

# Few Find the Way to Life (Norwegian)

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of knowing God and living by the Spirit rather than relying on knowledge and legalism.*

**Duration:** 51:47

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:13

**Topics:** "New Covenant", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the difference between the new covenant of grace and the old covenant of legalism. It highlights the danger of pursuing knowledge over life, the need to discern between good and evil, and the significance of seeking a deep relationship with God rather than just religious practices. The speaker urges young people to prioritize purity of heart, daily surrender of their will to God, and the pursuit of life through the Holy Spirit.

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## Transcript

I want to share something with you young people, that I have observed in 50 years of my traveling with my believers. Very, very few people have really understood the difference between the new covenant and the old covenant. And even among those who understand it in their heads, very few have been gripped by it in their hearts.

When Jesus spoke about the broad way and the narrow way in Matthew 7, we can think that the broad way is the way of sin and the narrow way is the way of grace. It's not necessarily so. The broad way can be the way of the law and legalism.

Jesus once said to the Pharisees, that the prostitutes and thieves will come before you into the kingdom of heaven. And he told those Pharisees who knew so much of the Bible, and who were externally so righteous, who never missed a meeting, who were elders in the churches of those days which were called synagogues. He said, how can you escape the damnation of hell? They were on the broad way.

The gate was broad, but the way to life was narrow. You see that even in the beginning in Genesis 2, the two trees. If it was a tree of evil and another tree of good, then the choice is easy.

Many of us know how to choose good from evil. But those are not the two trees there. It was a choice between knowledge and life.

Many Christians know how to choose good from evil. But they don't know how to choose life over knowledge. Particularly when you are young, you are educated, and you think you are spiritual, because you have knowledge.

One of the biggest mistakes I have seen in every group in Christianity, is they think because they have knowledge, that is equal to life. One of the biggest mistakes I have seen in every group in Christianity, is they think because they have knowledge, that is equal to life. We can think that all those Pentecostals, they have gone astray, because they think all that emotion is life.

We can think that all those Pentecostals, they have gone astray, because they think all that emotion is life. Or they do some miracles, and they think that is life, and we know that is not life. But we can be at the other extreme.

We don't think emotions and miracles are life, we think knowledge is life. We don't think emotions and miracles are life, we think knowledge is life. There is a difference between knowledge of the Bible and knowledge of God.

And many Christians don't know the difference. Eternal life is not knowing the Bible, it is knowing God. The greatest need among Christians today, everywhere, in every group, is to know God.

The greatest need among Christians today, everywhere, in every group, is to know God. Yesterday evening I asked why there is so much division and conflict among Christians. I also had those questions.

I studied church history right from the first century. I tried to read all the books I could about great movements that God started in different centuries. I tried to read all the books I could about great movements that God started in different centuries.

Including what God did in Norway in the last century. And my question was always this. Why is it that something that starts so well, goes down after a few years? Why is it that something that starts so well in the time of Joshua, ends up so terribly in the time of Judges? Why did something that was so wonderful in the time of David, descend to some terrible times in the time of Solomon and his son Rehoboam? Why did something that was so wonderful in the time of Solomon and his son Rehoboam, descend to some terrible times in the time of Solomon and his son Rehoboam? And in every movement in Christian history that has happened.

It has happened with the Methodists and the Salvation Army and the Pentecostals, and we can think, oh it will never happen to us. It has happened with the Methodists and the Salvation Army and the Pentecostals, and we can think, oh it will never happen to us. If you don't study the failure of others, it will happen to us.

730 years before Christ came, the Israelites were captured by the Assyrians. And that was a punishment God gave to the nation of Israel, because they worshipped idols. Now, Israel was divided into two denominations.

Ten tribes in the north were called Israel, and two tribes in the south were called Judah. And the ten tribes in the north went to idolatry very quickly, and God punished them by sending the Assyrians to capture them. But Judah was not captured.

Judah kept itself pure at that time. But they did not learn from the lessons of the failure of Israel. And God sent one prophet after another to Judah.

Jeremiah, for example. And their message was this. Have you learned something from what happened to your elder sister Israel? Have you seen what I did to them? They also thought everything was okay until suddenly they fell into captivity.

So, repent, seek for the old ways. But they did not want to hear. No, they said, we are okay.

About 125 years later, Babylon came and captured Judah. God sends his prophets regularly to his people. But very often we do not recognize a prophet until he is dead and gone.

But if we have ears to hear, we will hear God is speaking to us. And what is he saying? There is a difference between knowing the scriptures and knowing God. Peter did not know as much of the scriptures as the Pharisees.

The Pharisees were 60-70 years old and they had studied the scriptures. The whole Old Testament spoke about Jesus. The seed of the woman.

The serpent lifted up. The Passover lamb. And many, many pictures throughout the Old Testament.

It was even written in Micah that he would be born in Bethlehem. And yet, when Jesus came into their midst, they called him Beelzebub, prince of devils. It is not because the Pharisees' doctrine was wrong.

The Pharisees had the purest doctrine on the face of the earth. But they could not recognize Jesus when he came. And you and I can have the purest doctrine on the face of the earth.

And glory in that. We may not be able to recognize and know the Lord. But at the same time, we are not sure that we know God and know when he speaks to us.

But Peter, he was a fisherman. How much did he know of the Bible? You have to remember that no one had a copy of the Bible at home in their house. This is all written on parchment, very expensive, one copy in the synagogue.

So Peter's knowledge of the Bible was very little. But when he saw Jesus, he didn't think he was Beelzebub. He didn't even think he was just an ordinary man.

He said, You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus said, You are a blessed man. It's a blessed man who can see who Jesus is.

And we say, Yeah, I know who Jesus is, the Son of the Living God. We are supposed to see Jesus all the time. Jesus said, Blessed are the pure in heart, they will see God.

I believe I can see God every day. My heart is pure. That's not head knowledge, it is heart purity.

So I will encourage you young people to pursue purity of heart more than knowledge in the head. We receive knowledge through our eyes and ears, by reading and hearing. And then it goes through into our mind.

And it may stir our emotions also. But that is all still sand. And if you build your house on that, it will collapse.

It has to go through the eyes or ears to the mind. Okay, it can go to the emotions. But then it must go down to my will.

And the rock must be blasted there. Where my will is broken. That's the rock.

If the will in your life is not broken, you will never build on the rock. Every day. Take up the cross every day means my will has to be blasted every day.

That is a very narrow way. It's the way of the cross. It's the way of death to sell.

It's the way of saying no to my own will. Then I get life. When Adam was in the garden of Eden, he was in the garden of Eden.

The Lord told him, this knowledge of good and evil will not give you life. It will only give you death. We can think evil will bring death.

That we can understand. But how can the knowledge of good and evil bring death? Is there anything wrong in knowing good and evil? We say no, there's nothing wrong. That's good to know, good and evil.

We teach our children what is good and what is evil. And don't tell lies. Honor your father and mother.

That is teaching them good and evil. Is that knowledge of good and evil good or bad? That is good. But if it stops there, it will make that child into a Pharisee.

I have seen children brought up in some God-fearing home. Very well behaved. They don't go into pornography or any of those things.

Good. Brought up very well. First class Pharisees.

Because they look down on others. Inwardly they say, Lord, I thank you. I'm not like those young people in the other denominations.

I once said in my church, I want my children to be spiritual. I have four sons. I want all of them to be spiritual, not religious.

I don't want them to marry religious people. I want them to marry spiritual people. And if it is a choice, I would rather my children be spiritual.

I would rather my children become drug addicts than Pharisees. Have you ever heard a father say that? I would rather my children become drug addicts rather than Pharisees. Because there is hope for drug addicts.

There is no hope for Pharisees. It is very rarely that a Pharisee like Paul gets converted. But prostitutes and thieves, they get converted by the hundreds.

The great danger of growing up in a God-fearing environment is becoming a Pharisee. I'm not saying you have to be a drug addict or a prostitute. I'm just trying to say that legalism is worse than adultery.

You can see that in the story, where the Pharisees were on one side and the woman caught in adultery was on the other side. And Jesus was in the middle. Here was this woman who had done a terrible sin.

She had gone and slept with a married man. She had gone and slept with a married man. And she was caught in adultery.

And on the other side were these holy Pharisees who were ready to throw stones at her. And they used a verse from the book of Moses. Yes, the Pharisees know the scriptures very well.

Especially the verses where they can throw stones at other people. And I've been to meetings and the Pharisees have gone up to the conference room and they have stones that they can throw at different people who are sitting there. There are many Pharisees in the churches today.

And among the preachers their pockets are full of stones. And Jesus said to the legalists to the people who are very particular about good and evil but who had no understanding of life. He who is without sin, throw the first stone.

They all went away. They could have pretended to other people that they had no sin but they couldn't pretend before Jesus. Because when they looked at Jesus' eyes they could see that he could see right through them.

So they went away. And there was only one man left who had no sin in him. Who could pick up a stone? And that was Jesus.

But he doesn't throw stones. No. Did he say to the woman Oh my God, that's not serious.

He didn't say that. It's very serious. But I don't condemn you.

Do you know according to the letter of the law of Moses Jesus disobeyed the law there? Because the law of Moses said very clearly that you must stone any woman caught to adultery and kill her. And Jesus didn't do it. You can see according to the letter he disobeyed the law there.

Even today you find many people taking the letter the letter of the law and throw stones at divorced women and throw stones at people caught in adultery and they're always got stones in their pockets. And they say, doesn't it say here like this? They don't hear the word of Jesus saying he who is without sin cast the first stone. I believe divorce is a terrible evil.

Jesus said it's adultery. I believe that. But I'll give you one example.

Jesus spoke about two types of adultery in Matthew 5. I call it adultery number one and adultery number two. Matthew 5. Here is adultery number one. Matthew 5, 28.

Everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery in his heart. That is the first adultery Jesus spoke about. Adultery number one.

It's very serious. In the old testament they had to be stolen and killed. It's not a small thing to look at a woman and lust after her.

It's not a small thing to look at internet pornography even for five seconds. It's not a small thing to see that two second sex scene in some R-rated movie. A country that deserves a stoning to death.

Jesus said that. Then we go to adultery number two. Verse 32.

Everyone who divorces his wife makes her commit adultery and if you marry and divorce someone you commit adultery. That's also adultery. But I have found Pharisees speak much more about adultery number two and not so much about adultery number one.

Why don't the Pharisees speak about adultery number one? They are so hard on adultery number two. But why not so hard on adultery number one? Because they are committing it themselves every day. That is the broad way that goes to destruction.

So am I supporting adultery number two? Did Jesus support the woman caught in adultery? But he said I don't condemn you. That's what I say. I don't condemn you.

But don't go and sin again. What Jesus was saying was Dear sister You can do nothing about the past. But you can do something about the future.

And that is what I tell people who made a mess of their life. You can do nothing about the past. But you can do something about the future.

Don't sin anymore. That's just one example. So I was saying about these movements that start well and end up in the pit.

And I tried to understand what's the reason for this way of living. Not to judge other people but to learn for myself. I'm not here to judge anybody else or any other movement.

But I don't want to be like Judah that never learned from the elder sister Israel. So you young people you must learn from the failures of older people. That's the way you can make the most of your life.

Otherwise you will repeat the same failure that your fathers and older people did. When you see the failure of other leaders who are the previous generation to you you must say why is it like that? I don't want that to happen to me. Not only in failure of movements you suddenly hear of some preacher falling to sin.

I mean in America every now and then you hear one preacher living in adultery for ten years. I'm sure it's happening in every country but the media doesn't pick it up in every country so quickly. But why does it happen nobody falls in one day.

Falling is gradual. It starts with a thought and then goes a little step further. Maybe a little internet pornography and then the devil doesn't make people take a big jump it's small small steps.

And a little flirtatious talk with some woman or some sister in the church and a little unhealthy joking and then sin. Why is that? It's because they don't know God. They know the devil and the doctrine.

They can get up next Sunday and preach wonderfully. But if you have a little bit of discernment even though it's a great sermon you will sense in your spirit there's something wrong. I have many times sensed that with some people.

I say I can't say what is wrong but in my spirit something doesn't click with that person. Five years later I discovered the reason. Or ten years later there was secret sin in their life.

Dear brothers and sisters seek for discernment that the Holy Spirit will make your spirit sensitive not to knowledge of good and evil but to life and death. So the two trees in the garden one was the law and the other was grace we can say. What is the law? Knowledge of good and evil.

Committing adultery evil. Honoring father and mother good. Taking the Lord's name in vain evil.

Having only one God good. The whole ten commandments and all the other commandments are like that good and evil. They studied it studied it studied it and when they saw Jesus they said He is built.

Can that happen today? That we study the word of God and know so much of the Bible and we know the fellowship of Jesus? It is so easy for you young people to go that way if you are not careful. If you want to make the most of your life don't pursue just knowledge of good and evil pursue life. When you have life you don't need these laws.

See it says in Galatians 6 Galatians 5 Galatians 5 it says in verse 18 That's a wonderful verse. When you are led by the Holy Spirit you are not under the law. That's why I keep on saying you must seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Not one experience that happened five years ago or ten years ago or even five days ago. To be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. And if you want to serve God to continuously seek God for the gift of prophecy.

To say Lord show me what it is to be led by the Holy Spirit. Then you don't need the law. Now I'll give you an example which will illustrate that.

In India we have people with leprosy. My wife used to work with such people so I know a little bit about it. One mark of leprosy is you lose sensation.

You don't feel anything in your hand if you got leprosy. You poke him with a knife he doesn't feel anything. It's not a good thing it's a very bad thing.

Do you know that pain is the greatest blessing in your body? You may think pain is a nuisance. But it is pain that indicates something is wrong. If you get a thorn in your foot and you don't feel any pain that foot will get infected and it will get worse and worse and worse and finally they cut off your foot.

But how is it you're saved from that? As soon as a thorn gets in you feel it. Thank God for pain. Because you can pull out the thorn clean up your foot and your foot is healed.

But when you have leprosy you don't feel it. So here is a person with leprosy and his feet and his hands if he's got leprosy his feet and his hands he puts his hand on a hot plate he won't feel anything. It can be burning hot he won't feel anything.

And after some time his whole hand is burnt. And there are cases at night when rats will come and bite off a leper's toes and he doesn't feel it. So for those who have leprosy we have to give them some laws.

Like knowledge of good and evil. Like Moses' laws. And those laws are every night before you go to bed look at the bottom of your feet see if there are any nails there see if there are any thorns there and laws when you see a stove don't put your hand it may be hot.

So don't put your hand there, that's a law. And like that and you know another thing with lepers they can't close their eyelids. And if your eyelids are open all the time like lepers you will become blind.

But we, our eyelids close so often so it washes the eyes many times. We have to give laws to lepers you must pour water in your eyes many times in a day. Do you need any of those laws? Pour water in your

eyes many times a day.

Before you go to bed see if there is any thorn inside your foot. Don't put your hand on a hot stove. Why is it you don't need these laws? Only one reason.

You have life because you have life you don't need a law. As soon as you touch a hot plate your hand comes off. As soon as a thorn comes into your foot you pull it out.

And if you feel your eyes are dry you will automatically pour water on it. Your eyes will automatically close. When you have life you don't need laws.

When you are led by the spirit you don't need a law. When you are led by the spirit and even accidentally if you see a picture that is not good in a magazine what will your reaction be if you have life? Same as when you touch a hot plate. You turn the page.

Or you change that internet page. Or you turn off the TV or change to another channel. Not after 5 seconds.

You don't keep the hand on the hot plate and say 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 take it off. Then you don't have life. Then you've got leprosy.

Many believers have got leprosy in their conscience. That is worse than leprosy in your hand. That is why you stay even 5 seconds on a dirty site or a dirty picture.

You have come to hundreds of meetings it has not saved you from going to that site for 5 seconds. Because what you got in those meetings was knowledge not life. And you justify yourself and say it was only 5 seconds.

I'm not a sinner like those people who go there for half an hour. You put your hand for 5 seconds on a hot plate it is still burnt. You do that a few times and finally your hand is gone.

This is the reason why we don't have more anointing among our young people. This is the reason why there is no anointing in the ministry from the pulpits in many churches. The people who stand there are not faithful in their thought life.

They are not faithful with money. They live by rules. Many times when I deal with question answers in many churches with many young people it is very difficult then the young people often ask questions about different rules.

Can I watch this TV program or can I watch that TV program? How far should my dress be? Rules, rules, rules. When you have life then life will automatically tell you which program you should not watch. Even if I give you a list of programs then Satan will add ten new programs tomorrow that were not on my list.

It will never end. But when you have life then life will tell you how far your dress should be. It will tell you many, many things Your money must be Lord, I want life.

And so I discovered why these movements declined. The founder knew God. The followers knew the doctrine.

That I saw was the reason. And having learned that in my own work with different leaders in churches in our country I seek to help them to know God. I say if you don't know God even if you know all the doctrine you will never build a church.

But when Adam was in the Garden of Eden it was easy to go to the Tree of Life. But now it's not so easy. Because we read that there's a sword of fire in the last verse of Genesis 3 in front of the Tree of Life.

So if you want to go to the Tree of Knowledge there is no sword or fire on it. To get life the sword must fall upon you. And that fire must burn up your own will.

But that's not such a bad thing. Because you get a better life instead. Think of it.

What Jesus is saying Will you give me your Adamic life to burn up then I will give you my life. What a fool I am if I don't do that. I mean if I have a rotten, stinking, smelling apple and somebody says give me that and I'll give you a good fresh apple I'd be a fool not ashamed.

Or like this. Supposing somebody says if you bring me ten kilos of rubbish I will give you ten kilos of gold. That would be a big queue in front of that office.

I'm not going That's what Jesus is saying. But why don't we stand in a queue outside to get that? Because we haven't seen like Paul that everything is rubbish outside of Christ. Have you seen that? Paul said I count it all rubbish that I might gain Christ.

I give one kilo of my rubbish and he gives me one kilo of gold. I want to give all my rubbish to him. And he gives me gold in exchange.

What does that mean in practical terms? This Adam's way of dealing with money get it to me and I will give you my way of dealing with money. How many of you want to deal with money the way Jesus dealt with money? Many Christians don't want that. Then I'll have to give away a lot to the poor.

They say no I think I'll keep Adam's way because I can keep something for myself. Jesus once said they taste the new wine but they say the old is better. You really believe the old way is better? That is a great lie of Satan.

The Lord says give me this Adam's way of looking at women and I will give you my way of looking at women. Do you want that? I want it. I don't want it only when I'm 70 years old I wanted it when I was 22 years old.

That's why I say that you choose it. Choose the Christ's way of everything. And the sword has to go on Adam's life.

Say yes Lord. And it's not a choice I have to make once in my life. I have to choose it every day.

Even if I've chosen it faithfully for the last 30 years. I have to choose the cross again today. It's like the branch in the tree.

If a branch is producing fruit, fruit, fruit, fruit for 30 years it can't say oh now I've got so much experience. Now I can get away from the tree and produce fruit on my own. It will dry up immediately.

The 50 year old branch is the same as the new branch. If you were born again yesterday I have to be as dependent on the Lord as you. So what am I saying? Seek after life not knowledge.

Seek after the knowledge of God. Give up the rubbish of the life of Adam. And then we will find the narrow way.

But Jesus said that narrow way very few people find it. And I say Lord if there are very few people who find it will I get it? And the company says there are only about three vacancies. Are you so sure that you will be among those three? 10,000 people are trying for that job only three.

So when I hear Jesus say very few find the way to life I don't sit in the church and say oh yes I am going to be in that few. I strive with all my heart because I want to be among those three. The apostle Paul said I do my best to keep my conscience clear.

Let's go that way. It will make the most of your life. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father I pray that these wonderful young people will not miss out on your best for their life. I pray that none of them will be deceived by the devil. But they will choose wisely in Jesus name.

Amen.

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