

Freed From Wordly Attitudes

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the need for a radical change in our lives, seeking to please God and living a life centered on Him, in order to overcome worldly attitudes and achieve true spirituality.

Duration: 58:11

Scripture: Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:15, Romans 12:2, Philippians 4:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, James 1:22, 1 Peter 4:15

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Kingdom Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of walking upright in a crooked world, focusing on avoiding greed, being cautious about unnecessary curiosity, and filling the mind with useful information that aligns with God's will. It challenges listeners to judge themselves, prioritize spiritual growth, and seek to live a life that glorifies God by being concerned about others and making decisions based on God's kingdom principles.

Transcript

We were considering last Sunday about turning the world right side up and we saw how this was the way the folks in Thessalonica reported the preaching of Paul. These are people who have come to turn the world upside down in Acts chapter 17. And I mentioned how actually the world became upside down the day that Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden because we need to see what was it that turned the world upside down.

Adam and Eve sought their own instead of the glory of God. They didn't seek to please God but sought to please themselves and that is how sin came to the world and that's how man became upside down. So when you say that Jesus came to make man walk properly it should be the opposite of what happened in the Garden of Eden.

Now God gave an inkling of this in an Old Testament verse in Leviticus chapter 26 and verse 13. If you are not familiar with this verse I encourage you to look at it. You know the children of Israel being brought out of the land of Egypt in the Old Testament was a picture of our redemption from sin and Satan.

So apply this verse to ourselves and say that I'm the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of sin and Satan so that you will not be their slaves and I broke the bars of your yoke and make you walk erect not upside down. That's the way God wants us to go. You know he only can make us walk erect where we

seek to please him and not ourselves.

If you turn to Romans in chapter 15 you see that exemplified in the life of Jesus. I've often said but if you want to know how God wanted Adam to live look at the life of Jesus. That's how God wanted Adam to live and that's how he wants every one of us to live.

One of the reasons why God sent Christ to earth besides that dying for our sins was that he might show us how to live. I mean he would have died at the age of 18 for our sins. Why did he have to live 33 years with all that suffering? Because he came to earth not only to die for our sins and this wonderful truth that most Christians haven't understood that Jesus lived on earth to show us how we should live.

99% of Christians only know that Jesus died for their sins but his death for their sins was on one day of his life. Six hours of his life that's all. What was he doing for 33 years? Compare one day with 33 years.

What's the proportion? 33 years he lived on earth to show us how man is supposed to live. How a child is supposed to live he demonstrated in the years of his childhood in Nazareth. How a young teenager with all the passions in his body is supposed to live.

He demonstrated when he was a teenager how teenage men should relate to young girls. He was tempted and he demonstrated and you say it's not written in Scripture. Jesus once said the Holy Spirit when he has come he will take of the things of mine and show it to you.

Why is everything not written in Scripture? I'll tell you why. The secret of the Lord we read in the Psalms is for those who fear him and to them he will reveal his covenant. There are secrets that you don't publicize.

You whisper in people's ears. Forgiveness of sins is an open truth but to walk as Jesus walked is a secret. It's called a mystery of Godliness and that's why more than 95% of believers don't have a clue about it.

But if you fear God and your great longing is to obey the command in 1 John 2 6 which says we must walk as Jesus walked, I tell you he will show you how Jesus looked at women when he was 18 years old. Otherwise even if you're 80 years old you won't discover it because God sees you have no desire to live that way. He doesn't go revealing his secrets to people of no interest and that's the reason why I believe many of us sitting here have never overcome lusting with our eyes and you never will because God sees you're not keen about it.

You want to be free from the love of money? God will show you how Jesus handled money. It's a promise in John 16. Let me show you that before coming to Romans 15.

John 16 is a wonderful promise and I've claimed it many times and I would encourage you to do it. John 16 it says the Holy Spirit when he comes, verse 14, he will, the middle of that verse, he will take of mine and will show it to you. Now you don't need the Holy Spirit to know that Jesus healed the sick.

That's written in Scripture. You can be an atheist and read that. You don't need any fear of God to know that Jesus raised the dead.

You just need to be able to read some language, have a Bible you read that. But there are a million things about Christ that are not written in Scripture, which are secrets. God reveals to those who fear him and the more you fear him, the more you'll discover.

Then you will discover what true spirituality is. I tell you, 95% of believers I've met don't have a clue about what it means to be spiritual. They don't have a clue because they don't even know the difference between what is soulish and what is spiritual.

They don't know the difference between what is religious and what is spiritual. They don't know the difference between what is human and what is divine. What's the difference between human goodness and divine nature? Or human anger and divine anger? Human love and divine love? You just don't know.

What's the reason? They're not serious about walking as Jesus walked. I can offer this challenge to any of you sitting here, any one of you, even if you're a young child. If you're serious about one verse in Scripture, 1 John 2:6, which says anyone who says he's a Christian must walk and live as Jesus lived.

That's the Living Bible translation. If you're serious about that, just that one verse, I guarantee God will show you amazing things, which other Christians, even those who listen to messages like this, won't understand. He was ears to hear, let him hear.

I tell you, there are many, many people who haven't seen Him. Many of our elder brothers in our churches haven't seen Him. I'll tell you honestly, because I've seen their life.

They haven't been gripped by the way Jesus lived. Many, many others. The Holy Spirit will take of the things of Christ and show it to us.

That's why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I'll tell you quite honestly, I'm more interested in the Holy Spirit showing me the things of Christ than speaking in tongues, even though I do speak in tongues. That's not the main thing for me.

It is the main thing for many people, but to me, it's like a little finger. I don't cut it off. I keep it the right size.

But the main thing for me is the heart of the Christian life, to see Jesus and to be like Him. And that, I see, is the main reason why the Holy Spirit comes. You can get taken up with other little doctrines of the Holy Spirit and miss out on the main thing.

That's what the devil does. He gets us taken up with other things and the end result is we have been taken up with all these other things and we still walk upside down. You can have all the gifts of the Holy Spirit and walk upside down.

An example of that is in the Corinthians. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1, they had all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but they were walking upside down. They didn't even know that it was wrong to take a brother to court.

They didn't know that immorality is not permitted in the Christian life, that immoral people will never enter God's kingdom. They didn't even know it. So Romans 15, you see how Jesus lived.

What it means to walk upright, the way God wanted man to live. Romans 15, it says here in verse 3, Christ did not please himself. He did not please himself.

Throughout his life, for 33 years, imagine if the Lord told you, listen, I want you to live the next one month never pleasing yourself. You say, why? What a miracle. Jesus lived 33 years like that.

You'd say that's a miserable life. That would be a miserable life if I can never please myself. On the contrary, you won't be so depressed as you are now.

You won't get angry like you get angry now. You won't lust with your eyes like you do now. Many things will change in your life.

If you're wondering, you're struggling, you're struggling. I've heard people tell me, oh brother, I'm still struggling with lust. I'm still struggling with the love of money.

I tell you, you will struggle forever. Till you say the way Jesus lived is the way I want to live. I don't want to live centered in myself.

I want to live centered in God. I tell you, some of your sicknesses will be healed when you do that. You think you've all those multitudes of injections and pills and tablets and all will heal you.

No, the problem is you're centered in yourself. I'm not talking about every sickness. A lot of sicknesses come because we live in a sin-cursed earth.

Like thorns poke our foot, we catch the flu. And I'm not talking about that type of stuff. But there are definitely at least 10% of sicknesses that come because man is self-centered, which he can be free from.

Many, many problems in our life are not going to go by coming to church, singing songs, attending meetings, or even listening to messages. You got to say, Lord, I want a radical change in my life. I want you to change my way of thinking.

I want you to renew my mind. I want you to show me what it is to walk upright and erect. There is a life that's promised in Scripture, which I find very few Christians live in.

Most Christians are just saying, yeah, one day I'll be like that. They'll never be like that because they're not serious. It's like a student saying, yeah, one day I'll get my PhD and the guy doesn't even go to school.

He's playing marbles and playing the fool the whole day. Well, he get his PhD. He probably never even finished third standard because he's not serious about his studies.

We can have great ambitions. I want to be this and I want to be that. I want to be like Christ and all that.

But if you're not serious, Jesus once said that the kingdom of heaven is taken by people who do violence, not external violence. We are men of peace externally, but violence to everything in their life that stands in the way of their possessing God's kingdom. Paul once found that there were desires in his body that he had to discipline and control if he was to qualify and win the race.

He says that in 1 Corinthians 9, the last verse. And that's one reason the Bible says we got to fast sometimes. Fast means deny ourselves certain things which are normal.

I'm not talking about giving up sinful things. I'm talking about giving up certain legitimate things which hinder us from pleasing God. I want to speak particularly to those sitting here who are determined that whatever the price you have to pay, whatever the cost, you want to please God in your life.

I don't know how many of you there are like that. But I believe there are some. And to you I say, God will do that in your life.

There is a light promised in the New Testament, like Paul says in his own life, where he says, thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in life. Always in triumph. Never gloomy, always giving thanks, never losing our temper, never depressed, never in a bad mood, never anxious.

I can show you verses for all of these. You know those verses yourself. But you have assumed for so long that those are just high concepts.

It will never be achieved. It will never be achieved by those who are seeking other things in life. If you're seeking honor for yourself, I guarantee you'll never achieve the life the Bible speaks about.

If you're seeking your own name and fame and to please yourself, I agree, you'll never come to that life, even in a hundred years. But if you're serious and wholehearted and say, Lord, I recognize now that you didn't create me to live for myself. You didn't even create me to live for other people.

You created me to live for the glory of God. I want to do that in my life. I'm willing to pay any price for it.

I want to walk erect. I want to walk different from everybody else on the earth. I don't want to assume that people around me live like that.

I also live like that. I don't want to assume that as a husband and wife, we'll always argue and fight forever till Jesus comes. That's rubbish.

That's a lie of a devil. If you accept it, it'll be true in your life. But if you see that the Bible teaches another standard, you will live by another standard.

It's all up to you. If you're satisfied with exercising some gifts of the Holy Spirit, that's all you'll have. And you can even go to hell without all those gifts of the Spirit.

Because the Lord is calling people to follow him who will deny themselves and take up that cross every day. Now, you don't hear that much in the pulpits of Christian churches today. Because the gospel that's being preached today, which has made man, even those who say they are believers, walk upside down, is a man-centered gospel.

Whereas the Bible teaches a God-centered gospel. And there's a world of difference between the two. Let me show you a verse.

1 Corinthians, in Chapter 10. I'm talking about those who want to be radical Christians, who really want to live for God and not waste their earthly life. Because we have only one earthly life.

If you waste it, it's gone. It's like having a billion dollars and just wasting it or flushing it down the toilet. That's how many Christians are living.

I believe my life is worth more than a billion dollars and so is yours or a billion rupees or a billion whatever. And if I waste it, it's like taking all that money and flushing it down the toilet. I don't want to do it.

I'm not going to get this money again. I'm not going to get this life again. One time in my life, God gives you a billion minutes to live for him.

It's up to you. How are you going to use it? And we are more careful with our money than with our time and how we use our life. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 31 says, he takes the simplest thing that we do on earth

every day, eating and drinking.

And he says, whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God. That's an amazing verse. You know, you could take that one verse and live all your life without any other verse in the Bible.

Just keep asking God in every situation, Lord, here, I'm supposed to do something now. This is more important than eating or drinking. I'm getting married or I'm looking for a job or moving location, going here and there.

Whatever you do, let's show me, Lord, what is for your glory here? Not what is for my comfort and what is for my gain and what is for your glory? I want to ask you, my dear brothers and sisters, many of you have been believers for 10, 15, 20 years. Whenever you've taken a decision, you've taken many decisions in the past. You've taken decisions concerning marriage, concerning job, concerning location, concerning many, many things.

Now, answer this question to yourself. How many times in those decisions you took did you say, Lord, what will glorify you most here? Before I take this decision, I have this option and this option and this option. Which of the three will glorify you the most? I want to choose that.

Can you think of instances in your life where you sincerely, purposely sought what would glorify God the most? And you may find very often that that didn't even enter into your thinking and that most of the time you thought of your convenience and your satisfaction, your pleasure, but you still go to church. You're a very good religious person. You haven't understood true spirituality.

A truly spiritual person will say, Lord, what is for the glory of God? What will glorify you in this? How shall I respond to this person's rude remarks to me? I don't want to please myself. What will glorify you the most in every decision? That is the happiest, most wonderful, most triumphant Christian life anybody can ever live. Now, if a man doesn't start there and he says, brother, I still lose my temper, I still lust, and I still get angry, I still get depressed.

Brother, you will. You will for the next hundred years you will. Because you've got your foundation wrong.

You've not laid the axe to the root of all the problem. I think of when antibiotics were discovered. Before antibiotics were discovered, they used to have ointments to rub on your sores to remove them superficially.

They'd come somewhere else. Then somebody discovered antibiotics. You know what antibiotics did? You don't rub the antibiotics on the sore.

You swallow it so that it hits the root of the disease. And when the root of the disease is hit, the sores disappear all over the body. It's something like that.

The law was only a temporary measure. You know, rub it here, rub it there, keep the body healthy. But Jesus came with an axe to the root of the tree and said, now I will solve the problem at the root so that you don't live with these problems that Old Testament people lived with.

Elijah was depressed. Moses was angry. David committed adultery.

You don't have to have those things when the axe is hit to the root. Why do Christians go into all these things? Because the axe is not laid to the root in their life. That's the sad thing.

Whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. Imagine if you make that a motto in my life, that from now on I'm not going to take a decision in my life that's not for the glory of God. And start when you're young.

Lord, what will glorify you in my life? Ask yourself. I started when I was 21. I wish I'd started earlier.

But I'll tell you at the end of your life, you can look back over a very fruitful life. There is no limit to what God can do for a man who's totally illiterate or a woman. If you will decide even now, you say, Lord, many years of my life are wasted.

But at least the rest of my life, I want to live for the glory of God. I don't want to seek my own. Let me show you a couple of other verses.

In Philippians chapter 2, here's another good verse. It's another verse which you can just take and live all your life with. You don't need any other verse in the Bible.

Philippians 2 and verse 5. Have the same attitude in you that Jesus had. Have the same attitude in you that Jesus had. And what was that? There are two things particularly mentioned about him.

One, that he did not consider equality with God as something to be grasped and emptied himself. He came down and humbled himself. But the two things that are mentioned here are his concern for others, his total freedom from selfishness and from pride.

Those are the two things mentioned in verse 3. Don't do anything from selfishness or pride. Imagine if I take that verse seriously. Lord, from today onwards, this is Scripture.

Philippians 2 and 3. I don't want to do anything in my life that is selfish, where I think only of myself. But verse 4, I don't want to look out only for my personal interests, but for the interests of others. That is the attitude Jesus had.

Number one, long before he humbled himself on this earth, when he was in heaven and he looked down on this earth and he saw people living the miserable self-centered life that was taking them all to hell, he could have said, well, I'm okay. I'm having a good time here with the Father and the Holy Spirit and all the angels and others. But he couldn't sit there comfortably when he thought of all these other people who didn't enjoy what he enjoyed.

He wanted them desperately to enjoy what he enjoyed. And he said, if I can go down and tell them about this wonderful life up here in heaven, and I know I have to pay a tremendous price because they will reject me, kill me, that's fine. If I can get them to come to this life, it's worth it.

That was the spirit that brought Jesus to earth. That tremendous compassion that had a concern for other people that they should enjoy the spiritual life he enjoyed. I want to say that's part of true spirituality.

Now, when you're a Christian only concerned about yourself, yeah, I'm okay, I'm going to heaven, my sins are all forgiven, and not concerned about others, it's not the spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christ is one that is willing to pay any price to bring other people into God's kingdom, that never sought its own. You know, it's the spirit that drove missionaries for 150 years, from about the late 1700s to mid-1900s, from about 1780 to 1950.

We had a tremendous, or 1940, it was a tremendous missionary movement that drove people to all types of jungles. People who didn't have jobs, who couldn't get any jobs and become Christian workers like 90%

of Christian workers in India, I'm not talking about those third-rate Christian workers, I'm talking about people who could have earned a lot of money where they were, and who gave it up. Could have lived in a lot of comfort where they were, and gave it up.

And they didn't come here to foreign countries and live in five-star hotels like today's preachers from foreign countries. They went into the jungles to preach the gospel. They went into difficult places.

They sacrificed everything in order to bring others to Christ. And if any of us think we are spiritual, I'd encourage you to read some of these missionary biographies. They'll reduce you to this size when you read them.

They reduced me to that size when I read them. We have a generation growing up today, unfortunately, who have not read these biographies. I want to ask you young people, or even older people, how many missionary biographies have you read? Of what missionaries did during those years? Why did I stop at 1950? Because the missionaries who come to foreign countries after that have all been visitors and tourists.

They're not missionaries. They come for what they call short-term missions, two weeks, one month, three years, three months, one year. They're not missionaries.

They're trying to ease their conscience. But the missionaries before 1950, I really respect them. They were godly men and women.

No, they were not tourists. They were not seeking their own. They were seeking the good of others.

They were seeking the spirit of Christ. I enjoy so much this wonderful life. I've got to give it to others.

Now, God may not call you to be a missionary to a heathen land, but that spirit should still be there. Lord, you've given me a life. I've got to give it to others.

I can't keep it to myself. I've got to do everything possible to spread this word, even if your calling is maybe not an evangelist, but to share the wonderful truth of overcoming sin. Look at the millions of Christians who are defeated.

Look at the millions of Christians who are depressed, who still lose their temper, who still love money, who still lust with their eyes, who fall into adultery, who watch filthy movies on television. Don't you need to deliver them? Don't you need to tell them there's a better life than watching all that rubbish? How can you do that unless you yourself are free from it? Dear brothers and sisters, there's a tremendous need as we approach the end of time for people to walk upright, who are different from the world around, who don't seek to live the way the rest of the world lives, but live the way Jesus lived. And I want to encourage you to take that challenge and say, Lord, the rest of my life I want to live like this.

He did not seek his own. Do nothing from selfishness. Do nothing from conceit that makes you look down on other people.

You see, in the world, our selfishness is seen in things like this. You wish everything good for your family, but you don't wish good for other people. If you see something really good happen to somebody else, you feel a little unhappy about it.

You wish that some calamity would happen to that person. That shows the crookedness and evil that Satan has put into the mind of Adam, that has come filtering down, sinking down all his ways, come down all the way down to us. This desire that good should happen to me, but not for others.

If you think like that, I want to tell you, you've got the spirit of hell right inside your heart. I mean, however much you may sing and clap and do all that in the meeting, hell dwells in your heart. Because that's spirit of hell.

I don't want other people to have a good time. I don't want other people to have anything that's really good. I don't want it to go well with other people.

I don't want it to go well with other people's children. But of course, it must go well with me. It must go well with my children.

That is the spirit of hell. It's not the spirit of heaven. Ask yourself whether you'll have it.

And if you didn't know, I want to tell you, we all have it when we begin our Christian life. It's called the flesh. And the only person who's free from it is the man who's cleansed himself, who's detected it.

Say, Lord, I have it. I want to rid myself of it. How do I know that you have it? Well, I saw it in myself, and I know you are a descendant of Adam, just like me.

And I know that until I radically dealt with it, it wouldn't go. It's pretty deep-rooted, like a cancer. Ask yourself, can you really rejoice with others who are rejoicing? Or do you find a secret reluctance? Despite years of being in CFC, how hell still lives in your heart? How is that? Because you haven't taken the word seriously.

I want to deliver you from being religious, my brothers and sisters, because I have to answer to God in the final day when you stand before him. I mean, I can't stop you from going to hell, no. But I can at least warn you that you can sit here for 25 years, break bread for 25 years, and go to hell.

Listen to that. I believe that. If you don't take the Christian life seriously, if you don't say, Lord, deliver me from this self-centeredness, deliver me from wishing any evil for another person, deliver me, Lord, from a secret delight when evil happens to somebody else.

Deliver me, Lord, from a secret sadness when something good happens to somebody. Almighty God, get hell out of my heart. I want heaven in my heart.

I want the Holy Spirit. What is dwelling in your heart? Ask yourself. Is it the Spirit of Christ? Oh, what I need there is for repentance.

When we hear the truth of God and the light of God shines upon us and we see how Jesus lived, say, Lord, how unlike you I am. You know I still weep at night on my pillow because I'm unlike Christ in some area he shows me? When was the last time you did it? When was the last time you wept at night on your pillow and say, Lord, I'm sorry I was a bit unlike Christ in that way I spoke there or did this thing? You're not serious about the Christian life. No wonder you have so many problems.

No wonder you have so many sicknesses. Take the Christian life more seriously. Yeah, I speak especially to those who've been here for many, many years.

I'm not talking to those who have just started coming here recently. You haven't heard the things we preach here. We preach these things for 30 years.

And if you've heard these so many years and you haven't changed, I tell you, there's no chance you will change in the next 30 years unless you begin to take something radically now. Lord, I want to root out this. I want you to lay the axe to the root.

However much pain it causes me. I want to be honest. I'm willing to go and apologize to everybody in this church if needed, if I hurt them, because I want to set it right.

I tell you, do a little apologizing to others that will humble you pretty quickly. But we get around it. We hurt somebody, and we don't set it right by going and apologizing to that person because that hurts our pride.

We spoke evil about people behind their back, and we don't go and apologize to the person. We don't go and tell that person whom we spoke evil, I'm sorry, brother, for speaking evil about Mr. or Mrs. X or whatever it is. I want to take it back.

Do you ever do that? You don't do it? Well, no wonder you have problems. You'll continue to have problems because God sees you're not serious about taking back what you did wrong. You don't have to confess the sins of others, but what you did yourself.

There is so much like this we take so lightly because we want to retain our pride and our dignity and our reputation. Unless you come to Jesus and say, Lord, I'm willing to pay any price. I'm willing to humble myself to any extent.

I want to get rid of everything that dishonors you in my life. I want to set right every wrong thing that I did. Think how radical Zacchaeus was.

If you have taken money wrongfully from other people, how many of you would be so radical that you'd say, I'll give four times back what I took? I've hardly ever met people in my life like that, and people are so reluctant even to give one time what they took back. Imagine giving four times. I mean, Jesus could have said to him, hey, hang on, you don't have to give four times.

He's like, go right ahead. Make those guys happy. After all, you destroyed their happiness by cheating from them and stealing from them.

Make them happy now. Give them four times what you took from them and make them happy. He didn't stop them.

And if you want to give four times back to somebody else, I won't stop you. You'll be a happier person, and they'll be happier people, too. But if we are selfish and calculating, see, a lot of Christians are calculating.

Wrong is calculating. What is the exact down to the Naya Paisa? How much should I give to God? And you know, God is also very calculating when he gives to you. You get little spoonfuls of grace from God because you give little spoonfuls to him, and that's all you get.

And there are other people getting rivers from God upon their life as they're giving rivers to God themselves. You give and you get back in the same measure. It's like that.

I've seen this. God will treat you the way you treat other people. If you treat them with mercy and compassion and kindness, God will be immensely merciful and compassionate and kind to you.

It's all being different from the world. A walking upright in a crooked, upside-down world. See this.

Let me mention another thing. One thing that's characteristic of people in the world is curiosity. Everybody in the world is curious.

You don't have to be educated for that. Down from the illiterate villager to the most educated executive. They're curious about other people's affairs.

They want to know about other people. They want to know this and that. All useless information, which will not help us one bit.

But they want to know. They want to know. They want to hear.

This is how gossip spreads. And it's not only among unbelievers. There's plenty of gossip among believers, especially at prayer meetings, small prayer meetings, gossip sessions where they talk about this and talk about this person and that person and the other person.

In fact, it's the favorite pastime of many Christians when they come together. And they're curious to know who's getting married to who, who's pregnant. I couldn't care less.

I'm not interested. I want to know how I can overcome sin in my life. I want to know how I can become like Jesus in my life, not who's pregnant and who's getting married.

If you're interested in those things, no wonder you have so many problems. No wonder you spend your time coming to the meetings, singing and praising the Lord, but never growing spiritually. How many of you will be radical now? Say, Lord, I don't want to be curious about anything that doesn't concern me.

I want to be curious about sin in my own life. I'm pretty curious about that. But I'm not interested in other people's affairs, except to bless them and help them.

If they have a need, let me help them. But I'm not interested in finding out this and finding out that. Where did they get this? Where did they get that? What are they doing here? What are they doing there? The number of things that the devil puts into your mind, I tell you, the number of things that Christians are occupied with, and they call themselves Christians.

They're not Christians. They're just downright unbelievers pretending to be Christians. Christian is a person who, you know what the word Christian really means? It's Mrs. Jesus Christ, if I were to put it reverently.

She's just like my wife got my name when she married me. When a person marries Christ, he becomes a Christian. Lord, I'm committed to you now.

I want to do what you want me to do. And I'm interested in you and me, not in all those other people, what they're doing. I'm not curious.

Let me show you a verse in 1 Samuel chapter 6. It's one of those verses, Old Testament, which says what God thinks of curiosity. The Ark of God was a very sacred piece of furniture in the Old Testament, which

nobody was supposed to touch or look inside. Everybody knew that the Ten Commandments tablets were inside, the pot of manna was there, and Aaron's rod that budded even though it was cut off from the tree.

There were three things inside the Ark. Everybody knew that, but very few people had seen it. And this is a number of generations after Moses' time.

In 1 Samuel chapter 6, we read that the Ark was kept in a place called Beth Shemesh. And in verse 19, it says in the Living Bible, Message Bible, The whole town was mourning, reeling under the hard blow, questioning who can stand before God. You know why they were killed? They were curious about something that didn't concern them at all.

That's all. They didn't kill anyone. They didn't commit adultery.

They were curious. They wanted to see what's in there. I heard there's something interesting there.

I want to see it. And God killed him. He said, mind your own business.

It's quite a warning to me. I take these verses pretty seriously because it tells me that God takes sin very seriously. That's none of your business.

Why do you want to poke your head into that? In 1 Peter 4, it says something similar in the New Testament. 1 Peter 4, it says, verse 15. Now, a whole lot of wicked people mentioned here.

Make sure that this is talking to believers. Beloved, verse 12. Believers, verse 15.

Make sure that none of you believers becomes a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or a busybody in other people's matters. How do you like that? Four evil people. Murderers, thieves, evildoers, and those who are curious about other people's matters.

You may have escaped the first three, but the fourth one is put in the same category as murderers. And none of your business. I believe this is almost the number one reason.

Almost the number one reason why many people do not grow spiritually. They have never finished with being a busybody in matters that don't concern them. Their eyes are always open, looking, looking, looking, and looking, and they're watching.

They're not looking at people who are like Jesus in order to become like them. Oh, if we're to like that, it'd be wonderful. If our eyes were always open to look around and look around at some godly man or woman who's become like Jesus and say, Lord, I want to be like that.

Instead of that, if your eyes look around to see something you want to be curious about, why that? Why this? Well, you'll be in the same state forever. Or your ears are always open to hear, hear, hear. What are people saying? I want to hear something.

I want to hear something. Some news about some juicy, as they call it in the world, juicy news about somebody. And that's how the world is.

That's the world upside down. The world is full of people who are always looking around, curious, wanting to hear juicy news about others. And here I am walking upright in the midst of this crooked world.

No interest in all that. No interest at all in all of these things that don't concern me. That's walking upright.

Very practical, very down to earth. And there you'll see why. There you see how many Christians are not living like that.

Perhaps you see that scene yourself. And you say, why are you having so many problems in your life? Because you're walking on your head instead of your feet. Start walking on your feet.

Start walking upright, not like the rest of the people in the world. Instead of doing that, it says in verse 17, here's something else you could do instead of doing that. Let us judge ourselves first.

Let's be a little more curious about what's inside us and get rid of that. See, there are two curiosities mentioned here in verse 15 and verse 17. One is being curious about other people, and the other is being curious about ourselves.

Do you know the number of women, wives, who are suspicious of their husbands? Even when the husbands are upright men. Of course, some husbands are pretty evil, I know that. But even when they're upright, some women are, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm suspicious, curious, curious, finding out this, that, and the other.

I'll tell you, sister, worry about yourself. God will take care of other people. You're not going to solve any problem by being curious.

Tell me a problem that you solve by being curious about these unnecessary things. Be curious about things that are important. They teach in the schools, children to be curious about nature and science and why do these things happen.

That's how so many discoveries have been made. That's good. But to be curious about other people's affairs, that's demonic.

Jesus wasn't always trying to find out what was happening in other people's affairs. No. What I'm supposed to know, God will reveal to me.

I don't have to go peeking and finding out. I believe in CFC. The number one reason why many have not grown spiritually is this.

Many, many brothers, senior brothers and sisters are all curious about other things, which don't concern them at all. They're not spending enough time judging themselves. They're not weeping over their own sins and unlike this to Christ.

They're occupied with this, that, and the other, and this person, that person, the other person, and fill our mind with so much useless information. And all that space in our mind, which should have been filled with God's word, is filled with this useless information. So then when we try to read God's word, there's no place in our mind for that.

Do you know that your mind doesn't have an infinite capacity? Let me tell you a little thing. This universe is a huge thing, but your mind is not like that. Your mind is like a room.

There's only so much stuff that you can put inside that room. Okay? If you stuff something else in, something else has to go out. You must decide what you want to put in your mind.

If you want to put into your mind all that useless information about other people, and then try to put God's word in, the mind will say, hey, there's no place for that. I've got to keep the information you've stored here about a hundred other people you've got nothing to do with. There's no place for God's word here.

That's why many of us are ignorant of God's word. I'll tell you a little way, a simple way to get to know God's word, really to know God's word. Get through out of your mind today and determine I'm not going to put into my mind useless information that is not going to help me one bit in this world.

I'm not talking saying that all our information should be spiritual. If you're working with computers, you need to know about computers. You need to have a place in your mind for that.

If you're a nurse or a teacher, you need to have information. I'm talking about the whole lot of useless information, which doesn't help you one bit. But you're always curious to find out.

It's almost as though endless curiosity to find out more and more and more and more. Get rid of that from today and say, Lord, all that extra space I'm going to get in my mind from now on, I'm going to fill it with the word of God and see what will happen to you in six months. I tell you, things will change.

I'm telling you because I decided that myself. I've got the same nature as you from Adam. When I say I decide now what I'm going to put into my mind, you know, Paul says about his body in 1 Corinthians 9, 28, the living Bible says, I train my body to do what it should do, not what it wants to do.

My body may want to eat and eat and eat and eat and eat and eat. And Paul says, no, you're not going to eat and eat and eat and eat and eat and get fat and sick. I'm going to discipline you that you eat a little less.

And the mind says, I want this information, this information. I train my mind to be filled with what it needs, not what it wants. Do you give your children everything they want? That's the best way to get useless, spoiled children.

You know that. Every parent knows that. Give your children everything they ask for and you'll have spoiled children.

Give your mind everything that it wants, you'll have a useless mind. But you tell your children, no, you're not going to have that. And I'm going to tell my mind, no, you're not going to look at that picture.

You know, I'm not going to read that story, even if it's in the newspaper. I'm not interested in reading that. What's the use of that? It doesn't help me one bit.

What's the use of reading about the details of how somebody raped somebody somewhere else? How does that help you, brother? Except stimulate your passions and give you a lot of useless information, which is not going to make you spiritual. And one corner in your mind is occupied. This information, that information, and then you try to read God's word, there's no place for it.

Because the mind is filled with rubbish. That's how the world is. We're going to be different.

We're going to walk upright in a crooked world, in an upside down world with the wrong sense of values, filling their mind with all types of useless information. We're going to walk in the world with filling our mind with useful information. Information about addicts, for example.

You could, for very little money, subscribe to a missionary magazine to read about Christian work that's going on in North India. It's good to be curious about that. I am.

I've been getting it for many years. Or subscribe to a website. You don't have the money to read about persecution of Christians in other countries.

I'm very curious to know about that. When I read it every week, I read it. I want to know what's happening to my own brothers and sisters in China, in Eritrea.

We got an email from a brother in Eritrea. Eritrea, by the way, is in the middle of Africa, a Muslim country, who was so gripped by what they were getting from our site on the internet, they translated one of the books into the Eritrean language. I never even knew.

I was so delighted, and they sent us a copy of it. And then I read in this persecution website that a lot of Eritreans were locked up and killed. I've never heard from this brother for a long, long time.

I'm so thankful that before, whether he's locked up or killed now, I don't know, but before that happened, that I could communicate with him and encourage him. Do you know what's happening in the rest of the world to your brothers and sisters? It's so easy nowadays to know. If I stop being curious about a whole lot of unnecessary things, I can be curious about good things.

Now, the worldly people are not interested in all that. They're only interested in how to make more money and what's happening here, what's happening there, and all that useless information. I want to say, brothers and sisters, let us seek to have a renewed mind and say, Lord, I want to walk upright.

I don't want to fill my mind with what pleases me. Lord, something that'll help me to be more Christ-like, that'll help me to have a little more compassion for other needy people, that can help me once in a while perhaps to pray for one of them and help them. Think of you, what a useful life you can live, even without ever standing up in this pulpit, just by yourself.

Nobody in this church may even know your name. And you can be the most useful person sitting here if you say, Lord, I want my life to count for you from this day onwards. I'm not going to live with my mind occupied with the things that all the other people in the world are occupied with.

I want my mind to be disciplined from now on, to think about the things that are useful, to be concerned about other people, not to be curious about them, be concerned about them, and show me, Lord, how I can serve them, how I can live for the glory of God. To make my decisions based on, Lord, I want to think now, will this glorify God? If it doesn't, I'm not going to do it. Once Jesus was speaking and, you know, a man raised his hand and said, I've got a question.

And he said, tell my brother to divide the property with me. Imagine, in the midst of a spiritual message, he's asking Jesus to get involved in a property dispute. And Jesus said, no, I'm not going to do that.

That's all greed. What a definition of greed. Have you ever heard such a definition of greed? To get your legitimate half of your father's property when you're only two children is greed.

Have you ever heard of that? When there are only two children, to get 50% of your share, is that greed? According to Jesus, it is. According to the world, it isn't. According to the world, it's just fight and get it.

Jesus said, no, it's greed. And I want to train my mind to think like Jesus thinks. I remember, we have three children in our family, and when I came to my father's property, I said, Lord, I want to think like Jesus thinks.

I want to imagine that there are only two children in my family, that I'm not there. And I told my dad, you can divide it between them. I don't want to.

I'm not going to do it. I did the same with my wife's and her father's property. No, I'm not going to do it.

I want to train my mind to think like Jesus thinks. I don't want an atom of greed in my mind. Have I suffered loss? You guys have watched me.

Many of you have known me for 35 years. You've seen me in the days when I struggled. God doesn't let us down.

My children didn't beg on the roads, because I sought God's kingdom first. You seek God's kingdom first, His righteousness. He will honor you.

He'll take care of all your needs. And at the end of your life, your life must be a demonstration to the truth of the fact that if you live for God's kingdom, you'll have enough of this earth. Not too much.

I thank God he never gave me that which would destroy me. He knows exactly what to give. Dear brothers and sisters, that's the way you're supposed to live.

Completely different from the way the rest of the world lives. If you ask the Holy Spirit, he'll show you different, different aspects. May God help us.

It's a question of how you're going to respond personally to whatever the Holy Spirit's been telling you personally. Forget about everybody else. Say, Lord, deal with me and my mind.

Transformation begins in the mind. Worldliness is in the mind. We've got to be made erect in our mind, in our way of thinking.

Help us, Lord, we pray. Lord, I'm scared of being religious, not spiritual. And I'm scared that people here may be religious and fool themselves.

Please give us light. Shake us out of our complacency. Shake us up, Lord.

Do something drastic. Help us to live the way you want us to live in these closing days of time. As those who have an understanding of the times in which we live and the type of men and women you're looking for, young boys and girls you're looking for on earth at this time to be your witnesses.

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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