

Four Things to Flee From

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of individual responsibility and active engagement in the body of Christ while fleeing from sin and fostering love among believers.

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Scripture: Ephesians 4:15

Topics: "Idolatry", "Humility"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of fleeing from idolatry, immorality, and the love of money. It highlights the need to prioritize Christ's preeminence in all aspects of life, to run from self-worship, and to focus on glorifying Jesus rather than seeking personal recognition or honor. The message encourages a shift towards selfless living, humility, and a deep commitment to following Christ's example.

Transcript

I want to share this morning from a number of verses. I'll begin with Ephesians in chapter 4. You know that we have here in this church constantly emphasized the building of the body of Jesus Christ. Not just individual holy people, but the body of Jesus Christ.

The church consists of those who have committed their lives to be disciples of Christ. They are built together into one body. But I've discovered that sometimes with an over-emphasis on that, we can forget our individual responsibility in the body.

In the Old Testament, we read of a bush that was aflame with the presence of God when Moses saw that. But each little twig in that bush was on fire. It was not just a few twigs on fire and it appeared that the bush was on fire.

But unfortunately, it's very difficult to see a church where every member is on fire for God. And some who start off their Christian life on fire for God, after a few years they cool off. Whereas actually, as you grow older, your flame should be fiercer, more than it ever was.

Just like we progress in school from one class to the other. We never go backwards. And so it's important that each of us here, if you want to be a part of the body that Christ is building, recognize your personal responsibility to be the type of person God wants you to be, the type of husband God wants you to be, the type of brother, sister, wife, father, mother that God wants you to be, if the body is to be built.

You know how it is in our Indian buses. Sometimes if it's a crowded bus, you don't have to move. You just stand there and all the people behind you will just push you and you keep moving forward when people get in.

And sometimes it can be like that in the church. We just come and sit here, don't take any personal responsibility. We listen to a good message on Sunday or Wednesday, and we sort of get pushed forward without seriously making any effort ourselves to fight the battle and to go on with the Lord.

In Ephesians 4, there's a verse which says, verse 15 and 16 is speaking about the building of the body, speaking the truth in love. Ephesians 4, 15, we must grow up in all aspects unto him who is the head, even Christ. And now listen to this.

From whom, from the head, the whole body is fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies. Now, the joints are the most important parts of our body in one sense, external body, because that's what gives us flexibility in movement. If you've got a stiff joint, imagine if all your joints were stiff, you can't do anything.

And the joint speaks of fellowship. Here's one brother, here's another brother. Both may be strong, but if they don't have fellowship, they are useless.

They're like a hand where the elbow is stiff. So it's no use being a good brother. Here's a strong brother, a strong brother, upper arm, lower arm, but no fellowship between them.

Useless. Both are useless. That's why I've often said the most valuable brothers and sisters in the church are those who can build fellowship.

Blessed are the peacemakers. They shall be called the sons of God. And so that which every joint supplies, and listen to this phrase, according to the proper working of each individual part, who's left out here, those who are not under the headship of Christ are left out.

But those who are under the headship of Jesus Christ, each individual part has to work properly. And then if you read that, you must ask yourself whether you're working properly. Whoever you are, either you're not under the headship of Christ, then I have no message for you from this verse.

But if you are under the headship of Christ, or you claim to be, then there must be a proper working in relation to the rest of the body. You have a very important part to play. You can't just get sort of lost in the crowd and sit here and listen to the messages and go home.

Seven days a week, there has to be a proper working in your life for you to be an effective functioning member of this body. It's very, very important, and we keep emphasizing that. That is how we build the body.

So dear brothers and sisters, let me say this. I want to speak the truth in love, like it says here. Please consider this like Paul says, I beseech you, beloved brethren, consider this.

Are you fulfilling your function? There's no part in the body that doesn't have a function. You must work individually. It doesn't mean that you have to be very mature.

We don't expect little babies to be mature. And there are new spiritual new babies born into the church all the time. We have new members joining our church every year.

They're like new babies. We don't expect them to be mature, just like you don't expect a newborn baby to be mature. But we do want even newborn babies to be healthy.

You know the difference between being healthy and being mature? That baby may take 25, 30 years to be mature, but it can be healthy from the moment it is born. Which mother wants to see his child sick even for a single day? Don't we want our children to be healthy every single day? And that's what we desire in the church, not maturity. Maturity will take 30 years, but health.

Health means freedom from disease, freedom from unconfessed sin, freedom from sins that you're not trying at least to forsake. So that is, you know, the body has got a mechanism that works towards health. As soon as sickness comes, you got a little injury in the body, just a wee little cut.

And if you could see inside what all is happening in the blood, the brain has sent signals to the blood, hey, there's an injury over here, go and fight those germs that I've got in there. And you find all those white blood cells go there and lay down their life in order to bring healing. That's what happens.

Even for a small thing, leave alone big things like pneumonia or tuberculosis or some things. The body is always fighting disease. God has made it like that.

I want to say to you, if you're a member of Jesus Christ's body, you really want to know whether you're a member of the body, you will fight disease. Now dead people's bodies don't fight disease. That's why they begin to stink after a while, because, you know, corruption, worms get in and the body doesn't fight it because it's dead and it begins to stink.

And there are churches like that, that have begun to stink because of sin, because there's no life in it. Stop fighting disease. And whenever you find in your personal life that your inner attitude to fight against sin is decreasing, brother, sister, you are dying.

Like the doctors say, call the relatives. All hope is gone. You're dying.

You better do something about it. But you don't have to die. There's a resurrection life available in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit can lift us from the powers of death.

Please keep this in mind. The mark of death is that person lying in the hospital bed is unable to fight disease. You're to pump antibiotics, so many things are doing because the body, which normally fights disease is not able to fight disease.

And whenever a believer comes to that state where he's no longer fighting, I'm not talking about overcoming sin. That's another stage fighting it with all your heart. If you're not fighting sin with all your heart, you are on the way of death.

So the proper working of every individual part in the human body is it fights disease. Maturity may take a long time, so don't get discouraged if you're not mature. Even that little baby has got a body that God has given it with a system that fights disease.

So even if you are newly born again, you will fight sin. You're born again today. And if you're not fighting sin, I would say to you inwardly, your attitude, I mean, please check up whether you're really born again.

You probably are not. If you're here only to impress others that you are a very godly person, and you're not in your private life, in your thought life, in your speech life fighting disease, you are not born again. I would

say that without being a doctor.

If that body has stopped fighting disease, something is on its way to die. It's just a matter of time before it dies. So the proper working of each individual part means it's going to fight disease continuously.

And it doesn't matter if other parts of the body are fighting it or not. Sometimes decay can enter, you know, sometimes people who get diabetes and all, they get a thing called gangrene in their feet. And normally we get an injury in our foot, the body fights it and heals it.

But people who have a lot of diabetes, their body cannot fight. And gradually the foot begins to rot and all the powers of the body cannot heal that foot. And the doctor says, we got to cut off one toe now, then another toe, and finally the whole foot, otherwise it'll kill the whole body.

That's sad. It's sad when a brother or a sister, instead of bringing life into the body is corrupting the others in the body with gangrene of gossip and backbiting and wrong attitudes and allowing sin in their life and thinking it's all hidden inside. I'm just lost in the multitude.

You're not working properly. And maybe you were once in the body of Christ, but you've dropped out now. It's possible for a person who was once committed to Christ to finally be a disciple of Jesus Christ, finally become a disciple of Satan.

Eternally lost. It's possible. It's happened to numerous people.

Judas Iscariot was not the only one. He was a disciple of Jesus Christ who became a disciple of Satan. And he's a great example of multitudes of people in 2000 years who were disciples of Jesus Christ who became disciples of Satan.

On the other hand, we have people like Paul who were disciples of Satan who became disciples of Jesus Christ. It's also there. So please remember this phrase, the proper working of each individual part who's under the head of Christ that leads to the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Love is the test. For myself, I have tested myself like that. The building up of itself in love.

When I lose my love for Jesus Christ, I cannot build up the body. When I lose my love for other brothers and sisters, I cannot build up the body. So be careful about this one thing more than anything else.

Some of us are more careful to attend church service on Sunday, read the Bible every day. Some are not even bothered about that or pray a little bit every day. I'll tell you something more important than all of that.

Make sure you love Jesus with all your heart and love others as Jesus loved you. Even if you forgot to read the Bible a few days, it's not as serious. We need to have our priorities right.

And that is our priority. So I want to speak on that basis, the proper working of each individual part from a few verses in scripture. You know, I was doing a Bible study on the word flea, F-L-E-E.

Flea means run with all your might. It occurs just a few times in the New Testament. And I was interested to see something there which I observed for the first time.

And I want to relate it, I'll come to that in a moment, but I want to relate it to first of all to an Old Testament reference in the book of Deuteronomy in chapter 28. Deuteronomy 28 is a great chapter. It tells you in the

first 14 verses how you can be blessed.

And then in the remaining 54 verses, it tells you how you'll be cursed, not you but the Israelites. And one of the marks, now this is all referring to physical blessing, physical cursing, because Israel was an earthly nation. So we don't go to this chapter for our education.

We can read it if you apply it spiritually. When it speaks of physical wealth there, it's spiritual wealth. When it speaks of physical children, it's spiritual children.

When it says God will bless your earthly business, it means God will bless your spiritual business. If you apply it all spiritually and it speaks of physical sickness, it's talking about spiritual sickness for us. So if you apply the Old Testament spiritually, you got it right.

But if you apply it physically and you'll get this counterfeit health wealth gospel that is being preached in Babylonian Christendom today. But Deuteronomy 28 is a health wealth gospel for Israelites. They were not a heavenly people.

They were an earthly people. They were promised an earthly land and they were promised nothing in heaven. But here it says in Deuteronomy and chapter 28 that one of the marks of God's blessing, listen to this, in verse 7, Deuteronomy 28 7, the Lord will cause your enemies, and for us that is the world, the flesh, and the devil, who rise up against you to be defeated.

They will come against you in one way and they will flee. They will run for their life. That's the meaning.

They will run for their life before you in seven ways. They'll come in one united front and they will run in seven directions. That is the proof that the Lord is blessing you.

And then the Lord also told them further down that if you did not follow the Lord, I've got to find that verse. He will make, which verse is it? 25. Is it okay? Yeah.

Yeah. That's it. I'm getting old.

I used to know all these verses. The Lord shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies and you will go against them one way and you will flee seven ways. You see the difference between the enemies will flee or you will flee.

So our enemy today is Satan. I decided years ago that I will have only one enemy. Many people may consider me their enemy.

That's their business. My duty is to love them because the Bible says love your enemies. If you have enemies, thank God for them because that's the only way you can obey God's command which says love your enemies.

I feel very sorry for people who have no enemies. How will they obey that command? Imagine going to heaven without obeying one command of scripture. I never want to get there without obeying all scripture.

That's why I thank God for enemies, opportunities to love them. So, but the Bible says we don't wrestle with flesh and blood. So I never fight with human enemies concerning anything, nothing earthly, nothing spiritual.

I don't even fight for doctrine. I proclaim and stand up for doctrine, but I don't go arguing, fighting with people. I say, God bless you, brother.

You can believe what you like, but here's the truth if you want to hear it. So, but I decided I'm going to have only one enemy because the Bible says we do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but we fight with Satan. All those who fight husbands and wives, they are under the old covenant.

All fighting husbands and wives. I don't care how many years they've been in this church. They are under the old covenant because they are fighting flesh and blood and they're usually fighting about earthly things.

All those who fight with human beings, their office and their place of work, their neighbors, they are under the old covenant because in the old covenant they fought Philistines and Amorites and Hittites and all types ofites, but not today, not a disciple of Jesus. He refuses to fight with someone who is a child of Adam. You can fight with snakes and lizards and all that, but not with human beings on earth.

Otherwise, we fight only the devil. So, either I flee before the devil in seven directions when he comes against me or he flees from me in seven directions when I go against him. That is determined by whether the Lord has blessed me or he's not blessed.

How has it been in your life so far? You find the devil fleeing before you in your personal life? You find the devil running away from your home or settling down comfortably in your home with your children? You find the devil running away from your church? I want to be in a church where the devil is running away from it. I want to be in a church that the devil is scared of. I want to be in a church where the devil says to his senior demons, you better go somewhere else.

I've got to handle this church myself. That's the church I want to be in. The one that he's most scared of.

And you know it's possible if the Lord could say that to those Israelites with whom he made an old covenant through a man called Moses. Don't you think he'll say that much more to me and you with whom he's made a new covenant through his son Jesus Christ? Why do we live at such a low standard? The devil must flee in seven directions when he comes at me. But most believers I have met, they are running for their life.

Oh the devil's harassing me. I've seen a number of believers that told me, brother the devil's troubling me in my home. He's troubling my children.

He's troubling my wife. He's troubling this person. What are you doing? What about your Jesus, your wee teeny weeny Jesus that you worship? He can't help you.

This teeny weeny Jesus is not the Jesus of the Bible. That's another Jesus. The real Jesus is present.

The devil will run. He won't be anywhere near. The Bible says that.

Resist the devil and he'll flee from you. See three times in scripture. Let me show that to you.

James in chapter 4 and verse 7. If you submit to God, that's very important. Some people only know the latter half of that verse. The first half of the verse is submit to God 100 percent.

And then resist the devil and he will flee from you. And according to that Old Testament verse in seven directions. That's what I want.

And if he does not flee from you when you resist him, brother, you are not submitted to God. I have seen pastors and preachers trying to cast out demons for hours, yelling and screaming at them by the grace of God. I've had the opportunity to deliver poor people from demon possession in many places.

Never have I had to shout at them because the devil can hear even if you whisper the name of Jesus. He's got very good hearing. Secondly, I don't have to keep on saying it two, three times.

Once. If I tell that demon to go once in Jesus name and he does not go. I say, Lord, I'm sorry.

I need to go and pray and fast. Because Jesus said there are certain types which will not go without praying and fasting. My yelling and screaming there is not going to do anything.

The devil is not scared of noise, shouting, scared of spiritual authority. And when the devil does not flee from you, that is a proof that you have not submitted to God. Don't blame your wife, your children, your husband, your neighbor.

Oh, the devil's here. The devil's there. Blame yourself.

I have not submitted to God. I'm not saying you won't have trouble in the world. Jesus said in the world, you'll always have trouble if you're a Christian.

Very difficult to be an upright Christian. You'll have trouble in your office, trouble with your neighbors, trouble with all kinds of people. But the devil will not be able to trouble you.

Sorry. He will flee. But human beings, they will harass you.

They killed all. They killed Jesus. They killed the apostles.

They may kill you and me. That's okay. But not Satan.

I'm not saying people will flee from me. People didn't flee from Jesus. They killed him.

But the devil fled. And at his weakest moment, when Jesus hung on the cross, the devil was defeated. So remember this, brothers and sisters, that don't ever blame the devil, saying he doesn't go there.

He's troubling here. He's troubling there. Say to yourself, I have not submitted to God, and I'm trying to resist the devil.

And he says, Jesus, I know, and Paul, I know, and this person I know, and that person I know, but who are you? I know all about you. You play the fool with sin, and you're trying to resist me. You haven't submitted to God, and you're trying to resist me.

Okay, here's another verse. 1 Peter chapter 5, verse 8. Be of sober spirit and be on the alert. I find a lot of Christians do not obey this.

Now, I believe in joking, and I believe in humor. It's a gift of God, but if you're like a circus clown, all the time joking, laughing, joking, laughing, the devil won't be afraid of you. You've got to be serious about some things in the Christian life.

We must have a sense of humor, sure, but we must be of sober, serious spirit when it comes to spiritual things. That's why I believe all those people who make jokes of God, and jokes of the devil, and jokes of heaven and hell, they have not known God at all. Any man who reverences God will never make a joke about hell, and heaven, and God.

I've had sometimes emails people forward to me of some joke on heaven, or hell, or God. I say to them, please don't circulate this email. Let it end with you.

It's the devil who makes jokes of heaven, and hell are too serious matters to make jokes about. God and the devil are far too serious to make jokes about. We have to be serious in those matters.

I'm a firm believer in humor. All those who know me know that, but I'm serious when it comes to spiritual things. Be on the alert.

That means spiritually, don't ever go to sleep. The reason why should we be like that, because your adversary, the devil, is prowling around like a lion. It's like a lion that got loose from the zoo, roaring the streets.

It's waiting to devour somebody. What should we do? Resist him. Firm in your faith.

That's what Peter says. Resist him. And that's what James says.

Let's see what Paul says in Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians chapter 6, verse 10. Finally be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Verse 13. Take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to resist. Again the word resist the devil.

And having done everything, you will stand there and the devil will flee. Seven ways in front of you. So many people spend time studying the armor of God there in verse 14 onward.

The breastplate means this, and the shoes mean this, and the helmet means this, and the sword of the spirit means this. And they take so many bible studies. I was in assemblies where they used to major on explaining the meaning of these old testament types, and what is the meaning of the breastplate, and the meaning of the helmet.

But they were defeated by satan. I'd rather have a person who overcomes satan, who cannot explain what the breastplate, and the helmet, and the shoes mean. There are a lot of doctors who can explain the digestive system, but their own digestive system is not working.

And we have multitudes of others who don't know how to explain their digestive system, but their digestive system is working okay. So it doesn't matter if you can't explain all these verses, what is the helmet, and what is the it's good to know it. I'd like to know about my digestive system, sure.

But the most important thing is that it works. So the proof of all this, that you know all about the meanings of these different parts of the armor, is that the devil flees from you. Otherwise it's all rubbish.

Head knowledge, like these children with big huge heads who are sick. The disease called hydrocephalus, all water. A lot of Christians are like that.

A lot of knowledge. Beware of that. So all these apostles say resist the devil, he will flee, he will flee, he will flee.

This was never true under the old covenant. You know that you'll come under the new covenant when you're not afraid of the devil. The devil's afraid of you.

The old covenant, you read the entire Old Testament, nobody ever talked about the devil. Not Elijah, not Moses, not Abraham, not Isaiah, not even John the Baptist. Because the devil was not defeated.

At the moment Jesus destroyed his power on the cross and rose up from the dead, we entered into the new covenant where we stopped fighting with Philistines and Amorites and Hittites and neighbors and people in the office and people in the house and relatives and mother-in-law and father-in-law. We finish with all of that and we fight only the devil. That's one proof that you'll come into the new covenant.

So if the devil is to flee from us, I want to show you four verses that we have to flee from. If we flee from these four things, the devil will flee from us. Matthew chapter 3 verse 7. When he saw the Pharisees, John the Baptist saw the Pharisees, Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, you brood of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? That's what John preached.

Flee from the wrath to come. Run away from the judgment of God against sin. That is the first thing that we must flee from.

We live in a day when the wrath of God, the anger of God is not spoken about. It's all about the love of God. God is so loving.

He will never send anybody to hell. They become more spiritual than Jesus who spoke more about hell than anybody else. Don't listen to these deceivers.

One of the first things the New Testament speaks about fleeing from is the wrath of God. Flee from the wrath of God. God is angry against sin and if you want to know how angry He is against sin, look at Calvary's cross where his beloved son and you are not more, you and I are not more beloved than Jesus when he was hanging on the cross.

Not even his own sin but with our sin the father said, I cannot see that. Get away. I forsake you.

Imagine the father saying that to the beloved son who was with him from all eternity. Why? God doesn't look away from sick people like that. The day you learn to hate sin more than you hate leprosy and cancer and disease, you have understood the wrath of God.

If not, most believers I've met, they're more concerned about, oh I got a pain here. Is it cancer? What about that troubled conscience you have which you haven't said right? What about that person you haven't forgiven? What about that other person whom you have a grudge against? That's a million times worse than cancer. What about all that impurity you fool around with? I tell you, most people who claim to know much about Jesus Christ know nothing because they have not seen the wrath of God first.

Flee from the wrath of God. Then we can appreciate the love of God. If you try to learn the love of God before knowing the wrath of God, you will not appreciate it.

If you don't, like in the Old Testament, there was no mention of grace of God, grace of God, like in the New Testament. The Old Testament, the emphasis was fear of God, fear of God, fear of God, fear of God. And

you see, the thing about the early disciples were that 30 years they spent learning the fear of God.

Then they heard about the grace of God from Jesus. The trouble with us is from day one, we are learning about the grace of God. We have not spent 30 years as Jews in the old covenant learning the fear of God first and that's the tragedy.

We must, we'll appreciate the grace of God when we have first learned the fear of God. The wrath of God. Flee from the wrath of God.

That means see how serious sin is. See how much God hates it. Go and meditate on Calvary a little more and see how God hates sin.

Even if it is upon his own beloved son. That voice which said this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. Three and a half years later he says, I don't want to look at you.

Not only don't want to look at you, I forsake you. I want to meditate on that. There's a song which I mentioned before I often sing.

Ever when I'm tempted Lord make me see my God alone outstretched and bruised and bleeding on the earth that he made and make me feel it was my sin as though no other sins were there and that sin of mine was to him who could bear the world a Lord that he could scarcely bear. He who bears the world on his shoulders could not bear the Lord of my sin. I've spent 50 years meditating on Calvary and I continue to do that and it moves my heart, makes me weep at times, but more than anything else makes me hate sin.

It only makes you weep just sentimental stuff like these Jesus movies. You weep every time you see Jesus hanging on the cross. But the real test that you've understood it is when you learn to hate sin.

Flee from the wrath of God brothers and sisters. The time is coming soon when Jesus will return and people will say cry to the rocks and mountains says in Revelation 6 cover us from the wrath of God. This is terrible.

We heard a few crazy preachers preaching about it but we thought it was all nonsense. Now we see it's true. Cover us from the wrath of Jesus Christ.

Is that a wrath of Jesus Christ? God says in Revelation 6 the wrath of the Lamb. Boy take that seriously. Flee from it and if you have not fled from the wrath of God, you have not seen the seriousness of sin begin there.

There's no other place to begin and be really born again. Born again is to flee from the wrath to come. Here's I'm going heading towards sin in the world and I turn away from that and run towards God.

Flee that means I mustn't just turn. I must run. What does run flee mean? I told you run for your life.

You like that? Run for your life from the wrath of God. Run for your life from the wrath that comes upon sin. Oh God help me not just to meekly turn around.

Okay I hear about repentance. I think I'll give up that bad habit. It's giving me a bad testimony in any case.

That's not the thing. How often we run from anything that gives us a bad testimony. Oh if I lose my temper in the midst of the church I will lose my testimony so I better not do that.

Worthless. Run from for your life from the wrath of God whether people see you or not. Flee from the wrath of God.

He who has ears to hear let him hear and then you'll recognize that Jesus took that entire wrath of God. The wrath of God was satisfied when Jesus Christ was crucified there on the cross and I say thank you Lord. That's what will make us love Jesus more than anything else.

When I see how terrible the wrath of God is against sin. I say Lord I'm so thankful and so sometimes some of us have been believers so long we've forgotten how terrible the wrath of God is. We sort of become comfortable.

We lost our appreciation for Jesus dying for us on the cross. It's one of the prayers I prayed Lord let that day never come in my life when inwardly at least I will not weep when I think that Jesus died for a sinner like me. I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene and wonder how he could love me a sinner condemned unclean.

I will sing that till my dying day. Oh how marvelous how wonderful that he could love even me. Then once we have fled from the wrath of God we turn to 1 Corinthians and chapter 6. It says here we are to flee from immorality.

Verse 18. 1 Corinthians 6 verse 18. Flee from immorality.

Free. When you see a pornographic brook what should you do? Turn around and run for your life. You accidentally came upon a pornographic site on the computer.

Get up from your chair and run for your life or switch off the computer immediately or close the page for your life. Don't just gently. What shall I do now? Then you haven't understood how serious immorality is.

There's a weak attitude towards sin with a lot of believers particularly sexual sin and that's why the devil just laughs at them. The devil messes up their house and they can't do anything. What to do brother the devil's come and messed up my house.

I'll tell you why he's messed up the house. You don't run away from sin. That's why he doesn't run away from you.

He says who are you? I know Jesus and Paul I know but who are you? I know the attitude Jesus and Paul had towards sin and I know your attitude also. Who are you? You think you can fight me? Huh you and I are on the same side he says. He who has ears to hear let him hear.

Flee from immorality and Satan will flee from you. He doesn't say stand there and fight against it. No.

If you see a lion coming running down the road what do you do? Stand there like some wrestler or something. I'm going to fight this. I don't know about you.

I'll run. I'll run as fast as I can. I'll break a few records from my whatever I've achieved so far at that time.

That's how fast I'll run and when you learn to run from immorality like that I tell you brother you will not say anymore brother I'm trying to get victory over sin. You know the number of emails I get brother I really want to overcome sexual lust. I'm really trying to overcome sin.

I'm not able to brother. Can you give me some advice? I'll tell you what. Run.

Run from immorality. As soon as you see something you see some flirtatious girl. Maybe somebody in the church.

Avoid her. Dressed flirtatiously. Sex is a tremendous power that God has put in man for good.

If it were not for sex none of us would be here. God gave that tremendous power to Adam and Eve to produce children. But like everything God created the devil has abused.

God created music the devil abused it. Everything God made. God's made humor and the devil's abused it.

God created sex and the devil's abused it. Which side are you on? On God's side using sex properly or the devil's side abusing it. Well you have to be on one side.

You can't be neutral. And don't think that you become some type of sanyasi and try to say don't get married that's the solution. No.

God did not tell Adam to be a sanyasi. He told him to get married and have children. That's the most spiritual thing you can do.

And that was before sin came into the world. He told him to have sex with his wife and have children. Be fruitful and multiply.

How was he supposed to do that? By shaking hands with his wife? No. God created that. It's been abused by the devil.

That's what we call immorality. And it's there in every man and let me tell you in a woman too. You girls may not have such a temptation with your thoughts.

I mean there's some perverted one percent of girls who go after pornography on the website. But that's a perversion. Normally it's only men who are tempted much by that.

But you girls also have recognized there's a tremendous power in you to attract the opposite sex. Especially by revealing your body. Either with tight-fitting clothes that reveal your body contours or with exposing more and more and more.

Of course you've got a good excuse for exposing your body saying it's hot. But how is it men don't wear the type of t-shirts you wear? I never see any man coming here with sleeveless shirts saying it's hot. It's all exposure.

It's the spirit of the world. He who was yours to hear or she was yours to hear. Ask yourself when you say it's hot.

Is that the way men dress? Don't they feel heat too? In fact men feel more heat than women. Why is it they don't dress like that? It's not heat. It's some other type of heat.

Not physical heat. Which is wanting you to tempt men. Expose them.

Expose yourself to them. Make yourself attractive physically. And I'm surprised when married women do that.

Who should be making themselves attractive only to their husbands. Make yourself as attractive as possible to your husband. Not to other men.

You got to be careful because the spirit in the world. That spirit that you find in models and actresses and all. It's a spirit of sex and immorality.

Promoted by women. So it's there. It's a tremendous force.

If you don't recognize it. You may think I'm being extreme. Say what you like.

One day when Jesus comes back. You stand before him and ask him. Lord was brother Zachary right or wrong? Or was extreme? You'll get a surprise when you hear what he says.

You will. I tell you. Don't follow the fashions of the world.

They are all meant to attract men. Now this attraction itself is perfectly normal. God created it as in us.

So that we can get married. In fact by the time you're 16 or 17 or even earlier. If you're not attracted to the opposite sex.

You better have a medical checkup. Something is wrong. You don't have to feel oh I'm getting attracted to the opposite sex.

That's normal. It's like saying I feel hungry. If you don't feel hungry.

You better have a medical checkup. If you don't feel sleepy. You better have a medical checkup.

If you don't feel attracted to the opposite sex. By the time you're a teenager. You better get a medical checkup.

It's perfectly normal. As normal as the desire for food and sleep. It's a desire for sex.

But you can violate all those things. You can be so hungry that you go and steal food from a shop. That's wrong.

Or you can say I want to sleep so much. That you go to work and sleep at your place of work. That's wrong.

And in the same way. You can say the desire for sex is so great. I've got to fulfill it.

Yeah there's a place to fulfill it in marriage. There's a place to sleep. Not at work.

There's a way to get food. Not by stealing. And there's a way to fulfill our sexual desire.

It's in marriage. Not outside of it. It's completely wrong to seek for any fulfillment outside and in marriage.

Also only with your wife. Be careful. Flee from immorality.

Avoid these flirtatious girls. Even married women at work. Who try to be very friendly with you.

You say well I'm not touching them. But the test is this. That loose jocular way in which you speak to her.

If your wife walks into your office at that moment. Will you continue speaking to her like that? Or will you suddenly look in the other direction and start doing your work or something? Then you know you're wrong. Ask yourself when you try to justify it.

Saying I'm only joking. If your wife walks in right now. Will you continue in the same tone of voice? Then you know whether it's joking.

Or whether there's something impure there. There's a lot of impurity in the world. And I want to protect everyone in this church from immorality.

And I'll tell you. You can't fight it. If the Bible said fight immorality.

I would preach that. The Bible says flee immorality. That's why I preach that.

But I'll tell you why. There is a place to fight also. That is our inward desire after sex.

I can't run away from my thoughts. I wish I could. But these thoughts come in from my flesh.

That I have to fight. So there's an aspect of sexual temptation that I have to fight. Which is this inward thing with which I'm tempted probably many times a day.

And particularly when you're younger. It gets a little lesser as you grow older. But when you're young it's there.

Very strong. You know fight it inwardly the whole day. But externally.

That's the thing we got to flee from. The pornographic book. The flirtatious woman.

All these external sources of temptation that billboard on the road. Those cinema advertisements. The pictures of all these provocatively dressed models and film stars on television advertisements.

Flee. Run from it for your life. Because you have enough to do fighting those inward things all the time.

So there's a fighting and a fleeing. And the inward fighting I will tell you in Jesus name will become much easier if you run from the external thing. Okay.

May the Lord speak to you on that. The second thing I have to flee from. By the way before I go to that even Paul.

I just want to mention this in connection the same thing. Paul told Timothy in 2nd Timothy 2. Even though Timothy was I believe over 40 years old when he got the 2nd Timothy 2. He said to him in verse 22. 2 Timothy 2.22. Flee from youthful lusts.

Run away from those temptations that young people have. That's mostly immoral temptations. And the best way to run away from it he says in the same verse is by running after righteousness.

Running after faith. Running after love. Running after peace and fellowship with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Seek fellowship with those who are calling on the Lord from a pure heart. That is the best way to flee from youthful lusts. Great verse for all young people.

Easy to remember. 2 2 2 2. 2 Timothy 2.22. The best way to flee from youthful lusts. Another thing we have to flee from we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 is flee from idolatry.

Flee from idolatry. But before I come to that I'll put that last. I want to show you 1 Timothy 6 and verse 11.

Flee from these things you man of God. I told you he already told him to flee from youthful lusts in 2nd Timothy. He tells him to flee from something else here.

And that is verse 10 the love of money. We don't have to flee from money because we need money to live on this earth. Even Jesus needed money.

We read in Luke chapter 8 verse 2 and 3 certain rich women gave money to Jesus. Huge amounts of money because he had to feed 12 disciples and their families back home. He didn't flee from money but there was no love of money in Jesus.

He fled from the love of money. We need to distinguish between money and the love of money. Flee from the love of money.

Verse 10 the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil and those who are longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows. You man of God flee from this. So here's the second thing we have to flee from.

The pursuit of money beyond our needs. Now if you don't have money for your needs then I'll show you another verse. 2nd Thessalonians 3 verse 12 work in quiet fashion and eat your own bread.

Verse 10 if one is not willing to work then he's not he should not eat also. Here it says work. Work and earn your own living.

2nd Thessalonians 3 10 to 12. So there are some people some of you are earning a lot of money. You don't have to run after more unless you want to destroy yourself but some of you may be struggling to make ends meet by all means.

Follow 2nd Thessalonians 3 and seek to find employment maybe a second some other thing you can do on the side or something to earn enough for your family's needs because it says in 1 Timothy 5 8 that if a man doesn't provide for his own family he's worse than an unbeliever. It also says in 2nd Corinthians 12 and verse 14 that a good father should also lay up something for his children to give them a good start in life if you can. So there's nothing wrong in earning money.

There's nothing wrong in saving money. The saves up for the future. In that teeny weeny brain of that ant it says there won't be enough food in winter let me save up for the future but many Christians don't have even that much of a sense to save for the future.

When they have come to a need they have to beg or borrow because they didn't have the sense of the ant. So I'm not talking about that I'm talking about the love of money and there's a lot of it in the world today and it's happening it's coming to India because India has suddenly become prosperous a lot of people are earning a lot of money that you could not even imagine that your parents could not imagine that you'd be earning five years ago. Look what amount of money you're getting in your hand.

You think I envy you? No sir I feel sorry for you. My wife and I were so tremendously blessed because we began our married life with very very little. You ask brother Ian he'll tell you the same thing.

Those years of struggle were very good for me and my wife. So good that I wish God would give that wedding gift to every married couple of three years of financial struggle. Boy values you get there you'll never get.

You guys are earning plenty before you even get married. Now you can't do anything about it I'm not saying give up your job but all I say is live you're in danger. You're you're like a handicapped person.

You're like a person running on one leg. I feel sorry for you. You got a handicap.

The handicap of a huge salary. You can win but you got to fight that handicap. Some of you don't realize it like that.

You look at it like the people in the world say ah I'm so blessed. No you are not. You're in a handicap.

Fight it. Fight it. You can still overcome brother.

You're like a person who's crippled. Crippled with a lot of money. You're so heavily weighed down that when Jesus comes he'll find it difficult to lift you up and take you up to heaven because you're weighed down with your wealth which you think is a blessing.

It's a curse. That's why you don't grow spiritually. You love money and I'll tell you one way to fight the love of money.

Give. Learn to give wisely but learn to give. Give to the poor.

Give to the work of God where there's a genuine work of God. Sure. You know just because Ian and Newton and I minister here and we don't take a salary.

I mean I've never taken one cent from this church in 36 years and I never will. But what I say is that doesn't mean you should not appreciate those who serve you. The Bible says they should be paid and if we don't accept it and you can give it to the church.

You don't have to give it to me but there's a need or to the poor churches in Tamil Nadu. Otherwise you'll never be free from the love of money. You just love love love love love to get and get and get it and you're missing the higher blessing which is that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

You receive such a huge salary. You receive such a huge inheritance. You think you're blessed.

I feel sorry for you. You're so blind. You'll be more blessed if you learn to give.

Flee from the love of money. Run away from it. Why doesn't the devil run and run from you? Because you don't run away from the love of money.

You embrace it. Say I like this. I like this.

You say this is not immorality. It's equal to immorality because it says flee from immorality. Flee from the love of money and I'm not preaching what I have not practiced.

I do not preach what I do not practice. Whether it's immorality or the love of money. I'll tell you honestly I've never once been to a pornographic website on my computer in my life.

Does the computer know I'm 72 years old and therefore doesn't tempt me to such things? It's up to me whether I decide to go there or not. These suspicious sites. I say I don't want to test them out.

I want to run from the love of money. That's why I don't say I'm a paid preacher. No.

I'll earn my own living and I serve the Lord because I want the devil to flee from me. Thirdly, come to 1 Corinthians chapter 10 the verse I showed. Flee from idolatry.

1 Corinthians 10 14. You have to run away from idolatry. Idolatry is the worship of self.

Why do you get offended when somebody says something to you or doesn't smile at you or doesn't shake your hand on a Sunday? I'll tell you because you're an idol worshiper who's worshiping yourself. That's why you get offended. Oh that person said this or that person didn't say this or my husband said this or my wife said this.

Dear brother sister flee from idolatry. You will never get offended. I'm not preaching what I haven't practiced.

You can come to the place where you say it's impossible to offend me. You know that verse in the bible which says nothing shall offend them. Great peace of those who love thy law.

Psalms 119. Nothing shall offend them. I love that.

I said Lord I want that life and I think I've come there. Nothing will offend me. People say something.

Don't say something. Respect me. Don't respect me.

Doesn't make a difference. We long that Jesus will be glorified. That's what we long in the church.

This morning I wanted to pass a message here to CFC. So I this is an indication how many new people have come to CFC. I rang up the church office and I said I'm Zach Poonen.

They said who's Zach Poonen? I said great. I said this is the day I've been waiting for where I will decrease and he will increase. Like you know Lord it's wonderful.

The church doesn't need me anymore. People know Jesus. That's important.

That's all that matters. And I felt like Simon Simeon when he saw the baby Jesus. Lord now your servant can depart in peace because your eyes, mine eyes have seen your salvation.

I've seen your body. You know that's going to be in heaven. You'll really get offended if people say who are you? We know Jesus.

That's all. Worthy is the lamb. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3 who is Paul? Who is Apollos? Those are his words.

Read in 1 Corinthians 3. It's God who's everything. Don't get offended when somebody didn't recognize you or give you the honor that you think you deserve. You've been so long in the church.

People should know who you are. They may not even know your name. Thank God.

Idolatry. The worship of self. Run from it.

If you get offended you're a self-worshiper. Run from it. So many things.

You expect people to know your birthday. Oh they forgot my birthday. Wonderful brother.

Praise the Lord. Accidentally your name didn't come up on the screen the birthday. You should go home and have a party.

They didn't put your name up. Great. What all things people get offended with and they say if they've been, oh I'm a believer, a member of the body of Christ.

You want Christ to be exalted or yourself? Oh they give, they appreciate everybody else who did work from the conference but they didn't appreciate me. I was also one of those who went to clean the toilets and they didn't mention my name. Brother you should be leaping for joy.

Do you know how much of idolatry of self there is in us? So many areas. If you ask yourself why do you get hurt? People say that hurt me because you're an idol worshiper. Little children flee from idols.

That's the last verse. 1 John writes in his epistle after telling so many good things in 1 John walk as Jesus walked. Finally he says one last verse.

Run away from idolatry. Run away from the worship of yourself where you get hurt, you get offended with all types of silly little things. You really don't want Jesus to be glorified.

I remember years ago when I was a young man and the Lord said to me from Colossians 1:18. In all things Christ must have the preeminence and God said to me if you make it your aim in your life and your ministry that in all things Christ will have the preeminence and not you. I will back you till the end of your life.

I want to tell you God has backed me through many years in many countries and I believe if I remain along this way of the cross he'll back me till the end of my life. You can go that way too. There's no partiality with God.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father help us not to just be fascinated by a good message like Herod like to hear John the Baptist but to be gripped by the truth of God. Help us to flee from the things that we should be fleeing from and so that the devil can flee from us and your name will be glorified.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/orppX8sTkPQ.mp4>

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