

# God's Dwelling Place - the Foundation, God's Perfect Love

by Zac Poonen

---

*God's dwelling place is built on the foundation of His perfect love for us, and we must be rooted and grounded in this fact to have a strong and stable life and church.*

**Duration:** 57:01

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:31, Exodus 39:5-40

**Topics:** "Love Of God"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the message of Genesis chapter 1, which is that if we allow the Holy Spirit to move upon us and submit to the word of God, our chaotic and messy lives can be transformed into something beautiful. The speaker compares the process of God creating a beautiful heaven and earth in Genesis to the transformation that can happen in our lives when we submit to God's word. The sermon also highlights the importance of God speaking every day and how the earth and heavens respond to His word. The speaker then shifts to discussing God's desire for a dwelling place among His people, as seen in Exodus chapter 25, and how the nation of Israel was prepared to understand God's ways before Christ came.

---

## Transcript

We are going to have four sessions today and I'd like to speak on the subject of God's dwelling place. In all the four sessions, I want to turn first of all to Exodus chapter 25. We know that God raised up the nation of Israel in order to prepare a people to understand His ways before Christ came to earth.

Nobody would have understood Jesus dying on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins if the Jews had not, the people of Israel had not for 1500 years practiced blood sacrifice as the atonement for their sins. But it was not only sacrifice, the slain lamb or the slain bullock that the Lord taught Israel. Another very important lesson that He taught Israel was that He wanted a dwelling place in the midst of people.

He wanted to make a people to be His own out of all the people in the world, those who would respond. And in their midst, He wanted to dwell. That's what we read in Exodus 25 concerning the construction of the tabernacle.

It says here, let them construct, verse 8, a sanctuary for me that I may dwell among them. Now, you know, it's very easy to read scripture like a theological book and it was never meant to be that. I believe that Bible schools and seminaries have completely confused people concerning the Bible.

I thank God I never went to a Bible school one day of my life. The apostles never went either. They studied at the feet of Jesus.

The Bible was meant to speak to our hearts, not to our heads. We must remember that. So, when you read the scriptures, if you try to analyze it and understand it, you may get a lot of head knowledge.

But it will be pretty useless to you and pretty useless when you pass it on to others. But, if we try to understand the heart of God, that's what we need to understand when we read the Bible. Here is a revelation of the heart of God, what God is thinking, what God is feeling, what God desires in us.

And if we can understand the heart of God, say in a verse like this, the desire God has to dwell in the midst of His people. He doesn't want gifts primarily from them, but their hearts. We who are parents understand that.

What do you want from your children? Do you want their money? I hope not. What you want is their heart. What you want is fellowship.

You want to be friends with them as they grow up. That's what God wants. He wants fellowship with us.

He wants to dwell in our midst. And you know how disappointed parents are when children don't give them that friendship and fellowship, and instead just give them gifts on their birthdays or things like that. And that's how God is disappointed too.

We go for meetings, we give Him money, we do a few things for Him. And He is not interested in that first of all. He is interested in us, in fellowship with us.

He says, let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. And that word dwell is talking about permanent residence. Not an occasional visit.

A lot of people have God as an occasional visitor. He doesn't want that. He wants to dwell.

Dwell means permanently reside with us. He wants to reside in our hearts. He wants to reside in our homes.

And He wants to reside in our church. And our churches. These are the dwelling places of God.

First of all our heart. Then our home. And then our church.

And it must be in that order. We can't change that order. We can think of God's dwelling place like a three story house.

The first story is our heart. And the second story is our home. And the third story is the church.

Now the mistake that people have made through many centuries has been to try and build a third story before building the first or second. And you can't do it. Have you ever tried to build a third story without building the first and the second story? You'll be building on air.

A lot of churches are built on air. They collapse. It's not the church at all.

It's not God's dwelling place. It's imagination. It's not built on a personal walk with God.

That's the ground floor of the first story. And then some people who understand the need for that, having built the first story, switch straight over to the third story neglecting the second. You know one of the qualifications for an elder is that if a man does not know how to run his own home, how can he ever run the church? That's what it says in 1 Timothy 3. If he can't control his own children at home, how in the world is he going to control so many children in the church? Spiritual children I mean.

So it's the heart and the home and the church. It's always that order. And that's why in every church, if we want to progress, there must always be progress in our spiritual development, in our personal walk with God in our heart, in our home, then the church.

If our personal walk with God is strong, our home will be strong. If the home is strong, the church will be strong. This must be the order.

The first dwelling place of God that's mentioned in the Bible is Exodus chapter 3. In Exodus chapter 3 we read about the Lord appearing to Moses, Exodus 3.2, in a blazing fire, in a bush. That's when Moses was 80 years old and he never forgot it. He never forgot that encounter with God.

That, by the way, is the first dwelling place of God mentioned in the Bible. In the bush. When Moses was about to die, he gave a blessing to Joseph, the tribe of Joseph.

And you read about it in Deuteronomy 33 and verse 16. And when he wanted, when he prayed that the blessing of God would come upon the tribe of Joseph, the way he expressed it was, in Deuteronomy 33.16, May the Lord bless you with the choice, things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor or the blessing of him who dwelt in the bush. Him who dwelt in the bush.

He thought of God as the God who dwelt in the bush. So there we read of the first dwelling place of God in the Bible. And it's very interesting for us to see what was significant about that first dwelling place of God in the Bible.

It wasn't the size of the bush. It wasn't the color of the bush. It wasn't what type of bush it was.

The most important thing was the fire of God was there. The fire of God throughout the Bible is a picture of the Holy Spirit. Throughout.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. Or the fire coming down on Elijah's sacrifice. Or the fire in the bush.

The second dwelling place is the tabernacle. The distinctive thing about the tabernacle was the fire that dwelt upon the tabernacle. Again, what was called the Shekinah glory.

Again, a picture of the Holy Spirit. The distinctive thing, the distinctive feature of our walk with God and our life must be the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Filling us.

Guiding us. Leading us. Speaking to us day by day.

Correcting us. Instructing us. Transforming us into the likeness of Christ.

If you don't have that, whatever else you may have in your walk with God, you've missed the main thing. You missed the main thing. It's like having the fans and the lights and the refrigerator and the washing machine and not having electricity.

That's exactly how a lot of Christians are. The same thing in a home. The most important feature of our home life must be the leading of the Holy Spirit in our home.

The Holy Spirit tells us what's right to have in a home and what's not right to have in our home. What sort of books we can have. What sort of magazines we can have.

What sort of things we can have. What sort of things we shouldn't have. If you don't have that, the influence of the Holy Spirit, you can have family prayer.

You can read the Bible. You can have verses hung on the wall. You can have 101 things.

Electricity is not there. The same thing in a church. The most important feature of a church is the presence of the Holy Spirit leading, guiding, directing, convicting the moving of the Holy Spirit in our meetings.

The moving of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of the Word. Most important. If that is not there, we can have everything else.

Like I said, it will be like having all the electrical fittings without electricity. And a lot of churches seem to be content to come Sunday mornings and look at the fan and the light and the refrigerator and the washing machine and everything else and go home. Nothing works.

Because there's no electricity. The power of the Holy Spirit is missing in most Christian churches today. The power of the Holy Spirit is missing in most of the ministries from the pulpits today.

And you can sense it. You can sense it because it's so boring. It's so heavy.

Young people turn away from Christianity because they say it's so boring. That movie on television they say is more interesting and they are right. That movie on television for three hours is far more interesting than the one hour church service.

They are absolutely right, but it was never meant to be so. God is the most interesting personality in the whole world. And Christian preachers have made Him into a boring person and turned a lot of people away.

I haven't found Jesus to be a boring person. Through the years, I find Him to be more and more interesting. I find the Christian life to be very, very exciting.

And if other people haven't found that, then I say there's something they've missed and that's why they haven't found it to be like that. And it's important that in our churches, we lead people to genuine Christianity. And you cannot have that without the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Honor the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your personal life, in your home, and in your church. Be sensitive to His voice. Be willing to be radical, to change things which He says need to be changed.

Don't stick with old customs and traditions in your life, or your home, or your church, if the Holy Spirit says that you need to change them. You must be willing to be unique, different. Light is unique compared to

darkness.

It's totally different from darkness. And when a church is what it is meant to be, it'll be totally different from the world. Unfortunately, we have a Christendom today which is trying to look like the world to try and attract them.

To try and use the music of the world to attract the young people of the world. What type of Christianity are you going to draw them to? I cannot imagine Peter trying all that on the day of Pentecost. No.

What they had on that day and those days was the power of the Holy Spirit. And we have substituted the power of the Holy Spirit today with music, and money, and electronic gadgets, and none of these things are a substitute. For the fire of God.

God dwelt in the bush and there was a fire there. God dwelt in the tabernacle and there was a fire there. I want you to notice another thing in Exodus in chapter 39.

It tells us how the fire came. How the glory of God descended on that tabernacle. In Exodus chapter 39 and 40, about 18 times, I think it's 16 or 18 times in those two chapters, a little expression comes.

I don't know whether you've noticed it. It is this expression, which you find first of all in the last part of verse 5. Exodus 39 verse 5. Just as the Lord had commanded Moses. He did all this just as the Lord commanded him.

The end of verse 7, just as the Lord had commanded him. And further down in the end of verse 21, just as the Lord commanded him. In the end of verse 26, end of verse 29, end of verse 31, and verse 43 and a number of times in chapter 40, verse 16 and 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Repeated again and again and again and again. Just as the Lord had commanded Moses. And then it says in the last part of verse 33, Thus Moses finished the work, and then the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

That happens even today. When we do everything in our personal life, and in our home, and in our church, just as the Lord has commanded, the glory of the Lord will still fill our life, our home, our church. And if it doesn't fill our life, our home, and our church, we have to go back and check whether there is something we have not done, just as the Lord commanded.

God takes His word very seriously. Way back in the first chapter of the Bible, we read a number of times it says God said. God said something on the first day, and the second day, and the third day, and the fourth day.

He kept on speaking. And every time He spoke, because the earth responded immediately, and the heavens responded immediately, something happened. The sun appeared.

Light appeared. Trees appeared. Fish appeared.

Birds appeared. It all came through God's speaking. And that chaotic earth, which was dark and empty, that you read in Genesis 1-2, became such a beautiful earth, just because it responded to the word of God.

That's all. And the Holy Spirit moved there. I don't know whether you noticed that.

I want you to turn to Genesis chapter 1 for a moment. There are two things you read right in the beginning of the Bible. One is the operation of the Holy Spirit in verse 2, and the other is the word of God in verse 3. It's the combined working of the Holy Spirit and the word of God that changed that chaotic earth into something beautiful.

And that chaotic earth, dark, empty, earth full of chaos, mentioned in verse 2, is a picture of our life after sin has done its work. There's chaos, darkness, shapelessness, ugliness in our life. And the message of Genesis chapter 1 is that if you allow the Holy Spirit to move upon you, like it says in verse 2, and you submit to the word of God that comes repeatedly every day, by the end of the chapter, the earth has become so beautiful that God himself looks over the whole thing and says, it's very good.

You know, it's amazing. God says, it's very good, verse 31. And that, the message of that first chapter is that if your life is such a mess, as it is mentioned in verse 2, full of chaos and darkness and ugliness and shapelessness, if you submit to the Holy Spirit, no matter how chaotic and messy your life is, submit to the Holy Spirit and allow the word of God, submit to the word of God every day, your life can become so beautiful that God himself can look at it and say, excellent.

It can't be made better. That is the work that God seeks to do. In fact, Genesis chapter 1 is a sort of a synopsis or a little outline of the whole Bible.

Man starts in a chaotic state, the Spirit of God moves upon him, God speaks every day, and finally God ends up with a beautiful heaven and earth in Revelation. That's in Genesis 1.31. So, Genesis is actually, Genesis chapter 1 is a preview of the whole message of the Bible. Every day, God said something.

The first day he said something, the second day he said something, the third day he said something, every day. And every day, the earth and the heavens responded to God's word and that's why something happened. And I believe that ever since that time, God's been speaking every day.

I mean, you may not have heard it, that's another thing. A lot of people don't hear because there's rock music in this room right now. There's Christian music, there are messages.

Why can't you hear them? Because you don't have a radio set tuned to that frequency. It's here, right in this room. You say, I can't hear it.

I know you can't hear it. You're not tuned to that frequency. And you can choose what you want.

The devil is speaking, God is speaking. You choose the frequency. You say, I can't hear God.

You've got to be tuned to his frequency to hear him. You can't be listening to two, three stations at the same time, you know that? And you have your choice which you want to listen to. And if you're always listening to what the devil is putting out, well, I'm not surprised that you don't hear God at all.

You can go years on end without listening to God. And you can go years on end without being transformed. It's when God spoke that something got transformed in chapter one.

And it's when God speaks that we get transformed. And we're supposed to be transformed every day. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 4 that our outward man decays but the inward man is being renewed every single day.

That was Paul's experience. Every single day was getting a little more Christ-like. But I know lots of believers, even years go by and they don't seem to change.

They're defeated by the same old sins. They don't know God even after ten years of being a believer. They don't know the word any better.

The Christian life is not more exciting. Their life is not more useful to God. They're in the same old rut, in a deeper rut than they were years ago because they don't take time to listen to God.

The devil's got all his entertainment out there to distract them. How in the world can Christians who are taken up with the devil's entertainment ever listen to God? They can go to church to ease their conscience once in a week and say, I'm a good Christian. Well, you're not a good Christian just because you go to church once a week.

You're a good Christian if you're listening to God every day. Not otherwise. And that's why our lives are so shallow.

A little trial is enough to knock us down. And we're certainly not the dwelling place of God. And our homes are a mess.

Our children are wayward. And we don't have any church worthy of being called the dwelling place of Jesus Christ. Yeah, but it can all be rectified if we take heed to what God's Word says.

I want to turn, first of all, to 1 John now. You know, when building this three-story house, which is God's dwelling place that I spoke about, the three-story house, our heart, our home, and our church, we want to look at that one by one. But in this first session, we want to look at the foundation.

It's important. It is the most important thing in any house, in any building. The stronger the foundation, the stronger the building.

If you get a crack in the third floor, the problem is not in the third floor, the problem is in the foundation. If the door doesn't close in the second floor, well, the problem is in the foundation. So remember that.

We think, hey, why this problem in our home? Foundation. Why are we having this problem in our church? Foundation. That's where the problem is.

The problem is not on the third story. It's in the foundation. So what is the foundation? The foundation is God's perfect love for us.

We must be founded on that rooted and grounded in the fact that God loves me perfectly. If you're a bit shaky on that, doubtful, you say, well, I'm not so worthy of being loved. Oh, loved.

I'm not so worthy of being loved. I've made such a mess of my life. I wonder whether God will love me.

Well, brother, sister, you'll be shaky all your life. Your home will be shaky, your church will be shaky, you can't believe that God loves you. Even though he says it repeatedly in Scripture.

You'd rather believe the lie of the devil that says God doesn't love you. He can't possibly love such a wretch like you. Even though Jesus kept on saying that he came for sinners and not for righteous people.

You know the number of times Jesus said, I did not come for righteous people, I came for sinners. Do you qualify? I qualify. I qualify because I don't have any righteousness of my own to be accepted by God.

I'm a sinner and Jesus came for me. If you're a sinner, Jesus came for you, brother, sister. That should bring joy into your heart.

It certainly brings joy into my heart. Everybody on earth qualifies provided he's willing to acknowledge that he's a sinner. Sometimes that's a bit difficult to acknowledge that we're no better than anybody else.

I want to tell you something. You know who will have the greatest understanding of the love of God for him? The one who is most conscious that he's perhaps the worst sinner on the face of the earth. So if you're pretty close to that, you should be having a very good understanding of God's love.

And if you don't have that understanding of God's love, it's probably because you think you're not so bad. Well, I feel sorry for you. Paul had a tremendous security in the love of God because he said, well, I'm the chief of sinners.

I'm way down at the bottom. You fellows are all better than me. I'm way down at the bottom.

And he was so secure in the love of God because Jesus came for sinners. 1 John 4 says in verse 19, we love, 1 John 4, 19, we love because, because means the foundation is he first loved us. That's the foundation on which we love.

We love God. We love Jesus because he first loved us. Why is the, why is the love that many believers have for Jesus so weak? I'm very sorry to say that, but I've seen in every country and in every denomination, they are very fervent in praise and worship and very fervent sometimes in evangelism and doing things for the Lord and sometimes even giving money for the Lord's work and missionary work and missionary activity.

Very fervent in all these things, but very weak in personal devotion to Jesus Christ. Their devotion to Jesus Christ is a little string. It's like a little string.

You don't know when it'll snap. And yet that should be the strongest rope in our life. Everything else, praise and worship, evangelism, missionary activity must all be secondary.

This must be the strongest thing in our life. In fact, when we have moved away from devotion to Christ, brother, you've lost the most important thing in Christianity. The Lord told the church in Ephesus and the leader in Ephesus, you do all these good things, but you've left your first love.

Remember from where you've fallen. What did he do wrong? He still had a lot of activity there. You read in Revelation 2. He was still very active, still caring for purity of doctrine and everything.

What he lost was his love for Jesus. And when he lost that, he lost everything. But why is it so many people's love for Jesus is weak? Because their understanding of God's love for them is weak.

We love, it says, because He first loved us. If you think His love for you is very little, you love Him very little. The greater your understanding of God's love for you, the more you'll be able to love Him.

It's directly proportional. We love because He first loved us. He loved me little, then you love Him little.

He loved me to a fantastic, unimaginable extent, I will love Him to a fantastic, unimaginable extent. He gave everything in His love for me, I will love Him. It all depends on your understanding of the love of God.

Why is it Christians are so stingy and miserly when it comes to God's work? Shall I tell you? They haven't understood the love of God. I've seen this. So many Christians who think they are so spiritual, who think they are so holy, when it comes to giving of their time or their money for the work of God.

They are so cold and calculating and miserly. You know why? They have no understanding of the love of God. How would you give to a beggar? Money to a beggar.

I don't know whether you have many beggars here. We have many in India. How do you give money to a total stranger who's a beggar, comes begging at your gate? You're not going to lavish a fortune on that beggar.

But to ease your conscience, maybe you'll give him some old clothes or give him some food, give him a little bit of money. Compare your giving to a beggar with your giving to God and see if there's not a similarity. Be honest.

Don't you give to God just like you give to a beggar? Cold, calculating way. Is that the way you'd give an inheritance to a son? Is that a way you would pass on to your son or daughter? No. Why? Because you love your son and daughter so much.

You don't love God so much. When it comes to God's house, why is it we're stingy and miserly? We're not stingy and miserly when we are building our own house, are we? Oh no, that's my house. One of the things that many, many years ago God had to reveal to me was that God's house was my house.

And that changed my whole way of thinking. God's house was my house. Have you seen it? It all has to begin with a revelation of the love of God.

My dear brothers and sisters, I'm sorry to disappoint you, but you are not as spiritual as you think you are. I'm sorry to say that, but it's true. You are not as spiritual as you thought all these years you were.

Today you're getting revelation. All the preachers who spoke to you were tickling your ears. They wanted to keep you happy.

I want to heal you, not keep you happy and sick. It's sickness not to love God with all our hearts. Sure, any part of your heart that doesn't love God, that part is sick.

And I want to heal you. I don't want to pat you on your back and say you're wonderful people when you're not. If you love God with all your heart, you're a wonderful brother or sister.

If you don't, there's some part in you that's sick, cancerous, that needs to be healed. It's for your good that I say that. It's like giving you a scan of the inner part of your life and there's no use getting upset with the scan.

There's healing. And so, the foundation, how much God loves me, is so very important. I've discovered through the years that people, Christians, believers, in different situations, in different churches, in different countries, different denominations, I've discovered that the root cause of almost every problem is a failure to understand God's immense love for us.

I know it is true in my life. I became a Christian when I was 19 years old and my temperament was introverted, shy, reserved. If I went to a hall, I would always like to take the back seat somewhere in the corner, merge in the crowd and not be known or seen.

I never wanted to stand up in front. I never took part in public speaking or debating or anything in school. I wasn't that type.

I was insecure, feeling inferior to others. And you know how we are when we feel inferior to others. We always want to do things to impress others.

We want to say things to impress others. Have you noticed that in yourself? When you speak to other believers, you want to say something that will be impressive and you go away and afterwards you wonder, did I say something impressive enough? It's all insecurity. Where does all this insecurity come from? It comes from the fact that I don't know God.

I'm not secure in the love of God. Well, I was like that. And God changed me.

Changed me completely. I used to be scared to stand before people. If I got up to stand before people, I always wanted to say something impressive.

Even when I became a preacher. God asked me, do you want to impress people or do you want to help them? I said, Lord, I want to help them. Then the Lord just stopped trying to impress them, just helped them.

But it wasn't easy. Every time I stood up, I wanted to impress people. Because I myself was insecure.

The more insecure you are, the more you want to impress people. You don't want to help them. You want to say things to impress people.

You want to do things to impress people. You want to act in a way that impresses people. I see a lot of people in India who were good, God-fearing Christians.

And then they saw some American preacher on television who would hold the mic and walk up and down and up and down and pump the table and do all types of things. And they began to start doing that. I saw this change coming over a lot of preachers.

I said, this is like a joke. They were perfectly alright till now. What happened to them? They were watching television, Christian television.

And they felt, this is more impressive than the old way of doing it. They were people. I feel sorry for them.

I'm not impressed. I mean, you may be impressed. I'm not.

Because I can't imagine Jesus walking up and down like that when he was preaching. I don't see that picture in the Gospels. Jesus was secure in the love of his Father.

The more secure you are in the love of your Father, you don't want to impress any Tom, Dick or Harry or anybody else. You're happy. God's happy with you.

You're happy with God. My brother, sister, this is the root cause of your problem. Jealousy.

Do you know that all jealousy comes because you're insecure. You feel God's not given you a good lot in life. He's given a better lot to the other person.

He's made that other person more good looking. He's made that other person richer. He's given that other person more gifts.

He's done so many things for the other person and he's not done for you. You are too short or you're too tall or you're too fat or you're too thin. Something's always wrong with you and something's right with the other person.

This is all because of insecurity in the love of God. When you understand the love of God, you realize that God didn't make any mistake in your height or your size or your personality or your face or your intelligence or anything. You are perfectly happy to be what you are.

And you realize that God had a purpose in everything. I started losing my hair when I was about 21 years old. It's not exactly exciting for a young man when he starts losing his hair and his hairline starts receding.

Because, you know, all young men begin to think, what do the girls think about me when my hairline's receding? And they begin to worry about it. Well, quite frankly, I didn't worry about it at all because by the time I'd come to a little security in the fact that God loved me and He knew everything about me. And if that was in my genes, that which made my hairline recede, okay.

And I discovered later there was a purpose in it. You know, I was preaching, I started preaching when I was 21, 22, and by the time I was 23 or so, I was preaching in large conventions with many thousands of people. And because I had this receding hairline, they thought I was 33 and I was only 23.

And they would listen to me. Otherwise they may not have listened. They'd say, what does this young fellow got up there to teach us? So I saw there was a reason.

And I praised the Lord for it. There's a reason in everything God does. You may not understand it fully, but in everything there's a reason.

God's love for us is perfect. The verse that transformed my life is John 17, 23. John 17 and verse 23, it says here, one of the things that Jesus wants the world to know.

There are two things he says here. I want the world to know through my disciples. This is a prayer for his disciples.

I in them, thou in me. You've got to apply this to yourself. Jesus in you, the Father in Jesus, so that together we may become perfectly one.

As believers, so that the world may know two things. One, that the Father sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world. The world really needs to know that.

And the second thing, that the world must look at me the way I live and realize that I am loved by the Father exactly as he loved Jesus. Now there are many verses in the Bible that teaches that God loves us. But as far as I know, this is the only one that teaches us how much he loves us.

As much as he loved Jesus. You know, that's the verse that changed my life. That's the verse that helped an insecure, introverted, shy, retiring young person to flower and bloom, to serve God, to find security.

The fact that unbelievable as it may sound, God loves me as he loved Jesus. It's got nothing to do with our deserving him. The moment you begin to think of deserving, you'll never understand God's love.

It's got nothing to do with deserving. None of us deserve it. God has just decided to love me as he loved Jesus.

I'll never forget the story of a mother, of a man, of a young man, who was a very violent criminal, a serial killer. And the police finally caught him after he had killed many people and raped many women and done a lot of harm in a certain locality. And the whole town was just waiting for the fellow to be hanged.

And he was brought to court and the verdict was given that he has to be put to death. And after the judge gave the verdict and the whole courtroom applauded the verdict and rejoiced, the entire jury was in favor of the death penalty. There was an old woman who walked up to this young man and embraced him and said to all the people in the court, whatever you people may say, I still love my little boy.

I'm his mother. See, that's a mother's love, to stand up with her criminal son against the whole town. God's love is like that.

The love of God is inexplicable. It's way beyond our imagination. He loves us just as we are.

He doesn't want us to change. You know, many of us may have had parents who gave us what we could call performance love. Performance love means if you behave, I love you.

If you don't behave, well, I'm not going to love you. We've had teachers like that in school who give us performance love. Many husbands are like that.

Performance love. If you behave well, I love you. If you don't behave well, I'll chuck you and choose somebody else.

We live in a world like that. We can feel that in the church. And we can feel that in the church also.

We are surrounded by people who are offering us performance love. If I conduct myself properly, I'm accepted. If I make a mistake, oh, they frown upon me.

If I conform to everything this particular church believes and teaches, the code of conduct, the code of dress, the code of everything, I dress exactly like them, behave exactly like them, they look at me in a funny way. That's not the love of God. That's a cult.

I never in my life want to build a cult. A lot of churches are like that. God's not like that.

If God plants ten trees down a road, every tree will be different. If man builds ten apartments down the road, they'll all be the same, down to the last nut and bolt. That's the difference between man's work and God's work.

When man builds a church, everybody's exactly the same. They talk the same, they pray the same, they preach the same, they dress the same, they behave the same. That's man's work.

When God builds a church, ten people in a church, all ten will be different. They may dress differently, they may talk differently, they pray differently, they preach differently. They're all themselves.

I have only four children, God is a God of variety. He didn't make the world in black and white. Thank God He didn't.

He's got so many colors. Millions of colors, actually. Look at a sunset.

No artist can ever paint anything like that. You don't have so many paints on earth. That's how God is.

But this wonderful God has been taken by Christians and made into a black and white God who makes everything like this or that. He isn't like that. He doesn't want you to be different before He loves you.

He loves you just as you are. He sent Jesus to die not for those who live up to a certain level. He sent Jesus to die for everybody.

And to believe that God loves you exactly as He loved Jesus can transform your life. It can change you completely. It's God's Word.

I mean, if it was not written in God's Word I wouldn't believe it. Every problem in your life comes because this foundation is not right. What about competition among believers? I've seen so much of it in Christian circles.

One fellow wants to preach and show he's a better preacher than the other fellow who came to preach before him. What is this? Is this business or is it the house of God? It's terrible. Why does this fellow want to show that he's a better preacher than the other person? Because he's not happy with God accepting him.

He wants the people to accept him too. All the problems come and we want people to accept us. We're not happy with God having accepted us.

Do you know that God has accepted me whether I can preach or not? Do you know that God accepts you even if you can't preach at all? We have some brothers in our church back in Bangalore who can't sing one line of a hymn properly. Not one line. They go wrong.

But you know what they do sometimes in our public times of worship? They start a hymn completely off-tune, off-key, and nobody knows how to follow them because the whole thing is off. But some gracious brother who's got the ability to sing will start that again and we'll all sing it together. That's the body of Christ.

And we don't make that person feel unwanted just because he can't sing properly. God loves him, so what if he can't sing properly? He's got a good heart. That's what God sees.

If you had a retarded child in your home, would you always make him feel unwanted? Then you're not a good father or mother. A good church is one where everybody's accepted just as they are. You know, we've grown up in insecurity in the world around us, in our place of work, in our society.

People will accept us only if we perform. The world is like that. And so we're always trying to perform, to come up to the mark.

And then we become Christians and come to the church and we know we've got to perform here. You don't have to, brother and sister. This is God's house.

You don't have to perform. You don't have to reach a standard. You may be retarded.

God loves you just as you are. Please remember that. You don't have to compete with anybody.

You don't have to show that you can pray better than anyone, or sing better than anyone, or preach better than anyone, or bring up your family better than anyone. No! Do you see a brother with a wonderful family? Praise God! Is your family not so good? Never mind! Don't bring up your children so that some of them will waver. Don't worry! God will bring them back.

But don't feel inferior in the church. If there's one place on earth people should not feel inferior. This is the church.

And unfortunately people do. Because churches are not preaching the love of God enough. That God's accepted you as you are.

That you were chosen before the foundation of the world. Have you read that verse? That God chose us in Christ? Ephesians 1, 2 and 3. Before the foundation of the world He chose us in Him. You know what that means? Before there was an Adam and Eve.

And go back still further. Before there was a Lucifer. Before he fell and became the devil.

Go back still further. Before God created the heaven and earth. You go back.

Before there were any angels. Before there was anything. What was there? This is the way I read it.

There was Father. Son. And Holy Spirit.

And me. In God's mind. You think that's arrogance? It's not arrogance.

It's just faith in God's word. And you. If you are a child of God.

It says you were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. I just believe it. That's all.

That there was Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And I was going to be born millions of years later. Imagine that.

I tell you. That brings so much security to me. When you realize that.

You just got to believe what it says in Ephesians 1 verse 3 and 4. Your name was there. You may have accepted Christ in the 20th century. But God knew about it way back.

And He had your name in mind. That's how God is. And I thank God for the security of my life.

It transformed me completely. It delivered me from all competition. I'm not competing with anybody in the world to preach better.

To build a better church or a better home or anything like that. I'm not here to compare my children with anybody's children in the whole wide world. I'm not here to compare my life with anybody else's life.

My life has become secure. Because of one reason. I know that God loves me as much as I can give all of you this morning.

To be secure in the love of God. I want to invite you to this life brother, sister. Let's get the foundation absolutely solid.

You cannot be jealous of anyone. Because God determined how you should be. God determined the color of my skin.

God determined where I should be born. God determined when I should be born. God determined my parents.

He determined my circumstances. He determined my temperament. He determined my temperament because He needed such a person with such a temperament in the body of Christ.

And He determined your temperament and it's different from mine. Thank God it's different. Thank God you and I are not the same because we're meant to be different.

Are all the fingers the same? No. How terrible it would be if all the fingers were the same. Thank God the thumb is very different.

Why do you want to be like my body? Why do you want to be like somebody else? If God's made you to be an eye why do you want to be a ear? I don't want to be something different from what God's made me. I tell people repeatedly in our church I say, please don't try to preach like me. Please don't try to be like me.

God wants only one Zakpoon in the body of Christ. He wants you to be yourself. Be yourself and don't think when you're yourself you're inferior.

It was not meant to see. It was meant for some other function. Don't compare yourself with the eye.

Some other member of the body. You are yourself. God's prepared you to be a unique member in the body of Christ and He loves you just as you are.

You know inside us we all have a little person who is afraid of what other people think of us. We're always trying to impress that old man must be crucified put him to death. God loves us just as we are.

Will you pray a little prayer? A prayer of thanksgiving. Say, Lord Jesus I want to thank you that I'm loved. Father I thank you God for being my father and that you love me just as I am.

Even if nobody in the world loves me you love me just as I am. And I thank you that you've accepted me just as I am. Heavenly Father we thank you for the wonderful message of the gospel meant to change our lives especially the fact of your acceptance.

We thank you for it. In Jesus name. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4085.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/gods-dwelling-place-the-foundation-gods-perfect-love/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**