

Guidelines for Young People to Grow Spiritually

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of forgiveness, love for Jesus, and understanding the seriousness of sin in God's eyes. It encourages young people to build close fellowship, forgive others, and meditate on God's love and plan for their lives. The speaker shares personal experiences and insights to inspire a deeper commitment to following Christ wholeheartedly.

Scripture: Matthew 6:14, Luke 7:47, Psalms 139:16, Psalms 139:17, John 6:37

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Commitment to Christ"

Description

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Transcript

Praise the Lord, all you young people. Very happy to be able to see you. I didn't realize that 40 people could be sitting together like this in a small room.

Wonderful. I hope as you grow up, you will learn the value of close fellowship. Not just sitting together, but really bonding together with other people who love the Lord.

Because one of the things you must learn, which we preach in RLCF and other CFC churches, is that in the Old Testament, God dealt with individuals. You read about Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and you hear very little about the others. You just say there were 600,000 Israelites or something like that.

But it's very different in the New Covenant. Jesus came not to gather a congregation, but to build a body. The New Testament uses the example of the human body and says that we are to be like the members of our body connected to the head, where Christ is the head.

If you are just a Christian by yourself and you've accepted the Lord, it's a very selfish type of life. I want to go to heaven, so I ask Jesus to forgive me and come into my heart, and that's all. But the Lord wants much more than that.

God's highest purpose is to build an expression of the body of Jesus Christ in many, many places on the earth. So you come from many different places. From a very young age, you should have this burden to build yourself with others, to become a local body wherever you are.

So if you have a burden, it may take a long time for it to be fulfilled. I had a burden in my heart. See, I was converted when I was 19, and I had a burden even when I was about 24, 25 years old to see a local body of believers built together.

Now, I did not know anything about it, but I saw it in scripture, and that's why I had that burden. But it took 10 years before the first CFC church was born in my home. We can say those 10 years was like carrying a baby in my heart, just like a mother carries a baby in her womb for nine months, and then the baby is born.

In the same way, I carried a little baby in my heart, the desire to see a local expression of the body of Christ where I was. When you carry a burden like that, and as in when you remember, you pray, Lord, I want to be a part of that body in my local place. Well, I didn't have much abilities and all to start a church or anything when I was 25, but I had a burden.

Then it's only, I was about 35 before we started the first CFC church. But what I'm trying to say is, you don't think things happen overnight. You have to begin with a burden, and that is my ultimate goal in what I want to say.

I'm going to say a lot of other things, but remember, the final goal is to build a local fellowship where you are. It's a wonderful thing that you come from so many different places, and in those places, you must pray that God will one day build a local body of believers. So to begin with, let me read a verse in the Lamentations in Chapter 3. In Lamentations in Chapter 3, verse 27, you know where Lamentations is? It's immediately after Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Chapter 3, verse 27.

It says, it is good for a young man to be under discipline. I'm reading from the Living Bible. It's good for a young man to be under discipline because that causes him to sit apart in silence beneath the demands that the Lord has on his life, and to lie with his face down in the dust, then there will be hope for him.

And if people strike him on the cheek, let him turn the other cheek and accept the awful insults that people give him. That's verse 30. Because the Lord will not abandon him forever.

It may look as if the Lord has abandoned him, but the Lord will not abandon him forever. And although God gives him grief for a period, yet God will show him great compassion, because such is the greatness of God's loving kindness. Because God does not enjoy afflicting people or causing sorrow.

But we have to go through that discipline in order to become men and women of God. And you know, I have observed Christians now for 64 years in many, many countries of the world. And I've seen there's a world of difference between those who are in their youth, being broken by God, spiritually broken, I mean, through discipline, and where they submitted to whatever God permitted in their life, submitted to authority, especially.

I found in my younger days, from the age of 30 to the age of 35, in five years, God took me through a severe period of discipline, where I was rejected and misunderstood. And the Lord told me to keep my mouth shut. And he tested me to see whether I keep my mouth shut when people misunderstood me.

And the Lord said, don't defend yourself. Just keep quiet. Let people misunderstand you.

I understand you. Okay, that's enough. So those days, I came to know the Lord better.

Of course, I was still not really overcoming all sin. I was defeated and overcoming, you know, discouraged frequently and fighting my thoughts and trying, really seeking for victory, but it didn't come overnight. So if you continue in this battle, I want to tell you there's a tremendous future for you.

Because I see a lot of people whom I knew when they were 20 years old, today they are 40, 45. And I look at their life, it's like a wasted life. They are believers.

They may go to heaven when they die. And I mean, if your only aim in life is to go to heaven when you're dying, I want to say you're a very, very selfish Christian. One of the things that God showed me when I got converted was how greatly Jesus loved me to give his life to save me.

And I find a lot of Christians are not taken up with that. And that's why they don't discipline themselves to study the word of God. They're so lazy in studying God's word.

They're so lazy in seeking to serve God. All because they have not seen how much Jesus loved them. So when I got converted, one of the first things I began to see, as I read the scriptures, was how much Jesus loved me.

How he was willing to... I mean, I knew the simple gospel, he died on the cross for my sins. But as I read the gospels, I found how he lived such a simple life on earth and he went through so many difficulties and trials and sufferings. His own brothers did not believe in him.

Insulted so... Whenever I read it, I say, that was for me, that was for me. Everything I read in the scriptures, Lord, you came to earth for me. You could have stayed in heaven.

That drew my heart out in love for him. So read the gospels like that. I spent many, many hours through the years, reading the gospels especially, to see how Jesus lived and how much he loved me.

Because it's only if you are gripped by that, that your life will become secure, you'll be free from anxiety and fear. You'll be free from trying to hit out at other people who hit out at you. You'll quietly accept whatever God allows in your life.

And God will be able to accomplish something through you. And you know, when I look at all of you, I say, can you imagine what God can accomplish in the United States if just 40 of you become wholehearted for the Lord? If you become radical, wholehearted, and say, Lord, I'm willing to pay any price to follow you, to be a disciple of Jesus. I'm willing to suffer anything.

It's amazing what God can do for you. I mean, when I was a young Christian, I never knew what God is going to use me in any way. I just said, Lord, I want to love you, and I want to serve you.

And all I could do was stand on the streets and preach. No church invited me to preach. I would go to some church, and they'd think, oh, this is a 24-year-old young man.

He can sit and listen, and all the 45-year-old people would get up and speak. I said, fine. But when I went out in the streets, I could preach.

I was on my own. And I said, Lord, I love you, and I want to tell other people how much you love me. I want them to be saved like I was saved.

So if you take every opportunity you have to be a silent witness for God, I couldn't preach. I was just giving out tracts when I traveled in a train or a bus and trying to witness to people. But all of it began with being perfectly sure in my life that Jesus Christ had accepted me and forgiven me.

So let me begin there. Every one of you must be 100% sure that your sins are forgiven and that Jesus Christ has come to live in you and made you a child of God. If you're not sure of that, that's where you have to begin.

It's like saying you can't build a house without laying a foundation. If the foundation is sort of shaky, one day the whole house will collapse. So you cannot ignore the foundation.

Don't be in a rush to build a house. Make sure the foundation is strong. You may see other people going ahead and building their houses with a shallow foundation.

You'll see what will happen to their life 10 years from now. They'll be backsliders. I never wanted to be a backslider at any time in my life.

So build a good foundation. Be absolutely sure that your sins are forgiven. And you must get that assurance not by some preacher or pastor or some brother coming out and telling you you're a good brother or you're acceptable.

No, you must get it from the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Because then you will never doubt it. Okay, I'll tell you my experience.

I think the first time I asked Jesus to come into my heart was probably when I was around 13 years old. My dad used to take us to gospel meetings. And the preacher would say, you've got to accept Christ.

And I would say, Lord Jesus, come into my heart. But you know, I was not committing any gross sins. And my dad never even took us to movies.

I was not smoking or drinking or doing the type of things that people call sin. I wasn't going around fighting with people. But my sins were maybe fighting with my younger brother or being selfish at home.

The sort of things that people don't even consider a sin. And so what happened after I accepted Christ, I didn't find any big change in my life. I was still occasionally defeated.

And so I said, what happened? Did Christ come into my life or not? I don't know. So the next time a meeting came along, I would again say, Lord Jesus, come into my heart. Again, not much change.

Now, if somebody was a murderer and a thief and all, maybe some quick radical change he would see in his life. But I was not a murderer or a thief or anything. And just living an ordinary life.

And I didn't see much change. And I was not sure as Christ come in. Other people testify about wonderful changes.

I never saw anything spectacular in my life. So the next meeting come again, I would say, Lord Jesus, come into my heart. And I think, without exaggeration, I must have asked Christ to come into my heart maybe 100 or 200, I don't know how many times.

Many hundred times. Not only at meetings, but other times also because I wanted to be sure. And I was never, never sure that Christ had accepted me.

But, good thing, I read the Bible every morning. One of the things that my parents taught me, as soon as you get up in the morning, pray. And the only prayer I knew was our father who art in heaven and so on.

So I'd pray that every morning. And I would kneel down and pray and then I would get up and read the Bible. It may be just a casual reading, just a few minutes.

And that was it. But I kept up that habit. And finally, after six years, when I was 19 and a half, one day I was reading this verse in John chapter 6 and verse 37.

John 6, 37. It's a beautiful verse. In John 6, 37, it says, the last part, the one who comes to me, I will certainly not cast out.

Certainly. If you come to me, Jesus says, I will not cast you out. And that day, that was the middle of July, 1959.

64 years ago. I was working in the naval base as a naval officer. And I read that verse.

And it just came home to my heart. I don't know. I can't explain it.

It just came to my heart that Jesus was saying to me, if you come to me, I will definitely not cast you out. So I said, Lord, I come to you a hundred times. And the Lord said to me from that verse, I did not cast you out.

And I don't know how to explain it, but somehow to use a naval term, I dropped an anchor from my ship. And for 64 years, my ship has not drifted away. That anchor held.

And that anchor is a promise of God. And you can have that too. That verse, you can take that verse if any of you have a doubt about your salvation.

Jesus says to you today, if you come to me, I will not cast you out. If you come to me, I will not cast you out. Believe it.

That's the first step towards spiritual progress. So don't any of you go away from this youth camp without being absolutely sure that Christ has accepted you. Believe that verse.

And then I was always reading the Bible. But from now on, I began to take the Bible seriously. I began to read the Bible and say, Lord, please speak to me.

In the beginning, I was just reading the Bible to ease my conscience. But now I was saying, Lord, speak to my heart. I want you to speak to me.

And so I would now meditate on God's word, not just read it. In the beginning, I was just reading and then, okay, I finished. Close the Bible and go back to the Bible tomorrow.

But now I started meditating. You know, there's a wonderful promise in Psalm 1. If you turn with me to Psalm 1, it says there, How blessed is the man, verse 2, whose delight is in the law of the Lord. That means I don't just read it.

I'm delighted to read the Bible. And in God's word, he meditates day and night. He doesn't read it day and night.

Maybe he read it only for 10 minutes in the morning. But he thinks about it throughout the day. That's the best way to read the Bible.

You may read it only for 10 minutes. Don't try to read two or three chapters. I mean, you can do that at other times to try and cover the whole Bible.

I covered the whole Bible in about seven or eight months. So I had two Bible readings. One was my daily devotion, where I would read just four or five verses.

That's it. And the other was some other time of the day where I would read many, many chapters. So in eight months, I covered the whole Bible.

And most of it, I didn't understand, but I read it. But in the morning, I would spend a few minutes just in devotion. And that would be just three, four verses or four or five verses.

And I would meditate on it. That means read it again and again and say, Lord, please speak to me. Speak to me.

Speak to me. Something in this passage. And, you know, in my lifetime, from these verses, God has spoken to me amazing things through which he has guided me, what I should do.

It was through such a reading one day that God called me to leave my job. It was through such a reading one day that God guided me to the person I should get married to. It's through reading such of my daily portion that God guided me to travel somewhere.

So many things. I have so much guidance. But it says here, the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord.

He meditates day and night. And I want you to see verse three. Such a person will be like a fruitful tree, not a barren tree.

And whatever he does, he will prosper. Think of that promise. Think if God came to you and said, my son, my daughter.

Whatever you do, whatever you do, whatever you do, you will prosper. It will go well with you. I said, Lord, I want to go well with you.

And he said, do that. Stay away. Verse one is stay away from sinful people.

Don't walk with them. First verse. Don't stand with them.

Don't sit making fun of others. Three things. Don't walk with them.

Don't stand with them. And don't make fun of others. But delight in the law of the Lord and meditate day and night.

And you will be an unshakable tree with fruit coming out of your life. And here's the wonderful promise. Whatever you do will prosper.

Please remember those three verses. And claim that promise. The promise in the Bible is like a check.

Supposing somebody sends you a check for \$10,000. What do you do? Frame it up and hang it on the wall? And admire it every day? Won't help you. You take it to the bank and sign on the back and give it in.

And you get money in your account. God's promises are like that. If you just keep it there or you put it on your wall, it doesn't help you.

But take it to the bank of heaven and say, in the name of Jesus. Say, Lord, fulfill this promise in my life that whatever I do, I will prosper. And I want to do what your word says.

I want to stay away from sinful, wicked people. Avoid them. I want to delight in your word and meditate on it day and night.

Fulfill that promise that whatever I do, I will prosper. I want to tell you that in my life. That I've been a Christian 64 years.

And whatever I have done, I have prospered. I have to testify God's word is true. I want to encourage you.

And if you live as long as me, you will be able to testify that too. Because God's word never changes. I'm saying that for your encouragement.

But I did what God's word says. I stayed away from sinful people. I avoided them.

I gave up the habits of sinful people. And I would every day meditate on God's word. That's been my way of life for 64 years.

I prospered. I've been healthy and God's used me to help others. And I pray that all 40 or whatever number you are, every one of you will experience that.

So that's the first thing. Then. I want to show you another verse now.

Which. You know that is in 1 John. In chapter 4. The first epistle of John.

In chapter 4. First epistle of John chapter 4. And verse 19. We love him because he first loved us. So I learned something from that.

That if I want to love Jesus Christ. I have to understand how much he loved me first. See that word because.

It's like when you study chemistry. Something happened because you did this. You mix two chemicals together and the reaction took place because of that.

So here it is. We love him because he first loved us. So if you don't meditate on how much Jesus loved you.

You will not be able to love him. And if you don't love him, you will not be able to grow spiritually. So that's the other thing.

You must meditate on how much Jesus loved you. And I'll tell you. I used to meditate a lot on the cross.

Because I used to think of not just the nails. I mean that you can meditate on the crown of thought. Oh he suffered so much for me.

But I used to sometimes think of that and all. But it didn't really make me love Jesus. But when I really understood another thing.

Not the first three hours on the cross. But the last three hours on the cross. You know what happened in the last three hours on the cross? That's the time when he took our sins.

The punishment for our sins. Not in the first three hours. The six hours that Jesus hung on the cross.

Nine o'clock to twelve o'clock in the morning. He was not bearing our sins then. But from twelve to three in the afternoon.

He was bearing the punishment for our sins. Why do I say that? Because that's the time when the whole world became dark. And Jesus cried out at twelve noon.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why did God forsake him? He didn't say that at nine o'clock in the morning when he was crucified. He said that at twelve noon. Because that time my sin was placed on his head.

And when sin, God sees sin on anyone. He forsakes it. Because God and sin cannot go together.

Remember this. However much God loves you, God and sin cannot go together. And the proof of that is on Calvary's cross.

God loved his son. But he forsook him. When there was sin on him.

Not his sin. My sin. Your sin.

God cut it off. And for three hours on the cross. Jesus experienced hell.

Hell is not just a physical place. That will happen finally. But it is being forsaken by God.

That is hell. So in his spirit. Jesus experienced hell.

During those three hours. And none of us will ever know how terrible that is. There's no suffering.

No sickness. No imprisonment. No beating.

Nothing can compare with the agony of hell. Of being forsaken by God. In fact, Jesus, you can say, lost his senses there.

Yeah, I say that. Because otherwise he would not have asked why. Never in his entire 33 years.

Did he ask God why? He always knew why. Because his mind was perfect. I could answer that question.

God, why have you forsaken Jesus? Because of Jack Millon's sin. Because of your sin. And because of the sin of the world.

But I know it. How is it Jesus did not know it when he hung on the cross? Was he more foolish than me? No, because he was in hell. And in hell, your mind doesn't work.

And when you're in hell, you don't even know why you're being forsaken. And you don't call God father there. No.

All his life he called God father, father, father, father. Suddenly he says, my God, my God. When he at nine o'clock, he said, father, father, forgive them their sins.

They don't know what they're doing. But at 12 o'clock, he didn't call him father. He called him God.

Because my sin was there. Your sin was there. And he experienced hell.

And in hell, your mind doesn't work properly. That's why he's asking a question. He's asking a question to which I can give an answer.

Jesus, Lord, it's because of my sin you're being forsaken. But his mind didn't work. He didn't know the answer to that question.

Because he was bearing your sin. He was experiencing hell. And in hell, your mind doesn't work.

God has cut you off. And for three hours, we will never know on this earth how much he suffered. And it was because of you and me.

When you see that, you will learn to hate sin. You can't hate sin by hearing a lot of preaching in the church. You might hate sin.

You mustn't lust with your mind and so many things. You mustn't lose your temper. You can hear all those things and you will still sin.

But when you see one day, like I saw, that Jesus experienced hell on the cross for my sin, it changed my attitude to sin completely. I'm not saying I got complete victory overnight. But I started climbing that mountain of victory.

Little by little by little by little. Sin after sin could overcome. I could overcome.

It started with, we love him because he first loved us. How much did he love us? Enough to go to hell to save him. He need not have gone to the cross.

He could have gone up to heaven and we could have all gone to hell. But he went to the cross only so that we might never be forsaken. And when I realized that, you know, God gave me a picture those days in my mind.

I like to think of pictures like Jesus used parables. I used to use pictures in my mind when I read the Bible. And one picture I got is only a parable of how Jesus saved me.

I pictured myself crossing a busy road. And I didn't see a big truck coming full speed down the road. I didn't see it.

I was crossing the road and that truck was going to run me over. But somebody from behind came and pushed me out of the way. And my life was saved, but that poor man got run over himself.

And his legs were crushed and broken by that truck. I was saved. I saw that as a picture of how Jesus suffered.

To save me. And I see this man now with his legs all cut off, amputated. And he's lying in a hospital.

And I go to see him. I go to see this man who risked his life and lost his legs to save me from death. What do you think I'll tell him? What will you tell him? I thought, what would I tell this man? Would I say, thank you very much, see you later? Definitely not.

I'd say a lot more than that. I'd say, listen, my brother. I don't know how to repay you for losing your legs for my sake.

I would be dead to the end of that truck if you hadn't pushed me out of the way. But I want to tell you something. There are many things you cannot do now because you don't have legs.

I want to be your legs for you. I can't be with you all the time. I have to work and earn my living.

But let me give you my promise. I would tell that man. If ever in your life, even if you live for another 50 years, if ever at any time in your life you have a need, you want to do something and you can't do it because you don't have legs, just give me a call.

And even if I'm doing the most important thing in the world, I'll drop it and do what I can for you. What you cannot do for yourself. Don't you think I would say that? To express your gratitude to such a man? That's the way I pictured it.

So now transfer that into Jesus. He not only got his leg broken, he died. How shall I go and respond to him now? They say, oh, thank you, Lord, for dying for me.

I'm going to live my own life now. No. What will I say to that man? Any time in your life, if you ever have a need, call on me.

I'll come. And I said that to the Lord. Lord, I'm not coming to you to go to heaven.

I'm prepared to go to hell if you are there. I only want to be with you. My desire is not to go to heaven.

My desire is to be with Jesus. And I said, Lord, you can call me anytime to do anything. You tell me to give up something.

I'll give it up immediately. You tell me not to do something. I'll really stop doing it.

Give me the power and I'll stop doing it. Something I greatly desire to do, I will not do if you tell me not to do it. I'm not just talking about sinful things.

There are a lot of things in the world which are not sinful. Which God does not permit me to do. They're quite okay things.

They're not sinful. But they're not in God's plan for my life. I'll give you an example.

Supposing Jesus after a year of heavy preaching, traveling, traveling, tired. He thinks, let me take a holiday and go to Rome. I like to see Italy.

Tourists go to Italy and see Rome. Is there anything sinful on going on a tourist holiday to Rome? Absolutely nothing. If Jesus went to Rome, he would have lived a holy life there just like he lived in Israel.

But if that was not in the father's plan for him during those 33 and a half years he lived on the earth. He would say, Lord, however much I may love to go to Rome. I like to see the sights.

I like to be a tourist and see different places. Like a lot of people go as tourists. I will not go if it is not your will.

That's never nothing to do with sin. Say, I won't go. However much my flesh may say, don't you like to be a tourist and go and see places? Well, father, I want to know your will.

See, doing God's will is not just giving up sin. It's giving up our own plans. What we like to do.

Because that is not in God's will for us. You may see other people doing it. I've seen other Christians do so many things.

I say, Lord, I don't feel I can do it. I see other Christians buying so many things. I say, no, I will not buy it.

I was earning a lot of money as a naval officer. A huge amount of money when I was less than 20 years old. But I said, Lord, I can't waste all this money.

I've got to use it carefully for your glory. And it's not that I used it for simple things. I could use it for a lot of good things.

But I said, Lord, is that what God wants me to spend it for? No. I want to pray and ask God how he wants me to spend my money. How he wants me to spend my time.

How he wants to spend my life. I'm not talking about going to heaven. I'm already, my seat in heaven is reserved.

Christ has accepted me. Now, like that man, my life has been saved. That man, his legs were broken.

Now I'm telling, what can I do for you to help you? Tell me, tell me, call me any day. Every day I'm at your service. That's what I call Jesus.

I'm at your service, Lord. I want to tell you, my dear brothers and sisters, if you really believe that you have been saved from going to an eternal hell where you would have been burning for millions and millions and millions of years, if you really believe Jesus died to save you from that, I'm sure you'd say more to Jesus than I would say to that man whose legs were broken to save me from being led over. Lord, whatever you want, I'm yours.

Tell me. Sometimes I can't understand your will, but there are certain things I know. For example, I know that whenever I hurt somebody, I must ask his forgiveness.

That I know. Don't you know that? You don't have to ask the Lord, what should I do? In John chapter five, just go to John chapter five. I want you to see that verse there.

And never forget this verse. John's gospel, chapter five, and Matthew's gospel, chapter five. Matthew's gospel, chapter five, and verse 23.

When you are presenting your offering at the altar, read it like this. When you are offering a prayer to God, those days they were offering a sacrifice. Today we are offering a prayer to God.

Can't we read it? That was when the Jewish custom was still going on. When Christianity had not started. So they were offering at the altar.

Today I would paraphrase verse 23 like this. When you come to pray and present your prayer to God, and there, while you're praying, you remember that your brother has got something against you. Why has he got something against you? Because you said something to hurt him.

Or you did something to hurt him. What should you do? Leave your prayer there. Stop praying.

Did you know that there is a verse in the Bible where Jesus says stop praying? There are a lot of people who tell you the Bible says always pray. Yeah, there are verses like that also. But I don't know whether you ever heard that Jesus also said stop praying.

Here it is. Leave your offering there. Leave your prayer there.

Stop praying. Go first to your brother and be reconciled to him. Verse 24.

How can you be reconciled? Ask his forgiveness. Humble yourself. If he's somewhere else, call him up on the phone or write a letter.

But ask his forgiveness. And then, that's very important. Verse 24.

And then come and offer your prayer. And if you don't do that, I want to tell you the bad news is your prayer will not be heard. Let me give you my opinion.

I think that 95% of the prayers that Christians pray never are answered by God. More than 95%. They don't reach heaven.

They go as far as the roof, that's all. I want a prayer life which reaches heaven. Even if I pray for five minutes a day, it must go to heaven.

Once he's having hours of prayer meetings, if your prayer doesn't go to heaven, it's not the length of your prayer that matters. You know, in the Old Testament, when you read the prophets of Baal pray for six hours, no fire came. Elijah prayed for half a minute and the fire came.

You read that in 1 Kings chapter 18. So, the important thing is that God hears your prayer. Leave your prayer.

Go and ask forgiveness. And I love Jesus, I'll do that. So the other thing is, turn to John's Gospel chapter 6 now.

I keep saying John. Matthew's Gospel and chapter 6. And I want you to turn now to verse 14 and 15. Matthew's Gospel and chapter 6 and verse 14.

If you forgive others their sins, your father will forgive you. But if you don't forgive others, your father will not forgive you. You know there's a verse in the Bible that says, forgive your sins, no matter how much you pray.

You pray and pray and pray, Lord, please forgive my sin. And God says, no, I will not forgive you because there's somebody in your life you're not forgiven for what he or she did against you. Now, just stop for a moment.

Just stop for a moment and think. Right now. Right now, think.

Can you think of somebody who hurt you? Or hurt your family? Or did something wrong to you and you kept a grudge in your heart against that person? Did you know that all these years, God did not hear your prayer? And in the future also, he will not hear your prayer. Because if you do not forgive your father, others, your father will not forgive you. And if your sin is not forgiven, God will not hear your prayer.

If you do not forgive others worshipping, your father will not forgive your sins. Forget about going to heaven. He will not even listen to your prayer.

If there's sin, it blocks the connection. It's like the phone line being cut. The internet is cut.

You cannot communicate with anybody. You can speak as much as you like on the phone. There's nobody listening at the other end.

The internet connection is broken. Your phone connection to your phone server is gone because you have not forgiven somebody. So there are two things.

One, I have to ask forgiveness from those I hurt and I have to forgive every person who has hurt me. And there are certain people whose names will come up in your mind. Right now, for example, tell me.

No, no, don't tell me. Tell yourself. Who is the person who has hurt you? Most.

Can you think of someone? If you're older than five, I'm sure somebody has hurt you. If you're 20, 25 years old, there are lots of people who have hurt you. I only want to ask you one question.

Is there even one of them whom you have not forgiven from your heart? Is there even one of them about whom you say, no, I can't forgive him. What a terrible thing he did against me and I've suffered so much. My dear young brothers and sisters, I want your life to count for God.

Do this. If you love me, Jesus said, keep my commandments. I want your life to count for God.

I want you to be part of this generation that is going to count for God. We want to raise up a generation of people who count for God in this time. So if you meditate on the love of Jesus, it will be very easy to forgive others.

Because Jesus, the greatest sin, now you may think that what somebody did against you was a terrible sin. But shall I tell you the greatest sin that anybody committed on this earth? Listen carefully. The greatest sin that anybody committed on the earth was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

There was never a greater sin that anybody committed than that. And immediately Jesus said, Father, forgive them. What is the sin that you think somebody did some terrible thing against you? It's not even a drop in the ocean compared to the crucifixion of Christ.

A drop of water in the ocean. That's what your sin is. Whereas Jesus' sin is what they did against Jesus like an ocean.

Forgive, forgive, forgive. Somebody had drilled that into my head when I was 20 years old. I had to learn all this myself.

But now I can tell you what is good for you. How much Jesus loved you, that will make you love him. Then one more thing, how to love Jesus.

Turn with me to Luke's Gospel and chapter 7. Luke's Gospel, chapter 7. Jesus was invited, we read in verse 36, to the house of a Pharisee, chapter 7, and verse 36. One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to his house and he was sitting there at the table. And you know, those days people didn't sit in chairs.

It says he was reclining at the table. That means they would lean on their elbow like this and their legs were behind them. And a woman in the city who was a sinner, verse 37, that means she was a well-known immoral woman.

That's the meaning. She was a well-known immoral prostitute in the city. She heard that Jesus has come to man's house.

She was not invited for that dinner and she did not go for the dinner. But somewhere in her life before that, she had heard Jesus and her sins were forgiven. She had lived a very wicked life and her sins were forgiven and she was so grateful to God that all her sins were forgiven and she could go to heaven.

You know, just like I told this man to risk his life, I would go to that man and say, what can I do for you? You lost your legs because of me. This woman also felt like that. I'd been such a wicked woman and I thought I was going to hell.

But Jesus came and in one moment forgave me. Lord Jesus, what shall I do for you? I can't preach. I'm not a preacher.

I'm a woman. I'm a very sinful woman. I've got a very bad testimony in the city, but can I do something for you? And she thought about it.

She thought she would take a very expensive perfume. A whole bottle full of perfume. And you know, I've never bought perfume in my life, but I've heard that it's very, very expensive.

You have to pay hundreds of dollars to get a bottle of perfume. And this woman and this woman was, this woman went and bought this perfume. Now, just think of this.

This woman had earned all her money through a life of sin. And the money that she got from sin, that's the only money she had. She went and spent it all to buy this expensive bottle of perfume.

Now, there's a law in the Old Testament that said in the book of Deuteronomy that you cannot bring any money that you earn by committing sin into God's house. There's a law like that. If you were a prostitute and earned a lot of money through sin, you cannot even give one cent of that money to God.

Because that's sinful money. Earned through sin. You can only give money to God which you have earned righteously.

Now, Jesus knew there was such a law. And in those, in that time, Jesus was the house of God. He was the son of God.

And when she brought that, everybody in the city knew she was a sinner. Jesus knew she was a sinner. And when she poured it at his feet and anointed him and kissed his feet verse 39, the Pharisee, he knew the Bible.

He knew the law says this woman cannot give an offering like this to God. And he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he will know what side of person this woman is who's touching him. He will not allow it.

He will not accept that offer. But Jesus accepted it. And he told Simon, who was the one who invited him.

He said, I want to tell you something, Simon. There was a man who lent money to two people. One man owed 500 and another man owed 50.

He forgave both of them. Who will love him more? Simon said the one who was forgiven more. Verse 43, the one who was forgiven more will love more.

And Jesus said, that is correct. It's always true. The one who is forgiven more loves more.

Then he said, turning towards the woman. And then he said to Simon, verse 44, you see this woman? Forget about quoting laws from the book of Deuteronomy. You did not even give me water when my feet were dirty when I came into this house.

They used to wear slippers those days and the feet were dirty in the dusty roads and in every house they'd give water to wash their feet. But he said, you never gave me water to wash my feet. But this woman has wiped my feet with her tears, wet it with my tears and wiped them with her hair.

You never gave me a kiss and embraced me when I came here. But this woman has been kissing my feet ever since I came here. You did not anoint my head with oil, verse 46.

But she has anointed my feet with expensive perfume. And I'll tell you something, Simon. Because she has been forgiven much, she loves so much that she's willing to spend her entire money on me.

But because you have been forgiven so little, your love is not, you just give me a dinner and go away. There's a lot of difference. So I learned something from that.

Those who, verse 47, those who are forgiven much will love Jesus more. Those who are forgiven little will love Jesus less. So why is it some people love Jesus more in the world? Why is it some missionaries or some people have been willing to sacrifice everything? And they didn't spend their money going on tourism.

They gave everything up to go preach the gospel to those who have never heard it. Why did they live that life? Because they were forgiven much. They were not prostitutes.

I mean, think of people like Amy Carmichael and many others who went out and William Carey and Donna Ram Judson and all. They were not sinful people. But they understood how much, how serious their sin was in God's eyes.

You don't have to be a prostitute or a murderer to be forgiven much. You just got to see the gravity of your sin to know how much Jesus has forgiven you. You may think, oh, I haven't committed adultery or killed anybody or robbed a bank or anything.

No, you don't have to do all that to say you're forgiven much. When you see how serious telling one lie is. Yeah.

To have a grudge against somebody, how serious that is. It's as bad as committing adultery, as bad as killing somebody. That's how I see it.

The thing is, we don't see the seriousness of our sins and we think, oh, I haven't sinned much. Because your value of sin is evaluated by what the world considers to be sin. And according to the standards of the world, you're not sinning so much.

But when you look at sin from God's eyes, perspective, you see that you have sinned terribly. Even if you did not commit murder and adultery and theft and all that. Little, little things.

It's very serious. And that's what happened to me. I didn't kill anybody.

I didn't rob any bank. But I saw the little, little things I did, my unforgiving attitude, my dirty thoughts, my bad, angry words and all that. I said, Lord, I see how serious all this is.

You have forgiven me one much. I am just like that prostitute woman. I'm not a prostitute, but I'm just like that woman.

I've been forgiven so much. I have to love you much. So there are two ways in which we can know, increase our love for Jesus.

What did I tell you? One is from 1 John chapter 4. We love him because he first loved us. Meditate on how much Jesus loved you and how terrible a price he paid on the cross. Your love for him will increase.

Secondly, meditate on how serious sin is in God's eyes. Your sin. Even though you may not have committed some terrible sins according to the world, your so-called minor sins are terrible in God's eyes.

You know, you look at an ant under a microscope and it looks like an elephant. You know that. Just an ant.

It looks like an elephant under a microscope. And when you see sin in God's eyes, it's like seeing an ant under a microscope. Huge.

Most people don't see it in God's look at sin the way God looks at it. They look at it and say, oh, there's a little ant. But the person who sees sin the way God looks at it, he says, it's not an ant, it's an elephant.

When you see sin the way God sees it, you will really love Jesus and you will hate sin also. And you'll never want to do it again. That's the way you can be the man or the woman of God.

God wants to make you into. I want to tell every one of you, I believe if you've accepted Christ into your life, God has got a wonderful plan for your life. You can be sure of that.

I did not know that 60 years ago. But now when I look back on my life, oh, how amazing a plan God has for my life. And step by step by step by step, he fulfilled it.

And give me the tremendous joy of meeting other people to Christ and building them together into a body in different parts of the world. I never knew all that when I was 19 years old and I accepted Christ. Some of you are young.

You don't realize what a tremendous plan God has for you. Learn to love Jesus. Spend time with God's word.

Whatever you do will prosper. Stay away from bad company. Read God's word.

And ask God to show you the seriousness of sin, even a small sin. Forgive everybody. Ask forgiveness.

Whenever your conscience troubles you about something, set it right. If you cheated somebody of money, return it. And be absolutely upright with money.

And I pray that God will fulfill his plan for your life. God's got a plan for your life from before you were born. Okay.

My last verse for you. We'll close the meeting now. Psalm 139.

This is one of my favorite psalms. Verse 16. It's talking about you when you were in your mother's womb.

All of you came out of your mother's womb. And the psalmist is saying, oh God, your eyes saw me when my body was not even formed. Verse 13.

You wove me in my mother's womb. And in my mother's womb you formed my inward part. And your eyes saw me.

Verse 16. Before my whole body was formed. And in that state, before I was born.

You had written in your book the entire plan for my life. Before I was even born. Verse 16.

Did you know that? Did you know that God has written down a plan for your life and his mind in heaven? Before you were born. And before one of those days, he had already made a plan. What you have to do, where you have to go every day of your life.

I did not know that. 64 years ago when I accepted Christ. But now when I look back and see how wonderfully God led me day by day by day by day by day.

And provided all my needs. Took care of me without my ever having to ask anybody in my life for money. Trusting him.

I see how wonderful that plan is. And he says in verse 17. How precious.

Are your thoughts to me, oh God. How vast is the sum of your thoughts. By count your thoughts towards me.

There are more than all the sand in the world. Wow. The thoughts that God has for my life.

Are more than all the sand. That's what you do. Believe it.

That God has got wonderful thoughts for you and a plan for your life. Say Lord. I want to fulfill that.

And when I wake up in the morning it says in verse 18. I'm still with you. You're thinking of me.

When I wake up God is thinking of me. Even if you don't think about God. God is thinking about you when you wake up.

So I pray that from today on with your life will be changed. Completely. In a radical way.

Because of what you have received. Every one of you. No matter how old you are.

Be absolutely sure. Your sins are forgiven and that Christ has accepted you. Let's bow our heads and pray.

So first of all. If there's anybody you have not forgiven. Say to the Lord.

Lord I forgive that person and that person and that person and that person. I forgive every single person. Who has hurt me.

Ever. And if you need to go and ask somebody's forgiveness. And you're convicted of it now.

Say Lord at the first opportunity. I'm going to ask forgiveness in that person. If that person is somebody in this camp.

Go and ask forgiveness. Tonight. If it's somewhere else.

If you can phone that person. Phone that person tonight. Or write a letter.

Or an email. Settle it. If there's money you cheated somebody out.

Say Lord. The first opportunity when I have that money. I'm going to return it.

Say Lord I'm going to take my Christian life seriously from now on. I'm going to break out of my connection and friendship with. People who are leading me in wrong directions.

I want to be part of this generation that you're raising up this time. To be witnesses for Christ. I want to be a part of that generation.

Heavenly Father. I pray for these dear young brothers and sisters. What a wonderful plan you have for each of their lives.

I pray they'll never forget it. I pray they will be gripped by it. And.

Never never forget what they learned today. Bless every one of them. With your blessing which makes them rich spiritually.

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Thank you for your patience and listening to me.

It's been a long message but I hope. You won't forget it. I hope it will bless you.

Thank you Ajay. And all those who organized this. It's been a real pleasure to share God's word.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/5a-wZEKs8LI.mp4>

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