

Keeping God's Truths Ever Fresh

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of keeping our spiritual walk fresh and vibrant, likening it to the manna from heaven that could either breed worms or remain fresh based on how we handle God's truth. It highlights the need to constantly seek a deeper, more intimate knowledge of God, to endure the cross for the joy of fellowship with the Father, and to purify ourselves daily to experience the fullness of life in Christ.

Scripture: John 17:3, Hebrews 12:2, 1 John 3:2, 1 John 3:3, Revelation 3:21, Psalms 73:25, Hebrews 12:1, 1 Timothy 6:12, 1 Corinthians 6:17, Psalms 72:25

Topics: "Spiritual Freshness", "Intimacy with God"

Description

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Transcript

What is impressed on my heart was, there's a freshness about heaven and when we get into eternity we realize that, that nothing becomes stale. You know it says about the manna which fell from heaven, even though it is heavenly bread, within 24 hours it began to breed worms. To tell you honestly, I don't know of any food on earth that breeds worms in 24 hours.

I mean over a period of time, yes. But heavenly food is such, you can't keep it for 24 hours, it breeds worms. But that same manna, Moses said, put a part of it inside the Ark of the Covenant.

So they kept a part of it inside the Ark of the Covenant. They carried that around for 40 years and it never became stale or bred worms or stank. Teaching us that the truth that you get from God, if you keep it in your dirty hands or in your self, it stinks in no time.

Whatever truth it is, taking up the cross, new covenant, you name it, it begins to stink. And I've seen people who talk about the most fantastic truths, but it's not fresh in their lives like it was when they first heard it. And it stinks.

And they're the last people to realize it is they themselves. Everybody else realizes it, but not them. So one thing about heaven is a simple truth like, Jesus died for my sins.

It's as if I'm hearing it for the first time. Wow! Jesus died for me. And when I saw that some years ago from this verse, I said, Lord, you are giving me a foretaste of heaven now.

That's the purpose of the Holy Spirit. You know, that's absolutely true. We sing in that song, heaven came down and glory filled my soul.

When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, it is a real fullness of the Holy Spirit that we experience instead of the fake that most people have. One thing will happen. Something of the spirit of heaven will come into our hearts.

And the more we walk in the spirit, the more heavenly our thought patterns will become, our attitudes to people will become, and our attitude to truths that we got from heaven, like manna, remains fresh. Nothing becomes stale. There's no word in the Bible that is stale anymore.

Love one another as I have loved you. Oh, it's not, I heard that for years. No, I haven't.

I'm hearing it now. I must love people as Jesus loved me. Jesus died for a wretched sinner like me.

I'm hearing it for the first time. Wow. That he actually did it.

So I prayed that prayer. I don't think we can achieve perfection here on this earth, but the Bible says we press on to perfection. We purify ourselves as he is pure until we become like him.

So one of the prayers I pray for myself is, Lord, whenever I, particularly when I sing about the cross, I never want to, because they were singing here, it was a song they were singing in Revelation 5-9, that when I sing about Jesus dying for me or anything to do with the cross, I want to be able to sing as if I'm hearing that for the very first time. A criminal who was going to be hanged, the prison door is open saying, you're free. You're not going to be hanged.

Wow. Lord, make it like that for me. Every time I sing about the cross, not just something emotional, but something real in my life.

And when we do that, I tell you, it makes a difference in our, is that mine? Sometimes it helps to wake everybody up in the early morning. So we never find fault with somebody's phone ringing. The sovereignty of God is there.

So it's something I pray, Lord, make it real to me. And I don't think I've got to perfection yet, but it's been really God's answer to my prayer many times. Because I find tears in my eyes when I read that Jesus died for me.

I'm singing a song which I've sung a hundred times. I would encourage you to ask the Lord to make some of these precious truths fresh, that it never becomes stale. And when we talk about a new covenant, that also is something must always remain fresh in our mind.

See this verse in Hebrews chapter 10. Again, that word new, and I feel it as Messiah used the same meaning there. Hebrews 10 and verse 19.

See, Hebrews is the great book which explains how we have so much in the new covenant which they didn't have under the old covenant. It's one of the great books of the New Testament, and that's why the devil's made sure most Christians don't read it much. They'd rather go to Ephesians or Philippians or

something like that.

It's all scripture, true. But there's no book in the Bible that explains the difference between the old and the new as clearly as Hebrews. There's no book in the Bible which speaks about the humanity of Christ as clearly as Hebrews.

So, to me, it's a very precious, many truths in it. And here is a very precious truth which is also found only in Hebrews, Hebrews 10, 19. Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place, which is the immediate presence of God, which they could not go through in the Old Testament through the veil, which was rent only when Christ died, by the blood of Jesus, and He's inaugurated for us a new and living way through the veil, and that veil symbolized His flesh.

His flesh means His self-will. There was no sin in Jesus, but He had self-will. And you see that in the Garden of Gethsemane, not my will.

He had to deny His self-will. John 6, 38, I come from heaven not to do my own will. Why not to do His own will? Because His own will was not the Father's will.

He didn't sin. You see, Adam had his own will too, but he wasn't a sinner when he was created. When he exercised it, he sinned.

So, Jesus came with a will of His own, which He had to deny every single moment. That is the taking up the cross throughout His life, and that is the cross we have to take up if we want to follow Him. So, that is called the flesh.

Jesus came in the flesh. He came with a self-will, and that veil in the temple, which prevented man from going into the most holy place where God dwelt. They didn't understand what it was in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, we have a revelation. It is your self-will, and until that is crucified, you'll never enter the Father's presence. You won't live in the Father's presence.

And Jesus, when He cried out on the cross, it is finished. It was saying, every temptation to do your own will, the whole length of the veil, was finished. Every temptation that man could ever face to do his own will was exhausted in 33 and a half years, as a child, as a young adult, and as a grown-up man, as a full-time worker.

He exhausted it completely, and thereby opened what is called a new and living way, which He inaugurated for us, through the veil. And once you get into the veil, that's the Father's presence. See, the difference between the three parts of the Old Testament tabernacle was outer court, holy place, most holy place.

The outer court was where all the people congregated, where they had the altar symbolizing, Jesus died for my sins, the labor of water, symbolizing water baptism. A lot of people are stuck with just that. I've been saved, and I've been baptized, and we like to hang around with such people, and we're saved, we're saved, we're saved, the whole multitude of Christians like that.

And then, there's a group of Christians who want to go beyond that, into the holy place. And the holy place was a place of service, where the priests went to light the candle, and to put the showbread, and to burn the incense, those three things there. And those are Christians who want to go beyond just receiving

God's free gifts of forgiveness and water baptism, and want to go beyond and do something for the Lord.

And so, there are people who like to hang around in the outer court with people who are, we are all one in Christ, we're forgiven. There are others who go on a little further to say, we want to serve the Lord as well, we want to do something for Him out of gratitude for what He's done for us. But beyond all that is the most holy place, where you're going, there's nobody but God.

So, if you're bored with God, you won't want to go there. There are some people who are bored, holy with God. They always want fellowship with some human being.

And so, they hang around in the holy place, or the outer court. In the most holy place, it's only God. And until I've come into my life, into the place where I'm quite happy to be with God alone, and with no other human being, just God, then I can have blessed fellowship with other believers who also want God alone.

That's how Jesus lived. And that is what it means to go through the veil, into the presence of the immediate presence of God, where He means everything to me. You know, like the psalmist said, Psalm 73, 25, Whom have I in heaven but Thee? Lord, I'm not looking for the golden streets, or the mansions, or even the crown, or freedom from sickness, and freedom from problems, and to be meet again with my loved ones who went ahead of me.

No, no, no, no, no, no. You know, like that song we sing, But I shall see my Savior first of all, when I get up there. My Savior, first of all, more than anyone else.

I'm not going to happen to see my loved ones who departed ahead of me. No. They can wait.

They can wait a hundred thousand years before I meet them. No problem. I want to meet my Savior first of all.

I'm willing to spend the first hundred thousand years with Him, before I meet my loved ones who went ahead of me. Do you have that attitude with the Lord? Or are you eager to meet some of your loved ones who went ahead of you? This is what it means to God in the most holy place. Very few Christians live there, and that's why their lives are so shallow.

They backslide so easily. They get victory over sin, and then fall back, fall back into it, because God alone, it's not their interest. They have any other interest, along with God.

Sometimes it's money. Sometimes something which looks nice, fellowship with other Christians. I don't want fellowship with other Christians to become more important to me ever in my life than fellowship with my Savior.

So He's made a new and living way inaugurated for us. Now even though the way into the most holy place is open when Christ died and the veil was rent, this teaches me that it's not a door. It's not a new and living door.

Door means I enter into it immediately. It's a way. It's a mystery like many other things in Scripture, that it looks like just an open thing I walk in.

No, it's a way that I have to walk in every day to dwell in the Father's presence. The fact that I dwelt there yesterday doesn't guarantee that I'll be there today. I have to walk this new and living way.

And there again the word new, like I said there in Revelation 5, new song, ever fresh. This also is ever fresh. That means every day I have a fresh opportunity to put myself to death and walk this way.

This fresh, ever fresh, and it's the way of life. It's the only way of life which is hidden from the almost the rest of Christendom. That if we die with Him, we will live with Him.

That's the great truth of the way of the cross, that you will not live with Him if we do not die with Him. Yeah, I hope you know that verse which is in, I think it's 2nd Timothy and chapter 2 and verse 11. It's a trustworthy statement, a faithful statement.

If we died with Him, we will also live with Him. What if you don't die with Him? That day you will not experience the life of Christ. You can rejoice that 15 years ago my sins are forgiven.

I'm born again. You can rejoice in all that. That's the reason why you see shallow Christians.

There's no freshness about them. There's no fresh revelation from God. There's no freshness of God's presence when you meet them.

It's pretty boring fellowship with some Christians. But if we die with Him, we live with Him. God is the most interesting person to live with in this universe.

I don't know whether you believe that. It's more interesting to live with Him than to live with your wife. Or you're more interesting to listen to God than to listen to the most powerful preacher you have ever heard on earth.

He's the most interesting person in the universe. And I feel that many of us may not have known Him in that way because He can be known only in the most holy place. You can experience His blessings in the outer court.

You can serve Him in the holy place. But you can know Him only in the most holy place. And that is through this ever-fresh and living way that Jesus has inaugurated.

Inaugurated means that's the way He walked. I think of these, a new road or a bridge that has been constructed over a river which people could never cross. And now somebody's made a bridge across it and somebody comes and cuts a ribbon.

It's inauguration. That's for everybody to use now. You don't have to go into the river now.

You just drive straight across the bridge in no time you're on the other side. That's the picture I get. A way inaugurated for me at such tremendous cost.

It's like a bridge that has been spent millions and millions and millions of dollars just to make it easy for me to go across. And here Jesus lived His whole life and died in order that I might come right into the Father's presence. It's a way inaugurated for me.

But it is through, if I die with Him, I shall live with Him. This is very important, brothers, because I have seen, you see, I've seen CFC churches now in India for more than 44 years. And I've seen believers who understood these truths that you understood more recently, who have understood it for so many years.

And I'll tell you what I've seen in many cases. It has become stale. The manna came from heaven initially.

Whoa! Undoubtedly. But they held it in human hands and it began to stink and they don't realize it. They keep saying this is the manna that came from heaven.

Sure it came from heaven. But brother, your life is stinking. The way you speak and the way you relate to people and to your wife and your attitude to earthly things is stinking.

What's your saying you got this manna from heaven? Is it fresh? Is it ever new? The truth of Christ dying for you, stale old truth. Is it ever fresh? Taking up the cross. Oh, you heard that for years.

I can explain it. Maybe intellectually. But in practical terms, is it ever fresh? Is it new? I'm finding new areas of my life where the cross has to be applied.

I'm not saying this to condemn anyone. No. There's a difference between condemning to make a person feel useless.

No. It's to challenge. You say, hey, don't stop there.

Let's press on to perfection. Let's purify ourselves until we reach his standard of purity. That's 1 John 3 3. Everyone, 1 John 3 3, who has the hope of Christ's second coming.

See for many people, the hope is only that Christ will come again. But if you heard me, you heard me say from 1 John 3 2, 1 John 3 verse 2, that we have a double hope. It's not just that he will come and I will see him face to face, which is so exciting.

But it's also exciting that I will be like him. So it says there, we know two things when he appears. We will be like him because we will see him as he is.

So it's the seeing him is put second. We will be like him. Why is that so exciting? Because I'm sick and tired of the way myself comes out, my stinking self comes out in different circumstances in my life, in my words or in my expressions or my attitudes to people or something we say, oh that was an accidental slip-up.

It was an accidental slip-up, true, but it is because of the stinking self that that was that accidental slip-up was there. Otherwise there would be no accidental slip-ups in heaven. So though I can, you know, you can tell your wife, oh that was not, that was just a misunderstanding, accidental, true.

But you realize it's because of your stinking self that that misunderstanding and accidental slip-up came. And are you sick and tired of this holding on to this manna from heaven with dirty hands and for it to stink? No. I say, Lord, I want to be like you.

And it says everyone, verse 3, 1 John 3, 3, who has this double hope. Most Christians have only one hope. We will see him when he comes.

I say, I say what scripture says, I will be like him because I will see him. That is my hope. And why is that so important? Seeing him is great, but it'll be terrible if I've got to live in heaven with the stinking self of mine, even if I see him every day.

If I live with Jesus every day and I've got the stinking self of mine to carry around with me, I'll be fed up. I say, this is not heaven, Lord. So heaven is not going to be heaven if my stinking self hasn't gone.

And I believe that if we have a little bit of the Spirit of Heaven that comes down through the Holy Spirit in us, we will really want to be free from anything which is not fresh. So because we have this hope and we recognize that we still carry around with us the stinking flesh, we purify ourselves. This is not asking Jesus to cleanse us.

He cleanses us from the guilt of past sin that he'll take care of. But purifying ourselves is we. He purifies himself.

So it's our job to cleanse ourselves. There's a cleansing that God does, which is our past sin, the cleansing from our flesh, we have to do. It's the difference between the old man and the flesh.

God killed the Egyptians under the Red Sea, but the Israelites had to kill the Canaanites to possess the land. Big difference. God could have killed the Canaanites exactly like he killed the Egyptians in one moment.

Wow. Wiped out. Every Canaanite and Canaan wiped out.

Go and possess the land. It wasn't like that. The Egyptians buried under the Red Sea, which is a picture of baptism.

The Israelites went, it says in one Corinthians 10, they were baptized in the Red Sea. It's a picture of what a baptism. It's a picture of the old man buried, Romans 6. That old man is the Egyptian army.

They didn't have to lift a finger. God did it all, 100%. Our old man was crucified with Christ.

But when it comes to the giants of Canaan, Galatians 5.24, those who are Christ's crucify the flesh with its affections on us. We have to kill the giants of Canaan. There are many of them dwelling in our flesh.

One by one, we kill them. They didn't possess the whole land in one moment. What does victory over sin mean? It means the land that I see and the giant that I see, I'm going to fight him, kill him, possess his land, then move on to possess some more of Canaan's land.

Canaan's land is a huge area from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet. All the giants that have lived there for years, like Goliath saying, who can fight with me? And one by one, as I possess, as I kill them, you know, every giant that the Israelites killed, they got that fella's land. This is a picture.

The Old Testament is a perfect picture of New Testament life. And there you see clearly the distinction between the old man and the flesh, which 99% of Christendom doesn't even know the difference between the old man and the flesh. They think it is the same thing.

But it's not enough to know the theory of it. My attitude, my attitude to sin was dealt with on the cross, but I have to apply that every day. That's crucifying the flesh with his affections and love.

And that is the way we purify ourselves as he is pure. And that's why it's so important to keep looking unto Jesus. It says in the race, you know, Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 1 and 2, therefore, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses, let us run this race with endurance, Hebrews 12, 1, without giving up.

This race is through the veil. The race is just putting the Canaanites to death. That's the race.

The more you put to death, the more you progress in the race, whether you call it possessing the land or making progress in the marathon race, the picture is the same. You make progress, but it is with endurance. That means I'm not going to give up until I have become like him.

And we do it fixing our eyes on Jesus, verse 2, or looking away from everything else unto Jesus. That's very important. Looking away from everything else unto Jesus, just like Peter, when he looked away from Jesus when walking on the water, he sank.

No matter how much experience you have walking on the water, the moment you turn your eyes away from Jesus, in that moment, you sink. Experience means nothing. You can walk with the Lord for 50 years and you turn your eyes away from the Lord, you sink.

It's like a branch. I've produced fruit for 50 years and cut off from the tree, immediately drying out. Years of experience means nothing here.

I have to be in constant touch with the source of life, like a branch in a tree, or looking away from everything else, from the wind and the storms and all that. Looking away only unto Jesus, not looking at the devil being frightened by him. Looking away unto Jesus, who, and what do I see in him? The way he took up the cross every day and despised all the shame and got to the throne of God, which is the finishing line, and that's my goal, too.

That is my goal, because Jesus said, if you overcome like I overcame, you will sit with me on my throne. That's not a wrong ambition to have. I say, yes, I want to sit with Jesus on his throne, because it says, and Jesus challenges me to that in Revelation 3 and verse, Revelation chapter 3 verse 21.

If you overcome, and overcome is these giants of Canaan, the lusts of the flesh. If I overcome, he will grant me. This is the meaning of the mansions in heaven and the crowns and all that.

The reality is, I will sit with Jesus on his throne. And how did he get to the Father's throne? He was on his Father's throne from all eternity, but once he became a man, as a man, to sit on his Father's throne, he had to be overcomer. He had to overcome.

He had to overcome consistently for 33 and a half years in order to go back and sit on that throne as a man. He sat on that throne from eternity as God, but to go and sit there as a man, he had to be an overcomer. So he says, as I overcame, and I'm sitting down with my Father on his throne, I'm asking you to go the same way.

You can also overcome. He's not challenging us to do it. He's encouraging us, saying, you can overcome.

You can sit with me on my throne. And I say, Lord, I want that. I want, that's my goal, to sit with you on your throne, not for some honor, because I felt for a long, long time that the greatest reward that God can give me in heaven is not a mansion or a crown, or I'm not interested in any of those things.

Closeness to Jesus Christ. That's what I long for on earth, and that's what I long for in heaven. I'm not looking to be a more anointed preacher, or to bring more souls to Christ, and all these things that Christians long for, which sound very spiritual.

To tell you honestly, my longing on earth and in heaven is to be close to Christ. Like the Psalmist said, Whom am I in heaven but Thee? Psalm 72, 25. In other words, when I get to heaven, it's not a throne I'm

sitting on.

It's closeness to Jesus. That's the important thing. Whom am I in heaven but Thee? I don't want anyone but you, primarily.

And when I have you, then I can look at my loved ones there, and all the others. Just like you're on earth. My fellowship with Jesus, being so close, is what makes my fellow believers precious to me.

Not because, hey, that's a good guy, and I can have fellowship with him. It doesn't matter if that other guy is a weak believer, so what? I can have fellowship with that weak believer too, because it's Jesus who's first to me, and Jesus has accepted him. So I love that weak brother with all his weaknesses, because I see him through Christ.

I don't see him as himself. It's a human way to look and say, I like fellowship with this person. I don't like fellowship with that person.

It's true we are closer to some, because those who walk with the Lord, naturally we'll be closer to. Jesus was closer to James, Peter, and John, because they had a greater receptivity to the things of God. He wasn't as close to the 70 disciples whom he sent out.

There were circles in Jesus' teaching. There was the outer group of the multitude, and then a group of 17, and then a group of 12, and then inside that a group of 11, and then inside that a group of three. So I find the same exactly in my own fellowship with Christians, believers in our churches.

There's a bigger crowd of people who come and sit in the church meetings, and then there's a smaller crowd like the 70, and then there's a group of 11, and then there's a group of three. But the smaller group is the ones who want Jesus first. They're not looking for horizontal fellowship, but vertical, and therefore the horizontal becomes very precious.

Whom am I in heaven but Thee? And there's nothing on earth I desire beside Thee. Psalm 73 25. There is no one on earth I want, Lord, but You.

Psalm 73 25 to me has always been the definition of New Covenant worship. When it says you worship in the Spirit, this is it. Lord, I don't desire anyone or anything on earth but You.

I don't desire more money. I don't desire a bigger house. I don't desire a better job.

I don't desire a better church or a bigger church. I want You. And through You, whoever You give me, I'm quite happy with.

You put me in a particular church, I'm very happy. I'm not wanting to go to another church. Whatever You put me, I'm happy, because You are first.

Looking away from everything else unto Jesus, that is this ever-fresh and living way that God calls us to walk. And if we make an effort to walk that way, I believe increasingly, more and more, we will sense being with the Father all the time in our lives. You know, there's a book called, written by a Roman Catholic brother, Lawrence, called The Practice of the Presence of God.

It's a good book. It challenges. I've read it.

It's a sort of a Roman Catholic way of practicing God's presence, but it doesn't explain exactly how it can be real in my life. That guy was a monk. He had nothing else to do, so he couldn't spend all his time reading the Bible, praying.

But I'm not a monk. I'm married, and I've got children. I've got many other things to do.

I've got to earn my living and all that. So, how do I work it out in my life? He could do it such that anytime he felt a little distance, he could stop what he's doing and take the Bible and say, we can't do that. But it can be real in our lives if we have this attitude.

Lord, I don't desire anything on earth but you, and anything else that comes in between you and me, I'm gonna get crucified. Because I know that it's not that I don't need anything. I'm saying I don't want anything, but you, I desire nothing on earth, but I need a lot of things.

I need money to live. I need a house to live in. I need clothes.

I need a lot of things. But I don't want any of those things. If God doesn't give it to me, that's fine.

You give me, I'm quite happy with my old set of clothes and the amount of income I'm getting. I'm quite happy with it. The small house I'm living in, I'm quite happy with it.

Because basically, Lord, I want You. Dear brothers, live this life and many, many years from now, you'll have a very satisfying Christian life to look back to, if you choose this way, the way of Psalm 73, 25. I desire nothing and no one on earth but You.

You'll have a very blessed relationship with your wife, if you desire Jesus alone and not even your wife. Lord, it's You I want more than anything else. You'll have a very blessed relationship with your wife, your children, everything else.

And then this is the secret. This is what it means to worship in the Spirit. This is what it means to go through the veil, where there's no one there but God.

No one. Only me and God. I often sing that song of Faber's, which says, Father of Jesus, love's reward.

What rapture will it be? Prostrate before Thy throne to lie and gaze and gaze on Thee. Imagine just gazing at the Father for a million years. That'll be pretty boring.

But Faber understood it. What rapture? You know what rapture is? It's something exciting. What rapture will it be? Prostrate before Your throne to lie, gaze and gaze on Thee.

I mean, the type of excitement that someone in the world has when they have sex. Lord, to be with You and to experience a rapture constantly because it's You. I want to encourage you all, my dear brothers, to please get to know God like this.

This is eternal life, John 17 3, that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. This is eternal life, and you haven't tasted eternal life if you are not getting to know more and more of God. Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, you know, Timothy is a 45-year-old man who had walked with Paul for at least 25 years.

And to him, towards the end of his life, Paul writes in 1 Timothy chapter 6 and quite a good fight, verse 12, and lay hold, 1 Timothy 6, 12. Fight this good fight in order to lay hold of eternal life. What is eternal life? To know God.

This is life eternal. They might know Thee and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. You have to fight a good fight to lay hold of that.

Lord, I want to fight that fight every day so that I can know You better and I can know You, Lord Jesus, intimately. And that word, know, is, you know, the Old Testament word for the physical relationship between man and a woman. Adam knew his wife.

And like that, it speaks of the physical relationships of know God in the spirit, in the same way. 1 Corinthians 6 says, He who is joined to a prostitute is one flesh with her, but we are one spirit with the Lord. It's saying that our relationship with the Lord in the spirit is somewhat similar to the physical relationship a man and woman have with each other.

Such a union with me and the Lord in spirit. And this is to know Adam knew his wife. I know Jesus in the spirit.

We can understand the purity of that relationship with Christ. And you know, it says that a man must leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife to be one flesh. That means your closest human relationship must be cut off and to be one flesh with your wife.

And so in the same way here, to know the Lord, I must cut off all the human things that would otherwise attract me or draw me. I say, Lord, I want to know you. It's the passion of my life to know you.

And it's so important that in the final day when people come to Jesus and say, Lord, we did miracles in your name. We went to this church in your name. We were the members of this church and we cast out demons.

And the Lord says, but you know, I never knew you, man. I never knew you. Apart from me.

What are you saying? I belong to this church and I attended this and I sang these songs and I was a preacher here or a song leader there or evangelist here or a prophet here and I did miracles. I never knew you. You know what's gonna matter in the final day? Not what you did, but did you know him? We sometimes pat ourselves on the back because we have a particular ministry.

I've done this, I've done this. Garbage. To know him.

Our ministry must flow out of our knowledge of him. Otherwise it's empty. So we must have first things first.

And when we know him, it's only if we know him more and more that everything will be fresh. The death of Christ will be always fresh. I look forward to the day when I'm in heaven where every day when I sing about the blood of Jesus Christ shed for me, it'll be as if I'm hearing it for the first time.

Oh Lord, for a wretch like me who died on the cross. Wow. Really? Did you really do that? Yeah, there's a lot about the death of Christ that I have to say I still haven't plumbed the depths of it.

I'm discovering more and more. I've already shared with you how the Lord one day revealed to me that the greatest suffering Jesus had on the cross was being forsaken by the Father for three and a half hours. I mean, I'd heard about the death of Christ for nearly 20 years before I understood that.

That was the real suffering. Otherwise it was a child's understanding. Oh, he suffered the nails and how terrible it must have been with the crown of thorns on his head and the whip on the back.

It's all good. But God opened my eyes to show me that that was not the main thing. The main thing that he was forsaken.

He experienced actual hell. Eternity in hell for three hours on the cross. And that's because he did not want Zach to go to hell.

That's why he said in Gethsemane, Father can this cup pass for me? And the father says, yes, it can. But Zach will go to hell. Oh, okay, Father, I'll go to the cross then.

It's when it came to me like that, that I wept and wept and wept and wept and said, Oh, Lord Jesus. So that's what I mean by a revelation of the cross. Jesus died for me.

And there's much more I have to see. I want to see more. I want it to be ever fresh.

And my dear brothers, I pray you'll have a passion to sing this ever fresh song that Jesus died for you. And to walk this way of the cross, which is to be ever fresh, that I can die to myself. Because if I die, I will live it.

It's I'm not looking forward to the death. Jesus wasn't looking forward to the death. It was who for the joy set before him endured the cross.

That's what it says in Hebrews 12. It's not he enjoyed the cross. Some people tell you to enjoy the cross, man.

That is Hinduism. That is asceticism. I don't enjoy the cross.

It doesn't say Jesus enjoyed the cross. Hebrews 12 says he endured the cross. He looked forward to the joy that if I go through this veil, I have the Father is there.

And I'm willing to go through anything to get to the Father. It's like these stories you read of people who go through so much suffering to rescue their wife who is in some danger. Pull her out from there.

Lord, I'm willing to go through anything so that I can have fellowship with you. Who for the joy set before him endured the cross. It's all over in the New Testament.

These are things hidden from the angels and the Old Testament prophets, which are being revealed to us. It should be exciting. Lord, the great prophets in the Old Testament, Elijah and Moses never knew these things, which you are revealing to me.

Amazing. I'm not just revealing, but I can experience it. This fellowship with Jesus, which the greatest Old Testament saints did not have.

Wonderful. I want it to be ever fresh for me. May it be like that because that's the only way we can preserve this church in life.

And even if you have a few people in the world, they say one rotten apple will ruin a whole bunch of good apples. There's a reverse of that in the church where one wholehearted brother can't bring life into a multitude of half-hearted brothers. There's a reverse of one bad apple spoiling other good apples.

It's one good brother, wholehearted, bringing life into others. And you can be like that. You can.

And I want to be like that myself. One person can make the difference. You know, I think of the Apostle Paul.

Think if you remove Paul from where Paul never existed. What a lot would I be missing in Christianity? And to say, Lord, I want to be like that. Each of you.

There's something which will be lost if you are not there. And if you're if you're the type of person who for the joy set before your fellowship with Father despises the cross, despises anything, he takes up the cross. Despise everything and endure and take up the cross because of fellowship with the Father, you can be the most invaluable person in the body of Christ.

Even if you cannot preach like anybody else or you cannot expound things, that's a gift. I'm talking about life, not gifts. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, I pray that You'll make these truths fresh to us every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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