

# God Requires Honesty and Compassion - Part 2

by Zac Poonen

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*God requires honesty and compassion from us, and we must acknowledge our iniquity and treat others fairly in order to have a genuine relationship with Him.*

**Duration:** 8:32

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:13, Isaiah 1:18, Jeremiah 3:12

**Topics:** "Genuine Worship", "Fair Treatment"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine worship and treating others with fairness and mercy. It highlights God's displeasure with insincere religious practices and the need to repent from tearing others down with words. The message underscores the significance of acknowledging our mistakes without blaming others and treating everyone fairly, mirroring how we want to be treated.

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## Transcript

In the middle of the last part of verse 13, I can't endure iniquity in the solemn assembly and the message of the Bible says, quit your worship charades, that means pretense of worship. Quit your pretending to worship me. I can't stand your trivial religious games, monthly conferences, weekly sabbaths, Sunday meetings, special meetings, meetings, meetings, meetings.

I can't stand one more, God says. Meetings for this, meetings for that. I hate them.

You warn me out. I'm sick of your religion, religion, religion. When you go right on sinning, when you put on your next prayer performance, I'll be looking the other way, I'm not going to listen to you.

No matter how long or loud or how often you pray, I won't be listening. And do you know why? Now listen. Because you've been tearing other people to pieces.

Have you done that? Have you torn people to pieces with your tongue at home, anywhere? Well, the Lord says, if you do that, you come here and you pray and pray and pray and pray, I'm not even going to listen. See, God is very particular about how we treat other people. Very, very particular.

How do you treat other people? It's very, very important to God. Are you fair? Are you merciful? Now, obviously, we are very humble before people who are above us in the office. I'm not asking how you treat

your boss.

I'm asking you how you treat a peon in the office. How do you treat your boss? No, we are all respectful before our bosses. Through the years, God's spoken to me.

How do you treat people who have no obligation to you? If you want something from somebody, of course, you'll be very nice to them, very kind. But what if there's somebody who can offer you nothing, a beggar or a servant or your wife or husband, whose opinion you don't care for? How do you speak? How do you treat? Do you tear people to pieces with your words? Do you treat them like you want to be treated yourself? You say, your hands are bloody. Say, your tongue is bloody.

Go home and wash up and clean up your act. And then, verse 18, come and sit down. Let's reason this out.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Now, you know, Christians have the habit of taking verses out of context without any reference to the previous verse or the succeeding verse. And that's why many promises don't work in our life.

This is another of those verses. It's a very favorite verse of many Christians, Isaiah 118. Come, let us reason together.

Though your sins be as scarlet. And the Christians take a lot of, oh, I'm so thankful. Though my sins are as scarlet, you'll make them white as snow.

Who does he say that to? He says that to people who treat other people like they want to be treated themselves. Not to every Tom, Dick and Harry. You can go and claim it.

It won't work. A lot of promises in Scripture don't work because we take it completely out of its context and take, uh-huh, this is it. To whom does he say it? He says it to those who've stopped tearing other people to pieces.

Who've repented of the way they are behaving with others who are socially inferior to them. Or, you know, from whom you need nothing. This is so important.

The burden of the Old Testament prophets was this. First of all, acknowledge your iniquity. And second, treat other people fairly, the way you want to be treated yourself.

So I could sum it up in two statements. Acknowledge your failure. Acknowledge where you slip up.

Acknowledge your mistake and don't blame anybody else. And secondly, don't be hard on other people. See, Jeremiah chapter 3. In Jeremiah chapter 3, verse 13, the Lord says.

First of all, verse 12, the Middle East says, Return, faithless Israel, I will not look upon you in anger. Middle of verse 12. For I am gracious.

I will not be angry forever. But only acknowledge your iniquity. That you have sinned.

That you have not obeyed my voice. You know, this may sound very, very simple. Of course, we know we have to confess our sins.

But just like God says, you can't say you love God if you can't love your brother. You can't love a brother whom you can see. How can you say you love God whom you can't see? So, if you can't acknowledge your mistake to a human being.

How do you know that you're acknowledging your mistake to God? Let me ask you this. Who is holier? God or your wife? You don't have to think, do you? You can answer that one. God is much holier.

Now, it should be, strictly speaking, more difficult to go and confess sin to a holy God. Than to an unholy wife. Or an unholy husband.

Should be easy. I mean, after all, a sinner confessing to a sinner should be very easy. To come before a holy God.

To confess, it's more difficult. Now, let me ask you a second question. Which do you find easier? To confess your sin to God or to confess it to your wife? Or to your husband? You know the answer.

The answer is the same for every single person here. Whether you look holy or not, the answer is the same. You say it's much easier to confess it to God.

You know why? Listen. You're not really confessing to God at all. You're imagining that you're confessing to God.

If you were confessing, it should be much easier to confess to an unholy person than to a holy God. Sure. I mean, if you have done badly in an exam, would you like a very lenient type of teacher to mark your paper or a very strict teacher? So, if you have failed, isn't it better to go to a sinner and confess than to go to a holy God? How is it we find ourselves feeling that we can confess to a holy God much easily? I really believe that many of us, when we say,

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