

He Pleased the Father for 33 Years

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon reflects on the importance of living a life that pleases God, following Jesus' example of obedience and humility over personal accomplishments.

Duration: 58:39

Scripture: John 7:37, John 17:4, John 17:9, John 17:23

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon reflects on the journey of 33 years, emphasizing the importance of looking back with gratitude and looking forward with hope. It highlights the need to compare ourselves with Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, rather than seeking worldly accomplishments. The sermon stresses the significance of surrendering to God, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and living a life that pleases the Father, focusing on unity, faith, and obedience.

Transcript

Well, I'm glad to be back and I want to rejoice with all of you that the Lord has led us through these 33 years and it's been a very wonderful journey for those who knew how we started and where we are today. And at every point in our life, it's good for us to do two things, look back to the past and look forward to the future. Because at every point in our life, there is a past and a future.

So when we look back, there's so much to thank the Lord for, for his mercy and forgiveness and grace and help and goodness and many things. It's holy Thanksgiving. Certainly we can say that.

No complaints. He has done, like scripture says, exceeding abundantly above all that we have asked or thought or imagined. There are very, very few here who were here when we first started meeting 33 years ago.

And I don't even remember, we were probably about 10 people or so. And the Lord has now increased our numbers by, I don't want to count, I don't even know, I never count, but it's in great numbers and the influence has spread to many places. And it's only Thanksgiving that we can think of as we look back.

And the other thing for those who were there from the beginning would recognize is that this has been entirely God's work. No man could have, no man or group of men could have done what the Lord has done for us. And since we all know that Jesus lived on earth also for 33 years, now all of you haven't been

in the church for 33 years, but some of us have been, and some of us have been involved in the ministry for 33 years.

So you know what I do in everything in life? We are to run the race looking at Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. That's a wonderful truth about the new covenant that God has opened our eyes to in these 33 years. And let me repeat it.

In Hebrews chapter 11, we read about great men of faith in the Old Testament who accomplished amazing things, starting with Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and many others, Moses, Joshua, Daniel. Now we haven't done some of these wonderful external miracles that these men experienced. None of us got a baby yet, like Abraham who's 100 years old, and none of us are 100 years old.

And none of us have built an ark single-handed just with our family to save the world like Noah did. None of us have been thrown into a den of lions and seen the lions shut their mouth like Daniel. We have not split open any Red Sea like Moses.

We have not pulled down any walls of Jericho like Joshua. These great men of faith did amazing things. It says they even raised the dead in Hebrews 11 and verse 35.

But what many Christians, and I tell you my experience is that more than 90 or 95% of Christendom that I have come across don't have a clue, don't have a clue that these people are not our examples. We can learn things from them, sure. You can learn things from some non-Christian person who works in your office.

So I'm not saying we can't learn anything from them. We can learn a lot of things from the lives of David and Moses, and I certainly do. But what we need to recognize is at the end of this wonderful chapter, it says in verse 40, God has provided something better for us.

What is better than splitting the Red Sea? What is better than getting manna from heaven for 40 years? What is better than pulling down the walls of Jericho? What is better than shutting the mouths of lions? And what is better than verse 35, the resurrection from the dead? People think that's a great thing. Here it says something better than the resurrection from the dead. There are many people who claim to be raising people from the dead.

It's all humbug. I believe God can raise the dead, sure, but a lot of these people who claim about it and broadcast it all over the world don't believe all those lies. God has provided something better, something better than resurrection from the dead and all these other things listed in Hebrews 11.

That's the last verse of chapter 11. And then he tells us what is the better thing that God has provided. He has given us an example to follow.

And that's not Abraham. That's not David. That's not Elijah.

It's not even these people who raised the dead. It is Jesus. Chapter 12, verse 1 and 2. Jesus.

So, you know, this chapter really, these four verses should really be the end of chapter 11. By faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Noah, all the way down, all the way down to the last. And then it says by faith Jesus.

That's the last one. What did he do? Because it says he is the author of our faith. Verse 2, the author of my faith is not Abraham.

That's why I won't tell lies like Abraham to save my life. He told a lie saying his wife was his sister. That's why I won't get angry like Moses and throw the tablets down.

That's why I won't sit under a juniper tree depressed like Elijah because he's not the author of my faith. That's why I won't fall into adultery like David because he's not the author of my faith. That's okay for all these preachers who follow these old covenant examples.

God has provided something better for us. Many people, their book of Hebrews finishes in chapter 11, verse 39. That's it.

Not for me and not for many of us. We see verse 40. God has provided something better for us.

And it's not just some a doctrine that we must know the new covenant. It's something we have to manifest. Jesus didn't talk about new covenant.

He manifested it. The glory of God was seen in Jesus Christ. Not full of teaching but full of grace and truth.

It was a light. Moses brought the law but Jesus brought a light. Preachers can preach but Jesus demonstrated a life and it's a demonstration.

That is the primary thing in the new covenant. So Jesus is the author of our faith, of my faith. I want him to write his faith in me.

Author means what? That means he writes. The author of my faith means he writes his faith in me. Like Paul said, I live by the faith, not my faith, I live by the faith of the son of God.

He said in Galatians 2 20. What about your own Paul? I'm crucified with Christ. I'm dead.

My faith is useless but I live by the faith of the son of God. That which he wrote into my heart. I want to ask you whether Jesus has written his faith in your heart.

That's the only real faith there is in the world today when so many Christians are talking about some other type of counterfeit faith. And what did this Jesus do by faith? Did he split open any Red Sea? He did some amazing miracles. He fed 5,000 and piled loaves and two fishes.

He walked on the water. He raised a man who was dead for three days but none of those things are mentioned here. He turned the water into wine.

It's not mentioned here. What is mentioned here? He doesn't say the author of our faith who turned water into wine. The author of our faith who endured the cross.

Who took up the cross every day of his life. Meaning? And that's another thing most people don't understand what the cross is. Let me put it to you very simply in a picturesque way so you can understand.

Where my will crosses God's will, that's where I face the cross. Where I have to die to my will and do God's will. Jesus said we got to do that every day.

Every day he said take up your cross and follow me because he took up the cross every day for 33 years. So when we come to the end of 33 years one of the first things we have to ask ourselves is have we taken up the cross for 33 years like Jesus did for all those 33 years faithfully? In other words he never once did his own will in 33 years. That was the greatest feat and accomplishment of Jesus life.

And that is the faith I want written in my heart because I will discover when I get into eternity that that is the greatest thing that any man can do on this earth. To do the will of God. He who does the will of God will remain forever it says in 1 John chapter 2 verse 16 and 17.

This world will pass away everything but he who does the will of God will remain forever. When Jesus summed up his own life on earth 33 years he said in John 6 38 I came from heaven to earth for 33 years not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. That's how he summed up his life.

How shall we sum up our life? Lord we have reached so many people with the internet. We built a big hall here. We have more people meeting here than no.

Those things impress men. We've reached out here we reached out there. Jesus said in 33 years I never did my own will because man was created to please God.

They sing in heaven in revelation chapter 4 thou art worthy O Lord for thou has created all things and all things were created for thy pleasure says in the last verse of revelation 4 to please God. That's the reason why we were created and there was one man who walked on this earth for 33 years and every day he pleased his father. He didn't raise the dead every day.

He didn't do miracles every day. In fact for 90 percent of his life he never did any miracles but he pleased the father. You don't have to do miracles to please the father.

In fact for 30 years he never preached a sermon, never cast out a demon, never did a miracle and the father said at his baptism this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. Isn't that a great encouragement for those who don't have the gift of healing and the gift of miracles and don't have the gift of preaching? Maybe you don't have those gifts but can't you please the father in your daily life? Is there anything that hinders you from saying father in this situation where somebody is provoking me and I'm tempted to do something I will not do it because I don't want to do my will. I want your will to be done.

I want to die on the cross. Who is there who can say I can't do that? Say you don't want to do that. That's another thing but no one can say I can't do that.

You may say I can't preach like someone. I can't sing like someone. I can't play any instruments.

I don't maybe you can say I don't even have money to give for God's work. That's fine. God doesn't ask for any of those things.

He asks for the one thing which most preachers never preach. He asks you to deny your own will every day and do the will of your heavenly father for that is what Jesus did for 33 years. He raised the man who was dead for three days once.

That's it. He turned water into wine once but he did the will of his father every day. So as I seek to evaluate my life that's what I want to see.

Many many years ago the Lord said to me don't ever ever evaluate your life by your ministry. Sermons you preach or people you reach out to it means nothing. That's a gift and those who evaluate their life by their accomplishments and their gifts will definitely go astray or be puffed up with pride and God becomes their enemy.

Jesus went about doing good it says when he was anointed with the Holy Spirit. Acts 10 30 and the Lord said to me evaluate your life by how much good you have done to others. How many have you delivered people who are oppressed by the devil.

That's what he did. All of us can do that. You know with a word of encouragement that you give to your husband and wife or wife at home you don't have to be a great preacher you can deliver them from the oppression of the devil.

You think Christians are not oppressed but Christians can't be possessed by demons but they are certainly oppressed many of them and you can have a word of encouragement instead of criticizing them and finding fault with them. You can deliver them just like Jesus from that oppression. Try it.

Try speaking a word of encouragement to your oppressed wife and see if she doesn't get delivered or to your husband who's under pressure and see if he doesn't get delivered. You can do it. You don't have to be a great preacher.

Looking unto Jesus who never did his own will endured the cross. Now the other thing I want to say here is it never says in the Bible that Jesus enjoyed the cross. Neither are we supposed to enjoy the cross.

Oh I like it when people crucify me. I don't like it I'll tell you. Neither did Jesus but he took it whether he liked it or not.

People ask me do you enjoy reading the Bible. I say it's not a question of enjoyment. I do it because it's the right thing to do.

Do some of you folks enjoy going to work when it's raining and you've got a headache in the morning. You still go. Why? Because you've got to feed your children.

You go to work whether you enjoy it or not because it needs to be done. Those who say well I'll do things when I feel like it. I tell you most of the most days you won't go to work and they'll just sack you.

You see a Christian doesn't do things just because he enjoys. The joy comes because his joy is in the Lord. Jesus endured the cross.

The joy was set before him it says. If I go this way the joy set before him. What was the joy set before Jesus? For many people today when they obey God the joy set before them is that God will reward them.

You know a lot of preachers preaching this today. Come and give your tithe to my ministry. Look at this guy who gave a tithe and God gave him a car and so they give their tithe for what? What is the joy set before him? Some earthly thing that will perish in a few years.

You think that was you think Jesus was doing things to please the father to get to get a house or a chariot or something like that? Looking unto Jesus I tell you that is the greatest need of the hour. You'll never go wrong if you understand this verse. Looking unto Jesus Philippians 2 5 says 4 5 says verse 5. Let this attitude be in you which is in Christ Jesus.

You take that one verse that's enough. It's the same thing here looking unto Jesus who for the joy set before him. The joy set before him was one thing that he could please the father that he could have fellowship with his father.

Is that the joy you're looking for? I tell you you can have it all the time if you take up the cross. Taking up the cross is not a miserable heavy gloomy little thing. I've seen people who are miserable and gloomy.

They are the ones who don't take up the cross. They are the most miserable gloomy people I've met on the face of the earth. Those who don't take up the cross.

The ones who do take up the cross are the ones who are the happiest people on the face of the earth. So I want you to think about that. You want to be happy? You want to rejoice in the Lord all the time? Then take up the cross.

Deny yourself and say no to your own will every day from now on. As you look back in the past and you say Lord we have failed in so many areas. That's where we can look to the future and say well Lord I want to learn something for the future.

A wise man learns from his past failures and from the failures of others so that he doesn't repeat them in the future. So that's what we can think of as we complete the three years, compare ourselves with Jesus. We're supposed to look at him see how he endured the cross.

The only joy he longed for was fellowship with the Father. Is that the only joy we long for? Good question to ask ourselves and he despised the shame. Do you know that Jesus was made fun of, ridiculed, mocked and he said the disciple is not greater than his master.

He said if they call me the prince of devils, what do you think they'll call you? I want to ask you brothers and sisters, has somebody called you a bad name because you stood up for the Lord? Has somebody told stories, false stories about you? Not because of something foolish you did but because you stood up for the Lord. Have you lost a promotion or an increment because you stood up for the Lord? Have you lost a job because you stood up for the Lord? Well you're blessed. I would not want to leave this earth without suffering all these things for Christ.

They're not going to suffer it in heaven. All my shouting in heaven, Lord I love you, I love you will sound empty if I was ashamed to stand up for him on this earth in my place of work with my relatives. That's something we can evaluate ourselves in 33 years.

Jesus said if you follow me your own relatives will be your enemies. Have you experienced that? I'm not saying you're making your relatives your enemies because you fight with them for property or some foolish thing like that. No or because you do something stupid because you're following Jesus.

Man's enemies will be those of his own family. If you have not experienced that you must be better than Jesus. He's the master.

You're not following him. You're going in some other direction. It's good to evaluate ourselves at the end of 33 years.

Not in terms of how much we have reached out or our numbers have increased as I said. None of these things. We can have a carnal glory in this.

The world is full of people who glory in their statistics. Oh so many people, so much outreach, so much money, so much this that and the other. What could Jesus say at the end of his life? 11 people and they also ran away at the last minute.

The only thing he had was his clothes and that also people took off him and tore up and distributed among themselves. His accomplishments are nothing right compared to great Christian ministries these days. What was his outreach? He traveled in a small country called Israel which is smaller than Kerala all his life.

But did he have worldwide outreach or anything like that? You know we've got to have a correct sense of values and it'll only come if you fix your eyes on Jesus. It says you're fix. NASB is very good.

Fixing your eyes because you know like we sing in that song count you know prone to wonder come thou fount of every blessing. One line says prone to wonder Lord I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love.

We all know that. What a tendency that is for our eyes to leave being fixed on Jesus onto other beautiful things and people on this earth. It's really a job.

We need the grace of God, the power of the Holy Spirit to fix our eyes on Jesus. But I'll tell you that's the man who can come to the end of his life and have no regret. That he looked at Jesus and compared himself all the time with him.

People who unconsciously gloat over their accomplishments even in Christian work, they lose the grace of God. And I have seen numerous people in my life. Once upon a time there was such an anointing upon them.

You see them years later they are not the same. I'm not here to judge them. I'm not their judge.

I just sit listening to them and say this is not the same person I knew a few years ago. He's much worse. The anointing seems to have gone.

What has happened? I know what's happened. God is the enemy of the proud. That's all.

That's scripture. It's not my opinion. He gives grace to the humble.

Is there any human being in the world, any Christian in the world who will humble himself and say God didn't give me grace? Impossible. The moment you and I cease to be humble, that moment we stop getting grace from God. Now I'll tell you something.

You'll never have a problem with humility. Never. You'll never have a problem with remaining humble.

You'll never have a problem with becoming proud. Never, never, never. If you fix your eyes on Jesus.

It's when we fix our eyes on other people that we have problems with pride. Like I've said, the boy who got 10% in mathematics is pretty proud. Comes home.

Mommy, I came first in the class. Everybody else got 7, 6, 5, 3, 0. He got only 10%. He's proud.

But the person who got 99% in another school is not proud because 25 people in his class got 100%. You see, humility doesn't depend on how much you got or how much you accomplished. How is the person with 10% score became proud and the person 99% was humble? It's a question of who they compared

themselves with.

The 10% person compared himself with all those children who got 6 and 5 and 0. He was pretty proud. Foolish pride to get 10% in mathematics and be proud of it. That's the way a lot of Christians are.

They compare themselves with that other group, the other Christians, the other Christians there. Maybe some of your unconverted relatives and say, Lord, I thank you. I'm not like other men.

The comparison. But the one who compares himself with Jesus who got 100% every single day, which means he never did his own will, never pleased himself. You think such a man is ever going to have a problem with pride? Never.

Even if he lives 100 years in faithfulness, he will not have a problem with pride. I recommend that way to you, where God will never be your enemy. Not for a single moment.

I want that. I don't care if all human beings are my enemies. I believe God's brought me to such a place where it doesn't matter now to me.

It wasn't like this a few years ago, but at least now I think God's given me grace to come to the place where even if 7,000 million people in the world turn against me and become my enemies, I say, praise the Lord. God bless you. God's on my side.

You can't fight with me, brother and sister. It is impossible. You can try.

You won't succeed. That's not just for me, that's for you. That's how Jesus was.

He said at the end of his life in John 16 in verse 32 to his disciples, the 11 of you, one of you just walked out to betray me. Now 11 of you are left. All of you will also leave me, but I'm not going to be alone.

I'm not going to say, oh please, please don't leave me. No. If you want to go, you go.

My father is with me. I want to tell you, my brothers and sisters, that's the only thing that will help you in the difficult days that will come for Christians in India and the world in the coming days. He who has ears to hear let him hear, and you can't develop that relationship with the father in one day.

You have to be consistent. You know, just like everything, you can't learn swimming in a day. You can't learn to drive a car in a day.

It's practice, practice, practice, and you can come to the place where you really keep, picture eyes on Jesus, and you'll never have a problem with pride. So as we look back over 33 years and look forward to the future, it's good to compare ourselves with Jesus and have hope that God will do something more wonderful in the days to come. What is that? Reach more people? That is secondary.

Make us more like Jesus. That's primary. And as a byproduct, as a byproduct, that life will overflow, and bless whoever God chooses to bless.

I'll tell you honestly, I don't have a great lust to reach all the 215 countries in the world. No, not at all. I have a tremendous lust to do the will of God and complete it before I leave this earth, whatever it is.

I once said to the Lord, I said, Lord, if you decide one day to paralyze me and make me lie in my bed and take away my voice, and I can't speak anymore, I can't write anymore, it won't make the slightest

difference to me. I will just lie there and worship you, and I'll be the happiest man in the world because I'm primarily a worshiper, not a preacher. That's just an overflow, because I'm going to be worshiping God for all eternity, and I've started practicing already.

And worshiping God means not just singing songs, that's praising him. I'm not talking about praise, that's good. I'm talking about worship, which is very often in silence and which is mostly done alone.

My most sacred times of worship are when I'm lying in bed early in the morning or late at night or in the middle of the night. Those are the best times. The whole world is quiet.

You don't disturb anybody. You worship God. You don't make a sound.

The highest form of worship is in silence. And what does it mean? It means to say, Lord Jesus, there's nothing on earth I desire but you. There's no one on earth I desire but you.

You are enough for me. And when I leave this earth and get into eternity, you'll still be enough. I'm not interested in the golden streets or the mansions in heaven.

In you, that is worship. And as long as you can say that every moment, you're a worshiper. You're a worshiper.

You're a worshiper. Be a worshiper. I want to turn to John chapter 17.

Here is what Jesus says at the end of his life. 33 years. I thought of this today.

I say, Lord, we've finished 33 years of the church. What did you say when you came to the end of your 33 years? You said, verse 4, John 17, 4. Father, I glorified you on earth in these 33 years, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do. What is this testimony? I have finished the work you gave me to do.

But Lord, have you traveled to China? There are needy people there. No, I haven't gone there. Have you picked up the dying people from the streets of Calcutta? No, I haven't gone to Calcutta.

I'm not saying these things are bad. What about the people dying in Africa? No, I haven't gone there. Have you at least gone to Syria, just next door to Israel? No, I haven't gone there.

What have you done? I have finished the work which my father gave me to do. Paul said at the end of his life, I finished my course. And some poor mother looking after 10 or 11 children who never left her house or a village all her life but is faithful to Jesus will be able to say at the end of her life, Father, I finished the work you gave me to do.

You gave me 11 children to look after. I tried my best to bring them all up in the fear of God, whether it's one child or 11. If you're a mother, what's the work God's given you to do? To bring up your child as a godly child.

That's what Timothy's mother did. Timothy's mother backslid in her early life and married a non-Jewish Greek businessman who had no interest in God. But she repented and said, OK, what I couldn't do with my life, I'll make sure my son does.

What a work she did. She finished the work God gave her to do. One son, I don't know if she had more children, but she brought up that one son so well that by the time that boy was 19 years old, the apostle Paul said, he's fit to be my co-worker.

Imagine Paul saying to you that one of your sons, 19 years old, is fit to be his co-worker. Boy, and your husband didn't help you in that job. You must be a fantastic mother.

That's what Timothy's mother was. What does it mean to finish the work God gave me to do? It doesn't mean traveling the world, because God's given each of us different work. The hand never speaks one word in its entire life, but it finishes the work which the body gives it to do.

The tongue is supposed to speak, the ear never sees anything, but it finishes the work, which is hearing. Each of us has got a different function. We tend to compare ourselves with those who got great ministries, but that's not it.

The work which God gave you to do, and do you know that Jesus could say that at 30 years? He could say, Father, so far, I finished the work you gave me to do. But Lord, you haven't preached a sermon yet. That's okay.

You've been only making stools and benches. That's right. That's the work the Father gave me to do, and I did it for 30 years.

He could say that when he was 10, obeying Joseph and Mary. Father, I finished the work you gave me to do so far. What a wonderful testimony.

Are you really seeking to fix your eyes on Jesus? I say, this is what we should ask ourselves at the end of 33 years as a church. Have we finished the work that Jesus gave us to do? Not what do other Christians think about us? I couldn't care less what other Christians think about us. So many Christian leaders have tried to put pressure on me all these 33 years.

Why don't you do this? And why don't you do that? Why don't you do this? Why don't you do this? Why don't you do more evangelism? Why don't you send missionaries to North India? I say, well, you can tell me all that stuff. I want to finish the work which my Father gave me to do, not what you guys pressurize me to do. I'm sorry.

I'm not going to allow you to do that. Don't let somebody bring guilt upon your life. The Ministry of Condemnation, 2 Corinthians 3 says, is an old covenant ministry.

And in the olden days when we were also legalistic ourselves, looking back 25 years or so, 20-25 years, yeah, we had a bit of quite a bit of Ministry of Condemnation here too. I'm ashamed to say that. Like Paul said, I was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, but I understood grace and got out of all that legalism.

Thank God for that. And I never want to go back into that pit anymore. It's as bad a pit as any dirty sexual lust, legalism.

People don't see it. There are some poisons that are sweet and some poisons that are bitter, but they both kill. So legalism and sexual lust are like that.

One looks more dirty than the other, but they kill. There is no condemnation. Whenever people try to make you feel condemned, you're not doing this, you're not doing that.

Don't get condemned. Do you recognize that you are a member of the body of Jesus Christ? If you gave your life to Christ sometime in your life and said, Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner. I receive you as my Savior.

You became a member of his body. Then you have a ministry, just like every part of this body has a ministry. And don't think your ministry is unimportant.

You've heard me use the example of the nails. You'd say the nails are one of the most unimportant part of your body. But wait till you feel itchy somewhere.

You can't do anything about that part except with your nails. And you may be one of those insignificant members in the body of Christ, like a nail. You're not even a finger.

You're just a little nail. Do you know that you can give a word of encouragement? That's what I mean by scratching. A word of encouragement that makes a person feel better.

Don't you feel better after you scratch that itchy place? You feel sort of nice. Somebody scratches your back and say, thanks a lot. That's exactly it.

Just a word of encouragement. That may be your ministry. You do it.

It's the easiest thing to do. How many of you husbands encourage your wives? When was the last time you did it? Encourage your husbands? Your children perhaps? You correct them? Oh yes. If I ask you, how many of you correct your children? Ah sure, this morning.

What about encouraging? What was that? 2004, I remember one site. Is that how it is? There's a ministry we can all fulfill to do good, to look at Jesus. He was a great encourager.

He could look at a man who was in the military, a military man who killed so many people, who says, Lord please, I'm not fit for you to come to my house. Just speak the word and my servant will be healed. Jesus says, boy, I've never seen such faith in all Israel.

Do you think that Roman centurion ever forgot those words in his whole life? You tell me, if Jesus spoke those words to you, would you forget that in your whole life? I think that Roman centurion was converted. That word was enough to convert him. Not a great sermon on repentance and faith and all that.

Just the fact this man encouraged me. There must be something about him. I don't know.

I believe I'll see him in heaven, that Roman centurion. I asked him, how did you get here? Well, it was one day when Jesus said, I had more faith than everybody else. I was amazed when I heard it.

But it made me think and I said, boy, this is just somebody. I never heard anybody encourage me. Caesar never encouraged me like that.

But this man, you can have that ministry. Yeah, there are many other examples like that. I finished the work you gave me to do.

Now why don't you just look at some of these things mentioned here. It's a wonderful chapter. I would encourage you to read John chapter 17 to see how Jesus completed his work.

Go verse by verse by verse by verse through that chapter. I manifested your name. Verse six, name means nature.

God is a father and Jesus showed the father through his character to others. You know how a father is compassionate, merciful, even to a child who's done wrong. I love that line in that song, the love of God is greater far.

The guilty pair bowed down with care. You know, it's not just Adam and Eve. There are many guilty pairs of human beings in the world today bowed down with guilt.

God gave his son to win. His erring child, child that went astray, he reconciled and pardoned from his sin. That's a father.

I tell you, the church needs many fathers and mothers. Jesus said, I manifested your name to people. I showed them what a father was like.

I showed that woman caught in adultery, how a father would treat her if it was his own daughter. I showed that Samaritan woman who was divorced five times and sleeping with a man who was not even her husband, how a father would treat her if it was his own daughter. I showed the leper who nobody would touch, how a father would treat him if it was his own son.

I have manifested your name, father. My brothers and sisters, have you done that? I'm not talking about the whole world. I'm just talking about the small few people who have met you.

Is it difficult? Is it difficult to be like a father and a mother to a world where people are going astray and falling away and guilty, heavy, heavy laden? I want to be that. The older I get, the more God says to me, be a father. Don't be a preacher, be a father.

Don't be a teacher, be a father. People have heard enough preaching. They need someone who can understand so that we can help them, encourage them.

You know, if all of you decide to do that, it will relieve the burden from some brothers who have to do it all the time. It's true. All of us take that responsibility.

Something else he said, which is the secret of his life here in John 17.10. I'm not going through every verse. All things that are mine are yours, father, and everything that's yours is mine. The only way you can live this Christian life is if you say to God, everything that I have is yours.

My money, my time, my energy, my health, my reputation, my plans for the future, it's all yours. And do you know what such a man gets in exchange? Everything the father says, oh, really? Well, then everything I have is yours too. Isn't that a good exchange? Isn't that a good exchange? It's like some multi-millionaire, billionaire, rich man coming to a poor beggar woman like me, sitting with my tin can on the roadside and saying, I want to marry you and I want to have a joint account with you.

You put your 25 paisa into the bank account and I'll put my billions and we will have a joint account where you can draw what you want. And I hesitate to give him my 25 paisa. This is how many Christians are.

Have you given everything to the Lord? Have you given your 25 paisa? That's all you have, brother. I wonder even if you have that much in your tin can. Have you given it to the Lord completely? If you have, then his promise is all that I have is yours.

That's the secret of the Christian life. In every area, every area with my own children, I said, Lord, I'll take care of your children. You take care of mine.

I'll take care of your family. You take care of mine. I'll take care of your house.

You take care of mine. I'll build your house. You build mine.

I will not put my interest first. Do you think you're going to lose that way? Never. You must be a living demonstration to an unbelieving world that I spent my life not seeking my own interests and I didn't lose anything.

The world is full of people who are pursuing their own interests. We give everything to God and God gives everything to us. Today we have a Christendom.

Listen to this, a Christendom where preachers are becoming rich preaching the gospel. They become richer than businessmen preaching the gospel, collecting money from poor people, building their houses with other people's money, buying expensive cars and planes and holiday resorts and all that. That's the Christendom we see around the world.

It's exported from Western countries and there are enough foolish people in India to swallow it. In the midst of this, God has placed us as a witness to be a people who show that godliness will never be a means of gain for us. That's one of the things I praise God for.

God has given us godly men to preach his word, not only here and other places, who can say to their churches, we haven't become rich by preaching to you, have we? In fact, we got nothing through preaching to you, except that we could bless you. We didn't get anything material from you. This is the way the godly men worked.

Read about Elisha in the Old Testament, who turned away Naaman's money and said, keep your money, I don't want it. Look at Samuel, he turned around to people and said, have I taken anything from you fellas? Look at Paul, who could turn around to people and say, praise God that he's given us men like that in our day, in our churches. Don't take that for granted, because you look around and see how many Christian workers in India or anywhere in the world can look at their congregations and say, what did I get from you financially? And you can say, I got zero, but I served you.

Don't take that for granted. We gave everything to God and God gave everything to us. And I'll tell you another thing, these brothers who have lived like that, they're not living on the streets today.

No, no, no. God honors his servants. You know, when his 12 disciples, they were hungry themselves for three days, went around feeding the thousands of people in that day when there were 4,000 men and many children, 5,000 people there, many women and children.

At the end of that, he gave them each one full basket of loaves and fishes to take home. Say, that's your reward. They got a lot more than the others because they served the others, not thinking of their own stomachs.

God is never in debt to any man. Yeah. The other thing I want to show you here is, Father, verse 14, the world has hated them because they are not of this world.

Which was the world, even as I'm not of the world, which was the world that hated Jesus? Was it the secular world? Was it Caesar who wanted to kill him? Was it Pilate, the representative of Caesar, who wanted to kill him? No. It was the religious world. There are two worlds.

There's a secular world and a religious world. And in the religious world, again, there are two worlds. There's a false religious world and the true religious world.

Was it the false religious world that wanted to kill Jesus? Was it the prophets of Baal who wanted to kill Christ? Was it the worshipers of Venus and Adonis and all those other gods who wanted to kill Jesus? No. They left him alone. The Greeks who worshiped those other gods, they wanted to see Jesus.

Who were the ones who persecuted Jesus? The people who followed the true religion, who had the true scriptures, who worshiped Jehovah. They are the ones who persecuted and hated Jesus and were determined to kill him when the secular world wanted to set him free. So when Jesus says, the world hated me and therefore it's hated them, which world do you think is going to hate the disciples of Jesus first? The religious world.

I believe that. And that's what encouraged me in the days when there was so much of opposition and evil speaking and false stories. And even now there are all kinds of false stories spread, in literature and in writing and internet and everything.

I said, they can say what they like. That's the way Jesus went. And the other thing he says, I'm praying, verse 23, that they may be perfect in unity.

Who is he praying for? Verse nine, he says, I'm not asking for all the people out there in the world. I'm just praying for these 11 people. I ask on their behalf.

I do not ask on behalf of the world. Do you know that Jesus never prayed for the world? Oh God, he came and died for the world, but he never prayed for the world. You know what I pray for India? I don't pray that India will be converted.

To me, that's a crazy prayer. Sounds very spiritual. Oh God, let India be converted.

India for Christ and all these types of stuff. Sounds very impressive, right? You know what I pray? Hallowed be thy name in India. Let this nation know that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Very few will find the way to life. I know that. I'm not expecting the whole country to be converted, but that there'll be a witness for Christ, a pure witness in the midst of all the corrupt Christianity there is.

I say with Jesus, Lord, I ask on behalf of the disciples. I do not pray for the world. You can do what you like.

I have fixed my eyes on Jesus. I find no better example than him. Now, I'm not fooled by all these pressures that people put on me for prayer because I know my scriptures.

Today, so many Christians are moved by all these things they read and hear because they don't know the Bible. They haven't seen Jesus. So, they are moved with every wind of doctrine.

They go here and there. My brothers and sisters, study the scriptures and you won't waste your life. So, he says, I pray that these 11 will be one.

And not only these 11, verse 20, I ask also for those who will come to the discipleship through their ministry. So, he was preaching and praying for disciples, not the great crowd of people who listen to him. But I don't pray for the great crowd of people who listen to me on the internet or anywhere else.

I say, Lord, in the midst of that crowd, there are a few who want to take up the cross every day, who love you more than anyone and anything on the earth. I want to pray for them that they will be one. That's one of the amazing things we have experienced here.

We're not perfect. Ian and I are not perfect, but I'll tell you something. In 33 years, we have never had a fight for one day.

We have disagreed on different things, sure. That's the proof that we all have our own individual mind and that we are not perfect. But we haven't fought.

I can't think of a single day in these 33 years when I didn't feel like speaking to him. Always not on good terms and it's the same vice versa. We've experienced that, not only with him, but different ones.

And I praise God for that and I want to say that is a greater mark of God doing something. That's what Jesus prayed for. They must be one.

Not that they must be large in number. They must be one. They must be one.

They must be one. Not that they must accomplish great things. So dear brothers and sisters, it's very good for us as we come with deep thankfulness to God for all that he's done to evaluate ourselves by comparing ourselves with Jesus.

And as we look towards the future to say, Lord, we see how you lived and we want to see where we can short without condemnation, without discouragement. I remember the olden days when I didn't fix my eyes on Jesus. When I was busy in the ministry, going back 35-40 years, I used to be depressed frequently.

I'm never depressed now because the author of my faith has written his faith in my heart and in his faith there is no depression. I mean, I'm not taking any credit for it. Supposing you pick up a book written by somebody else and you read it.

Can you take a credit for what's written there? No. Look, if somebody has done all this artistic work and writing all these letters on this, these verses on this board, I can't take any credit for it. I didn't do it.

Somebody else wrote it. I'm saying my faith. I didn't write it, brother, sister.

I didn't. How can I get any credit for it? I don't get depressed. That's not my credit.

Somebody else wrote his faith in me. Just like somebody else wrote those letters. I didn't write it.

The author of my faith. The trouble is you are the author of your own faith. That's why you get depressed.

Let Jesus write something in your heart. Fix your eyes on him and say, Lord, write your law in my heart. You know, he never does anything for people unless they ask him to.

If you don't ask him, you won't get it. You don't have because you don't ask. Why not ask him? Lord, you said in your word that you write your faith in my heart.

You write your law in my heart and mind. Do it. I give you the book.

You know, if I say, write it and I don't open the book for him. No, no, write it, Lord, but I don't open the book for him. How can you write it? I've got to open my heart.

Say, Lord, here, write it. Write it. I want you to have all of my heart, every page from page one to the last page.

I want you to be the author of my faith. I want you to write in me the faith you had that made you please the father, even when you were making stools and benches. That made you please the father when you were 10 years old and go and did some maybe cutting vegetables.

So Mary in the kitchen, can you please the father by cutting vegetables in the kitchen? I tell you, Jesus has taught us another way, a wonderful way. You can do ordinary things and please the father. It's wonderful.

This is the new and living way that Jesus has opened for us. It's very simple. One last thing.

Everything Jesus did in his life was through the power of the Holy Spirit. You can have everything right in your doctrine, understanding, but without the power of the Holy Spirit, nothing will work. We can have these bugs, we can have these fans, we can have the mic, speakers, everything, but without electricity, nothing works.

And I often feel that that's how it has been for a number of people in our church. You perhaps know enough doctrine to teach thousands of people in this country, but do you have the life to demonstrate to them? That's another thing. You can say, I've got better fans and better air conditioners and better gadgets and computers and everything else in my house.

Great, but you have electricity brother. Otherwise nothing works. Jesus lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All the time he valued the power of the Holy Spirit as a man. And that's what you and I need. Jesus said, if you thirst, come to me and drink.

Dear brothers and sisters, let's pray. God will fill us with the Holy Spirit so the rivers of living water will flow from us. I never get tired of saying it, but I know my life would be nothing without the power of the Holy Spirit.

That is the answer to everything, to life, to ministry, to family life, to bringing up children. What's the secret? If I write a book, how to bring up children? One page, be filled with the Holy Spirit. How to be a good husband? One page, be filled with the Holy Spirit.

How to fulfill your ministry? Be filled with the Holy Spirit continuously. Let's pray. Let's bow our heads before God.

There is never a word of condemnation in the church, only word of hope and encouragement and faith. And that's what you've heard this morning. And it's come to you from heaven, straight to your heart, from the throne of God.

Open your heart and say, Lord, I want all of this in my life. I don't want to miss out on one drop of the living water. Thank you, Heavenly Father.

Thank you for your goodness to us as a church through many, many years. And thank you for the ones who you have brought from here and there, who long to be disciples and who are becoming disciples here in this church and in other parts of this country and elsewhere. I pray you will make us one so that your

heart can be satisfied.

Make us holy so that your heart can be satisfied. Make us those who will deny our will every day and please you every day so that your heart can be satisfied. Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thine is the glory. Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

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