

God Honours Those Who Honour Him

by Zac Poonen

God honours those who honour Him, and His divine power is a gift that we receive by faith, not by works.

Duration: 58:51

Scripture: 1 Samuel 2:30, Matthew 6:33, John 13:34, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Timothy 6:6, 2 Peter 1:4

Topics: "Honour"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a life that reflects the character of God. He encourages the audience to look at Jesus as an example in various areas of life, such as money and relationships with women. The speaker highlights that the purpose of God's promises is not to make us materially wealthy or physically healthy, but to enable us to partake in divine nature. He emphasizes that our lives should be a demonstration of God's power and goodness, so that others may see and be drawn to Him.

Transcript

There's a little phrase, a very beautiful phrase found in 2 Peter chapter 1. I want you to look at that. In 2 Peter chapter 1 verses 3 and 4, there are some amazing things mentioned here. If you read slowly and carefully and meditate on what's written here, it says that His divine power, that means the power of God, and remember, whenever the New Testament speaks about the power of God, He's talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said that, when the Spirit of God has come upon you, you shall receive power. And if there is one doctrine that is misunderstood, abused, and concerning which there's so much counterfeit and confusion, it's concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Because they have not related it to divine power.

They've related it to other things. So, when you read in scripture about divine power, pay attention. Because it's telling you what happens when you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

His divine power has granted to us. Granted means it's a gift. God does not give the Spirit to those who deserve Him.

Just like forgiveness of sins. You know, there are multitudes of religions, where people are seeking forgiveness of sins by works, pilgrimages, offering money, rolling on the ground, self-denial of various sorts, trying to earn. Where have they missed God's truth? Because it's free.

And as long as a person thinks that he can work and earn something from God, he's never going to get it. The Bible says, God gives it freely so that no man should be able to boast that he earned forgiveness. Whenever you see a person who is baptized in the Holy Spirit, sort of talking to you in a condescending way, you know what that means, sort of, for you, who have not yet been baptized in the Holy Spirit like me, you know he's missed the bus.

He hasn't understood a thing. He's got counterfeit. Because he thinks he did something and got it.

I mean, those of you who've been terrible sinners, and Jesus forgave you, would you look down on a sinner and say, oh, you poor thing, you haven't got forgiveness of sins like I have? No! We know that forgiveness of sins was so absolutely free that we can't possibly look down on another sinner. That's the way you know your forgiveness is genuine. But all these people who go on pilgrimages and give various offerings in order to get forgiveness, they look down on others.

They haven't got forgiveness. Forgiveness is free. So remember, the divine power grants us something.

It's a free gift. The gift of the Holy Spirit, the Bible says. And you don't pay for a gift.

You've got to receive it. That's for sure. If somebody gives you a gift and you don't stretch out your hand and take it, you won't get it.

That's another thing. But that's not a work, receiving it. So, remember this, that if you are really filled with the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for you to look down on someone else who is not filled with the Holy Spirit.

You will long that he or she also receives this wonderful power of the Holy Spirit, which you receive as a gift. I mean, if you receive forgiveness of sins, don't you long that other people should also know that it's free, man? You don't have to pay anything. You don't have to do anything.

It is absolutely free. It's for sinners. It's not for righteous people.

It's exactly the same with the gift of the Holy Spirit and God's power. And the sooner we realize it, the sooner we'll stop wasting our time trying to deserve God's gifts. Okay.

His divine power has granted to us everything. Now, whenever you read everything, it means everything. But it's qualified, not everything in the world.

Everything pertaining to life and godliness. And remember, in the New Testament, when it speaks about life, it's always speaking about the life of Jesus. Eternal life.

Eternal life is not living forever. That's not the meaning of eternity. Eternity means no beginning and no end.

So, eternal life means a life that had no beginning and no end. Only one person has it. That's God.

And that was manifested on earth in the life of Jesus. We read in John 1, 4, in him was life. The life was the light of men.

Nobody had it in Old Testament times. And God has granted us everything pertaining to this wonderful life of Jesus. And everything pertaining to godliness.

In other words, there's absolutely no excuse for anyone who's a believer now, not to have the life of Jesus more and more in his personality, in his behavior, in his character, in his conduct. There's absolutely no excuse for anyone not to live a godly life anymore. In the Old Testament, there was an excuse.

Because this verse could never be there in the Old Testament, that God's divine power has granted you everything pertaining to life and godliness. They didn't have it. They had power to do all types of external things.

I mean, things that amazed others, like pulling down the walls of Jericho, splitting the Red Sea, calling down fire from heaven. Jesus never did any of those things. It's something else.

Life and godliness. So the Holy Spirit's power is what God has given so that we might have everything pertaining to life and godliness. I thank God for a promise like that because it assures me that there's not a single sin in my life that I'm a slave to that I cannot overcome.

Not a single. I don't know what habit plagues you, but I'll tell you it can be overcome. Because God's granted everything pertaining to life and godliness to you.

I don't care what filthy habit you've gotten. It doesn't matter how many years you've been a slave to it. God has given you divine power, if you will take it, to have everything pertaining to life and godliness.

We may have, I'm not saying that we'll get healed about all of our aches and pains and weaknesses as we grow older. Those things will be there because we're not promised a resurrection body yet. But we are promised everything pertaining to life and godliness.

That's for sure. Everything. I mean if that's not true, the Bible's a lie, God's a liar and we gotta throw away the scripture.

There is absolutely no excuse for me to have any more darkness in my life in an area where I'm conscious. Unconsciously. Areas where I don't know.

Yeah, there's darkness in all of us. But those are areas I don't have light on yet. It's like a student saying when he's in the third standard, well I haven't studied trigonometry yet.

Well you're not supposed to study trigonometry in third standard. That doesn't mean he's a stupid child. He's getting a hundred percent in mathematics, but he hasn't studied trigonometry yet.

So what? Give him a few more years and he'll study trigonometry and he'll get a hundred percent there too. So when I say there are areas in my life I still haven't got light on and there must be darkness there, it means I haven't grown to that level yet. That's okay.

But wherever I have light, whatever I know to be sin, what do we mean by the area where we have light? Whatever I know to be sin, there is absolutely no excuse for me to remain defeated by that. God has given me everything necessary for eternal life and godliness and if you allow the devil to have that little foothold in your life in some area, it's exactly like the Israelites allowed the giants in Canaan to have little footholds and live in little caves in different parts of Canaan. It's okay, we won't disturb you.

God rebuked the Israelites for allowing that. And now it says here, it comes through the true knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and excellence. You know that's another thing you read very often in the New Testament that you hardly ever find in the Old Testament.

The knowledge of God. And here it says the true knowledge of God. Jesus said, this is eternal life that they might know thee.

The only true God. Jesus' definition of eternal life in John 17.3 is to know God and Jesus Christ. And through the true knowledge of God, what God is like, that's how we come to partake of this life and godliness.

So that's what the Holy Spirit does, you know, he gives us a true knowledge of God, what God is like. He shows us that God is not a policeman. God is not a judge at the moment.

He will be a judge in the future. He shows us that God is a loving, merciful father. And how do you know whether you've known God as a loving, merciful father? It's very easy to find out.

You'll be very loving and merciful to other evil people. If you are not merciful to evil people, you haven't known God yet. If you can't love unlovely people, you haven't known God yet.

That's the way we know. Through the true knowledge of God. I'll tell you this, I really believe, that certainly for myself and I believe it's for you, our calling is to show Christendom and the world what God is really like.

You know, that's what Jesus came to do. It says, He explained the Father. John 1.18 No one had seen God at any time.

But at last, somebody came from heaven and explained the Father. Explained the Father means He showed by His life and by His words and His whole attitude what God was like. So that at the end of His life, He could say to Philip, Have you seen? He who has seen Me has seen the Father.

The true knowledge of God. That's our calling. Jesus went around all over Israel trying to show what God was like.

That He was a loving Father. He was a loving Father. If your evil fathers know how to give good things to your children, how much more will our loving Father give good things to those who ask Him.

Give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. You know, brothers and sisters, your life, your witness to your unconverted relatives, and to your friends in the office and neighbors and everything else must be a demonstration to them to show them what God is like. God is a good God.

God is a merciful Father. And He is not a person who gets uptight about little, little things. So, this is why we need divine power to make us godly and partake of this eternal life so that we can manifest it to people around us.

True knowledge of God. The Holy Spirit comes to me. One of the greatest delights in my life for the past many years has been as the Holy Spirit shown me various aspects of the life of Jesus, how He lived on earth, demonstrating what God was like.

And that challenged me to say that's my calling too, in everything in life, to demonstrate what God is like. You know, Jesus could say to His disciples, see my attitude to money, for example, and you'll understand what God thinks about money. What about you? Can you tell people, look at my attitude to money, you'll get an idea what God thinks about money.

Can you say that? I'm just telling one area. Look at how I treat women. Jesus could say that.

Has He given me everything pertaining to life and godliness? That I can treat women like Jesus treated them? That's our calling. Don't ever be satisfied with anything less than that. So, and then in verse 4 it says, By these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises.

The promises of God are called precious and magnificent or in modern language, absolutely terrific promises. And the purpose of all these promises is that by these promises, listen to this, so that by these promises we don't become wealthy materially, we don't become healthy physically, but we partake of divine nature. That's the difference between what we preach in the counterfeit health and wealth gospel that is being preached today.

That was a gospel before Christ came, by the way. The health and wealth gospel was a gospel before Christ came. Deuteronomy 28 makes that very clear.

If you obey me, God says, I'll make you healthy, I'll make you wealthy. And that's why all these health and wealth preachers get their promises from the Old Testament. But in the New Testament, the precious and magnificent promises, in fact all of the Old Testament leads to the New Testament, is that we might partake of the divine nature, having escaped all the corruption that is in the world by lust.

In other words, I see the world as saturated with lust. Lust means desires, desires that have corrupted the world, desires contrary to the will of God. And that's corrupted the world, and I have escaped from that.

It's like, think of a person who is certified cancer, and then gets healed and is delivered from it, and the doctor says, hey, what happened? The cancer is all gone. That's what it means to be, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Think of a person who was, with five, six tests, declared that he, his blood test declared he's got AIDS, and then one day he gets healed, and every blood test declares he's free.

Can you imagine what a wonderful deliverance that person has? What a testimony he'll go around saying, everywhere. That is how we've got to see deliverance from lust. You know, I'll tell you honestly, it's one of the prayers I've prayed for myself.

Lord, help me to see sin as worse than cancer, worse than AIDS, that I will not be afraid of AIDS or cancer as much as I'm afraid of sin. And I'll tell you, that's a very important prayer to pray, because most Christians, whatever they may say, they don't take sin as seriously as cancer or AIDS. Leave alone cancer and AIDS.

Most people, they get disturbed if they have a stomachache or a headache. That bothers them more than sin. Can you imagine? People, you know, so many people go to servants of God for prayer for healing, for sickness, or pray that I'll get a job, pray that I'll get a promotion, or pray that I'll get a good wife or a good husband.

What should we be praying for primarily? That I might partake of the divine nature. And I'll tell you something, when we seek that, when that becomes our promotion in our life, you'll get all the health that you need for your life on earth. And you'll get all the wealth that you need, that won't ruin you for your life on earth.

I've experienced that for nearly 50 years. Health and wealth, not because I never asked for it, but according to my need. I mean, I can't do the things today I could do when I was 30.

And I'm not the richest man in India. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about enough for my needs.

Enough health to do my work. Enough wealth to meet my needs. What do you want more than that? So, but when I seek this thing which God's precious and magnificent promises have promised me, divine nature, then I've got the greatest thing of all.

Because nobody could have it in the Old Testament. In Deuteronomy 28, it never said that if you obey me, I'll give you the divine nature. You can't get it.

It has to be received as a gift. But I'll tell you something, you know, God sees whether we value what we, what he offers. I've often thought, why is it so many people seem to take so long to be filled with the Holy Spirit or to overcome sin? And I've come to see the reason is that God wants us to value his gifts.

You know, one of the illustrations that's come to me is, think of a mother who carries a baby in her womb for nine months. And that baby when it's born is so precious. Whereas if God had made this time of conception say, one day, you can see the next day the baby is born.

I don't think the mother would value it so much. They'd probably dump the baby like these dogs, you know, they dump their pups after a few days and say, well, I'm going to have another pup some other time. What is it that makes a mother value that baby so much, even more than the father? You know, no father values a baby as much as a mother.

I hope you all know that. It's true, whether you like it or not. It's the mother who values the baby because the father was just enjoying himself, while the mother was just struggling nine months carrying this baby.

It's like that. You value something when you have struggled for it, when you've longed for it. I've seen mothers who, I've seen wives who've been barren for years.

Then all of a sudden, out of the blue, after so many years, 10, 15 years, they suddenly get a baby. Boy, he didn't wait nine months, he waited 15 years. Can you imagine how precious that is? God wants us to value his gifts.

And I'll tell you, most Christians don't value the gifts of God, the real important gifts of God like divine nature, the power of the Holy Spirit. They don't value that. They value earthly things that they want to get from God.

I believe that's the reason why God keeps a lot of people waiting. See, you don't value my gifts, really. Even a lot of people who seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, they're seeking it for some selfish reasons, to have a feeling or perhaps to testify or to be happy that I got it.

I want to share some of the wonderful promises that have blessed me. Some of them are in the Old Testament, by the way. And I believe the principle there in the Old Testament applies even today.

And one of the wonderful promises, one of these wonderful, magnificent promises that I believe is just as valid today as it was when God first spoke it, is found in 1 Samuel chapter 2 and verse 30. This has been one of my favorite promises that I've sought to claim through many, many years. 1 Samuel chapter 2 verse

30.

It's a little phrase, you know, just like the phrase we saw in Peter, precious and magnificent promises. Think of that phrase, precious and magnificent promises. That's what we're thinking about.

And here's one little phrase in the middle, in the end of chapter 2 verse 30. The Lord says, Those who honor me, I will honor. I want to encourage all of you to remember that reference, 1 Samuel 2.30. It's easy to remember, 1.2.3.0. 1 Samuel 2.30. And what is the promise? Those who honor me, I will honor.

What's the reference? 1.3.0, right. 1 Samuel 2.30. It's a wonderful promise. Now, the reason why you need to know the reference is, I mean, you don't have to say, Lord, according to 1 Samuel 2.30. He knows it.

But I'm saying when you want to show it to somebody else who doesn't know where it is, show it to him in his Bible. That's where you need it. So, them that honor me, I will honor, says the Lord.

The opposite of that is, those who despise me. Now, you wouldn't think that you despise God. If I were to ask you, do you think you despise God? I think all of you would say, oh, no.

But do you know that when you don't honor Him, you are despising Him? It's only two options. It's not ignore me. It's not those who give me a low place.

It's those who despise me. You know what despise is? It's a pretty strong word. You know how the high-caste people in the villages despise the low-caste people.

It's a strong word. Certain people despise them. They're like that.

Imagine treating God like that. I don't think any of you would dream that you've been treating God like that. Oh, God.

You say, that's an atheist who treats God like that. No, sir. Believers.

Who are the ones who are despising God? Every single person sitting here who is not honoring God to the best of your knowledge in every area of your life. Believe it or not, you're despising God. That's what He says.

You either honor me or you despise me. Is there a midway? No, there is no middle way. You honor me.

If you don't honor me, you despise me. You give God second place in your life. You're despising Him.

You don't have to give Him tenth place or forty-fifth place. You just give Him second place. You're despising Him.

Because He is God. You know, in any function in India, if you give the President of India seat number two, and put anybody else, even the Prime Minister, in seat number one, you have despised the President of India. It's true.

Because He is supposed to be the highest dignitary in the country. You don't have to push Him down the line. You just put Him in seat number two.

You've despised Him. Now, we understand that. In all these big functions, all the dignitaries have to come to their place, and the last person who comes isn't.

Because He is the most important person. That's the place we must give God in our life, in our home, and in our church. That's why in our weddings, we don't start the wedding, and then allow the bride to walk in like a queen.

Because she's not the most important person. She must come there first. And then the last person to come is the most important, Jesus Christ.

He comes. We start the service. It's not like that in western countries.

They make Jesus come and start the service, and then the queen walks in. It's amazing how the devils make fools of Christians everywhere in the world. They say it's a little thing.

I know. It is a little thing, asking the president to sit in seat number two. Or making the president wait for the junior minister to walk in.

Isn't that an insult? The president has come and said, shall we start the function? No, sir. The junior minister has not yet come. We're waiting.

A small thing. It's not a small thing. You insult the president.

You know, these little, little things. If you really seek to honor God in your life, I tell you, God will show you the little, little areas, as He's shown me, where you don't honor me. And that's why God isn't going to honor you.

It's a law. The measure in which you honor God, God will honor you. And I'll tell you, it's a wonderful thing to have God honor you.

You don't have to be afraid of any human being thereafter. You know, there are a lot of people in the world who criticize me, write against me. And the other day, when I was down in Kerala, they showed me a book written by some brethren people on theology or something, some Bible school stuff, where they've got pictures of heretics.

And among the photographs of the heretics is the founder of the Church of Satan, Anton LaVey. And next to that, next page, is Zak Poonen. No definition of what the heresy is in the whole book, just along with a few others, like the founders of Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.

It was interesting. You think I lost a second of sleep over that? Not one second. The point is this.

It doesn't matter. If God honors you, it doesn't matter if the whole world dishonors you. It makes absolutely no difference.

I'll tell you that. You fellows who don't allow God to honor you, you're missing something. You're afraid of men because you don't honor God.

You honor God in your life, He'll stand by you through thick and thin. He'll never let you down. You remember the time when Paul says in 2 Timothy 4, I had so many good believers around me, but they caught me and took me to the court, and every believer ran away.

But the Lord stood by me. The Lord stood by him. He didn't bother him that other people ran away.

You don't have to seek help from man. Man may disappoint you. Imagine if Almighty God says to you personally, My son, my daughter, I will honor you.

Boy, I'd give anything in the world for that. I hope you will also. Anything in the world.

If God will honor you. I'll tell you something, the more God honors you, the more the devil will hate you. And the more the devil hates you, the more his agents will hate you.

That's why they called Jesus Prince of Devils. I mean, if they had photographs those days, they'd have put a picture of Beelzebub and Jesus next to that. That's how it would be.

We don't understand that people who honor God are not going to get the Nobel Prize and get honored by men. When God honors you, men will most probably dishonor you. Like they dishonored Jesus Christ.

Peter was crucified upside down. And Paul was beheaded. And all the other people, I don't know how they suffered.

Some were thrown in boiling oil and all types of things. People who honored God. Because it says, there's an expression in Hebrews 11 which says, Men of whom the world was not worthy.

I like that expression. Men and women of whom the world was not worthy. The world didn't deserve to have such good men in their midst.

God took them away. Men like Paul and Peter. He allowed them to live 30 years and say, You fellas don't deserve such a good man in your midst.

Kill him. I'm going to take him up to heaven. Do you want to be one like that? Men of whom the world is not worthy to have such good people.

Imagine what heaven will be like, my brothers and sisters. We're going to live there with the finest people that ever lived on this earth. With the best human beings that ever lived on this earth.

I'm just looking forward to that. I'm going to see some of the finest men and women that ever lived on the face of this earth. Men of whom this world was not worthy.

Men and women the world did not deserve to have here. But whom God honored. So I want to say to you.

Take this promise seriously. Those who honor me, I will honor. Seek with all of your heart.

To be one whom God can honor. And you know. Hold up as an example to others.

I've often thought about why the Acts of the Apostles. Inspired by the Holy Spirit. It's got so much detail of the life of the Apostle Paul.

I mean is that people like Andrew and Matthew and Thomas who came to India. You know Thomas came to India with the time when Acts of the Apostles was written. He came to India long before Paul died.

And before Paul was imprisoned. There's nothing mentioned there. It's not that Thomas was not a good man.

He was a wonderful man. But I think God wanted to show the world. What he could do in a human life.

And he took one example of Paul. And said see what I could do through this man. He was a man like you.

You fellows who won't believe that Jesus was like you. Can you believe at least Paul was like you? And then you can go to the second step of believing that Jesus was like you. Okay.

Even if you believe Paul was like you. Think of the life you lived. A man who honored God.

And God honored him so much. It doesn't mean he had an easy time. Being honored by God doesn't mean you know.

So many wrong ideas this world has got about honoring God. Being honored by God. That God honors me that I have so many earthly things.

No. Paul had very little. There were times when Paul.

It says in 2nd Corinthians 11. The times when I fasted. And there were times when I didn't have enough to eat.

It's different. Fasting was out of choice. And there were other times when he wanted to eat.

And he didn't have money. So he had to sort of scrape by with a little money he had. Because you know how rigid he was in his attitude towards receiving gifts and all that.

There were times when he didn't have enough to eat. There were times when he shivered in the cold. Because he didn't have money to buy a blanket.

And he tells Timothy in 2nd Timothy 4. It's pretty cold here in this prison. Please bring that blanket I left behind there when you come. Imagine a servant of God.

Having to ask somebody saying when you come can you please bring that blanket for me. This is God's greatest servant on the earth. Boy, if I could be like him.

If I could live like him. God's given us an example there. He wants to take you my brother, sister.

Paul is gone. He was an example in his generation. You know what God calls you and me to be? An example in our generation.

An example to what? Not how smart and clever you are. Not how much money you made. But an example to demonstrate to the world that if you honor God he'll honor you.

Yup. There must be no earthly explanation for our lives. People must look at your life and say how does this man manage it? He's a normal human being like us.

How does he manage it? How does he manage to be so patient when he's provoked? How does he manage to overcome his anger? How does he manage to keep himself pure and be free from the love of money which the entire race of Adam is riddled with? There's no earthly explanation. This God he talks about must be real I suppose. That's the explanation.

It must be real this God he believes in because there's no other way I can explain it. So many people attack him but it doesn't make a difference. Look at the number of people who attack Paul.

It didn't make any difference. God honored him. A number of wonderful ways.

It's not only Jesus who was protected from the soldiers of Herod when they wanted to kill him. You know how before the soldiers could reach Bethlehem an angel had gone there and told Joseph and Mary take the child and go. It's not only Jesus.

Paul. You read in Acts 21, 22 and 23. Those three chapters of Paul went to Jerusalem and he was captured.

And there were some Jews who had taken a vow to kill him. Some 30, 40 people said we won't eat until we kill Paul. And God allows.

See. Now Paul didn't know it. The Roman soldier who was guarding Paul and was supposed to take him from Jerusalem to another place didn't know it.

But God allowed Paul's nephew to hear it. Sister's son. How did he hear it? How did that happen? Was that accidental? How did he land up from Tarsus over there at that particular time? Now how should he be hanging around where these people are discussing that? And he goes and tells Paul.

And Paul tells him to tell the commander. And that's how his life is saved. I often wondered when those 40 people started eating because they said they were not going to eat until Paul was killed.

I suppose they were like some of these politicians today who fast unto death and then afterwards after a few days say yes. They have agreed to negotiate so I'll drink a glass of juice or something like that. The world is full of hypocrites.

Liars. In the midst of all that, there was this man Paul. Just like Jesus was protected, God protects his servants.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 4, he delivered me from the mouth of the lion. And when Paul's time was come, Nero was allowed to chop off his head. Then God didn't protect him.

Because God's saying to the world, you don't deserve to have this man in your rotten old world anymore. He's too good for you. He's fit only for heaven.

So it's a wonderful thing to be like that. I hope these are your heroes. People you want to be like.

People who honored God in every area of their life. They didn't make as much money as you and I make. But they honored God.

And God honored them. And as I said, you know, God will give you what you value. What you desperately long for.

What you're willing to pay any price for. He'll give you. But if you don't value this, you don't think being honored by God is the greatest thing of all.

You don't feel this is one of the precious and magnificent promises. Those who honor me, I will honor. You don't think of that as one of the fantastic promises of God.

Then you'll probably carry on, drift along. As one of the meeting attenders. As one of those mediocre Christians.

Always getting 35%. Ah, I didn't fail. I got promoted to the next class.

And next class, 35%. I got promoted to the next class. Now, from the beginning.

I want to say that God has made manifest. Those whom he honors. I want you to turn to Genesis chapter 4. This is the first event.

Recorded in the Bible. After man was thrown out of the Garden of Eden. And that's why it's significant.

After man had sinned and was put out of Eden. The first event recorded in the Bible. Is Cain bringing an offering to God.

And Abel bringing an offering to God. God accepting one offering. And God not accepting another offering.

It's very important to see that. It just says. It's an introduction.

Adam and Eve had two children. Cain and Abel. They had many other children also.

Which are not mentioned here. Don't think they had only two. Because one proof of that is later on.

When God curses Cain. He says. Oh, you've cursed me now.

Anybody who sees me will kill me. Who are these people who will see him? All the other children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Adam. There were many.

There were many people. In those days. Cain and Abel was just mentioned.

The two stories mentioned about two of Adam's sons. That's all. There were many others.

Because it says they grew up and Cain became a herdsman. And Abel became a farmer. That means they were 20-30 years old.

And those 20-30 years Adam had many, many children. So, Cain. This is a story of two of them.

Cain and Abel. And Cain brought an offering to God. And Abel brought an offering to God.

And I want you to see. That everything we do. We must see as an offering we bring to God.

Our whole life is meant to be an offering. We bring to God. The way I speak to you is an offering I bring to God.

If I'm angry with you, I say something to you. It's an offering. And you know whether God will accept it or not.

Imagine if I see my whole life. Everything I do. The thoughts I think.

When I'm sitting by myself lying down in my bed at night. And the thoughts I think are an offering I'm bringing to God. Does He accept it? What's the first thing that happened after man was thrown out of Eden? He brought an offering to God.

One was accepted. One was not accepted. And I want to say.

Everything we do is an offering to God. Everything we say. Every word that comes out of our mouth is an offering to God.

It's accepted or not accepted. There are two streams. The head of one is Cain.

The head of the other is Abel. I want to be in the Abel stream. Where everything I do.

Morning till night. Everything I say and everything I think. Is an offering that God can accept.

And He'll accept it. If you seek to honor Him. You say, Oh, this life is going to be such a strain.

Not at all. It's just being spiritually healthy. You know, nowadays there are so many.

So much consciousness of healthy foods. Don't eat junk food. They say things which just make you fat.

Taste nice in the mouth but just make you fat and make you sick. But so, is it a strain? To know all these things. To avoid certain types of food and eat food that's good for the body.

It's not a strain. It's good for me. I'm glad to know.

These things are not good for my body. These things are good. Let me take what's good for my body.

In the same way, it's not a strain. To know what is pleasing to God. And what is not.

Just like I throw away junk food. I throw away junk thoughts. And junk words.

And junk actions. I mean, if I'm more worried that junk food will hurt my body. And I'm not worried about junk thoughts and junk words and junk actions.

When I'm a Christian, am I? I'm just like any rotten old worldly person. I'm not bothered about the offering I bring to God. So, this is related to that promise.

Them that honor me, I will honor. Why was Cain so angry? See, this anger against true servants of God started with Cain. It's not you.

The anger that Saul had towards David. The anger that the Pharisees had towards Jesus. The anger that the Jews had against Paul.

And the anger that so many people have against me. And against us as a church. It's as ancient as Cain and Abel.

It's not something new. That's why it shouldn't puzzle us or disturb us. It's not something new.

It's as old as Cain and Abel. And it is due to the fact that one man's offering is accepted by God and the other man can't stand it. You know that? It's jealousy.

It's jealousy. The first sin described in the Bible outside the Garden of Eden. Jealousy.

When God accepts somebody. Blesses him. You're waiting for some calamity to happen to him.

And no calamity is happening to him. The anointing of God becomes richer and richer. And furious and angry.

And by that God exposes the corruption in their hearts. Even though they claim to be religious and Christians and all that. Why should a Christian be upset if God is using somebody else? I'll tell you, I'm not upset.

I'm not upset if God uses... For example, when I was in Germany once, I met a brother who came all the way from Italy. A poor brother. Most of the meetings you go to is all these poor immigrants.

These are poor immigrants from Sri Lanka who just scraped by and came to Italy as immigrants. And trying to get a job working in laborers and all that. And with a little bit of saving he took a train and came all the way to Germany from Italy to hear me speak.

And I was so thrilled. He was so gripped by the truth, this brother. And I asked him, how did you hear about me? I've never met you.

How did you know? He said, there was a Tamil pastor who was living in Germany. Who brought a whole lot of your books. And sold it here.

And I asked him, how much did he sell it for? It was about ten times the price. It was a business for him. Come to India and buy these books at a cheap rate and go there.

When I heard it initially, I got mad. I mean, I got mad that not that he was making money, that he was duping these poor people who were working as laborers and making them spend so much money for books which we sell so cheap here. But then the Lord said to me, don't worry.

Because that fellow brought that book, this chap has come now to hear your words. So then I realized, I'll let them sell it at any price. And let them make as much money as they like.

If I get one soul out of all that, I don't care if he charged a thousand rupees for a book. So I changed my view after that. I said, sell it, do whatever you like, but spread the word.

Anyway, this guy came. And I saw there how he had such a hunger for God. And God saw that hunger in him.

And reached out to him through a corrupt fellow who was out to make money. You know, like the money changers in the temple, trying to make money out of God. This fellow was trying to make money out of God, selling my books.

God used him to reach one chap who is sincerely seeking God. How wonderful God is! I was so excited to see that. You know, it doesn't matter how simple you are in the remote corner in the world.

If you want God honors you. You know how we have prayed many years, you and I have prayed. Lord, if there is anybody seeking a godly life somewhere, bring him in touch with us.

Some way or the other. Even if it's through some corrupt fellow trying to make money out of selling books, fine. Let God use any agent, but bring him to us.

And I was so delighted to meet this person. I mean, that fellow's offering, making money out of the books, that was an acceptable God. But this chap, he was so hungry, he could come to hear his word.

And it's amazing how God has got these people here and there. And I tell you, my life's passion is to meet these people. Some poor laborer here, some poor cook in Paris, and some bus driver in Chicago.

These are the type of people I meet. Seeking for a godly life. It's really amazing.

There's a stream that started with Abel of people who want to honor God, and who are making an offering to God. And God's bringing us in touch with each other. I praise the Lord for that.

I want to encourage you all, my brothers and sisters, be a person like Abel, who brings an offering that pleases God. You will naturally find a lot of other people who are disturbed by God blessing you. And don't worry about them.

God will honor you. You'll have a great reward when you stand before the Lord and you see people whose lives you influenced. Not because you are a great preacher.

No, God's given the gift of effective preaching to very few people. I've seen that in my travels around the world in different places in 50 years. I've seen there are very, very few people who have the gift of very powerful preaching.

I don't know why. God could have given it to many people, but he hasn't given it. I don't know why.

I would have thought that if there were 100 more people like that, it would be good for the church. But God says no. He is looking for those who will live.

That we can all do. You may not be able to preach. But preach, man.

You want to honor? Why not live in a way that honors God? And say, Lord, my life is an offering to you. And you accept it. That's all that matters to me.

I don't want any honor from men. Seek to do that. Precious and magnificent promises.

And as you've often heard me say, Genesis 4. You know, many people in Christendom say that Abel was accepted because he brought blood. And Cain was not accepted because he didn't bring blood. And so they say, so long as you say the blood of Jesus, you're okay.

It's just like some mantra they teach in some religions. They keep saying this mantra, the blood of Jesus, the blood of Jesus, power in the blood, etc. No, it's not that.

It says in Genesis 4, it came about when they brought the offering. See what it says. Last part of verse 4. The Lord had regard not for Abel's offering, but for Abel.

And therefore, for his offering. And the Lord did not have regard for Cain. And therefore, not for his offering.

It was the man behind the offering whom God was looking at. Not the offering itself. You know, the offering you bring, God regards it if he regards you first.

If you're okay, then your offering is okay. I mean, Cain brought a lamb because he was looking after lambs. Abel brought a lamb because he was looking after lambs.

Cain brought wheat or whatever it was because that's his job. He brought the best of the wheat. This chap brought the best of the lambs.

I don't know whether he brought the best of the wheat, but whatever it was, there was something in Cain's heart that God could not approve of. He said, I won't accept your offering. You know how Jesus also said that? You come with your offering to God, and there you remember that you hurt somebody.

You yelled at somebody and got upset and got angry. Jesus says, leave that offering there. God won't accept it.

Why won't he accept it? Is it a good offering? It's a good offering. But the man behind the offering is not good. He has to go and settle something with somebody whom he hurt.

Somebody he yelled at or something like that. Then God says, come and give back the offering to God. He'll accept it.

How the same offering was not acceptable half an hour ago, and now it is acceptable. How is that? Because in that half an hour, you went and apologized to somebody. The Lord had regard for Abel, and therefore for his offering.

The Lord did not have regard for Cain. Therefore, he didn't regard his offering. Those who honor me, I will honor.

You want God to accept your life? You want God to accept everything you bring to him? Everything, even if it's a widow brought two mites. Jesus said, that's great. But all the other fellows who put thousands of denarii into the box, he didn't have regard for the person.

So seek with all your heart to be one who honors God. Precious and magnificent promises. Those who honor me, I will honor.

Let's pray. If you take a decision today, you must ask God to give you grace to stick to it. Every day and say, Lord, give me grace.

Give me the power of your Holy Spirit that I'll stick to this every single day of my life. I don't want to play games with God. I want to be in business with God.

Will you do that? Respond to the call of God to your heart. Acknowledge your inability, your weakness. Say, Lord, I really need the power of your Holy Spirit.

I don't deserve it when I come to you because Jesus died for me and purchased this for me. It's mine. I want to be filled with the Spirit continuously.

I want this divine power that helped me to offer you. Everything in my life is an offering acceptable to you. Heavenly Father, help us to live by your magnificent promises and to partake of your nature.

To live as Jesus lived on this earth. Thank you, Father.

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