

# Jesus' Standard of Holiness

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, highlighting the difference between the Old Covenant of Moses and the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. It challenges listeners to seek victory over sins like anger and lust, stressing the need to be under the law of the Spirit to overcome the law of sin. The message encourages a deep desire for righteousness and a genuine transformation by the power of Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:6, Romans 8:2, Matthew 5:21, Romans 6:14, John 7:37

**Topics:** "Hungering for Righteousness", "Transformation through Christ"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, highlighting the difference between the Old Covenant of Moses and the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. It challenges listeners to seek victory over sins like anger and lust, stressing the need to be under the law of the Spirit to overcome the law of sin. The message encourages a deep desire for righteousness and a genuine transformation by the power of Christ.

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## Transcript

So welcome all who are coming from other places. We pray the Lord will be with us in these days more than anything else. I want to tell you something about what I learned about singing hymns.

The most important person here, if you recognize it is the Lord Jesus in our midst. Many of the songs we sing, we're singing to Him. But I discovered in my life that very often I get so taken up with the words and particularly if I'm very familiar with the words, I'm not singing it to the Lord at all.

In fact I'm not even conscious that He's here. It's just a nice song and we can clap our hands and swing our move our heads and enjoy the whole thing but we're not talking to Him at all. Thank you.

So and I went on like that for many years and I decided Lord I don't want to be a hypocrite. I mean when I'm talking to a person I'm conscious that he's in front of me and I mean what I say. I don't say empty words and I'll tell you it will revolutionize your life, your Christian life and your attending church if you just begin to practice the presence of the Lord in the church meeting and consciously sing the songs unto Him.

When you pray send the fire. Lord Jesus you're here, send the fire. Or it can be just a nice little song and then we're not really praying.

Many songs are a prayer but you know Jesus speaks about there's a specific command by the Lord. I want you to look at this verse in Matthew chapter 6 and this applies to singing as well as praying. Let me read it in relation to singing because our singing is a prayer.

Matthew chapter 6 verse 7. When you are singing don't use meaningless repetition. Meaningful repetition yes, a hundred times. Okay but meaningless words, meaningless repetition Jesus said don't use it because the heathen do that.

He says you go to heathen temples, non-christian religious temples. They are just going through repeating a lot of things to their idols and I fear that many who claim to be believers are not doing much better than that. There's nobody they're singing it to.

So there's something which I learned from my own mistakes and I wasn't even alert to it until the Holy Spirit said who are you singing all this to? I said Lord I want to sing it to you. And you know whenever we begin a new practice like singing a song unto the Lord it won't happen over in one day. You'll probably make the same mistake for many many days till one day it becomes real and you're singing thereafter unto the Lord.

If you work at it, if you don't work out your salvation from meaningless repetition then it'll never happen. So that's just a little bit advice of singing songs. There are many things like this in Scripture that very often we don't take seriously and we say the Bible is God's Word but if you really believed it was God's Word we would take every word seriously.

We would first of all read through it all. I mean I can't say that this is God's Word and not bother to read it. So all of us would have read the New Testament.

There's another thing that I discovered. I found very often that I would read large sections of Scripture and not get anything out of it. And then I realized it's better to read a small section and meditate.

In the first Psalm it says not the one who reads the Scripture but the one who meditates on the Scripture whatever he does will prosper. And I've taken that verse many times to myself. I said Lord I want a life where whatever I do, whatever I do in my Christian work, my secular work, in earning my living, everything, whatever I do I want to prosper.

And it says in Psalm 1 that if I turn away from the ways of the wicked and meditate on God's Word promises whatever I do will prosper. So that's the other thing I want to encourage you all of you to not read God's Word but meditate on it. Read slowly.

It's one of the things I've been encouraging people for many years. Read the Scriptures slowly. Okay and in the days when I read very fast I did not know the answer to this question.

What is the first promise in the New Testament? Imagine that's on the first page and everybody who's read the Bible would have read the first page of the New Testament. But I don't know whether you know it. Those who probably heard me speak on it would know it.

But do you know the first promise in the New Testament? Well I'll tell you what it is. It's in Matthew's Gospel chapter 1. If you have a Bible please turn to it. It's good to know, good to look up the Scripture verses.

Matthew 1 and verse 21. This is the very first promise in the New Testament. In other words you've got all these Old Testament promises about I'll defeat your enemies and I'll make you very wealthy and I'll drive out all the Midianites and Amorites and all the otherites.

You'll drive them all out and many many things like that. All earthly. Every promise in the Old Testament is earthly.

I'll give you a land. I'll defeat your enemies. I'll make you prosperous.

It's about money and health and possessions and all that. And then you come to the New Testament and the very first promise is Matthew 1 21. He will save his people from their sins.

Well if you never knew that till now, know it today. That the New Testament opens with the words Jesus. You shall call his name Jesus.

Why Jesus? Why is his name called Jesus? Here's the answer. If some non-christian were to ask you why is your Savior called Jesus? Here's the answer. He will save his people not from hell.

Read carefully. Not from hell. He will save his people from their sins.

Now most people in the world want to hear the gospel to be saved from hell. You know there's not a single verse in the Bible which says that Jesus will save us from hell. Search a concordance and find out.

It's not written anywhere. He never says I've come to save you from hell. He has come to save us from our sins.

And if I'm more interested in being saved from hell than being saved from my sins, I wonder if you'll ever be saved from hell. Being saved from hell is the end result of being saved from our sins now. So I sometimes ask people why do you call Jesus Savior? Jesus Savior.

What has he saved you from? Has he saved you from getting angry? Has he saved you from an unforgiving spirit? Has he saved you from dirty thoughts? Has he saved you from bitterness? Has he saved you from wrong attitudes towards other people? Has he saved you from pride? And if people are honest, they say no. But they say he forgives us. Uh-huh.

So be honest and say he's my forgiver, not my Savior. Because he hasn't saved me from his heart. Hardly saved me from anything.

But he's forgiven me. I keep on sinning and he keeps on forgiving me. Jesus my forgiver.

We must be honest. That's the meaning of walking in the light. 1 John 1 says if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with him.

And I wish somebody had told me this when I was a young Christian. I went to so many churches and people never told me these fundamental things like the first promise in the Bible is to be saved from sin. There's a difference between Jesus being a forgiver and a Savior.

Or what's God's ultimate purpose with us? It's not to take us to heaven. It's important for us to understand some of these things. Basically because then we the whole all the promises and commands in the Bible fall into their proper place.

So I'll show you the answer to that also. What is God's ultimate purpose when he becomes our Savior? Turn with me to Romans chapter 8 and verse 29. Romans chapter 8 and verse 28 is a fairly well-known verse with many Christians.

It's a promise that God will make everything work for our good. Not for everybody, but for those who love him and those who want to fulfill his purpose in their life. It's a tremendous promise from Romans 8 28.

That if you love God with all your heart and your only aim in life is to fulfill his purpose for your life. That doesn't mean being a full-time worker. You could be in a secular job.

Most 99.9% of Christians are in secular jobs. But their desire is to fulfill God's purpose for their life. That is, if their desire is to fulfill God's purpose for their life, then it says here everything will work for good to those who are called according to his purpose.

And then it tells us what that purpose is in the next verse. Many who know Romans 8 28 don't know Romans 8 29. It's true of me.

For many years I said what a wonderful promise. Everything will work for my good. I didn't know what that good was.

When we are young we think that good is that some material good or some job I'm applying for. I'll get it or something like that. But here it tells us in the next verse that the purpose is in the middle of verse 29 that we might be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ his son.

It's very important to see this is the ultimate purpose of God for our life. Once you get your focus right, you know it's like a race. When people run a race they've got a finishing line in mind.

Then where is the finishing line? I want to get there. In the marathon race for example it winds through many many roads and all finally but they're aiming for the finishing line. And you must know where the finishing line is.

And what is the finishing line in the Christian life? It is to become like Jesus Christ in character, my behavior, in my thought patterns, my speech. To be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. And when you make that your goal and you see that's God's goal for you for every one of us.

Then all the other things fall into place. And if you can start your Christian life with that goal and those of you who are young or newly accepted Christ what a wonderful privilege it is to hear these truths at this age. I never understood it till I was about 35 and I was converted when I was 19.

Imagine for 16 years I don't know how many churches I went to. I never missed a Sunday. I would always go to some church and yet I never once true I never once heard somebody tell me that God's ultimate purpose for your life is that you might become like Christ.

And the reason which why he wants to fill you with the Holy Spirit is that you might become like Christ. It would have changed I mean I could have started the race much earlier. Instead of starting at 35 I could have started when I was 19.

And because I did not know that some parts of my earlier life I mean you know when you're first converted there's a lot of excitement and all that and there was and you want to read the Bible and you want to go to church but you don't know what your goal is and just go along. And I thought the main goal in my life was

to witness to others because that's what they said you must be a witness for Christ. I said yeah.

So I would have a lot of tracks with me when I traveled in a bus or traveled in a train in India. I would always carry tracks with me and give it out to different people I was sitting with and even on the roads. And of course some people would take it, some people get upset, some people would just throw it away.

But I said I have to witness for Christ and witness for Christ. That's important but that's not the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is that I might become like Christ and then my witnessing becomes more effective.

And so because I initially that zeal of witnessing for Christ kept me going for some time but then after some time it's frustrating because you say what's this accomplishing? I never missed a Sunday service. I'd always go to Sunday service. And then if you don't see this goal I can guarantee what will happen to you what happened to me.

You begin to slowly backslide and after about ten years of trying to follow the Lord I began to backslide. Backslide means not commit some gross sin in the way I lose my testimony. No we were careful not to lose our testimony.

It's more more inward. Not such a passion to read the scriptures anymore. Not such a passion to be a witness and little more careless in our thought life and careless with our speech.

And I realized that I was slipping. I began to cry out to God and said Lord I want to come back to the Lord. I know what I need.

I need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I need that mighty baptism in the Holy Spirit that the Apostles got on the day of Pentecost. And I'm going to seek and pray for it.

And with many days and months and years of praying and occasional fasting and seeking God and God met with me in that way and he saw I was really earnest. Then my whole life turned around. So I want to say if you can understand all these things right at the beginning of your Christian life it's wonderful.

So those of you who are young newly converted be gripped by this fact. God wants to fill you with his Holy Spirit so that you can become increasingly like Christ. So when we go back to the beginning of Scripture before we get there let me show you a verse in Matthew chapter 19.

You know there's a lot of divorce in many parts of the world now and especially in this country. And this question came up in Jesus time in Matthew 19. The came to Jesus testing him and said is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason? And he never made two or three women and said Adam have your choice.

No. It was one male and one female. And therefore a man, this is a quotation from Genesis 2 24, a man must leave his father and his mother and cleave to this one woman God gave him.

And the two become one flesh. There's never meant to be three only two. Then they are no longer two but they are one.

And what God has joined together let no man separate. So the phrase I wanted you to notice is this phrase in verse 4. From the beginning how is it? In other words don't look at the world around today and see so-called believers divorcing and all. Don't don't don't look at them.

Way back go back to the beginning. If you want to understand God's purpose go back to the beginning. That's the principle I learned from that verse.

Anything you want to know go back to the beginning. If you want to know what the church is to be like go back to the beginning when the first church was established. If you want to know what Christian workers should be like go back to the beginning of from the day of Pentecost onwards.

How did Christian workers serve him? Everything is from the beginning. Go back to the beginning. That's the phrase I want you to notice from Matthew 19 verse 4. It helped me a lot.

So when we think of man what was God's purpose for man? Okay go back to the beginning. Genesis chapter 1 when he made man. It's important for us to know Genesis chapter 1 and verse 26.

You know when God noticed this whenever God did all the other creation of everything else in the first five days he never stated any purpose. He just said let there be light and let there be let the heavens be separated and let the earth come together and let there be fish and there was no purpose mentioned in any of those cases. But when it came to man the crown of God's creation he mentions a specific purpose.

Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. Two phrases both really emphasizing the same thing. It's a double statement to emphasize one thing.

In our image according to our likeness means God wanted a replica of himself in man and let them rule and have authority over everything. God wanted man to rule with authority and again it's repeated in verse 27. God created man in his own image repeated a third time in the image of God he created him and blessed him.

So when you go back to the beginning you say ah that is God's purpose for me. Primarily that I might reflect his likeness. Now when God is up in heaven and nobody had seen him we don't know what his likeness is.

Likeness means character. It's not physical likeness. God doesn't have a physical likeness in character but I don't know what it is.

But when Jesus came to earth that's why Jesus had to come as a man to be tempted like us and to live that pure holy life loving life to show us this is the likeness of God. This is what God is like. In fact he told his disciples in John 14 if you have seen me you've seen the father.

It was Philip when he came to him and said Lord show us the father and Jesus said you don't have to see. If you have seen me you have seen the father. The father is like me and he didn't know when he said that in John 14.

In John chapter 13 he had just washed their feet like a slave. In those days in the rich Jewish homes they'd have a slave with a bucket of water at the door to take off people's slippers and wash their feet and at the Last Supper there were no slaves and the bucket of water was kept there by the owner of the house. They decided to look around who's gonna wash the feet.

Nobody's gonna be a slave. Well Jesus said I'm here and he washed their feet and then he said if you've seen me you've seen the father. This is what God is like.

He comes to wash our feet. He comes to take the low place. He's not this mighty big authority that tries to sit on our head and say you got to do this.

So many people have a wrong concept of God and that's why you have so many preachers and pastors who act like big authorities ruling over others instead of being servants washing their feet. It's all because they have not seen what God is like. They have not seen how Jesus lived and worked and how he did things on earth and so this is what I want to begin with.

We need to see very clearly why Jesus came. He came to save us from our sins not to forgive us and to make us like himself. We saw that in Romans 8 29.

Let me repeat it. God's purpose is that we might be conformed to the image of his Son. I'll show you that again in 1 John chapter 2 and verse 6. The first episode of John chapter 2 and verse 6. It says here if you say that you are in Christ and you're abiding that is living in Christ then on earth you must walk in the same way as he walked on this earth.

That means he had certain values by which he lived and you must have those same values as you live on this earth. If you say you abide in him but if you're not a Christian do as you like but if you claim to be I'm in Christ and I'm abiding means I'm remaining in Christ then I have an obligation to walk as he walked. Here's another thing 16 years of my Christian life after I was born again nobody ever read that verse to me.

In no church that I attended did anybody preach on that verse. I hardly even knew that it existed. I mean I'm sure I read through the Bible but you don't remember every verse.

If somebody points it out specifically then it sticks in our mind but it's so clear. I said I abide in him. I said that right at the beginning of my Christian life.

I'm in Christ but nobody told me. Well then you must walk in the same manner as you walked and when I read that I must walk in the same manner as he walked I say how in the world is that possible? He's not telling me to do all that he did. Distinguish.

Walking refers to our way of life. Doing refers to a service or ministry or activity like preaching and healing the sick and doing miracles. That's not it.

That's God gives that gift to some people but walking as he walked is referring to the way we live. Men, women, young people. The way we live on earth.

The principles by which we live must be the same principles which govern the life of Jesus Christ. That is what we preach in our CFC churches primarily because that's what the Bible teaches. We teach that the first promise in the Bible is that we must be saved from our sins.

So we keep preaching that and forgiveness of sins is only clearing the ground so that we can be saved from our sins. It's not just to be forgiven and that's it and we keep on being forgiven and forgiven and forgiven and forgiven and never being saved. Then we know Jesus as forgiver.

If he doesn't save us from any of our sins we got to be honest and say well he hasn't saved me but he forgives me. He's my forgiver. He's not yet my savior.

Well in my life it was like that. He was my forgiver. I'd call him savior but it was a lie.

He was only my forgiver. Till I became desperate and I said Lord this is not all there is in the Christian life. I'm sure there's a lot more than this and the enemy has hidden, Satan has hidden these things from, I said he's hidden it from me because preachers are supposed to explain the Bible to me but they didn't.

So I found out for myself. I discovered that he does save and I began to seek God to be saved and when we begin to be saved, seek to be saved, the first thing is to be honest about our failure. If I'm not willing to be honest about my failure I won't be saved from it.

If I say that I have no sin, I deceive myself. If for example I read a verse like this let me show you. Matthew chapter 5. You know we know the Bible is described divided into Old Testament and New Testament or it can also be called Old Covenant and New Covenant or Old Agreement and New Agreement.

Basically the same words. The Old Agreement was what God did through Moses and God and the New Agreement is what God has established through Christ and there's a lot of difference. If you want to know what how big the difference, as much higher as Jesus is than from Moses, that's the difference.

Compare Jesus with Moses and the difference between the two is the difference between the Old Agreement and the New Agreement. And in the Old Agreement the promise was, maybe I should go there first, then we come back to Matthew 5. Psalm 103. This is what Moses led people to and which David, a follower of, David was an Israelite, follower of Moses, experienced this.

Psalm 103 and verse 3, verse 1 and 3. Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgives all your sins, pardons all your iniquities, means he forgives all your sins. And you say, David, did he really forgive all your sins? Yes he did. He writes that inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Forgiveness of all sins is not after Jesus came. It's a thousand years before Christ came. David got the forgiveness of his sins, looking forward to Christ dying on the cross by sacrificing a lamb then.

That lamb that he killed was looking forward to the Lamb of God that would die on the cross. He looked forward and said, my sins are forgiven. We look backward 2,000 years.

Neither David nor I saw Christ dying on the cross. The only difference is he looked forward to it and I looked backward to it on the same basis that my sins are forgiven. Same basis.

David got his sins forgiven on the same basis as mine, but he got all his sins forgiven. But if you were to ask David, what about victory over sin? Oh no, that's not possible. So every Christian who says it's not possible is living in 1000 BC like David.

The New Testament begins in Matthew chapter 1 and says he will save his people from their sins. So let's look at some sins that we need to be saved from. In Matthew chapter 5, I don't know whether you've seen that the Sermon on the Mount, this is another thing many people have not seen, is a contrast between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and the Old Agreement and the New Agreement. Jesus was saying this was the Old Agreement, but this is the New Agreement. This is what you were supposed to do under the Old Testament as follower of Moses.

And this is what you are to do in the New Testament if you are my follower. So let's look at it. What should the followers of Moses do? And what should the followers of Jesus do? Here it is.

And he explained it by saying, verse 20, Matthew 5 20, unless your righteousness surpasses, goes beyond the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. So let's stop there for a moment and see what was the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. I'm going step by step so that you understand it clearly.

The righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees can be described in one verse. Matthew chapter 23. We'll come back to Matthew 5, but let's look at Matthew 23.

And Jesus described the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees like this. Verse 25. Matthew 23 and verse 25.

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees! What do you do? You clean the outside of the cup and the dish where the inside is full of robbery and self-indulgence. So the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was one where the outer life was clean, the inside was dirty. They had a good external testimony but their thought life was filthy.

The heart was dirty. Outwardly they're very decent, well-behaved, upright people. That is Pharisaical righteousness.

They had no power or ability to clean the inside. In fact, the Lord describes it like tombs. You know, whitewashed tombs.

Verse 27. Oh beautiful! You've seen these tombs, expensive tombs built by rich people for their relatives who died. Underneath is dead man's bones, but outside it looks so fancy.

He says that's how many, that's the mark of a Pharisee. Very beautiful external life before others, but inside, corruption, the way he lives at home, very different from the way he appears in public. And the way he appears in public is vastly different from what his heart is like, what his thoughts are like.

So that's the difference between the righteousness of the Pharisees and what Jesus expected. Come back to Matthew 5 20 now. Now you understand this verse better.

Always when you compare Scripture with Scripture, you understand Scripture. God has not given the Bible for lazy people who will not bother to compare Scripture with Scripture. I mean, for example, I just showed you two verses today and I think many of you got a like for the first time.

Aha! That is what the righteousness of the Pharisees is. Now I see. My righteousness must be different from the righteousness of the Pharisees.

In what way? Theirs was only external. Mine must be external plus internal. In other words, the cup must be clean.

When you drink milk or tea or coffee, anything from a cup, oh boy, you're not just bothered about the outside being clean. You're more concerned that the inside should be clean. In fact, we are more concerned to clean the inside even if the outside is a little dirty.

It doesn't matter. But, of course, we want the outside and inside to be clean. So that's what he meant here.

That your righteousness must be more than the scribes and Pharisees means your righteousness must be inward. And then he says, okay, now I will explain it. And if you want to understand the rest of the Sermon

on the Mount, the rest of it, all the way to chapter 7, you have to understand this verse which I just read in Matthew 5 20.

Then he comes to the end of chapter 7 and says, if you listen to my words, you will build your house on a rock. Unshakable, if you obey it. What is our house? The house is, first of all, my personal life.

Second, my family life. And thirdly, my church. It's a three-story building built on a rock.

I obey what I hear in these three chapters. Then my personal life, my family life, my church life will be unshakable no matter what happens. Why are there so many divorces? It's not built on the rock.

Why does the house collapse? Only one reason. It's not built on the rock. A storm comes, house collapses, they don't see the reason.

The reason is we don't love each other. Oh no, that's not the reason. That's what Hollywood tells you.

The real reason is it was never built on the rock. It was never built on obedience to God's Word. It was built on the righteousness of the Pharisees.

He wanted to present a good front to others. Oh, we are a happily married couple. And the inside was rotting away like dead man's bones.

There's a lot of truth here relevant to the life, to the world around us, and the lives we live. And so he goes on in the rest of the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5 onwards to Matthew 7 to amplify it and explain it. Now he says, I'll explain to you.

I gave you the main heading, which is inward righteousness and not only external, is the difference between the religion of Moses and the religion of Christ, between following Moses and following Christ. And now you have the opportunity to discover whether you are a follower of Moses and of the Pharisees, or whether you're a follower of Jesus Christ. And you may get the shock of your life to discover today that you're following Moses.

Okay, he gives number one example. Moses, Old Covenant, said, don't commit murder. You'll be taken to court.

That means you'll be guilty before God. That's the meaning of that. That's the righteousness of the Pharisees, the outside of the cup.

Don't commit murder. But I say to you, this is Jesus' words, inside of the cup, don't get angry. Because it is from anger that murder comes.

People who love others don't kill them. Murders are angry with someone. So where did that originate? From the inside, dirty cup inside, anger.

So if we were to write it as a commandment, the old commandment is thou shall not get, thou shall not commit, thou shall not kill. The equivalent in the New Testament is thou shall not get angry. How many of you can honestly say that you're even trying to keep that commandment? Jesus said, if you listen to my words and don't do them, you're like the man who built his house on sand.

It'll always be shaky. One day it'll collapse. You wonder now why your life is shaky and one day will collapse? Here's the answer.

And if your anger goes, you say some strong words to your brother and then say something more, even stronger to him, and then go on to say something more, three steps. The third step, it says in verse 22, will take you to hell. Have you ever heard any preacher tell you that anger is the first of three steps to hell? By the way, I didn't say that.

It's Jesus who said it. Let me read it to you. If you're angry with your brother, verse 22, step one, you're guilty before a court, lower court.

But if you go further and say something stronger to your brother, some word in anger, you're guilty before the Supreme Court. And if you go still further and express your anger in still greater terms to your brother, third step of anger, you go to hell. Is that written in your Bible? That anger, anger, anger can lead you to hell.

Not the first step, not immediately when you get angry, but you know how anger is. Haven't you seen that sometimes with people who get angry with you, even at home? Husband or wife, they go and say something, something has happened, they're very upset. And they come away.

And they said, what I said was not enough. They go back and say something more. Is that familiar? That's exactly what he's talking about.

He says, you keep going like that and you end up in hell. Why is it that preachers who are supposed to be spiritual doctors don't tell you the truth? But they're only interested in collecting your money. What would you think of a doctor who gives you a scan or an MRI examination and discovers that you've got cancer, but he wants your money? He says, you're okay.

Perfectly okay. You're in good health and sends you to die. Collects your fees, doctor's fees and sends you home to die.

The majority of preachers today are like that. They come to collect your money and they don't tell you the truth about where you're headed. They don't tell you about the cancer that's rotting away inside and destroying you.

Sin. Your anger. I lived under that type of preaching for 16 years and I was defeated.

Yeah, I was defeated by anger. I used to get angry and upset with my wife at home and we were born again. Oh, yeah, we were baptized in water and we'd go to a good church.

We were not going to some dead church, but we'd get angry because our spiritual doctors never told us about this deadly cancer that's eating away our insides and that would finally kill us. I thank God he opened my eyes and I could see it. And once he opened my eyes, I said, Lord, I'm determined to open other people's eyes.

And it doesn't matter if somebody gets angry with me and goes away from our church and goes somewhere else. I say, OK, brother, you can go. God have mercy on you.

But we're going to speak the truth. We're not here to build our numbers. We are here to populate heaven.

To depopulate hell by telling people the truth so that they don't go there and we don't want your money. That's how our CFC churches started 48 years ago. I saw in India particularly that there was such a craze for money in churches.

I've heard of a church where they took an offering and the beginning of the service and they counted it to the back and found it was not enough. They sent another bag around for another offering and then they send letters mostly to Europe and America. They won't send it to Africa.

Nobody there will send money. Send it to America and Europe where people have a lot of money and say, oh, we are doing a great work for the Lord and all types of fictitious false statements. Hundreds are getting converted.

I come from a country where people say those type of lies. And I know because I live there, the lies they say when they say they're running an orphanage, they're running, they're taking care of their own children and the children of all their relatives. I know one orphanage like that, but people were financing it.

We'll never go there to see what it's like. This is the type of Christianity I saw in India and I got fed up and I said, Lord, I was in the Navy. I wasn't a preacher.

I never been to a Bible school in my life, thank God. And I, when the Lord called me, I said, okay. And I said, I will never have anything to do with this type of Christianity.

So we started our churches with some principles. We will not pass a bag around to collect offerings. We will never send a report to any country in the world about our work.

And in 48 years, we have never done it. Not once. I've never sent a report to anybody about what work I do.

Nobody knows what I do. The Lord knows that's enough. And I said, we will never ask people to give money for anything.

But because we knew that Jesus once sat near a box, an offering box, and allowed even a widow to put two mites in. And so we said, okay, we'll keep a box somewhere at the back. And those who want to put it in can put it in.

Those who don't want, we don't check who's putting and who's putting. We're not interested. We don't give any receipts or any such things.

Drop it there and ask the Lord for a receipt one day. And when he comes back, he'll reward you. I guarantee he'll reward you.

We, in other words, we are urging people to live before God and not before men. And to teach people that the gospel is free. You don't have to pay to hear the gospel.

And that's how we have operated. As the churches grew, we said, fine. We needed a building because we were meeting in a house, in my house first, and it became too small.

Then what do we do when we need a building? We're not going to ask anybody for money. No. We trust the Lord that people will be prompted to put money in the box.

And if they don't, we'll wait. We're willing to wait to have a building. And we waited.

We waited about six years before you have a building. Fine. And the same in the villages.

And then gradually, little by little, we spread this message to other places. And we discovered that there were people in India who wanted this wonderful gospel of the new covenant. And so gradually, we found people who wanted this gospel.

That Jesus can save us from our sins. That we are not to be followers of Moses who don't just kill people, but we are followers of Jesus, where we seek not to be angry with people. Then he went on.

He said, I'll give, that's one example. He said, I'll give you another example. Jesus said, the religion of the Pharisees, verse 27, you shall not commit adultery.

That is the righteousness of the Pharisees. You reach that level, which is better than the level of the world, because a lot of people in the world commit adultery. Moses was higher.

You shall not commit adultery. But Jesus said, I say to you, his hand is higher. Don't even lust after a woman with your eyes, with your thoughts.

You see the difference between Moses and Jesus? The difference between old covenant religion and new covenant Christianity is the difference between Moses and Jesus. And I say, most Christians, without realizing it, Moses is their leader. Their standards are the standards of the 10 commandments that Moses got on the mountain, the Old Testament.

But they claim to be following Jesus. If you claim to be following Jesus, then listen to these words. You have heard, Moses said this, what I say to you.

So when we take the commands of Jesus seriously, in the beginning, we find we are constantly defeated. Defeated I was. Defeated, defeated in both these areas, which I just read.

These are just two examples. There are many more. And I said, Lord, what is this? And then I came to this verse, which is the answer.

If any man thirst. He had said it earlier in Matthew chapter 5, before he said these verses. If you want this righteousness, how to get it? Matthew 5, verse 6. He had said this before he said all these verses I just read.

If you hunger and thirst for righteousness, you will be satisfied. Aha. So that is the secret.

I can have this righteousness of Jesus, which he preached. I can be elevated above the level of the 10 commandments and what Moses preached, if I hunger and thirst for this standard. Now, if you're only interested in having a good testimony and to make a good impression before men, you don't have to hunger and thirst for this.

If you keep the standard of Moses, don't kill, don't commit adultery. Most people will be very happy with you. They'll give you church membership and they'll consider you a good person.

They will never ask you whether you get angry or whether you lust with your eyes. No. And you're happy with that.

And nobody's asking you that question. You go to a church, nobody asks such questions and you're happy and you keep on getting angry at home and keep on lusting with your eyes most of the time. And you imagine yourself to be a disciple of Jesus.

No, sir, you're a good person according to the standard of the world, but you're not a disciple of Jesus. If you never knew that till today, thank God you know it today. But the good news is you don't have to be like that.

How can I get this righteousness? Here it is. If you hunger and thirst. Now, there's a type of thirst.

Well, I'm a bit thirsty right now. I'd like a glass of water, but I would not pay \$100,000 for this glass of water. No, I'm not that thirsty.

Thank you. But if I had been in a desert for seven days or 10 days and dying of thirst, I'd give everything I have. Please give me that glass of water.

I'm dying. That is the type of thirst that Jesus is speaking about. That means when you're that desperate, Lord, I don't want to get angry.

Lord, I don't want to lust in my thoughts or with my eyes. When you're desperate and I'm willing to pay any price for it, I want to seek you, you'll get it. But if it's a casual like, yeah, I'd like a glass of water now, that type of thirst, you'll never get it.

These weak type of prayers. Yeah, Lord, that's a good idea. I'd be happy to get over the victory of my anger, sure.

Life will be more peaceful at home. And yeah, these dirty thoughts, I'd be happy if you can give me victory over it. And then you forget all about it.

You're never going to get anywhere. That's not hungering and thirsting. Hungering and thirsting, you're desperate.

And when I got desperate, I give you my honest testimony. I who was defeated, I can't say I got victory. I say the Lord kept me from falling.

See, if I were to just hold it like this, it'll drop. But if I hold it up, why is gravity not able to pull this thing down? Gravity is working strongly here, trying its best to pull this glass of water down. But there's another power.

The power of life in my body that's overcoming the power of gravity and saying, gravity, you're not as strong as me. I can overcome your power and keep this held up. That is how Jesus helps us to overcome.

The power of sin is like the power of gravity. It operates on everybody, any part of the world. It's as universal as the law of gravity.

Everywhere, everybody is pulled down by sin. But the life of Jesus, if I allow it to flow through me, can hold me up. Let me read that verse to you in Romans chapter 8. In Romans chapter 8, it says, the law of the Holy Spirit, different from the law of Moses.

Have you heard of the law of the Holy Spirit? The law of Moses was 10 commandments. What is the law of the Holy Spirit? It says here, Romans 8, to the law of the Holy Spirit. The law of the Holy Spirit is not one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

No. It is life in Christ Jesus. That's the law.

Life in Christ Jesus. That is the New Testament law. It's called the law of the Spirit.

The law of Moses, 10 commandments. This is the law of the Spirit. And this law of life in Christ Jesus, you know, like the life in me, sets me free, sets this cup free from the law of gravity.

You see how it's the life in me is freeing this cup from the law of gravity? And as long as this life in me keeps going, now because I'm human, I get tired and I'll put it down, but the life of Christ never gets tired. The life, the law of the life in Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit, life in Christ Jesus, it will set me free from the law of sin forever. This is the gospel.

It's good news. The good news is not you will sin. Ask him to forgive you.

And tomorrow you'll sin again. And after 35 years, you'll still be sinning exactly the same way. But Jesus will forgive you.

That is not the gospel. That is one percent. It's not the full gospel.

Jesus forgives sin, sure. But the full gospel is the law of the Spirit will set me free from the law of sin and death. That's the meaning of grace.

Grace is different from law. Law came through Moses. Grace came through Jesus Christ.

What is the difference? Here it is, Romans 6, 14. Romans 6 and verse 14. If you're under grace, that is Jesus, and not under law, which is Moses, sin cannot rule you.

Sin cannot rule you. The law of gravity cannot rule where my life is lifting up this cup. That's the meaning, grace.

So if you were to ask a little 10-year-old boy, listen, son, can you answer this question? Just read Romans 6, 14 and answer this question. I'm only giving you one verse, and I'll ask this 10-year-old. Sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Question. What is the mark of being under grace? He will answer, sin will not rule over me. Next question.

Same verse. What is the mark of being under law? Sin rules over me. It's as simple as 2 plus 2 is 4, and 2 minus 2 is 0. It's as simple as that.

If you're under law, sin rules over you. If you're under grace, sin cannot rule over you. Now all of you can decide whether you're under law or under grace.

Not according to my word. I said don't get upset with me. That's what the Holy Spirit says here.

And anyone should be delighted to hear it. I mean, if a doctor said to you, you got cancer, but you can be free from it 100%, would you get depressed over that? Oh, don't tell me I have to give up this cancer. Would you say that? Oh, sure.

How do you feel about giving up your anger, your bitterness, and your grumbling and complaining? Is that bringing any life into your home? Is that bringing peace and joy in your home? How about giving up all that filthy thinking which ruins even your dreams at night? Would you like to get rid of it? Well, some people don't, but those who want, here's the good news. Jesus can set you free. He can.

I tell you, if you thirst, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the beginning of the gospel that we preach in our churches. And it is only with such people that you can really build a genuine church which is called a body of Jesus Christ.

It's a message that is not heard much because very few people hunger and thirst for righteousness. That's the reason. Very few pastors hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Very few pastors are honest enough to say, I'm defeated. I haven't yet got victory. It's like I heard of a person lying in an operating theater for heart surgery, and the doctor was about to cut him open.

And the man said, I'm nervous because this is the first time I'm being operated for heart surgery. He said, don't worry. The doctor said, this is the first time I'm operating on a heart as well.

That's how it is with many preachers. Let's seek the Lord. Let's bow before God.

Thank God we're coming to a heart surgeon who's an expert, who can heal us completely from the sins of the heart. He's done that on many other people. He's operated on many and delivered them, and he can deliver us.

Heavenly Father, what a wonderful gospel. This is hidden from the wise and the clever of the world and revealed to babes who will simply trust your word. We long to follow after you, Lord Jesus.

We long to be witnesses to this wonderful gospel in many parts of this country and from other countries, wherever people have come from here to hear this, to this conference here. We pray that not one will go away by the end of this conference without being satisfied, without being spoken to you directly by you. Be present in every meeting, Lord.

Let your name be glorified. Father in heaven, hear us. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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