

# How Jesus Pleased the Father

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life that is pleasing to God, as exemplified by Jesus, and encourages listeners to follow His example.*

**Duration:** 1:05:56

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:45, Matthew 12:32, 2 Corinthians 5:9, Galatians 2:20, Hebrews 4:15-16

**Topics:** "Following Jesus", "Pleasing God"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having the mind of Christ, focusing on the need to deny oneself, follow Jesus, and seek to please God above all else. It highlights the example of Paul and Jesus in living a life dedicated to pleasing the Father, through prayer, humility, and forgiveness. The speaker challenges listeners to examine their hearts, prioritize obedience to God's will, and cultivate a mindset that reflects the character of Christ.

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## Transcript

It's really a joy to be here again and what has been on my heart to share during this conference is the subject of having the mind of Christ. So before we get to that, I want to show you a verse in 2nd Corinthians and chapter 5. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5, here Paul speaks of having an ambition. The world is full of people with ambition.

People have different ambitions in politics, those who are in business, those who are academics and scientists, those who really accomplish something in the world, in any field, in any field are those with ambition. And even in Christian work, there are people with ambition but the wrong type of ambition. Ambition to be a famous preacher or to be internationally known as a speaker or to build a mega church and to be known around the country as a great pastor, all types of ambitions people have, religious people, non-religious people.

What was the ambition of the apostle Paul? See Paul has been given to us by God as an example because there are only two people in the whole Bible who said, follow me. One was Jesus and the other was Paul. Jesus said, follow me, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11 verse 1, follow me as I follow Christ.

And so if the Holy Spirit has told us to follow Paul as he followed Christ, that's a good example to follow. And I believe that every true servant of the Lord should be able to say like Paul, follow me as I follow Christ. Unfortunately, there are very few like that in the world.

Most people say, don't look at me, my family life is a mess but I'm going to teach you God's word. I would say to such a person, he should stop preaching God's word. If his family life isn't a mess, he should go and set his family right and not bring more dishonor to the Lord's name.

But there's so much of this, people who are after money, preachers, they can't say follow me as I follow Christ because Christ was not after money. He never in his life asked anybody for money. So how can today's preachers ever say, follow me as I follow Christ? This is the Babylonian state of Christendom we're living in.

And in the midst of such a world, we have the example of Paul. If you go to scriptures and you see how Paul, Paul has been my example for many, many years. See, Jesus never taught us how to plant churches, Paul did that.

Jesus showed us how to live the life and we can look at him to live the life but we're not just interested in living a godly life, we're interested in planting churches. Jesus did not come to earth to make holy people. He said, I came to build, I will build my church and if I'm just a holy person and I'm not part of a local church, I have missed the will of God because Jesus has not come to make holy people.

He said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. So it's easier to live a holy life than to build a church, I'll tell you that. And that's why a lot of people shrink away from that, they just want to live individual holy lives.

They have missed the will of God. So 2 Corinthians 5, Paul speaks about his ambition in verse 9, therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home, and if you want to know what is home, he says in verse 2 and 3, our home is in heaven, that's where our home is. Here on earth we're not at home, we're absent from home.

So he says, whether I'm in heaven or absent from home, it's the same thing. It says in verse 9, absent from the body to be at home with the Lord. But whether I'm there at home with my Lord or absent from my Lord here in my body on earth, I have only one ambition and that is to be pleasing to Him.

So what does that mean? Think of what your ambition will be when you get to heaven. There you will have no ambition to make money because there's no money there. There will be no ambition to be a great scientist or a businessman or a preacher because there's no preaching.

There's no opportunity to build a mega church. In heaven, what will your ambition be? It will be to please the Lord. And Paul says, that is exactly the same as my ambition on earth.

In other words, Paul was going in a certain direction on earth, seeking to please the Lord, please the Lord, please the Lord, please the Lord and then he died and he entered heaven and he's continuing in the same direction. He doesn't have to change direction. Or if the Lord comes, such a person will not have to change direction, he just continues the same way.

But a lot of Christians will have to change direction when Christ comes because they're following some other direction here right now. Their whole passion in life is not to please the Lord, it's something else and suddenly the Lord comes and says, hey, now we've got to please the Lord. If that is how it is with you, I want to say to you, you're completely out of the will of God.

The only person who can say I'm in God's will is the man who can honestly say that if the Lord were to come tonight, I will not have to change the direction of my life. It'll go exactly the same way as I'm going right now. Every day of my life, I'm seeking to please the Lord and I enter heaven, I just continue in the same direction.

I want to ask you, my dear brothers and sisters, to examine yourself in the light. Don't look around at shallow Christendom around you and compare yourselves with other churches and other Christians and pat yourself on the back that you are better than them. I know you're better, but that doesn't mean you're pleasing to the Lord.

This must be your goal. This is the way to press on to perfection. Paul says in relation to this, follow me as I follow Christ.

So if my ambition on earth has got to be exactly the same as my ambition when I get to heaven, I have to do something about my way of thinking because it's my way of thinking that's got to change. It's because I think in a certain way that I make a certain ambition in my life. Think of a scientist.

He thinks in a certain way it's a great thing to pursue science and to invent something and he pursues that. Or someone else thinks it's a great thing to do a business and make a lot of money and become a millionaire and he pursues that. Or somebody says the great thing is to be a preacher, to be known as a famous preacher or to build a big church and that's his goal.

All that will disappear when Christ comes. So you don't have to be a great preacher or speaker. If you as an ordinary believer without any fantastic gifts, most believers don't have exceptional gifts.

How many believers have you heard in your whole life, in your whole life, who preach in such a way that you're blessed every time you hear? Very very few in my life I have heard. Why is it God has given very few people that gift? It shows that is not the most important thing. It's necessary.

It's one of the gifts that God's given in the body. But what about all the multitudes of ordinary believers who don't have these fantastic gifts? What's God's plan for them? They can have the same ambition that Paul had, which is to please the Lord, even if they are not apostles, even if they don't preach, even if they don't plant churches. I want to say to every person here who's got perhaps zero gifts, you can live a life pleasing to the Lord and you can enter heaven and hear the Lord saying to you, well done good and faithful servant.

So for that we have to change our way of thinking. So when we think of pleasing the Lord, let me show you two verses. First of all, 1 Corinthians in chapter 10.

In 1 Corinthians 10, it speaks about the children of Israel who came out of Egypt and God did not want them to wander for 40 years as they did. As soon as they came out of Egypt, God had planned a route for them and in two years they reached a place called Kadesh Barnea, where they sent the spies to occupy the land. And the spies came back and said, this land is filled with giants, we can't go in.

And they pulled back and then God said to them, you read that in Deuteronomy 2 verse 14, God said, okay, because you didn't obey me, you're going to wander another 38 years in the wilderness, making 40 years altogether. And it says here that God was not pleased with them. Notice in 1 Corinthians 10, our fathers all were under the cloud, they all passed through the Red Sea.

They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They ate the same spiritual food, the manna that came from heaven. They drank the water that came from the rock, which is a picture of Christ.

But with most of them, God was not well pleased. So then we see that out of the 600,000 men, God is pleased with only two of them. And it says most of them, it means 600,000 minus two.

He was not happy with all those 600,000 people. He was not pleased with them, but He did many miracles for them. He sent the manna every day.

He healed their sicknesses. He split the rock to give them water. What does this teach us? That God does miracles even for those with whom He's not pleased.

Many believers think that if God answers my prayer, He must be pleased with me. No. He answered the prayer of these 600,000 people for 40 years.

They did not miss manna one single day. They got manna from heaven every day for 40 years. Imagine if you experienced miracles like that.

Wouldn't you think inwardly, God must be very happy with me because He's done some miracles for me. I think people are healed of cancer miraculously or God does miracles even among believers. And they get the idea that because God's done a miracle for me, He's happy with me.

It is not true. Many Christians think because I asked God for something very difficult and He answered my prayer, God must be happy with me. No.

I want to clear your mind of this deception that if God answers your prayer, He's happy with you. Here is the clearest example. He was not happy with 600,000 people, even though He did miracles for them every day.

There's never been a group of people on the face of this earth who experienced an answer to prayer every single day for 40 years. You may have experienced an answer to a prayer three or four times a year. These people were experiencing it every day for 40 years, but God was not pleased with them.

So please remember this. Answers to prayer. God protecting us.

You know, it says the pillar of fire protected them from wild animals at night. The pillar of cloud protected them from the heat of the sun during the day, but God was not pleased with them. God can give you supernatural guidance like a pillar of fire, and still it doesn't prove that God is happy with you.

It's very, very important for us to understand this. This is why the Old Testament has been given to us so that we can read and learn who are the people who made God happy and who are the people whom God was displeased with. It's very, very important for us for this to be firmly established in my mind.

And this failure of the Israelites is mentioned three times in the New Testament. Here, 1 Corinthians 10, Hebrews 3, and in the book of Jude. Let me show you one more verse.

In Matthew chapter 6, sorry, Matthew 5. In Matthew 5, it says that God, 45, Matthew 5, 45, God causes his son to rise, S-U-N, to rise on the evil and the good. He sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. So here's an atheist farmer.

One side and the other side, there's a God-fearing righteous farmer. Both plant seeds. The God-fearing farmer prays that God will give him a good crop.

The atheist farmer doesn't pray. He says, there's no God. I don't believe in all that rubbish.

He plants a seed. Without prayer, he gets a good crop. And the God-fearing farmer, he gets a good crop.

With whom is God pleased? He sends the rain on that atheist farmer's field and he sends the rain on the God-fearing farmer's field. Haven't you seen that around you, how God blesses some unbelievers, the same way he blesses you? I've heard of unbelievers who've had supernatural healing from sickness. Just like I've heard of believers who have it.

He makes the son to rise on that godless atheist field and he makes the son to rise on this God-fearing farmer's field. What is the difference? Sometimes that puzzles us when we see in the material, physical realm, similar things happening to believers and unbelievers, both bad and good. So these good things don't prove anything about the person.

They only prove that God is a good God. That's all. Any material, you see rain and sun, are material blessings.

And material blessing only proves that God is a good God. Think of health. Health is a tremendous blessing.

But is it only God-fearing Christians who got health? No. A lot of ungodly atheists who are very healthy and who live long lives, beyond the age of a hundred. Money, it's a very useful thing to have here on this earth, but is it only Christians who have money? All these people who preach that God blesses you with wealth, well, the Muslims say that too.

They say some of the richest people in the world are the Muslim kings and sheikhs in the Middle East. So, what does it prove? God gives money and health to ungodly people and also to godly people? None of these things prove that God is pleased with them. It just proves that God is a good God.

It's very important for all these false concepts that are being preached by deceiving preachers to get it right out of our head. Because even though we may not believe in the health-wealth gospel, in the back of our minds, sometimes we think that if God has blessed me somewhere, it must be because he's happy with me. If God has answered a prayer of mine, it must be because he's happy with me.

And it's that mental confusion that I want to remove from your mind and say that does not prove that God is happy with you, because he does that for unbelievers. He did it for the unbelieving Israelites, for hundreds of thousands of them for forty years, even when he was not pleased with them. He does it for atheists, he does it for Muslim kings and for Hindu businessmen and all types of people.

The richest people in India are not God-fearing Christians. The healthiest people in India are not God-fearing Christians. So what is it then that pleases God? How can I say that I'm living in a way that's pleasing God? How do I know for certain that my life is pleasing to God? If it's not by material blessing, if it's not by God prospering my business or giving me a job or giving me a house to live in or any of these things.

When God sent Jesus to earth, the entire Christian world thinks of Christ having come only to die for our sins. That was one thing. But that took only six hours of the thirty-three and a half years that he lived on earth.

Listen, out of the thirty-three and a half years that he lived on earth, he spent six hours being crucified for our sins. That's not the only thing God sent him for. Why did he send him as a little baby? Why didn't he send Jesus as a full-grown man, just like he made Adam from the dust of the earth? He could have made a man and Jesus could have appeared and said, okay, here I am.

I come to die for your sins. Because dying for our sins was not the only reason why Christ came to earth. That's why he so often said, follow me.

He could never have said, follow me. If he just died on the cross for six hours. Because we are never going to do that.

He could never have said, follow me, if he came as a full-grown man. Because a six-year-old boy will say, Lord Jesus, I don't know how to follow you. You were never a six-year-old.

How do you know the problems I face as a six-year-old? But there's no one who can say, Lord Jesus, you don't know what I went through. He came as a baby, right all the way up to adulthood. You see, the little footsteps of Jesus as a one-year-old, as a two-year-old, as a ten-year-old, as a teenager, footsteps that you can put your feet in to follow.

There's no one on earth who can say, you don't understand what I went through. He came lower than anybody else. Why was he born in a stable? Why was he born in a cow shed? He could have been born in a palace.

He was born in a cow shed. In my entire life, I've never heard of anybody born in a cow shed. I mean, I met numerous poor beggars and poor people in India.

Never once have I heard, even at that level, anybody who had to give birth in a cow shed with cows and donkeys. It's only Jesus. I don't think in the history of the world, there's ever been any other person who was born in a cow shed where the baby had to be put in that feeding trough of a cow.

Can you imagine that? Why did he come there? So that nobody could say that Jesus didn't understand the poverty into which I was born. He came underneath everybody. And when he died on the cross, that is the worst form of killing a person that's ever been invented by man.

Today, there are more merciful ways of killing people with the electric chair or a lethal injection or even hanging. It's just all over in a moment. The most painful and the most excruciating, painful way in which people have been killed is the way the Romans discovered it.

To crucify a man and keep him hanging there till he dies. And Jesus came down there from birth to death to show one thing that nobody on earth can say, you don't understand what I'm going through. We need to understand this.

He said, follow me. So as I was saying, Jesus didn't come just to die for our sins, as most Christians think. That's true.

And we need that. But he also came to show how God wants man to live. And that's not preached in most churches.

And that's why he lived 33 and a half years. Those 6 hours on the cross are just to take care of our fast life. He needed to die.

He needed to shed his blood and be crucified because there was no other way for the guilt of my sin to be removed. But he lived on earth to show me how I must live. That's a very, very important aspect of the reason why God sent his son.

And that's why he said, follow me. And so we need to understand how he lived. And that is why we need to understand the mind of Christ.

Because we read about 600,000 people with whom God was not well pleased. Now let me show you the example of one man about whom God said, I am well pleased. It's the opposite of what we read in 1 Corinthians 10.

And that's in Matthew chapter 3 and verse 17 when Jesus was baptized. The voice from heaven said, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Here's another thing we can learn.

And if you've heard me before, you've heard me say this many times. I never get tired of saying it because I believe it's the primary message God has asked me to preach for the last 40 years. And I'll never stop preaching it.

The Old Testament prophets very often were given one burden. If you read Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Ezekiel, God gave them one burden. They only preached that one message.

And this is the burden that the Lord has given me and I never get tired of preaching it. That Jesus never did a miracle for 30 years. Never preached a sermon.

Never did what we call Christian ministry. And yet God said, I'm well pleased with him. Some of you who don't have any gift of music or preaching or any ministry, can God be well pleased with you? Of course.

Supposing you spend your whole life without ever preaching, without ever doing a miracle, without ever experiencing a healing or any such thing. Can your life be well pleasing to God? Of course. The example is Jesus.

He never experienced one supernatural thing in 30 years. His life was a very, very ordinary life for 30 years. Never doing things which we would call religious or spiritual.

He just went and sat in the synagogue. Never preached in the synagogue. First time he preached in the synagogue was after his baptism.

And his life was well pleasing to God. And if you can understand that, Lord, how did your life please the Father? If I can discover that, I've discovered the secret to how to have my ambition to please God. That my direction of my life will never change if Christ were to come suddenly.

So it is in that first 30 years of Jesus' life that you discover what it means to be well pleasing. Compare that with the 600,000 Israelites about whom it is written, God was not well pleased, and here I am well pleased. Those are the people who saw miracles for 40 years and answers to prayer and supernatural experiences

and God speaking from heaven, thunder and fire and everything.

God says, I'm not well pleased. Here is a person who never experienced anything supernatural for 30 years and God is well pleased. Are you like that? Are you a Christian who is really born again but you've never had one supernatural experience in your life? You don't even speak in tongues.

Never mind. Jesus never spoke in tongues, by the way. Don't worry.

You've never heard a voice from heaven. But Jesus never heard it for 30 years. You're not able to preach.

Never mind. You're not able to play music. You're not able to do any great ministry.

Jesus never did anything for 30 years what you call ministry and religious work. How was He pleasing to the Father then? Because He did what His Father wanted Him to do every day. That is the secret.

If you want to know what is the secret of a life well pleasing to the Father, turn with me to John chapter 6 and verse 38. John chapter 6 and verse 38 we read, Jesus said, I have come down from heaven I always call this the one line autobiography of Jesus Christ. An autobiography is a life story written by the same person, Himself, about Himself.

And here is Jesus' life story that He says about Himself in one sentence. I came from heaven and what did I do for 33 and a half years on earth? Never did my own will but only the will of my Father. That was what pleased the Father.

My dear brothers and sisters, if you are gripped by this, I tell you, it will change your life. If you are gripped by one thing, that the only way you can please the Father is if you follow Jesus and the way He lived in those I don't say 33 years because then you'll think of miracles and preaching and all that. Let me say the first 30 years.

Never doing His own will but only the will of the Father. In other words, putting His own self-will to death every day and doing what pleased the Father. For example, He had to grow up and obey Joseph and Mary which I'm sure was not easy.

It's not easy for any of our children to obey us. They've got a will that they have to put to death if they obey us. They have to say no to their own will when they obey their daddy or mummy.

Jesus had to put His own will to death because in His case it was even more difficult because our children don't have as much wisdom as we parents have. All of us parents have a lot more wisdom than our children. But there was one child who lived on this earth who had more wisdom than his parents.

Only one. And that was Jesus. And so imagine a child who has more wisdom than his parents.

And he can see the wrong decisions his parents make. The wrong attitudes his parents have. And when such a person tells this 10 year old to do something, he obeys.

That really requires the crucifixion of his own self-will. You see, if you want to know what that means, it's like working in an office where your boss knows less than you of the job. And you have to submit to him.

He doesn't know 10% of what you know about that job. But he's the boss. And he tells you to do it and you gotta do it.

And you can see how painful that can be. That's exactly how Jesus was as a little boy. Obeying imperfect parents.

And seeing Joseph and Mary fighting and quarreling with each other. I hope you realize that they were all covenant people who were defeated by sin. And not despising them.

It's very very important for us to see this. There's an old testament verse in Leviticus in chapter 22. I want you to turn.

You see in the book of Leviticus you read how God was explaining the seriousness of sin. And how you had to kill a lamb as a sacrifice for your sin which is portraying Christ who would come later on. And here he tells us the type of lamb that you should select.

I mean you have many lambs and some of them may be defective. So turn Leviticus chapter 22. Leviticus chapter 22 and verse 18.

Leviticus 22 verse 18 speak to Aaron and say if any of the house of Israel who wants to present his offering when he brings his offering for it to be accepted for you to be accepted verse 19 it must be a male without defect. That's the point. Without defect.

And look how much that is emphasized. Whatever has a defect you shall not offer it. It will not be accepted.

When a man offers a sacrifice of offerings to the peace offerings to fulfill a vow or free offering it must be from the herd of the flock verse 21 it must be perfect. There must be no defect in it. It must not be blind or fractured or maimed or having a running sore or eczema or scabs.

You shall not offer to the Lord or make them an offering on the altar to the Lord in respect of an ox or a lamb if it has an overgrown or stunted member you may present it for a free will offering but it cannot be offered as a sacrifice and the priest were told you shall not accept any such offerings. Look at the emphasis on perfection in that lamb symbolizing that finally the Lamb of God that had to die on the cross there could not be one sin in Him. That means the offering of Jesus when He died on the cross had to be an offering where in His entire life, now just think of this in His entire life He could not have had one dirty thought in thirty and three and a half years.

Remember the Bible says He was tempted exactly like us Hebrews 4.15 You and I know how difficult it is to live one day without sinning without a single bad thought without a single unkind word without a single angry word I'm just talking about 24 hours one day or 12 hours just the daytime hours without a single sinful action without a single sinful attitude in our heart towards somebody without jealousy without pride without looking down on someone even for a moment If Jesus had despised somebody for two seconds He would have sinned. He would have been a lamb with defect. No wrong attitude no wrong thought no wrong word no wrong deed and no wrong motive in doing You know you can do something good and then the motive is to get honor or you feel a little proud that people appreciated what you did sin Immediately Jesus could no longer be a sacrifice for our sin So you can see what a tremendously difficult thing it was for Jesus to live 33 and a half years like that You know most Christians think of the pain Jesus went through on the cross and how terrible it must have been to be hammered and nailed and crown of thorns and whipped and mocked and all that They concentrate on those 6 hours There are other human beings who have gone through that type of, you know the apostle Peter was crucified and there are many other

Christians who have been crucified at different times Even recently we heard of some Christians who were crucified in Iraq or Syria or somewhere There are human beings who have suffered that type of pain That was not the greatest thing that Jesus did.

He died on the cross of course took our sins but the most difficult thing was not the cross It was living 33 and a half years, day by day by day by day by day without ever having one sinful thought ever speaking one sinful word, without ever doing one sinful action without ever having a single wrong attitude towards a single human being and without ever doing anything with a motive other than the glory of God To me that was the greatest miracle of Jesus' life It was not raising the dead.

Raising the dead you could do like that it didn't, no effort at all and this is how he lived and as the father from heaven saw Jesus struggling to live like this Now, if Jesus didn't have to struggle Now a lot of people don't understand that he lived on earth as a man he was God of course even on earth he was God that's why he could accept worship from people people worshipped him he didn't tell them to get out like the angels and Peter would do he accepted it and he forgave people's sins nobody can do that except God but even though he was God he did not use the resources of God to overcome sin he did not use the privileges of God when he was on earth for example God cannot be tempted that's one of his privileges it says in James chapter 1 God cannot be tempted but Jesus was tempted so

how did he overcome? how did he live this life which we find difficult to live for one day that he lived for 33 and a half years we need to understand that I mean if this is the way that Jesus pleased this father in heaven I for one want to find out I don't know about you I want to find out I'm not satisfied with ministry because I know a lot of people who are in ministry are not pleasing to God I want to find out how Jesus pleased God without any ministry without any preaching without doing any miracle without casting out any demons just by his life if I can find that out I have found the secret of pleasing God then I can ensure that the direction of my life will not change if Christ were to come today I just continue in the same direction so if your ambition is not to be a great

preacher or a miracle worker or to have a great ministry or to be recognized in the church or to be an elder in a church or some crazy worldly religious ambition like that if your ambition is to please God you want to know the answer to this turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 4 I'm trying to explain to you what the mind of Christ was like a mind that only was set on pleasing the father not a mind set on ministry a lot of Christians their mind is set on ministry and that's why they go astray and it looks so nice they say there's a world to be reached there's dying without Christ we got to go and reach them it sounds very adventurous people go to Mexico to serve the Lord it's actually just to ease their conscience that they've done something for the poor people people come to India so

called missionary work waste of money if God has not called them then it's disobedience to go to India or Mexico or anywhere a lot of people go to all these places it's evangelical tourism a lot of churches arrange mission trips to Mexico to build houses for people it's evangelical tourism they enjoy going to a place and get a satisfaction out of helping poor people you think that's why Jesus came to earth just to get some satisfaction out of helping poor people most Christians don't have a clue as to how to please the father because they haven't studied the scriptures they've been brainwashed by today's Babylonian Christianity even so called believers even so called spiritual believers they haven't understood the way why is that? because they think that they can get the answer outside of

the scriptures if God's word is not the primary source of your guidance I can give it to you in writing that you'll go astray like I often say if you've got a bible in your own language and you don't study it deeply you deserve to be deceived you deserve to be deceived because God's given you the word in your own language educated you so that you can read and you still don't study the scriptures if you've been a believer for more than 2 years if you were born again more than 2 years ago and you haven't read the bible fully yet I think you should go and hang your head in shame before God and say Lord I'm ashamed of myself I've been born again for 2 years and I haven't read through the bible yet I'm reading other books I decided when I was converted 57 years ago that I would read through

the bible and I read it through in 6 months I didn't understand a lot of it because it takes time to understand I'm still trying to understand parts of it but I read through it to see what it was and I began to study it from then on then you will know God's way of thinking God's given us his word so that we can think the way Christ thought so turn with me to Hebrews 4 it says here in verse 15 we don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses sometimes Christians don't realize that Jesus Christ can fully sympathize with your weakness and I'm not talking about physical weakness I think Jesus was a very strong man he was a carpenter a hard working man he must have been a very muscular man when he was 33 there was no physical weakness in him what is the weakness that he is

speaking about Jesus was not 76 years old like me, I have physical weaknesses that Jesus never had in his life but the weakness spoken of here is some other thing he can sympathize with our weakness it's relating to temptation we are weakest when we are tempted you may be muscular you may be able to do many mighty things you may have a brilliant intellect that you are not weak in your intellect, you can do many mighty things but when it comes to sin the strongest of men the cleverest of men are weak pastors are weak, preachers are weak the greatest weakness is when it comes to sin we are strong when it comes to theological argument oh the number of sinners I have met who are strong in theological argument quoting this verse and that verse I get numerous emails from people because of our

internet ministry and I find so many people are defeated by sin but they are arguing about this verse and that verse I have met people like that in the churches they are totally defeated by sin in their life they get angry, they lust with their eyes and they watch pornography but they are arguing theology can you be more crazy than that that's crazy and yet there are believers like that sitting in churches their weakness is temptation and I want to say to all of you my dear brothers and sisters your weakness is in the time you are tempted that's the time you really see how weak you are you may be clever and strong in a thousand ways when it comes to temptation you are weak and it says here Jesus can sympathize with our weakness Jesus had a brilliant mind he wasn't dumb and stupid like

some people are so there you can't say he can sympathize with our weakness because he had a brilliant mind he was physically muscular but he was tempted just like us and that's where he can sympathize with our weakness he knows how difficult it is to overcome temptation not how difficult it is to lift a hundred pound box not how difficult it is to solve a complicated mathematical problem he is not talking about such weaknesses he is talking about how to overcome temptation he can sympathize with our weaknesses because he was tempted in every single point exactly as we are but he did not sin in thought or word or deed or attitude or motive but he knows what a struggle it is and how did he overcome by help from above he says therefore verse 16 let us also go to the throne of grace that we

can also get the same help in time of our need verse 16 the time of our need is not when we are solving some earthly problem but when we are tempted that's the time of our need that we can get the same help

that Jesus got from his father if we go and ask for it so how did Jesus ask Hebrews 5 verse 7 in the days of his flesh thirty three and a half years he offered up prayers and supplications in the days of his flesh flesh is not referring to the last night in Gethsemane that is one day this is the entire period of his thirty three and a half years in the days of his flesh or we could paraphrase it as during his thirty three and a half years on earth those were the days of his flesh what did he do well he didn't do miracles all the time he didn't preach all the time but he did pray a lot

during those years even when he was in Nazareth before the age of thirty he prayed and supplication specific requests that supplication and it wasn't just a weak type of prayer it was fervent prayer with loud crying and tears can you think of when you would pray with loud crying and tears can you think of some time in your life when you prayed with crying and tears you know it's only when you're facing some impossible situation it's hopeless case like if you have a child maybe your only child after many years of marriage you got a child and that child is seriously sick and the doctors say there's no hope for it it's gonna die that poor innocent baby is gonna die then you'll pray you'll pray with crying and tears and all the time your mind will be occupied with that and if it's a prolonged

period of hospitalization that that baby has say three months in the hospital you won't have one day in those three months that you'll be free of thinking of that only child of yours is it gonna die, is it gonna live you pray and you know only hope is in God how you pray with crying and tears and wake up in the middle of the night and pray for that child and during the day in your place of work you'll be praying for that child in your mind all the time sometimes with strong crying and tears now Jesus was praying like that not for any baby that is dying or for any physical thing not for a job or a house but he was praying to be saved from death what is the subject of his prayer to be saved from death now there are two types of death mentioned in the Bible one is physical death the other is

spiritual death only two death physical death is when you die spiritual death is when you sin it says in James 1 when lust conceives sin is born and when sin is finished it brings death so even if there is a slight sin there is a smell of death there and Jesus didn't want it and it says here he was heard that means his prayer was answered so that proves that it was not physical death he was talking about because he was not saved from physical death but here was a death from which his prayer was heard and he was answered his prayer was answered he was praying father I don't want the smell of spiritual death in me I don't want sin I want to be saved from it and he knew listen to this he knew he could not save himself he prayed to him who was able to save him from death that's why he is an

example for us because we cannot overcome temptation on our own I remember the years I lived first as an unconverted person I couldn't overcome temptation then after being born again I still couldn't overcome temptation I was defeated for years with dirty thoughts and anger love of money it was there I wanted to be free but I couldn't I am sure that if you are honest that is a testimony of many of you but maybe you take it lightly oh it's ok I am going to heaven when I die well I wasn't interested in going to heaven when I die I was interested in following Jesus on earth before I die that's one of the things we prayed when we started our church 41 years ago in Bangalore in India I said Lord we don't want people to come to our church who want to go to heaven when they die we have 1200

million people in India they all want to go to heaven when they die but they are not fit to be part of the church we are not interested in gathering Christians who want to go to heaven when they die we are not interested in gathering Christians who want their sins to be forgiven we want to gather people who want to follow Jesus on earth before they die that's a very small number Jesus said that the way to heaven is

narrow and the way to life is narrow and very few find it and I said Lord those are the people we want to find the people who want to walk this narrow way were not interested in going to heaven when they die but wanted to follow Jesus on earth before they die so here was Jesus praying Father save me from sin and he was hurt it says here because of his godly fear some versions

it says piety there was a godly fear that Jesus had as a man that he didn't want to displease his father you know there are two types of fear we can have of God one is the fear that he may hurt me the other is the fear that I may hurt him we don't have to have the fear that he may hurt me God doesn't come to hurt us but we must have the fear that we may hurt him Lord I don't I have a fear that I might hurt you by something I say by something I do but something I look on watch on my computer or my phone which I shouldn't be watching I may hurt you I'm not afraid that you'll come and punish me and send me to hell that's not the fear I have but the fear that I might hurt you by some wrong attitude towards a human being I may hurt you by a wrong word that I say to somebody I never want to do

that that is a godly fear and Jesus had that godly fear so he was heard and he goes on to say here the apostle verse 11 concerning Jesus in this way there's a lot we have to tell you but it's very very difficult to explain why is it difficult to explain is it because these Hebrew Christians were all stupid dumb people that they had to be intellectual and clever no God has hidden his truths from clever people and intelligent people the bible says that Jesus himself said that in Matthew 11 25 Father I thank you that you've hidden these truths from the clever and the intelligent but you've revealed them to babes what is it babes have that clever intelligent people don't have humility helpless dependence clever intelligent people don't have a sense of helpless dependence they are smart they

can take care of themselves they don't have humility like babes have so I see from that verse in Matthew 11 25 that revelation from scripture understanding of scripture cannot come by the use of our intelligence this is why I am against bible schools and bible colleges because they are speaking to man's intelligence and that's not how we are to study the bible that's why I never recommend anybody to go to a bible college I've never been there one myself and I thank God for that because it's catering to man's intelligence you don't have to go to a bible college you come to a meeting and you're absorbing things in your intelligence there are lots of people who listen to my sermons on the internet and get points to preach it I say you can preach it if you've lived it first but if you haven't

lived it and you're preaching it you're just preaching from your intelligence you'll ruin yourself you'll destroy yourself by preaching that you live it then you can preach it so why is he saying it's difficult to explain he says because you have become dull of hearing how do these Christians become dull of hearing I'll tell you when the Holy Spirit tells you something is wrong something that you're doing some habit some practice the Holy Spirit tells you in your conscience that's wrong you shouldn't be doing it and you ignore that voice and continue to do it you are on the road to spiritual deafness every step you move like that you're gradually going to lose your sense of hearing you'll become dull of hearing you won't be able to hear there are people who say I can't hear God speaking

to me you know the Apostle John says in the Isle of Patmos in Revelation chapter 1 I heard the Lord's voice like a trumpet how is it he heard it like a trumpet and other people say I can't even hear it here you blow a trumpet and a deaf man standing there says I didn't hear a thing that's exactly how lots of believers are God is speaking as loud as a trumpet but they can't hear it the Holy Spirit is speaking because for years and years and years they've neglected and despised the witness of the Holy Spirit they've never repented seriously they take advantage of the fact that the blood of Jesus cleanses them from sin so they

take sin lightly you know the number of men who watch pornography in secret and sit in the church as if they're holy people they're deaf they'll never be able to

understand their intelligence may grasp a lot of things but they won't understand what he's trying to explain about Jesus in this way I've seen this over 40 years, I've preached this message for 40 years but I've seen very few people who are gripped by it even in our own churches who are gripped and seen this is the way I must live and walk every single day of my life every single moment of every single day this is to be my ambition it's because there's a certain dullness of hearing that has come to understand the mind of Christ and even when they understand it intellectually it never works in practice because their conscience has become dull so we've got to be careful about this so when we think now of the mind of Christ, Paul said in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 he made this very bold

statement 1 Corinthians 2 the last verse verse 16 who has known the mind of the Lord who has known the mind of God but he says but we have the mind of Christ now not everybody can say that, you can quote the verse anybody can quote the verse but Paul was giving a testimony there's a lot of difference between giving a testimony and quoting a verse when Paul said we have the mind of Christ he wasn't quoting a verse he was giving his testimony he said I have the mind of Christ and he wasn't boasting he was just speaking the truth it's like if you say I don't have the mind of a dog but I've got a mind of a human being you're not boasting no you're saying I don't have the mind of a dog my way of thinking is not like that of a dog my way of thinking is like a human being that's not boasting

it's just speaking the truth so when Paul said I have the mind of Christ he was just speaking the truth he was not boasting but he didn't come there overnight for example in another place he says I am crucified with Christ Galatians 2.20 nevertheless I live but it is no longer I but Christ that lives in me we quote that as a verse Paul was not quoting a verse he was just giving his testimony he says fellas I want to give you my testimony I've died some time ago I died and it's not the old Saul of Tarsus now living here Christ lives in me and the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God so here also it was a testimony I have the mind of Christ how did he get there I believe it was by his being gripped by these very things I've been talking about gripped to see how Jesus lived on

this earth and hearing his call follow me deny yourself say no to yourself say no to your will put that self will to death destroy that self which is on the throne knock him out of the throne and let Christ rule there deny yourself die to yourself every day and follow me now I believe that's how Paul got the mind of Christ that he took seriously what Jesus said about saying no to himself dying to himself in every situation and seeking to follow he gradually his mind became like the mind of Christ and then you see the tremendous advantage of having the mind of Christ as we increasingly begin to think more and more like Christ is our decisions in little little things become decisions decisions which are according to the will of God and when we get into eternity and our life is assessed we

find that so much of our life has accomplished the will of God we are built with gold silver and precious stones and not with wood hay and straw my assessment is that most Christians are building with wood, hay and straw they take sins so lightly there's no deep mourning when they do sin there's no weeping on the pillow at night if they have sinned during the day in their thoughts or attitudes take the matter of forgiveness forgiveness is the first thing that we receive from God when you come to God the first thing we need is forgiveness and the first thing he gives us is forgiveness and so that is the first thing that we have to give to other people as well you know why God gives us forgiveness so that we can give it to others but you know the number of Christians who still haven't

forgiven somebody in their life you ask yourself all of you sitting here can you honestly tell me or not tell me, tell yourself that there's not a single human being on the face of this earth whom you have not forgiven is there one one person who did some terrible wrong to you spoke evil about you or your children or your family or did something wrong worse than that you say I can't forgive him you don't have the mind of Christ there was nobody whom Jesus could not forgive the mind of Christ was always to forgive when they called him the prince of devils Beelzebul you know what he said in Matthew 12 have you spoken a word against the son of man it is forgiven turn to that verse in Matthew 12 they just called him prince of devils it's just after that you read in Matthew 12 the Pharisee

said in verse 24 this man cast out demons by Beelzebul the ruler of demons imagine if somebody called you a devil and Jesus replies in verse 32 saying whoever speaks a word against the son of man it will be forgiven you see you can speak against me but don't speak against the Holy Spirit and my understanding of that phrase the son of man is an ordinary man you know the son of a man he was saying I am an ordinary man have you spoken against me it's ok don't worry I am an ordinary man I was so gripped when I understood the meaning of that phrase son of man as ordinary man I said Lord Jesus almighty God you walked on this earth as an ordinary man and you considered yourself as an ordinary man in relation to others please help me to get rid of all my high thoughts until the end of my life

always to consider myself as an ordinary man not superior to any human being on the face of the earth an ordinary man because my savior walked that way he was an ordinary man till the end of his life how dare I think of myself as anything other than an ordinary man you know the number of Christians who suddenly just because God has blessed them in some way or used them in some way they suddenly begin to think they are special or important or specially anointed servant or some devil rubbish like that no wonder God is no longer pleased with them there are many people whom God used once he is no longer happy with them be an ordinary man till the end of your life it's easy to begin our life as an ordinary man I have told people in our church who have been with us for many years I said brother

what do you think of yourself today? can you think of the day you first came to this church I have told them you heard of this church you were so defeated, frustrated and you heard a message being preached in a church which was going to lead you to victory you heard of it and you came and you sat there in the last bench and you were so happy just to find a place in such a church but now you have been here 25 years and you have begun to think oh I am a senior brother now you have begun to think get some airs about yourself how sad be an ordinary man till the end of your life then it is very easy to forgive others he said you have spoken a word against an ordinary man is forgiven let me say this to you my brothers and sisters if there is one human being you have not forgiven it proves you

do not consider yourself to be an ordinary man you are sort of special then you haven't understood the way Jesus lived, you haven't understood the mind of Christ and you don't know the way to please your father so think of these things don't let the devil take away the seed that is sown today don't let the seed just sprout superficially let it sink deep and produce fruit you will think more of it in the days to come bow our heads before God heavenly father my words are weak I am unable to express what the spirit wants to express no man is capable but as you took the five loaves and blessed and broke it and fed the multitude do the same today Lord take the words home to every heart by your holy spirit let there be no peace in any heart until there is obedience to your word and I pray that

everyone here Lord nobody here will waste their earthly life the one life you have given us to be able to do something for you before we leave help us to be wise to make full use of every single day I think of the

young people here the tremendous potential they have got their whole life ahead of them help them not to waste it but to be gripped I think of older brothers and sisters preserve them in humility Lord help them to be ordinary men and women till the end of their lives help us all we pray we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/LF2RgTHVSII.mp4>

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