

# From God, Through God, and To God

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of dependence on God, following the example of Paul and Jesus. It highlights the dangers of seeking personal glory, the significance of serving without seeking titles or financial gain, and the need to give all glory back to God. The message stresses the importance of proclaiming the full purpose of God, living in humility, and seeking God's power in all aspects of life.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 23:8, Acts 20:27, Jeremiah 5:1, Psalms 71:17, Isaiah 46:4

**Topics:** "Dependence on God", "Humility in Service"

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## Description

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## Transcript

The Significance of the Two Trees in the Garden of Eden is very important to understand it because we face the same choice today that Adam faced but we have a bit of a handicap that we already have the sinful nature passed on from Adam whereas Adam started out without that handicap so it's a little more tough for us but we've got the Holy Spirit which Adam did not have so it's God versus the Giants of Canaan but what is the significance of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life knowledge of good and evil is not a bad thing we want our children to know good and evil when they grow up in fact when they are born they know nothing and we gradually teach them as they grow up what is good and evil like using a sharp knife or playing with electricity these are dangerous things we want them to know what is good and evil but then why was it that God told Adam that if you eat of that tree you'll die spiritually that means you'll be cut off from God and they were invited to the tree of life which is in the middle of the garden God placed that in the middle of the garden so they could go there and the devil who knows what was behind these symbolic trees led them to partake of that which he knew would drop them straight into his lap and the mistake Eve made was she thought God did not love her all sin originates from that when you have a doubt about God's love because the Lord when Satan told Eve God knows that when you eat of this you will become like him and he doesn't want you to become like him he's jealous he wants to be the only God of the universe he doesn't want you to be like him and see how attractive that fruit is doesn't it make your mouth water it'll give you knowledge beyond what you have and Eve foolishly

thought that God did not love her and sin came please remember that whenever something happens in your life and you hear a whisper that God doesn't love you that's why this happened or God didn't answer your prayer because he doesn't love you you can be absolutely sure where that voice came from never never have a doubt about where that voice comes from because the purpose is to lead you into sin so what was this tree of knowledge of good and evil symbolizing it was symbolizing if a man partook of it that I myself will henceforth decide what is good and evil I don't have to refer to any authority outside of me to know what is good and evil because I've got the information within I've got all the answers and every atheist and every proud man in the world lives with that foolish assurance the tree of life on the other hand is a life of dependence upon God who is a source of all life and so that there's a life of constant constant consultation as to what is good and what is evil that's how Jesus lived he didn't live by the tree of knowledge of good and evil as I myself can decide what is good and evil I will depend on my father to tell me what is good and what is evil because a lot of things that appear good to us may not be good to us proud arrogant man doesn't believe that proud arrogant men say I mean I know what to do here I don't need to pray why should I pray about this situation I know what to do and even believers can fall into that trap we've been trying to proclaim since Friday evening the real full gospel a lot of people claim the full gospel full gospel church and all that we don't want to boast about that but then entering into the new covenant is the real full gospel and a lot of people have not experienced that so this life of dependence this is the thing which has increasingly been such a blessing to my own heart see God's called me to preach in way back in 1963 which is 56 years ago and he anointed me otherwise I couldn't preach I was a very shy reserved type of person I sought for the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the gift of prophecy which is the ability to speak in a challenging comforting and building up way as it says in 1 Corinthians 14 and God called me to that and as people found that I had a gift that I got more and more invitations and I thought Lord how in the world can I meet the need of the people sitting here I don't even know most of them and even if I know them I only know their superficial need I don't know their real need in their life how can a man I mean a man who stands up to preach in the name of Jesus Christ believe it or not is in the most helpless situation that any human being can be because he's standing there not in his own name he's standing there is a representative of God Almighty and that's an awesome responsibility that's one place where I really like to use the word awesome an responsibility to represent God let me show you a verse for those of you who preach please remember this and I'll tell you to really humble you anybody who preaches here please turn to this verse and see what it says 1 Peter 4 it's an amazing verse there are three things here three very important things whoever speaks anybody here who preaches God's Word even for five minutes whoever speaks number one speak as the utterances of God speak as if God himself is speaking through you if you don't want to do that don't speak don't mess up God's work in any church by getting up arrogantly and expressing your own thoughts and saying I'm sharing God's Word you're not speak as the utterances of God I tell you there's nothing that brings more fear and trembling into my life than that that doesn't mean I shut up that would be even worse God doesn't want me to shut up he said I've made you my witnesses Jerusalem Judea Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth that includes wherever you are you're part of the uttermost parts of the earth and he wants you to be his witness and he says that's why I want you to be filled with the Holy Spirit and so there's no option to opt out of that thing no no I don't want to be a witness it's too much being to be an utterance of God that's why you need to seek for the part of the Holy Spirit and that's why I sought I didn't back out from that and say no no I'm too shy and I can't do that I had to devote myself to the study of the word number one to know what God's mind was and I had to seek for the part of the Holy Spirit that's all you have to do and I was a working man because I was not a full-time worker those days I was working very busy in my work in the naval base on a ship as a naval officer and I had to in my spare time study God's Word because I had to

preach many Sundays I was only 23 years old don't say you're too young to serve God seek God and say Lord I want to be even if I speak for three minutes in a church meeting I want to speak as the utterance of God and you'll be a greater blessing than that other guy who gives his lecture for half an hour with his own ability speak as the utterance of God number one second serve with the strength God supplies not your own ability not your own cleverness not your own intelligence not your own study by all means we can receive the blessing of others for example people ask me brother Zach when we listen to your sermon on YouTube and I received something from it can I preach that to others I said yes if you live it first if you're trying to live by what I have preached you can preach that and you don't even have to quote me if you don't like that but I mean don't avoid quoting me because you're ashamed of being associated with that point that's another thing but otherwise you don't have to keep quoting me but you can preach it provided you live it if you live it it becomes your message and by the way I didn't get my message originally I got it from Paul and Peter and John they were the originators of this message and I got it from them and from Jesus so I'm not it's not original and so I'm passing on to you what I heard from all these great men of God so but I live it first I seek to live it and then I preach it Jesus acts 1 1 says Jesus did and then taught great principle of the new covenant acts 1 1 Jesus did and taught he did not teach what he did not do there's a saying in the world saying practice what you preach Jesus did not do that he preached what he had already practiced which is different from practice what you preach he first practiced and then preached that's what we got to do and if you're practicing it then go right ahead and preach every single message you ever heard from me on the internet but it must be with the strength God supplies that means you must seek for the power of the Holy Spirit and it's a constant thing God may give you special moments when you're filled with the Holy Spirit but you need to constantly depend on the Holy Spirit in the picture God has given me of the life of faith this is the best picture of the life of faith that God has given me life of faith means a life of dependence upon God where I don't go to the tree of knowledge of good and evil which is in my head and try to produce a sermon I use my head sure but it comes from my heart which is connected to the tree of life so I picture myself very often in my mind I shut my eyes and picture myself like a branch branch in the tree of life Jesus said you know I am the wine and you are the branches so what does the branch do the branch by itself can produce not a single fruit it I can't even produce a leaf it can produce nothing you know you cut off any branch and you find little later is dead nothing grows after that but the moment it's in the tree and the SAP which is a picture of the Holy Spirit that liquid flows from the tree into the into the branch it automatically produce green leaves and fruit and if you were to ask the branch how do you produce such wonderful food I don't do anything I just remain helplessly in the tree without me you can do nothing many people don't realize that they feel I can do something no you can do nothing without the Lord that's why you need the strength of God for every little thing and nobody exemplified it as much as Jesus I'm not I haven't got there yet you know Jesus hardly said anything without hearing from the father and that's why Jesus said the most important thing for a man is not to eat food but to hear the Word of God man shall not live by bread alone we need food but by every word that proceeds not proceeded 2,000 years ago in the Bible but proceeds continuously every day from the father God is speaking the very first message in the first chapter of the Bible is this what is it on the first day God spoke and the second day God spoke and the third day God spoke what is the message God is speaking every day not everybody is listening to him because you got to be tuned to it for example you know that you know right now there are many voices in this room music is rock music in this room right now you just got to tune into the right frequency and you'll get it we're not tuned into that frequency that's why you don't hear it it's like that God is speaking and you won't hear it if you're not tuned into his frequency he can be shouting the Lord John says he heard his voice like a trumpet why is it some people say I can't hear God how did John hear it like a trumpet somebody says they don't hear God I'll tell you why because your

conscience is not clear when you have a bad conscience blocks your hearing you can't hear what God is saying you don't apologize to the people you hurt you don't forgive people who hurt you well you'll be deaf as a doorknob and you won't hear a thing God can be yelling and you won't hear it it's not God that's at fault you have blocked your ears by not setting things right in your life you have debts that you don't even try to repay you have hurt people and you don't ask their forgiveness people have hurt you and you don't forgive them how in the world will you hear God not only you don't hear God if you don't forgive others the God says he won't even forgive you you'll go to hell I can tell every single person sitting here you may not hear this in another church but you'll hear it here when I sit in the pulpit I'm not Zach Boone and I'm a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ outside of the pulpit I'm Zach Boone and I want to tell you in the name of the Lord if you don't forgive others the Lord will not forgive you Matthew 6 verse 14 and 15 and if you don't if you're not forgiven even of one sin you cannot enter heaven nobody can enter heaven who is unforgiven so please make sure every day you forgive don't wait till you go to bed and if you if you wait till the last minute at least before you go to bed forgive everybody because if you don't wake up in the morning you make sure you wake up in the right place by forgiving everybody before you go to bed but the best thing is to forgive immediately I have that I have that habit now as soon as I hear somebody spoke evil about me Lord forgiven I don't even know that person sometime I get a lot of rude emails from the internet criticizing and I say Lord forgiven he doesn't know what he's doing he doesn't know what he's speaking against not against me but against the Lord forgiven forgiven forgiven I want to be like God who's always forgiving people in heaven if you could go up to heaven and hear God from all corners of the earth people are saying Lord forgive me and he's saying forgiven forgiven forgiven forgiven yes forgiven forgiven I say Lord make me like you always saying forgiven okay you said something to me you did something against me forgiven forgiven you spoke against my family forgiven brother whoever you are you want to be like God that's how it is it's a wonderful life it's a wonderful life a man who forgives others constantly and asks forgiveness readily is a very happy man it's very important so the strength God gives don't lose that anointing by an unforgiving spirit you can have all the knowledge in the world but if you don't have the anointing of the spirit it will not go to people's hearts when I was a young preacher 24 25 years old one of the words the Lord spoke to me was from the example of Samuel it spoke to my heart strongly one Samuel and chapter now you may say brother Zach are you preaching to preachers no I'm speaking to Christians who should be witnesses for Jesus Christ every Christian must be a witness for Jesus Christ according to Acts 1 8 you know the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses that's why we don't have an ordained clergy in CFC churches our ordination comes from heaven it's not by some empty man putting his empty hands on my empty head it's Jesus Christ laying his nail-pierce hands on my head that anoints me and on you that's what you need and then one Samuel it says here about Samuel when the Lord came and spoke to Samuel one Samuel in chapter 3 he had this attitude saying here are my Lord speak to me verse 8 the Lord called Samuel sorry verse 10 he said Samuel Samuel 1 Samuel 3 10 and Samuel said here are my Lord speak your servant is listening that is the attitude we must always have it's doesn't we don't have to be consciously listening but unconsciously always listening you see our ears are always open you can be very busy doing something and suddenly a loud sound there you hear it how is that you're not waiting to hear that sound you were concentrating on doing some very important work and suddenly there was a sound just like that was right now and you heard it how is that you can be listening to something and you can hear another song that's the way we should be listening to God while we're doing something all the time listening and it says here that he was faithful with what God spoke to him and listen to this this is the word that challenged me as a young preacher take it seriously you can it can be for you it's in your Bible 1 Samuel 3 19 because he had this habit of listening and he spoke what the Lord told him he even spoke fearlessly to Eli Samuel grew and the

Lord was with him and let none of his words in the margin says fall to the ground so it says in the King James Version and here in the margin of my Bible it says he did not allow Samuel's words to fall to the ground I said Lord that's what I want that when I preach God's Word as it goes from my mouth it shouldn't fall to the ground before it reaches that guy's heart and mind it must not fall to the ground so many preachers their words fall to the ground because God does not back up that word I want the words that I speak I said Lord I want the words that I speak not to fall to the ground just go straight to that guy's mind and he must be convicted whether he accepts or rejects it is another issue but it must go to him and he must hear it very clearly as from the Lord and you know one thing we see here is that the Lord told Samuel some very strong words the very first message imagine the very first message when Samuel said Lord speak to me the very first message was a message of judgment it was not a message of grace some people are called by God to proclaim a message of judgment and they must be faithful to that call it's much easier to have a ministry like Mother Teresa's going and helping the poor people and caring for them you you'll get the Nobel Peace Prize and you get every other award but if you're going to preach like the Apostle Paul nobody will give you any award but God wants people who are called like Samuel to proclaim judgment upon a sinful generation upon a backslidden Christendom and the Lord said to Samuel speak Lord he said the Lord said I'm going to do something verse 11 1 Samuel 3 11 I'm going to do something at which the years of everyone in Israel will tingle with fear when I'm going to judge Eli I've already I'm about to judge verse 13 his house forever for the sin which he knew his sons brought a curse on them and he did not rebuke them here is Samuel going to speak to a man who is like his grandfather old enough to be his grandfather this 10 12 year old Samuel going up to 70 year old Eli and saying God's gonna judge you because you're not brought up your sons properly it's not an easy message to preach Samuel in the morning and like like all human beings verse 15 he was afraid to tell Eli that message and I tell you when God gives a message of judgment humanly speaking we are afraid to speak it I'm afraid to speak it I said Lord is it just my opinion I don't want to say I'd rather speak a message of grace and comfort I'll be popular that way or something that stimulates people's intellect you know so many ways in which preachers seek for popularity something that some clever thing some new illustration some clever thing all to get honor for myself you can never do that if you're a servant of God sorry you have no choice you got to speak what God says it may be words of comfort sometimes many times it is but it's equally words of judgment as well go and tell that man who's old enough to be your grandfather that God's gonna judge him and he was afraid naturally I would be afraid to go and speak to somebody 60 years older than me and say God's gonna judge you brother but Eli called him and said what is the word God spoke to you or 17 may God punish you if you hide anything from me then Samuel got scared oh if I don't speak God's word I'll be punished so he told him verse 18 everything and hid nothing from him praise God for men who will be like that young Samuel who will hide nothing of what God says proclaim the whole counsel of God that's what we seek to do in CFC that's why people get offended with us and go away well God bless them we don't wish any evil for them we pray they'll find the truth somewhere else but it's not very likely in today's world that you hear the whole counsel of God and he spoke to him and the next verse is verse 19 Samuel grew you grow when you listen to God and the Lord will be with you and your words will not fall to the ground what a need there is for men and women like that in the world today in the church you sisters may not stand up in the pulpit and preach but you've got a whole half the church is full of women and you can speak to all of them personally through email through texting through cell phones through meeting them pointing them out not seeking to be popular no detest popularity Lord I want to be faithful God wants brothers and sisters here not to seek popularity but to be faithful if I seek to please men I cannot be the servant of Christ yeah and that's how Jesus lived and I want to say this is the tree of life is where I'm depending on him the life of faith Lord I can do nothing I want this sap to flow through me constantly the

the it's not by in fits and jerks no in the beginning it's like fits and jerks our connection with God but over a period of time if you are faithful the branch will be in that tree steadily constantly all the time and it's almost unconsciously the power of God and the words of God come into us and I'll tell you honestly in my case I mean you're not called to my ministry but I'll tell you my own experience it would be impossible for me to keep speaking God's Word day after day there are places in India sometimes I have to speak 12 times in three days it's been impossible I mean I can say okay let's study Ephesians and I can go through 12 sessions Ephesians and I finish that I go to Philippians and Galatians I go through that because I studied those books thoroughly I could do it anytime but that's not prophetic that's a Bible study but the church needs prophetic words prophetic words means a word according to the need of the people sitting there and it's impossible for me to do that if I am not in the tree and say Lord let your sap flow into me constantly so that I know what I should be saying at each moment to people it's a wonderful experience if God calls you to that seek to if you're called to preach God's Word strive for this strive to be like the branch in the tree that not everybody's called to it maybe only 1% of believers but if you happen to be with that 1% and you're one of those is leading a church and you're preaching you need to learn to be like the branch in the tree otherwise you'll be proclaiming your own clever ideas and that won't build the church so that's what I was talking I was speaking from one Peter sometimes I go away from there to emphasize certain points but let's turn back to one Peter I told you there are three things and I want to mention all three one Peter chapter 4 you remember the first one is that what we speak must be the words of God and not our own bright ideas this is the life of dependence the depending on the tree of life tree of knowledge of good and evil let me say again is where I don't need God I just have my commentary with me and my Bible dictionary and my Bible and a few tapes and listen to all that I with all my clever brain I produce something I don't have to hear God at all I got my own resources and my intelligence is enough to prepare a message to preach God's Word no and and in different situations where I have to take a decision whom to marry I don't need God I just use my intelligence is she a pretty girl fine 50% taken care of and then is she intelligent Oh another 30 40% taken care of spiritual yeah she's accepted the Lord okay that's 10% that's also taking care of I'm ready to marry her that's that's how so many marriages are messed up and one year later they divorce Christians divorce then they make another mistake and go marry a second time that's not the way we are to find God's will the tree of knowledge of good and evil is the cause of all the divorces in the world is the cause of all the false preaching in the world today when you want a job a tree of knowledge of good and evil tell you which will which will give you the most money well I'm not against money I don't believe that God says seek for them that the job with the lowest salary is God's will I don't believe that type of rubbish God's God wants you to earn enough to take care of your family and if the cost of living is going up God wants you to get more money I believe there's nothing wrong in that I've even told people in our church if you're doing faithful work in your office and the boss is not increasing your salary go up to him and say sir the cost of living is going up would you please consider raising my salary there's absolutely nothing wrong in that you're not cheating you're not telling a lie you're just saying something which is a fact the cost of living is going up in the salary they're paying you is not sufficient so I'm not a person who believes that always go for the lowest salary or any such rubbish but what I say is don't make money you're God so the tree of knowledge of good and evil will tell you what is best for you and that may not be in long the long term the best for you so it's much better to go to the tree of life where God who knows the future tells you which job to take whom to marry and other decisions like that so the first thing is to speak as a word of God second is to depend on the strength and the wisdom of God in whatever he tells you to do and the third is third point 1 Peter it's all here in 1 Peter 4 11 the purpose of it all the ultimate purpose is that God should be glorified so that it's not that you get the glory oh what a wonderful preacher but people should go away saying wow the Lord spoke to me today in the meeting and he spoke

something to my heart which is I'm gonna change in my life I'm gonna take that seriously that's what we want let them forget your name let them not know even who you are but God must be glorified through Jesus Christ so like it says in there's a little expression that sums it all up in one verse in Romans chapter 11 exactly what we read in 1 Peter 4 it says in Romans 11 and verse 36 the last verse Romans 11 36 from God through God and to God are all things and we can say of an eternal nature all things of an eternal nature originate in God are fulfilled through God's power and end up for God's glory from God through God to God that's how the tabernacle was built God gave the plan he gave those people the power bezel and a holy hour the first people mentioned as filled with the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and they built the tabernacle and the glory of God came upon it from God through God and to God the opposite of that is what we see in what we call Babylon Babylon is false Christianity and the origin of Babylon is way back in the Tower of Babel where it was from man through man to man they had an idea let's build a tower and they said we'll do it in our strength we'll gather bricks and build it and at the end of it they said we will make us a name from man through man to man and Nebuchadnezzar continued in that spirit in Daniel we read in Daniel and chapter 4 when Nebuchadnezzar stood on the roof of his royal palace and he looked at looked out at everything he had built Daniel chapter 4 he's verse 29 he stood on the roof of his royal palace and you see here from man through man to man same spirit verse 30 isn't this Babylon the great which I built from man by the might of my power through man and for my glory the glory of my majesty to man Babylon is from man through man to man till the very end is the opposite of from God through God and to God I want to say to you the full gospel is that which leads you to a life of dependence on the tree of life where everything you do will be from God and it'll be through God's power and it'll be to God's glory keep this principle in your mind in everything whenever you're taking a decision when you're preparing a sermon Lord I wanted to be from you through you and to you I notice in the Bible that Jesus very often prayed after he ministered very and most of us pray before we go to some important meeting and but Jesus prayed after he finished the service I want you to turn with me to Luke's gospel in Luke's gospel we read there were times when he went out in the night and spent a whole night in prayer let's look at that first Luke 6 verse 12 he prayed a whole night there's only one time it says he prayed a whole night that's because he was listening he wasn't talking that time he was listening father who are the ones I should choose as my disciples and in the morning he got it he became clear and he chose his 12 disciples sometimes he did it like that but here's another example where he prayed after his ministry there's a place where he prayed before he had to take an important decision now I'll show you a place where he prayed after his ministry Luke 5 verse 15 previous chapter news about him was spreading even further and large crowds were gathering to hear him to be healed of their sicknesses and what did Jesus do after that he would slip away into the wilderness and pray after he had healed so many sick people why was that so that what came from God and through God he would offer it back up to his father and say father all that glory that came through people being healed I offer it back to you I will not touch it do you do that when you pray for God to do something for you or through you and he's done it you go back to God and say thank you Lord I offer it back to you when you pray before a journey Lord protect us on this trip do you pray after the journey thank you Lord for bringing us safely you pray before a sermon or do some ministry Lord give me anointing for this you go back after the ministry and say Lord I offer that back to you a lot of a lot of people blessed and they came and thanked me and they and there's a lot of glory there Lord I don't want to touch that boy the number of times God's convicted me in early years they say you didn't give the glory back to me and I said Lord have mercy on me it wasn't conscious of course I knew consciously I would give it but unconsciously I just forgot about going back to God after the meeting and saying Lord that's yours and I I would discover it when I lost the anointing somewhere and I said Lord I know what happened forgive me and I'd go back in repentance and say Lord I offer it back to you my dear brothers

and sisters I'm telling you for my own failures learn from the failures of others always seek to hear what God has to say to you and then when God says something to you and you have to share it with others even if it's a single word you know but a correction or rebuke or encouragement say Lord let me do it in your power and when some good is accomplished I'll give you the glory I won't touch it you know there are many things God will give us he'll give us his power he'll give us his love in our hearts he'll give us many material blessings he'll give us many spiritual blessings he'll give us the fullness of the Holy Spirit but there's one thing God says I will never give you Isaiah 42 and we're saved there's one thing God has said he will never give remember this Isaiah 42 in verse 8 I am the Lord that is my name and my glory I will never give to another he will never give his glory to anyone don't touch it you will destroy yourself if you take credit for anything God does give the glory back to God humble yourself and think that God did it in spite of you not because of you we have so many limitations from many times people have asked me brother Zach why don't you write a book on bringing up children because you brought up your four sons well I said no that was all of God in fact most of the work was done by my wife but she wouldn't write that book either because it was God we prayed and said Lord we made so many mistakes but please forgive us and please have mercy on our children it was prayer and it was God who made them what they are and I said if I do write a book it'll be the mistakes I made as a father that's what I write I dare not touch the glory of God in anything I dare not touch it in any any area I have publicly said I have never planted even one church in my life the Lord planted them all and he asked me to go and water a plant that he planted if I planted it it'll be destroyed one day don't boast about a sermon you preached or a church you planted let me show you what Jesus said in Matthew 15 the words in scripture teach me to live in the fear of God Jesus said in Matthew 15 very serious words Matthew 15 please remember this verse verse 13 Matthew 15 verse 13 every plant which my heavenly father did not plant will be uprooted and destroyed every church which you planted brother will be destroyed the ones which God planted will remain I don't want to plant a church and I've never done it you may not believe it but I'm telling you the truth because I know the history of every one of the CFC churches and I know how they came up I was get the Lord asked me to water it or I happen to be there but it was God who planted it and made it grow and I believe that principle it is the same with every sermon I preached in all these 55 years God's given me the grace and words to speak and I cannot take the credit for it if any result has come it's again it's his work every plant which my heavenly father did not plant will be uprooted one day most of Christendom does not understand this and that's why they are so deaf to the way God wants his church to be built see the next chapter Matthew 16 where Jesus said in verse 18 I will build my church and the gates of hell will never overpower it why have the gates of hell or Satan's power over powered many churches I don't mean destroyed them made them into megachurches but full of worldliness and corruption and love of money I don't care if a church has got 30,000 members if they most of them love money that church has been destroyed by Satan even though they are the best music and so many members and such a beautiful parking lot and such a beautiful building Satan's destroyed it we got to have eyes to see what God is building I've been in small little churches in huts where I see the glory of God and I've seen in huge buildings where God is not there we got to have eyes to see where God is I'm not impressed by buildings and parking lots and fancy cars and all the fancy things they have many churches is God there or not I will build my church Jesus said and the gates of hell will never prevail against it the church that Jesus builds Satan can never overcome why is it five of those churches in Revelation chapters two five out of the seven were destroyed and they were corrupt and the elders the elders were corrupt that's why the churches were corrupt because the Lord says to John write to the elders you have left your first love and so the church left its first love here was another elder who was faithful and the church was faithful here was another elder which had only a name that he was alive and the church only had a name that it was alive every church becomes like its leaders

and that's why I'll tell you something I've seen this through 44 years of CFC work in many parts of the world whenever God sees whenever God sees that one of the leaders is seeking his own you know what God does in one way or the other he removes it yes I've that I've seen that happen again and again and again in a number of churches that I had a relationship with wherever there was a seeking of one's own whether wherever there was jealousy and competition with another elder or competition with another church to so that we are better God removes such an elder and you wonder hey why did that happen I'll tell you why I have enough experience from other churches to know that man sought his own he was seeking something he was trying to build his own kingdom there God removed him because his glory he will never give to another dear brothers why is it that we have so few churches that are remaining because Jesus is not allowed to build according to his way for example I got a letter the other day from the email from someone I've never met someone in the United States who said to me brother Zack you said in one of your messages show me someone who's preaching the new covenant message and building a new covenant church I'd like to meet him I wasn't saying there's nobody I was just saying sincerely I would like to meet such a person so that I can fellowship with him and learn what he learned from God please introduce me to such a person who's preaching the full new covenant message and he said here is one go to this website oh I said delighted as soon as I got that email I went to that website and I searched that whole website because you're someone who's supposed to be proclaiming the new covenant and there was a website with Mino this this this this our programs and our messages and all that and I open it up at the bottom it says donate money I open the next page to donate money and here is a message of mine preached pay \$25 if you want to listen to this message and here is some other article \$5 somewhere cheaper I don't know why some messages were cheaper than the others but whatever it is I wrote to this brother graciously I said brother I don't know what this man is preaching I didn't have time to listen to it but the primary message of the new covenant is you can only serve God or money have you understood that and you can't serve God and money it's not God and Satan is God and money and I said Jesus and Paul never asked anybody for money they didn't have a website they had a website if they could have a website they wouldn't put at the bottom donate donate donate donate every single page at the bottom donate don't and that is in red all the rest is in black you can't miss it that is not new covenant that's not new covenant means the footsteps of Jesus or Paul saying follow me as I follow Christ so I wrote to him graciously and I said we're not here to compare ourselves with anybody we don't say that our church is better than anybody else's we humbly say we are trying to follow Jesus pattern we're trying to follow the example set by Jesus who said follow me and Paul who said follow me as I follow Christ Jesus example I can follow in life but Jesus never planted a church and appointed elders physically on the earth he did that after he went to heaven he did that through Paul so I need to follow Paul's example in the epistles and in the letters to how to plant churches how to appoint elders how to correct churches that are going wrong how to hand over to Satan like 1 Corinthians 5 a man living in sin so that his flesh will be destroyed so that his spirit can be saved in the day of Jesus so it's not an easy ministry but here's there are examples given us in scripture that is new covenant and Paul worked with his own hand and supported himself I say that's why we are trying to build our churches where we don't ask for money and we have nobody who's a paid preacher in any of our churches that is new covenant and I said this is completely wrong here you've got it all understand it's not a message preached from the pulpit you know you you can preach the right words in the wrong spirit and the test comes with money or position or title for example Jesus said never use a title don't be called father rabbi or any title you are brothers I want you to turn there to Matthew 23 it's very important it's also part of the new covenant and Jesus said in Matthew 23 he's criticizing the Pharisees and he said see these Pharisees look at them they wear special clothes they were five they brought in their Matthew 20 brought in their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments so they stand out

as different so you find many priests and preachers they'll have that collar inverted what is on the backside they put in the front and it's like this it's called a clerical collar and to show that we are little different in our dress and they have a special role it's exactly what Jesus criticized don't wear a special dress to show that you're some type of special man of God and they love the place of honor chief seats in the synagogues in all of our churches when I go even in churches that were planted through partly my ministry and the Lord planted them I will always sit in the congregation I go to the village churches and I sit on the floor there with all the others and the person who is the elder leads the meeting and they asked me to come up to preach I go up there and preach and I come and sit back on the floor that's how we've done it for years now they give me a chair because I'm a little older but but I still in the midst of the congregation I don't go sit up on the platform because he said don't seek the place of honor and the chief seats you take every word seriously I take every word seriously one is about dress dress like others and don't take the chief seats and then don't look for respectful greetings to be called rabbi or today pastor reverend right reverend right reverend doctor don't look for these titles Lord then what are we we are all brothers were saved we are brothers and we've got one more title verse 11 we are servants if you want a title here are two of them pick both of them brothers and servants that's how we build new covenant churches every one of these things is being disobeyed by people so what if people disobey all this and then preach the words of the new covenant they heard from my message somewhere that's not them it's not a message it's a life and I believe this is very important for us to understand the new covenant is a life by our life we proclaim the full purpose of God Paul said in Acts chapter 20 when he was speaking to the elders in Ephesus he called them he was leaving he had been there for three years in Ephesus day and night he was preaching to them can you imagine Paul preaching in a church day and night for three years he says that in Acts chapter 20 and verse 31 for day and night for three years I preach to you with tears but he says what did I do in those three years I declared to you verse 27 the full purpose of God the full purpose of God the real full gospel he proclaimed to them how you can be justified by the blood of Christ he proclaimed to them how you can be how you can overcome sin by the Holy Spirit's power he proclaimed to them how you can humble yourself and get grace from God for everything you need in your life he proclaimed to them how you can bring up godly children in your families he proclaimed to them how husband and wife can live without strife he proclaimed the whole purpose of God in three years did they take it seriously the sad answer is no and so he tells them where's 29 I know what's gonna happen as soon as I leave this place the savage wolves will come in and destroy this church those wolves are waiting outside the door but they dare not come in when this man of God Paul was there they were scared of him he said that's an anointed man we better not go there but he's not going to be there forever he'll go away and the moment Paul left Wow all the savage wolves came and destroyed the church in Ephesus how do we know that you read the first letter to the Ephesians which Paul wrote when the church was such a powerful church it's the best letter of Paul showing that that church was the most spiritual church go to the second letter to the Ephesians have you read the second letter to the Ephesians yes there in Revelation chapter 2 verse 1 onwards in the second letter to the Ephesians the Lord says you have left your first love I'm going to withdraw the anointing from you I will do you recognize you as a church the church that the Apostle planted but they didn't follow those principles that Paul taught them they modified it they began to call themselves bishop reverend and this that and the other and they altered the Paul stand on money and so many things they didn't preach victory over sin they see we are saved and the Lord loves us and they kept on preaching about God's love and nothing about God's holiness and his standards the result is the church went to the dogs that is not a church Jesus planted to us once it was when Paul was there you know so much depends on one man of God who preserved that church of maybe 500 people in Ephesus one man Paul who preserved the two million people of Israelites in the wilderness one man Moses who

knew God very often God's work is done by one man even though it's a body it's one man who preserves a church in purity and I believe that's what God looks for if he can find one man in a church he can preserve it in Abraham's days if I find ten men in Sodom who are righteous I won't destroy it but he couldn't find them but years later if you turn to Jeremiah in chapter 5 Jeremiah it was another time when God is going to destroy Israel by sending them into captivity into Babylon God sent Jeremiah to try and save Jerusalem from captivity that was his main message for 40 years he preached to try and save Jerusalem from going into Babylon for Israel from going to battle from Judah rather the nation of Judah to go to Babylon but he did not succeed they rejected his message and they went captive to Babylon but look at the message here in Jeremiah 5 Jeremiah go through the streets of Jerusalem take note look in the open squares and you see if you can find one man not ten men like in the days of Sodom one I'm not looking for ten I'm not looking for five I'm looking for one man who will do justice who speak the truth and I will pardon this whole nation they will not go to captive to Babylon there was not one man there was another prophet in among the Israelites he was in Babylon and to him the Lord said through Ezekiel I searched for a man who will stand in the gap for me and there wasn't even one but in Paul's day he found one who was completely free from the love of money who never wanted a salary and who served God faithfully till the end and he was making tents and you know I've often thought about Paul how the devil must have been so furious with that man he got people to stone him and beat him and lock him up but he wouldn't that man would just get up and continue continue continue and stand up to the end of his life he was faithful in the area of money he would not he was not against gifts if the church in Macedonia sometimes sent him gifts he would take it but he never asked anybody for anything and he was not dependent on anyone there's nothing wrong in a servant of the Lord receiving gifts from those who are grateful but he was not dependent on them like a lot of people are today never took a salary from anyone and he would never ask anybody would never send a report about his work to get money but the devil must have thought well wait till this guy gets old he'll be too old to stitch tents then let's see how he survives he'll have to lose his testimony and it's an amazing thing that God did when Paul became old you know what happened let me show you something very interesting in Acts of the Apostles if you read between the lines you'll see it in Acts chapter 24 Paul was a prisoner and he was brought in front of Felix who was the local governor to be judged and all preached to him and spoke his testimony to him and he told him I live with a blameless conscience Acts 24 16 and Felix knew about this way verse 22 knew about Christianity and it's a here's an interesting thing he says he was hoping that and when Paul preached about righteousness was 25 self-control and judgment to come Felix began to tremble and he said oh please go away I'll listen to you later at the same time verse 26 he was hoping that he would get some money as a bride to release Paul how much do you think a governor of a state expects as a bride \$10 I'd say he must mean expecting a few thousands of dollars as a bride but who was he expecting it from this is not a rich businessman this is a poor preacher was this governor so stupid to think that this poor preacher could give him thousands of dollars as a bride they're not dumb this governor has his secret sources to get information and he had got some information that Paul even though he's a poor preacher has recently come into a few thousands of dollars how that you got to turn to the previous chapter it says there that when Paul was in prison we read there were some people who planned to kill him and when they were going to kill him that's some Jews made a conspiracy to kill Paul at that time Paul's sister son you never hear of him before that we're 16 Paul's sister son came there to the jail to the prison and met with Paul why in the world should Paul's sister son come there at that time who never came all these years I'll tell you what I read between the lines and this is what I get Saul came from Tarsus Tarsus is a place where Jewish businessmen went to make money most Jewish people lived in Israel but some people went to Tarsus rich businessmen went there and I believe Paul's father was a very rich businessman and these

rich businessmen would send their sons to study the law in Jerusalem under the great teachers of the law and Paul was sent there to study in Jerusalem but as soon as Paul became a Christian his family disinherited him say you're not you're not going to get any of the family wealth finished but when they heard he was in prison they felt compassion for their son and the family sent his share of his inheritance through his sister's son and that's why the sister's son came to Paul in prison and gave him that money and the Roman soldiers knew about it and they told Felix and Felix knew these guys come into a lot of money recently so you can expect a bribe of course Paul didn't give that bribe another proof of that is in Acts 28 we read that Paul was taken to Rome and in Rome Acts 28 30 he stayed in his own rented house for two years how many of you can afford to rent a house in London or New York for two years in the middle of the city today Rome was like that in those days there was only one capital city in the world those days Rome and here's a poor preacher a poor preacher who earned his living by stitching tents renting his own house for two years paying his own rent he had come into an inheritance and that's how God made a fool of the devil when the devil thought he could make a fool of Paul when he got old God made sure that when Paul got old he had some other source of income I tell you if you honor God he will not let you down till the last day of your life on earth I remember you know I've been preaching now for 50 years and I'm getting on in years I'm 79 years old now and I was seeking the Lord I say Lord I'll serve you as long as I have health but you got to take care of me and here's the word that the Lord told me in Psalm 71 it's a word the Lord spoke to my heart some years ago Psalm 71 17 which is like a prayer that I pray to God Oh God you have taught me from my youth yes he has and I still declare your wondrous deeds and even when I'm old and gray Oh God I am now don't forsake me until I have declared your power and your strength to this new generation many of whom who don't know you and declared your power to all these people who are to come that is my prayer and the answer of the Lord is in the Lord gave me the answer to that prayers in Psalm 46 some 46 this is the what the Lord spoke to me sorry not some 46 excuse me Isaiah 46 Isaiah 46 Isaiah chapter 46 and verse 4 the Lord says even to your old age I am the same God who called you when you were young and even when you're in your green years when your hairs are all gray I will bear you I've done it I will carry you I will deliver you the last part of verse 3 you were born by me from your birth I carried you from the time you were in your mother's womb and I will carry you till your old age and your hairs are gray I will bear you I will deliver you to whom can you liken me or make my equal God did that with Paul he does that with anyone who is a faithful servant of his and I want to say that to all of you you don't have to fear old age you don't have to fear anything if you decide now Lord I want to live by the tree of life a life of dependence on you where everything comes from you and I will do what you tell me and I will seek your power for it to do it and when I have accomplished it I'll give you all the glory seek to live this life my brothers and sisters and you live a wonderful life on earth and have a glorious entrance into eternity when Christ comes again may it be so for all of you let's pray Heavenly Father we pray that you will help us each one to live the life you want us to live to accomplish what you want to accomplish through us on this earth in the days to come in Jesus name Amen

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