

God Requires Honesty and Compassion - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of honesty and humility in our relationship with God and others, warning against false prophets and the importance of genuine repentance.

Duration: 8:50

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 7:10

Topics: "Humility And Honesty", "False Teachings"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and honesty before God, using examples from Paul's writings and biblical figures like Isaiah and Peter. It warns against self-appointed prophets and false teachers who seek to control or manipulate others for personal gain. The key message is to acknowledge our sins, seek forgiveness, and strive to walk humbly with God, even if it means admitting our mistakes and shortcomings.

Transcript

No one in the world worse than you, and the closer you get to God, you feel that every now and then. I don't feel like that every day, I don't think I can bear it, but I'd be a very depressed person if God allowed me to feel like that every day, but every now and then I do feel like that, I'm going to tell you quite honestly. Paul said, Oh, wretched man that I am.

See for such people, it's very easy to acknowledge, yeah, I made a mistake, and look at the way Paul writes even scripture in 1 Corinthians. This is a mark of humility, 1 Corinthians in chapter 7. In 1 Corinthians chapter 7, there are a number of places where he says, yeah, I really don't know what the Lord's commandment is. You know, he says in verse 10, to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord.

Previously he was saying his own instruction in a sense in verse 7, I wish all men were as I myself. That's not God saying, it's just my opinion. I wish you could all be bachelors like me to serve the Lord, but he made it here, that's my opinion.

But then he says, this is the Lord, and then later on, he says down at the end of the chapter in verse 40, after writing all this, he says, I think I have the spirit of God, and God put it in scripture. God says, oh yeah,

you have the spirit. You know, I'll tell you something.

I would rather listen to a man who says, well, I think this is what God is saying, God wants me to ban all these fellows who go around saying, that's what the Lord, oh, I'm sure the Lord said this to me, the Lord said that to me. I have seen that whole tribe of people, self-deluded Christians. I would listen to a man who says, like, well, I think I have the spirit of God, and who says, well, I don't have a clear commandment from the Lord.

You read that chapter, you get that tone coming through, I don't have a clear commandment from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has found mercy from the Lord to, so I'm just giving my opinion, and it says in verse 40, in my opinion, and that comes through a number of times. The honesty to acknowledge that I haven't heard very clearly from the Lord, that's humility. You know, I believe that a lot of people, just like we pray, and pray to ourselves, think we are praying to God, we can have a thought in our mind, and imagine, oh, that's God speaking to me, that's God.

That's how lots and lots of people have gone astray, and when a man makes himself a self-appointed prophet, and whatever thought comes into his mind, he begins to tell other people, this is what the Lord is saying to you, boy, then it's really serious. There are a lot of people floating around like that. One mark of all of them is, they will want your money.

That's the way you can easily pick them out. Or they'll want to control you. So if you steer clear of people who want to control your life, and steer clear of people who want your money, you'll never be deceived by such people.

Because all these false prophets, they'll want to control your life, or they'll want your money. Very quick way to test them out. So I'm just giving you a couple of tests to find out false prophets, a lot of them floating around today.

So that's the first thing, to the fact that we have really made contact with God means, I see my sin, and I am so ashamed of it, and I don't mind acknowledging it. I mean, Isaiah wrote it down in a book for everybody to read. I am a man of unclean lips.

Can you imagine the greatest prophet in the country saying that? We read Isaiah chapter 6, and we think, yeah, yeah. But that was the greatest prophet in Israel speaking and saying, I am a man of unclean lips. I would listen to such a man.

I would listen to a man who was quick to acknowledge I was wrong. Peter, when he denied the Lord, it says he went out and wept bitterly. I think he was saying, Lord, you're right.

You said I would deny you. It's me. I'm the worst of the apostles.

I handed my resignation. It says in John 21, he said, I'm going back to my fishing. He really meant it.

He said, I'm not an apostle. I'm not fit to be one. I deny the Lord.

He went out and wept bitterly. Judas Iscariot could do something worse than that. He just felt a bit sad that Jesus got caught and got beaten.

You know, you feel sad if anybody gets beaten. Even a thief, if you see him being beaten and hammered and killed, you'll feel sorry for the man. That's how Judas felt sorry that Jesus was being beaten so much.

It didn't mean a thing. It's honest acknowledgment before God that proves that we're really walking humbly with him. And as I said, the test of it is that we'll be willing to acknowledge our mistake before others.

Yeah, I was wrong. But it's so difficult in saying that. It just means I'm saying I am not God.

Brothers and sisters, I want to announce to you that I'm not God. Is that a big, very difficult to say that? Whenever you say to your husband or wife or to a brother or sister, I'll tell you something I told you earlier. It's sometimes easier to say to a husband and wife because you want peace at home.

It's not because you're really convinced it's true. We want to do okay for the sake of peace. We'll do it.

I'll say I'm sorry. I've noticed this with many, many brothers. I mean, you check yourself.

I don't know your private life. When you have a difficulty with your wife, do you do everything possible to try and restore that relationship as soon as possible? But when you have said something rude to a brother or done something wrong or not acknowledge your mistake, can you let days go by, weeks go by, and ignore it? I'll tell you something. It proves you know nothing about the body of Christ.

Your knowledge of the body of Christ is zero, even though you may have been in CFC for many years. You're not a disciple because you love your wife more than you love Jesus' body. Every heathen, unconverted, godless atheist in the world wants to have peace at home and will acknowledge, will say something to pacify his wife.

You're no better than them. The test is whether you'll go and acknowledge to somebody with whom restoring fellowship doesn't, you know, doesn't really accomplish anything. Restoring fellowship at home is important.

You may not get your breakfast tomorrow. That's important. But this other guy, my fellowship with him is not so important.

I want to encourage you to take all these things seriously. Walk humbly with your God.

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