

Humble Yourself and Be a Servant

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the necessity of humility and self-denial in following Christ and building a unified church community.

Duration: 59:54

Scripture: Philippians 2:5

Topics: "Humility", "Servanthood"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and servanthood, following the example of Jesus Christ. It highlights the need to be like Christ, who humbled himself and became a servant, focusing on unity, selflessness, and pride as hindrances to spiritual growth. The speaker challenges listeners to embrace a life of sacrificial service, seeking to be exalted over sin and the world rather than seeking positions of honor or power.

Transcript

One of the most important things we need to understand about God's ways is what was manifested as the primary thing in Jesus life and we can see that in Philippians in chapter 2. In Philippians chapter 2 we read, he talks about unity there. It's one of the most complete verses on unity found in the whole Bible. Philippians chapter 2 verse 2, he speaks about being in the same mind, the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

I don't think there is another verse in the whole Bible that speaks about so many aspects of unity, same mind, same love, same spirit, same purpose. And in order to get there, he says in verse 5, have this attitude in yourselves which was in Christ Jesus. He speaks about two sins, two sins that disturb and prevent unity.

Those sins are verse 3, selfishness and pride. Here is a command. Is it possible to obey it? Do nothing from selfishness.

Do nothing in pride. I tell you, after 50 years of being a believer, I haven't come there yet. And if you think you have, it's because you don't have light on yourself.

These are two mountains. Do nothing from selfishness. That means absolutely zero in my life that I do centered in myself.

Every decision, never thinking of myself. Nothing in pride. But though it is a mountain, if you don't start climbing it, you'll never reach the peak.

We have to press on. This is what it means to press on to perfection, like you see in the front of this pulpit. Some people say to us, oh you brothers think you're perfect.

I say, just come and see what's written in the front of our pulpit. That's our testimony that we're not perfect. We believe in pressing on to perfection.

Perfection means what? To be like Jesus, who did nothing from selfishness, who did nothing from pride. Now in the Old Testament, there was no commandment saying, don't do anything from selfishness. Don't do anything from pride.

It was impossible to give that command, because it's like asking a little baby to lift a 50 ton weight. How can your little five-year-old lift 50 tons over his head? So God doesn't give impossible commands. But now he says you can do it, because you know if you have a crane, you can lift a hundred tons.

Now when God gives us the power of the Holy Spirit, it's possible to obey this command. Many of us say we believe the Bible is the Word of God. Do you tremble at God's Word? Do you know why God does not look upon many of us with favor and blessing? If God would look upon us, his face would shine upon us, we would be radiant all the time.

We would never be in a bad mood. We would never be depressed or discouraged if God's face would shine upon us. God told Moses, tell Aaron, this is the way to bless the people of Israel.

Numbers chapter 6 verse 24 to 26. The Lord bless you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and shine upon you and give you peace.

The fullness of that we can experience only today. And if God, to whom does God look with favor? Let me show you a verse in Isaiah 66. Isaiah 66 we read in verse 1 and 2. He's talking about prophetically about building the church.

Many of us want to build a church. Many of you elders think that you're building the church in your locality. I hope you are, I don't know.

But I certainly want to build a church. I don't want to just like Noah was gripped by building the ark, I'm gripped by building the church because I know that's the only thing that will remain when the world is destroyed. Just like Noah knew that ark is the only thing that will remain when the world is destroyed.

I don't know whether you believe that the only thing that will remain is not your house and your job and your reputation, but the church. And if you're wise, you'll build a church. Isaiah 66 the Lord says, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool.

Where are you going to build a church for me? What sort of house are you going to build for me? Because I made all of this universe. But I will look at this person with favor so that I will make him build my church. The one who is humble and contrite or broken of spirit and who trembles at my word.

I remember years ago when I read that verse and I said, Lord, all my life I want you to look at me with favor. Always, every day in my home, I want you to look at me and shine upon me. When I stand in the pulpit, whether it's ten times a day, I want you to look at me with favor and I know it will go well.

And the Lord says, I look at you, but I'm not partial. These are the conditions. You must always humble yourself.

You must always be broken in your spirit and when you see something in my word, you must tremble until you obey it. I said, Lord, I'll do that. And God's word breaks me.

God's word humbles me because I know I haven't reached where God wants me to reach. That's what God wants me to do. God's word made Paul the man he was.

He was constantly aware, as he says in Philippians 3, I have not yet attained. I have not yet become perfect. But there's one thing I do.

There's only one thing I'm doing in the world. I'm not here to make money or get honor or fame. I'm here to press on to perfection and to build a church.

So when I read a word like this, do nothing from selfishness, you know what I do? I tremble at that word because I look at my life and I say, Lord, so many things in my life, I'm seeking my own. You be honest with yourself. When you make a decision, what do you think? How will this affect me? How will this affect my family? Is this going to be beneficial for me? Is this going to be beneficial for my family? If I go there, that will be more beneficial for me, that will be more beneficial for my family.

I say, Lord, I never want to decide like that. I want to say, if I go there, will it be more beneficial for God's kingdom and will it bless God's family? I'll go. If it's inconvenient, let it be inconvenient.

Can you say you're doing nothing from selfishness? Are you even trying? Many of you have been in the church for 20, 30 years. How free are you from seeking your own? How free are you from saying, I don't want to seek my own and the decisions I take in my life. Those are the people who get God's best.

Those are the people who build the church. There are many people who want to build a church. They say, oh, they built a church over there.

I want to build a church in my locality. They want honor. They want to be known as the elder and the leader.

They don't tremble at God's word. They're seeking their own in the decisions they make. They don't want to pay a price.

They don't want to be inconvenienced. They don't want to sacrifice. Do you know how Jesus built the church? Let me show you.

Ephesians 5. The Lord's spoken to me many times through this verse. Ephesians 5, we read that Jesus Christ, verse 25, Ephesians 5, 25, Christ loved the church and gave himself up for the church. Gave himself to death.

Every desire he had was put to death. What for? For the church. Now when you decide to take up the cross in order to be holy yourself, you know even that can be pretty selfish.

I want to be holy. I want people to see me as a holy man of God. Good, but it could be a very selfish desire.

Jesus did not take up the cross in order to be holy. He was already holy. He went to the cross for the sake of the others, for the sake of the church.

True holiness is that which seeks the good of others, not one's own gain. Paul says about some people whom godliness is a means of gain. And the Christian world is full of people who preach godliness in order to gain money.

I don't believe there are people like that in our churches who are doing it for money, but I think there are many in our churches who are doing it for honor. The honor of being known as a great preacher. The honor of being known as an elder brother or an elder brother's wife.

You're no better than that other man who's doing it for money. You don't need money. You need honor.

He needs money. What's the difference? Seeking our own. Wanting to be known.

Would you do God's work if you're unknown and nobody knows about you and you're not an elder? You're just an ordinary brother sitting at the back of some church, but you say, Lord, I want to build a church. I never want to be an elder, but I want to build a church. Let nobody give me any credit.

Let nobody know me. Let nobody recognize me, but I want to build a church. That's the man God will use because he's not seeking his own.

Do nothing from selfishness. Do nothing from pride. I tell you, we need to constantly repent and repent and repent of the selfishness, self-centeredness, and the pride there is in our life.

That's what he says in Philippians 2. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. Philippians 2, it says, let this attitude, verse 5, Philippians 2, 5, be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. In Jesus Christ, God demonstrated his ways.

When Jesus said, I am the way, he wasn't just saying the way to get forgiveness of sins. He says, I am the way. The way I lived is the way you should live.

I am the narrow way. That is the way we are to walk, the way Jesus walked. Not being a carpenter or a bachelor, but living free from selfishness and pride.

And that is the area where God sees how many of us are serious about following Jesus. If you want to know whether you're serious about following Jesus Christ, ask yourself whether you're constantly asking God to show you the selfishness within yourself. When was the last time you asked God to show you your self-centeredness, your seeking your own, your selfishness? When was the last time you asked God to show you your spiritual pride? When God used you in some way to bless somebody, the pride that came up at that moment, you repent of it.

It comes to all of us. Some people immediately fall on their face before God and say, God, I'm sorry. I got a little puffed up there.

Forgive me. Others just move on as if nothing happened. Their conscience doesn't even bother them that they got puffed up when God used them.

Yeah, that happens in our churches too. I can, after being a believer for 50 years and having served the Lord for 44 of those years, I can pretty much see pride in a person's face. You know, pride is like body

odor.

You know, when we perspire and we're sweating, there's a smell that comes forth from our body, which is not a good smell. When we don't brush our teeth properly, there's a smell that comes forth from our mouth, which is not a good smell. And the sad part of it is we ourselves are not aware of it.

You know, a beggar who hasn't had a bath for many years, he doesn't even know, he's not even aware that he's stinking. You can smell it pretty close, but he's not aware of it. People who have bad breath are not usually aware of their bad breath, and pride is like that.

You may not be able to see the pride in you because you don't want to see it, but a godly man can see it straight away, because pride is not something only in the heart. Adultery is not only in the heart. Let me show you something in scripture.

Proverbs chapter 6. Proverbs chapter 6, it says here in verse 16 onwards, there are six things which the Lord hates. Yeah, actually there are seven, which are an abomination to him. You know what abomination is? If you look up a concordance, you'll find that in the Old Testament, in the book of Deuteronomy, the Lord said, when you go to the toilet in the wilderness, there were no flush tanks and toilets and all.

He said, you got to go out outside the camp and take a spade with you, so that when you've gone to the toilet there, you cover it up, because the Lord does not want to see an abomination there. That is an abomination. You've gone to the toilet and you didn't cover it up.

Here are seven things that are like that, an abomination to God. Number one, proud eyes. Number one, it's not in the heart.

It was in the heart, but what is in the heart comes forth through the eyes. You don't know it. I have come to the place where I can detect it almost immediately.

I can look at a person's eyes and see pride, like an experienced doctor can look at a person and see from the color of his skin, sickness, jaundice. He looks at his tongue and discovers sicknesses. Pride is something that is seen in our eyes and you cannot hide it.

You can act very humble and speak in a humble way, but you can't change your eyes. No. Acting humble is not the thing.

If it's in your heart, it comes forth from your eyes. If pride is in your heart, it comes forth from your eyes. The same way with adultery.

It says in 2 Peter 2, 2 Peter 2 and verse 14, it speaks about certain preachers who have eyes full of adultery. You say, I thought adultery was in the heart. That's right, but it comes forth through the eyes.

A man who's kept on lusting with his eyes in secret, watching pornography, watching women and lusting, lusting, lusting, lusting. A spiritual man can see adultery in that person's eyes and not only a spiritual man, I think a modest woman will very easily be able to see adultery in the eyes of a man. Yeah.

You men don't know it. Nobody sees you lusting after women. Nobody sees you watching those pornographic sites, but a godly, modest woman can see it in your eyes.

Your eyes have become saturated with adultery and you can't cleanse it easily unless you get rid of that secret lust in your heart. It's in the eyes. God's made it like that.

It's like you can see anger in a man's eyes, can't you? That's easy to detect. You don't have to be spiritual to see anger in a person's eyes. You know that? You can see gloom and depression in a person's face.

You don't have to be spiritual to see that. But you have to be a little spiritual to see pride in a person's eyes and pride and adultery in a person's eyes, but it is there. And so if we really want to be like Jesus, we say, Lord, I'm determined to root out all selfishness from my life, all pride from my life.

That's the only way to pursue unity. And it's no use an elder brother telling other people to do it. He has to be an example himself.

If an elder brother has got adultery in his eyes, how can he deliver other people from it? If an elder brother loves money, how can he deliver other people from the love of money? Impossible. The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil, it says in 1 Timothy 6. And you can love it secretly, but it will produce all sorts of evil in your life. It will produce confusion in your church.

And you will blame this person and that person and the other person for the problem, but the problem is with you, that you love money. You've got adultery in your heart. It's all secret, but it comes out.

So it's not an easy thing to build a church. You can see somebody has built a church and say, boy, I'd like to do that. Let me get the right doctrine and let me get the right pattern, sing the same songs, preach the same message, and we'll build a church.

It's not like that. It's like copying the tabernacle. You know that we can make a tabernacle today exactly like Moses made in the wilderness, because all the dimensions, details, color of the curtains, everything is written in Exodus.

Today a man can produce a tabernacle 100% like the one Moses made in the wilderness, but one thing will be missing. The fire of God will not be there, and that's the most important part. And so you can look at other churches and imitate the pattern, preach the same doctrine, go to our website and listen to all these messages, absorb them, and preach them.

You think you'll build a church? No. You'll build the pattern. The fire will be missing, because the fire depends on a humble man, on a godly man.

And if God doesn't find a humble, God-fearing man who trembles at his word, there will be no fire there. The pattern will look the same, and you can fool everybody. We are attached to CFC.

We are one of the CFC churches. How long will that glory last? When Jesus comes, he's gonna strip that veneer off that and expose your church for what it is, and expose an elder brother for what he really was. Take it seriously, my brothers and sisters.

I'm concerned, because I see failures in elder brothers. It disturbs me. Take the pattern.

As I've studied church history, I asked myself, why is it a great movement started by a great man of God, by the time it comes to the second generation, just dies out? It's happened again and again and again with every single movement that ever happened in history, church history. And as I've studied it, I studied it because I want to learn from the mistakes of others. And I don't want to repeat the mistakes other people

made.

And I learned one thing. The founder knew God. The followers know the doctrine.

That's the difference. The founder knew God. Like Elijah, he lived before God's face.

The followers, they just know the doctrine. They got the doctrine and pattern, and follow the pattern and the doctrine, but God is not there. It's like building the tabernacle without the fire.

And that's what's happened. The glory of God has departed. And the Old Testament word, Ichabod, is written there.

The glory has departed. So the solution to it is to determine. Any one of you, God can use you to build a church, if you decide one thing.

Lord, I am determined to climb to the top of this mountain. What is the top of the mountain? Where I do nothing, Philippians 2 verse 3, from selfishness and nothing from pride. And if I discover some selfishness or pride, I immediately repent in dust and ashes before God and say, Lord, that was not this person's fault or that person's fault.

It was my selfishness. It was my pride. I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had, who had zero selfishness, zero pride.

When it says we are to walk as Jesus walked, it means we are to walk with zero selfishness, zero pride. And like a child learns to walk, we have to learn to walk. It's a long walk.

You know these people who run marathon races in the Olympics? You know that for three, four years, every day, they get up and run those 40 kilometers. You think they win that prize in the Olympics so easily? No. They keep their bodies trimmed.

A lot of things they'd like to eat, they don't eat. A lot of things they'd like to do, they don't do. They have to get enough rest and get up early morning and run 40 kilometers every day.

And then one day you see him standing on top of that podium and getting the first prize in the gold medal, you say, boy, I'd like to be there. Yes, you'd like to be there. Are you willing to get up and run 40 kilometers every morning? Are you willing to deny yourself all those rich foods you like to eat? That's the price he paid.

Behind that man standing at the gold medal for the winning the marathon lies a history of self-denial. And behind every man or woman of God whom you see God has used is a history of self-denial you may know nothing about. But you can do it.

If you're willing to pay the price, if you're determined to climb this mountain and say, Lord, I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had who loved the church and gave himself for it. Think how you give yourself for the sake of your children. Is there a father or mother here who will not sacrifice for your children? What a lot of sacrifice you make for your children.

Time, energy, money, your life. How many of you will love the church like that? Those are the ones who will build the church. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

I know that verse many times the Lord has spoken to my heart. Said, do you want to build a church? There's only one way you can do it. You got to do it the way Jesus did it.

Love the church and give yourself for it. That means you don't complain about others. I remember years ago in CFC is way back the beginning in the early days when we had a lot of different duties to different people for the maintenance and cleaning of that building when it was just one floor.

And there was somebody appointed to clean the toilets at the back. And he didn't turn up. And my first reaction was, so what an irresponsible person he is.

And the Lord told me immediately, is my house your house? I said, yes Lord. Then go and clean the toilet yourself. So I went and did it.

And the picture that came to my mind was like this. Supposing in my own house where I live, not in the church building, but in my own personal house, if some brother who loves me very much volunteers and says, Brother Zach, will you give me the privilege of every morning just coming and cleaning your toilet? Oh, that's very kind of you. I don't want that.

But he says, no, I just want to do it. I love you so much. And so he comes along every morning and cleans the toilet.

And one day it doesn't turn up. What do I call him? Hey, why haven't you come to clean my toilet? Will I do that? Impossible. Impossible.

Why should he come to clean my toilet? It's my house. I should be thankful that he did it for so many weeks. The Lord said, treat my house like your house.

Then you will be my servant. And I decided that day, Lord, your house will be my house. Your family will be my family.

I will care. I will sacrifice whatever it costs. I will never say that that's too inconvenient.

That's too difficult. No, I'll never say it. Because Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

Yeah, you can build a church too. But if you keep on asking, how much will it cost? What is the sacrifice I have to make? The Lord will say, forget it. I'll look for somebody else.

You keep on asking, how much will it cost? What sacrifice will I have to make? Brother, forget it. Forget it. Go and do something else.

Go and do business and make some money. Don't waste your time trying to build a church. God will not use you in a hundred years.

Till you come to the place where you love the church and give yourself for it. You say, Lord, I want to do nothing in my life out of selfishness. Those are the people who have really built the church in different places.

You think it's a doctrine. You think it's gifted speaking. You think so.

It's not gifted speaking. It's a life of sacrifice that builds the church. Some of us can speak great sermons, but you don't have a life of sacrifice behind it, of self-denial and doing nothing from selfishness and pride.

That's why you have so many problems in your church. That's why you have so many complications. That's why the devil is able to come in and mess around in your church and you just sit back and blame human beings.

You blame other people. You know, if something went wrong in CFC, I would blame myself. I wouldn't blame anybody else.

If my home was messed up and my children were wayward, what will I do? Blame my children? No, I'll blame myself. I say, I didn't, I was not a good father. That's why my children were wayward.

Where are the elders who will say, there's problems in my church because I have been a total failure as an elder. Show me an elder like that. I tell you, God will do mighty things through him.

But we have a bunch of elders who blame others and say that person's fault, this fellow's causing trouble, that fellow's causing trouble. That's the spirit of Eve when she got the Adam, when he got poisoned by the devil in Eden. It's my wife.

She's the cause of the problem. Dear brothers and sisters, we haven't seen Jesus who never blamed anybody. I say, what's the difference between Adam and Christ? When we are in Adam, we have Adam's nature.

When we have Christ, we have Christ's nature. That's what it means. I was once upon a time in a tree called Adam, where I did everything from selfishness and everything from pride.

One day the Holy Spirit cut me off from that tree and put me into another tree called Jesus Christ. That's why I don't believe in these generational curses. Ancestors did something and the curse will come to me.

Rubbish! That's if I'm not born again. Now what is my ancestry? My ancestry is in Christ and the Heavenly Father. There's no curse there.

If you have not been grafted and put into Christ, boy, you got a lot of generational curses to deal with. But when we are put in Christ, we have to, the sap that flows from the tree is the sap of unselfishness and humility. It's not something I produce.

Do you think a branch produces the sap that produces oranges? No. The sap, the branch just receives the sap that produces oranges. And Jesus said, I'm the tree, you're the branches.

I have to receive the power of the Holy Spirit that produces humility. Otherwise, it would be an artificial humility that produces a life free from selfishness. That's why the most important thing in the Christian life, listen to this, is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

That's what those early Christians have, which the devil has counterfeited everywhere and people are satisfied with the counterfeit. My life and my ministry would not be what it is today if God had not baptized me in the Holy Spirit and fire. There was a time when Jesus Christ baptized me in the Holy Spirit and fire.

He laid his nail pierced hands on my head and anointed me, put the Spirit in me and fire in me. And I said, Lord, I never want to lose it. And the Lord said, live in trembling at my word.

I said, Lord, I will. And that's why I say I haven't come to that top of the mountain yet, but I'm working my way up. And every year it gets better to be totally free from selfishness and conceit.

The reason is there is a law in God's dealings like the law of gravity. You know that you can make use of the law of gravity. So many, so much of machinery makes use of the law of gravity.

In many places, electricity is produced by what is called hydroelectric power. They have a big wheel, a waterfall. They put that wheel under the waterfall and the wheel goes round and round and round.

And now there's gravity pulls the water down and the turning of the wheel around a magnet produces electricity. Adam could have done it. Electricity is not an invention, it's a discovery.

Invention is something you produce like a computer. Discovery is something which is there in nature and you discover it. If Adam knew how to use gravity, he could have produced electricity in Eden.

You know, let waterfall fall upon this thing and get some magnet and produce electricity through it. There are laws in the kingdom of God too. And one of those very important laws like the law of gravity which you can make use of is this.

God gives his grace to the humble. 1 Peter, James chapter 4 and verse 6. God gives his grace to the humble and God is opposed to the proud. And in case you missed it, Peter repeats it in 1 Peter 5 and verse 5. It's one of those things repeated in the epistles.

Two different apostles write the same thing. God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, 1 Peter 5 verse 6. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you at the proper time.

What does it mean to be exalted? Some people think if I humble myself, God will make me an elder. You want to be exalted over people? You are totally unfit to be an elder. The sad thing is some elders do want to be exalted over people.

They want to order around and be known as a big man. I'll tell you what I want to be exalted over, sin. I want to be exalted over sin.

I want to be exalted over the world. I want to be exalted over the devil. I have zero, zero interest in being exalted over people.

I have no interest in giving orders to people. I have no interest in people respecting me. God is my witness.

I have zero interest in people honoring me or respecting me or deferring to me or any such thing. But I have tremendous passion and interest to be exalted over sin and the world and the devil and money and lusts. I want them all under my feet.

I want to be exalted. And that is how I read the verse, that if I humble myself, God will exalt me over all these things. Let men be bigger than me and greater than me.

Let everybody in the church be greater and bigger than me. It doesn't matter. We one bit.

I'm sorry to say that once upon a time many who started in CFC pursuing the right way are not pursuing the right way now. They are seeking to be exalted over people. Many have drifted from that original path that God showed us in CFC, the way of humility and brokenness.

But there are a few, and I praise God for them, who have seen that vision and who will not change, who are determined to go the way Jesus went, who at the end of his life, on the last day of his life, was washing the disciples' feet. And I prayed that many times in my life. I said, Lord, on my last day of my life on earth, I don't want to be a director of any organization or be some big shot somewhere.

If you will give me the honor on the last day of my life on earth to be washing somebody's feet, I would be delighted because that's where my Savior was on the last day of his life on earth. Which way are you pursuing? Are you going up or going down? Lucifer went up, and you know where he ended up. He became the devil.

Jesus went down and down and down and down and down. You read that in Philippians 2. Turn back to Philippians 2. Jesus, though he was God, humbled himself. He wasn't just an elder brother.

He was Almighty God. He was not an elder brother. He was Almighty God, and he humbled himself and became a servant.

He came to earth and became a servant, it says, because he was made in the likeness of men. Philippians 2.7, he became a servant. You need to understand this verse.

I never understood it for a long time. He knew that the moment you become a man, you have to be a servant of others. Have you known that? I said, Lord, that's amazing that in this sin-cursed earth, we're not supposed to be kings.

We're not supposed to be rulers. When they wanted to make Jesus a king, why did he run away? Tell me, why did he run away in John chapter 6? Because he knew a man has to be a servant. They didn't know that in the Old Testament.

The man after God's own heart, David, became a king. Many people became kings, but not today. No.

Today we have to follow Jesus, who when they wanted to make him a king, he ran away into the wilderness on the mountaintop. He didn't want to be a king. He wanted to be a servant, because he knew, he saw clearly that in a sin-cursed world, the only right position a man can take is to be a servant of others.

Have you seen it? I praise God for the day God opened my eyes to see that, that I am not called to rule over anybody. I am not called to get anybody to obey me. I agree fully with John Wesley, who said, if you disobey me, brother, you do not sin.

If you disobey God, you sin. I'm sorry to say there are elder brothers who think, if you disobey me, you sin. Rubbish! You're a servant of the devil.

I'll tell you honestly, if you disobey me, you don't sin. If you disobey God, you sin. Jesus became a servant.

I'll tell you what is the greatest need in CFC today, in the year 2010, as it completes? We need more servants, with the spirit of a servant. Not those who serve. There's a lot of difference between those who serve.

Haven't you seen these pictures of cabinet ministers who inaugurate a road-sweeping campaign by taking a broom and make sure the photographers are there and sweep the road, inaugurating the road-sweeping campaign, the chief minister coming and doing this. Are you that type of an elder? He's serving. He's not a

servant.

There's a lot of difference between serving and being a servant. You can serve in numerous ways in the conference, and you may not have the spirit of a servant. You may do so many things, but you may be a pretty bossy person.

Jesus was a servant, a born servant. He became like a slave, and because he emptied himself and came down like that, it says God exalted him for this reason, verse 9. For this reason, God exalted him and gave him a name which is above every other name. Do you know who's going to sit at the left hand and the right hand of Jesus? James and John wanted to sit there.

I'll tell you who's going to sit at the right hand and left hand of Jesus. If you can understand how Jesus got the highest place, then you will know who's going to sit at his left hand and right hand in eternity. Jesus did not say, oh, there is no such place as my left hand and right hand.

All are equal in heaven. He did not say that. He said, there is a place like that, left hand and right hand of me.

That means very close to me. Not every believer will be so close. I believe that with all my heart that for all eternity, every believer will not be as close to Jesus as others.

That depends on how faithful you are here. To me, the greatest reward, the greatest reward that God can ever give me in heaven is not mansions. It's not crowns.

What do I do with 10 crowns, me balancing on my head and walking around heaven? What's the use of my getting a 14 bedroom mansion in heaven? I don't want it. You can have it. I'll tell you the reward I look for in heaven.

Closeness to Jesus. Closeness to Jesus. That is the only reward worth anything in heaven.

And I believe with all my heart that the more faithful you are on earth in this one life, the closer you'll be to Jesus. Why did God give Jesus the highest place in heaven? Not because he was the son of God. It says here, because he humbled himself.

Now I know who's going to sit at the right hand and left hand of Jesus in all the history of humanity. Those who humbled themselves the most. I don't know who they are, but I'm sure there are two people who humbled themselves the most.

It could be some poor widow in Africa who was one of them and maybe some other unknown man in some other place who humbled themselves more than anybody else. They're going to sit in the left hand and right hand of Jesus. And you wonder who are these? I never heard of these people.

They are the ones who humbled themselves the most because it's a law. The one who humbled themselves the most is right at the top. The one who humbled himself next to that is next to them.

Those who humble themselves a little less are next. It's like a pyramid. And those who, you know, just wanted to be somebody on earth, they are way down somewhere else.

Where are you going to be? Do you want to be close to Jesus? I tell you, I'd give anything to be close to Jesus for all eternity. Anything. I say, Lord, just tell me the price I have to pay on earth.

I'll pay it. I'm not interested in anything. I want to be close to Jesus in all eternity.

He who gave his life for me. Why should I be a thousand miles away from him in heaven? I want to be close to him. And I can be.

Humble yourself. You can be. Humble yourself.

Be a servant. Be a servant of others. It's not just a theory for me.

I've been gripped by it in my heart. You know there's a difference when you're gripped by something in your heart. It becomes a passion.

It becomes a passion that drives you. And you never get tired if you have this passion in your heart. You can do miracles, amazing things when you have a passion in your heart.

I heard a true story once of a mother who saw a car going over her child. And immediately she rushed and lifted that car to release that child. You see a woman did that? That's right.

It actually happened. She had such a passion, such a love for that child that all the adrenaline pumped into her body. She could lift one wheel of the car which she could never have done in normal circumstances.

It's amazing what you can do when you have a passion for something. It'll drive out your laziness. It'll drive out your tiredness.

It'll drive out everything because you've got a passion to be a servant of others. This is the way my brothers and sisters. This is the way which was completely unknown in the old covenant.

In the old covenant they wanted to be kings and leaders. Jesus said the gentiles look for such positions. Among you it must not be so.

But he who is greatest among you must be serve the others. Must have the spirit of a servant. Isn't that how a mother is? Many of you are mothers.

Tell me honestly. Aren't you really a servant at home to your children? What a lot of things you do for the sake of your children. From babyhood you don't expect any reward.

You serve even when your children are ungrateful. Don't even say a word of thanks to you. You'll still cook food for them.

You'll still wash their clothes. That's the spirit of a servant who seeks nothing in return. And I'll tell you something.

Elder brothers can learn from mothers how to serve others. If you want a good example elders of how to serve the church, look at mothers how they serve their children. Expecting nothing.

Serving, serving, serving, serving, serving. Serving for years even after the children are married. You know how it is in India.

The mothers still go and help their children when their wives have babies. That's how it is. It's an endless life of serving till that 90 year old mother dies.

What has she done all her life? Served, served, served, served till her last day on earth. Elders take an example from that. If you want to be a true servant, if you want to be like Jesus because God says he compares himself with mothers.

Can a mother not care for a child? That's the example you got to follow. And that's the example Jesus gave us. We humble ourselves and when God allows circumstances to come into our life it says here humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.

What is the mighty hand of God? It is some supernatural ability to do miracles. No. It is that the circumstances in your life which crush you.

A difficult husband. Boy. Sister, that is the mighty hand of God trying to crush your pride and your selfishness.

That difficult wife who cannot understand you at all. That is the mighty hand of God trying to crush you. But you refuse to be broken.

You resist and you blame your wife or you blame your husband. No wonder you're not broken even though you've heard this message for so many years. When will you start brother? This is the ABC.

Imagine a kindergarten student getting frustrated, teacher getting frustrated with this 15 year old sitting there still don't know, doesn't know ABC. I believe that's how God looks at a lot of his children. The first lesson of humility you haven't learned.

What are you trying to learn? You're trying to learn about the tribulation and the rapture and the antichrist and the beast with seven horns. See the beast in your own flesh first. He's got more horns than seven horns in the days of the antichrist.

Discover that and put that to depth. That's more important than all these prophetic pictures of beasts and all that. The beast of selfishness and the beast of pride.

The mighty hand of God, financial difficulties, problems. Don't run to man. Run to God and say, Lord, why have you allowed this? I mean, I followed that principle even if I got a little fever and I lie down in bed and I say, Lord, why this? There must be a reason.

Nothing happens without God's permission. I'll tell you why. Because Jesus said, even your hair on your head cannot fall without your father knowing about it.

A fever is much worse than a hair falling off our head. So I say, Lord, what's the purpose of this fever? What are you trying to tell me? And the Lord will remind me of a few days earlier when I spoke one unkind word to somebody or a harsh word. One word.

I have wept with joy. I say, Lord, thank you so much that you watch over me so carefully that you don't even let one word slip without giving me a spanking and saying, don't do that. I have loved the hand that has smitten me because it's made me holy.

It's broken me. And the Lord is near to the broken spirit. And I've experienced the nearness of the Lord at such times.

I'll tell you honestly, I've said, Lord, please treat me like that all the time, all the time. Don't let me slip up even slightly in any area. I want to be a servant.

The slightest bit of pride somewhere, immediately God brings me down in some way. And I've fallen on my face before him and said, thank you, Lord. Thank you for your watchful care over me.

I want to ask you. Does the Lord watch over you like that? Or can you do many, many wrong things and the Lord lets you go? I'll tell you why the Lord lets you go when you do so many wrong things, because he knows you're not serious about becoming like Jesus. If God saw that you were really serious about He'd pick you up for small, small things.

He will watch over you with a very jealous care because you're one of his special treasures. I want to be that. So that is the mighty hand of God, which is always bringing us down because he wants to save us from the spirit of the devil, which wants to go up and up and up in the world and say, no, I want to make you like Jesus who came down and down all the way from being equal with God down, down, down to a servant, even to the depth of the cross.

And I say, Lord, that's the way I want to go. That's the way I want to go. I don't care if I don't preach, but I want to go that way and become like Jesus.

And if you have that passion, God will communicate that passion to other people through you. And that was our longing right from the beginning. Lord, I don't want to meet people who want to go to heaven.

There are millions of people who want to go to heaven. That's not my calling in the body of Christ. Maybe some people are called to do that.

I say, Lord, I want to meet with those who want to live a holy life on earth as a witness for you. Just bring me in touch with such people. I'm not saying that is the only ministry in the body of Christ.

It's my ministry. That's why we used to pray, Lord, if there's anybody seeking a godly life here, please bring him in touch with us. Not anybody who wants to go to heaven.

Let the evangelists take care of them. God bless them. But Lord, is there anybody seeking a godly life? I want to know them in Bangalore, in India, in Africa, in Chile, Russia, Japan, Cambodia.

And we get in touch with people in all these places because we prayed, Lord, we want to see those who want to live a godly life. Of course, a few hypocrites also come in like the bad fish in the net. It's okay.

God will deal with them. But in the midst of it all, we get some precious fish, wonderful brothers and sisters who want to be servants, whose longing in life is to be like Jesus, a servant of others. I want you to sing a song with me.

Can you put it up on the screen? Let me read it out first and then we will sing it. Will you let me be your servant? Let me be as Christ to you. Is it on the screen? Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

You know, some people can be so proud and say, I will not let you serve me. I will keep on serving you. That's not the spirit of Christ.

You need grace to let somebody else serve you too. I want to serve others and I must give them freedom to serve me as well. We are pilgrims on a journey.

We are travelers on the road. We are here to help each other, walk the mile and bear the load. I will hold the Christ light for you in the nighttime of your fear.

I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear. I will weep when you are weeping. When you laugh, I laugh with you.

I will share your joy and sorrow till we have seen this journey through. When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony born of all we have known together, of Christ's love and agony. Will you let me be your servant? Let me be as Christ to you.

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too. It's a familiar tune. It's not the original tune, but this is the one we are familiar with, so we'll sing it.

Will you let me be your servant? Let me be as Christ to you. Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too. We are pilgrims on a journey.

We are travelers on the road. We are here to help each other. Walk the mile and bear the load.

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We have seen this journey through. When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony born of all we have known together, of Christ's love and agony. Will you let me be your servant? Let me be as Christ to you.

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too. Let's pray. Brothers and sisters, do you really want to go this way? Answer it to Jesus Christ, your Lord.

Turn around today from the way you've been going. Husband, wife, father, mother, elder, younger, child, boy, girl, whoever you are. Say, Lord, I see today what you were in your earthly days and that's what I want to be all my life.

Oh, Lord Jesus, we long to be like you. It's becoming more and more the passion of our heart to be like you. What an example you set.

Forgive us for the poor examples we have been. Fill us with the Holy Spirit. Baptize us in the Holy Spirit and fire and give us your spirit so that we can walk on earth as you walked and manifest the true Jesus in a corrupt Babylonian Christendom.

We pray in your name. Amen.

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