

# Jesus - Our Forerunner

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes Jesus as our forerunner who lived a human life, providing a relatable example for overcoming temptation and living a Spirit-filled life.*

**Duration:** 1:28:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Mark 6:3, Luke 4:22, Hebrews 2:17

**Topics:** "Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker uses the analogy of a millionaire living in a slum to illustrate how Jesus chose to live among us and teach us how to live with limited resources. The speaker emphasizes the importance of using our time wisely and not wasting it on useless activities like watching television. He encourages listeners to find relaxation and joy in singing songs of love to Jesus. The speaker also highlights the need to make daily decisions that align with God's will and to confront and address any wrongdoing in a righteous manner, just as Jesus did when he cleansed the temple.

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## Transcript

We were thinking the last two days about the distinctives of the New Covenant. We looked at a number of things--repentance, grace, a father in heaven, the gift of the Holy Spirit to fill us so that rivers can flow through us, and how we can overcome Satan and build a family that can be a part of the Body of Christ, a Spirit-filled family that reflects a little bit of heaven. Now, I want to turn to Hebrews 6. Here we read of a title of Jesus, which is not one that we are very familiar with.

We know many titles of Jesus. We know Him as the Good Shepherd, the Door, the Way, the Truth, the Life, Saviour, Lord, perhaps High Priest, the Resurrection and the Life, and many, many titles like that, even Bridegroom. But I very rarely found Christians who think much about this title of Jesus mentioned in Hebrews 6. In Hebrews 6 we are told that we have, in verses 19 and 20, we have a hope as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, Maiden High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Here Jesus is called a forerunner, that means one who runs in front of us. When we first come to Christ, we come to the cross, where He is our Saviour. That's where we begin, where the burden of our guilt is rolled away, and our sins are blotted out, and we see the blood shed on Calvary's cross that cleanses us so thoroughly and, like we saw the other day, justifies us and makes us as though we had never sinned in our whole life.

And we are as Jesus is, before the Father. Jesus never sinned, and I am clothed with His righteousness. This is an amazing Gospel.

But then we are to live the rest of our Christian life looking at Jesus as our forerunner. We can say the Christian life is like a race, which has got a starting line and a finishing line. The starting line is when we are born again and our past life is cleansed away, all things have passed away and all things have become new.

But we are not to stay at the starting line forever. We are to run the race, and in running this race we have a forerunner. Now, a forerunner means someone who ran the same race.

Now, if he was running on some other track, some other race, he is no example for us. But Jesus, our forerunner, means He ran the same race that we have to run. He did not start where we started at birth, because we had this old man, this sinful nature.

He did not have that. We have an unconverted period of history in our lives, where we have accumulated a lot of garbage that still affects our minds and our dreams and our unconscious reactions. Yes, He did not have all that.

But Jesus was born of the Spirit, and one day you and I were born of the Spirit. And He was filled with the Holy Spirit, we can be filled with the Holy Spirit. And it is an amazing truth that He walked the same way that He calls us to walk.

That is why He is called a forerunner. Now if we do not see Jesus as our forerunner, we do not have much encouragement in the Christian life. This is how it was under the old covenant.

They did not have a forerunner. Moses was no forerunner. They had a law given to them, commandments, they were all correct, but they had no example.

And it is like teaching swimming on a blackboard. You can explain all the theory of swimming, how to move your legs, hands, how to breathe and all that, and you understand it all, and if someone tells you, well now go and jump in the pool and swim, you are not going to swim. None of them could.

In the Old Testament, they could not keep the law. That explanation on the blackboard may have been accurate down to the last detail, but they still could not swim. But on the other hand, if somebody took you down to the river and jumped in and said, follow me, just do what I am doing, that is much easier.

Then you do not need an explanation. You watch and you follow. That person in the river or in the pool is your forerunner.

He is being pulled down by gravity just like you. If it were an angel flying across the pool, that could not be your forerunner. If an angel came down from heaven, flew across the pool and said, follow me, I cannot follow you.

I can only admire you. I can sit beside the pool and admire you, but I cannot follow you. If you want me to follow you, take a body like mine, that is subject to the law of gravity, and then ask me to follow you.

And if Jesus had come to earth with some supernatural abilities that I don't have, or if he had lived on earth as God, I couldn't follow him. My understanding is that a lot of Christians, even though they accept the fact that Jesus was God who had become man, they don't think of his humanity sufficiently. They think

that would be dangerous.

And they think only of his deity. And that's why most Christians would worship Jesus, admire him, pray to him, call him Lord. But when it comes to following him, walking as he walked, they say that's impossible.

Because in the back of their minds, they've got this understanding Jesus was God. Period. But that's not true.

That is a heresy. But it doesn't look like a heresy. For example, supposing somebody said Jesus was a man, period.

Oh, that's easily identified as a heresy. But what was he? God who became man. And if you take either of these truths by themselves, it's a heresy.

If you say he was only man, like a lot of people say, that's heresy. What about if you say he's only God? For me, that's equally heresy. God became man.

Because he is God, he never ceased to be God, even when he was on earth. People worshipped him and he accepted that worship, proving that he was God. You and I can't accept worship.

He accepted it. Angels don't accept worship. He was God on earth, but he never used those inherent powers he had as God.

He had to come near a fig tree to find out if there was fruit on it. God doesn't need to come near a fig tree to find out if there's fruit on it. Jesus had that power to know whether there was fruit in the fig tree from a distance, but he never used it.

It's something like a man who's a millionaire, he's got millions in his bank account, coming into a little slum in a poor country, trying to teach people in that slum how to live on a limited income. Now if he lives in the midst of that slum and every now and then draws money from his bank account, he can never teach those people, because they don't have such a bank account like him. But if he says, listen, I'm not, I've got a bank account there, but I'm not going to touch that at all.

I'm going to live here with you, I'm going to work, earn my living, and I'm only going to use what I earn, just like you fellas. And I'm going to teach you how to live with what I earn. That person can be an example.

So that's the thing. Jesus had tremendous resources as God in his bank account in heaven, but if he used that, he could never say, follow me. I'd have to tell him, I don't have those resources.

And perhaps you don't realize, the reason why you may not be serious about following Jesus, is at the back of your mind, you feel he used resources that you don't have. And as long as the devil keeps you thinking like that, you'll never make any serious attempt to follow him, because you'll say, that's impossible. Was he a forerunner or not? Did he say, admire me? Or did he say, follow me? Did he come like an angel, flying across the pool and telling us to follow him? That would be taunting us to do what he knew very well we couldn't do.

But that's not the message of the Gospel. I want to show you these amazing verses. First of all, Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 17.

Sometimes it's difficult to believe what scripture says. I think the book of Hebrews shows us the humanity of Christ perhaps more than any other book in the New Testament. And through these years I've discovered that Hebrews is not a very popular book with many Christians.

I don't know why. Perhaps I do. Perhaps it's because the devil doesn't want us to see something here which would change our whole life.

Christians read Romans, Galatians, Ephesians. These are good books. But very few study Hebrews.

What does it say in Hebrews 2.17? Wherefore, in all things, and when it says in all things, it means in all things. In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren. And we are his brethren.

That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Then it says, in that he himself had suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. In all things he was made like us.

It's another verse I haven't scratched out of my Bible. I believe it. I hope you believe it too.

That in all things he was made like you. Every single area he was made like you and me. He did not have, or he did not use, resources that he had access to as God.

He lived with the limitations you and I have. He felt the pulls that you and I have. The pull of temptation.

Did you feel it? It says, because he was tempted, he can support us. And the meaning there of succor is run to assist us, relieve us, help us. Because he was tempted like me.

That's why he can run to assist me. Of course, God can sit in heaven and help me even without having face temptation. You know, you can comfort a person who is going through a deep financial difficulty, being a millionaire yourself.

But if you have been through financial difficulty yourself, you'd be able to help him with a little more understanding. And God decided to become man, not only to die for our sins, but also so that he could be our forerunner, so that he could face temptation and feel the pull of temptation just like you and me, overcome it and say, follow me. He was made like us in all things.

Turn to Hebrews 4, in verse 15. We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Again you find the word all, but was in all points tempted.

How? Like as we are, yet without sin. We could ask a number of questions and get an answer here. In how many points was he tempted? In all points.

How was he tempted? Exactly like us. The pull you feel in temptation, the pull downwards he felt. If he didn't feel it, he wouldn't be tempted.

It would be like the angel flying across the pool that doesn't feel the pull of gravity. How can he say, follow me? He can only say, admire me. You know, sometimes we are so rooted in a certain understanding that even God himself cannot change us out of that.

We are prejudiced. And even when we see something clearly in scripture, we cannot change. For many, many years after I was born again, I couldn't see this clearly.

I couldn't believe that Jesus had become exactly like me. I thought that would be degrading him to make him like me. I thought that would be robbing him of his glory, if I believed he was like me.

And even though I saw these scriptures, I said, it can't be. No, there must be some other interpretation. Just like perhaps some of you are saying right now, as you hear it.

Must be some other interpretation. It can't be. He couldn't be like me.

He came from heaven, but he sort of stopped somewhere above me, because it is too much to come down to my level. You remember the vision that Jacob had of a ladder from earth to heaven? At Bethel, he had a vision, we read in Genesis 28. And Jesus said to Nathanael, he said to him, I believe that that ladder was a picture of him, of the Son of Man.

In the last verse of John chapter 1, he said, you'll see the Son of Man and angels ascending and descending on him. It was the angels ascended and descended on the ladder that Jacob saw. So that ladder from earth to heaven is a picture of Jesus, the way to heaven.

And to use that picture of a ladder, I always thought that ladder came from heaven and stopped somewhere here. It didn't come all the way down to where I was. Oh, it would be too much for him to be like me.

And then I thought of this picture. Supposing a missionary from a very wealthy western country, let's say like the United States, who is used to a life of great comfort, comes to a poor country like India, and wants to help the poor people in the slums in India. And he lives in a five-star hotel in India, and visits the slums every day to help people to live a clean life, teaches them hygiene, how to live clean, hygienically in those slums where there are no proper toilets, no proper drainage, no running water, nothing.

Yeah, I think we would admire him. Why should he sacrifice the comforts he has here to come down there? And I think of another missionary who comes from the same comfortable situation here and comes to India, and does not live in a five-star hotel, but lives right in the middle of that slum. And he tries to teach these people how to live clean and hygienically.

Which one would you admire more? I know which one I would admire more. Both would have sacrificed. But I would admire more the one who lived in the slum, more than the one who lived in the five-star hotel and visited the slum.

Would this missionary lose some of his glory because he lived in the slum? No, his glory would be greater. And when I saw that Jesus did not come in some five-star flesh, something that had supernatural powers, which I don't have, but became exactly like me, to be tempted like me, I really wept. I said, Lord, I never knew you loved me so much, that you could come in this slum and teach me how to live clean without sinning.

That's what opened my eyes many years ago to the possibility of seeing that one who lived in a slum like me could live clean. One who had lived filthy all his life could be clean. It's a message of tremendous hope.

But Satan has blinded the eyes of many believers from seeing it. We're almost afraid of taking away from his glory. His glory became greater in my eyes when I saw how low he had come, how that ladder from heaven had touched the earth.

It didn't stop somewhere above. He was made in all... It was written in scripture, but I couldn't believe it. He was made in all things like his brethren.

He was tempted in all points, like as we are. If these verses were not in scripture, then it would be fanciful imagination. But it was in scripture, but I couldn't accept it because my inherited theology was different.

I resisted it. I said, no, we're making Jesus dirty. But when I... But I made Jesus dirty and I was living in sin, as a believer.

But when I saw that Jesus had become like me and was tempted like me, I got hope. See that missionary who lives in a five-star hotel and comes and visits the slum, cannot give much hope to this man who lives in the slum. He says, well, he retreats to his clean hotel every night.

So, I suppose he can come here every morning and give me lectures on hygiene, but it won't work for me. But the other one who lives in the slum, he gives more hope to the person who lives there and says, boy, this fellow is living right here in our midst just like us. He's got no resources.

He doesn't retreat to some five-star hotel at night. And he's living clean in his house. Well, I suppose I can live clean too.

That's the one who gives hope. Or to use the other illustration, the man who accesses his millionaire bank account and lives here, doesn't give hope to this man who's trying to live within a limited income. But the one who says, no, I don't access any account.

I work hard just like you and I earn just as much as you and I don't get into debt. And I say, hey, I want to learn the secret of that. This man is just like me.

He's working just like me. He earns just as much as me and he's not in debt like me all the time. I want to learn from him.

That man gives me hope. And when I saw Jesus had become like me and had no resources that I don't have as a man, he never accessed those resources. Then I got hope.

And when it says in Philippians chapter 2 and verse 6 that though he was in the form of God, he did not, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men. He was made in the likeness of men. He was exactly like us.

That word translated made no reputation is also translated in other translations as emptied himself. Emptied himself of what? Not of his deity. That would be impossible.

God can never cease to be God. But he emptied himself of access to those resources he had as God. God knows everything.

But when Jesus was on earth, he said, I don't even know the date of my second coming. How is that? It's because he was like us. I don't know the date of Christ's second coming.

And he was so much like me that he himself also didn't know it. He said, the Father knows it, I don't know it. How is that? Is there anything God doesn't know? He did not access his bank account.

That's why he didn't know. Why was he tired? Why did he sleep? God never sleeps, it says in the Psalms. He never slumbers, nor sleeps.

He didn't access his bank account. That's why. He was like us in everything.

If you see it as I saw it about twenty-five years ago, can revolutionize your life like it did mine. Then Jesus became my forerunner. I saw he did not run another track.

He ran the same track as I have to run every day. He was tempted like I am every day. And he did not sin.

That gave me hope. I can live a clean life too. I need not sin.

I need not react in anger when people spit at me, call me the devil, call me Beelzebub. I can say like Jesus. You know what he said to people who said to him that he was Beelzebub, the prince of devils? He said, have you spoken a word against the Son of Man? You are forgiven.

That wasn't the old covenant. The old covenant when Miriam criticized Moses for marrying a non-Israelite wife. You know what she got? Leprosy.

In the new covenant, when somebody said even something much worse to Jesus, Beelzebub, prince of devils, you know what he got? Forgiveness. And when people call you something, bad names, do bad things to you, what do they get? What do you want them to get? Leprosy or forgiveness? That depends on whether you follow Moses or Jesus, that's all. If you follow Moses, you want them to get leprosy.

If you follow Jesus, you want them to get forgiveness. That's because Jesus is your forerunner. You see, he was like you.

He was tempted like you. He felt what you feel when somebody calls you the devil. But he didn't react like we react.

Because he used the power of the Spirit that the Father gave him. We don't use that. Or we think that we can't follow him.

It's wonderful to have an example. And I know my life has been changed since I saw Jesus as my example, my forerunner. And when I'm under pressure in some temptation, let it be any type of temptation.

It could be the temptation to react in anger or bitterness or lust or anything. I say, Lord, sometime in Nazareth in those thirty years you lived there, you were tempted exactly like I'm being tempted right now, according to Hebrews 4.15. And I want to react as you reacted. You sought for grace for the power of the Spirit and I want to seek for that grace to overcome.

That encourages me. I have a forerunner. I don't have just a commandment.

I have an example. I don't have an explanation on the blackboard how to swim. I have somebody swimming in front of me, who is pulled by the law of gravity, and I just have to do what he did.

And I overcome. There is this verse in Hebrews 10, which says, verse 19 and 20, having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the veil that is his flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near. Now to understand this passage, you need to understand a little bit about the Old Testament

tabernacle.

The Old Testament tabernacle was a large compound, inside which was a tent. It was a large open court, surrounded by white sheets, with a little gate at the eastern end. And then inside this court, open court, was a covered tent, called the tabernacle.

And that covered tent was divided into two parts. One was the holy place, one was the most holy place. So we can say the tabernacle had three parts.

The open outer court, which everybody could see, symbolizing my body, which everybody can see. And then there were two covered parts, the holy place and the most holy place, symbolizing my soul and my spirit. See, man is a trinity, because man was made in the image of God, who is a trinity.

And 1 Thessalonians 5.23 says that man is spirit, soul and body. And God wants to sanctify spirit, soul and body, it says in that verse. And the tabernacle, tabernacle means a dwelling place.

Man was to be the dwelling place of God, and so God made that tabernacle an exact picture of what man was, with three parts, a trinity. And that tabernacle had an outer court, a holy place and a most holy place, like man has a body visible to all, soul and spirit that are hidden inside the tent. And here when it speaks about the holiest, it's talking about that spirit part, representing the spirit part, the most holy place, which was a little queue, where nobody could go, in the Old Testament.

All the people could come to the outer court, they bring their sacrifices there, the brazen altar was there, picturing Calvary, where the lambs, the bullocks and the goats were slain, it was always covered with blood. There was a, like a basin of water called a laver, symbolizing baptism. And then, inside was this holy place, covered with a curtain, and then between the holy place and the most holy place, was another thick curtain, called the veil.

And into the holy place, only the priests could come. They could never go into the most holy place, except the high priest once a year, with blood. And the high priest had little bells at the bottom of his dress, so that as he walked, the bells would ring.

And as he moved around in the most holy place, the bells would ring, so that people outside would know that God hadn't struck him dead, he was still alive. Because it was a dreadful thing to go there. And you know, I spoke yesterday about this pillar of fire, which is called the Shekinah Glory, that dwelt in the most holy place.

God didn't dwell in the outer court, God did not dwell in the holy place, he dwelt in the most holy place. Nobody knew what God was like, because it was like a veil. And that veil symbolized that the way into the most holy place was not yet open.

Nobody could know God, personally. That's why people thought that God was like a policeman. They didn't know what he was like.

That's the way into the holiest, spoken of here. You know when Jesus died on the cross, it says that veil was torn, not from bottom to top, it was not man who did it. It was torn from top to bottom, showing that it was God who did it.

There is symbolism in everything. That veil was torn from top to bottom, the way was open into the most holy place. This is new covenant time now.

In the old covenant it was closed up, you couldn't go in. But in the new covenant you had a privilege now to go walk right into the most holy place. And Jesus opened that way and showed us the one inside was not a policeman, but a father.

A lot of people haven't seen that. They still think there's a policeman inside. That's why they're insecure.

And not only did he open the way and show us who was inside, he said we could go in too, and fellowship with the father. That's what's spoken of here, Hebrews 10.19. Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Yeah, we need the blood of Jesus because God is so holy that not one sin can come before him.

When Isaiah saw the glory of God, it says the seraphs, Isaiah chapter 6, the seraphs covered their face and covered their feet. I don't think any of us have an understanding of how holy God is. Remember these seraphs have never committed sin, these angels have never committed sin.

And even though they have never committed sin, they still cannot look at God. We think that if I haven't sinned I can look at God. No, you can't.

He's so holy that even if you have never sinned in your life like those angels, you got to cover your face. Now that's the holiness way beyond our imagination. It's not just the holiness of being free from sin.

And that's what Isaiah saw in Isaiah chapter 6. The holiness of God where he saw these seraphs who had never sinned covering their face and when he saw that, Isaiah was the holiest man on earth at that time. He said, woe is me, I'm an unclean man. And that's usually the reaction when a man sees the holiness of God.

He sees himself like Paul saw himself as the chief of sinners, the rottenest, most sinful man. I used to think how could a man like Paul who had lived such a good life, that he had kept all the law from his childhood, he says that in many times once he told a high priest, I've lived with a good conscience all my life from my childhood. How many of us can say that? That from my childhood I've lived with a good conscience right up to the age of 50.

That's really something. And who Paul could say in Philippians 3, according to the righteousness which is in the law, my life is absolutely blameless. I kept the Ten Commandments from the time I was a child.

It's very difficult to find a person like that on earth today. That's how upright Paul lived. But do you know what he thought of himself when he saw God? He said, I'm the chief of sinners.

He says, there's not a sinner on earth like me. And he said in another place in Ephesians 3.8, I'm the least of all the saints. That means you put all the list of the believers and I feel I'm right at the bottom.

I'm a nobody. How did he feel like that? He wasn't just acting humble. We say things like that to act humble before others.

That's just counterfeit humility, fit for the trash can. But when Paul said it, he really meant it. How can you say it and really mean it that I am the least of all the saints? I am the chief of sinners.

I'll tell you honestly, I felt like that a number of times. The least of all the saints in my church, the chief of sinners, the times when I've seen the glory of God. You remember how Peter said, depart from me.

I'm a sinful man, O Lord. You remember how the apostle John at the age of 95, the holiest man on earth, having walked with God for 65 years. And he saw Jesus, the same Jesus whom on his breast he had leaned at the last supper.

Now he sees him in glory on the isle of Patmos in Revelation chapter 1. And he says, I fall at his feet as a dead man. No leaning on his breast now. He falls at his feet like a dead man.

O Lord, what a sinner I am. Was he a sinner? He'd been cleansed in the blood. He'd been justified and he'd walked with God for 65 years.

I'm sure John was the holiest man on earth. But when he saw Jesus, he felt he was the worst sinner of all, that he had to bury his face in the dust. You see, it's people who don't see Jesus in his glory who think they're pretty good.

And whenever you think you're pretty good and you're better than others, you can be pretty sure that you're far away from God. No doubt about that. No one who's close to the Lord can ever feel like that.

No one who's close to the Lord can ever feel anything other than, I am the least of all the saints. I'm the chiefest of sinners. One who lives in the presence of God cannot look down on one single believer.

One who lives in the presence of God cannot look down on the worst sinner on the earth as inferior to him. How do we know the Pharisees were not close to God? Very simple. They said, Lord, I thank you.

I'm not like other men. The moment you say that, you know that man's a million miles away from God, probably a trillion miles. That's why he says, I thank you, Lord.

I'm not like other men. And whenever you see believers who, not who disagree with others, not who point out wrong doctrines in others, but who say, Lord, I thank you. I'm not like others.

I'm a little better. You can be pretty sure you're a trillion miles away from God. When you come close to God, you see yourself as the worst of sinners.

So that's the holiness of God. So that's why we need the blood of Jesus to cleanse us so thoroughly, not only from sins we are conscious of, but sins we are not even conscious of. You know that there are a lot of sins in our life we are not even conscious of.

We need to be cleansed from all of them. The things we are conscious of is only about 10%. You know when you got rid of every sin that you are aware of, you still only cleansed 10% of your life.

I hope you know that. That will keep us humble when we realize that. Our life is like a cube of ice that you put in a glass of orange juice.

How much of that ice can you see on top of the surface? 10%. That's all you can see of your life. Other people can see less than 1%.

That's why it's stupid to go by what other people think about you. It means nothing. They see only 1% of your life.

What's their opinion worth? Even your wife can probably see about, after living with you for 30-40 years, maybe she can see 3-4%. That's all. You think your wife knows everything about you? Tell me, how much does your wife know about the thoughts that are going through your mind right now, after having lived with you for 40 years? A man can think filthy thoughts in his mind and his wife will know nothing about it.

She knows about 3% of your life. Others know less than 1%. It's foolish to be bothered about what other people think of you.

Do they think you're a devil? Can 10,000 people calling you a devil make you a devil? No. You make yourself a devil. Can 10,000 people calling you a prophet make you a prophet? Oh no.

Only God can make you a prophet. So the opinion of others is only fit for the trash can. Leave it there.

God knows a whole lot about us that we don't know ourselves. But we know about 10% of our life. Nobody else knows whether you love money.

And I tell you, your wife doesn't know it either. You can fool her, even if you live with her for a hundred years. But you know it.

You know it very well. And you know it by the thoughts you think. When your mind is free from other things, what are you thinking of? What are the things that give you maximum pleasure? Thoughts of money, thoughts of women, or thoughts of God? You know yourself.

Nobody else knows. But even what we know is only 10%. And if that 10% is that much, can you imagine what the other 90% is like? Underneath, the lower part of that ice cube.

What is spiritual growth? Spiritual growth is, if you slice off that top 10%, you deal with the sins that you know in your life, radically. Seek God's grace for the power of the Spirit to put to death the giants that you see. Slice off that top 10% of that ice cube.

What happens? A little bit that was hidden comes out. Then you can deal with something you never knew was sin in your life. That's spiritual growth.

That is called here a new and living way. It's a way, it's not a door. There is a difference between a door and a way.

There is a narrow gate and there is a narrow way that leads to life. The narrow gate is the crisis experience. A lot of people place emphasis on the crisis experiences.

Born again. Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Crisis experiences.

They become backsliders pretty quickly because they talk about the gate. But there is a way. Just like that in my life.

I was born again. And 16 years later I was a thorough backslider. I was closer to God 16 years earlier when I was born again.

I left my first love. But I knew more of the Bible. Oh yeah, I knew more of the Bible.

I was more active 16 years later. But I was backslidden. Down in the dumps spiritually, but outwardly appearing spiritual.

And in that way I had an example of one who had run that race before me, who was tempted like me and who had become like me and who could teach me how to live clean. If I look to him as my example and see how he lived, I could follow him. That challenged me.

And what we see here is, in verse 20, how is the way into this most holy place opened? By new, it's a new way, which was not there in the old covenant, a new and living way. Living means it's not dead. It's not the result of dead traditions.

It's a living way. It's always alive. New means ever fresh, never gets stale.

It's a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us through the veil, through this veil that was rent. And here it tells us what that veil symbolizes. In verse 20, his flesh.

Jesus came in the flesh, like us, and rent something and opened away. What was it he rent? We know that his body was rent on the cross. The nails tore his body.

The spear pierced his side. But there was something else that was rent in his life too. And that was his will.

Throughout his life, he said, not my will, but thine. We thought about that the other day. There was something that was torn in his life, so that he never pleased himself.

He never did what he wanted to do. What he wanted to do was always torn. And that's how he lived in fellowship with God.

And let's get back to this picture of the Trinity. There's this outer court, the body, and the soul, and the spirit. God wants to dwell in the spirit.

The darkness is in my spirit. My soul is my personality. My personality consists of three things.

My intellect, which I understand. My emotions, with which I feel, feelings of joy, anger, and my will, with which I decide. But that will is the most important part.

That's where the door to the spirit is. What I mean is, if you understand that Jesus died for your sins, you get excited about Jesus dying for your sins, you're still not converted, till your will says, yes, Lord, come in. It's the will that's important.

You can understand, you can feel, but it's the will that's important. It's like that in every decision in life. This is the rending of the veil in my life.

If God is to fill my spirit with His glory, this will must be torn, yielded. That's what God is seeking to work with in all of our lives. That's the door to the spirit.

When Jesus says, behold, I stand at the door and knock. Which door is He knocking at? Have you ever thought? It's not my body. There's no door in my body for Jesus to go in.

Is it the door of my intellect? Is He saying, I'd like to give you a little more understanding? There are lots of people in the world with biblical understanding who don't know Jesus. We need understanding. Is it in the emotions? Is He standing at the door of my feelings and saying, I'd like to get you excited a little more? No.

It's the will. He's saying, I want you to surrender your will. I want you to surrender your ambitions, your plans.

When somebody calls you the devil, Jesus says, I want you to surrender your will. So that you don't react the way you want to react. Say, not my will, but Thine Lord.

This is the way of victory. This is the rending of the veil in my life. This is where something is torn within me.

And this is where I resist. And this is where I can fool myself that I'm spiritual, because my intellect is getting flooded with knowledge of the scriptures, even knowledge about victory over sin. And my emotions are getting excited about this wonderful message.

But I still don't yield my will. And I remain exactly the same. Because that's where Jesus knocks at that third most important part.

And I don't yield that. And I can deceive myself that I'm spiritual. He made a new and living way through the veil that is His flesh into the most holy place.

Let me turn you back to Matthew chapter 7 and show you the same thing there. In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus spoke this parable about the wise man who built his house on the rock and the foolish man who built his house on the sand. Now for many, many years, I used to think that the wise man built in one rocky area and the foolish man built in a sandy area.

And that's where the folly of this man and the wisdom of that man lay. Till I compared, sometimes you know, you compare one scripture with a similar scripture or another gospel, you get a little light. Till I saw, when I compared this scripture with a parallel passage in Luke 6 48, I discovered that both these people were building next door to each other.

The difference was the foolish man built superficially on the sand and the wise man just next door to him built through the sand till he hit rock. The foolish man could have also dug deep till he hit rock, but he was too lazy. It's too expensive.

He didn't want to pay the price. There is a price to be paid to follow Jesus, you know. And if you don't want to pay the price, you build on sand.

That's easy. Just scoop it out with a spade and dig and build. But if you're going to build on rock and that rock may be, I don't know, a hundred feet down, I don't know.

It's all sand all the way up to there. Then you got to dig so deep, you got to get dynamite, you got to blow it up. And you've hardly laid the foundation before the foolish man's completed his house.

And you spend so much money. And you really look like a fool, when this fellow has completed his house and you're still laying the foundation. A lot of people who look fools to the world are wise in God's eyes.

And a lot of people who look very clever, when they built their fancy house, are pretty big fools in God's eyes. Because when the judgment comes, you discover who was wise. And what is this sand? And what is this rock? I want you to think of this picture of our mind, our emotions and our will.

When I understand the scriptures, you've heard a lot of teaching now in these days. And your understanding has been stimulated. I want to tell you, you're still on sand.

It's only understanding. Understanding the scriptures is sand. It hasn't changed your life.

It won't change your family life. It won't change your church life. And some people go a little deeper than that.

They get excited. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! That's tremendous! You're still on sand. You think you're better than that, but not really.

You're still sand. It's when you yield your will, when you take a decision, when you say, yeah, I'm going to give up that. I'm going to open my life to let the Lord come in in this area.

I'm going to set that matter right. You've taken some decisions. That's when you hit rock.

And that's the wise man, who's gone beyond. Do we need to use our understanding? Sure. I wouldn't be able to speak to you right now, if you didn't use your understanding.

Do we need to use our emotions? Sure. I'm an emotional person. I get stirred in my heart, when I think that Jesus died for a sinner like me.

I'm not feeling less, when I think that Jesus loved me so much. It moves me to tears many times. I'm excited, when I know that my name was written in the book of life, before the foundation of the world.

I've got emotions, but all that emotion doesn't make me spiritual. All my understanding doesn't make me spiritual, till I decide and say, Lord, come into my life. I am going to give back that money, which I took wrongfully from that person at the first opportunity.

And I write that check and I send it to him. That's my will. Something is being torn in my life.

The excitement and the understanding didn't make me spiritual. It was that action. Lord, I'm going to apologize to that person I wronged.

And I walk up to him and say, that's a tearing of the pride in my life. I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you. That's when you become spiritual, when your will acts.

Now, if you don't understand this, you can go from meeting to meeting to meeting to meeting. The veil is never rent. And you're just hanging around, the outer court and the holy place all your life.

The spirit is still dark. God's never able to enter it. Jesus knocking, knocking, knocking at your will and you don't yield it.

Now, that was not possible in the old covenant. You know, in the old covenant, they could only worship in the body and the soul. But Jesus said, the woman of Samaria, the time has now come, when the true worshippers will worship God in spirit, in the most holy place, not just in the outer court and the holy place.

And how are we going to worship in spirit when my will is yielded? When my will is yielded, I can become one with other people. How is the body of Christ built? It's built with people with broken wills, not with the people, a lot of understanding. A lot of people with a lot of understanding and correct doctrine come together in six months, they are fighting with each other.

And I've seen mostly two types of churches, one which emphasize the understanding, we must get teaching, teaching, teaching, teaching. And the others that emphasize the emotions. Oh, this dry knowledge, brother, we must get excited, we must jump, we must dance, we must, what's all this dry knowledge? These folks think, that's sand.

And those folks think, oh, that's all sand, we got the rock, both are on sand. It's just two extremes. Do I need understanding? I certainly do.

I spent years, I still study the scriptures, I read books, I listen to tapes, I want to use my understanding. God did, it wasn't the devil who gave me my mind. But I say, I can never get to the rock till I go through the sand.

See, that wise man dug through the sand, through his understanding, through his emotions and finally hit rock. All I'm saying is, go through your understanding, go through your emotions, finally hit rock. That's all I'm saying.

Do we, do I need to, let's take the matter of study of the scriptures. Do I need to use my eyes? Sure. I can't read the scriptures without my eyes.

But that's not enough. I need to use my mind. If I don't use my mind, I can't study the scriptures.

And when I read something there, it stirs my emotions. And if I stop there, I'm still on sand. I need to act.

I need to deny my will. That's the meaning of taking up the cross. You know what the cross is? It's not understanding.

It's not emotions. It's when your will crosses God's will. That's why you face the cross.

And you deny your will and do God's will. That's how we become spiritual. That's how the little cup becomes a larger bucket.

You take up the cross again, continue, it becomes a tub, becomes a river, many rivers. Otherwise you'll be a little cup of water, even after 50 years of being a believer. And I met lots of people like that.

Their understanding has grown tremendously in 50 years. They have attended so many meetings, they have read so many books, they have listened to so many tapes, they can argue about anything in the Bible. But they're not spiritual.

They're not godly. They don't know God. And then I met other people.

They're always happy. At least when they meet other people. I don't know how they are at home.

I don't know how they face life when they have problems. But they appear to be very excited and emotional and clap and shout and sing and dance in their meetings. And I can do all that.

And I found they're not spiritual too. You get to talk to them, they don't know God. I'm not against these things.

All I'm saying is these things don't make us know God. Very often these things only reflect our likes and dislikes. It's like food, you know.

Some people like fish and some people like ham and some people like lamb. And it's choices. And some people like a church which is very solemn and serious and some people like a church which is all excitement.

Neither of them may be spiritual. I mean a man's not spiritual because he chose fish instead of ham. And a man's not spiritual because he chose an exciting type of church instead of an intellectual type of church and vice versa.

Spirituality is when the will is broken. When you humble yourself and your pride is broken to go and apologize to someone. When you drain out your bank account to return some money.

I remember when I was converted and the Lord showed me how I had cheated the government on taxes and all in my unconverted days. And I had to total it all up. And I had to return to the government about four months salary.

I was earning a very good salary those days, way back in 1961. And I had to save that over a long period of time. It wasn't just understanding, it was my will.

And it was emptying my bank account, it was writing a check, taking all the money, giving it back. An exercise of will. And then I got on the rock.

It's like that. Different things where you decide. Do you know that every day we're taking decisions? And in those decisions, you're doing your will or God's will.

You're reacting to different circumstances. You're reacting to the way other people treat you. You're reacting to many things.

You know, when we live together like this, even for a weekend, that can be a lot of reactions, because not everybody around you is unselfish and considerate and thoughtful. And there could be so many situations you can even face in a camp like this, where you rub against inconsiderate, unthoughtful people who behave in a certain way. It makes a little inconvenient for you.

And you may be civilized and polite on the outside, but you got a reaction inside. And all the understanding we get in scripture, doesn't seem to change that reaction until I decide, I'm going to follow Jesus there. I'm going to die to my reaction, to my natural Adamic reaction to this unthoughtful, inconsiderate way this person is treating me.

I'm going to die to it. If I don't die to it, I can come to a hundred conferences like this, and I'll never change. I'll just increase in understanding and emotions.

I'll just be floating around the outer court in the holy place, and the veil will never be rent, because I don't want it to be rent in my life. I'll never be spiritual. But there is a way that Jesus opened.

He opened it by his example. He went that way. He never pleased himself, the Bible says.

Whatever people did to him, he was concerned when it affected the glory of God. When a Pharisee, when the Pharisees would not allow a man with a withered hand to be healed on the Sabbath day, says Jesus, looked at them with anger. You read that verse? Yeah, there is a place to be angry.

Mark chapter 3, verse 5, when Jesus looked at those people, it says, he looked around upon them with anger. But when they spat on his face and pulled his hairs from his beard, he said, Father, forgive them. When they nailed his hands to a cross, he said, Father, forgive them.

There he wasn't angry. And I've learned something from that. You know, there's a command in the Bible which says, you must be angry? There is such a verse.

Ephesians 4, verse 26, be ye angry. That's not the end of the verse. And sin not.

So that teaches us there is a sinful anger, and there's an anger that's not sinful. Be angry, but don't let it be sinful anger. That's what he's trying to say.

So when should we be angry? Let's go to the dictionary. That's the answer. Jesus, the word made flesh.

When was he angry? When people were exploiting others in the name of religion. When some elder or bishop or archbishop keeps somebody bound in a system, instead of allowing him to be free, the fellow will not get into God's kingdom himself, and he won't let others get into God's kingdom. You should be angry.

You can't sit back and say, oh well, what to do? You must be angry about that. Jesus would be. He walked into the synagogues and saw people holding other people in bondage, and he was angry.

Be angry in such occasions, where it concerns other people who need to know God. When he went into the temple, and he saw people making money in the name of religion, he was angry. It says, have you read that verse in John chapter 2, where it says, he sat and made a whip.

Can you picture this in your mind? Jesus seeing all these people making money in the name of religion, and looking around from some strands, and the disciples wonder, what's he doing? And he picked some strands from near, and then twisting a rope together. I like to see that. Jesus sitting and twisting a rope, and the disciples have never in their life seen him doing it.

They wonder, what's he, is he going to tie up some box or something? Oh no, he's got some more serious purpose with that whip. And then he's got this ready, and he whips. He doesn't go to them and say, gentlemen, this is not the type of thing you should be doing here.

Why don't you just move out please? No. There is a place for speaking like that. Not when people are making money in the house.

And he doesn't say, please take these doves away. He opens the doors and lets the birds fly out, and whips the lambs and the sheep, and chases them all out, turns the tables, and lets the money go. I'm sure the children there were excited to see.

This is wonderful. I've never seen anything. Mummy, this is an exciting day in the temple.

You should have seen what Jesus did. You've missed something. Yeah.

But the Pharisees are angry. They decided to kill this man. He was angry, when it concerned the glory of God.

But if it is anything concerning himself, whether they call him the devil, whether they call him illegitimate. I don't know whether you've noticed this. I noticed this very carefully in the Gospels.

Whenever the people were happy with Jesus, they'd call him the son of Joseph. Whenever they were angry with him, they'd call him the son of Mary. We don't know who his father is.

You understand the implication? I'll just show you one example of that. Luke 4.22, it says, he was preaching in the synagogue, and they wondered at the gracious words, which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, isn't this Joseph's son? Yeah.

They were happy with what he said, at least the first part. As he went on in his sermon, they got a bit angry with him. But then another time, when they were upset with him, we read in Mark chapter 6, when he was with his disciples, and they were upset, because he was doing these miracles, which they couldn't do, and they were jealous.

And they said in Mark 6 verse 3, isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary? Notice that distinction. They called him illegitimate son. They called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils.

They called him all types of names. They called him a heretic, one who was leading people astray. He never reacted in anger, even once.

So I learned from that, how it was with Jesus. He's my forerunner. He never, never got angry with anything concerning himself.

But he was full of anger, when it concerned the glory of God, and other people being exploited. Now look around at the world, and see the children of Adam, and see how it is with them, even many Christians. When you touch them, they get angry.

You say something against them, they're upset. You say something against their family, they're upset. But the name of Jesus is dishonored in church, after church, after church, they're not angry.

They just discuss it. That's how the children of Adam are. And that's why I say most Christians behave like the children of Adam.

They are not angry at the things Jesus was angry with. They're angry at the things the children of Adam are angry with. When people rob them, they're angry.

When people exploit them, they're angry. If somebody calls them the devil, they're angry. If somebody humiliates them, they're angry.

But when the name of Jesus is dishonored, when people are exploiting, when television evangelists are exploiting poor widows, getting money from them to buy private jet planes, they're not angry, they just discuss it. That's the type of thing which would make Jesus angry. But it doesn't make most Christians angry.

They're quite comfortable. They get upset. If somebody called that child a bad name, or spread a scandal about your daughter, then you'd be upset.

That's not following Jesus. Be angry for the things Jesus was angry about. That's righteous anger.

And don't ever get angry about the things Jesus was never angry about. That's sinful. I'm very thankful that I've seen this distinction, so that I can be angry when I see things which, where poor people are being exploited, for the name of Jesus being dishonored, where Christians make money in the name of Christ, and give a wrong picture of Christ to the world.

I see a lot of it in my country, and it makes me angry, and it makes people hate me when I expose it. I'm not going to be angry with them. Is it like that in your life? Or are you building on sand? Intellect and emotions.

In Matthew chapter 7, when Jesus spoke about this man building on sand and the rock, He preceded it by these words in Matthew chapter 7 verse 21. I want you to read Matthew 7 verse 21. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father, which is in heaven.

I want you to see intellect, emotions, and will, in just this one verse. There are a lot of things hidden in scripture. We see it if we read it carefully.

Mind, emotions, and will. One who says to me, Lord, he's obviously got his understanding right. In his doctrine, he's right.

He doesn't call some heathen God, Lord. He calls Jesus, Lord. He's okay in his understanding.

His emotions, he doesn't just say, Lord. He says, Lord, Lord. He's excited.

He's got his emotions right too. What's his problem? His will. He does not do the will of my Father in heaven.

His mind is right, his emotions are right, but his will is wrong. He says, well, he's not going to get into heaven. I stand at the door and knock, and I was not knocking at the door of his understanding.

I was not knocking at the door of his emotions. He can say, Lord, Lord. He can say, Lord, Lord, ten times.

The will. Whose will is he doing? Then he went on to say about the man who built on the rock, who blasted the rock, who went through mind and emotions and broke his will. So as I was saying, we're taking decisions every day.

And let me tell you this, my dear brothers and sisters, spiritually, you are what you are today, because of all the decisions you took from the time you were converted till today. That's what you are. Another brother who was converted on exactly the same date as you, who had the same filthy background as you in your unconverted days, is way ahead of you today, because of the decisions he took.

In understanding, you may be both equal. In emotional excitement in the meetings, you may be both equal. But in spirituality, he's a million miles ahead of you, because day by day, he took up the cross.

He denied himself in areas where you indulged yourself. He allowed his will to be broken, where you reacted in revenge and anger. Of course, you went to Jesus later on and asked him to forgive you and cleanse you, blot out your sins with his blood.

But you live at the same level. See, if I live this life of constantly sinning and asking Jesus to forgive me, sinning and asking Jesus to forgive me, yeah, I'll be clean. But I won't grow spiritually.

To grow spiritually, I have to say, Lord, give me the power of the Spirit that I can put this to death, my will to death in my life. Have you ever taken this verse seriously? Romans chapter 8, verse 13 and 14. Let me begin at verse 12.

Romans 8 is, if you read it carefully, it's got some deep truths in it. Romans 8, verse 12 says, Therefore brethren, he's talking to brethren, believers, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh. What does that mean? I'm tempted by my flesh to all types of things, to react in a wrong way, to take revenge, to indulge myself, to make my God my belly, to live for pleasure, to live for comfort and ease and also be a Christian and go to heaven.

My flesh tempts me in so many ways, but we're not debtors to live after the flesh. I live in the flesh, but I don't live according to the dictates of my flesh. But, if you live after the flesh, you will die.

That's written to brethren. And it's not die physically, because everybody dies physically. It's die spiritually.

Brethren who live after the flesh will die. And what does the devil say? What did he tell Eve? You shall not die. Eve believed it, I don't believe it.

I believe what God says, you shall die. If you live after the flesh, you shall die. But, here's the alternative.

What is that? Something you could never do in the Old Testament, because you didn't have the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. If through the Spirit, through the power of the Holy Spirit, you mortify. Mortify means you put something to death.

Just like Jesus was crucified, He was mortified, He was killed. You through the Spirit put something to death. The deeds of the body, you will live.

Now, my question is, who has to do the killing? You or the Holy Spirit? If you read that verse quickly, you think it's the Holy Spirit who has to do the killing of all the bad things in your life. You know, if the Holy Spirit had to do all the killing of all the bad things in our life, we would all be glorious saints by now. Don't you think so? You think He failed in His job? But, that's not what it says.

If ye, if you, through the power of the Spirit, put the deeds of the body to death, you will live. To me, the power of the Spirit is like electricity. When I build a new house, I apply to the power supply company and get an electricity connection to my house.

But, I may not have any fans in my house. I may not have any lights. I may not have a refrigerator, a dishwasher, nothing.

And, it's as good as having no electricity. I go to another house and he's got everything. He's got so many gadgets running in his house and he's got no more electricity than me.

The only thing is he used it. I didn't. That's the difference between many Christians.

It's not enough to say, Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, you put to death the darkness in the house. Get some lights in the rooms.

Put on the switches. Through the Spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body, you live. And so, in a different, in a certain situation, I say, I'm not going to react in that way.

I'm going to, through the Spirit, put to death this natural reaction, the way I've reacted, the way somebody talks to me. I'm not going to retort like I've retorted to my wife all these years or to my husband all these years. I'm going to put my flesh to death.

I'm not going to be so talkative. Some people don't think talkativeness is a sin. I was in a house once, where I was visiting with a family.

I was there for one hour and the sister there spoke for 54 minutes and I spoke for about four minutes and her husband spoke for about two minutes. She didn't talk anything sinful. She was talking about the Word and the light she had on different things and her testimony on different things.

I never said anything. She was a believer. We just preached the way of the cross.

Some years later, I went to the same house and she was not the same. She had understood that a gentle and quiet spirit doesn't dominate the conversation. See, there's a lot of sin.

At that time, she didn't realize it was sin. She was very sincere, but she didn't realize this big mouth of hers was making her sin. There are many things like that.

But she got light and she mortified this deed of the body, this talkativeness, where you drown out your husband. You know, there are a lot of holiness sisters who are like that. They don't have light.

Why is it they don't get light even after five or ten years? Because they are not dealing with what they know. If you through the spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you live. It's a way.

And if I take up the cross and deny myself in the decisions I take, I can live. It can apply in other areas. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6, have you read this verse? 1 Corinthians 6, in verse 12, he says, all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient or profitable.

All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. There are a lot of lawful things in the world. For a Christian, he's got rid of all unlawful things.

I look at it like this. There are three levels at which you can live. Let's say the surface of this table is one level.

Everything below this is unlawful. And a Christian must never do anything unlawful. That's completely out of the question.

Harming somebody, cheating someone, lusting, telling lies, stealing, dishonesty. No. Unlawful, no.

Now we moved up to this level, where I become a Christian, I become a disciple of Jesus. Now I'm moving in this realm of lawful. But in this realm of lawful also, there's another level called profitable.

Out of all these hundred things, fifty of them are profitable. Or maybe thirty of them are profitable. The other seventy are lawful, but not profitable.

Now you have a choice now. I'm talking about believers. I'm not talking about unbelievers who go below and live in the unlawful level.

I'm talking about believers who have a choice to live in the profitable level or the lawful level. Paul says all these things are lawful, but all things are not profitable. So I'm going to spend my time with what is

profitable.

You know there's a lot of question among young people particularly about music. What type of music can we listen to? And there's a lot of argument about what's lawful and what's unlawful. People are trying to define this line.

What's lawful and what's unlawful? What's the level of this table? Let's find out. Is it here or is it here? Is it three inches lower or three inches higher in music? Can I spend my money for this or that or the other thing? I say if you're trying to find out where is the line of demarcation between lawful and unlawful, you're going to have a lot of problems. It's like trying to find out how close can I stand to the edge of the cliff without falling over.

I say I don't want to find out. You want to find out how close you can stand to the edge of the cliff? Little children try to do those things. I hope you're grown up.

I hope you're not trying to find out. You know we have railway trains. A lot of our travel in India is with railway trains and sometimes children like to say how close can I stand to the edge of the platform with the train whizzing past me without it touching me? I don't want to find out.

I keep a respectable distance. A lot of Christians are like that. How close can I get to the world without falling in? I don't want to find out.

You want to find out? The chances are you'll fall in. The chances are you'll get run over by the train. The chances are you'll fall over the cliff.

I like to keep a respectable distance. Lawful or profitable? Okay, even if you decide that's lawful. You're always going to be a carnal Christian.

You may not be an unbeliever. Unbelievers are those who do unlawful things. But if you're going to live only at the level of lawful, I prophesy that you'll be a carnal Christian all your life.

A spiritual one is one who denies his will, who rents the veil, who doesn't live with understanding and emotions, but denies certain things, gives up certain things. He pays a price. Call it what you like.

You can put it in different terminology, but ultimately it's the same thing. I follow Jesus who denied himself a lot of things. Have you ever read this verse in John chapter 17? What do you understand by it? John chapter 17, Jesus said, verse 19, For their sakes, I sanctify myself.

Listen to it. For their sakes, I sanctify myself. Sanctify means separate myself.

How do you apply that to your own life? Jesus is our forerunner. We're supposed to follow him. I separate myself from a number of things of earth for the sake of other people.

Paul says, if my eating meat will cause another person to be offended, I won't eat meat. I met a very godly missionary once who was working among the Muslims in Bangladesh, the country next to India. When we were eating together, he said he didn't eat pork or anything that came from pork.

I said, why? He said, I work among Muslims who don't eat pork. If they ask me, I can say that. It's not that I have any conviction on it.

But for their sake, I sanctify myself. Because I want to reach their hearts. Now another brother said, I couldn't care less what they think.

I want to just enjoy my like pork. Go ahead, brother. The chances are that other brother will be a hundred times more useful than you are in working among Muslims.

That's all. Of course, you're not much bothered about them. So the chances are you probably won't bring many souls to Christ at all in your whole life.

Perhaps not even one. Because that attitude, I couldn't care less what others think. I'm just going to do what I please myself.

There's no sin in eating pork. I'm not under the Old Testament. No, it may be lawful, but all things may not be profitable in a certain situation.

Now that may not apply when you live here. It may apply when you work among Muslims. Paul said, if my eating meat will stumble another person, I'll give it up.

What's there? There's nothing. If I have to dress in a particular way to reach certain people, sure, I'll dress like that. I have no problem.

If they'll allow me into a Roman Catholic Church, only if they put on their robe and hang a cross around my neck, I'll do it. If they'll give me a chance to preach the gospel to those Roman Catholics, I have no problem with that. Brother, I'd be willing to wear a Muslim dress if they allow me to preach the gospel in a mosque.

Sure, that means nothing to me. To be all things to all men in order to get the gospel, to save them, to deny myself certain things. Don't you think Jesus could have taken a holiday in Rome? What was wrong with that? Rome's a nice exciting place.

It's the world's capital and I need little rest. And I could take a trip to Rome. All these people are giving me gifts.

I could go to Rome with that money. He didn't do it. Not because it's sinful.

Do you think he'd have sinned if he had gone to Rome? He'd never have sinned anywhere in the world. It was not in his father's will. That's all.

He had a program. He sought the Lord, the Father, and Father said, no, you don't do that. You don't do these things.

Not because they were sinful, but they were not in the Father's program. There are very few Christians who live like this. They earn money.

They say, that's my money. I earned it. I can spend it as I like.

Go ahead. All lawful. That's the level most people live.

There are some who say, well, is it profitable? Is that the way I'm? Is it necessary to waste money on that? Is it necessary for me to waste my money on that? Do I need to eat so much? Do I need to have so many sets of clothes? I tell you, Christianity is very practical. It's got nothing to do with just understanding and

emotions. It's got to do with decisions.

Decisions on clothes, food, travel, spending of money, spending of time, the books you read. There are lots of lawful books in the world I can read. Sure.

My question is, are they profitable? I can spend my time listening to so much of music. I tell you honestly, I don't have the time for it. There's so much of work for God to be done.

But people say, we need relaxation. Sure. Some people's relaxation is sitting in front of television and watching some useless program.

I said, okay, that's your relaxation. Go ahead. To me, a lot of that defiles me.

My relaxation is singing songs of love to Jesus Christ. Do you know that Jesus is the most interesting person in the whole world? You ask a person, you ask a person who's in love with somebody, who has no time for television, because he's in love with somebody. He's got to go for a walk with her.

He's got to spend...

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