

# (God and Man) Being Delivered From the World

by Zac Poonen

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*Jesus came to deliver us from the world system, which teaches us to seek our own and leads to religiosity, not spirituality.*

**Duration:** 1:10:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, James 2:1-3

**Topics:** "Worldliness", "Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the ongoing battle against the world system that surrounds us. He compares it to plugging holes in a leaky roof, where new holes keep appearing. The speaker also discusses the importance of being vigilant in keeping the world out of our lives and homes, including in matters of dress. He highlights the difference between the Old Covenant focus on earthly matters and the message of repentance and the coming of the kingdom of heaven proclaimed by John the Baptist and Jesus. The speaker concludes by addressing the idea that we cannot love both the world and God simultaneously, and emphasizes the need for deliverance from the values of the world system.

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## Transcript

There were many reasons why Jesus died on the cross. We have spoken about and known some of them. He died for our sins.

He died that our old man might be crucified with Him on the cross. He died that Satan might be defeated. And we also read here one more reason in Galatians in chapter one.

Galatians chapter one, verse four. It says that Jesus gave Himself for our sins so that He might deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of our God and Father. And when it speaks about the world, it's not talking about the earth.

The earth is different from the world. The earth is a physical thing and the world is used sometimes in the scriptures to describe the people of the world. You know, we say about there are people all over the world.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for the world. And that is the people of the world. But there is another sense in which the word world is used in scripture.

And that is referring to this system that runs this world. And that system is run by the devil. That's why he's called the ruler of this world.

He's not the ruler of the earth. Jesus said, All authority in heaven and on earth is given to Me. Jesus rules the heaven and the earth.

But the ruler of the world is Satan. You need to distinguish between the ruler of the earth and the ruler of the world. Jesus has got all authority in heaven and earth.

Everything that happens on this earth, everything that happens in this whole universe is under the control of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is sovereign. Nothing can ever happen.

Nobody can lift a finger or do anything without His permission. And particularly where it concerns His children, He makes every single thing work together for good because He controls all circumstances and people. But on this earth there is another thing called the world.

It's invisible primarily. It's as invisible as the devil. It's a system by which He controls almost everything on this earth.

It controls politics. It controls the business world. It controls the entertainment world.

It controls the various styles and fashions of dresses. It controls television. It controls radio.

It controls the whole videotape industry and science and education and marketing, advertising. There's a spirit behind it all, the flow of money and also many other things which, a lot of things which I spoke about are things which we are all touching every day. And then a lot of other evil things like wars and pornography and many other evils, it's all part of this world system that's got a ruler.

And that ruler is Satan. And Jesus came and gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this world system because we're all born in this system. And from childhood we absorb the values of this system.

In school we are taught to compete with one another, to somehow put the other fellow down and come on top and glory in being first in the class and first in the athletics and it gets into the thing of little children. And I'm not saying we shouldn't do our best. I used to tell my own children when they were in school, I will never in my life care for your rank in class.

If you do your best, you work hard, I don't care if you come last in the class. I don't want them to get caught in this system where you have to push down other people and come on top and boast about it. It's all evil.

Don't let your children get caught in that. If they get caught in that, they will live in that no matter how religious they are, how much they come to meetings, they can never become spiritual, neither grown-ups. I believe that the reason why many Christians, believers, become religious and not spiritual is because they have not understood this world system.

They are influenced in so much of their thinking by this world system and also trying to be spiritual and they end up being religious. If you could only be free from this world system, you'd become spiritual. Religion is an outward form which gives you a name.

You can get a name of being holy or you can get a church, can have a name of being a wonderful church to go to based on feelings and many things like that. Spirituality is quite another thing. Spirituality is primarily based on a great devotion to Jesus Christ in one's personal daily life.

If one is not personally, daily devoted to Jesus Christ, we're not spiritual. No matter what we do on Sundays, no matter what religious activities we go through like reading the Bible, attending Bible studies, prayer meeting, fasting and all that, it's all religious activity. A personal devotion to Jesus and a fervent love for brothers and sisters in your local church, that is the mark of true spirituality.

But religion is something different. You can have religious people involved in what we had just now, praise and worship. See, praise and worship can be a spiritual thing or a religious thing.

That depends on you. You can have spiritual people and religious people in a praise and thanksgiving meeting like we had just now. And for the spiritual person, it's worship of Jesus, it's devotion to Jesus.

For the religious person, it's a good sing-along time, you know, swing and keep the beat, nice feeling, emotions, all very good. Religious words, these are religious people. There's no, I mean, Jesus may not even be there.

It doesn't make a difference. We had a good time. Whether the Lord had a good time or not doesn't matter.

The spiritual person's not like that. The spiritual person's not thinking, we must have a good time. The spiritual person's thinking when we worship the Lord, he must have a good time.

It's just that simple difference. And if you look at a lot of meetings that you go to, you may discover at the end of it, you only think of you having a good time. And that's one of the clearest proofs that you're a religious person.

And you're a religious person because even though you believe everything about Christ and everything, all of that, you've never seen what this world system is, which binds you down. I believe the reason why many Christians and believers have an up and down experience, constantly in their life, is because they've never been detached from the world. They've never been delivered from the world system.

For example, moods. Do you know that it's the will of God that you should never have a bad mood? Never. That's God's will, because it says, Rejoice evermore, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Have you read that verse? 1 Thessalonians 5? Verse 16 to 18, it says, Rejoice all the time, because this is the will of God for you. That's God's will. So how can I rejoice all the time if I'm in a bad mood? So I'm absolutely convinced, I was convinced years ago, that if I'm in a bad mood for one minute, I'm out of the will of God, however religious I may be at other times.

And the reason is the world system's got a hold on me. There are no bad moods in heaven. Bad moods are a part of the world.

Worldly people have got bad moods. But you need never have that. You need never be gripped by fear.

Fear is something Jesus hated as much as sin. Just like the Bible says, Sin not, it says fear not. What's the difference? But a world system can grip you so much that you think sin is wrong, but fear is not wrong.

You can think sin is wrong, but anxiety is not wrong. That if God says, Don't kill, you take that seriously. But God says, Don't be anxious, you don't take that seriously.

How's that? How can God say, Don't kill, we take that seriously. And the same God says, Don't be anxious, and we don't take that seriously. It's because the world system gripping us, where we come to the Bible and pick the verses we think are important and throw away the things which God said, which we feel are not important.

It's this world system. And we don't realize how much we do that. We don't tremble at God's word because with all our religious activity, the world system has got a grip on us.

It's like an eagle. It's one leg caught in a trap, that's all. One leg is caught in a trap.

There's no difference between that eagle and a whole eagle sitting inside a cage. Both can't fly. One is completely enveloped by the world in a cage.

The other is caught in one area, can't fly. Both of them are down on the earth level. But both of them were created to fly.

God has called us to be a heavenly people. See, that's the one big difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. We've seen many differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

And one of those differences is that in the Old Testament, the people were an earthly people. They were down on this earth. Everything they got was on this earth.

They never got victory over sin. They got land. They couldn't defeat the demons.

They could kill human beings like the Philistines and the Amorites, the Canaanites. They couldn't get anything spiritual, but they could get everything material. They couldn't know God, but they could make a lot of money.

They couldn't save souls, but they could have many children. The whole of Old Covenant life was bound to this earth. And then John the Baptist came and said, Now, the kingdom of heaven is coming.

Do you understand the difference? That was the message. And if you want this kingdom of heaven to come into your life, you've got to do one thing. Repent.

Jesus proclaimed that same message. Before he went up, he said, Some of you standing here will see that kingdom coming. And they saw it on the day of Pentecost.

It's exactly like we sing in that song, Heaven came down. The Holy Spirit never was on this earth for 4,000 years. But on the day of Pentecost, heaven came down.

When Jesus came to earth also, it was heaven came down. But that was only in one person. It was heaven in one person for 33 and a half years.

That's why he told his disciples, It is better for you fellows that I go away. Otherwise, heaven will only be in me. It won't be in you.

You fellows, even in the Last Supper you are arguing who is the greatest. That's not heaven. That's earth.

That's the world system. You know, you can listen to the greatest preacher in the world, week after week after week, and still be thoroughly worldly. And the proof of it is the disciples themselves.

To seek honor and position as to who is going to be the leader, who is going to be the elder, who is going to be the greatest, who is going to be considered the best preacher, the best elder, the best singer, the most handsome person, the most intelligent person, who comes first in the class, who comes first in the races. This is all part of the world system. In heaven it's different.

In heaven, who is first is last. That means the last person is considered first in heaven. And the servant is considered the greatest authority in heaven.

That's exact opposite of this world. But when we don't think like that, when we think that if somebody thinks highly of us, we feel really great, that shows you're part of the world system. That's the clearest proof that you're still part of the world system.

Jesus has not delivered you from that world system. Jesus has not delivered you from that system where position and honor and coming first, and those of you, for example, who glory that your child came first in a class, or came first in something, the world system grips you and you're communicating it to your children all the time. Then you're wondering why your children are not spiritual.

They'll never be spiritual. Because you're giving them large doses of this world system every day. It's like poison, then wondering why they're not healthy.

They'll never be healthy. See, heaven is different from the earth. You've got to see that.

This world and heaven are two different systems altogether. And John the Baptist said, the kingdom of heaven is now coming. I don't know how many of you fellows are interested in it, he told the Jews.

But he said, if you want to be a part of it, you've got to repent. You've got to repent of being part of this wretched world system. A few people repented, and they became part of that heavenly system.

Now, everybody wanted healing. Healing is an earthly thing. And it was promised in the Old Testament, and Jesus also did it.

A lot of people today are interested in it too. You don't have to be a believer to be interested in healing. Any unbeliever would be interested in healing.

Atheists are interested in healing. See, if we ask ourselves this question, if anything that I'm interested in, a worldly unconverted person is also interested in, that can't be a spiritual thing. Let's make a simple rule.

Anything that an atheist is interested in, and if I'm also interested in it, that cannot be a spiritual thing. An atheist is interested in making a lot of money. And if a man gets up and says, Jesus will help you to make a lot of money, that can't be a spiritual thing.

I mean, that itself sends a red light into my mind saying, that is wrong. That cannot be the kingdom of heaven. If an atheist is interested in physical health, and the main message of the gospel is, Jesus will give me physical health, the red light goes off in my mind.

Jesus came to give me something, which that atheist is not interested in. He came to deliver me from the love of money. He's not interested in that.

He came to deliver me from seeking the honor of man. He's not interested in that. Jesus came to deliver me from secret sins, which other people can't see.

He's not interested in that. To be delivered from anger, that may not be a proof of spirituality, because anger makes us lose our testimony publicly. And I may be concerned about my testimony, so I don't want to get angry, because then I lose my testimony.

And that atheist also may not want to lose his testimony. That could be a worldly thing. But to be delivered from anger inside, that's a spiritual thing.

Ask yourself, what are the things you're interested in in your life, which an atheist is not at all interested in? You say, well, I go to the meetings. Well, he goes to his club. And your meetings may be no different from a club.

What does he go to his club for? He goes to his club to have a good time, to meet with other friends whom he meets regularly once a week. And you may be going to your club to meet people once a week. Essentially, not much difference.

There may be people giving lectures in his club and people giving lectures in your club. He listens to those lectures and does nothing about it. And you'd listen to your lectures and do nothing about it.

Not much difference, really. You call your club a church. He calls it something else.

He may be more honest. He really may be more honest, because he says it's a club. I just go there to meet people, listen to lectures, and I live my own life.

You also go to your club, what you call a church, to meet people, to listen to lectures, but you live your own life. He's more honest. That's a club.

You call it a church. It's because this world system is fooling us all the time. And if the devil can fool you all your life, that you're a spiritual person, and you wake up in eternity and you discover you are not spiritual at all, the devil will say, ha-ha, you thought you fooled me.

I fooled you all your life. My brothers and sisters, the greatest danger that believers in the world today are facing is being religious and not spiritual. If you think that I've got a little bit of sense, please take my words seriously.

And the only thing that will deliver you from religiosity is getting rid of the spirit of this world. Yeah, we can think that if I get rid of legalism, all rules and regulations, and I become more liberal, I become spiritual. And some of us have tried that.

Has it made you spiritual? You got rid of legalism, you got rid of all your rules and regulations, and you don't have any more rules that I won't have any television. Now I'll have television in my house in order to be spiritual. Did it make you spiritual? You ask yourself.

Did it make your children more spiritual? In the old days we had rules that we will not see any movies. Now we're going to be all free from all these rules and regulations. We start seeing movies.

Did that make you spiritual? All this liberalization. You ask yourself. Did it make you and your family more spiritual, more devoted to Jesus, more eager to study God's word, to understand God? You think you can

be free from religiosity just because you get rid of legalism and legalistic rules and regulations? Well, you tried it.

It's worldliness that still holds us. A world system that controls our way of thinking. And the basic rule of this world system is seek your own.

That's what the world system says. Seek your own first. Not the things of God, but your own.

All people seek their own. And as long as you're seeking your own, you ask yourself, what's the difference between you and an atheist? An atheist also seeks his own. And Jesus came to deliver us from that, where we seek God, His righteousness, His kingdom first.

Have you ever read the first four words in your Bible? Do you know what the first four words in your Bible are? In the beginning, God. That's how your Bible begins. Every Bible begins with these words, In the beginning, God.

It's one thing to have that written in the front of our Bibles. It's quite another thing to have our life lived like that. That is spirituality, where in every decision, how will this affect God, His kingdom, His righteousness, His uppermost.

Do you think all believers make decisions on that basis? I think perhaps one percent of born-again believers make their decision on that basis. That in everything, they think, how will this affect? If I take this, if I go here, if I do this, if I marry this person, if I go there, if I do this other thing, how will that affect God, His kingdom? If I spend my time like this, how will that affect God, His kingdom? If I spend my money like this, how will that affect God, His kingdom? Do you think believers all live like that? One percent. Those are the one percent that are really spiritual, because they've been delivered from this world system that teaches them to seek their own.

Jesus came to deliver us from this. See, it says in 1 John, in chapter 2, about two types of loves, and they are contrasted with each other. You know, like we say, you can't love two women and marry both of them.

You've got to make your choice, which one you want to get married to. Do you love this one or that one? And a lot of people have problems with that even after they get married. Even after they get married, they can't stick to one love.

It's part of this world system. It's not only where divorce is common, like in western countries, where they get rid of one woman and marry another. If you're a married man and your eyes wander to admire other women, you're gripped by the world system too.

When you can talk more freely with a woman other than your wife, more freely than with your own wife, maybe somebody at work. I don't care how religious you are. You are part of this world.

You probably never hear that told you straight to your face like you hear it here, but if you keep coming here, you'll hear a lot of things told you straight, which scan your heart and reveal its true condition. Now, what you do with the scanned report is your business, but at least you'll get an honest report. It's a world system that says you can love two things at the same time.

Okay, here in 1 John 2, it says about two types of love in verse 15. Loving the world and loving the Father. And it says you can't do both at the same time.

You've got to make your choice. But in a world in which people think, yes, I love my wife and I can also love that other woman. Such people can think, yes, I can love the Father and I can love the world.

That's why the Bible says to believers, you adulteresses, have you ever in your life heard a preacher get up in a pulpit and say, you bunch of believers, you are adulteresses. If you ever heard a preacher like that, tell me about it. I'd like to hear him.

Because it's quite likely that such a man may be a prophet like James. I want to show you what James said. James says, first of all, we need to understand to whom is James writing.

He's writing chapter 2, verse 1, my brethren. Chapter 2, verse 5, my beloved brethren. Chapter 2, verse 1, those who have faith in the glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

He is writing to beloved brethren. Chapter 3, verse 1, my brethren. He's talking to believers.

And what does he tell these believers? Chapter 4, verse 5, you adulteresses. Look at that. My beloved brethren, you adulteresses.

He was a prophet for sure. He was not the type of chap who's interested in increasing the congregation in his church and making sure all the rich people come there and put their offerings in. James couldn't care less for all those people.

In fact, if you read the book of James, you'll discover that he was against a lot of rich people who tried to get influential positions in the church because of their wealth. And why does he call these people adulteresses? He says here in verse 4, don't you know that friendship with the world, this goes one step further than what John said, is actually enmity towards God. And if you become a friend of this world, you make yourself an enemy of God.

What a word. Question, children, are you listening? How to be an enemy of God? Answer? It's there in that verse if you read it. What's it? Be a friend of this world.

Very simple. How to be an enemy of God? Be a friend of this world. That's what this verse says.

Friend of what? It's not the people of the world. It can't be the people of the world because God loved the people of the world enough to give His Son. Jesus loved murderers, thieves, gamblers, all types of evil sinners of every description.

He loved them. He came to die for them. It can't be the people of this world.

Then what is this world spoken of here? Do you know you can love God and love the people of the world? In fact, the more you love God, the more you love the people in the world. The more you love God, the more you love the sinful people in the world. But the world itself spoken of here is not people.

It's a system. When you become a true disciple of Jesus, you don't have to give up your worldly friends and worldly relatives and become like a hermit. That's not true Christianity.

In fact, that gives a bad name to Christianity when people have nothing more to do with their relatives and friends and all and become like ascetics and live all by themselves and say, I'm a Christian. No. Do you think Jesus was like that? No.

But, if you allow those worldly friends and relatives to influence, oh, that's a different thing. You know, it's like a tug of war. Once upon a time, you were on the side of the world pulling against God and God's people.

But now you've changed sides in this tug of war. And you got onto the other side and you're pulling the rope the other way. Can you keep your worldly friends and relatives? Sure.

But watch that rope. That handkerchief tied in the middle of the rope. Watch which side it's moving.

When you are with your friends and relatives, just make sure that you are pulling them into God's kingdom and not that they are pulling you into the world. And if they are pulling you into the world, just drop that rope. Leave them.

Because you are not strong enough to be with them. If you find when you are in the midst of relatives that they gossip, backbite, speak evil, which is the common practice of most worldly people, and you sit there and you find you are being polluted, I would say, give up contact with such relatives. But if you can sit there and be a positive witness for goodness and uprightness and truthfulness and not speaking evil of others and not gossiping and speaking about, even if you don't speak about worldly thing, about spiritual thing, about good thing, then you can be there.

But otherwise, steer clear. And then it is right for you to steer clear of such worldly friends and relatives who are polluting you every time you go there. I mean, if you go to somebody's house and every time you go there, he throws garbage on you, how long will you go there? You stink when you come out.

You go have a bath. And that's what happens when we go with a lot of unconverted relatives. As soon as they start, the conversation is garbage, garbage, garbage, this fellow is garbage, the other fellow is garbage, all flung on you and you come out stinking.

Do you want to go back there? I don't want to go back there. I want to go to a place where at least they don't throw garbage. Even if they don't throw perfume, at least they don't throw garbage.

That's why I steer clear of a lot of worldly people. Because they've got nothing but garbage in their hands and on their tongues. I'm not interested in that.

Find somebody else to throw your garbage on. I'm not interested. I'm not saying that you've got to listen to my holy talk about the Bible, let's talk some clean stuff.

Otherwise you can say, oh, you're holy people. I'm not a holy person, I don't want your garbage, that's all. Can't you keep the garbage away from me? Why should I come there? You've got enough people there to throw your garbage on, why do you want me also there? I don't want it.

But that's because we don't love purity as much as we love those unconverted people. That's the trouble. We don't love Jesus enough.

It says, friendship with the world is enmity with God. The world is a system which seeks its own. And have you noticed when people sit together, they never talk evil about the people sitting there.

Always the evil talk is about somebody who's not there. That's what I mean by evil. If you don't believe that, just go and see when people sit together and talk.

They never talk about people sitting there until one of them leaves. Then they'll start talking about that person also. It's always about people who are not there.

It's a system which seeks one's own. It manifests itself in numerous ways and gossip and backbiting is just one of them. Where you sit and speak evil of others, you sit and pollute each other with more and more talk about and people sit there and boast about themselves and boast about their children and boast about their husbands and their houses and their jobs and all types of things all trying to show that I'm one better than you and then the other fellow has to do something to show that he's also equally good and this is all the world's system.

Boasting about our connections and our... Even among religious people. You know, I meet some people who are always boasting about some bishop they are related to and I get sick and tired of it. Religious people.

I mean, where did that bishop come from? He came from Adam, thrown out of Eden like the rest of us just because he wears a purple robe and a cross around his neck doesn't qualify him for heaven any more than it qualifies you and me. What does it matter? You can be related to Judas Iscariot as much as a bishop. It makes no difference.

You're a sinner, so is that bishop, so is Judas Iscariot, so is you, so is me. We've got to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, whoever we are and you can't escape, you can't go to heaven by hanging a cross around your neck or changing your clothes and putting purple robes on. You can't fool God.

You can fool people that you're holy but you need to be born again to enter God's kingdom and if you don't realize that before you leave this earth, you'll suddenly realize it when you stand before the Lord. Like Jesus told Bishop Nicodemus, you must be born again. You may be 75 years old, Nicodemus, you may look very holy but you need to be born again otherwise you'll never enter God's kingdom and Nicodemus was humble enough to accept it unlike the other parishes.

You see, that's the thing. The world system that glories in all types of religious things which have no value in heaven and that world system affects our thinking in so many ways and I believe that you must ask God to give you light on where that world system has polluted your way of thinking. That world system is what teaches you to rebel.

You know, one of the marks of people who are in this world system is they have no respect for authority. They have no respect for people who are older. Why do we keep on teaching in this church teach your children to respect you as parents? First of all, they must respect you as parents and then they must respect other older people they meet anywhere.

Now, you don't have to be a Christian to know that. You go down into the villages of India, villages that have not yet been polluted by television and western influences and you will see in those villages young people respect older people. They are not Christians.

God has taught them. They have got a conscience. Young people respect older people.

They stand up when an older person comes into the room. Do you see that with our children? I am sorry to say, with most of them, no. And the parents get offended when they are corrected.

That shows what a tremendous grip the world has got even on the parents. The parents are only interested in honor, not in godliness. Oh, I lost my honor.

My children lost honor. Do you think such parents are interested in godliness? I don't even know whether they are converted. If they were converted, they would be interested in godliness, not honor.

You ask yourself, my brothers and sisters, have you taught your children to respect? Do you allow your child to speak disrespectfully to the mother and the father listens to that and does nothing about it? I tell you, if you are a father like that and your son or daughter, no matter what age they are, speaks disrespectfully to his mother and you listen to it, I say to you, you should never have gotten married and produced a child. You should have remained single all your life. You are unfit to be a father and you are certainly unfit to be a Christian father and certainly unfit to be a father living in, coming to CFC.

Totally unfit. Imagine, your child violates a law of God right in front of your eyes, dishonors his mother and you just smile. Say, don't speak like that, darling.

You deserve to join the atheist club, not sit here. The atheist club, that's where you belong. No respect for God and His word which says, teach your children right from day one to honor their father and mother and when they don't honor their father and mother, now how do I know that they are talking like that at home? I don't come to your home.

I'm not looking in through the windows. I don't look in through anybody's windows, by the way. How do I know? Because I see them behave like that over here.

That's how I know. When they behave like that over here, they must be behaving exactly like that at home. The children who respect their parents at home will respect older people here.

The children who don't respect their parents at home don't respect older people here. That's all. Because you can't change your nature.

I mean, you are older and you can act in a different way in CFC than you do at home because you are smart and you can cover all your sins that way. But children are not so smart. They behave exactly like they behave at home right here because they've got no guile and so we discover exactly what they are like and like I've told all the CFC people, just watch the children and you'll know what the parents are like.

Watch the ones who are unruly, who have no respect for anyone. They're part of the world system because the parents are part of the world system. They're religious.

They come to every meeting. They send their children faithfully to Sunday school. But there's a tremendous difference.

No respect for authority. In the world, there's no respect for authority. Look at all the spirit of rebellion that started with Lucifer way back.

That spirit of rebellion against authority, against God. And we see that in schools where people make fun of their teachers and colleges and factories where they rebel against the authority. They break windows and damage equipment.

It's all part of that spirit of rebellion. And in the home, the children rebel against parents. In the church where people have no respect for elders.

You know, it's in small things that we see. And the fault with the children often starts with the parents. I don't believe we should blame children.

For example, you go to the slums. You can't blame the children for not knowing ABC. Why can't they know ABC when your children know ABC? Don't blame those children.

Your children are not better than their children. You, as a parent, were more sensible than those parents. They never sent their children to school.

So, where's the fault? In the parents. You know, when the Lord spoke to Israel, He always spoke to the leaders first. He said, the problem is with the leaders.

If the leaders are right, everything will be right. And this respect for authority is, I believe, something we must teach our children. It's part of the world system, this rebellion against authority.

I was asking Brother Ian yesterday, you know, I don't come for choir practice. But yesterday evening, I was asked to speak to the choir. And I see some faces in the choir this morning who were not there yesterday evening.

So I asked Ian, what is the rule here? People who don't come for choir practice, are they allowed to sing here on Sunday morning? I thought we had a rule on that. But, who cares for rules, right? This is what I mean by rebellion. We don't care.

If it were the military, such a person would be court-martialed. But this is not the military. This is just a club.

We have fun together. I'm just talking about a little thing like that. I noticed it because I happened to be here yesterday.

So, what I'm saying is, it starts with the older people, always. The problem is there. A total disregard for any rules or authority.

And when the parents are like that, how in the world can the children be different? So, it could be many, many things. First of all, we've got to respect authority ourselves. A disrespect for authority, a disrespect for older people is a sure sign that the prince of the world has got something in you.

Jesus said in John chapter 14, John's Gospel chapter 14, in verse 30, he said, The ruler of this world is coming, and he has got nothing in me. Do you know who calls Satan the ruler of this world? Jesus. Jesus acknowledged Satan is the ruler of this world, not of the earth, of this world, of this system.

And that system has got nothing in me. That system could not make me rebel against Joseph and Mary in the 30 years where God kept me at home. 30 years the prince of the world could not get Jesus to rebel against Joseph and Mary.

Is he your forerunner? He submitted to imperfect parents. Teach your children to submit to imperfect parents. Even if daddy is wrong, honor him.

If daddy is a drunkard, honor him. Don't follow his example, honor him. He is your father.

Your mother is a liar, outright liar. She is still your mother, honor her. Don't follow her example, steer clear of that.

She is your mother, honor her. Your husband is dumb, stupid and all the other names you call him, still, submit to him. That's what we teach, respect for authority.

Otherwise, the world has got a hold of you no matter how religious you are. We have to teach this to our children right from the beginning so that we can raise up a generation in the midst of this ungodly world of young people who are different. Who are different because they know how to respect authority.

They know how to respect their parents. They know how to respect their older people. They don't necessarily follow their parents because their parents may be carnal, worldly.

They may not seek advice from their parents in spiritual matters because parents have no spiritual advice to give them. That's okay. Jesus didn't seek spiritual advice from Joseph and Mary.

They couldn't teach him anything. That he sought from his father in heaven. And when he chose his disciples, he didn't choose any of his four brothers to be his disciples.

No. He didn't have any partiality. A lot of preachers today have partiality.

When they form a church, they get all their own relatives to be board members and all that other type of stuff. Not Jesus. He did not go by human relationship.

He had four brothers. Not one of them did he choose to be among his twelve. But, if he saw somebody spiritual among his relatives, like James and John who were his cousins, he said, sure, come along.

He was not bothered what people said. He was purely governed by the values of heaven. He had nothing against anyone or for anyone because of relationship.

That didn't make any difference. You know, in the world system, we show partiality to our relatives. If somebody is your child, oh, he can never do anything wrong.

He has different standards than the standards in the church. That's partiality. That means you are gripped by the world system.

The standards are for other people's children. Who said that? Jesus never cared for his own relatives when it came to spiritual things. He says, well, they never believed in him, well, they can't be his disciples then.

That's it. I've seen people, even in CFC, they see some young people getting baptized. Through the years, I've seen it many, many times.

And then the parents think, oh, my son, my daughter is getting left out of this. Somehow, they must also get baptized. Then they'll be in the club.

And they somehow manipulate and get their son or daughter baptized because somebody of their, a friend of their son or daughter also is getting baptized. What do you think such parents are doing? Destroying those children. And you see the people who are baptized like that through the years.

I've watched them. I've never said anything. None of them are spiritual.

None of them are following Jesus. Whose fault? Parents. Parents wanted the honor.

Oh, my son, my daughter shouldn't get left out of this baptism going on. Don't be like that. I never asked one of my sons to be baptized.

Not once. Why? Because I didn't want your honor that my sons are baptized. I say, I don't care to get baptized when they're 30.

They must choose on their own. Not because somebody else or their friends are getting baptized. You have to make a choice in these things, brothers and sisters, that you will not let the world influence you.

The spirit of this world which is always, get honor. Get honor through your children. Get honor for yourself.

Jesus came to deliver us from this evil system. And I'll tell you, I'll tell you after 43 years of fighting this battle, it's going to be a battle till the end. This world system is all around us.

You know, it's like plugging a leaky roof. You know, a tin roof. Okay, you plugged every hole and the next rain comes there's another hole.

You got to go and plug that. This is how the world is. All the time surrounding us and we got to plug a hole every now and then.

Don't let that water drip, drip, drip, drip, drip. It'll make it worse. Go and plug it immediately.

Wherever you see the world coming into your life, into your home. And the same thing applies in dress. See, the Bible has a lot to say about dress, by the way.

Turn to Isaiah chapter 3, particularly about women's dress. The unfortunate thing is that a lot of Christian groups have majored on dress itself as though that is the only test of worldliness. Now, I don't believe that.

You can get a person dressed in white clothes and without any ornaments and sisters and long-sleeved blouses and all that and they can be the most worldly people in the world. Because the world is a system. If they seek their own honor, they have no respect for authority, despite all their long, white-sleeved blouses and modest dress, they are worldly.

So, worldliness is a system inside, but which is manifested in many things outside. And one of it is dress. In Isaiah chapter 3, it says, one of the things the Lord had against Israel in those days was the daughters of Zion.

That's chapter 3, verse 16. The daughters of Zion are proud. It all comes out of pride.

And pride is a major part of this world system. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. It's because of pride that I want to seek my own honor.

It's because of pride that I want to present myself dressed up in a way that I'll be more attractive than the other girls around me. I will have the latest fashion that will make me stand out among all the others. I say to you, dear parents, don't let your daughters grow up like that.

If they are young, you can control them. If you don't control them when they are young, they'll become teenagers and it'll be too late to control them. The daughters of Zion are proud.

And you can see it, first of all, in the way they walk. Do you know that the way a woman walks is a pretty good indication of whether she's a God-fearing sister or a worldly one? I've learned through the years to

see that. The way a person walks, the way a person looks, the way a person talks, and the way a person dresses.

These are three, four pretty good guidelines. I don't tell them. I'm not here to go around classifying worldly, 10% worldly, 90% worldly.

That's not my business. But for myself, I do that. And I know the way a person walks, the way a person talks, the way a person looks, and the way a person dresses.

They walk with their heads held high, with their noses in the air, the Living Bible says, and with seductive eyes. The Living Bible says, with wanton eyes that rove among the crowds to catch the glances of the men. Here are women, young women, who are hoping that some man will watch them.

They're not immoral. No, no, no, no. They won't give their bodies to anybody.

No. But they want to be noticed by man. Do you think that's a good thing? God doesn't think so.

You must dress neatly. I'm not talking about shabbily dressed. I don't believe Jesus was shabbily dressed even one day of His life.

I don't believe Jesus wore stinking clothes one day of His life. I believe Jesus was neatly dressed always. He was made in all things like His brothers.

In other words, He wanted to dress in such a way that He wouldn't stand out in a crowd. I think if everybody was wearing a suit and a tie, Jesus would wear a suit and a tie. If people were wearing dhotis, He'd wear a dhoti.

If everybody around was like that, He tried to merge with the crowd, be made all things like the others, because He came to be like us. Not to stand out is different. And that's the fundamental principle that you should follow if you're a God-fearing sister.

Don't seek to stand out. Follow Jesus, who sought to merge with the crowd so that you don't stand out, so that you get the glances of men, the way you are smartly dressed. And it says here, therefore, He talks about the bangles on their feet.

It's amazing what all the Lord takes note of. Verse 18, their anklets and headbands and their ornaments and their earrings and their bracelets and their scarves and veils and headdresses and ankle chains and sashes and perfume boxes and amulets and finger rings and nose rings. Lord, are you going to stop? No, not yet.

Festal robes, altar tunics and clothes and the money bag. Oh, even the dainty little handbags. The Lord's keeping an eye on that.

And these hand mirrors and undergarments and turbans and veils. Boy, you'd never thought the Lord's interested in all these things, right? We always heard that the Lord looks on the outward appearance and man looks at the heart. And God looks at the heart and man looks at the outward appearance but it looks as if the Lord's looking at the outward appearance too.

Because that outward appearance comes out of a heart that is worldly. And so, we're not here to make rules for people. Because it's very difficult.

The Bible says in 1 Timothy chapter 2 that a woman should be dressed sensibly, modestly, discreetly. Verse 9. 1 Timothy 2:9 With proper clothing, modestly and discreetly. That's why I believe that no God-fearing sister should expose parts of her body that would provoke a man to lust.

And if you're in doubt, go and ask your father. Don't ask your mother. She may be worldly herself.

Go and ask your father. Dad, what parts of my body if I expose will provoke a man to lust? Your dad, if he's honest, will give you an honest reply. Because he's a man.

And listen to him more than to those advertisements you see on television. You ask yourself whether your style of wearing certain parts of your clothing has come through watching certain cinema stars or television models. Or whether it has come out of a desire to be modest in the way you dress.

You know, we can say one dress is more modest than the other, but the world has got ways of making even these churidars, the kurta part of it, tighter and tighter and making the slits down the side bigger and bigger. And it's all part of the world. We can't make rules on it.

It's a sense you get. We don't make any rules, but you know, how do you define a bad smell? Can you please explain a bad smell to me? Anybody. Write a book on it and try to explain a bad smell to me.

You can't explain it. But if you've got a good nose, you smell it pretty quick. How do you define bad food? Well, if you've got a good tongue, you know it immediately.

It's exactly the same. What is worldliness in a woman's dress? I'm sorry, I can't explain it. But when I look at her sister, I know.

It's like that. You know that that person did not get that out of any desire for godliness. That person got it from watching television and movie stars.

The way they do their hair and the way they do their, the way they walk and the way they toss their heads and like little dolls. And the way they walk and so many things. All the way from head down to the heels of their shoes.

You can see where did you get it from. Are you trying to be like other god-fearing sisters? Or are you trying to be like those movie stars? That's a choice you have to make. But I would encourage you parents to teach your children to be simple, godly.

They can be, I'm not saying they should wear white. No, I'm not. God made flowers in various colors.

And when He spoke about dress, by the way, He said in Matthew 6, God will make you dress like all the flowers. So I don't understand where this idea of white dress came from. Because it's contrary to what Jesus said.

The flowers have got various colors. There's nothing wrong in colors, they're not reds. There's nothing wrong in beautiful.

Those flowers are beautiful. But, modest, tight-fitting dresses and all following the latest fashions in order to expose various parts of our body and shape and expose and you know, gradually a spirit of uncovering. Uncovering.

Uncovering parts of a woman's body that should be more properly covered in the church. I say we're against it. We're against it.

We're against this unnecessary decking of oneself with all types of things in order to impress. Let's humble ourselves and go to God. And say, Lord, we need to repent.

There was a day years ago when the church was first born. The church in the world walked far apart. But gradually through the years the church in the world come closer and closer and closer in most places.

They're holding hands now. The church is supposed to be engaged to a bridegroom who's coming. I remember a sister once I told her, she asked me, how should I dress for my wedding? I said, dress in the way you would like to be dressed if you were going to have an interview with Jesus Christ.

How would you like to? Jesus Christ invited you to come and visit Him sometime. How would you like to be dressed when you go there? Dress exactly like that. If you believe in the presence of the Lord and the church, dress like that.

Be careful of this world system, brothers and sisters. That's barheads for God. All I would say today if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart.

Those of you parents who are lucky enough to have your children still young, small enough for you to spank them and correct them, there's great hope for you. You can guide them aright. And those of you who are careless and allow your children to do what they like because of a wrong understanding of legalism and rules and regulations, well, you can still pray.

The job will be a little more difficult now that your children have become teenagers. It's a bit too late to try and impose your laws on them now. You can pray for them, love them, advise them and repent before God.

But it's a big responsibility we all have. The church and the world have nothing in common with each other. Just make sure that in every area we're trying, where none of us are perfect, we're at least trying to do things in a way in our homes, even in our clothing, to glorify God.

Don't let the world determine how you spend your money, how you spend your time. Let Jesus be happy. That's the test.

What you've got from me today is not a bunch of rules and regulations, not even a dress list of what you should wear or what you shouldn't wear. Just ask yourself, is that the way you would go to meet Jesus if He asked you to come and meet Him? Is that the way you'd be dressed if you went to meet Jesus somewhere? That's the way you should be dressed all the time. Let's be careful in the days to come.

There's hope for everyone. As long as we're alive, there's hope. Brothers and sisters, from the beginning, as a church, we've sought to stand for the Lord.

And we want to continue to stand for the Lord. And we want all the parents to cooperate wholeheartedly in preserving the church in purity and that the next generation that grows up after we are gone does not get rid of the standards that we sought to maintain. May God have mercy on us and help us.

It's an awesome responsibility that falls on the shoulders of us parents. We need to fall down before God and weep and repent and ask God's mercy. And that will protect our children from the corruption that is in

the world through lust and prepare them for the Kingdom of God.

I'm not asking you to make silly rules and regulations which have no meaning. I'm not asking you to ask them to follow the fashions you followed 50 years ago. I'm asking you to teach them to be decent and modest, God-fearing and respectable in the presence of Jesus Christ.

That's all. Heavenly Father, it's a tremendous battle in the church to fight against the world. So many are unwilling to fight it because it will make the church unpopular, because it will drive away people who want to be worldly.

We say to you in Jesus' name, Father, we're not afraid of that. We're not afraid of people being offended with the truth. Help us to speak the truth in love, with graciousness, and not with a spirit of legalism.

To find that balance between grace and truth, between the kindness and the severity of God. To find that balance where we have standards without being legalistic. Where we want to keep the world out, but we don't want to bind people with chains.

I believe you will do that in our midst. We don't want to be like those churches that put chains on their people, and neither do we want to be like the other churches that let people go right into the spirit of the world and destroy themselves and their children. We want to follow Jesus who was sensible and balanced, and we believe that you are in our midst, Lord, and you can help us and show us and show our children that what we advise them is for the very best for them.

For them. Because you're always seeking our good in everything. Preserve us, Lord.

There are a million aspects of the world which we don't often notice, but give us a sense for the things of the world and the things of God. Make us quick of sense in the fear of God so that we can immediately detect where something is worldly, where even a manner of speech is worldly, or a conversation is becoming worldly, or a particular dress is worldly. Give us wholehearted sisters who will remodel their dresses.

Yes, Lord. Do it. Give us wholehearted parents who will teach at whatever cost their children to respect parents and older people.

Give us wholehearted brothers and sisters who will stand for the standards of God's Word in a corrupt, worldly, adulterous Christendom we are surrounded by today. Preserve us as much as we have asked you through the years to preserve us from legalism. We also ask you to preserve us from worldliness, from the world system that surrounds us on every side, in school, at work, with our friends and neighbors, and especially with television.

Protect us, Lord, from the worldliness that comes booming into many homes through television every day. Protect us, we pray, from the worldliness that there is in the newspapers, in the advertising sections, in the entertainment sections of the newspapers. Protect us, Lord.

It's all over. We can't escape it. It's in the billboards, on the roadsides, and everywhere.

Preserve us. Preserve us. Preserve our children.

They face a more difficult time than we had in our younger days. Please help them. Please help them and help all of us that we shall be as a church a light for you.

We're not worried if we are small. We pray the light will be bright. That's all we pray.

Bright in a way that you can endorse it and that in the day when we stand before you, you will say to us, Well done, good and faithful servant, because as a church you proclaim the truth without compromise, in love, without legalism. Help us, Lord. It's not easy, but we believe you'll help us and help our children to be gripped by this matter of being delivered from this present evil world system, lest it destroy them one day.

Give us light on the schemes and the snares of Satan, on the clever traps he's laid for our young people, the snares in the realm of music and so many other areas. Preserve us from the world, we pray. Have mercy upon us all.

In Jesus' name, Amen. You are invited to visit our website on the Internet at [www.cfcindia.com](http://www.cfcindia.com) that is [www.cfcindia.com](http://www.cfcindia.com) and at [punan.org](http://punan.org) forward slash zac that is p-o-o-n-e-n dot o-r-g forward slash z-a-c for video messages, audio messages and books by Zac Poonen that can all be downloaded freely. Our mailing address is Christian Fellowship Center Forte da Costa Square, Bangalore, 560-084-INDIA If you would like to receive a weekly message by Zac Poonen by email, please send us your email address to [cfclit at touchtellindia.net](mailto:cfclit@touchtellindia.net) that is [cfclit at touchtellindia.net](mailto:cfclit@touchtellindia.net) The Lord bless you richly.

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