

Five Essential Truths

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the distinctive purpose of the church, the significance of the way of the cross and being part of Christ's body. It highlights five essential aspects in the life of a Christian: the blood of Jesus, the word of God, the Holy Spirit, the way of the cross, and fellowship in the body of Christ. The speaker shares personal testimonies and practical insights on how to have a solid grip on the Christian life through these five essentials.

Scripture: Matthew 18:20, Hebrews 2:14, John 16:22, Exodus 17:8, Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 4:3, Galatians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 12:27, Colossians 3:13, Acts 1:8

Topics: "Purpose of the Church", "Essentials of Christian Life"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the distinctive purpose of the church, the significance of the way of the cross and being part of Christ's body. It highlights five essential aspects in the life of a Christian: the blood of Jesus, the word of God, the Holy Spirit, the way of the cross, and fellowship in the body of Christ. The speaker shares personal testimonies and practical insights on how to have a solid grip on the Christian life through these five essentials.

Transcript

When we met a few days ago, I mentioned how it's important for us to recognize why God has established a church here. When we met a few days ago, I mentioned how it's important for us to recognize why God has established a church here. Unless there is something distinctive and special which nobody else is proclaiming, there is no need for another church.

Unless there is something distinctive and special which nobody else is proclaiming, there is no need for another church. It's important for every brother and sister to understand what that purpose is. It's important for every brother and sister to understand what that purpose is.

I mentioned last time that the way of the cross is almost not emphasized in Christendom today. I mentioned last time that the way of the cross is almost not emphasized in Christendom today. Another thing which is not emphasized is the importance of every brother and sister being a part of Christ's body.

Another thing which is not emphasized is the importance of every brother and sister being a part of Christ's body. I mentioned that there are five important things in the life of a Christian. I mentioned that there are five important things in the life of a Christian.

You can hold something with two fingers. You can hold it with three or four fingers. But with five, you get a very solid grip on something.

But with five, you get a very solid grip on something. If you hold something with two, somebody can pull it out of your hand easily. Those five essentials are, First of all, the blood of Jesus Christ.

That's like the thumb, the most important part. That's like the thumb, the most important part. You can't do without that.

Because that's how our sins are forgiven and our past life is blotted out. Because that's how our sins are forgiven and our past life is blotted out. We can say that is the bare minimum.

We can say that is the bare minimum. A man cannot be a part of the body of a Christian, A man cannot be a part of the body of a Christian, unless he has received forgiveness from his sins. And the second thing is the word of God, the Bible.

Without the Bible, we don't know anything about God. Supposing you are an illiterate person, you can hear about the blood of Christ and be forgiven. But you are not going to grow spiritually if you don't read the word of God.

Jesus said that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. Jesus said that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. So I'm telling you how you can get a strong grip on the Christian life.

And if you listen to these five things carefully, you can get a strong grip on the Christian life. There are many Christians who are satisfied, my sins are all forgiven. Whenever I sin, I confess and my sin is forgiven.

Most believers, even in our churches, don't read the Bible carefully. Their only knowledge of the Bible is from what they hear in the preaching. And that's very easy then to get a lot of wrong doctrines and to be deceived by many other preachers in Christendom.

So, I want to ask you, how strong is this second finger of yours? Do you read the word of God every day? Do you really believe that there is only one book that God has given to us? And this is like the manufacturer's instructions, how we must run this life. If you buy an expensive washing machine, there are so many knobs and all that, you don't know what to do. You get a book called the manufacturer's instructions, and you will read it and operate those knobs accordingly.

And I'm sure all of you will do exactly as it's written in that book. You would never think of imagining that you know better than the man who made that. But has God given us the manufacturer's instructions how we must run our life? Yeah, that's in the Bible.

So, if you don't read the manufacturer's instructions, you are like a proud person who thinks, I know better than God how to run my life. And it's like if you operate that washing machine without listening to the instructions, and the thing packs up, and you take it to the shop, the first thing they'll ask you is, did you follow the instructions? And you say, no, I didn't bother about the instructions, I know how to do these things. And they'll say, that's why you spoiled it.

So, if you have not followed the instructions, there's no guarantee on the machine, we cannot repair it for you. The reason for so many miserable lives, so many miserable marriages, is because they don't follow the instructions. You take a simple command like, forgive those who have harmed you.

We want God to forgive us as we forgive others. Can all of you sitting here honestly say, that as soon as somebody does some harm to you, you immediately forgive them? Can all of you sitting here honestly say, that as soon as somebody does some harm to you, you immediately forgive them? Do you do it? If you don't do it, then you think you know better than the manufacturer. Then you say, why is it I have so many problems in my Christian life? Why can't I get victory here and victory there? Why is it my prayers are not answered? It's like your washing machine packing up and the shop person says, did you follow the instructions? It's like your washing machine packing up and the shop person says, did you follow the instructions? So the Lord will say, did you forgive everybody? Sickness can come to anybody in the world.

And I think 70-80% of sicknesses in the world are because we are living under a curse in this world. That's why we die, even believers die. That's because of the curse.

So that is the reason why much sickness is there even among believers. But I have a feeling, that at least 10 or 20% of sicknesses among believers is because they haven't forgiven somebody. Is it possible that you have a sickness in your body which is not being healed because you haven't forgiven somebody? That's in God's word.

That's a second finger. I'll give you a testimony from my own life. I'll give you a testimony from my own life.

Some months before I got married in 1968, I had to go to a hospital just to get some injury stitched. And they had to put me under anesthesia because it was quite a painful thing. And some days later, I found a severe pain down my arm, like a nerve pain.

And it was getting worse and worse. I didn't know what was the cause. The stitch had all healed.

So I went to a neurosurgeon. And I said, what do you think is the cause of this? He said, there is nothing wrong with you, so I can only think of one reason. That when you were under general anesthesia, and they lifted you from the bed, they may not have been careful.

And your neck may have fallen back in some awkward angle. Pinched some nerve, and injured it. And that's the cause of this pain.

There is no cure for it, you got to live with it. I was a believer, but I didn't have any victory over sin. So I got really angry with the doctor who treated me.

Not only I got really angry, I wrote him a very angry letter. He was a believer. And I wrote some hard words.

I'm so ashamed of it that I don't even want to mention what I wrote. And I was more worried because in a few weeks I was going to get married. And then the Lord said to me, forgive him.

He didn't do it deliberately. Even if he did it deliberately, you must forgive him. Supposing he deliberately took my neck and twisted it, you must still forgive him.

How much more if it was accidental? Just a few days after I wrote that first letter. Very quickly. Within 3-4 days.

So I wrote another letter. Dear brother, I feel ashamed that I wrote that letter to you. You were so kind to treat me.

It's not at all your fault. It's my fault for writing such a letter. Please forgive me.

Please forgive me. I love and respect you very much. I have nothing in my heart against you.

In a few days, this pain disappeared. And I've never had a problem for 43 years. Which injection cured me? The neurosurgeon said, no hope.

It was one simple decision in my heart. I am going to forgive him. It was a lesson I learnt for my whole life.

When you don't forgive others, you hurt yourself. When you forgive others, you bring healing into your own body. Read the manufacturer's instructions and follow it.

Then number three. The third finger is the Holy Spirit. Now there's a lot of controversy about the Holy Spirit in Christendom today.

I grew up in the early days in the brethren assembly about 50 years ago, where they never talked about the Holy Spirit. We studied the word of God, but we didn't depend on the Holy Spirit. And my life was dry, discouraged, depressed.

So people told me, I must go to the Pentecostal church. I said, okay, I'll go there. And I went there and I heard all the noise and all that.

I met the pastors who loved money so much. And I came back to my room in the naval base. And I knelt down and I said, Lord, I don't want that.

That's not the real thing. That is a painted fire, not a real fire. It's a lot of noise, not power.

So I said, Lord, I want what Peter, James and John got on the day of Pentecost. I want what Jesus got in the river Jordan. I want the real anointing and if it takes 10 years to get it, I'm willing to wait 10 years.

It's no use accumulating counterfeit 500 rupee notes and thinking you're very rich. It's all paper. One genuine 500 rupee note is worth all those counterfeit notes.

There's a lot of counterfeit of the baptism in the Holy Spirit today. And that proves that the real thing is very precious. And I want to tell you my brothers and sisters.

When the Lord filled me with the Holy Spirit, my whole life changed. But I found after some years I could backslide. So I learned that this baptism in the Holy Spirit is not just once.

I experienced it and there was a lot of joy and anointing. And then 10 years later I began to backslide. Inwardly, I backslid because I didn't have fellowship.

And I was so desperate. I said, Lord, you got to fill me with the Holy Spirit again. And I began to seek God again.

And God filled me with the Holy Spirit. And I looked back now over that incident which was 36 years ago. I can say the whole direction of my life changed after that.

So I want to say to all of you. You must seek for a genuine baptism and fullness of the Holy Spirit. And I received this in my own house, not in some meeting.

That is why in CFC, I always encourage people to pray for this in their own house. Don't go for a meeting because you may get some emotional experience which is not real. Everybody else is shaking and crying and you think there is something there.

I did not shake, I did not cry, but God filled me with the Holy Spirit. And the result was power in my life and ministry. From that, I learned that I must be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit.

So I want to say to all of you. This is a very important third finger to hold the Christian life. They are alone with God in your house.

And cry out to God, maybe at night when you are sleeping. You don't have to make a noise, cry in your heart. All the others in your house are sleeping.

You pray to God and say, Lord, I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And not just once, I pray for it regularly. My wife and I pray together in the morning.

Every day we pray, Lord Jesus, fill us with the Holy Spirit. I need it all the time. And then number four.

Is the way of the cross. Taking up the cross every day and dying to ourselves. You cannot follow Jesus if you don't take up the cross every day.

Yesterday's cross was for yesterday. It's like yesterday's food. Yesterday's food does not satisfy your hunger today.

However good that food may have been. If you don't eat food every day, you feel hungry. You can fast, but you still feel hungry.

So we eat food every day. We must take up the cross every day. This is another thing that many people don't understand.

To take up the cross means to die to myself. To take up the cross means to die to my selfish desires. I must be free from worshiping myself.

Why do you get upset when someone says something to you? You worship yourself. That's why you get upset. Why do you get upset when someone doesn't say something to you? Or they don't shake your hand.

Or they don't smile at you. Or they said something bad about your son or your daughter. And you are hurt.

Because you are an idol worshiper. You worship yourself. If you destroy that idol, that is taking up the cross.

Every day. Lord, this self is going to be dead today. It will be impossible to get offended.

Your life will be very peaceful, no matter what other people do or don't do. Your life will be very peaceful, no matter what other people do or don't do. This is so important.

This is how we overcome satan. Do you know that Jesus did not overcome satan by preaching? Do you know that he did not overcome satan by casting out demons? Do you know that he did not overcome satan by casting out demons? We read in Hebrews 2. We read in Hebrews 2.14. In the middle of that verse, through death, he made the one who had the power of death, the devil, powerless. How did he take away the power of the devil? By dying on the cross.

Until Jesus died on the cross, satan had power. It is so clear here. He made him powerless only when he died.

Not by preaching, rebuking, casting out demons, nothing. Today there are many preachers who are preaching and resisting and casting out demons and rebuking the devil. It's all good, but you don't defeat the devil that way.

Jesus defeated the devil when he died. And if I die with Jesus, satan loses his power over me. If you wonder why satan has got some power in your life, or in your home, or in your church, here is the answer.

You have not died. You are not willing to die. I don't believe satan has any power over me.

Because I have chosen to die with Jesus Christ. I have chosen to destroy this self-life completely. Every day.

I don't have any expectations from people. When you die, you don't have any expectations. I know a lot of people my age who expect people to respect them for their age.

Or if they are elders like me, the brothers must respect me because I am an elder. I don't expect anything. I don't expect anybody to help me in any way.

I don't expect anybody to be considerate about my feelings. I don't expect anybody to respect me. I don't expect anybody to be kind to me or considerate or any such thing.

What is the result? I am a very happy person. Because I don't have any complaint against anybody in the world. You ask yourself, why do you have a complaint against somebody? Why do you have a complaint against your wife? Because you expect something from her.

She must do this or do this or do this because I am the husband. I can prophesy, you will be a miserable husband all your life. Why are you so unhappy as a wife? Because you always expect your husband to do this or that or the other thing for you.

Then you will always be a miserable wife even if you are filled with the Holy Spirit. You need this fourth finger of dying to yourself. And not just once.

Every day. Every day in the morning as you get up, you have to say, Lord, this is another day, I am going to die. I will tell you from many years of my experience, that is the happiest life you can ever live.

I will tell you from many years of my experience, that is the happiest life you can ever live. You know this beautiful verse, it has been a tremendous blessing to me. Jesus said in John's Gospel chapter 16, John 16, 22, the last part, no one takes your joy away from you.

no one takes your joy away from you. I have come to that life. No one in the world can take away my joy.

Whatever they do or don't do, they can't take away my joy. Because my joy is not dependent on them. You remember what Jesus told the woman of Samaria? If you drink the water I give, it will be like a spring that springs up to everlasting life within you.

It's like having a spring or a well inside your house. What is the advantage of having a spring or a well inside your house? Then nobody can turn off your water supply. If it's only from the corporation, they can turn it off.

But if you got a supply in your own house, nobody can turn off your water supply. That is the life God gives us. You read in the Old Testament, when the rock was smitten, the water flowed.

That's a picture of how when I allow myself to be smitten, the water springs up. If you keep that rock hard, there won't be any water. If you take up the cross and say, Lord, I want to die to myself every day, your life will be full of joy and peace, and you'll overcome Satan.

Satan will be afraid of a person who takes up the cross every day. And that's why he doesn't want you to take up the cross. That's why he makes people afraid of him.

That's why he makes people afraid of him. The fifth finger is the fellowship in the body of Christ. The body of Christ is something that helps me to have a solid grip on the Christian life.

You don't need 200 or 300 people. Even two or three. You remember that verse in Matthew 18.20? If two or three are gathered to my name, there I am in the midst.

That is a body. Have you ever thought of it like this? In that verse, what is the minimum number? How many? Two. Two is the minimum.

Where two are there, I am in the midst. But what if you are alone as a believer? There is no midst. The Lord is not there.

And that is why you are defeated so often. You need fellowship with at least one other person. And as soon as you try to build that fellowship, the devil will try to destroy it.

Because the devil is scared of the Lord being in the midst of two people who are united. That is why as soon as God joined Adam and Eve together, the devil came immediately and separated them. And that is why he is always working to separate you from your wife or your husband.

I am not talking about divorcing your husband or wife. I am talking about living in the same home, but not in unity. With tension.

And misunderstanding. And an unforgiving spirit. And you go to work with that tension.

Most Christian homes are like that. And the devil is so happy. The Lord is not there.

Two have to be united. That is why the devil seeks to bring division between the elders in a church. One of the reasons why the devil has never been able to come into the CFC Bangalore is because the two of us elders have always been united.

So he has not been able to come into the church at all. Because if two people are united, they have authority over Satan. If you find the devil trying to enter your home, affecting your children, husband and

wife, please seek to be united.

A church is a blessed church where the elders are united. We don't have to agree on everything. We can be united in our spirit, even if we disagree on some matters.

It's a unity in the spirit. There is a beautiful example of this in Exodus. In Exodus chapter 17, we read about the forces of Amalek coming to fight in verse 8 against Israel after they came out of Egypt.

Moses told Joshua in verse 9, go and fight against them. Joshua went to fight and three people, Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. In verse 10, Joshua told Moses to go and fight against Amalek.

Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. These three went to the top of the hill. There they prayed.

In verse 11, Moses lifted up his hand and he prayed. Whenever he lifted up his hand, Joshua was winning. When he put his hand down, Amalek was winning.

The battle was going on for so many hours. He could not hold up his hand for so many hours. It says there in verse 12, his hands were heavy.

So they took a stone and made him sit on it. Aaron lifted up one hand and Hur lifted up his other hand. They held it up the whole day until the sun set in verse 12.

Verse 13, Amalek was thoroughly defeated. That's a picture of how the devil can be defeated. Three people united, standing together.

Did these three agree with everything? No. We know later on that Aaron had some big question about why Moses married this non-Israelite woman. They may have had some disagreements.

I don't agree with the woman you married, Moses. I don't agree with the way you are bringing up your children. But they did not discuss all that over there.

There was only one question. Are the three of you agreed that Amalek must be defeated? That we are agreed. Then forget all your other differences.

And so that's what I say to a husband and wife. Are you agreed that the devil must be defeated in your home? Yes, then forget about everything else. And I say to you in the church.

Are you agreed that the devil must have no place in this church? That's enough. Join together with others who want the devil to be defeated. Don't waste your time judging why is he like this and why is she like this and why are they doing this and why are these people doing that.

It's none of your business. Leave it to the elders to take care of the problem. And if you are united like this then the devil will have no power in our church.

Can you remember these five things? The blood of Jesus Christ. The word of God. The Holy Spirit.

The way of the cross. And the body of Christ. This is not a theory.

It's not just a nice illustration. I have proved in my life with these five things how I can have a solid grip on the Christian life. And it prevents me from back sliding.

It prevents me from slipping down. Let's pray. Let's think about what we heard.

Heavenly Father please help everyone here to be gripped by these truths and to build the body of Jesus Christ. To build their homes. Your name will be glorified.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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