

God's Sovereign Power Over All People

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God completely, showcasing the story of Nebuchadnezzar's pride and downfall as a powerful illustration of God's sovereignty. It highlights the need to prioritize God's will, power, and glory over our own desires, emphasizing the significance of seeking God's will, relying on His power, and living for His glory. The sermon encourages humility, faithfulness, and obedience to God's plan, reminding listeners of God's ability to turn even the wasted years of our lives into something meaningful and impactful.

Scripture: Daniel 4:35, Romans 8:28, Acts 17:30, Psalms 139:13, Jeremiah 29:11

Topics: "Surrender to God", "God's Sovereignty"

Description

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Transcript

Well, brothers and sisters, I'm so happy to meet you all. I was supposed to come here three years ago, but there was this pandemic. Everything is in God's control.

There's absolutely nothing that happens on this earth which God does not control. Some years ago, I saw a very lovely verse which I've never forgotten. It's the most powerful verse in the entire Bible.

The most powerful verse in the entire Bible that tells us about the absolute power of God. And I don't think most of you know it, so I'm going to show it to you. It's been in your Bible all your life, but I don't know whether you've seen it.

Turn with me to the book of Daniel and chapter 4. In Daniel chapter 4, we read of one of the proudest kings that lived in Old Testament times. He was a very powerful man. He ruled the most powerful empire in the whole world.

America is a very powerful nation. But as you read in the papers, there are many other nations becoming powerful. But in Nebuchadnezzar's time, there was only one powerful nation.

And the name of that nation was Babylon. And Babylon had a huge palace and hanging gardens and a wall that went right around it. It was a wall.

On top of the wall, a chariot could drive around the whole city. And Nebuchadnezzar built it. And one day, we read in Daniel chapter 4. If you read in your Bible, Daniel chapter 4, it says in verse 28, Daniel 4, 28, all this happened to Nebuchadnezzar, the king.

Twelve months later, he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. See what a proud man he was. He was the one who built this fantastic palace in the city.

I mean, making a whole lot of slaves work. When he said in verse 30, the king looked at what he had built and he reflected, he thought about it and said, is this not Babylon the great? Which I have built myself by my power and for my glory. This is the characteristic of man.

Three things. If you read carefully in verse 30, I built it according to my own plan. I built it by my power and I built it for my glory.

Can you remember that? My plan, my power, my glory. This is the characteristic of man. We do things according to our own will.

We do it according to our own strength and we do it for our own glory. Babylon is a picture of a false church in the New Testament. And the characteristic of Christians who belong to Babylon is they do their own will.

They don't seek God's will. They use their own power. They don't seek God's power.

They believe more in the power of music and cleverness than the power of the Holy Spirit. And they do it for their own glory. Examine your own life.

Ask yourself in these three areas. How many areas of your life do you seek the will of God? And how many areas do you do exactly what you want to do? That's Babylon. My will.

You remember Jesus taught us to pray, Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will father be done on earth in my life exactly as it is done in heaven. Do you know there are millions and millions of angels in heaven? Do you know the reason why heaven is such a wonderful place? And I hope all of you will go there. But I'll tell you, heaven is a place where nobody does his own will.

No angel does his own will. One characteristic of heaven is they all do the will of God. That's why he taught us to pray.

Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth in my life exactly as it is done in heaven. When I was a little boy, my father and mother taught me to pray that prayer. They were Christians.

They were born again. So every morning when I got up in my bed when I was eight, nine years old, I would kneel on my bed and pray, our father, who art in heaven, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. I prayed that for many years, but I did my own will.

It was an empty prayer, which I just memorized and repeated, just like a lot of Christians say empty things to God because they're not really talking to God. A lot of Christians, when they pray, they're like children

who pick up a phone. They don't know how to dial.

They're not talking to anybody and just say, hello, hello, and begin to talk. And they're not connected to anybody. But they imagine, they see their parents talking like that and they talk like two, three-year-old children.

That is exactly how many people pray. They pray so many things. Has God heard you? I don't know.

There's no difference between your prayer and the children praying. My dear brother, I'm not saying that to condemn you. I'm just saying that it can be different if you will listen carefully.

So Nebuchadnezzar built this according to his will, by his power and for his glory. But the way God wants things to be done, the way the New Testament teaches, Jesus Christ never did his own will. So he never used his own power.

If you read the Gospels, you see how the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus when he was baptized. Why did he need it? He was the Son of God. But he came on earth to show us, listen carefully, Jesus came to earth not only to die for our sins.

That he did at the end of his life. That was just six hours, six hours of his life. He died on the cross.

But what did he do for 33 and a half years before that? He showed us how we are supposed to live, never doing our own will. Let me show you a verse in John's Gospel chapter 6. John's chapter 6 and verse 38. If you were to ask Jesus, Lord, what did you come on earth to do? Many people would say, we came to die for our sins.

That is a small part of the truth. But that's the first thing we probably learn. It's the first thing I learned.

Christ came to die for my sins. But if you want to know the full story, what he did for 33 and a half years, here it is in one sentence. John chapter 6 and verse 38.

I came from heaven. And you say, Lord, why did you come from heaven? I came from heaven never to do what I want to do. My will means what I want to do.

He never did his own will. Not even for one second in his entire life. But what did you do, Lord? The will of him who sent me.

You know, it requires tremendous humility, tremendous humility to do what somebody else tells us to do. Really? Haven't you found that with your children? How difficult it is to make your children do what you know is good for them. You tell them to do something and they won't do it.

You tell them to eat something which you have know is good for their health. They won't eat it. They want to eat what they like to eat.

That's human nature. We do what we want to do. We nominally pray, of course, our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth in my life exactly as it's done in heaven.

Absolute lie. Do you know the number of lies people tell God? Can you tell me which day of the week Christians tell the most lies Sunday to God? God. Some of the songs we sing all to Jesus I surrender.

Really? Take my life, Lord, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee. That's why I say most Christians tell lies on Sundays to God, but I never realized it for so many years of my life. Now when I sing a song I ask myself, what did I sing just now? I want you to answer a question honestly, not to me, but to yourself.

Can you remember what you sang just now a little while ago? Do you remember what you told God? You know when we're singing we're telling God something. Do you remember what you told? Now if it was a new song you'd probably remember. But if it's a familiar song, I almost guarantee that you don't remember what you sang today.

Because we have got so used to singing. Singing is like a little exercise we go through. We don't even think what we're saying.

This is an evidence of the lack of reverence we have for Jesus Christ and God. I was like that for years till God showed me I was telling lies to him. You would think it is serious if your children told you one lie.

Do you know the number of lies we have told God by our singing? If you don't even think of what we're singing. I'm not blaming you. I did that myself for years.

I told a whole lot of lies to God when I sang songs. I never took it seriously. It's like these people go to rock music musicians and all.

They're not worried about what they're singing. It's just a nice tune and they move around and jump around and sing. They enjoy the singing.

That's not how we are supposed to sing in the church. You know what Jesus said, where two or three, and we are more than that here, are gathered in my name. I'm in the midst of them.

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is here? You can't see him, but he's here. I believe that with all my heart. That's why I'm very careful about what I say.

Many preachers want to impress their audience. If I try to impress you, God will judge me. If I want to impress people, I must go and do some other job.

But I'm a servant of God, and I've been a servant of God for 56 years. And if I try to impress you with what I say or my sermon, God will judge me severely. I mean, you may not realize that, but I know it.

Because he's listening to me. Right now as I speak, Christ is here and he's listening to me. And that's why I seek to be aware of his presence as I speak.

And Jesus said when he was down on earth, I never did my own will. I did my father's will. Nebuchadnezzar was not like that.

He said, I, by my own plan, I built this. The reason I say that is, that is the reason why we have a lot of problems in our life. We do what we feel like doing.

But people say it's so difficult to find God's will. It's not really difficult. If you want to do, you will know.

The problem is not that we can't find God's will. The problem is we don't want to do it, because sometimes that can go contrary to our will. So let me show you another verse in Romans in chapter 11.

Keep in mind what I showed you in Daniel 4, that Nebuchadnezzar said, I did things by my plan, through my power, and for my glory. But how should it be? It says in the Romans chapter 11, an eternal work. If you want your work to last for eternity, and not just for your earthly life.

I want everything I do to last for eternity. Even a sermon I preach. I want it to have an effect on people that will last for eternity.

And that is my prayer. And that's why I seek God for the power of his Holy Spirit. Because I don't know the needs of people, but I want to so affect people's lives by what I say, that their lives will be changed, not only on this earth, but for all eternity.

And I want every bit of my life and my work to last for eternity. That's like if somebody's building a house, he doesn't want a house to be built that lasts just one week. I mean people build houses that can last for a hundred years.

So if you want your life to do something that will last for all eternity, that when you're dead, and you've gone out of this world, and your work will last long beyond your grave, beyond your going to the grave, listen to these words. Romans 11 and verse 30. This is how everything in our life should be.

From God, through God, and to God, are all things of an eternal nature. What did Nebuchadnezzar say? From me, from my mind, through my power, and for my glory. That is Babylon.

That's a false church. But a truly Christian life, a wholehearted Christian, lives the way Jesus lived. Everything in his life, he wants to hear what God wants him to do from him.

And in order to do it, he seeks for God's power through him. And when it is done, he says, Lord, I don't want to take any credit for it. It's for your glory.

This is true Christianity. Unfortunately, it's seen very little. Most people's understanding of Christianity is, ask Jesus to come into your heart, and one day you'll go to heaven.

Well, I also believed that third-rate, good-for-nothing, useless Christianity for many years. And I was a miserable person. Till God showed me, if you want to live a satisfying life, a life where your life can be a blessing to many, many people, seek that everything in your life will be from God, through God's power, and for God's glory alone.

Please remember that verse in Romans chapter 11, which I just showed you. Never forget it. It's one of the most powerful verses, Romans 11, verse 36.

And compare that with, turn back to Daniel chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar is an expression of the strong human will, that wants to do its own will, for its own, with its own power, and for its own glory. Now you see here Romans, sorry, Daniel 4, and verse 30. The verse we just saw, Daniel 4, 38.

Isn't this Babylon, the great which I built, a royal residence? I built it by my plan. I built it with my power, and I built it for my glory. So contrast this, my plan, my power, my glory, with God's will, God's power, God's glory.

And I want to say, this is true Christianity, and this is what the way man lives. Jesus lived totally. I showed you that verse.

I came from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me. Everything Jesus did, was in the power of his Holy Spirit. That's why he prayed so much.

He prayed because he wanted power from God. We don't pray so much because we got a lot of power of our own. Why do we need power from God? But I'll tell you this, my brother, sister.

There are a lot of things you can do with your power. They won't last very long. Your work will be wasted.

I don't want to do a work that remains for a very short time. I want to, I've got only one life, and a lot of that life is already over. But I thank God that many, many years ago, I discovered, Romans 11, 36, that if you want to live a life which will have fruit for eternity, long after you're dead and gone, determine, at least from today, to say, Lord, I want to seek your will in my life in every area.

I want to do it in your power. And I want to do it only for your glory. I don't want any credit for myself.

You will come to the end of your life with great satisfaction. In everything, you young people, decide that you want to do God's will. You want to marry the one God chose for you, not the one you choose.

My wife and I have been married for 54 years. We're extremely happy with each other. We never fight at home now.

In the early days, when we were ignorant of God's ways, like every married couple, we fight. It's gone. 365 days of the year.

We have peace, peace in our home. It's a foretaste of heaven. Because we chose each other, seeking the will of God.

And if you young people are considering marriage, say, Lord, I want your will. How do I choose? It's the first step to a happy marriage. Even a job.

Lord, I want you to... You've got a plan for my life. I want to fulfill that. Do you know that God made a plan for your life before you were born? Let me show you a verse in Psalm 139.

It's one of my favorite verses. Psalm 139. Verse 13 and 16.

Psalm 139 verse 13 says, Oh God, you formed me in my mother's womb. That you know. It's God who formed you as a little embryo, a little baby, inside your mother's womb.

And there, before you came out of your mother's womb, before you were born, it says here in verse 16, Oh God, your eyes saw me there when I was not even fully formed. And while I was in my mother's womb, when I was not even fully formed as a baby, in your book, that is in God's mind, all the days ordained for me were already written down. That means God had written a life story of yours the way he wanted it before you were born.

Isn't that amazing? Many people, their only goal in life is, I want to go to heaven when I die. That's a very ungrateful way to live the Christian life. After all that Jesus did for you, can you only think of going to heaven when you die? Don't you want to do God's will on earth before you die? That plan that God wrote down in his mind for your life when you were in your mother's womb, that from the very first day till however long God planned your life to be, this is what he must do every day.

I'm sorry that I discovered that after more than 20 years of my life. When I was 19 and a half, I was in India and I joined the Navy when I was 15. I'd finished school and I joined the Navy.

I had no interest in I was nominally Christian going to church, but I didn't want to do God's will. I wanted to become a big officer in the Navy. But somehow God laid hold of me when I was 19 years old and I got converted.

And it was a radical conversion. My whole direction of my life changed. I said, Lord, now I don't want to be a big officer in the Navy, I want to do your will whatever that is.

And I'm glad I made that decision 63 years ago. And therefore I look back over 63 years with many mistakes I made. But I'm thankful that I discovered fairly early in my life that God had a plan for me before I was born.

Now, if you're old already and you never thought of it before, at least you can do something with the rest of your life. But some of you young people you've got your whole life ahead of you. Don't waste it like so many other people have done.

Go to Jesus and say, Lord, I never knew that you had made a plan for my life before I was born. Show it to me. Do you know the number of times I have cried out to God and said, Lord, show me your plan for my life.

Please show me. I want to fulfill that because I know that's the only worthwhile life I can live on this earth. I've cried and prayed to God and when God sees that you're earnest he'll show it to you.

If you're not earnest, he won't show it to you. And if he has not shown you his plan for your life, I'll tell you one thing, he sees that you're not earnest about it. And he says, all the days, verse 16, that were ordained for me were written down in your book before even there was one of them.

That means before my first day on earth God had planned my whole life. Boy, I wish I had known that when I was five years old. I discovered it when I was nearly 20.

Have you discovered it yet? Do you really think you can make a better plan for your life than God can? I look back over my life and I say, Lord, I'm so thankful that you planned my life. Do you think God's plan is worse than the plan you can make? Let me show you another verse in Jeremiah chapter 29. Jeremiah chapter 29 and verse 11.

I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. Now, listen as if Jesus Christ is speaking that to you directly, personally, as if there's nobody else in this room and Christ is here and he's speaking to you personally and he's saying to you, my dear son, my dear daughter, I have some plans for your life and I know it and they are plans for your welfare. That means they are plans to do something really good for you.

Not to harm you in any way. To give you a wonderful future and a wonderful home. He doesn't want to mess up your life.

A lot of people have got a wrong idea about God that if I surrender to God's will, my life will be unhappy. My life has not been unhappy. I've been a very happy man ever since I surrendered my life to God's will.

I'm not the richest man in the world but I certainly would like to find out if somebody is happier than me. There may be many people who are doing God's will who are as happy as me, but happier than me? I don't think so. You can't be happier than doing God's will.

And all those who are doing God's will will be just as happy as I am. And you can be that. And you can come to the end of your life with tremendous satisfaction that the one life God gave you, you did not waste it.

Some of you came to America from another country to make money. I didn't come here to make money. Okay, you made a lot more money than you would have made in India or somewhere else, but are you happy? What are you going to say at the end of your life that you made so many hundreds of thousands of dollars? Is that all? Are you going to go to the gates of heaven and show them your bank account and say how much money you made? There are people who live in India or whatever country you come from who may go to heaven happier than you.

Though they didn't make as much money as you or live in a grand house as you did. I want to tell you that is not the greatest thing in life. I don't know how many of you will believe me, but if you believe me, it will change your life if you believe the scripture that God has made a plan for your life.

You can never make a better plan than that. And you may say, well, what about all the years gone by if I have not sought God's will? I messed up God's plan for so many years. Never mind.

God says start from today. Start from today for the rest of your life. Say, Lord, I want to fulfill your plan.

And you say, what about the past? I'll give you a wonderful promise for the past. Please remember this all your life. Acts of the Apostles in chapter 17.

It will encourage you. It's a verse that I offer to many people. Acts chapter 17 and verse 30.

Acts chapter 17 and verse 30. Here's what God says. Having overlooked the times of ignorance.

What are the times of ignorance? You never knew God's plan for your life. You say, what to do about those years? I was ignorant of God's plan. God says, forget it.

You know the meaning of overlook? Overlook means God says, I forget it. I'm going to forget about those years when you did not know my plan for your life. But now God is telling you to repent means to turn around.

Stop doing your own will from now on. Say, Lord, I want to do your will for my life. I want to know what it is.

Now make that decision today. I can give you a written guarantee to change your life because I know from my own experience it did. It's made me a very happy person.

It's given me a very happy marriage. It's given me a very happy life. Even though I may not be earning as much money as you do, it doesn't make a difference.

I've discovered one thing in my life that money doesn't make anybody happy. A comfortable life doesn't make anybody happy. Look at all the miserable people there are who live comfortable lives with a lot of money.

I'll tell you who's really happy, the one who does God's will. Jesus Christ was the happiest person that ever lived on this earth, and he was not a millionaire. When he traveled, he said, I don't even have a place to stay.

He never stayed in rich hotels. He said, son, a man doesn't have a place to lay his head. He was very careful with money.

So different from today's preachers. Do you know that Jesus had a treasurer? There were thousands of people who followed Jesus and they were so blessed by his healing and his message that they would give money as an offering. He didn't ask for it.

There was a man called Judas Iscariot who collected that money in a bank and Jesus didn't use it to buy a grand house for himself. No. He came here to do the will of his father and he said, comfort is not the main thing for me.

I want to do the will of my father. He was so utterly faithful. Now I'm not saying there's anything wrong in having a good car or a good house.

Don't misunderstand me. God has given you those things. Use them by all means.

But don't think that's the main thing in life. I wish we'd all be gripped by one fact. The plan God made for your life is the best possible thing and if you missed it till now, God says, okay, I'll overlook the past.

Can you start today and say, God, I want to do your will from today onwards. Tell God seriously he'll do it for you. He's not going to send you back to your home country.

No. Don't misunderstand. Don't think that God is such a cruel God who likes to make your life miserable, wants to make you live in a hut.

That's the devil who tells you that. Oh, if you give yourself to God, he'll make you live in a hut and you'll have to give up this and give up that. No.

What did we read in Jeremiah? I've got plans to make you happy for your welfare, for your good. And the second thing there in Daniel chapter four is, oh yeah, I must say one more thing before I go on. You see, what about the years that were wasted? Here's a wonderful promise that you can claim.

I've claimed it for the few years of my life that I wasted. It's in the book of Joel. Do you know where Joel is? You're going to meet him in heaven and he'll ask you, did you read my book? And you'll say, your book? Which is that? You see, I wrote only three pages and you didn't read it.

You didn't have time to read three pages that I wrote? Read it before you meet him. It's in the Old Testament. Towards the end, Joel chapter two.

The Lord says, it's a little expression. Verse 25, I'll make up to you for the years that were eaten away by locusts and this locust and that locust and whatever way you wasted your life. It's a picture, locusts eating up the grains.

And I will make up to you for the years that have been lost in your life. It's a tremendous statement. I will make up to you for the years that are lost in your life.

Let me tell you the example of a man who lived much worse than you. How many of you have killed other Christians? I think zero. There's a man in the Bible you read of who for 30 years lived completely outside the will of God.

For many years he was persecuting Christians, putting them in jail and killing some of them. His name was what we know as the Apostle Paul. 30 years.

He lived only about 67 years altogether. The Emperor Nero cut off his head when he was 67 years old. But out of those 67 years, 30 years he lived for himself and for the devil.

Persecuting Christians and... But do you know when he came to the end of his life he said, I finished my course. Amazing. You say, how could he have finished his course when for 30 years he wasted, not only wasted, but he killed other Christians and did so many wrong things.

It's amazing what God can do. God says, I can make up for you the years that were wasted. And what a fantastic work Paul did.

In the remaining 37 years of his life the results are lasting till today. Today. All of us, our lives have been affected to some degree by what Paul wrote in the Bible.

And millions of people in the last 2,000 years. And yet that man wasted 30 years of his life. I'm just telling you to say that God can restore the years that are eaten away.

So, let's go back to Daniel 4. So here he was, Daniel, or Nebuchadnezzar, building a kingdom by his, according to his own plan, and by his own money and power. See, that's another thing. We all think we are very strong and capable.

We can do something. I can do this and we can plan this and plan this and I've saved up enough money for the future and I can do this and that and I've got this education and with this education I can always get a job and even if I lose this one I'll always get another job. You know the amount of confidence we have in our own power? It's absolutely amazing.

that's how Nebuchadnezzar did, by my own power and ultimately it's for my own glory. And listen to what happened. See how God humbled him.

This is what I want to show you. This mighty king, who was the most powerful king in the world. It was about 500 years before Christ.

Who had built the most powerful empire in this fantastic city called Babylon and a palace. As soon as he said these words in Daniel 4.30 the next verse Daniel 4.31 A voice from heaven came saying King Nebuchadnezzar you proud man your authority and sovereignty has been taken away from you God says I'm going to drive you away from human beings I'll make you like an animal and you will eat grass like the cattle for seven years until you recognize that almighty God is the ruler of all men and as soon as the word was spoken this man, the moment he said this I built by my plan and my power for my glory God said you think you're such a great man I'll humble you right now and Nebuchadnezzar was driven away from mankind and he began, can you imagine a man who was the king and the most powerful king in the world suddenly going around in his underwear, crawling on the grass eating grass verse 33 like the cattle and his body day and night out there in the open drenched with the dew of heaven and he wouldn't cut his hair, it began to grow like verse 33 like eagle's feathers and his nails became like bird's claws you read this

verse? this mighty king this is not a fairy tale this actually happened to the mightiest king that ruled at that time for God to show for human beings for all time that if you become proud that you're so capable and you can do something for God, I can humble you in no time as you look back over your life, I want to ask you dear brothers, sisters are you proud of something you've accomplished? you know the thing that God hates you see adultery, murder yes, he hates all that, but something worse than all that pride are you proud about what you've accomplished in your life? I've done so much, I've done this I've done that or maybe I've brought up my children, my children have accomplished this, that and the other any type of pride God can humble in a moment he did it for this man and that's the lesson we've got to learn did he learn the lesson? yes, thank God many have not learned it, even though they hear the word of God at the end of that seven years, verse 34 I he's giving his testimony now I raised my eyes to heaven and my reason came back to me, stop behaving like an animal I like that expression read it slowly middle of verse 34 I raised my eyes to heaven and my reason came back to me then I became a sensible human being and I want to tell you he's the one who raises his eyes to heaven to see God whose senses have come back to the place, otherwise our senses are not in the place proper place, and I blessed God I honored him I acknowledged finally that his dominion is lasts forever and now I want to tell you the verse which I told you about in the beginning the most total complete statement of the almighty power of God found in the whole Bible I read the whole Bible and I never found a verse like this anywhere in any book of the Bible that expresses the almighty sovereign power of God like this verse Daniel 4.35 it's a good verse for you to memorize and remember number one all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as zero before God that's the first thing you got to remember you and I are a zero before God number one some years ago in my home church in Bangalore I demonstrated this, getting a lot of of my young people and I got one brother to stand with a big zero on a placard in front of him I said this guy is the wealthiest man in the world what's he in God's eyes? Zero then I got another person to stand with another zero and I said this is the most handsome person in the whole world what is he in God's eyes? Zero then I got another person I said this is the guy who wins all the medals in the Olympic games, the athlete sportsman, zero then I stood there I said the great preacher, zero and like that one after the other different ones somebody would accomplish so many things all zeros and I got a pile of zeros and you put it all together and they are still zeros then I held a placard with a one in front of it written on it and I held it out there and you see how suddenly the value changes this this one is Jesus and when you put Jesus in front all of a sudden it's no longer a zero I was trying to demonstrate that you are a zero and I am a zero but if you put Christ in front of your life you'll have value so I asked one of these people one of the first zeros, I said move over to the right all the other zeros were piled up here and that zero stood there and I put a one in front of him this is just one man and with the one in front of him, Christ in front of him he's become more valuable, all these people all of a sudden now if he learns to build fellowship with another person, you know how fellowship is a very important thing, with his wife or somebody else, so I told one of these zeros, go and join him the ten became, not eleven, but a hundred you follow, one zero and zero I said get another fellow to join him, it became a thousand I said that is the power of fellowship when two or three and more and more zeros join up and Christ is in front the tremendous power of a whole lot of humble God fearing men and women who recognize that they are zeros and have all decided to put Christ in front of him they become a tremendous army with tremendous value before God if you want to see that you can go to YouTube and search for being a zero before God Zac Poonen just an eight minute clip I think you can see it for yourself well that's, I got it from this verse, Daniel 4.35 all the inhabitants of the earth are zeros before God now I remember that and I know I want to be a zero before God all my life I have no value apart from him because Christ is in front of me I'll always keep Christ in front of me I have value before God I remember when I got married before I got married to Annie my wife I told her I want to tell you something which most husbands will not

most people getting married will not tell their wives I said you're always going to be second in my life Christ will be first all my life you will never be first in my life you'll always be second and I said I want you to make me also only second in your life not first I don't want to be first in my life we won't have a happy marriage we'll have a miserable marriage like all the other people who say oh we love each other and you're first in my life and all that garbage we've had a very happy life both of us because we did not put each other first we put Christ always between us and so he held us together it's like the glue that sticks two pieces of paper so closely together you can't separate them you have to tear it why are there so many broken marriages today so many divorces I'll tell you they put each other first you want a miserable marriage put your husband or wife first you want a happy marriage put God first and put your wife or husband second it'll never break that marriage it is impossible Christ will hold you together for eternity and he will bring your children also into his kingdom he brought my children into his kingdom this is the secret do you think the devil wants you to know that no the devil doesn't want you to know that he wants you to have a miserable marriage and a miserable family life and miserable children by putting yourself first all the inhabitants of the earth are zero if you did not know that at least today know it what Nebuchadnezzar says number 2 verse 35 God does exactly what he wants in heaven he does his will in heaven and he does his will among all the inhabitants of the earth you know there are many people who can affect our lives but God is the one who determines he does his will among all the 7 billion people on this earth and no one can it says here further no one can stop his hand he does according to his will among all the inhabitants of the earth and no one can stop him saying what have you done nobody can question God his authority is absolute in heaven and absolute among all the people of this earth that's why if you're a child of God who puts Christ in front of you let me tell you what the bible says in Romans 8 28 every single thing that happens in your life will work for your good is there anybody who can promise you that all the money in the world will not promise you that, you can get sick and die even if you're a billionaire but when you put Christ first in your life everything will work for your good I can testify to that in my life nobody can harm me without God's permission, they crucified Christ but only with God's permission somebody may crucify me but only with God's permission, not without it many years ago about 23 years ago there were some people who hated me well there are always people who hate me because I preach the gospel and I preach the truth but they wanted to kill me and the way they did it I don't want to go into the details but in a car that I was traveling in was parked somewhere they got some criminal I still don't know who did it, to puncture a hole in the tube through which the petrol, the gas flowed and punctured the hole just above where the exhaust comes so that the petrol or the gas would fall on that and catch fire while I was driving and I and my wife would be blown up I didn't know that so as I drove the car this is in Bangalore some buddy traveling behind me came up to my window in the car and said hey your petrol is leaking, drip drip drip drip I said really I said I don't know head or tail about car mechanics anyway I reached home and we saw the petrol all along the road so I got a brother from our church to have a look at the car and he took it to his factory and he took out that pipe and he brought it home he replaced it, it had to be replaced and he showed me he said brother Zach do you see this hole here this is not rust this is a brand new car it's punctured by somebody and it is positioned in such a way that it would be exactly over the exhaust so it would catch fire and you could have been blown up and you drove how many, 7 or 8 miles with that well I said God obviously has got some more years for me on this earth nobody can stop his hand because God has got power not only in heaven but among all the inhabitants of the earth no one can stop his hand or stop him, there was a great man of God who lived about 250 years ago in England called John Wesley probably heard of him, he was a great Christian preacher there were people who tried to kill him I'll tell you one story in his life those days they used to ride horses that's how they traveled and he would early morning 5 o'clock he would go out on a horseback and go and preach somewhere to people before they go to work and then

late in the evening he would again go and preach to people after they came back from work he lived up to the age of 88 or something and he was one of the most famous preachers in England he started the Methodist church well there were a lot of people who hated him because people were turning to Christ through his ministry in thousands and so the drinking saloons were getting closed because nobody would go and drink these people were getting converted people who were running prostitute houses, their business was going down because people were getting converted and they hated John Wesley and they wanted to kill him but they wanted to kill him in such a way that nobody would catch them and nobody would blame them so you know what they did they knew that he travels down a certain through a certain forest on his way back to his home a small section of that was through a forest he always traveled that way and they tied a rope between two trees at the height of a man sitting on a horse so that as he came galloping down on a horse he'd be thrown off the horse and fall down and hit his head on the ground and die John Wesley knew nothing about this he comes galloping on the horse and all of a sudden an ant bites him in his feet and he bends down you know what happens when an ant bites your feet you bend down to scratch it and it took a little while and by the time he had passed under this rope he didn't know there was a rope there and he comes up the other side and he escaped somebody who put that rope or part of the team that put that rope later on got converted and that's how the story came out have you ever wondered why God created ants some of them are such a nuisance well here's one reason God created ants to save the life of one of his servants it's a true story I could tell you other stories like that which show that God's almighty power is so great here was a man who was mightily used by God to turn thousands of people to Christ away from their sinful life and God said I'm not going to let somebody kill him no they can try but I'll save his life with an ant to show that all their cleverness is worthless I'll use a humble little ant to save a man's life that's what God can do it's a wonderful thing to give your life and heart to such a God who loves us so much that he sent his son to die for us I want you, my brother, sister to serve this God all your life I've had a wonderful life since I started serving God 56 years since I quit my job to serve him and it's been the most wonderful life that I've lived I'm not asking you to give up your job like I gave up God calls only 1 in 10,000 perhaps to give up their job the remaining 9,999 people like all of you you must remain in your jobs and be faithful to Christ so I'm not asking you to become a full time Christian worker like me but be faithful in your life and say Lord Jesus, I want to make good use of my life show me your will for my life I don't want to waste my life anymore I want to live for your glory I believe that's why God's brought you here this evening to Austin CFC I've come here to Austin to Brother Benoit's house when there was no church here there was no Austin CFC many years ago but because this one brother, Benoit James was faithful see what God has built today it started with one man's faithfulness and then God brought another brother called Josh McGuire to join him and it's amazing what God can do when he gets two people together who are one with each other, who are not competing with each other who love one another and who want to glorify Jesus Christ that's amazing it really is and I remember the days when there was nobody here to join Benoit in the early days but he had been blessed through contact with me and my teaching so he felt, well I don't have a church what can I do with my life I can't preach like Brother Zach, but I can distribute his books so many years ago he started doing what he could he advertised my books and started distributing them and he got his children to pack those books and take them to the post office and mail them and that's why his children are following the Lord today too because from the beginning he taught them to serve God wouldn't you like a life like that he's not the richest man in Austin he never will be but you wait till Jesus comes and see where he'll be and see where the richest man in Austin will be God gives us such examples to show us you want to live a life worthwhile for God, start with something small he just took books to the post office and mailed them and he got his children to do that God's work always begins with something small you put a little grain of wheat into the ground and bury it from that can

come a whole field full of wheat one day that's what Jesus said if that grain of wheat is put in a glass case and put it in a window it will be one grain even after 50 years but if that grain goes into the ground and cracks open and dies it can be a field full of grain of wheat that's the way of Jesus die to your own plans and your own will and say Lord I can't do the great things that some other great man of God can do but maybe I can give a little track to somebody about Christ I can't preach but I can do that there's no limit to what God can do through you that's what I want to encourage you, God's got a plan not only for Benoist and Josh's life, for your life too make sure you fulfill it the time is short Christ is coming soon when I heard about Russia threatening to do to send nuclear bombs with this Ukraine war I said Lord does this mean you're coming soon? the world being set on fire? praise God, that's wonderful I look forward to that, not to the nuclear war but the Bible says the world is going to be the whole earth is going to be burnt up with fire that's what it says in 2 Peter 3 is it by nuclear bombs it's going to blow up? well if your coming is here I'm looking forward to it not to the nuclear bomb but to the coming of Christ he's coming soon make good use of the rest of your life let's pray while I heard about in prayer no power can harm you if you give your life to Christ you will live the most useful life any human being can ever live if you give your life to Christ not partially, totally not just to say Lord Jesus come into my heart I want to go to heaven that's a selfish type of Christian life but say Lord I want to do your will on earth I want to be a useful member in Christ's body in the church Lord put me in a church which is a living powerful church for the glory of God I don't want to sit in some dead church that just sings songs and listens to messages and go home a church that does God's will through God's power for God's glory Lord I want to be in such a church God will hear your prayer today, Heavenly Father I pray for these dear brothers and sisters here some who have come from distant places please bless them, bless this Austin CFC let it be a powerful shining witness for you in this part of the world we pray in Jesus name, Amen

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