

God Will Help Us To Walk As Jesus Did

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living in alignment with God's will, focusing on the need for self-examination and growth in faith. It encourages believers to evaluate themselves regularly, seek to progress spiritually, and trust in God's provision and guidance for every aspect of life. The message highlights the significance of forgiveness, rest in God's promises, and the possibility of living a life that reflects the principles Jesus lived by.

Duration: 59:13

Scripture: 1 John 2:6, Hebrews 8:12, Matthew 6:11, Lamentations 3:23, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Genesis 2:1

Topics: "Alignment with God's Will", "Spiritual Growth and Self-Examination"

Description

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Transcript

God doesn't have a calendar. He lives in eternity, but he made the earth go around the sun in 365 and a quarter days. So there was something in it.

And we read in the Bible about years, and every year is the period the earth takes to go around the sun. So it's good at least once in a year for us to examine ourselves, to see where we stand. Of course the ideal thing is to do it every day.

I do it every day. But many people don't take the Christian life seriously, and we have to come down to their level and help them. So at least once a year to evaluate ourselves, see where we have stood.

Just like in a school, they evaluate the students. Are you prepared to go to the next higher class? And we want all our children to be promoted to the next higher class every year. We don't want anyone to stay in the same class in the same year.

And it's the same in the Christian church, in our church here, we don't want anyone to stay in the same level next year. And not only that, we want to learn something new every year. We want to finish with our past mistakes and move forward.

In the Old Testament, they could not do it as well as we could do it now. I want to turn to a verse in 1 John chapter 2 and verse 6. 1 John 2 verse 6, you know the way you read the Bible, you can read a verse and you can look at it in two ways. I want to ask you, how do you look at this verse, 1 John 2 verse 6. The one who says he abides in Christ ought himself to walk in the same manner as he walked.

Or as the living Bible says, anyone who says he is a Christian must live as Christ lived. Like you have got the title of my book, Living as Jesus Lived. So, you ought to walk as Jesus walked.

How do you look at that verse? You can look at it as an impossible command. It's not possible. It's a challenge that I can never attain to.

Or you can say, see that first attitude is the attitude of unbelief. That's what the devil tells you, that's impossible man, don't even waste your time thinking about it. And I would say the most Christians in the world look at that verse as an impossible standard.

You might as well scratch out that verse in the Bible, it's not possible to live like that. And there are some people who say, we'll probably reach that when we get to heaven, but not possible now. Is the Bible telling us how to live in heaven? No, there's not a single verse in the Bible that tells us how to live in heaven.

In fact, we don't even know how it will be there. It's telling us how to live on this earth right now. The other way to look at it, and that's the way I want you to look at it for the new year, is to see it as a possibility that God says, I will help you to live like that.

That's the language of faith. Oh boy, you mean I can walk as Jesus walked? It took me a long time after I became a Christian to take that as a possibility, instead of feeling discouraged, oh I can never live like that. I feel most of us here have always taken it as an impossible standard, not even worth trying.

And always the devil says, who can live like Jesus lived? It's impossible. But if you believe that God does not give us commands that are impossible, just like a loving father or mother will never ask their child to do something they know they cannot do. They will only ask them to do something they can do.

When you children sit for your final examination, and you look at your question paper, whichever subject, every question will be a question of a subject that you were taught in that year. Not a question that you were not taught. I mean you can have that much faith when you go to an examination, that I will not get a question that I was not taught in this year.

You won't get a 10th standard paper if you're sitting in the 3rd standard class, no. And if earthly teachers know how to give us challenges and questions that we can answer, are we accusing God of something less than that? If earthly fathers will never ask us to do something which we cannot do as children, do you think God will do something like that? Are we accusing God of something like that? That's a terrible sin to accuse God of something like that. And even though we may not have deliberately said it, I feel that unconsciously our attitude to this verse in the past years is something we have to repent of.

Many of you. Think of the particular areas in your life where you have sinned. And you only got to go to the Sermon on the Mount to see how Jesus lived.

You read that sometime. Takes about 10 minutes, 3 chapters, Matthew 5, 6 and 7. Jesus did not sit down the previous night and write down the points to preach the next morning, no. He had lived that life for 30 years and he spoke.

You want the Kingdom of Heaven? You must be poor in spirit. Have a sense of your own need. That's what he had.

Hunger and thirst for righteousness. Be merciful and mourn for greater fellowship with God. Be pure in heart and all those beatitudes.

And avoid anger and avoid sexually dirty thoughts. Are these all impossible commands that God puts upon us and we are burdened? Now most Christians just chuck it and say, I don't even attempt it. There are some people who say Matthew 5, 6 and 7 is not for us.

There are people who go through sections of the New Testament. And if you go to the book of Leviticus and say that's not for us, I agree. Because the Old Covenant has been abolished.

It says in Hebrews chapter 8. But where does it say that any chapter in the New Testament has been abolished? And yet there are groups of people, particularly among the brethren and family, who say certain parts are not for us today. Matthew 5, 6 and 7 is for the Jews. The book of Hebrews is for the Jews.

We had a brother in our midst once who used to go around saying that's not for you. That's not for Christians. That's not for you.

Any difficult words, that's not for you. Imagine preaching such blasphemy. I believe it's blasphemy.

Anyone who teaches that must repent of leading people into a godless, sinful life and leading them to hell. Anybody who preaches that, because of which people listen to them and go to hell, their blood will be in the hands of those preachers who taught them. That's not for you.

That's not for you. Well, what is for me? The book of Philipians is not for me. That's for the Philipian people.

Ephesians is not for me. I'm an Indian. Where is the letter to the Indians? It's ridiculous.

Which part of the New Testament is for me then? Hebrews is for the Hebrews and the Sermon on the Mount is for the Jews. What all things the devil tries to fool clever people with? And I'll tell you something. It's only very clever, intelligent people who come up with these thoughts.

That's not for you. You'll never find an uneducated person coming to the Bible and saying that. He just believes it's for him and he gets filled with the Holy Spirit and obeys it.

But that clever fellow who thinks he knows so much, God has hidden these wonderful truths from the clever and the intelligent. Not because they are clever and intelligent, but because they are proud of their cleverness and intelligence. It's one of the things I sought the Lord for many years ago.

I said, Lord, when I read that verse in Matthew 11, 25, I thank you, Father, Jesus said that you've hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent. I said, what shall I do, Lord? I'm not the most clever, intelligent person in the world, but I do have a certain amount of cleverness and intelligence. I don't take any credit for it.

I was born with it. What shall I do? I'm not a dumb person. And the Lord showed me.

It's not your cleverness and intelligence. I gave you that. I can use it for my glory.

I can use it to make you teach the Word. But if you become proud of it, like most people are proud of their cleverness and intelligence, then I hide the most important truths in Scripture from them. And those are the people who don't see the possibility in this verse.

Oh, you mean I can walk like Jesus walked? That's how the person of faith looks at 1 John 2, 6. But the proud person, or the person who's not interested in obeying God, says, ah, there are so many commands like this, which are impossible to obey. So, as we approach the New Year, how shall we approach these commands? In the way the devil wants you to? Or in the way God wants you to? That's the thing you need to think of as we approach the New Year. How am I going to approach the commands in the New Testament? The promises, of course, we'd love to take.

All things work together for good. But even that promise, you know, it's not for everybody. It's only for those who love God, Romans 8, 28.

And Jesus said, you can't love God and money, in Luke 16, 13. So Romans 8, 28 is not for anybody sitting here who loves money. All things will not work for your good.

I'll tell you that in Jesus' name. If you love your father and mother, wife or children more than you love Jesus Christ, all things will not work for your good. I'll tell you that.

You'll hear it clearly from me. You won't hear it so plainly from other people. It's for those who love God.

Read Romans 8, 28 and see. Don't try to take a promise. It's like trying to cash a check and it's not in your name.

I mean, all of us have sensed if the check is not in your name, you can't put it into your account. Well, you can't put this into your account because it's not in your name. You don't love God more than anything else.

Do you love God more than your job, your property, money, your father, mother, wife, children, everything? Then, brother, sister, here's a wonderful promise for the New Year. Every single day of 2019, everything will work for your good. And it also mentions here, it's for those who are called according to His purpose, which means there is a purpose with which God has called you.

And that purpose is mentioned in the next verse, that you might become like Jesus Christ. So, if that is your passion in life, Lord, you called me not to go to heaven. There's no verse in the Bible which says, Jesus called us to go to heaven.

That's a false teaching that is preached by so many preachers. Do you want to go to heaven? I never tell people that. No apostle went around preaching around the world.

How many of you want to go to heaven? Everybody wants to go to heaven. My question is, how many of you want to follow Jesus Christ? And if you want to follow Jesus Christ, Jesus said you've got to love father and mother, wife and children and brothers and sisters. You've got to love God more than you love your father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife and children.

So, if somebody says, no, I want to love my father and mother more than God, I say, okay, brother, goodbye. I haven't come for you. Somebody else says, I want to love my wife and children more than I love Jesus.

Okay, brother, goodbye. Find some other church. I haven't come to call you.

We have come here to make disciples. Matthew 28 says, go into all the world and make disciples. And that's how CFC started.

And that's how we're going to continue till Jesus comes. Or as long as I'm alive, I'll certainly say, that's the only thing we're going to preach. Discipleship.

You've got to love Jesus more than father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children. And if you're not interested in that, you can sit here and have the lunch after the meal. That's okay.

But we haven't come here for you. We're not interested. We're not interested in making people who just want to go to heaven, but don't want to follow Jesus on the earth right now.

It's like going to a shop and buying something expensive and saying, I'm sorry, I don't want to pay for it. Can I just walk out with this refrigerator? You wouldn't do that in a shop, would you? Oh, it costs 3,000, 5,000 rupees. Can I just take it and walk out with it? I want a refrigerator in my house.

You say, sorry, you have to pay a price for it. Do you want to go and spend eternity with God? There's a price for it. You've got to put God first.

In heaven, they put God first. And is that something difficult God is asking? Do you know when you put God first, all the filthy things in your life will be cleansed away? I'll tell you. It's because you don't put God first, that those filthy things still cling to you.

Some area in your life, God is not first. Something else is first. Money is first.

Some relatives are first. Ask God this coming year to make sure He's first in your life. Like the first words in the Bible, In the beginning, God.

Let it be like that every day of this year in your life. Lord, I want you to be in the beginning of my life, not my possessions, not my family. And I'll tell you something else.

You'll be able to honor your father and mother much better if you put God first. I believe I can love my wife much better because I put Christ in my life first. I told her when I got engaged to her that you'll never be first in my life.

You'll always be second. Christ will be first. And I told her, I don't want ever to be first in your life either.

I want to be second. I want you to put Christ first. That's what I told my wife more than 50 years ago and that's what I tell her now.

I don't want to be first in your life. Our marriage life would be miserable if we make each other first. That's why there are so many fights and quarrels.

And if I don't yell and get angry with my wife ever, even once in 365 days, it's because she's not first in my life. Because Christ is first. Think of these things, my brothers.

It's not something we accomplish. It's something God works in us. That's in the New Covenant.

In the Old Covenant, the commandments were, Do this, do this, don't do this, don't do this. Ten commandments were all like that. And all those 613 commandments in Leviticus and Numbers and all were, Do this and don't do this, and if this happens, do this, this.

And boy, they couldn't keep it. And God understood that they cannot keep it. Why did he give it? He gave it so that they can learn that you cannot keep God's standards no matter how hard you try.

So if you look at 2018, the year that has gone by, maybe it's been like an Old Covenant period in your life where you tried, and I'm sure many of you, perhaps all of you, have sincerely tried to live according to the standards of God's Word that we have preached in this church, and you have found you have failed. Good. God wanted you to fail.

That's an Old Covenant period. 2018. Now let's move into the New Covenant where God says, Hebrews chapter 8, verse 7, If that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second.

But he finds fault with the Old Covenant. And he says, the days are coming when I'll make a New Covenant. Why don't you take that as a promise for the New Year? That the Lord will establish you in a New Covenant in this New Year.

Where it's not going to be like the one I made with the Israelites in the past where I told them, don't do this, don't do that, don't worship idols, do honor your father and mother, keep the Sabbath, don't murder, don't steal, don't covet your neighbor's wife or neighbor's things. It's all, don't do this and do this and don't do this and don't do this. They could not do it.

It says in verse 9, they did not continue in my covenant and I did not care for them. But now, I am making a New Covenant. We are the Israel of God today.

The Christian Church is the Israel of God that he makes his New Covenant with in verse 10. You know, by the way, I want to tell you, there are people who even say this. I've actually read it.

Christians who say, this is not for us. Hebrews is not for us. This is a covenant.

We are not in the New Covenant. New Covenant has not yet come, they say. New Covenant is when Jesus comes back and then he will make this covenant, verse 10, with the house of Israel.

Boy, what a deception. And then to discover when Jesus comes back that 2,000 years we were supposed to be in the New Covenant. And these people who say that, the whole purpose of it is to keep people defeated by sin till Jesus comes.

And we are called to expose that. Lie of the devil. It's for us.

You know, in Galatians 6, the end of the last chapter, the church is called the Israel of God. That's what we are. This is the covenant I will make, says the Lord.

And I'll tell you how I know it is. Because I've experienced this in my life. I was more defeated by sin in my thought life than probably any of you.

I don't mind saying that. I'm ashamed of it, but there's a curtain behind me, and I look back and there's nothing. My life is absolutely clean, cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ.

I'm not condemned by a single thing I did in my foolish, unconverted days, or my foolish, believing days, when I did not take sin seriously. I'm not condemned by even one stupid, foolish thing I did. Because the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed me thoroughly, and when Satan accuses me, I overcome him, giving the word of my testimony to the blood of the Lamb.

Not a word saying, but I am different now. That's not my testimony. But I have changed.

No. Satan, the blood of Jesus Christ, has blotted out my past. And he keeps me from stumbling now.

It's got nothing to do with me. He took care of the past, and he takes care of me now. And he takes care of my future.

It's all of Christ. All of Christ. Nothing of Zak Poonen.

So that's the new covenant. The Lord says, I will put my laws into your mind. That means he'll give me a great passion to obey everything.

When Ephesians 4, 31, 32 says, put away all anger, I have a great passion to put away all anger from my life. When it says, put away all impurity, I'm going to put away all impurity from my life. How? Because God has put that desire.

I want that. And then I say, Lord, I've got the desire now, but I don't have the ability. And the Lord says, OK, I'll write it in your heart.

I'll give you the ability. Let me paraphrase that. I will give them a desire to obey me in their mind.

And I will give them grace and strength in their heart to keep what I command them. Have you read this verse in Hebrews 13, verse 8? Which says, sorry, not 13, 8. 13, 9. Hebrews 13, 9. It is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace. Grace doesn't come to your mind.

It comes to your heart. What does it do? It strengthens you. Strengthens you to do what? That will which God has revealed to your mind and which has given you a desire to obey which you didn't have the strength for.

Two things. The desire and the ability in the mind and in the heart. The heart, and that's what grace is for.

The Holy Spirit comes and instructs my mind and challenges me to do God's will and then gives me grace in my heart to actually do it. God says, He'll do it. Why not allow Him? I'm not a robot.

God doesn't make us robots. You know how robots are. It's all programmed with computers inside.

And the robot will do whatever you say. It will never make a single mistake. We can think of the stars and planets like robots.

They've obeyed God for thousands of years without one second of disobedience. Would you like to be like that? A Christian who obeys God without one second of disobedience? But how? Like a robot? Like the star? No! I want to be like Adam with a free will and choosing not to go in the direction God has forbidden and to go in the direction where I can contact Him, the Tree of Life. I want to have a free will.

I never want to be a robot. God is a Father. Like I often say, do you want a little robot in your house or a child? Do you know robots will obey you much better than your children? Do you know that a robot will never disobey you? It will always speak nicely to you.

Say, Hello Daddy. I'll do whatever you say. You program it.

Whatever you want, it will say. You want a robot or a naughty child who may disobey you but one day when that child comes and hugs you and says, I love you Daddy, it melts your heart. That's what God wants in Heaven.

A bunch of people who choose to say, Lord, in the midst of an evil world, I love you. I love you more than my money. I love you more than everyone because you're my creator.

You're the one who made me. And I want to live for you. That brings more delight to God's heart than if He programmed us to say, Yes Lord.

If God had programmed Adam, he would never have gone to the tree of knowledge of good and evil because as he went near it, the program inside would say, turn right. He would turn right. Walk to the tree of life.

He would walk there. Now take from the tree. You think God wanted a robot? No! And He doesn't want a robot from you now.

That's why He gives you freedom even after you hear all these truths to go and disobey if you want. You can go and disobey tomorrow. You can hear all these wonderful things and all 365 days of 2019, you can disobey God.

He won't stop you. But He'll be delighted if there are even a few who choose the way to life. For your own good, Moses told the Israelites, the commands God is giving is for your good.

Children don't realize it, right? Even a small child, a two-year-old doesn't know why mummy takes away the knife from his hand. Children don't realize why mummy forces them to eat the vegetables and not just the ice cream. They don't understand.

But it's good for them. You can't keep eating ice cream morning, noon and night and be healthy. But the children don't understand that.

And we also don't understand some things God does not tell us to do and asks us to do certain things which are for our good. But He will write that law. He'll give me the desire to do it and He'll give me the ability to do it.

I can testify to that today. It was not like that in the early days but I can testify today God has given me the desire to obey every single command of His in the Bible and in the New Testament and everything that He shows me to be His will beyond the scripture in my personal life. And He's given me the ability to do it.

I believe if the Lord wants me to go somewhere and preach the gospel, He'll give me the health. Not perfect health. He'll give me enough strength to go there.

I don't have to be perfect in health to go there. He'll give me the ability. He'll give me the money to travel and when I get there, most important of all, He'll give me the words to tell them.

Because I don't know them. They're all strangers many places I go. God will do it all.

It's all His work but I have to be willing to say, yes Lord. You know the story of the disciples when they went fishing. Most of us have our experiences like that.

We try, try, try. Maybe 2018 has been like this. You put the net on this side and that side and the other side, the front side and like they spent the whole night, you spent the whole year and you're still at the end of the year, December 31st.

You're still defeated and you have not come to that life which God wants you to. Like Peter said, I'm going to go fishing. He was very confident because he's an expert fisherman.

And many of us have thought, we've heard so much in CFC. We know the truth. We'll be able to live like that.

And you discovered in this year, like the Israelites discovered under the old covenant, that you cannot keep God's standard. Have you discovered it? I hope you have. I discovered it one day in my life and it became the day I was delivered.

When I realized that no matter how much I grit my teeth and determined I will never be able in my entire life to keep God's standards. And if some of you think like that, maybe you have to go through another 10 years before you discover it. God has to bring us to a zero point.

We're all pretty high. And if you have not overcome yet, I'll tell you, it's because you haven't come to that zero point yet. Like you heard in that illustration.

You messed up a few machines in the factory. But it's the day you mess up the biggest machine and you realize you're absolutely useless. That day God will fill you with the Holy Spirit.

When you realize you cannot make it. God does not give the Holy Spirit to those who feel they deserve Him. Or they feel they are better than others.

Or they have prayed sufficiently. Or fasted sufficiently. These are all the schemes of Satan.

It's like the people looking for forgiveness of sins by going on a pilgrimage or lighting candles or rolling on the ground or dipping in some river. Where did they get forgiveness? I know. I got forgiveness when I realized I can never get even one sin of mine forgiven.

Like we sing in that song. Nothing in my hands I bring. Simply to thy cross I cling.

Naked come to thee for dress. Helpless look to thee for grace. As a foul person I fly to the fountain of blood.

Wash me saviour or I die. You know that song, Rock of Ages cleft for me. Beautiful song.

I cannot make it. And the disciples that day, it was the last miracle Jesus did before he went up to heaven, John 21. They tried and tried and tried and tried and tried and failed.

Five o'clock in the morning they gave up. Then Jesus came. Said, I believe with a little touch of humor Well, boys, did you get any fish last night? No, Lord.

Why didn't the Lord tell them that at six o'clock the previous evening? You're not going to get it. You're going to waste your time. No, he didn't tell them because they had to learn it.

He allowed you the whole of 2018 to try. You've come to the end of it. Have you succeeded? Has it become five o'clock in the morning for you now? Can you see Jesus on the shore saying to you today,

cast your net on the right side.

Listen to me. And you've come to the place where you have no confidence in your own ability anymore, but you have faith. You'll do what the Lord says.

What the Lord is saying, will you let me write my law in your heart? Will you allow me to put my law in your mind and write in your heart? Will you come to me as a helpless person and say, Lord, I can't keep your will, but I want to. You've put the desire in me to want to. And I wanted desperately enough to cry out to you.

Jesus cried out with loud crying and tears. Cry out like that in your heart, even if you don't make a noise with your mouth, in your heart. Lord, I want this coming year to be different.

I want to be an overcomer. And the Lord says then, I'll do something about your past. Hebrews 8, 12.

I will not only forgive your past, like we spoke about that curtain falling right behind me. He says, I will not remember the past. You look back and you would have committed zero sins in your life.

I will not remember your sins anymore. You look at God's record and there's zero in it. Isn't that good for us? I thank God that I can look back and say, wow, what a life I've lived without committing a single sin in 79 years.

I have that joy. In God's eyes, I stand as a person who from the day I was born, never committed a sin in 79 years. People say it's arrogance.

Brother Zach, it's not arrogance. It's faith. In the power of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Not only to cleanse me, but to declare me righteous. The meaning of Romans 5, 9. Justified by His blood. I hope all of you will begin the new year justified by His blood.

Forgetting the things that are behind the curtain right behind you. I don't see anything. It's all gone.

In Lamentations 3, it says, His mercies are new every morning. What does that mean? His mercies are new every morning. Do you know that verse? Lamentations.

It's a great verse. If you don't know it, let me show it to you. It helped me a lot, that verse.

It will help you too. In Lamentations we read in 3.23. I like some of these verses. Easy to remember.

3.23. They are new every morning. Mercy is the quality with which God forgives my sin. So when it says His mercy, Lamentations 3.23 is new every morning.

I hope you know where Lamentations is. It's after Jeremiah. Past the middle of your Bible.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations. They are new every morning means when God looks at me today and if I slip up today in some area. Oh Lord, a bad thought came into me.

Oh! The Lord says, that's the first time you sinned. I'm glad to forgive you. First time I sinned? Yes.

Because His mercy is new today. That's the meaning of His mercy is new every morning. He doesn't say, I've been merciful to you for so many years man.

That's not what He says. It's new every morning. I rejoice in the power of the blood of Christ.

It's way beyond what we imagine. You know because we are used to merciless people. We are dealing with merciless people around us.

We cannot imagine that anybody could be so merciful to us that even if we mess up everything in our life. He says, it's okay my son. It's okay my girl.

Don't worry. God says, you're my child. I love you.

Forget the past. I'll change your life. I'll make your life a glorious life.

But Lord, I messed up so much. No, don't worry about that. I can handle everything.

But Lord, I tried all night and I couldn't catch any fish. Don't worry. Just do what I say one step at a time.

And you'll see miracles happening. Our life is supposed to be an experience of miracles. Difficulties we face? The Lord solving them.

Storm? The Lord stills it. No fish? Jesus fills the net. No food for the multitude? Jesus provides it.

The wine runs out in the wedding? It's okay. Jesus can provide it. What is the message in all the miracles? Take this word for the new year.

God can solve every problem. I'll tell you that. Put God first in your life and you'll never have a regret when you come to the end of your life.

Let people try to harm you in 101 ways. Do you know how many people have tried to harm me and destroy me, destroy my reputation, destroy my ministry, and destroy our church? Have they succeeded? Just look around and see if they have succeeded. They would have succeeded if I hated them.

But I love them. I said, Lord, I forgive them. Father, forgive them.

They don't know what they're doing. They don't know. They're fighting against you.

They're not fighting against Zach Poonen. They're fighting against God. They're not speaking evil of Zach Poonen.

They're speaking evil of God. Let them do what they like. I'll forgive them.

They don't know what they're doing, Lord. You know, when Jesus said, Father, forgive them on the cross, I've thought about that often. When he said, they don't know what they're doing, you mean people don't know what they're doing when they kill a man? What he meant was, they don't know who they're killing.

They don't know that I'm the son of God whom they're crucifying. This is not an ordinary thief or even an ordinary man. Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing.

They don't know who they're killing. And when people speak evil of me, I say the same thing. Father, forgive them because they don't know who they're speaking evil of.

I'm not an ordinary man. And I'm not boasting. I'm a son of God.

If I say I'm an Indian, am I boasting? No. If I say I'm 79 years old, am I boasting? No. Neither am I boasting when I say, I am a son of God.

I'm not an ordinary human being. If you don't have faith in what God has done in you, God calls you his child, but you won't call yourself that, okay then, what can I do? But when God called me his child, I said, I'm going to say the same thing. I'm going to say the same thing about myself, what God says about me.

I'm a son of God. As many as received him, John 1, 12, he gave them the authority to be children of God. That's what I am.

That's what I tell the devil. And so when people hurt me or harm me, I say, Father, forgive them. They don't know whom they are hurting.

Poor people. They think they are hurting an ordinary human being. They're not.

They're hurting a son of God. They're crucifying a son of God. They're trying to destroy a son of God's ministry.

Father, forgive them. Poor people. That's how Jesus forgave and that's how we are to forgive everyone.

It's a wonderful way to live the new year. I pray this new year will be a year of forgiving people. Gladly.

Happily. Forgiving, forgiving. You say, Brother Zach, every day? Yes, every day.

Do you think there was one year in this day when God did not forgive you? What do you think? Was there one day in your life this year where you did not sin? Well, I think I can say there were many days in this day of my life where I did not consciously sin. But unconsciously, every day. How do I know? Because I'm not yet like Christ.

As long as I'm not like Christ, there's some unconscious sin in me which I'm not aware of. God doesn't hold me responsible. But I sinned.

And I'll tell you why we do it every day and why we need to ask forgiveness every day. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 6. Jesus did not say we have to repeat this prayer like a parrot or play it like a tape recorder. He said in Matthew 6.9 Pray then in this way.

Matthew 6.9 Pray then, not repeat this. No, no, no. In this way.

That means this must be the pattern of your prayer where God is first, your kingdom come, your name be hallowed, your will be done. God's needs first and then my needs. My bread, my food, my forgiveness, my victory.

But first God. That is the way we got to pray. But He also taught us something else here.

Pray then in this way. Give us this day, this day, our daily food. So it's a daily attitude I must have.

This prayer must be not repeated daily but it must be the way in which I must pray every day. With God first. My needs second.

God's needs first. Hallowed be your name. My kingdom come.

Thy will be done in my life as it is done in heaven. And then my needs. My food and my earthly needs.

Job, house, etc, etc. But I have to pray for it. Verse 11.

Every day. It's a life of daily dependence. The word daily.

This day. Verse 11. Teach me that the next verse is also this day daily.

Verse 12. And forgive us our debts this day. Today.

Just like we forgive others, we probably need to forgive others also every day. Because we live in a world which is full of evil people. You husbands and wives, you need to forgive each other every day.

Sure. Not what they do deliberately. I don't think most husbands and wives are deliberately planning, OK, today I'm going to hurt my wife.

Or today I'm going to hurt my husband. Most people hurt their husbands and wives accidentally. Sometimes by a misunderstanding.

You said something and the other person understood it in another way. Fight. Forgive.

Forgive. Forgive like God forgives. Lord, this day, please forgive me.

Just like I have this day forgiven everyone who has hurt me. What a wonderful thing it is to go to bed at night having forgiven every single person. That's been the way I sleep for many years now.

There's not a single person on earth I have not forgiven. There may be people I don't even know, but Lord, they are forgiven. I want you to forgive me of my unconscious sins, the ways in which I'm not yet like Christ.

Cleanse me. And I want to forgive others. And every day, Lord, don't lead me into temptation too strong for me, but deliver me.

The very prayer deliver me means I cannot deliver myself in the time of temptation. Lord, when I'm tempted to be angry, deliver me. I cannot deliver myself.

When I'm tempted to lust after women, deliver me. I cannot deliver myself. Lord, deliver me day by day from evil and from the evil one.

Because the power is yours, not mine. It's a beautiful prayer. The power is yours.

So that's what he's saying in Hebrews 8, the new covenant. I will write my law. Put my law in your mind.

I will write them in your heart. I'll give you grace to be an overcomer. And I will be merciful to your past.

Verse 12, Hebrews 8, 12. I will not remember them anymore. And on top of it all, all will know me personally as their father.

You will not need brother Zach to come and explain to you, God is your father. He did that in the days when you were a baby. But now you know him yourself.

And even if brother Zach disappears from the scene, it doesn't matter. You know God is your father. They will not teach every man his name.

Brother saying, you've got to know God as your father. No! All will know me. You say, but I'm a new believer.

Okay, your name comes first, by the way. Are you a new believer? Your name is first in verse 11. All will know me from the newest believer to the most mature believer.

Did you read that? It's just a paraphrase of verse 11. From the newest believer to the most mature believer. Who's the first one? The newest one.

He will know me. You don't have to wait one year to know God as your father. You can know God as your father the day you're born again.

The devil doesn't want you to know that, but God wants you to know him as your father. He wants you to call him dad. In a reverential way.

Father. Father. Oh, what a wonderful life for my brothers and sisters.

As we approach the new year, let's go back to 1 John 2 6 again. What a word that is. In this new year, Father, you have put a desire in my mind.

You have written your law in my mind. That law is, walk as Jesus walked. Live by the principles Jesus lived by.

Live, saying, not my will, but your will, God, every day. And every moment of every day. Unconsciously.

Not my will. The Holy Spirit will prompt you. No, not that way.

Go this way. Listen to that prompting. I will write my law in your mind.

I'll give you the desire to walk by the principles that Jesus walked by on his life on earth. Because he was tempted like us. And he overcame by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And not only will I give you that desire, I will write, that means I'll give him grace in your strength in your heart, so that you can walk by the same principles that Jesus walked by. Jesus never got angry once when it concerned himself. They could call him the devil.

They could spit on his face. They could do whatever they like. No.

You think he was not tempted to be angry? He was tempted like us. When people insult you and call you all types of bad names and tell false stories about you, you're tempted to be angry, sure. They told all types of false stories about Jesus.

He was tempted, but he didn't get angry once. Because the Holy Spirit gave him strength in his heart. No.

Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're saying. I'm not living here to please them.

They can tell whatever story about me that they like. Maybe they're telling a story about your children. Forget it.

Can somebody spoil your children by telling stories about them? No. You'll spoil them by not forgiving those people, by teaching your children not to forgive those people. You're spoiling the children.

You're the one who's spoiling your children, not those people. They're only telling false stories about your children. But you're the one spoiling your children by teaching them to have a wrong attitude to those people.

Many CFC parents have spoiled their children by criticizing others. By defending your children in a wrong way. Protecting them.

Oh, my dear girl, did they say that about you? Oh, forget they are evil. Why not teach your dear little girl to forgive them? It's okay. Jesus is with you.

God is your father. He will not let anything happen to you. Do you know the hair on your head is numbered? Do you teach your children that? That the hairs on their head are numbered? That they are more value to God than all the sparrows in Bangalore? Those are the things we should teach our children instead of gossiping about what that young brother did and what that young sister did.

And look at the way that person is dressing. Did you see that way that girl dressed and came to CFC today? Instead of looking at that, tell them to look at the sparrows. Your children will grow up godly.

We have taught our children all types of useless things in 2018. Is it going to be different, parents, in this year? Teach them to look at the sparrows. Teach them to remember that the hairs on their head are numbered.

That God is a loving father. If God, if earthly fathers give bread to their children, your father, you tell your children, your father, you may be young, my little boy, my little girl, 10 years old, your father will fill you with the Holy Spirit. Why not? Is there an age limit for being filled with the Holy Spirit? Do you have to be 45 before you are filled with the Holy Spirit? Rubbish! I believe we have limited God amazingly.

So look at these verses like 1 John 2, 6 as a possibility. God is your father and you don't need anybody else to teach you that. You can know him yourself.

Whatever your need is. Some people have a need to get married. OK? It's a desire God puts in the heart.

The attraction towards the opposite sex is a God-given thing. It's not wrong. It's the basis on which you are attracted which you have to be careful about.

Most people in the world are attracted in the wrong basis. That's the problem. The attraction is not wrong.

For a boy to be attracted to a girl, for a girl to be attracted to a boy is perfectly normal. It happens at a certain age. God himself does it.

But the devil has taught boys only to look at a pretty face. See, that's all. What's her color? How good looking is she? Then I'll choose her.

Now I'm not saying we should ignore the body. We are not angels. Angels don't look at faces because they don't have faces.

But we are created as human beings. We are not only spirit, soul, full stop. We are spirit, soul and body but in that order.

1 Thessalonians 5.23 says, spirit, soul, body. So we have to look at the opposite sex. Spirit, soul, body.

So I'm not saying we shouldn't look at the body. I'm not saying we shouldn't care whether the person is one foot taller than you. You know a girl who is one foot taller than a boy.

Maybe you should reconsider that proposal. Or a girl who is 25 years older than the boy. Just reconsider that a little bit.

We do consider age. We do consider these things automatically. And so if you can consider height and age, appearance is just another part of the body.

There is nothing wrong in considering it. But put it number three. That's all I'm saying.

I'm not saying eliminate it. Put it number three. Put spiritual values first.

And then soul values. Soul values are, can you speak the same language? Of course we look at that, don't we? We are unconsciously looking at certain things. You wouldn't marry a girl or a boy who speaks a different language, would you? Who can't understand you.

The only benefit you'll have in that marriage is you'll never quarrel, you'll never fight. Because you can't understand each other. You'll smile when the other person is yelling at you.

Because you can't understand what they are saying. But otherwise we look at we marry people whom we can speak to. In the same way, social level is important because it's very difficult to adjust to a completely different level.

For example, can you imagine a girl who has been brought up in a city in a well-to-do home where there is running water and hot water and all that, marries somebody in a village and she has to go every morning to draw water from the well and then use wood to heat fire outside. I think it's going to be a bit difficult. That's all I say.

It will add to the problems in marriage. So there are certain things we need to think of. But spiritual first.

So what I say is you must also in addition to all these things have faith that if it is the will of God for you to be married it is God's will for some people to be single. I'll tell you that. One of the greatest missionaries that ever came to India was a single lady called Amy Carmichael.

You'll read her story. It's amazing what she did in Teneveli district, Teneveli area. Some amazing men and women like that were never, Paul was never called to be married.

So there are some people who are just not called to be married. That's okay. But if you say, Lord, I want your will for my life, that's the best thing to choose.

But you must trust him. Lord, I don't want to always be in a panic and always unrest, unrest, unrest, unrest, unrest. I want to be at rest and trust you.

So that's very important. Jesus lived at rest all the time and very important. I mention that because that is an area of tension for many people.

It's important to have a house to live in. Is God interested in that in 2019? Sure. Is he interested in giving you a job? We need to do a job to earn a living.

Our children need to get jobs to earn their living. But not to get into a panic. No.

We have a loving father who cares. That's how Jesus lived. He lived at rest all the time.

And I pray that 2019 will be a year of rest instead of all this turmoil that's been in your mind concerning job, marriage, house, education, all these things. Good to pursue it, work hard, but in the back of it all, I want to encourage you to be at rest. Say, Lord, I want to enter into your rest.

I want my whole life to be like the sabbath the Israelites had. Not the Israelites had, the sabbath that Adam had on his first day of life. Genesis 2.1 God rested and Adam rested.

From that rest, he went out to the garden to work. So I pray that 2019 will be like that. And we must have faith that God will help us.

Let's believe that. How many will say Amen? I heard about 20%. How many will say Amen? Good.

Let's keep saying that throughout the year. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, it's a life of tremendous possibility that you have invited us to in the new covenant.

All the commands in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, we can obey all of them. 1 John 2, 6 is going to be our goal this year. Not perfection, but pressing on to perfection day by day.

A little more perfect, a little more like Christ. Walking by the principles he walked by every day. Seeking the help of your Holy Spirit every single day, depending on you.

Make it like that for us, we pray. You heard our Amen today. You heard us say it shall be so.

And we want to say that in English as well. It shall be so. Yes, Lord.

Thank you, Father. In Jesus' name. Amen.

I hope you all know that Amen means not let it be so, but it shall be so. God bless you.

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