

Fellowship With Jesus

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing fellowship with God and seeking to hear His voice and follow His instructions in order to have a joyful and effective service.

Scripture: Philippians 3:13, Revelation 4:1

Topics: "Fellowship With God", "Prioritizing Spiritual Life"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of fellowship with Jesus, urging believers to rise above their earthly concerns and seek a deeper relationship with God. He reflects on the creation of Adam, highlighting that humanity was made for communion with God rather than mere service. Poonen shares personal experiences of spiritual dryness and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, stressing that true service flows from a vibrant relationship with God. He contrasts the attitudes of Martha and Mary, illustrating that prioritizing time with Jesus is essential for effective ministry. Ultimately, he encourages believers to listen to God's voice and focus on their personal walk with Him.

Transcript

I'd like to turn to the Word of God in Revelation Chapter 4.

After the Lord had given John a revelation of Himself in Chapter 1, He gave John an insight into the actual state of many of the churches in that part of the world - in Chapters 2 and 3. As you know, many of those churches were in a very backslidden state. Then the Lord said to John in Chapter 4:1: "Come up here!". What a lovely word that is! When we see the state of things around us, and encounter problems for which we do not have a solution, it is good to hear the Lord saying to us, "Come up higher! Come and see things from My standpoint - and not from the low earthly level from which you have been looking at these things". I believe this is a word that we need to hear constantly - "Come up higher!". Paul said, "One thing I do - forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus". He had heard the call to come up higher and he was never satisfied, no matter how high he had reached. "We need to get closer to the heart of God! We need to go up higher!"

God did not create Adam because He needed a servant. He did not create Adam because He wanted a scholar. And He did not create you and me because He needs servants or scholars. He already has enough servants in the millions of angels. He created Adam first of all that Adam might have fellowship with Him. That's why, for Adam, the law was NOT: "Six days you shall work and the seventh day you shall

rest". No. That came through the Law of Moses later. Adam was created on the sixth day. And so his very FIRST day - the seventh day for God but the first for Adam - was a day of rest and fellowship with his Creator. It was from that day of fellowship with God that Adam was to go out into the garden and serve God for the next six days. And when we forget that order - when we forget that fellowship with God must always take precedence over our going out into His vineyard to serve Him - then we've missed the primary purpose of our creation and of our redemption.

We can be so taken up with the need around us that we have no time for fellowship with God. We may feel that's a waste of time, when there is so much need around us. But what is the result of need-based work? Perhaps plenty of work - but the quality will be poor.

There are times in my life when I have been through certain crises. One was very early in my life when I sought to serve the Lord and I found that although I knew the Word, I lacked power! And so I sought God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit - to be endued with power from on high. Now, I know there are different views on this - and I am not trying to convert anybody. I am just saying that I was born again and baptized in water, but "rivers of living water" were not flowing out of my life. Yet I knew that Jesus had promised that everyone who believed in Him would have rivers of living water flowing out of their life - they'd never be dry. But I found myself dry, many times. Even though I knew the Word, and even though I was preaching, I was dry. Very often my service for the Lord was like pumping a hand- pump. You know what that means - you pump and pump and a few trickles of water come out. It is certainly not like a river. Yet I saw the word of Jesus clearly: "Everyone who believes in Me, out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water". All I can say is that I sought God and He met with me. And that changed the direction of my life. God met with me and filled me with His Holy Spirit.

And then years later, I came to another crisis in my life. That was a crisis that dealt with the issue of reality - whether what I was preaching was actually true in my inner life, and whether the burden that I appeared to have when I spoke to people was something I really carried in my heart as well. Then the Lord spoke to me once and asked me, "Do you want to impress people or do you want to help them?" I said, "Lord, I want to help them". Then the Lord said, "Stop trying to impress them then". I came to a place then in my life, where I had to say, "Lord, my inner life does not correspond with what I am preaching". Externally, I had a good testimony. But my thought-life and my attitudes - my attitude to money - were not Christ-like. I was proclaiming Christ with my mouth but the Spirit of Christ was not ruling my thoughts. And I was honest about it with God.

Fellowship with God has now become the most precious thing for me - during the last 22 years. It has changed my life and taken away discouragement and depression from my life altogether. I have found the secret of walking with God. And that's made my service joyful! It is no longer dry!

All your service depends on your personal walk with God. You remember when Jesus was in the house of Mary and Martha. He said to Martha, "You are worried and bothered about so many things". What was Martha worried about? There was a need there. And she was serving the Lord, unselfishly and sacrificially, sweating away in the kitchen - not cooking food for herself but for the Lord and His disciples. What greater service could she do than that? It was totally unselfish! And she didn't do it for money or for a salary, as many Christian workers serve today. No. It was totally unselfish! And yet the Lord told her, "You are bothered about so many things". She had thought that Mary was selfish, sitting there at the Lord's feet and not doing any work, but just listening. And Jesus said, "That's the important thing. That's the ONE THING needful".

There is a beautiful paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 4:2 in The Living Bible that reads like this: "The most important thing about a servant is that he does just what his master tells him to." That has brought so much rest to my heart. I say to the Lord, "I want to hear You".

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