical college examination or some top engineering college or management Institute examination.

And you know how there's a craze in India to get to these top management colleges and engineering colleges and medical colleges. Why do they study so hard? Because they believe everything they are being taught there is for their good. They sit till midnight studying.

Boy can you imagine what a revival would come if Christians believed that God's Word was more important than all those management classes and all those training courses for IITs and medical college. Can you imagine what would happen even to our church if everybody here believed more than those students believe in those training institutes that God's Word can do a lot more for me in my life permanently than that can do for them. I tell you we'd have a revival.

We'd have such a revival God would be present in every meeting. We'd have a mighty anointing. Why is there this sluggishness and laziness? I'll tell you we don't really believe.

We believe in our heads. You believe in your heart that Jesus was raised from the dead. Don't be afraid he says.

I've got the keys. And that's how he gave him a ministry. Therefore now you write.

Say this to this church. Say this to that church. Say this to the other church.

Say this to the other church. Chapter two and three. God has a word for us to speak to the church.

If you fall down at the feet of Jesus and worship him like John did and listen to him saying I'm the first and last John. I'm first and last in your life. I know that.

You don't have to be afraid of a thing. Here's what I want you to tell the church. This church and that church and the other church.

This resurrection is so important. Do you know who was the first person in the Bible who understood the resurrection? Who saw it in his heart? I want you to go to John's Gospel chapter eight. John's Gospel chapter eight.

The first person who understood the resurrection was not Abel. It was not Noah. These are people mentioned in Hebrews 11.

By faith Abel. By faith Enoch walked with God. He didn't as far as I know.

He didn't understand the resurrection either even though he walked with God for 300 years. Noah what a fantastic man being faithful to God for 120 years with all the opposition in the world. He didn't understand the resurrection either.

It was Abraham. It says here in John chapter 8 verse 56. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad.

How did Abraham see the day of Jesus which was to come 2,000 years later. Abraham lived 2,000 years before Christ. How did he see the day of Christ? Where did he see it? Was it in some revelation which is not written in the Bible? I think it's pretty clear.

It was when he walked up that mountain with Isaac to sacrifice him. Something that to sacrifice your own son. Something that Abel, Enoch, Abel offered a sacrifice but it wasn't his son.

Enoch walked with God but he never sacrificed his son. Noah didn't sacrifice his sons. The first person who went up to sacrifice his son was Abraham.

And I tell you you got to have a son after a hundred years to know how much pain that'll cost you. You haven't had a son after being married for 50-60 years and then you get a son and he grows up to be 25 years old and God one day says kill him. Boy you'll really discover whether you love God or not.

Much lesser things than that that we don't say yes to God Abraham had 10,000 sheep he'd have gladly offered all of them. God said no your son. When God told him earlier to send away Ishmael he said sure.

He sent him away. It cost him some pain because it was his son but it didn't cause him that much pain because he still had Isaac with him. But in the next chapter you read God said now I want Isaac.

It was in the middle of the night that God spoke to him. The early next morning very wisely he didn't discuss it with Sarah. Don't burden your wife with things that she can't bear.

It was between him and God. God gave him three days to think about it. That's why he told him go to Mount Moriah three days journey.

Think about it. No don't just. God doesn't want.

Come on raise your hand decide immediately. No no no no God doesn't do that. Jesus said sit down count the cost.

That was three days journey. He walked there and as he was walking he took I don't know at what point somewhere along that line maybe as he took him and laid him on the altar. God gave him a vision.

This is what I'm gonna do for humanity one day. I'm gonna give my son. And we hear about it but Abraham understood in his heart the cost the price to give your son as a sacrifice.

He understood it better than all of us. I tell you there's not one of us who understands what it cost God to give his son as much as Abraham understood that day when he laid Isaac on the altar and took the knife up to kill him. And when it says here Abraham saw my day.

That was very different from you and I saying yeah yeah I know Christ died for my sins. For us it is a fact. But Abraham it cost him everything to see that.

And I'll tell you let me tell you this it's possible for us also to see it in the same way and I'll tell you how. I want you to turn before that to Hebrews in chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11.

I want you to see something written here in verse 17 to 19. Hebrews 11. By faith Abraham when he was tested offered up Isaac and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son about whom it was said in your Isaac your descendants will be called.

He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead. Did you read that? That is the first person in history who believed in the resurrection of the dead. He believed.

I mean he was trying to figure it out in his mind. On one side God has said through Isaac the promises will be fulfilled. On the other side he says kill him.

How are these two going to go together? You know sometimes there are paradoxes in Scripture. There are one side it looks as the Scripture says this and the other side it says the Scripture says the opposite and clever people who don't have revelation say ah that can't be the Word of God. See two opposites.

And I'll tell you the Bible is full of such paradoxes to confuse clever people. I praise God for that. I praise God that the clever and the intelligent will never understand the Bible.

But those who come with little babes in faith they will understand that these two that look like opposites can be fulfilled. Abraham was the first person I think who considered this paradox. On one side through this one not through another son being born after that through Sarah.

No this one the promises are going to be fulfilled and you got to kill him. And Abraham tried to figure that out and said well there must be only one way then. What's that? I suppose after I kill him God will raise him from the dead.

That's it. Otherwise how can it be? He figured it out in his mind. It says here he's considered he believed Abraham figured that God wanted him he could raise him from the dead.

And from which death he received Isaac back as a type. You know as far as he was concerned Isaac was dead. As he lifted up his knife Isaac was dead.

God said stop. I know you were gonna do it. I'm gonna give him back to you in resurrection.

If he didn't believe that I think it would be a little more difficult. I think it was a little easy but he had to have faith that when I kill Isaac God will raise him from the dead because the promise is there. What did he have to go by? Only the promise of God.

That's all. Okay then I'm gonna kill him. And there was fulfilled that word but Jesus said Abraham saw my day.

Now how can we see that day? I don't mean understand it and what I've said right now you understood it all in your mind you think you've understood it. Now I want to tell you how your hearts can be enlightened to see it in your heart. In Romans chapter 6 this is the proof whether we believe in the resurrection whether we're going to be witnesses of his resurrection or not.

Romans chapter 6 says that something that God did on the cross which we testify to in baptism. Our old self, verse 6, was crucified with Christ. If you were to ask me what is the greatest truth that born-again Christians need to know today? Oh let's start with what is the greatest truth that the world needs to know today? That Christ died for their sins and rose again from the dead.

There is no greater truth that the whole unbelieving world needs to know. Okay what is the greatest truth that believers need to know? I'll tell you that you were crucified with Christ and that if you accept that you will experience a resurrection in your life. If you accept it.

The most precious thing that Abraham had was Isaac and the most precious thing that you and I have is our self-life. You value that I'll tell you believe it or not you value that more than your wife, more than your husband, more than your children. I know we'll be willing to lay down our physical lives for our children.

I'm talking about our self-life. I know many of us when we have children sick we wish oh I wish I could take that sickness. I know you love your child like that but your self-life is something you guard carefully.

That's why you get angry with people. You know why you get angry? Because your self-life was hurt. You know why you get offended? Because your self-life was hurt.

I told you about people are offended with the elders because the elders did not give them that honor they wanted. Their self-life was hurt. Do you like that? Upset with people.

They didn't give you your self-life the respect and honor that you deserve. You're not ready to sacrifice it. It's like Abraham sacrificed Isaac.

You want to preserve it. God says kill it. No, no.

I'm not gonna kill it. Where in the world will you have a resurrection? Not in a hundred years. Where in the world will you be a witness of his resurrection? Never.

You will know thousand and one truths in your head but not know in your heart and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. What does it mean to be a witness of his resurrection? Our old man was crucified with him so the body of sin might be done away so that we should no longer be slaves to sin. This has got to do with being slaves to sin.

Being victory over sin. Now let's read verse 5. There's a big if. I F. Many times in the Bible in the New Testament you read if and Christians tend to ignore that if.

Hebrews 3 it says if we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm until the end. You read that in verse 12 to 14 Hebrews chapter 3. If. But people ignore that if and say no we are partakers of Christ.

Full stop. Not full stop. We are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm until the end.

Here also there's an if. If. Not for every believer.

If we become united with him in the likeness of his death certainly we shall be in that of his resurrection too. That is how I'm a witness of his resurrection. I believe that Jesus rose from the dead that God raised Jesus from the dead.

Jesus never raised himself up. I hope you recognize that. He never raised himself up from the dead.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that. He had the power to do it but he didn't do it. Let me show you that in John's Gospel chapter 10.

John's Gospel chapter 10 verse 17. For this reason the Father loves me. Okay you can even ask a ten-year-old this question.

Read that verse and tell me why the Father loved Jesus. Read that verse and tell me why the Father loved Jesus. Very clear.

For this reason the Father loves me because I laid down my life. Do you think God's gonna love you for any other reason? We read you know we've heard many times in this year's God loves me as he loved Jesus. Right.

John 17 23. Well why did God the Father love Jesus? For this reason the Father loves me because I lay down my life so that I may take it again. No one takes it away from me.

If I want I can resist it and you know very well how you can resist people trying to kill your self-life by getting angry and yelling back. I can't take it from you. How dare people try to kill my self-life and my reputation.

No one can take it away from me. I laid down on my own. I have power to lay down.

I have power to take it up. Look what he says. I have power to give myself to death and I have power to rise up from the dead myself.

But I won't do that. I only lay down my life. Have you noticed in Scripture it always says God raised him from the dead.

The very first time the gospel was preached. We may preach it wrong. Peter didn't because he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 verse 23. You nailed him to a cross. But it doesn't say he raised himself up.

He arose. That's true. To say that Christ arose from the dead is right.

But who raised him up from the dead? God raised him up again. And that is not just there my brothers and sisters. Throughout the New Testament you'll never find one place where it says he raised himself up.

Yes they said he is risen. It's true to say he is risen. It's true to say Christ arose from the dead.

But who raised him up? Not he himself. He had the power to lay down. He had the power to raise it up again.

But he used only his power to lay it down and said I will not raise myself up again. My father will do that. That's why in baptism you know when you dip a man you lift him up.

He gives himself up surrenders himself to death as it were and you lift him up. Symbolically that we give ourselves to death because we believe that God will raise us up from the dead. Abraham believed if I kill Isaac God will raise him from the dead.

Now if you didn't believe that you don't believe that then you don't give yourself up to death. Now if I was going to be baptized and I was not too sure whether this fellow pulled me up out of the water I'd resisted a bit definitely. I think I'd be sensible to resist it.

Never let an enemy baptize you I'll tell you that. He may not bring you up. But you know when you go into the waters of baptism that this guy's gonna bring me up.

Nobody who has ever gone into a river or tank ever went in doubting will I come out of this alive or not. Nobody. And the symbolism of that is in every situation in my life from this moment onwards in every situation in my life from this moment onwards where I've taken my baptism I'm gonna give myself up to death.

Fully believing in the resurrection of the dead that my father would raise me up. I don't have to raise myself up. I don't have to fight for my rights.

That's my father's business. I don't have to take vengeance on someone who has harmed me. Does it mean that vengeance will not be taken? Turn to Romans chapter 12.

You know this business of resurrection is very very important. We have to see Christ's resurrection in our heart clearly. It'll make a tremendous difference in our life.

Romans chapter 12 verse 17. Never just like we'd say never commit murder never commit adultery never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Got it? Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.

I don't think there's any scripture that could be clearer than that. Never anyone. There's no exception.

But what should we do? Be at peace. As far as possible with all men verse 18. Never take your own revenge.

Never take your own revenge. Never verse 19. But you know I like what it says here in one translation.

Stand back. I know it's living Bible or one of those paraphrases it says stand back and let the wrath of God do that for you. God will do it.

He won't do it if you don't stand back. Because God is a just God. He never allows any injustice to escape on earth.

Some of it some people may escape on earth but they'll pay a greater price on the day of judgment. You know anything that you haven't settled on earth you'll have to settle at the judgment seat of Christ. I hope you know that.

I'm just kidding just in case you didn't. It's better to settle it here because the price is going to be heavier there. Do something now and pay later like the advertisement saying.

Buy now pay later. You can't escape. Anything not settled now we've got to settle at the judgment seat of God.

It's better to settle it now as far as I'm concerned. I've decided. There's no partiality with God.

We read in the Old Testament that God even wanted to kill Moses once as he was on his way to deliver the Israelites from Egypt. Have you ever heard of such a thing? There was one man and only one man on the face of the earth who was prepared to 80 years to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and as he was going to Egypt to deliver the Israelites the Bible says in Exodus 4 God tried to kill him. We think the devil tried to kill him.

No. He says God tried to kill him. You read Exodus 4. I don't have time to go there now.

Just because of one little thing. He did not circumcise his son. As if God is.

That's what scripture says. When people tell me oh brother Zach you're so strict I say you haven't read the Bible. That's your problem.

Yeah you haven't read what God did. You haven't read how strict God is. You haven't read how strict Jesus is.

We have a one-sided understanding of God. I'll tell you there's a thing called the wrath of God. The anger of God.

You may have seen a lot of angry men but you've seen nothing compared to the anger of God. The most angry man you have ever met in your life is a drop in the ocean compared to the anger of God Almighty. He's got angry with people.

He doesn't hate anybody but he's got anger. Love has got anger. When people hurt someone who's the apple of God's eye, God is angry.

It says in the book of Zechariah chapter 2 verse 5 I think it is or 8 that I'm the apple of his eye. You know the center part of your eye. Try and touch that something.

Don't try it. I mean you know it's it's pretty painful. I'll tell you that.

It's pretty painful. The apple of his eyes. It's the most sensitive part.

You can touch any part of your body. It doesn't pain but the apple. You react immediately.

The apple of his eye. What a phrase. God is angry with anybody who touches the apple of his eye.

And it says here stand back. Leave room for the wrath of God because God says vengeance is mine. I will repay.

Not I'll think about repaying or I might repay or perhaps I'll do it. No I will repay. So what should we do? How do I stand back when somebody harms me? Give him some food.

Verse 20. If he's hungry, if he's thirsty, give him a drink. Help him.

Bless him. That's my job. That's how I stand back.

That's how I die. My natural self-life says don't feed him. Let him starve to death.

No no no. I'm gonna feed him. That's how I stand back.

And one day the wrath of God will come like a avalanche finishing him off. If he if he doesn't repent. He repents.

There's some hope for him. I'll tell you something. The wrath of God is something I don't want to be anywhere nearby.

Even when it's not only hitting I mean never hit me but even when it's hitting somebody who harmed me. I don't want to be anywhere around there. I don't want I don't even want to see it because I feel sorry for the poor guy.

He's gonna be so bad. It is gonna be so bad for those who touch the apple of God's eye. Why not die? If you believe in the resurrection you'll never seek to preserve your self-life.

I'll tell you from my experience of many years you'll never never get offended with anybody no matter what they do or what they don't do or what they forget to do. You will not get offended. You will not get hurt.

Somebody wrote me an email the other day. Somebody who caused some problem to me. Brother Zach I'm sorry if I hurt you.

I replied saying you can never hurt me. It's impossible you know that. It is impossible for you to hurt me.

It's impossible for you to harm me because I said I live inside the filter of Romans 8 28. All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose. You may try to harm me but it'll work for my good.

Like I've said these aqua God filters you put dirty water in clean drinkable water comes out the other side. If I'm thirsty and somebody tries to put dirty water fine I got it I got a glass of clean water there thank you very much. That's what a filter does.

Why are you upset with him? He gave you a glass of clean water to drink. Why are you upset with a guy who tried to harm you? It's all a matter of whether you believe in the resurrection. Dear brothers and sisters if you believe in the resurrection from the dead you will never never try to preserve your self-life.

The Holy Spirit always led Jesus towards the cross. Once when Peter said no no no Lord don't go to the cross Jesus said get behind me Satan. Imagine turning around to his own disciple and saying get behind me Satan.

Peter was ignorant because Peter had was not baptized in the Holy Spirit. He didn't understand that the way of the cross is the way of power is the way of resurrection is the way of defeating the devil. He didn't know that and you'll hear many voices from yourself from your loved one no no don't go that way come on give him a piece of your mind uh-huh get behind me Satan.

Do you recognize that voices from the devil when it comes from yourself or even from a close loved one who's concerned about your reputation maybe your wife says gives you some foolish advice like Peter. I Be wise. Don't listen.

Go the way of the cross. That song which says the way of the cross leads home. I must needs go home by the way of the cross.

I'll never get sight of the gates of light if the way of the cross I miss. But what many people mean when they sing that song the way of the cross leads home the way of the cross leads home what they mean is Calvary where Jesus died. But there is a Calvary where you and I were crucified too.

That's what leads us home. That's the narrow way. We used to think about it a lot more in the early days.

I wonder if you have lost sight of it now. The way of death to sell every day.

Jesus said if you want to come after me Luke chapter 9 verse 23 Luke 9 23 Jesus said anyone again that word which applies to all senior elder being in the church 32 years makes no difference doesn't make any difference to me anyone that includes me includes you born again yesterday brother you and I are in the same category anyone wants to come after Jesus he must there's no option here deny his self that means saying no to your self life and take up his cross that means die every day when self says something you say no I'm not gonna listen to you kill it first say no to it then kill it follow me why don't you do it because you don't believe in the resurrection from the dead if we die with him we will certainly live with him you don't believe that let me put it another way when Jesus

comes again it says we're going to get a new resurrection body how many of you will tell him no Lord I'd prefer the old body any of you would you say to him no Lord the old body is good enough anything in the resurrection is going to be much better than what we have in this life do you believe that what God gives you in the resurrection when you lay down yourself life will be better than what you have right now I'll tell you from a few years of my experience my walk with Jesus has been wonderful because I've learned something of the way of the cross I'll never forget I've shared this before 44 nearly 45 years ago I was kneeling down in my room in the naval officers mess in Cochin in the naval base as a young 23 year old man born again baptized in water seeking for the baptism in the Holy

Spirit which the church I went to never taught but which I read in God's Word and I prayed prayed many many days fasted prayed and God showed me something I never forgotten for all these 45 years that Jesus was anointed with the spirit when he went into the waters of death and baptism he was raised up by John the Baptist the Lord said to me so clearly something I haven't forgotten if you also follow that path of dying to yourself you will have my power resting upon you every day but if a day comes in your life when you don't want to walk that path my power will also leave you you think I'm a fool to leave that path it's painful sure that's why very few find it nobody likes pain just like we don't like pain in our body we don't like pain in our self life being hurt have you ever said

somebody hurt me oh that was so hurtful what you said are you a child of Adam a child of God have you understood what it is to follow Jesus I don't tell people fine I don't think for 30 40 years I've told people you hurt me by what you said it's impossible you gave me a glass of clean water thank you so much just filthy when you poured it in but by the time it came through Romans 828 it was clean I was a bit thirsty actually but thank you very much I believe in the resurrection from the dead I believe in my heart that God raised Jesus from the dead if I die with him I will certainly live with him let's pray we've all understood it in our

head now now we've got to pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal it to us in life's difficult situations Lord we know that you won't spare us because

you're determined that we understand the truth you will give us situations perhaps today itself and tomorrow and the coming week we're like Abraham we are given a choice no compulsion to offer up that which is most precious to us our self life give us grace to believe in the resurrection from the dead at that moment we pray in Jesus name

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19040.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/fOyYfVeguWA.mp4>

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