

God Lifts Up Our Head

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and allowing God to lift us up rather than seeking self-promotion in ministry.

Duration: 18:56

Scripture: Psalm 3:3, Psalm 75:6-7, Luke 18:9-14, Galatians 6:2, Philippians 2:3-4, Revelation 3:1-2

Topics: "Humility And Exaltation", "Christian Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, letting God exalt individuals rather than seeking self-promotion. It touches on the need for genuine ministry, avoiding counterfeit practices, and staying true to God's calling. The speaker highlights the significance of living a life that reflects Jesus, showing love, compassion, and selflessness towards others, just as Christ did.

Transcript

See, one of the things I had to do when my sons were growing up was that, one, I wanted them to serve the Lord, but I was not going to determine how they do it or where they - because calling for each person is different. But I was determined that I would not promote them like a lot of preachers promote their sons. I said, Lord, I'll never do it.

I'll never do it, and I still won't do it, because I never wanted all my sons to be the same either. Each has got a different ministry in different ways. And you can probably see that the two of my sons you've heard, they don't speak like me.

They're more polished with, you know, PowerPoint, and I sort of speak here and there. I'm glad they're different. But there's a verse in Psalm 75, which I've kept in mind in this connection, in the King James Version.

Psalm 75, verses 6 and 7. It's a very important word. You see, the same principle. Many of my fellow elders are also about the age of my children, and I don't promote them.

I say, I'll let God do that. Promotion does not come from the East or from the West. It is God, not from the desert, but from God.

He exalts. God is the judge who puts down one and exalts another. So that's what I've kept in mind.

I will never promote my children, I will never promote any particular elder who is my favorite or any such thing. I have no favorites. I will let God, who exalts the humble, exalt whom he sees.

I've seen the calamity that has come around me, with so many preachers who build a ministry and then promote their children. Always calamity. And I've learned a lesson, Lord, I'll never do that.

And that's why I was glad that they went to another country where nobody knew me, and that God gave them a ministry on their own, and God exalted them and gave them a ministry. I'll tell you one thing that happened in Sandeep's church. He started meeting in his home with a few people.

That's how it started a few years ago. And a number of people started coming. And then he preached that women should cover their heads when they pray or share the word in the meeting.

And half the people left. That's what happens in America if you go and preach such things. Because then nobody covers their head, you know.

They used to cover their head 60-70 years ago, before the Second World War. You went to any church in America, they would all cover their heads. There was a lot more godliness there then.

But after the Second World War, a great movement started around the world, started by heathen women called Women's Liberation. And what happened in the world came into the church, and little by little, I think the Roman Catholics still kept their heads covered, and the Mennonite Christians, they kept their head covered. But all the other so-called Baptists and so-called Evangelicals and so-called Pentecostals, they just took off their head covering.

It was a small indication of the way Christianity was going to go. And it's drifted. In the last 65 years, Christianity has drifted.

I believe there was a great influx of demons into the world after the Second World War. Healing ministries started, most of which were fake. I've read of the healing ministries of people in the early 1900s, genuine healing ministries.

And I've read of the healing ministries that started after the Second World War. I don't have a respect for even one of them. Fake, fake, fake counterfeits.

The early people who had a healing ministry never made money. But after the Second World War, till now, every healing ministry, they are millionaires. They got their private jets and all that.

The amazing thing is so many Christians are blind to all this. I've studied Christian ministry and the history of Christianity through the years, and I'm not fooled by all this. God exalts, and he exalts the humble.

And you know, Sandeep shared about the Pharisee and the publican going out of the temple, the Pharisee lifting up his head saying, not like others, and the publican also lifting up his head because God had justified it. Two different reasons why they walk out with their head lifted up. There's a verse in Psalm 3, and verse 3, Psalm 3, verse 3, which says, Thou, O Lord, art a shield about me.

You are my glory, and you are the one who lifts my head. Or as the King James says, lifter of my head. I want God to lift my head.

I don't want to lift up my head myself. Do you lift up your head yourself in your church? I'm the elder around here. You all better listen to me.

And even if I'm boring in my sermon, you better listen. I'm going to keep you here for one and a half hours. There are elders like that.

There are a few like that in CFC churches too. How do I know? People write to me, Brother Zach, will you please tell our elder not to speak for so long? He bores us. CFC churches.

I've told these elders for years, most of you don't have grace to speak more than 20 minutes. Please limit yourself. They won't listen.

They won't listen to me. They want to lift up their heads. I'm sorry to say that, but it's true.

The Lord rebuked the churches which the apostles planted. You know, it says when Jesus walked and preached for three hours for those 11 kilometers from Jerusalem to Emmaus, to those two disciples of walking to Emmaus, for three hours their hearts burned. That's what they themselves testified.

That is the mark of Jesus speaking. Your hearts will burn. They won't be bored.

And if you can help people's hearts burn just for 10 minutes, speak 10 minutes and sit down. I've seen people speak wonderfully for 20 minutes, but they say, oh, the time is not up. So I got another 20 minutes more and they bore people.

And I've sat there and I said, I wish the guy had sat down when he was 20 minutes. It was perfect. But he spoiled the whole thing by speaking another 20 minutes.

I've seen it again and again and again and again. And I've spoken about it again and again and again and again. Nobody listens to me.

Maybe one or two. I'm not saying that you have the grace to speak. There are some people who have the grace to speak for three hours, two hours, one hour.

You've got to see whether you have that grace or not. I remember one brother in one of our meetings spoke and it was very heavy. He's not one of our elders in a sharing meeting.

I didn't want to tell him, brother, you were pretty heavy and boring because it would discourage him if it comes from me. I'd be so depressed. So I said, brother, did you feel something about how you said today, spoke today? He said, no, I felt okay.

I said, okay. Go home and ask your wife what she thought about it. She loves you, right? And tell me.

The next Sunday I met him and I said, what did your wife say? My wife said, you were long and you were boring. I said, you've got a wonderful wife. She's a helper like Eve.

Always go home and ask her to tell you the truth, what she thought about it. I asked my wife, I don't want to excuse myself, and ask some of the other brothers also. Don't lift up your head, that's the Pharisee.

Let God lift your head. And people sitting in your church will see whether you are lifting your head or whether God is lifting your head. They will recognize it.

And you'll build the church if God lifts your head. You'll destroy it if you lift your head. So as we heard also, there are two types of publicans.

They both can say, Lord, be merciful to me, I'm a sinner. They don't believe it. One really believes it, he's so gripped by it, he really believes he's a wretch.

But the other is just using the right language. And that's one of the great dangers as CFC has grown, we all know the right language now. Sin shall not have dominion over you, God keeps us from falling.

We know all the right language, the church, the body of Christ. I'm scared, to tell you honestly, I'm scared. Because we have the language.

41 years ago, nobody had the language. If somebody said something, it was because he suddenly saw it. But now, it has become so familiar.

Everybody speaks the language. And you don't know which is the real thousand rupee note and which is the counterfeit. They look so alike.

So it's happened. And it always happens after 30, 40 years in any movement. The language becomes the same, but it's not the same power, it's gone.

You have a name that you're alive, but you're dead. You know, the Lord said that to an elder in Sardis, a church planted by the apostles. You can have an apostle plant your church, and you can have a name that you're alive, but you're dead.

So we need to ask ourselves whether the Lord is lifting up our head, or we're lifting up our head ourselves. The other thing I want to mention is, you saw that beautiful picture of that triathlon. Oh, it's exhausting.

Swimming, biking, and then running. All of them long distances. And by the way, those two were brothers, blood brothers, Brownlee brothers.

And in the Rio Olympics, for the first time in Olympic history, two brothers came first and second. Gold and silver medal. Those two got the gold and silver medal in the Rio Olympics triathlon.

And this is another triathlon, they were running after that. And one of those brothers was coming first. And somebody else was there, and then this other brother came along.

And when he saw his brother stumbling and falling, he got a hold of him and he saw him and made him run together, and the wonderful part was he pushed him so that he would go ahead of him. What a picture. And somebody interviewed that brother who helped his brother afterwards.

And he said, my mother would not have been happy if I had left my brother just standing there. That's what he said. And I think of Jesus coming to earth and saying, my father would not be happy if I left this sinner like that.

So I put my arm around him. That's how he took me. Because Jesus said, my father would not be happy if I let Zachary lie like this.

I lift him up. And he's carried me 57 years. And he says to me, do to others what I did to you.

Your father is not happy when he sees somebody else in your church stumbling, falling, and you are running. Do you want to come first? No. Push him forward.

Let him come first. You take the second. What an example.

What an example. He said, my father would not be happy if I leave him standing there like that. And let me push him forward.

This is Christianity. It's just two or three lines of a very lovely song which we can sing from our hearts, meaningful words. I do not know how long I'll live, but while I live, Lord, let me give some comfort to someone in need by smile or nod, kind word or deed.

I only want to love like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee.

Lord, help me do whate'er I can to ease things for my fellow man. I only want to do my part to lift a tired, weary heart. And the chorus.

I only want to love like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee.

If I can make folks love again, then I will not have lived in vain. And I'll not care how long I live if I can love and give and give. The chorus.

I only want to love like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee.

That last verse, once again, it's very special. If I can make folks love again, then I will not have lived in vain. And I'll not care how long I live if I can love and give and give.

I only want to love like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee. Lord, help me live on earth like thee.

Brothers and sisters, sing that song all your life. God bless you. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, help us to live like Jesus on this earth. Not just in words. Most people can't preach well, but we can all live well.

We can live like you, even if we can't preach like you. Help us to live like you, Lord. And there's not a single person here who cannot, unable to live like you.

If you help them, help us all. We pray in Jesus' name.

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