

Going Beyond the Soul to Spirit

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of moving beyond a foundational faith to achieve spiritual maturity and true worship in Christ.

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Scripture: Matthew 4:10, Luke 14:27, John 4:23-24, Acts 4:34-35, Galatians 6:10

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Godly Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of denying our own will and aligning ourselves with God's will, focusing on the need to worship in spirit and truth. It highlights the significance of crucifying our flesh, making wise decisions with money, and seeking to live a godly life by denying our own desires. The speaker shares personal experiences and biblical insights to encourage listeners to press on to spiritual maturity and build a church that is focused on spiritual growth rather than intellectualism.

Transcript

Always very happy to be here. I remember the days, I first came to Dubai in 1990. 1990 is 25 years ago.

And of the people who first met in that conference, nobody is here. A lot of people get offended with what I say. And some of them don't last.

And then I came another time for a conference where we had only two families. And through the years, God has added many people. I am very happy that this is no longer a Malayalam assembly.

A Malayalam assembly is okay in Kerala. Anywhere outside Kerala, it becomes a club, not a church. I found that consistently.

And clubs are united on the basis of a common interest. There are people who join a club to play tennis, or table tennis, or golf, or play cards, or drink. Or because they are Malayalees.

The reason of unity makes no difference. But if anything outside of Jesus Christ becomes the uniting factor between me and another person, that is a club. It's not a church.

Listen carefully. Even if the uniting factor is, I enjoy listening to Zak Poonen. That sounds very spiritual, right? It's a club.

It's a club of Zak Poonen followers. It will never be the body of Christ. God is very jealous.

He will never give his glory to another. So I have seen a lot of people in many parts of the world, even in the United States. It's okay.

I say, Brother Zak, we really enjoy listening to your messages and we hear it regularly. But I say, are you a part of a church somewhere? Have you united with other people who accept these truths and become one with them? No. Because they say, well, there is no church like yours over here.

But I say, there is no perfect church in the world. I remember a young man who once came to a godly elder brother and asked him, Can you suggest a perfect church that I can join? And he said, that old man, godly old man, he said, I've never found a perfect church in my life. But if you find one, don't join it.

Because the moment you join it, it will become imperfect. So those people are looking for a perfect church. As soon as they join something, they make it imperfect.

The church is a bunch of imperfect people who are pressing on to perfection. That is the difference between what we emphasize and every church has got imperfect people. Every church in the world, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, everything.

So people say, well, you're also imperfect and we're also imperfect. I say, but there is a difference. The difference is, in every message that we seek to preach in our church, we are seeking to press on to perfection.

You know, if a bunch of, say, 20-year-old young men, say, well, we're all imperfect, none of us have got a PhD. I say, yeah, okay, none of you got a PhD. But some of you 20-year-old people have finished high school, and you're studying in college.

And some of you 20-year-olds are still sitting in the kindergarten. 20 years old, sitting in the kindergarten. What are you saying? Oh, that brother is in college, but he hasn't got a PhD.

I'm in kindergarten, I haven't got a PhD. So we are the same. You're not the same.

Some have started in the kindergarten and pressed on in 20 years to reach college. Others are sitting in kindergarten for 20 years. That's the difference between saying, we're all imperfect.

I would never want to be in a church that's not pressing on to perfection. Because that is like what Jesus said in Luke 14. I want you to see this verse.

Turn with me to Luke's Gospel, Chapter 14. He says, which one of you, verse 28, when you want to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough, or we can also say, he may have enough, but whether he wants to spend that much money to build today, instead of a tower, we would say a skyscraper. Here's a man who wants to build a skyscraper.

And I want to tell you something. Following Jesus is like building a skyscraper. We keep on building floor after floor.

Every sin you conquer is one more floor in your life. It's like in the land of Canaan, every giant you conquered, you occupied his territory. So you're building a skyscraper.

But if you want to build a skyscraper, if you want to build a little hut, you don't count the cost. All of us may have money for it, but you want to build a big building. Many of you have built houses in Kerala.

Before you built, didn't you calculate how much it's going to cost? And whether you have the money? And even if you have the money, whether you want to spend it? That is another question. So if they don't calculate, what can happen is, after laying a foundation, it says here in verse 29, he lays a foundation and is not able to finish. Why is he not able to finish? Because he says, I don't want to spend so much money.

I don't want to spend so much money. I say, okay, a foundation is enough. And people laugh at him and say, this man began to build, verse 30, he's not able to finish.

This is the condition of, I would say, 95% of born-again believers that I've seen, and I've got 55 years of experience in many, many countries. I've seen believers, 95% are born-again, but they have not gone beyond a foundation. What is a foundation? Hebrews 6, verse 1, 2, and 3 says, repentance, faith in the Lord Jesus, water baptism, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and after that, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

Turn with me to Hebrews 6 and see that for yourself. What did Jesus mean by laying a foundation and then not doing anything beyond that? It's very important that you see Scripture and compare Scripture with Scripture. Don't just believe any preacher who cannot show you from Scripture.

What did Jesus mean when he said somebody makes a foundation and does not go beyond that? Hebrews 6, verse 1, therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about Christ, let us press on to maturity, press on to perfection. That is how in King James Version it says, let us press on to perfection, complete the skyscraper, not just laying a foundation. And what is the foundation? Listen, read this carefully.

Repentance, that means you've given up what you know to be sin. Faith, and repentance from dead works means you don't think that you can be saved by doing a lot of good works. All your good works are dead works.

You've repented from trying to save yourself by burning candles or going on a pilgrimage or going to church. You've given up all that or sprinkling child baptism. Those are all dead works.

You've given up all that. You've turned away from all those dead works and you believe faith in Jesus Christ. That's how people are born again.

And baptisms. In King James Version it says baptisms. Baptisms means baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

You know baptism in the Holy Spirit, by the way, is foundation. In the early church everybody received it right at the beginning. Today some people teach as if it's some postgraduate degree.

It is not a postgraduate degree, it is kindergarten lesson. Baptism in the Holy Spirit, receive the Holy Spirit. Everyone can receive the Holy Spirit if you want, unless you close up something in your heart.

And laying on of hands, that is for spiritual gifts or for healing. But after that, what do you do? What about spiritual growth? No spiritual growth. After that you just wait for resurrection and eternal judgment.

That's foundation. That means after you've been born again and been baptized, baptized in the Holy Spirit, there's nothing more to do except wait for resurrection and eternal judgment. But he says it shouldn't be

like that.

Once you have accepted these things, we must press on to perfection. It's like climbing a mountain. Jesus has reached the top and we seek to follow.

So in Luke 14, Jesus spoke about these certain people who only lay a foundation because they didn't want to pay a price. So the reason why CFC was started many 40 years ago was because most churches were occupied with only a foundation. We're not saying they're not born again.

They were born again. There are many, many churches in Dubai and in many parts of the world that preach a genuine being born again. And they are believers.

The only thing is they're not pressing on to perfection. Ten years later, they are defeated by the same sins they were defeated ten years ago. That means they're not pressing on to perfection.

It's like you're climbing a mountain. Ten years later, you're on the same level. You haven't progressed.

Or ten years later, you've still got the foundation, polishing the foundation. You haven't progressed. That is the reason why we decided to move away from churches that did not preach completing the building.

I mean, you would not want to give, if you're building a house in Kerala or anywhere in India, you would not give it to a contractor who just lays the foundation and sits on that for ten years. What sort of contractor is that? You'd say, hey, I want to change the contractor. Why do you want to change the contractor? He's a good man.

People ask, why do you want to change the church? Same reason. Same reason that you'll change your contractor. That's the reason I changed the church.

And that's the reason a lot of people change the church. But some people do not change their church for that reason. They come together just because there's a good message there and they're intellectually stimulated.

That's not a good reason to join any church. And sometimes God uses an intellectually minded godly man and keeps him in the church with another equally godly person but who's not intellectual to test people. See, for example, the Apostle Paul was a very godly man, but he was a very sharp intellectual man also.

Peter was an equally godly man, but he was not intellectual. He was a fisherman, not so educated. He says in his letter, in 2 Peter 3, he says, Paul writes so many things that are very difficult to understand.

He's very honest. He says, my mind is not like his. Peter's letters are very simple.

Paul's are very strong intellectual stuff. And why does God keep Paul and Peter in the church? Two equally spiritual, but one intellectual, one non-intellectual, because he's testing people. People don't know that.

The people who listen to these two brothers, Paul and Peter, they don't realize that God is testing them. That if somebody only wants to listen to Paul, you know he's not a spiritual man. He's not a spiritual man because he's not attracted to godliness.

Because he's attracted to godliness, he listens to Peter also. He's attracted to intellectuality more than godliness. But he doesn't realize it.

But God uses that to test him. See, is this guy interested in explanations, and nice presentation of a message, or is he really godly, hungering to overcome sin? I have been tremendously blessed through the years. As I have sat, you know, most of our churches are in the villages of Tamil Nadu.

And Tamil Nadu villages' elders are not at all educated. Most of them haven't finished even school. Whereas people in Kerala, even in the poorer places, they have a certain amount of education.

But I've been so blessed as I've mingled with these brothers from Tamil Nadu who are poor, uneducated, and I've learned things from them. Because I'm not drawn to people on the basis of intellectual ability. It's God who made people different.

Something very important for us to understand in the New Covenant is that, this is not theory, but I've found through the years it's very, very practical. Let me show you first of all this verse in 1 Thessalonians 5. 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 23. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 23.

It is speaking about holiness. Sanctify means make you holy. And he's saying here, may the God of peace himself make you holy completely.

Entirely means your whole personality. And the whole personality is described here as three parts. Spirit, soul, and body.

Like God is a trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When God made Adam in his image, he made Adam also a trinity. Spirit, soul, and body.

Three parts, not two parts. There are some Christians who believe there are no three persons in the trinity. Some believe there are only two.

But there are three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Man also is a trinity of spirit, soul, and body. And this is why when the Old Testament, you know, everything in the Old Testament is a picture of spiritual realities.

Like the Passover lamb is a picture of Christ dying on the cross. They're going into the Red Sea and coming out from Egypt is a picture of water baptism. The cloud coming down from above is a picture of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Everything in the Old Testament is a picture. And when they came out into the desert, the Lord told them, build a tabernacle. That was another picture.

Tabernacle says, I want to dwell among you. And the tabernacle was a picture of man becoming the dwelling place of God. In the Gospel of John, when it says about Jesus, the word became flesh.

John 1.14 is referring to Jesus. The word became flesh. And you know what my NASB Bible margin says? The word became flesh and tabernacled among us.

That is the real meaning there. Here in this Bible, in my margin, it says, when it says dwelt, it means tabernacled among us. So the tabernacle, that's the word the Holy Spirit uses here.

The word became flesh and like a tabernacle of God dwelt in our midst. So the Old Testament tabernacle is a picture of man. Spirit, soul and body.

And just like our body is the only part of us that can be seen, you cannot see my soul and spirit. There are two parts inside me called soul and spirit. But you can only see the outward.

In the Old Testament tabernacle also, if you went there, you could only see the outside court. That was open. And there were two parts that were hidden under a tent called holy place, most holy place, symbolizing soul and spirit.

It's a very beautiful picture. So once you understand that, then you see that in the Old Testament, God put a thick curtain called a veil between the soul and the spirit, between the holy place, the most holy place, and said you can't enter there. And God dwells there.

God wanted to dwell in man's spirit. But there was a thick curtain, something hindering God from dwelling in man's spirit. That was the message.

When Jesus died on the cross, that veil was rent from top to bottom. Not bottom to top. Top to bottom means God did it.

Saying now the way into the spirit of man is open. God can dwell in man's spirit. Till then, religion was only body and soul.

All the priests could go to the outer court and the holy place. They could not enter the most holy place. That is one of the big differences between Old Covenant and New Covenant.

We say in CFC we are a New Covenant church. If so, we must understand what is the difference between soul and spirit. And many Christians live in the soul.

That's why they never become spiritual. These three parts of man can also symbolize three types of Christians. There are some Christians who are only interested in the body, external things being okay.

They don't seek to purify their soul and spirit. There are other Christians who live in the soul but not in the spirit. There are also Old Covenant Christians sitting in the 21st century.

These are things we need to understand. Hebrews chapter 4, let me show you. Have you ever understood this verse? The word of God, Hebrews 4.12, The word of God is living and powerful, active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to divide soul and spirit.

What does that mean? Soul and spirit are not the same. The word of God comes and brings a division between soul and spirit. And it's only one who understands that who can become a spiritual person.

So there are carnal Christians who live enjoying things. They say they are born again. But the body means a lot to them.

They are carnal. You know, for example, they don't have any control over their eating. They are careless with their eyes and their tongue.

They gossip. They backbite. Sins of the body.

Flustering the eyes. But they are born again. And they will come and sit in a church.

They could sit in a CFC church. But they are ruled by their body. And it's possible that some folks are sitting here.

You are ruled by your body even though you are born again. Your bodily desires control you. And, of course, you confess your sin and ask God to forgive you.

But you never seem to be able to overcome your bodily desires. They keep bringing you down, bringing you down. You are like a Christian living in the outer court.

You are not spiritual at all. You are born again. You come into the tabernacle.

But you are stuck there in the altar. Forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sins.

You are not pressing on to perfection. You are just laying a foundation and stopping there. And then there are some brothers and sisters who decide these bodily passions are not going to rule me.

They fast. Have you ever fasted? I am not going to ask you to raise your hands. But you ask yourself.

Have you ever fasted even for one day in your life? Not when your child is sick and dying. I don't mean that. Fasting to seek God.

To control your bodily passions. When I was a young Christian, I was working in the Navy. You know, young people, bodily passions are very strong.

And I said, I don't want to be ruled by my body. And while I was working on the ship, I would fast. Every week.

At least one day, fasting. And I carried that on for many, many years. Because I said, I don't want my body to run my life.

Some of you who have a problem with controlling your tongue. Or controlling your eyes. Try fasting.

Prove to God, I don't want my body to rule my life. So that's one type of Christian who lives in the outer court. Then there is a second type who is better than that.

Who goes into the holy place. The second, the soul. He has overcome his bodily passions.

But he is intellectual. He is a soulish person. He is always interested in intellectual explanations of the Bible.

You know, the follower of the apostle Paul. The intellectual answer to this question, that question. And careful study of scripture.

He thinks he is spiritual. Because he is studying the scripture. But he is studying the scripture like he is studying chemistry.

Supposing a man wants to get a PhD in chemistry. He will analyze chemistry books, chemistry books and become a specialist. You can study the Bible like that.

And you can fool yourself thinking you are spiritual. You are not. You are soulish.

You are not carnal. You are not committing all those terrible sins that other people in your church do. And you can think you are spiritual because you are better than them.

But because you don't know what spirituality is, you are soulish and you think you are spiritual. It is a very, very common mistake. They have not allowed the word of God to bring a division between soul and spirit.

They have not understood what it is to go through the rent veil into the most holy place. Let me show you one verse which teaches that. John chapter 4. In John chapter 4, when Jesus was speaking to the woman of Samaria, there was a discussion about worship.

Today, all Pentecostal, charismatic churches talk about praise and worship. Maybe some of you use that expression too. Praise and worship means the time of singing before the message.

Even the brethren assembly, we say we are having a worship meeting where we come around the Lord's table. Even the Anglican church, they call their Sunday services worship services. So all the way from Anglican to Brethren to Pentecostal, they all use this word worship.

I will tell you, I have been in all those churches. None of them understand what worship is. None of them means none of them.

I will tell you why. Please read scripture. If you know the scriptures, you will not be deceived by all these things.

Jesus told the woman of Samaria, in verse 21, she was asking, should you worship in Jerusalem or in that place? Jesus said, it's not a question of place. It's not a question of this mountain or Jerusalem that you worship the Father. It's not location.

It's not this church or that church. Today we would say this. The Samaritans say it should be here.

Israelites say it should be there. Some people say it should be this church, some people say that church. Jesus said, it's not this church or that church.

It is a matter of the spirit. You worship what you don't know. The hour is coming, verse 23.

If you really want to understand worship, I want to encourage you to study verse 23 and 24 and ask God to give you revelation on John 4, 23 and 24. The hour is coming. That means it has not yet come.

And now is. How is that? The hour is coming, but it is already here. That means in one sense, it has not fully come.

But it's going to fully come, but part of it has already come. Understand it like this. When the true worshippers, now we're talking about true worshippers, will worship the Father, not in the soul, not in the body, but in spirit and in truth.

For such people, the Father is seeking to be his worshippers. I tell you, I got revelation on that. The Father is not seeking for people who worship with their body and their soul alone, but to worship in the spirit.

And God is a spirit. He's not body or soul. God is a spirit.

And those who worship him must worship not in body and soul, but in spirit. You ask 99% of believers what that verse means. They'll never be able to tell you.

I don't know if any of you know it. You've read it many times. But I don't know whether you understand it.

I never heard a single message preached on that by anybody in my whole life. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. When I read that verse, I said, Lord, I'll tell you what I said.

Listen to me. Father, verse 23, you are seeking for true worshippers who worship in the spirit. You're looking all over the earth for true worshippers who worship in the spirit.

Show me what it means. Because I want to be one of those. I want to be one of those who satisfies your heart to be a true worshipper.

And then I began to understand the difference between worshipping in the body, worshipping in the soul, and worshipping in the spirit. Supposing you hear that your father wants something badly. Would you have a longing to please your father or not? I have a great longing to please my heavenly father because he sent his only son to die for me.

I said, Lord, if there's anything that I can do to make you happy, I want to do it. And I discovered here one of the things is the father is seeking for those who will worship him in spirit. And I did not know what that meant.

So I said, Lord, show me. Show me what I don't know. You've got to be humble when you come to the Bible and acknowledge that you don't know.

If you come to the Bible like some expert thinking you know everything, you'll understand nothing. Come like a little child. God has hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent.

He's revealed them to babes. So I discovered that all Old Testament worship was body and soul. There's nothing wrong in that.

In the Old Testament, the veil was there. You couldn't go into the spirit naturally. There was only body and soul.

But now that the veil is rent, and you can enter into that place which represents the spirit, man can worship in the spirit. That's why in the Psalms, you read the Psalms. Those are the songs of worship in the Old Testament.

Everything is body and soul. Clap your hands. Raise your hands.

Shout. Shouting is body. I do it.

I raise my hands. I clap my hands. I shout.

But I don't stop there. Soul is that which stimulates my intellect and emotions. Musical instruments and banging and drums and instruments.

I believe in that also. And emotion. Sometimes I weep when I praise God.

That is good. But it's all emotion. But I want to go beyond that.

I want body plus soul plus spirit. And I have discovered there are very, very few Christians I've seen in my life who have gone beyond body and soul. Our soul is our intellect and our emotions.

And when we worship, we are moved in our intellect and moved in our emotions. You are better than those who are just clapping their hands and raising their hands. But you still haven't become a worshiper in the spirit.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. The Father seeks for those who will worship in spirit. Because there is only one way to worship in the spirit.

You have to go through the veil. And that is a mystery to many people. What is that veil? Turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 10.

I want to show you everything from Scripture so that your faith does not rest on somebody's cleverness. Not even Zach Coonan's cleverness. Your faith must rest on Scripture.

Hebrews 10, 20. 19 and 20. Brethren, we have confidence to enter.

And this is referring to the most holy place. We have confidence to enter that most holy place by the blood of Jesus Christ and by a new and living way which he inaugurated through the veil. That means Jesus rent the veil and opened the way.

Inaugurated means for us, you know, when a new road is inaugurated by some minister or sheikh or someone. That doesn't mean only he uses it. It's inaugurated for the whole population.

That's the meaning of inauguration. A building is inaugurated for people to use. Not just the man who inaugurated it.

So when it says Jesus inaugurated a new and living way, he opened it. He cut the ribbon and opened it. Like people cut the ribbon and open a road or open a building.

But it is for people to use. He's inaugurated the way for us. A new and living way inaugurated for us through the veil.

And it explains here what the veil is. That is his flesh. This is a great mystery.

A mystery, you know the Bible, if you retake a concordance and read the word mystery or mysteries in the New Testament, it comes a number of times. One mystery is called the mystery of godliness. A mystery is a secret of God that God has to reveal to your spirit to understand it.

You can't understand it by study. What you can understand by study is not a mystery. Chemistry is not a mystery.

If you have a clever mind, you can understand it. Physics and science and mathematics are not mysteries. If you've got a clever mind, you can understand it.

But some things in the Bible are a mystery. That means you don't understand it unless God reveals it to you. Peter was not a clever person.

He may not have got a PhD in science or mathematics. But he could understand the mystery. Because Jesus said, to you it is given to know the mysteries of God's kingdom.

Because God reveals. To whom does God reveal his secrets? You know that you don't tell your secrets to everybody. Certain secrets you may tell your wife or your husband, but you won't tell everybody.

Some secrets you don't even tell your children. You reveal secrets to those who are closest to you. You know to whom God reveals his secrets? Psalm 25.

Psalm 25, it says, verse 14. Psalm 25, verse 14. The secret of the Lord is for those who fear him.

Fear means reverence him. Who have a tremendous reverence for God. The fear of the Lord is to hate sin.

There is a verse like that in the book of Proverbs. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Are you one of those who hate sin in your life? That's one proof of the fear of God.

God reveals his mysteries to those who hate sin in their private life. See, I can appear to be very holy coming here to CFC. In fact, some people say, I don't want to be a part of a dead church.

I want to be a part of CFC. And they get a reputation and a name. I am a part of CFC.

I am not a part of some dead church. That doesn't mean you fear God. That depends on your private life.

If you don't hate sin in your private life, you don't fear God. Even if you sit here forever. I have sometimes said to CFC in Bangalore.

I said, some of you will go to hell. In CFC Bangalore, I have told people, some of you will go to hell. Because you don't fear God.

You come here because this is a good church. You like to hear the messages. People are very kind and helpful and nice and all that.

But you will go to hell finally. And your blood will not be on my hands. Because I told you straight.

I have told some people in CFC, you are not born again. I want to tell you that. It is quite likely, some of you sitting here are not really born again.

Quite likely. Please think of it seriously. If you hate sin, then you know you are.

But if you don't hate sin in your private life. And you alone know that. If you can sit in front of a computer and watch filthy pictures.

Don't tell me you hate sin. Don't fool yourself that you are born again. I seriously question it.

Turn from sin. Fear God. God will then reveal the mysteries to your spirit.

Which cannot be understood by your soul. He will reveal it to your heart. And that will change your life.

That will be revelation. What we have in the mind is called understanding. You understand with your soul.

But you get revelation in your spirit or in the heart. And we must seek for revelation. So one of the mysteries is 1 Timothy chapter 3. And verse 16.

It is called the mystery of godliness. You know we just read in Hebrews 10. The veil symbolizes the flesh of Jesus.

Which was rent. And the mystery of godliness is that Jesus was revealed in the flesh. But he was pure in his spirit.

That is a mystery. How can someone who has a flesh keep his spirit pure? You and I have a flesh. How can you keep your spirit pure? That is a tremendous mystery.

Jesus came in the flesh. And kept his spirit absolutely righteous. And pure.

He was declared righteous in the spirit. And even the angels saw that it says here. But that is a mystery.

And when you understand it. That is the mystery of godliness. Or the living bible says.

Out of phrase. It is true. That the way to live a godly life is a secret.

But the answer lies in Christ. Who came to earth like us. And lived a holy life.

The answer is there. That is why my life was changed. When I understood this.

And I began to study the earthly life of Jesus. As my example. So what does it mean that Jesus came in the flesh? In very simple terms.

He did not have a sinful nature. The bible says very clearly. We have sinful flesh.

He did not have sinful flesh. He came in the flesh. But not sinful flesh.

There was no sin in him. Not at all. Not even from birth.

The angels said to Mary. This holy thing is going to be called the son of god. So when we say Jesus had a flesh.

What it means is. He had something called my will. And when it says Jesus had to crucify the flesh.

He had to crucify my will. So that he could do the father's will. That is the meaning of crucifying the flesh.

If you never understood it till now. At least you understand it now. But if you understand it.

It does not mean you will do it. It is only here. I will show you where it says that Jesus crucified his flesh.

John chapter 6. And verse 38. John chapter 6 and verse 38. This is Jesus himself saying.

Now we would say Jesus came down from heaven. To die for the sins of the world. That is not what he says.

Listen carefully. Why did Jesus come down from heaven? You ask the average Christian. Why did Jesus come down from heaven? 99% of people say he came from heaven.

To die for the sins of the world. No. That is one part of it.

He says I came from heaven. To do my father's will. And to deny my own will.

In other words to crucify my flesh. And to please the father. That is why he came down.

And in the list of those things that he did. One of the items is. Dying for the sins of the world.

That is not the only thing. It is one among hundred things. Dying for the sins of the world.

But what is the total list. Denying my own will. And doing the father's will.

Every day for 33 and a half years. For example when he was a little boy. And his.

Joseph and Mary. Tell him to do something. And you know a little 10 year old boy.

You know you have 10 year old children. Or 5 year old children. They want to do something on their own.

And you tell them no son do this. And it is a struggle. For them.

They say no. We have all faced children who say no. Or I will do it later.

Never once did Jesus say that. He wanted to do. What all 5 year old and 10 year old children wanted to do.

But. He killed that. Thing called my will.

And he said ok mummy. Mary do what you say. You think that is easy.

Try it with your children. It is not at all easy. There is something Jesus killed.

Something called my will. Which your 2 year old has. Your 5 year old has.

They will not kill it. Jesus killed it. And when he killed it.

The veil was being went. As he grew up. When he was a teenager.

He was tempted with sexual desire. Just like you and me. Hebrews 4.15 says.

He was tempted in every point. He never sinned. He would turn his eyes away.

He would not look at anything impure. So. My will is always to look at something.

That I can enjoy. Jesus said no. He doesn't please the father.

I won't do it. And the veil was went some more. When he became a carpenter.

And earning money. You know what a lot of temptations. There are in earning money.

To you know. Supposing the wood is cracked a little. Put some paste.

And make it look. Like good wood. Jesus never did it.

He would tell. The customer. This is cracked.

I will cover it up with some paste. So it doesn't look bad. But you don't have to pay me the full price.

Give me a lower price. Because it is not top quality. Where do you find.

Business people like that. Jesus did business like that. Never cheated anybody.

He wouldn't sell a table. Which is little shaky. No.

And if it is a poor widow. Who wanted it. Sometimes you just make it free.

And give it to her. His aim was not to become. The richest carpenter in Nazareth.

Like so many so called. Christian business men. They will never give a free gift.

To a widow. Jesus was different. We have a lust.

To get as much for ourselves. If he had a lust to get everything for himself. He will not give a free gift to a widow.

Because he is losing some money. But he denied that thing called my will. My will is to possess.

Gain as much as I can for myself. He said no. Let me help her.

She is a poor lady. She has lost her husband. That is how Jesus lived.

Always denying his own will. And he grew up. And he became a preacher.

And he knows as a preacher. He can collect money. He would never ask anybody for money.

Never. Never send a report about his work. Anywhere.

And when people gave money. Tell Judas Iscariot keep it. What did Jesus do with the money.

Judas Iscariot had a bank. I hope you know. People were not giving money to Judas Iscariot.

They were giving it to Jesus. He was only the treasurer. But there is a verse I read in the Bible.

Which taught me how to use money. It is a very important verse. Do you know that story? Where Jesus said.

The sower went out to sow the seed. Some seed the devil came and took away. First itself.

The birds took it out. That means before the meeting is over. They have forgotten what they heard.

The second group is. No depth of earth. That means they are not serious about it.

Just superficially they obey it. But the third group is very interesting. I think some of us are in there.

It says it grew up well. But the thorns came up and choked it. Mark chapter 4. You read it.

The thorns are. The worries of this world. That is what Jesus said.

The worries of this world. Which come up. And choke.

The. This is Mark 4.19. Mark 4.19. The worries of the world. Is one of the things.

Mark 4.19. Which come and choke the world. And the second is. Mark 4.19. The deceitfulness of riches.

That means. Riches are deceitful. Many of you are earning money.

All of us. How many of you know that money is deceitful? It is deceitful. In many ways.

It makes you think. That you are a very blessed man. When you are not.

It makes you think you are a very lucky man. Because you got so much. But you are not.

It makes you think God is blessing you. Not at all. Because if God is blessing you.

God has blessed the sheikh. God has blessed you. You know that.

So don't be deceived. That riches. Are an indication of God's blessing.

It is deceitful. But this deceitfulness of riches. Comes and.

Crushes. The word. That it becomes unfruitful.

Why is it most Christians. Sitting in churches. Are unfruitful.

I will tell you. Here is the answer. The worries of this world.

And the deceitfulness of riches. And the desire. For other things.

That is the third thing. Desire for this. I want to buy this.

And I want to buy that. I have already got about 100 sarees. But I need one more.

And I got. It is endless. Desire to get this.

That this car is not good enough. I have to get a better one. It is working okay.

But it is not up to date. It is this desire. To be like the others.

You will never be a spiritual man. Because all these things. I tell you.

Some of you sitting here. Ask yourself. The thorns are choking out.

Some of the wonderful words. That some of you have heard. In CFC for many many years.

Choked. By the thorns. So.

I said Lord. I want to learn from you. How did you spend money? Because for three and a half years.

Jesus was not earning money. And he did not make tents like Paul. Some people gave him gifts.

We read in Luke 8. Verse 3 that even Herod's palace manager. Gave some gifts to Jesus. In Luke chapter 8. In verse 3. So that is how Jesus received gifts.

But he never asked anybody. He never asked anybody for one cent. But I see a verse.

That tells me. How he spent it. Luke 8 verse 3. Tells us how he got it.

Different people. People voluntarily. Supported him.

And he received. There is nothing wrong in that. If people voluntarily cheerfully give you a gift.

There is nothing wrong in receiving it. If you don't ask for it. And you don't become their slave.

But how did he spend it? That is the important question. You earn your money from the company you work for. Okay good.

How do you spend it? John 13. Verse 29. This is the only verse in the Bible.

That tells me how Jesus spent his money. And you got to look carefully. To understand it.

Judas Iscariot. Was going to betray Jesus. And Jesus said to him.

Verse 27. Whatever you are doing. Do quickly.

But the people. The other people at the table. The disciples did not understand.

What did Jesus mean? When he said whatever you want to do. Do quickly. They thought.

They supposed. Verse 29. Because Judas had the money box.

That Jesus was telling him. Let me paraphrase it. What he usually told him.

During the previous three and a half years. There I learned. What Jesus usually told.

Judas Iscariot to do. For three and a half years. What are the two things? Let me summarize it.

Buy what you need. Number one. Give to the poor.

Number two. That's all. You got it? I learned something from that.

When I earned money. I earned a lot of money. When I was in the Navy.

Buy what you need. Number three. Give to the poor.

That's all. That is how Jesus spent. All his money.

Now then you say. How shall I decide what I need? That is up to you. Between you and God.

And don't judge the other person. He may need more than you. He may need two cars.

Because maybe more than one person. In his family is working. He needs to go to work.

You need only one. Don't judge him. He needs two.

There are some people in America. Who need four cars in one family. Because two of their sons are working.

I don't judge. Anybody. At home I don't need any car.

So there is a lot of people. In CFC Bangalore. Who only need a scooter.

They don't need a car. But if they judge someone. Who has a car.

Then they are sinning. So when he says buy what you need. You decide what you need.

And don't decide what somebody else needs. Because then you will be a busy body. In other people's matters.

You decide what size of house. You must rent. According to your income.

Don't judge another man. Who rents a bigger house. He earns more than you.

God has given him more. He is not taking your money. I tell you.

If you obey these principles. You are saved from such a lot of useless thoughts. That go through your mind.

Why did he buy this for his house? Why did he buy that? What is that in your business brother? Did he take your money? Why are you bothered by why he bought it? He may have bought ten houses. It is not your money. He is not stealing.

He is not stealing. It is not in your business. You buy what you need.

And let him buy what he thinks he needs. He just saved me from so much of judgment. I never judge a person.

I can go into a brother's house. Which is like a palace. I say praise the lord.

God has blessed him with a nice house. And he can enjoy that. Maybe he needs it.

I don't know what all he is using it for. Maybe he is using it for the glory of god. So each person must decide with the money you earn.

Deceitfulness of riches. We are trying to overcome that. Buy what you need.

Don't buy things to show off to others what I have. That's what some people do. Buy what you need does not mean you have to buy the cheapest thing available in the market.

Because the cheapest thing may pack up very quickly and you will have to buy another one. So sometimes it is better to buy something more expensive that will last longer. That is sensible.

So don't think to buy what you need means I go for the cheapest stuff and I keep on spending money because that packs up and I buy another one, another one, another one. Buy something that lasts. But buy what you need.

And never, never have something in your house just to show other people. Don't get something just to show other people. Just because somebody else has it, I must have it.

Do you need it? Get it. And secondly, give to the poor. That means give to those who are not as fortunate as you are.

Always think of that. Think and in the New Testament it says especially believers. Galatians 6.10 It's a great verse.

Galatians 6.10 Let us do good as we have opportunity. As we have opportunity means according to how much God has given you, let us do good to all men and all human beings. Now there are 7 billion people in the world.

You can't do good to all of them. So therefore what do you do? Especially to the household of faith. So I say Lord, there are many poor people in the world.

I can't help all of them. But I see there are believers who are poor and in need. Let me think about them.

That's how Jesus spent his money. But he was very wise in how he gave. He did not foolishly give.

There's a lot of foolish giving money to the poor nowadays I find. It first of all spoils those poor people and hinders the work of God. That is why we have followed in CFC the apostolic pattern of giving to the poor.

The apostolic pattern of giving to the poor is described in Acts chapter 4 and verse 34 and 35. Acts 4 verse 34 and 35. There was not a single needy person among them because those who were owners of lands and houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and they did not give it to the poor.

They laid it at the apostles' feet and the apostles would distribute it as any had need. Why was that? Otherwise you know the old saying the baby that cries the most will get the milk. So if they did it themselves then some poor person who is very clever and who cries the most will get lots and lots of money and some other more upright poor person will get hardly anything because he's not crying so much.

So they decided we don't want to do that. We'll give it to the elders and the elders will see so that there's an equal distribution according to the needs. That's wisdom.

I find very few people have that wisdom. In CFC I've always told people in Bangalore never give money directly to a poor person. Put it in an envelope and say for the poor and put it in the offering box and the elders will give according to where there's a need.

What I'm trying to say is these are the ways by which we don't allow money to control us. When I was talking about body, soul and spirit, I was talking about worship in the spirit. Worship in the body is with our hands and our mouth.

Worship in the soul is with our emotions and our mind. Worship in the spirit means I have to crucify my flesh. I have to put my flesh to death.

I have to say no to my own will. That's what I was telling about Jesus. Whenever his will said I'd like to buy that.

Jesus said no. Do I need it? I don't need it. But that brother has bought it.

Let him buy it. I don't judge him. He was denying his own will.

Can you tell me some time where you denied your own will, where you had the money to buy something and you didn't buy it because you felt God stopped you. And if you did it you'd get a blessing. I'll tell you one instance from my own life.

When I was a young naval officer and I was earning a lot of money. I'd just been converted. 1961.

I was just baptized in January 61. And I was walking down Bombay and I saw a music store where there was an accordion. And you know import of musical instruments was getting stopped in India in those days.

1961. And I think that was one of the last accordions that was available. I did not know whether God wanted me to buy it or not.

I did not know the price. So I said, Lord I don't want to do anything which is not your will. I like to learn some musical instrument.

I like to play it. So I made a sign. You know when you're young the only way to find God's will is by a sign.

You don't know how to listen to the Holy Spirit and all that comes later. I was newly converted. I said, Lord here's a sign.

If this accordion costs less than so much money, I'll buy it. That's a sign. If it costs more than that, that means you don't want me to buy it.

So I went into the store and I asked them, how much does this... I knew I had to buy it quickly because if I wait till next week somebody else will buy it, it will be gone. And I asked, how much does it cost? And it was just little above the cut-off limit that I had put. But I had that much.

Even though it was above, I still had that much savings with me. And it was a temptation. I had that much.

I want that accordion badly. If I come next week, I won't get it. But I said, Lord, I'll honor you.

I told you that if it's more than this, I won't take it. And you knew what I said. I will honor you.

I will not buy it. I wanted to buy it very badly. I had the money, but I honored God and I said, I won't buy it.

Next week it was gone. So what is the result? In those days, I was not studying the scripture much. I used to read the Bible, like others, every morning, little bit.

But I won't go into the details. I was witnessing to a Muslim once who challenged me about something in scripture which I didn't know. So I got so ashamed of myself.

I said, Lord, I'm really ashamed. I don't know the answer to this question. He asked me from scripture.

I'm going to start studying the scripture. The one who challenged me first to study the scriptures was a Muslim person who was a fellow officer whom I was witnessing to, who asked me something from the Bible. I didn't know the answer.

I said, Lord, that will not happen again. I'm going to study the scriptures. From that day onwards, I really began to study the scriptures day and night and day and night.

If I had an accordion in my room, temptation would have been too strong to pick it up every now and then and become an expert accordion player. And if I had done that, I'm absolutely sure I would not be standing here today. Because I wouldn't have studied the scriptures, and God would not have called me to serve him.

It's a very crucial decision I made on which my whole future hinged on a simple decision. I'll tell you, as a young 22 year old man, if you have an accordion in the room, it's very difficult not to keep playing it. God saved me from it.

Buy what you need. Listen to the word of God. Listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

If you seek to live your life like this, denying your own will and doing the will of God, in 15-20 years, you will be such a godly man or woman, that rivers of living water will flow from you to every part of the world and bless them. You say, how can that happen? Well, if you had asked me in 1961 if that would happen with me, I'd say impossible. It's amazing what God can do to an ordinary person if you decide, I will not do my own will.

I will. So Jesus did not do his own will. Finally, when he cried out on the cross, it is finished.

It's not just our sins that were finished. The entire range of temptation that any human being can experience is also finished. He had been tempted in all points, and in all points he has said no to his own will, yes to the Father's will, no, yes to the Father's will, no to my own will, yes to the Father's will.

By the time he died on the cross, the whole veil was rent. My will had been crucified completely. That's what he meant when he said it is finished.

Also our sins are finished for many things. The devil's kingdom was finished. That one sentence, it is finished, means much more than my sins are finished.

And the veil was rent. Now I can enter into the most holy place. I can live in the spirit.

The one who denies himself every day will learn to worship the Father in spirit, and it is not with words, and it's not with emotions. It's with the ascending of your spirit to God in private, when you're alone. Most of the time I worship God in spirit when I wake up in the morning, lying in my bed.

Those are some of the most precious times in my life, more precious than preaching. In fact, I cannot preach if I don't worship. Jesus said in Matthew 4.10, You thou shalt worship the Lord and then serve him.

Worship comes first. Worship in the spirit. Now I was just trying to say how Christians who live in the soul, in the intellect, try to understand everything and appreciate all the intellectual messages Brother Zach preaches.

They never understand what it means to be a spiritual man, and they'll discover one day when they come before God, when Jesus comes again, that they were just soulish intellectual Christians, not spiritual. So I'm trying to tell you something that will make this church a spiritual church. We want to build a spiritual church, not an intellectual church.

We want to build a spiritual church and not a soulish church. And so soulish people will get offended with non-intellectual people in the pulpit. They'll appreciate me because they consider Brother Zach a little intellectual and also spiritual.

But supposing somebody like Peter gets up here, who can't present truth in such a clear intellectual way, but he's a godly man. He's denying himself in private and maybe he's a bit crude in the way he shares the word, but he's sincere. He's absolutely sincere.

And maybe he can't speak for one hour like me. He speaks 10-15 minutes, but he's a godly man. And you'll say, ah, not worth listening to.

The problem is not with him. The problem is with you. You are a soulish intellectual Christian.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Amen. Let's bow our heads.

Our Father, please help us to understand the things which you have hidden from the clever and the intelligent and which you reveal to babes. Pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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