

# Freedom From Self-Centeredness

by Zac Poonen

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of breaking free from the self-centered life of Adam and embracing the indestructible life of Jesus, which requires a 180-degree repentance and steady progress in increasing likeness to Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:03:03

**Topics:** "Self-Centeredness"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to reflect on what worldly people seek after versus what Jesus sought after during his time on earth. He emphasizes that Jesus sought after his Father's will and the good of others, showing compassion for those in misery and leading them to a better life. The speaker urges the audience to count the cost of following Jesus and not make emotional decisions, but rather to sit down and carefully consider if they truly want to follow him. He also highlights the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit and going beyond just preaching the gospel, but also planting churches and making disciples.

---

## Transcript

And verse 16, that Jesus became a high priest according to the power of an indestructible life and not on the basis of anything external, not according to the law of a physical requirement. The contrast here is between physical requirements and spiritual requirements, the contrast is between external and inward. Our following of Jesus is primarily inward and what we see here is that the life we have got from Adam is a destructible life, it's a corrupt life.

That's why when Jesus died on the cross, God condemned that entire life of Adam. Jesus was born of the seed of Adam, you read that in Luke chapter 3, how the genealogy of Mary goes all the way up to Adam, but he was born without sin because he didn't have an earthly father, he was born holy because he was born of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 15, Jesus is called the lost Adam and the second man, it's one of those areas where you find even hymn writers have made a mistake, I don't know whether you know that English hymn which says a second Adam came to the rescue, Jesus is not the second Adam, it's all because people don't read the Bible carefully or slowly, Jesus is never called the second Adam, he's called the lost Adam, the Adam, Adamic race is finished, there is no second Adamic race.

1 Corinthians 15 and verse 45, the first Adam became a living soul but the last Adam became a life-giving spirit, he was the last Adam, that was the end of the Adamic race there and then he's called the first man

from the earth is earthy, verse 47, the second man is from heaven, so Jesus is called the second man and we're followers of that, that old Adamic race, that old Adamic inheritance we've got from Adam is totally finished and if I ever yield to it, you know, this is the seriousness of yielding to the lust of the flesh or the lust of the eyes, even in secret, I'm thereby saying, God, you made a mistake when you condemned all that on the cross, some of it is good and I want to enjoy some of it, I'm going directly against God's condemnation of that life of Adam on the cross, what God

condemned on the cross was the life of Adam, everything that the Adamic race is pursuing after was condemned on the cross, Jesus lived in complete opposition to what the entire world was running after and if I run after, you can call yourself a Christian and if you run after the things that the world's running after, you're saying to God, God, you were wrong in condemning all that on the cross, some of it is good and I'm going to pursue after it, do you know there's a bit of a rebellion there in that type of attitude towards a God as a Christian, I have to agree with God's condemnation of the life of Adam on the cross, the last Adam is finished, there is no second Adam, he was the last Adam and he was crucified on the cross at the end, it's a new creation now, the second man, these are

little things but they mean a lot, let me turn to Matthew chapter 6, what Jesus said in relation to anxiety, Matthew chapter 6, we read here, he talks about eating and drinking and clothing and many things like that and he says here, verse 32, verse 31, don't be anxious saying, what shall we eat, what shall we drink, what shall we be clothed with, verse 32, because all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek but your heavenly father knows that you need all these things, the race of Adam eagerly seeks after many things, that destructible life of Adam eagerly seeks after many things, I remember once thinking about that verse and I said Lord, I want to find out what are the things that the Gentiles eagerly seek after, you can either write it down or mentally make a list of, it's a good thing,

it's a good discipline, this expression of Jesus, all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek, the life of Adam makes people eagerly seek after certain things and you know what they are, food, clothing, good comfortable life, popularity and advancement in the world, you can make a big list of the things that the Gentiles eagerly seek after, they are doing everything possible to get these things, Jesus never sought after those things, now the question is, are you seeking after the things which the Gentiles are seeking after or the things that Jesus was seeking after, you see a lot of us may hear, may have heard what we heard the last 3-4 sessions and say, boy I want this indestructible life, do you really want to seek after the things that Jesus sought after, he said if you want to seek

after the things that I'm seeking after, then seek verse 33, God's kingdom and His righteousness and what about these other things we need in life, they will be added to you because your Heavenly Father knows that you need them, so there's a fundamental difference in which the destructible life of Adam lives on this earth and the indestructible life of Jesus lives on this earth, if you make Jesus your hero and you believe that the best possible life that any human being could ever live was the way Jesus lived on earth, I mean you got to believe that first and I wonder whether most Christians believe that to tell you honestly, many Christians if you really were to look into their mind, they feel that Jesus missed out on certain things which he should have had, like a little more

comfortable life, you know in one place it says that he was so busy serving people, let me show you that verse Mark chapter 3 verse 20, it says when Jesus came home, Mark 3 verse 20, the multitude gathered again to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal, I mean Jesus was so taken up with the ministry to people he wouldn't have time to eat, I want to ask you has that ever happened to you even

once in your entire life, I mean some of us lived 40-50 years, has there been a time even once in 50 years where you were so busy serving people that you didn't eat a meal, didn't happen even once, what type of life of Jesus are you seeking, is eating and drinking and clothing and the earthly things so important for you and it says here that his own people, that's his own relatives verse

21, when they saw him living like this they thought he's off his head and they took custody of him saying he has become insane, he's lost his senses, have you ever served the Lord in such a way that you're so intensely serving people that people have said this guy's lost his senses, he's become insane serving other people that he doesn't even have time to eat, it's not that Jesus starved all the time but there were times when he was so busy serving people that he didn't have time to eat, it was true of Paul, it was true of Jesus and it's true of almost every servant of God that served the Lord faithfully in 2,000 years because the life of Jesus when you think of it, think of it from what brought him down to this earth, talking about this indestructible life of Jesus which looks so

attractive but there's a price to be paid, remember that there are certain things in the Christian life that are absolutely free, forgiveness of sins, that's free, it's a gift, even the Holy Spirit's called a gift, you can't earn the Holy Spirit, you can't pay for it, the gifts of God are free but there are certain other things in the Christian life which you have to pay a price for, you remember Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like a treasure hidden in a field which a man had to sell everything in order to get it, so that wasn't free, there was something he had to pay a price for or he said it's like a man seeking for very precious pearls, everything he had in order to get that pearl and in to the church in Laodicea, the Lord says, I advise you to come to me and buy, not get

free, forgiveness of sins is free, gift of the Spirit is free, but he says in Revelation 3, I advise you to come and... he's telling Christians, I know you guys are born again but come and buy from me, you lack something because you are not willing to pay a price, come and buy from me gold refined in the fire, if you're not familiar with that verse I'll read it to you, Revelation chapter 3 and verse 18, I advise you and when Jesus advises me something I better listen to it, advise you to buy from me gold refined in fire, that is not free, that you may become rich and white garments that you may be clothed, that's not free, the shame of your nakedness may not reveal an eye salve to anoint your eyes that you may see, that's not free, I have to buy it, you remember the story of the ten

virgins, five of them were without... they had a lamp but they didn't have that extra flask of oil and that's why they missed out when the bridegroom came and it says they had to go and buy that oil, the wise virgins were those who had paid a price and bought that oil earlier and the foolish virgins were those who thought everything is free, they didn't buy and too late they woke up and said hey we got to go and buy this, now these things are written for our instruction, don't think that everything in the Christian life is free, for some things we have to pay a price and there are Christians, you know how human beings are such, I mean most things are like this, anything that they can get free, they're ready to have, anything you have to pay a price for, you say well I don't know whether I

want that, come to the Christian life like that and say tell me what's free, I'll take it, now I'll tell you, you get such people in your church, you'll never make it a church of disciples, Jesus said go into all the world and make disciples, to be a disciple you have to pay a price, to get forgiveness of sins, that's free, so there are people, there are many people who come to the church only to get something for themselves, what can I get free from this church, you'll find them in India, you'll find them in America, you'll find them everywhere in the world, what can I get free, if I come to this church people will serve me, they'll give me something

free, you'll never make a disciple out of that person, you say but they are so poor, do you know there was a widow who was so poor, she had

only two coins, you know what she did with those two coins, she gave it to the Lord, you read about it in the Gospel of Mark and Jesus had called his disciples, say hey come and see this, have you ever seen anything like this, disciples and said look at this widow and Jesus saw her putting those two coins into the box and he didn't go and stop her and say no no no, no need to put that, keep that for yourself, you need it, no let her put it, can you imagine Jesus allowing a poor widow to put her last two coins into the offering box, because Jesus knew his father in heaven would never let a widow like that starve, not in a thousand years, impossible, she'd probably starve, what could she buy with two coins in any case, the best thing to do was to give it to God, she wouldn't starve at all

for the rest of her life, Jesus knew all these things the eager Gentiles eagerly seek after, there are certain things we had to buy, you know Paul says in Philippians 3, I pointed this out to you, that he had to lose everything in order to gain Christ, Philippians 3 verse 7 and 8, whatever were gained to me I counted as loss for the sake of Christ and not only that, in the last part of verse 8, I've suffered the loss of all things that was voluntary, sometimes people rob us or if we are Christians, we are persecuted in many lands, they persecute Christians and rob them of all their property, that's not the case here, Paul was not robbed, he voluntarily gave up, he suffered the loss of all things in purpose to gain Christ, like that missionary Jim Elliott who went to the Orcas and died

there said, he's no fool who gives away what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose, that's what Paul decided, I've suffered the loss of all things and it's actually rubbish what I gave up because I gained Christ, so did he get it free, why is it that the Apostle Paul had a quality of life that most Christians don't have today, it's because most Christians have come to the church and come to the Lord only to get, tell me Lord what's free, I'll take it, the things I have to pay a price for forget it, most Christians are like that, no wonder their Christian life is so unsatisfying and they live this up and down, up and down this, in physics there's a thing called the sine wave, just up and down and up and down and up and down all the time and that's the type of life they live

and they think that's normal, that is not normal, that is totally abnormal, that is an Old Testament life, the godly men in the Old Testament, they couldn't come to this steady life that we have in the New Testament, think of one of the greatest men of God in the Old Testament, Job, you read in the book of Job that when he lost all his property, he lost his children one day, he bowed down and worshipped and he said the Lord's given, the Lord's taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord, he was really on a mountaintop and then a few days later he got so sick, full of sores and he said well the Lord can give adversity, he can give prosperity, I accept them both, boy that was a fantastic mountaintop but you go to the next chapter, chapter 3, you know what happens, he says why in the world

was I born, why didn't somebody kill me as soon as I was born, Lord why have you made me a target of your attacks and you're firing all your arrows at me and then he would suddenly jump up and say yeah even if he slays me I will trust him, he's on the mountaintop again and then he's down in the dumps again a little later saying Lord why are you treating me like this and then he's up on top again, yeah I know my Redeemer lives, that was his life, one of the greatest men in the Old Testament, up and down and up and down, do you find your life like that, that's a good Old Covenant life, think of Elijah bringing down fire from heaven and then one woman scares him the next day and he runs for his life, imagine that, imagine a man who could confront 850 prophets and kill 450 of them running

because one woman shouted at him, that was Old Covenant life, if you're scared to follow the Lord because your wife shouted at you, it's Elijah, it's a good Old Covenant life but it's not New Covenant, in New Covenant it says in Proverbs 4 18, this is the indestructible life, Proverbs 4 18, the path of the righteous and they could never experience it in the Old Covenant because they never could become fully righteous, the righteousness of Christ could become ours only after Jesus died and rose again, it says he rose again for our justification, he rose again to make us righteous, nobody could be righteous like we are in the Old Covenant because Christ had not risen because the Holy Spirit was not given to dwell in people's heart but once you come to that righteousness, it says in Proverbs

4 18, the path of the righteous man is like the light of dawn, that is like sunrise which keeps on shining brighter and brighter and brighter and brighter until the full day, until the noon day, that's when Christ comes again, so it keeps on going, it keeps on increasing, the sun never backslides, you know that, it keeps going steadily up in the sky, it never hesitates, never stops for a moment, from sunrise is the time when you are born again, noon day position is Christ returns again, from that moment till the return of Christ, the path that God has ordained, not the path that Christians walk, the path that God has ordained for the Christians, if they live in God's perfect will, if they live as God wants them to live, is steady progress in increasing likeness to Christ, more and more,

they're not perfectly like Christ till he comes again, but they begin when they are born again and it becomes more and more and more and more or to use an illustration, if our heart before we are converted is like a big black circle, nothing good dwells in our flesh, that's our flesh and in the middle of our flesh, one day Christ comes in, that's like a little white circle that has come into the middle of this black circle and God's intention is, the circle now becomes bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and occupies more and more of this black circle, that's more and more of your life becomes Christ-like, you become more patient, more humble, more loving, more pure, more good, more everything that Christ was, that is God's will, it's an indestructible life, but for that I

have to reject this life of Adam and the main problem with the life of Adam is it is centered in itself, it's I, me and my family, if I take this decision, how will it affect me and my family, every heathen in the world thinks like that when they take a decision, every atheist in the world takes his decisions on that basis, will this be good for me, will this be more comfortable for me, will this be better for my children, what's the difference between your way of thinking and the thinking of any non-christian atheist in the world, what happened when you got converted, you know the word repentance, there's a message of John the Baptist, there's a message that we need to hear these days, it's hardly preached and even where people talk about repent, repent, repent, most people don't know

what repent means, I know numerous people who come to our church in Bangalore and said to me, brother Zack, I thought I was born again before I came to your church but now I realized I wasn't born again at all, I was just asked to say these magic words, Lord Jesus come into my heart and I was told I was saved, I never knew what sin was, I never knew what repentance was till I came here, now I understand what sin is, now I understand what repentance is and now is where I'm really getting converted and many of them get baptized even though they were baptized before, I don't tell them to do that but they say, I wasn't really converted, that baptism was worthless, the message of repentance is missing and even where people use the word repentance in their sermons, you think they are preaching

repentance, no, if you don't explain what that repentance is, then you're not preaching repentance, in our Indian languages, the word used for repentance is clearer, in Indian languages, the word repentance is a

turning of the mind, that's how it's translated and that's the correct translation of that word, a turning of the mind, 180 degree turn, this was my attitude towards, I was facing sin, I loved sin, I pursued the things that the Gentiles seek after, I was totally committed to this life of Adam and pursuing after everything that every child of Adam pursues after and I was not interested in the things that Jesus was pursuing after when he lived on earth, no, that was all behind me and then I repented and a real repentance would be a 180 degree turn, where I say, I've stopped pursuing

after all those things that all the Gentiles are pursuing after and now I'm pursuing after the things Jesus pursuing after, how many Christians do you think repented like that, did you repent like that when you got converted, the chances are no and I don't blame you, I blame your pastors and preachers who never told you what repentance was, I mean if all the children in a school do badly in their examinations and most of them get five out of a hundred or six out of a hundred, I wouldn't blame them, I blame their teacher, something's wrong with the teacher, how in the world do all these fellows end up like this, the problem today, it's just like in the Old Testament, God sent his prophets, you listen, read Jeremiah and the other prophets, they say, the trouble is with you, the trouble is

with your leaders, your princes have gone astray, your priests have gone astray, your false prophets are leading you astray, that's why the people go astray, so we need to understand, if we want to come to this indestructible world, I have to have a hundred and eighty degree repentance and the chances are that many of us have got a sixty degree repentance or a ninety degree repentance or perhaps a hundred and twenty degree repentance but hundred and eighty degrees, that type of radical repentance, very few people have, it's one of the things that I'm very thankful, I said Lord Jesus come into my heart maybe about five hundred times or a thousand times, I don't know, between the ages of thirteen and nineteen but a time came in my life when I was nineteen and a half and I turned around

completely, I gave up my earthly ambitions, when I had big earthly ambitions, I gave up saying, Lord I don't want to live for myself anymore, I don't want to live for money, I don't want to live for seeking my own will, you gave your life for me, I want to give my life for you and it made all the difference and if you have never done that, it's not too late, it's not too late to turn now, don't worry about the date when you're born again, some people ask me when you're born again, I say I don't know the date, dates are not important, dates are on tombstones and graveyards, I'm not interested in dates, I'm interested in are you alive today, are you alive, are you full of life, don't glory in a date, I was born again so and so date, I was baptized in the Holy Spirit so and so date, are you

living today in the fullness of the Holy Spirit, a total turning around from the things that the Gentiles eagerly seek after, that's why I say make a list of all the things that worldly people seek after, it won't take you much time, I guarantee it won't take you more than five minutes, less than five minutes, take a piece of paper, draw a line down the middle and on the left side write down, these are the things that I know worldly people seek after and one minute you could write it down and then take another minute to write down on the other side, what you think Jesus spent his 33 years on earth seeking after, not what he did, I'm not talking about his ministry of raising the dead and walking on the water and dying on the cross, we can't do all that, I'm talking about what he sought

after, he sought after his father's will, he sought after the good of other people, he had compassion for people and then you contrast these two things you have on the list and it's a list you yourself made and you see there this destructible life of Adam on one side, the indestructible life of Jesus on the other side and you ask yourself, do I really want this or not, are we serious, are you serious about your Christian life,

I believe the reason why many people never enter into this life is they're not serious about it, God knows they're just playing games, they're just using words, they're just feeling emotional, you know like you see a movie about Jesus and the way they hammer him and kill him and you feel so sad, oh Lord I love you, you love him at all, it's just an emotion,

temporary emotion, the next day you'll continue to live for yourself, it's a deception and the same thing can happen in a meeting, you can be stirred emotionally by a message and intellectually say, boy Lord I want to live for you, it's only temporary, it's only temporary, that's why you know I never, I don't judge those who ask people to raise their hands and stand up and come forward and all that in evangelistic meetings, that's not my business to judge them, I tell people when I preach, I preach discipleship because I know the commission the Lord gave me many years ago, that there are enough converts in India, but the Lord said, I commanded my disciples to go and make disciples in all nations, go and make disciples in India, that was my commission and I decided I'm going to make

disciples, enough converts, I'm going to make disciples and in connection with Jesus' discipleship, the cost of discipleship is mentioned in Luke 14 verse 2, Luke 14 26 to 33 and in the middle of that section Jesus' words, Luke 14 and verse 28, sit down first and count the cost, first sit down and count the cost, so when I preach in a meeting, I don't ask people to raise their hands or stand up or come forward, I ask them to go home and sit down and count the cost, don't be in a hurry to decide, do you really want to follow this Jesus that I'm describing, don't take an emotional decision at the end of a meeting because it may not mean anything, sit down and count the cost, many people take emotional decisions at the end of a meeting, they stir and they do something, I remember once in one

of our conferences, we found a golden earring in the offering box, we're not people who are coveting other people's gold, so I announced in the next session, I said somebody has put a golden earring into the offering box and I have a feeling it's a result of an emotional stirring, it's not the result of a cold calculated decision, so I'd like you to come and meet me after the service is over with your husband or if you're single with your father because I'd like to return that to you and I said, I met this lady, she came with her husband and I said, please take this back, go home, think about it for a few days and maybe a few weeks and then decide whether you want to give it to the Lord, we never got it back, thank God, you see this emotional stirring which excites a lot of preachers

never excites me because I know it doesn't mean anything, it doesn't last, so Jesus said sit down and count the cost, think about it, don't make a decision in a hurry, I remember when I was proposing to my wife 42 years ago, I was serving the Lord, I didn't have any income, I was just trusting the Lord for my needs and I painted before her the darkest bleakest possible picture of the future that I could ever think of where I'd be living and how I'd be struggling for everything I need, you know, for food, I'd probably live in a hut and everything and then I said, now don't say yes or no, think about it for three days and then let me know, I don't want any quick emotional decision and Jesus says the same thing, sit down, count the cost, then decide whether you want to follow me, do you want

this life or not, now I'll describe a little bit about this life, when Jesus was in heaven, he looked down at this earth and he saw how his own life was there, enjoying the glory of heaven, the wonderful joy of being with the Father and the angels and it was wonderful and if he had only thought of himself, he'd say, this is great, but he looked down at this wretched earth and he saw so many people in misery, messing up their lives, destroying their lives, destroying their families on their way to hell and all types of preachers leading them astray and he said, I gotta go and bring them to enjoy this wonderful life I'm living, I can't sit here and

enjoy this just by myself, I've got to share it with others, I've got that they must also have it and I can imagine, I'm just imagining now, the

angel saying, but Lord, you know what will happen, they'll treat you badly, spit on you, they won't appreciate what you're doing, they'll call you the devil, kill you, he said, I'll go through all that because I want them to have what I have, even if it means I have to pay a tremendous price for it, for these ungrateful wretches, I will pay the price and transform them, that is the indestructible life of Jesus, where you don't seek your own, Paul says concerning his own co-workers, I'm not talking about unbelievers, I'm not talking about believers, I'm talking about the highest class of almost the highest class of believers in those days, Paul's co-workers and Paul was pretty careful about whom he selected to be a co-worker, John Mark and all they dropped off or he said, I'll never take

him again on my team, he was pretty strict, if you got into Paul's team, that was a great honor but as they many of these people went on with Paul, they discovered, it's not easy to live with Paul, this guy is so radical, he doesn't collect money from people and he's living so simply and trying to work with his own hands and support Paul, this is not and Demas and all said, hey, I better drop out, I better join somebody else's team and Paul looked at his co-workers in Philippians chapter 2 and he wanted to send somebody to Philippi to encourage them and he thought about his co-workers A, B, C, D, E, different ones that he had in mind, who were with him at that time, not all his co-workers, the ones who were with him at that time, I don't know who all were there and he looked around and he

thought about them and he said, I cannot send even one of them except Timothy, why?

Because Philippians 2.21, they are all seeking after their own interests, never forget that expression in your life, do you know the number of times God has challenged me with that verse, you can be a co-worker of the Apostle Paul and you may be seeking after your own interests, I said, Lord save me from that, that's the destructible life of Adam, seeking after my own interests, you think you can preserve yourself by seeking after your own interests, Jesus showed us on earth, he said, if you seek to save your life, you lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake in the Gospels, you'll keep it, you'll find it, so many people seek their own, they seek to have it very good for themselves and very comfortable for their children, get as much money as possible for my children, do those children live for God?

Maybe they are born again, maybe they are baptized, I remember saying once to people in our church, don't be satisfied that your children are born again and baptized, is that enough? Are your children disciples of Jesus? Are they living for him?

If not, go before God, don't just say, oh thank you Lord, my children are born again and baptized, everybody thinks I'm a wonderful father now, because my children are all born again and baptized, you're seeking your own honor, you got to go before God and weep and say, Lord my children are born again and baptized, but they're not disciples, they're not following after you, they're not living for you, they're seeking their own and God has to give us light on that, I know through the years, the thing that God has given me more and more light on, it's not, I mean lusting with the eyes and getting angry and all these are things everybody in the world knows is sin, but there are more subtle areas of seeking one's own, love of money, you may be absolutely honest and upright with money, but do

you know that love of money dwells deeply in all of us, it's not only in rich people, I've never seen a beggar in India who doesn't love money, the poorest man in the world loves money and the richest man in the world also loves money, it's got nothing to do with your salary or your wealth, it's got to do with the fact that

we've got the life of Adam and the life of Adam loves money and I'll tell you, even if you live as a hermit in the forest, you'll love money, no, you can't escape it by that, but if you're honest with it and say, Lord please save me from it, the Lord will save you from it, I remember once the Lord showing me from Luke's Gospel chapter 19, you know money is the one thing the Gentiles eagerly pursue after, now we need money to live on this earth, so I'm not being

unrealistic and saying, don't earn your living, in fact I'll tell you in India, it's so difficult to get a job, so difficult, because our population increases so fast, we have one child born every second in India, 20 million more people every year and they don't have 20 million more jobs every year in India, it's so difficult to get a job that children, parents teach their children from the beginning, please study hard, get a good qualification, go and get a degree and get a postgraduate degree if needed, because that's the only way you'll get a job, otherwise we have children in India who are living with their parents when they are 30, 35, 40 years old, that's the type of situation, because they are poor, they're not able to get a job, they're not able to support themselves, they get

married and they got to stay with their parents and the other son gets married and he stays with the parents, there are families like this, so we've encouraged people to work hard and get a good qualification, so they can get a good salary, so that you can be financially independent, so that you don't have to live with your parents, maybe you folks don't understand that in this country, but I live with that, in the villages I live with this type of thing, I got to advise them, how to learn to live separately in a simple thing like that and so people work hard and get a qualification, that's why you find them going all over the world to get jobs, because there are not enough jobs in the country, but you know that pursuit can be such that it can make you a lover of money, the Gentiles seek

after it, Jesus also needed money, he never told anybody his needs, that's why in our church for 34 years, we have never sent a report about our work, never sent a photograph about our work, we never told anybody our needs, even when people give us donations, we tell them we will not give you a report of our work, even though you give us money, sorry, if you don't trust us, don't send us anymore, that's all, we'll even return what you sent us, but we're not going to send any reports, because Jesus never sent any reports about, because the Apostles never sent any reports about their work, we want to do it as far as possible according to the New Testament, we don't want to do it the way the Gentiles do it and we don't want to do it the way the worldly preachers do it, no, we're not here to

judge them, I know there are people who send prayer letters asking for money, God bless them if he can, but we want to go, we want to go the way Jesus has shown us and the Apostles have shown us in the Scriptures, because we believe that's a pattern, to me that is a hundred and eighty degree repentance, it affects many areas of our life, it affects our church life, it affects our home life, it affects everything a hundred and eighty degree repentance, I'm just telling you that most people haven't repented a hundred and eighty degrees, they haven't seen the way Jesus lived and say that is the only way God wanted man to live, we don't know how God wanted Adam to live, because he never lived like that, as soon as he got married, he sinned in Genesis 3, the very next thing he says, the devil

came and made them sin, he didn't as far as I know, he didn't even live one day, maybe he lived the Sabbath day, one day with God, the way he was supposed to live and after that he's just sinned and went out, but finally and no man ever lived the way God wanted man to live, until Jesus came to earth and if Jesus had lived here as the Son of God, he would have been no example for us, it would be like an angel flying across the swimming pool and saying, come on follow me, I'd say, sorry I can't follow you, get rid of

your wings and take a body like mine and then teach me to swim and if Jesus came to earth with all his heavenly abilities and said, follow me, I'd say, Lord I can't follow you, sorry, get rid of those heavenly abilities and become a man like me, then tell me to follow you, then

I can follow you and that's exactly what he became, it's the spirit of the Antichrist that does not confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, he came with a will just like mine and he denied it with the power, same power of the Holy Spirit that he offers me and it's when I understood this truth, it's called the secret of godliness in 1 Timothy 3.16, the secret of godliness, there are two very important things, one is the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the other is to see that Jesus came with a will like mine, which is called the flesh, which he denied in the power of that Holy Spirit and lived a godly life, if I don't see these two things, if I don't see that clearly, I'll never live the way God wanted me to live, I couldn't, but when God filled me with the Holy Spirit and showed me

that Jesus was my example, he was exactly like me, there was no sin in him, that's the only difference, but he was tempted like me, he had no resources other than what I have, he had the same Holy Spirit that he gives me today and therefore I can walk as he walked, I don't have to live the way the Gentiles lived and when I saw that, I said Lord, I want to turn 180 degrees, this is the only way I want to live, that's when I began to experience little by little by little by little, it didn't come overnight, little by little by little, this indestructible life and that's the time when my path began to become brighter and brighter and brighter and brighter, that's when my backsliding stopped, I was born again and I mean after 15 years I was backsliding, you know a total repentance Lord, I

want to live the way you lived, I want you to give me your life which makes me feel that other people should have what I have, not that selfishly says, well I've come to a wonderful life but if the others are defeated, just too bad, you know a lot of evangelism also very often is done with very selfish motives, can you do evangelism with a selfish motive?

Yes, I feel guilty that this guy's blood is on my hand because I haven't preached the gospel to him, okay here's a track brother, your blood's not on my hand anymore, here's another track, your blood's not on my hand, here's another track, your blood's not on my hand, what are you doing to these people? Condemning them, God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved, there's a lot of evangelism going on in the world which is only condemning people, not saving them and the result of it is after years and years of this type of distributing tracks, not one single person from that millions of tracks has joined the church, what type of evangelism is that?

When Paul did evangelism, they got into the church whether it's in Ephesus or Corinth or Philippi or anywhere, he didn't just go around doing evangelism with nobody joining the church, nowhere, Paul would have given up that type of preaching, certain places he didn't go because the Holy Spirit didn't lead him to go, was there a need there?

Yeah, the tremendous need, the Holy Spirit said don't go there but today's generation we don't listen to the Holy Spirit, we've got all these methods that we've got from worldly corporations, I heard that the Coca-Cola company wanted to evangelize the world with Coca-Cola, they wanted everybody in the world to taste Coca-Cola at least once, that's and they've got their advertising techniques and everything and that's the way a lot of Christians have also tried to reach the world with the gospel, you know when Jesus wanted to spread the gospel he didn't give it to an advertising agency, he gave it to 11 disciples who didn't know anything about advertising but he said all you need is the fullness of the Holy Spirit, if you're filled

with the Holy Spirit you'll go and make disciples and

plant churches, you won't just go and preach the gospel, you won't just go around giving tracts, you'll plant churches, you'll gather together people who want to be disciples and I want to say to you my brothers and sisters God is not satisfied just because you went around preaching the gospel and you condemned a whole lot of people saying their blood is not on your hands, it's a selfish life, I remember when the Lord brought me about more than 30 years ago into this life in the spirit, into understanding that it was possible to walk as Jesus walked, that I could overcome sin, that I could have the life of heaven in my heart and in my home and in my church, that I could build a church which is like a family and not like an institution, I said Lord give me life and I will spread this news

all over India, I see lots of believers in India who are defeated, defeated their home lives are miserable but if you as long as you this I said to the Lord about 35 years ago, I said Lord you give me life and I'll do it, I'll spread it wherever I go, I only thought of India, I thought that's all God's called me only for there but he does far more than we ask or think but I want to ask you brothers and sisters do you want this life, do you really want this indestructible life of Jesus, it'll disturb your convenience tremendously but you won't be the loser, I remember the days when my children were small, we all like to spend weekends with our children, our children used to go to a school whole week they were in school and we like daddies would like to spend the weekends with their

children but most weekends I could not spend with my children because I was preaching the gospel somewhere, some going here or there and so many weekends I couldn't be with them and I said Lord I'd like to be with them, I'm like any other father but if you want me to serve you, I have to make some sacrifices, I'm willing to do that but I'm not going to make sacrifices where I lose my children, no that I won't do because you don't want me to lose them, so I said Lord let's make an exchange, I'll take care of your family, you take care of mine, I'll take care of your children, you take care of mine, I want to tell you today after 40 years God's done a better job than I did, he honors you if you honor him, don't think that by living for yourself and your family you're going to do God's will,

we had two brothers in our church when we have, we have conference only once a year, four days a year we have a conference, we used to have it twice, now we have it once because there's so many other conferences come up and I told these brothers, hey listen everything we do we do voluntarily, you must never do anything under compulsion because if you do something under compulsion it's a dead work and it has no value before God, anything, I mean here's this sister who wears jewelry, okay I don't tell her to take off her jewelry, it's not my business, my wife and I don't wear it and we don't even have a wedding ring but I say if the Lord leads you and you do it, take it off that's fine but if the Lord doesn't lead you and you feel under pressure because other people in the church are not

wearing it, that's going to be a dead work, it'll have no value before God at all, it's a principle in life that everything we do we must do as unto the Lord, not because this person is doing it and even veiling the heads, I mean in our church everybody veils their head but I tell sisters if you don't feel like veiling the head, don't do it, I mean if you're not convinced that that's what God shows in his word, you're doing it will be a dead empty ritual, please don't wear it everything we do, we do when you're convinced it's God's will, not because the person on the left and the right is doing it, that's got no value, so do it because you feel that's what God's word says so I suggested to these two brothers who were running a grocery store, I said I want to suggest to you to close down

your grocery store for four days completely, lose all that money completely and wholeheartedly get involved in the conference, I said think of all these people who are coming for the far corners of India, they've closed down their business and shops and everything and come here and you're sitting here, what a bad testimony you are, if you don't do it yourself, one of them did it, the other person didn't, I never said anything because everybody must do it voluntarily and I saw the way God blessed that one brother who decided to close every conference, he'd close his store, he prospered 10 times more than the other person, you think that's the way the Gentiles believe is the way to do business, no I'll tell you something, Proverbs 11 25, the generous man will be prosperous, he who waters

others will be watered also himself, I saw a living example in two brothers in my own church, he who waters others will be watered also himself, when I decide that I'm going to live for God and for others the way Jesus lived and it costs personal sacrifice, I'm going to take certain decisions in my life which the Gentiles will say will affect you financially, will it cause problems and I say I trust God, I'm doing it for the Lord, he waters me, when I water other people God waters me, when I'm generous God makes me prosperous, it's God's way, I was telling you how the Lord spoke to me once from Luke 19, let me come to that, in Luke 19 we read the story of Zacchaeus and the interesting thing there is this is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus ever said these words, salvation has come

to this house, wouldn't you like Jesus to say that to you and me, I would like it, I mean I don't want a certificate from you that salvation has come to Zacchaeus or his family, I'm not interested in your certificate and I hope you're not interested in mine either, but I want Jesus to tell me salvation has come to your house, I'd really like to hear that, when did Jesus say it, when Zacchaeus said Lord, you know it says here that when Zacchaeus, Jesus stood beneath that tree and said Zacchaeus I'm coming to your house, I'm going to stay there today, it says there's an interesting verse in verse 8, as soon as they came near the house Zacchaeus stopped in front of the house, the word is Zacchaeus stopped, Luke 19 8, he stopped, he stood before the Lord and said Lord hang on, you can't get

into my house, have you noticed that, read the Bible slowly, he stopped and I want to expand on what Zacchaeus said, Zacchaeus said Lord, this house of mine has been built with a lot of money that I've cheated from other people, it's not righteously built, there's a lot of crookedness, you're a holy man, are you going to come and stay in this house, before you come to this house, I want to tell you something, I'm going to repay all the money that I've cheated, including the interest and a little more, four times and there are a whole lot of other people whom I've cheated, I don't even know their mailing address but I can't keep their money, I'll give that money to the poor, left in my bank account only with the little bit of money which I've righteously earned, I'm going to give away all

the rest, now Lord you can come to my house, Zacchaeus, Jesus said boy, salvation has come to this house, when a man's attitude to money changes, you know what Jesus says, salvation has come to this house, that's the thing I asked myself, Lord can you say that about me, can you see that my attitude to money has changed and then Jesus said these interesting words, because, verse 10, let me read the whole thing, salvation has come to this house because he is also a son of Abraham, you remember when Abraham and Lot had a conflict about money, their servants were fighting, not Abraham, their servants were fighting about property and Abraham, the great man of God could have said, hey Lot, you never were called to Canaan, go back to Ur, this is the plan God gave me, he never said that, he said,

Lot, I won't treat you as my nephew, you're my brother, you choose what you want first, choose the best, I'll choose what you don't want, there Abraham showed he didn't love money, he told the king of Sodom

and the king of Sodom said, take all the money that you brought back from the war, he said, I won't take a shoelace from you, God, Jesus looked at Zacchaeus and here's another son of Abraham, a man who's free from attachment to the things of earth and then he said in verse 10, the son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost, Zacchaeus was lost in the love of money, many people when they think somebody is lost, they only think he's going to hell, what about being lost in the love of money, do you know the number of believers who are lost in the love of money and Jesus has

come to seek and to save them, if they will confess they are lost, the trouble with the Pharisees is they would not confess they were lost, the woman caught in adultery, the thief on the cross, they acknowledged they were lost and Jesus said, sure, I'll save you, sick people only need a doctor, healthy people don't need a doctor, he was being sarcastic about these Pharisees as if they were healthy, they were the sickest of the lot but he came for those who will acknowledge that they are lost, the son of man has come for the lost and I learned something from that verse years ago, I said, Lord, I am lost in the love of money, even though my attitude to money may be better than that of many Christian workers in India but still I am a child of Adam, the flesh loves money and I'm lost in it,

please save me from it, you came to seek and to save those who are lost in the love of money, Lord, I'm one of them, you know how much God loves honest people, he began to save me, if I had compared myself with all the other Christian workers in India, I would have thought, boy, I'm not lover of money like all these other preachers but the day I confessed, Lord, I'm a child of Adam and I'm lost in the love of money like anybody else, I'm not comparing myself with them, I'm comparing myself with you Jesus and my attitude to money is not the same as yours, therefore I'm lost, please save me, bring me to the place where you are, bring me to that indestructible life which you had where you could look at money in a certain way, you could look at women in a certain way, I want that, I want to

look at women the way you look at women, I want to look at money the way you look at money, do you want it, then confess that you don't have it and say, Lord, I want to repent radically, I want this life at any cost, he'll give it, there's no partiality with God, what he did for Jesus, he'll do for me, I believe that, what he did for others, he'll do for you but we have to be honest, honesty is almost the first requirement, I am lost, if you can say, Lord, I'm not able to look at women with the same purity that you looked at women but I want it, at any cost, I want it before I leave this earth, I want it, I'm not looking at money the way you look at money, Lord, I want it like that and Lord, I got a lot of enemies who hate me, I don't look at them with the love that you looked at your

enemies on the cross, I want to look at them the way you looked at them with love and the Lord began to show me, don't look at these people as people who hate you, these people as people who got cancer, how do you look at a person who's riddled with cancer and leprosy, you don't get angry, you feel compassion and when you see a person full of hatred towards you, poor man's got cancer, he's got the cancer of hatred, that's worse than physical cancer, you'll have compassion, God changes the way we look at people, this is what the life of Jesus, I praise the Lord for it and it's offered to all of us, just say, Lord, I want it at any cost, send me the bill, I'll pay it, let's pray, let's bow our heads before God, as I said in the beginning, sit down, count the cost, do you believe it's worth

it to live this life, to have this life, you can't produce it, all the gritting of your teeth and all your determination will never produce this life, you got to get it from Jesus through the Holy Spirit, are you willing to get rid of your old church traditions, all the concepts and ideas you have acquired through many years, are you willing to throw it all in the trash and say, Lord, there is something more that I haven't got so

far, I want it, a life in the fullness of the Holy Spirit, I want it at any cost, the Lord will give it to you, Heavenly Father, help us each one this day to respond to you rightly, in Jesus' name, Amen.

We'll take a 10-minute break and come back here at 11.30, there's coffee and I think cookies downstairs, if you'd like to get some to eat or drink, let's gather back here a little before 11.30, Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19549.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/freedom-from-self-centeredness/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**