

Living Constantly at Rest in God

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, focusing on the need to follow Jesus' example of sitting down to preach like in the Sermon on the Mount and the Last Supper. It delves into God's original plan for humanity in Genesis 1 and 2, highlighting the significance of being made in God's image and the capacity to receive the Holy Spirit. The sermon stresses the growth in humility and love as essential aspects of spiritual maturity, distinguishing between religious growth and true spirituality rooted in humility and love.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, Psalm 139:23, Mark 9:35, John 13:14, Romans 8:28, Hebrews 4:9, Luke 14:26, Luke 14:33, Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

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Transcript

For 50 years, I stood up and preached. About two years ago, as my legs started getting weaker, I started to sit down, so I did a little research. I said, Lord, how did you speak? And when I used a concordance, I found that the two longest sermons of Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6 and 7, and the Sermon at the Last Supper, John 14, 15, 16, he sat down and preached.

I said, okay, I have an example to follow. And the reason was, I felt that, you know, the prophets were like teachers, and in a school room, in a classroom in a school, the teacher stands up. But Jesus was building a family, and in a family, the father sits, and the children sit around the table.

It's a more informal atmosphere, and I prefer to speak in that type of atmosphere in a church, not like a classroom where I am teaching people of students, but family members, we can sit around and share God's Word. So, I want to turn today to Genesis chapter 1. Anything after chapter 2 of Genesis is man affected by sin. If you want to say something of man not affected by sin, you got to go to chapter 1 and 2 of Genesis.

All the rest of the Bible is man affected by sin until we come to Revelation 21 and 22, the last two chapters where the problem of sin is finally solved. So really, there are only two chapters at the beginning and two chapters at the end of the Bible where sin is not involved at all. Everything in between is dealing with man who has lived in sin.

So I like to learn a lot of things from Genesis 1 and 2, God's original plan for man. God's original plan for man is mentioned as he made him, Genesis 1, 26, let us make man in our image. No angel was made in the image of God.

Angels have free will, they can move around at tremendous speed, they can do great miracles. We read in the time of Hezekiah how one angel came and killed 180,000 soldiers of the enemy. They have tremendous power, but they are not made in the image of God.

They don't have the capacity to receive the Holy Spirit. It's like saying this bulb has the capacity to receive electricity, this table doesn't. You send any amount of electricity through this table, it won't light up.

But you send a little bit of electricity into that bulb, it lights up. That's how we are. We are like a bulb, we don't have the capacity to burn ourselves, but let the Holy Spirit come and fill us.

And the more we allow him to fill us, the light becomes, by the light I mean the life of Christ becomes more and more. It's a life of love. Love to God, love to our fellow believers, love to our enemies.

Maybe in the beginning of your Christian life it's not there, but as you walk with the Lord, let that electricity, the power of the Holy Spirit increase love. If you are not increasing in love, brother, sister, you are not growing. If you are not increasing in humility, you are not growing.

Sometimes we talk about holiness. Holiness can be legalism. You know, avoid this, avoid this, don't do this.

But the test of it, underneath it all, we want to be holy. We don't watch dirty movies. We keep clear of anything that pollutes our mind, but underneath it all, if you are not growing in humility and love, all spiritual growth is a deception.

It's not spiritual growth at all. It's religious growth. It's very important to distinguish between religious growth, which is knowledge of the Bible, and being able to serve and preach, and even go on mission trips.

That's not spirituality. You may never go on a mission trip in all your life. Think of a mother with many children.

Where can she travel? But she can be the most spiritual person, without ever leaving her home, looking after her children, being a godly mother, an example in humility and love, and seeking to bring up those children in the fear of God. That's as great a work as an apostle does, traveling the world, planting churches. When Jesus said that in the last days, someone sit at his right hand and left hand.

Who do you think is going to sit there on his left hand or right hand? Do you know why Jesus was given the highest place in heaven? Philippians 2 says, because he humbled himself the most. No person on earth has humbled himself as much as Jesus Christ. He was born in a cow shed.

Have you ever heard of anybody born in a cow shed? That's where his humility started. He washed the last day of his life when Christian workers wanted to be chairman, directors, and all of the last day of their life. Jesus was washing the feet of his disciples on the last day of his life, and I said, Lord, that's the way I want to go.

I want to go downwards, to be at the feet of your disciples on the last day of my life. That's where he was. And crucified like a criminal.

The worst possible death that man has ever invented. Crucifixion, torture, humiliation, hanging in an underwear on a cross to be mocked at. Jesus chose that death.

From birth to death, he walked the way of humility. And the Bible says, because he humbled himself to that extent, therefore God exalted him to the highest place. So from that I conclude that the ones who are going to sit on the left hand and right hand of Jesus are going to be those who have humbled themselves the most next to Jesus.

And that may not be an apostle. It may be some widow in Africa who we never heard of who loved Jesus and chose the way of humility. And the other side may be some unknown person.

It's not ministry. Don't ever think that ministry is what makes a man great in God's eyes. No.

So many things exist. But the Bible says the greatest of all is love. And Jesus humbled himself.

They go together. True humility and true love go together. You can't have one without the other.

If you think you have one and you don't have the other, it's a fake. If you think you have love but you don't have humility, you're wrong. If you think you have humility and you can't love people, you're wrong.

These two go together. That's what Jesus had till the end of his life. What did he prove on the cross of Calvary? His humility, being willing to be crucified as a criminal and his love for people who forsook him.

People who betrayed him. People who killed him. Saying, Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing.

Dear brothers and sisters, walk that way. So Genesis 1 we read about God recreating the earth in 6 days which had been corrupted in verse 2. And remember this. Man was made on the 6th day.

The first part of that day animals were made. Verse 24. And the second part of that day, verse 26, man was made.

So we can say that man was made at the end of the 6th day. At the end of that 24 hour period. And then he, I don't know, in a very quick time he gave a name to all the animals.

I suppose they could do it in quick time those days. But then what happened on the next day? That's what I want to talk about. Man's first day after he was created.

He was not sent to the garden to work. God said to him as it were Adam and Eve. There's work to be done in the garden but that can wait.

Working for me can wait. What I want you to do this first day of your existence as human beings is live with me. The 7th day which is the first day for Adam.

It says in chapter 2 verse 2, God rested. And man did not work that day. What was he doing those 24 hours? He was fellowshiping with his creator.

No work. And Adam, let me carry on an imaginary conversation. Adam says, God what do you want me to do today? Isn't there work there? No, the work can wait Adam.

I want you to fellowship with me first. I want to teach you something in your life as a human being. I don't want people to work for me first.

I want people to fellowship with me. I could have made you on the first day made you work for 6 days and then told you to rest. No.

I made you at the end of the 6th day after having made everything for you I want you to rest in what I have done for you. For whom did God make all those beautiful stars and planets and the sunset and the sunrise and all the animals. And remember those animals were all beautiful.

Nothing was harmful at that time. Even the lion would lie down with the lamb. It was a beautiful world.

He made it all for Adam. And what I learned from there is God's plan for man is make everything for man and then bring man into the scene. That's how he brought us to Christ.

He did everything. And then he saves us and says, my son my daughter, enjoy what I have made for you. Never, never forget this because otherwise we can get all types of wrong pictures about God that the devil tells God is so hard, he's so strict, he's allowing this to happen, that to happen in your life.

Think of what he's done for you. That's what Adam needed to know what it was to be in a Sabbath rest. Now because man sinned the law changed.

For Adam the law was your first day is a day of rest then you go out on the 8th day and start working for 6 days. You shall rest one day work for 6 days. That's the law for Adam before sin came.

After sin came it was changed. The law said 6 days you work the 7th day you rest. It was reversed.

But that was not God's original plan. And then when Jesus died do you know that on the Sabbath day Jesus was in the grave? He buried the Sabbath and the entire law in the grave on that Sabbath day when he was in the grave to tell people I finished with the Sabbath, I finished with the law and he rose up on the first day of the week saying folks this is a new beginning. Now that's why the disciples gathered together on the first day of the week and they came around the risen Lord and that's how we come together now on the first day of the week.

The work is done by the Lord. The entire law has been buried. We have come under grace and now we live in the presence of the Lord and now it's not one day.

We live in the presence of the Lord 7 days a week. We live in a perpetual Sabbath where inwardly I'm always at rest while serving God. The Lord called me to serve him in 1966 which is 52 years ago and in the early years of my service I did not know how to serve him at rest in my heart I would be disturbed by different things oh this thing happens, that thing happens and I'm disturbed I did not know how to come to rest in God but I thank God for the last many years, at least 20-30 years now I've learned to serve God from an inner rest and I want to encourage all of you you may not be in full time Christian work like me but I want to encourage you in your life even you young people, I wish from a very young age you young boys

and girls will learn to come into the rest of God.

First of all a rest because all our past sins have been blotted out. Very very important don't take that lightly I, when I accepted the Lord at the age of 19 and a half for at least 1 and a half years I lived in constant reminder, oh I did this I did this wrong in my life, I did this wrong in my life and does God look at me as, ah this is the guy who did this last year or this is the guy who did this 10 years ago it tormented me till one day I remember I was in the Navy, I was standing on the deck of a ship and I was the officer on duty that day I can still remember it so vividly, I walked on the deck of that ship late one evening, alone and the Lord spoke a word to my heart your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more and that's not a voice from heaven it was just, I've never heard voices from heaven but it was coming back to my memory what I read in Hebrews 8 verse 12 I want every one of you to remember Hebrews 8 verse 12 it's a very important verse where God says I will be merciful to their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more and when God says something, he means it I want to ask all of you who have confessed your sins to the Lord ask the Lord Jesus to come into your heart can you honestly say this or are you living in that torment I lived in for the first one and a half years after I was born again I hope you will not be in that I don't care what sins you have committed, can you imagine the rest that came into the heart of the thief on the cross when he told the Lord, Lord I'm guilty please remember me when you come into your kingdom and the Lord said to him, not 2000 years later when I come into my kingdom but today you will be with me in paradise can you imagine the thoughts that went through that thief's heart because do you know that the thief died long after Jesus died when the soldiers came to pierce they came to break the legs of the soldiers because they hadn't yet died but Jesus had already died because he had been tortured so much before he was put on the cross and when they pierced his side, the blood and water flowed showing that he was already dead, but the thief had not died I don't know how many hours he was hanging on that cross thinking, after all this wicked life I have lived, murdered so many people and no opportunity to even go and apologize to them and stolen so much money from people's homes if there's anybody who deserves hell, it's me and this wonderful Lord has told me that today I'll be with him in paradise can you imagine the joy in his heart he was sitting happy, the only person hanging on a cross happy, because he says this is a short period I'm going to suffer but I'm going to be with my Lord in paradise today he had that assurance because Jesus spoke to him and it's the same Jesus who says to you it doesn't matter how many your sins are your sins and your iniquities, I will remember no more all of us have an ugly past and it's not just that God doesn't expose us before others he won't even expose you in eternity that ugly past of your life nobody will ever know in time or in eternity because when God blots out something it's blotted out forever what are the sins he's blotted out in your life I'm telling you how to come to rest Adam could come to rest just like that because he had never sinned but for us to come to rest, to live such a sinful life we need to be sure first of all that our past sins have been blotted out that's why I'm emphasizing this point because I've seen so many people who keep being reminded by the devil remember this what you did 20 years ago remember what you did to that person or this other terrible thing which you did so many years ago and they're tormented and they sometimes think about it again and sometimes they confess the same sin a hundred times when God says you need to confess it only once you think your sin will be forgiven more if you confess it a hundred times that's a human idea you hurt somebody so badly supposing you went and murdered somebody and then you go and apologize to that person's wife or children I'm sorry I killed your dad every time you see them you say I'm sorry I killed your dad every time you see them you have to say sorry but it's not like that with God you do not have to confess your sin more than once if you've really repented and confessed it the Lord says it's gone so we have to be rooted and grounded in this verse he will not remember my past anymore that is the first rest we must come to and I emphasize it because I've seen so many believers who have not come to this simple rest in their life be as happy I'm sure none of us

have done the terrible things that thief who died on the cross did you haven't murdered anybody you haven't gone around burglarizing people's homes but he was forgiven and he was sure that very day he was with Jesus in paradise and I believe we can live I remember once the Lord brought this verse to my heart my life was at rest the devil still reminds me oh the devil will keep reminding you all your life you did this you did that but I can say get away Satan you can't fool me anymore have you seen this verse in Revelation chapter 12 very important verse in the same connection Revelation chapter 12 it says here about the devil being cast down to earth and it says in Revelation 12 verse 10 in the middle of that verse the accuser of our brethren that's the devil has been thrown down he who accuses them before God day and night now you can be pretty sure that if he accuses you to God he certainly accuses you to yourself I mean if he accuses you to God he's not scared to do that he'll accuse you to yourself he'll accuse you day and night you did this you remember that over there and you remember what you did there you remember that your husband doesn't know it your wife doesn't know it your dad doesn't know it your mom doesn't know it but I know all about it the devil says and he accuses us how are we to overcome that accusation read the next verse verse 11 read it and never forget it they overcame him not by arguing back no by the blood of the lamb that's how they overcame the blood of Jesus has cleansed me blotted out my past and they didn't just believe it in their mind it says they spoke it to the devil the word of their testimony the word of their testimony does not mean getting up in the church and giving a testimony no it's the word of your see the context always read the bible in its context the word of your testimony to this accuser this accuser is accusing you and you're giving a testimony about what not saying but I've lived a good life for the last five years no no no no don't bank on that your testimony is about the blood of Jesus I'll tell you the story of a man of God great man of God he was I mean whom God was using one day he was sitting alone and the devil was tormenting him don't think the devil doesn't torment man of God in their thoughts you remember you did this you remember you did this you remember you did that and how you behaved over there and this other thing that you did that nobody knows and kept on tormenting his mind and he sat and listened to it for a while and he knew it was Satan he was a man of God he knew that and he said Satan that's not all I've done a lot more sins than the ones you've mentioned to me many others you haven't mentioned them all many many many others make the list complete and when you have made the list complete right across the whole list the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed him from all sin he was free you do that tell the devil make the list complete there are many other things Satan which I did which you haven't mentioned to me make the list complete and right across it the blood of Jesus has cleansed me from all sin the word of his testimony about the blood of the Lamb that's how he overcame and you know the new revelation speaks about overcomers, overcomers, overcomers this is where you begin to overcome you have to finish with your past and many of us are seeking for victory over sin in the present but you can't get victory over sin in the present if you keep on don't believing that the blood has taken care of your past and the devil knows that that's why he torments you with the past so that you never come to rest and if you don't come to rest concerning your past I'll tell you this I could never get victory over sin in my life till I finish with the past and the only way to finish with the past is not by saying but I'm living a good life now forget that you may slip up tomorrow you know towards the end of Paul's life he once yelled at a high priest saying God will spite you you whitewashed wall great apostle Paul yeah that happens sometimes in a moment of weakness as you read about in Acts 23 he slipped up and got angry but he immediately confessed and repented that's the way to overcome let me show you that example it's a great encouragement it'll be an encouragement to you it'll be an encouragement to me because there we learn what it is to have a good conscience because sometimes when we speak about victory over sin some people think it means I never get angry in the whole of my life I never slip up with a bad thought in the whole of my life let me explain to you Acts 23 verse 1 Paul is standing before a judge who was the high

priest and he stands up and says in Acts 23 verse 1 brethren all my life I've lived with a perfectly good conscience up until this day 30 years I was a Jew I lived according to the law the standard of the law I had a good conscience the external commandment of the law then I became a Christian and slowly progressively as I got more and more light on my life I kept a good conscience at every stage like you know the Christian life is a growth from first grade to second grade to third grade where you get more and more understanding and we get more and more understanding on sin in our life and kept a good conscience all along I have lived with a good conscience all my life I don't think any of us can say that I can't say that I can't say I lived with a good conscience all my life he was an amazing man maybe he had very God fearing parents and he was very serious about his life even before he became a Christian but then the high priest who obviously didn't have a good conscience said smite him on his mouth and somebody slapped him on his mouth and immediately Paul loses his good conscience do you notice that? immediately he lost his good conscience immediately he says you whitewashed wall God will strike you you sit there according to the law and in violation of the law you ask me to be struck was that how Jesus spoke when somebody hit him? Jesus just kept quiet and anything un-Christ like is sin if you don't react the way Jesus reacted it's a sin Paul was probably close to 60 years old I mean he'd already been a Christian nearly 30 years or 25 years at least and he knew about victory over sin but he slipped up and when Luke, you know Luke was Paul's co-worker and he's the one who wrote the Acts of the Apostles he was writing Paul's biography and I can imagine, you know if you write the biography of a close friend of yours you'd like to cover up his mistakes right? and don't mention events like this and I can imagine Paul saying, listen Luke if you're going to write my biography don't hide my mistakes tell everybody that I yelled at the high priest and I slipped up that will encourage some people when they fall I thank God for instances like this and Paul's absolute honesty to be known as he really was and not some imagined angel who never did anything wrong but he lived in victory and you see that as soon as he the bystander said, is that the way you reviled God's high priest was for? he said, oh I'm sorry I was not aware and I'm sure it's all that he said is not mentioned therefore I'm sure he apologized, he says no the Bible says you shouldn't speak evil of a ruler, I did something wrong you see that's how he got a good conscience immediately he lost it and he got it back in a second that teaches us not to get discouraged if you slip up and fall, get back up immediately as soon as the thorn gets into your foot, pull it out don't wait till the evening to pull out that thorn that got into your foot if you fall down on the road, don't lie there even for 5 minutes get up, confess it to the Lord and it's gone and press on to perfection so it's not just the past that's blotted out when I slip up now, it's blotted out immediately if we walk in the light it says the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin the only requirement is walk in the light you know that verse in 1 John 1 7 if we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and walking in the light is very simple, don't hide your sin in the darkness come into the light before God, you don't have to confess it to men I mean if you hurt men, you must confess to them also if you yelled at your husband or wife you need to ask their forgiveness but if it's a sin alone only committed before God like a bad thought or a bad attitude that you had, then you confess it only to God and immediately you have a good conscience I don't have to wait till tomorrow to get a good conscience we must believe God's word faith is the greatest thing that Jesus appreciated faith to believe what God has said is true I walk in the light, I'm honest about it before God I don't try to justify myself or blame somebody else like Adam blamed his wife, she gave me the fruit and I ate it and God it's partly you are to blame for giving me such a wife that's what Adam said don't say all that, Lord I'm to blame like the thief on the cross didn't blame his parents or bad companies it's me, Lord it's me, I'm 100% to blame oh you'll be with me in paradise, heaven is made for such people who will be absolutely honest of their sins Adam was kicked out of paradise because he blamed his wife and wouldn't fully take the blame himself the thief went into paradise because he took the blame completely himself he didn't blame anybody else

whenever you confess sin to God, don't ever think of saying but it was because of this circumstance or I was very tired today and that's why I lost my temper no, you got a rotten flesh, that's why you lost your temper we've got a rotten flesh and that flesh does not go till Jesus comes we got to acknowledge it, don't blame this, that oh the devil put a pressure on you, forget the devil what was the Holy Spirit doing when the devil was putting pressure on you just be humble and say Lord I'm sorry, I didn't get grace from you because we read that verse just now, memory verse sin will not rule over you when you are under grace Romans 6, 14, so why did I fall into sin there because I was not under grace why didn't I get grace because 1 Peter 5 says God gives his grace only to the humble so I know whenever I've slipped up, I've gone to the Lord and said Lord I'm not asking you why I sinned, I know I didn't get grace at that moment, I lost my temper or I had a bad thought or a bad attitude to that person you know if you have a bad attitude to another person even for 5 seconds it's a sin, a bad attitude you didn't even open your mouth but you thought that evil thing about that other person when you don't even know all the facts you know we have such a lust to judge others a lot of people think of lust sexually the lust to judge others is as much a lust in human beings as sexual lust and I have to fight it, some people don't fight it Lord I have this lust to judge others and that gives me a wrong attitude to other people, I never want to have it I tell you honestly, I fight it with all my life the more you fight it, you'll overcome it you have to kill that giant in your life and don't say like the 10 spies who went into Canaan these giants are so big, I can't overcome them, why can't you overcome them like Joshua and Caleb said, we can bring them under our feet any sin that defeats you, look at it like a giant and speak like Joshua and Caleb, I can overcome that because God will be with me so often people want to use that verse Romans 8 verse 31, God be for us, who can be against us I remember seeing that in a non-Christian man in India, in his store he was a rich man, businessman in his store at the place where you pay your bills he had a verse written there, he was a non-Christian if God be for us, who can be against us this will scare all the people who are coming to pay their bills don't try to cheat me, so that's a verse a lot of people use everybody thinks God is on my side but what does it mean to say God is for us the context of it, whenever you take a verse out of context it's a pretext for something you want to do a verse taken out of context is a pretext but in its context if you read it in Romans 8 verse 31, it's talking about overcoming sin if you want to overcome sin in your life, God is for you brother who can be against you, the devil can't make you fall your lust can't make you fall, God is for you so God is for us and he'll help us to overcome and when is it that God is not for us I'll tell you, 1 Peter 5 verse 5 God resists the proud so when I fall, I say Lord I don't want to ask you why I fell, I know why I fell I did not get grace at that moment and I also know why I didn't get grace, I don't have to ask you, I was proud so whenever I slip up, what I go to God and say is not Lord why I slipped up, I know Lord show me where was I proud in my life that you withheld your grace from me at that moment and resisted me, I thought only the devil resisted me but I see God resists the proud and if God resists me, I'm finished, I can never overcome and then the Lord shows me something that happened the previous week where I got a little puffed up about something I did or accepted to myself praise that people gave me which I should have passed on to God or thought a little highly of myself when I did not slip up and somebody else did you know that can happen very easily supposing your husband gets upset with you one day and speaks angrily and you stand there quietly and you inwardly say to yourself you don't say it openly but inwardly Lord I thank you that I'm not like my husband, I've got victory in my life, I'm not losing my temper right now you don't see that you're a Pharisee, that's what he said Lord I thank you I'm not like other men half an hour later your husband is convicted of his sin and goes before God and says Lord I'm a sinner, I'm sorry I lost my temper, he comes back into fellowship with God and you you, who did not lose your temper you're away from God because of your pride because you look down on your husband for losing his temper that's how pride can come in Lord I thank you I'm not like others it's so easy, especially when pride is disguised as

humility, be careful it's always good to keep our face in the dust before God, I work with a number of fellow elders in churches in India and always my advice to them is dear brothers, when God uses you you can be puffed up, very easy my advice to you is like John the Apostle in the Revelation chapter 1 when he saw the Lord he fell on his face like a dead man, fall on your face before the Lord like a dead man, I do it frequently on my bed, I lie down face down before God I say Lord I want to always be down on my face before you I never want to lift up my head to think I'm somebody, I am a nobody I always want to keep you in front of me all the time even when I preach, I believe Jesus I often think of Jesus sitting in that seat in front of me listening to every word I say, when I sing the songs you know sometimes we sing songs and we're taken up with the words and the melody and we completely forget that we're singing to Jesus I mean think of this morning how many of you thought that the words you're singing you're singing to Jesus Christ who is in our midst many times I forget that, I have to remind myself Lord you're here, I'm singing this to you in Christ alone my hope is found I like the tune, I like the words but I'm singing it to Jesus my God how wonderful thou art thy majesty how bright, how beautiful thy mercy seat in depths of burning light father of Jesus love's reward, what rapture will it be prostrate before your throne to lie and gaze and gaze on thee I want to encourage you, I know you'll forget it but once in a while remind yourself when you're singing Jesus is here, it doesn't matter if I can't sing well I can't sing very well but the Lord listens to the melody of my heart because I wanted to be before him I want to sing to him praying also was very difficult for me in the early days if I prayed in public I was more conscious that there were people listening to me and that happens in the beginning but gradually I worked myself out of it through many years not days, years, where I came to the place where I could now pray to Jesus and it didn't matter if people listened to me or not work towards that if you work towards it, it will happen in your life and you guys who are young, if you start when you're young you can reach there sooner than I reached it live before God's face that's how to be at rest because when we develop the habit of being in God's presence all the time you know in God's presence there's perfect rest that's how it was with Adam in the seventh day he lost the rest the next day when he went and listened to the devil but we can now live in that perfect rest turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 4 Hebrews in chapter 4 we read here Hebrews is a great book because it speaks about the humanity of Jesus Christ we all know in the deity of Jesus Christ but many Christians have not meditated enough on the humanity of Jesus Christ if you want to know more about the humanity of Christ read Hebrews and meditate on it Hebrews chapter 4 it says here verse 1 let us fear if while a promise remains of entering his rest some of you come short of it he's talking to believers you can come short of that rest that is promised to God's people and he quotes the Sabbath rest here in verse 4 for he said somewhere God rested on the seventh day from all his works verse 9 so today there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God today there's a Sabbath rest for you every day of our life we are supposed to live in a Sabbath rest of God that means completely at rest first of all concerning my past and believing that God is on the throne and running control of everything I will not get into unrest and it says in verse 10 the one who has entered into his rest has rested from his own works so it says here also that when we believe we enter into his rest that's the way we enter, verse 3 we who believe, verse 3 is very important we who have believed enter that rest what do you believe first of all that your past, God says I will not remember what are you to believe now let me make it very simple when Jesus taught us to pray he taught us to pray like this our father who art in heaven then the rest of the prayer but he said begin your prayer with understanding two things that the one you are praying to is your father not the government, not the governor of the universe he is the governor of the universe but your father talk to him like you talk to your dad who loves you who has forgiven you, who is merciful to you who has plans the best for you have faith in someone who loves you how did Jesus explain it you evil fathers give good things to your children how much more will your heavenly father give good things to those who ask him if your son asks you for bread

will you give him a stone are you insulting your heavenly father by saying he may give me a stone if he asks you for fish will you give him a snake are you insulting your heavenly father that he will give you a snake when you ask him for fish, no he will give you good things, Matthew 7.12 11.12 or Luke 11.13 he will give you the holy spirit this is faith, a father, a father do you know how many times Jesus emphasized this one thing it's helped me tremendously the hairs on your head are numbered he cares for the sparrows when was the last time you found a sparrow dead on the road can you think, I'll tell you honestly I cannot even think when I saw a dead sparrow on the road maybe I did 20 years ago or something but I hardly ever see a dead sparrow on the road and there are millions of them, where do they get their food from why don't we find whole lot of dead sparrows on the road and in Israel when Jesus spoke there were no dead sparrows on the road do you know who feeds them they don't have a stock pile of food your father in heaven cares for them so those are the pictures he used look at the flowers, who clothes them your father and he says even Solomon was not as beautifully dressed as these flowers and the flowers teach us that you don't always have to wear white clothes or grey clothes or black clothes, God didn't make all the flowers black you can wear any color of clothes some people are scared, you shouldn't put red brother, red is not good I've seen a lot of flowers that are red, you can wear a red shirt if you like or a red skirt it's perfectly ok, God made the flowers he cares for us, for our clothing he cares for our food, he cares for our life he cares for the hair on our head I remember once a brother in our church was very worried about his wife being in a very bad condition physically and whether they would be able to rush her to the hospital at night and I said listen, the hairs on your head are numbered is this more serious than that, and God will care for it, don't worry I've used that example to many people when their child is very seriously sick I said just remember brother, do you believe what Jesus said the hairs on your head are numbered, I believe it with all my heart that brings rest into my heart no matter what happens there's rest in my heart because I believe a couple of things, my father in heaven has numbered the hair on my head I don't know whether you take it exactly I take it exactly there's a difference between saying he knows the number of hair on your head and saying he has numbered it, do you understand English he knows the number of hairs on your head means mine is very easy to count but yours is a little more difficult to count but he knows it all, maybe a hundred thousand or something like that, but that's not what he says he's numbered them, which means he knows which is hair number 45 and which is hair number 9631 he's numbered them, you know when you see the houses on a street are numbered, it's 1,2,3,4,5 it's not the number of houses that's the way I take it, I take Jesus' words literally the hairs on your head are numbered and if you woke up one morning and the hair is on your pillow the Lord says that was hair number 645 you don't believe it, according to your faith I believe it, so my heart is at rest my heart is at rest only because I believe what Jesus said there's no promise like that in the Old Testament I thank God that Jesus is my savior I thank God that I'm not following Moses or the law I have a father in heaven whom Jesus explained to me and the next thing is the sparrows the flowers, the sparrows Jesus spoke, why did he speak about all this because he knows how much man is tense and anxious and that's why Paul says in Philippians 4,6 don't be anxious for anything, be at rest that's the other rest we must come to rest concerning our past and rest concerning our circumstances what will happen if you're there are people who are scared to get in an airplane you know there are more people killed crossing the road than those who fly in a plane, it's statistically correct I mean if you're going to be scared you can't even cross the road because statistics are so many people get killed crossing the road at least in India I see that so we can be at rest if we really believe our father and then Jesus said when you pray, pray our father who art in heaven that's the second thing I have to remind myself of, first of all a loving father and secondly one who is in heaven one who is in complete control not only of my needs but also my circumstances how can God give us a promise like Romans 8,28 which says that everything that happens to you will work for your good if you love God and

are called according to his purpose how can you believe that if God is not sovereign if there is some part, some corner of this world which is not under God's control wow, I'd be scared because someone will hurt me from that corner of the world but that's impossible because there is no little nook or corner on this earth which is not under God's control, I pray our father who art in heaven that's why Jesus said whenever you pray think of these two things first, otherwise don't even start prayer because the rest of your prayer will be empty words without faith, you can ease yourself I prayed for half an hour, you might have gone to sleep that time your half an hour prayer or your five hour prayer was a waste of time because it did not start with faith and if you want to have faith you must begin with this you don't have to actually say those words our father in heaven but that must be in your mind when you begin prayer my father is the one I'm talking to and my father rules this universe and because he rules the universe everything that happens on this earth is controlled by him you know there are so many meteors and large huge rocks flying around in the universe how is it none of them hit the earth in all these years how is it one didn't land on your house because I've got a father in heaven that's why he watches everything can you think back over the numerous things that happened in your life where you have no explanation but God I rode a scooter in India for 42 years because the price of gas was too much for me and in all those 42 years I never had an accident never killed anybody, never hurt anyone I didn't get hurt myself but I can't take the credit for that I had numerous angels pushing away other vehicles that came in my way or pushing me back or applying the brakes when I couldn't apply it myself for some reason the scooter slowed down and I see wow that's because he didn't want me to hit that other person coming in the way I'm going to have to shake the hands of a lot of angels when I get up to heaven and say thank you very much for protecting me he controls everything in your life and you look back over those close shaves, they say I had a close shave there I don't mean this type of shave I mean an accident where I almost got killed that was an angel who protected you that was an angel who took care of you in different situations and everybody thought you would die and you didn't our father who art in heaven Jesus said I've got all authority in heaven and earth recognize that, we come to rest there's a rest for the people of God and I'm trying to bring you into that rest because so many things can happen in the world that can bring you into unrest I want to show you a verse in Colossians in chapter 3 it says in Colossians in chapter 3 and verse 15, this is a very very important verse it's helped me for many years in my life the margin of my bible, you know sometimes you find a word written in the margin the meaning of that is the Greek language in which the new testament was written has got a different shade of meaning which cannot be expressed in one word here it says let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts in the margin of my bible it says let the peace of Christ act as a referee in your heart a referee and you know what a referee does in a soccer game or whatever games you play here he blows a whistle hey, there's a foul bring that ball back here, start the game and you can't score a goal after that, sorry the foul was committed, bring the ball back here to where the foul was committed and start the game, continue the game from here referee blow the whistle, and here it says the peace of Christ, when you lose it in your heart, the rest is gone it's a referee blowing the whistle saying something is wrong in your life maybe you hurt somebody and you need to go and apologize to that person, maybe you need to call up someone and say I'm sorry for what I said or what I did, please forgive me, the peace is gone from your heart the referee is blowing a whistle settle it, maybe the lord is showing you something a wrong attitude that you had towards somebody and the lord says confess it to me as soon as some unrest comes into your heart my brother and sister the referee has blown the whistle confess it, immediately the blood will cleanse you you come to rest again, we must live in the rest of God 24x7 as soon as you slip up, get up, just like you fall on the road slip, fell down, get up, don't wait I followed that rule for a number of years in my life, you know when we are agitated in our heart, I tell people that's the time to keep our lips closed close your lips and don't open your mouth because if you speak to anybody when you are agitated in your

heart words will come out of your mouth which you will regret sometimes for years Proverbs says death and life are in the power of the tongue and we have spurted out so much death in the past with our tongue let's not do that anymore and one way not to do that anymore is whenever you are agitated about anything in your heart, keep your mouth shut don't even get up to share something in the meeting if you are agitated, because when you are agitated you will hit out at somebody sitting there whom you don't like don't do that, wait till you come to rest and at home for example, if there is a little conflict between husband and wife and maybe one is at rest but the other is agitated, don't open your mouth simple rule never open your mouth when the referee is blowing a whistle, hey there is unrest, unrest, unrest there is a foul, don't open your mouth bring the ball back to this spot and start again how do we bring the ball back to the spot, confess your sin to God cleanse it in the blood of Jesus, then continue kicking the ball so this is a very important law to always be at rest that Sabbath rest which God wanted Adam to live in on the seventh day and which says in Hebrews 4 let us fear, lest we don't live in this rest 24-7 you can live in that 24-7 and you don't have to be a mature saint do you have to be a mature saint to confess your sin to God a newborn baby can do that a 5 year old can come to his mom and say, mom I'm sorry I told you a lie you don't have to be a very mature saint to do that you can go to your husband or wife and say, I'm sorry darling for the way I spoke, it wasn't right, it was really wrong please forgive me, I'm battling, I'm struggling I'm trying to become more like Jesus imagine what that will do to your marriage it will cement it together it's so difficult to say to someone, I'm sorry, that was my mistake please forgive me are 10 of the hardest words that you can ever speak and it's so easy, I'm sorry it was my mistake, please forgive me let's learn to do that so that we never lose that rest I've decided long ago, that I will not come out of that rest I don't want to continue kicking the ball when the referee blew the whistle 10 days ago there are people who live with an unrest in their heart for 10 days the game is not continuing the game is at a standstill that means there's no spiritual progress in your life there's no spiritual progress, because it's something you have not settled it's very easy come into the light, be honest take the blame, say Lord forgive me if you hurt somebody, go to that person humble yourself, say what are you saying when you confess to someone you're only saying, I have not yet become like Jesus Christ is that difficult to say? I'm ready to say it everyday I've not yet become like Jesus Christ, one day Christ will come, I'll be like Him you'll never see a single mistake in my life after that day, when He returns but today when I confess to you, I'm sorry brother for something I did or I hurt you in some way, maybe even accidentally what I'm saying to you essentially is my dear brother, my dear sister I want to confess that I've not yet become like Jesus Christ but I'm struggling, I want you to forgive me so that I can take one step forward in this race of becoming like Christ we're in a race to become like Christ but I always want to be at rest I don't want to lose a single minute in this game I want to score as many goals as possible against the devil I'm not scoring goals against you I'm scoring goals against the devil and I want to do as many goals against him as possible in this one earthly life and that's only possible if I ensure that every time I commit a foul I set it right and move on, confess it and move on please follow this simple rule in your homes even if it's an unconverted person in your office and you did something wrong, go to him and say excuse me sir, I'm sorry for what I did wrong there's nothing wrong in calling even a junior sir, I can do that I can call an unknown cab driver, I'm sorry sir for being a little upset with you there's nothing wrong in that humble yourself, we're called to be servants we're called to take the low place, that's what Jesus taught us to wash people's feet this is how we are at rest, one more thing concerning circumstances God is a God who controls all circumstances Romans 8.28 everything is under his control and it will work for your good provided you love God it's not for everybody there are two things mentioned in Romans 8.28 you love God and you're called according to his purpose if you can stand before the Lord and say Lord I love you more than anyone else he'll make everything work for you good and when you say you love him more than anything else let me show you the first condition

of discipleship in Luke 14.26 the number one condition to be a disciple great multitudes came after Jesus it says in Luke 14.25 now today when a preacher sees a great multitude he says let's take an offering, time to collect money that's not what Jesus said he saw this great multitude and he spoke to them some of the hardest words he ever spoke he says you thousands of people standing before me Luke 14.26 if you come to me and you don't hate your father and you don't hate your mother and you don't hate your family members your wife, children, brothers, sisters you cannot be my disciple I tell you why did Jesus say that because he knows how much we are attached to our family members we support our family members even if they do something wrong you know why? because we are not disciples of Jesus if you are a disciple of Jesus you will not support your family member if he is wrong you may love him, forgive him but you can't say to him you are right I don't Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5.14 I don't know anybody according to the flesh now I know people in Christ that's all just like when you get married it says forget your father and mother and cleave to your wife when I got married to Jesus Christ and I gave my life to Christ my human relations were over I was once in a tree called Adam I had many human connections my family members, those I love, my brother, sister, father, mother I was in Adam and they were the ones who were with me in Adam one day the Holy Spirit cut me off from that tree and grafted me into another tree called Jesus Christ I still have brothers and sisters but these are brothers and sisters in Christ now and if some of those people are not in Christ I am sorry, I am not in that tree I love them, I love even my enemies but I don't have a connection with them like I had before my dad, my mom, he is always right or my brother, my sister, I am going to stand by him through thick and thin I say sorry, I will stand by the Lord through thick and thin and if you stand with him, I will stand by you but if you are going to do something wrong, I am sorry sir I am sorry my dear brother, I will not stand by you I am loyal to Jesus Christ, I will help you if you are in need, I will help you, even if you are my enemy but I won't stand by you when you are wrong the first condition of discipleship after 50 years of ministry, let me tell you something most Christians, I don't say all many Christians have not fulfilled this first condition some trial comes and they suddenly discover family members are more important than my brothers and sisters in Christ thank God for that revelation that's the time you can repent, whenever God shows you something it's like you go to the doctor and the doctor takes a scan of you and say, hey you got a cancer here don't fight with the doctor, don't tear up the scan thank you doc for showing me that and the doc says, you can be cured that cancer can be removed, please remove it first condition of discipleship, it's not laid down by me it's laid down by Jesus Christ you got to break your connection and love them in Christ that means Christ is first not my family members secondly, not my own self you can't be my disciple if you don't take up the cross Christ is first and not my own self did somebody say something to hurt me call me a devil, I've had people call me a devil you know I'm a servant of the Lord and servants of the Lord are the targets of Satan and he uses people to hurt, people have taken me to court religious people have taken me to court in India for the sake of the truth, false charges God stood by me, like Paul says the Lord stood by me in court so what should I do, die to myself I say Lord, I will not hit back somebody called me a devil I say father forgive him, he doesn't know what he's saying if you can have that attitude that Jesus had when he hung on the cross I will not react in the same way he is you know most of our sins are committed as reactions not actions, a few of our sins are actions but many of our sins are reactions reactions to the way somebody else did something I've got to be careful, I want to react like Jesus did once they called him Beelzebul, prince of devils you know what Jesus said, you're forgiven I want to be like that, so dear brothers make sure you love Jesus more than yourself let yourself die, I prophesy on the words of Jesus, a resurrection will come out in your life every time you die to yourself, a resurrection will come out that's why Jesus was not afraid to go to death because he knew the father would resurrect him when you're dipped in the waters of baptism, you know you'll be lifted up and I say Lord, I know if people push me down into the water, you lift me up people kill

me, you will resurrect me that is the power of resurrection that we can know more and more that's why we can be at rest even when people speak evil of us at rest and the third condition of discipleship there are only three, the third one is in verse 33 Luke 14, 33, you've got to love Jesus more than your possessions first, more than your family members second, more than yourself and third, more than your possessions that means, I'm not saying you have to give up your possessions I'm not saying that you must take your money and put it in the offering box no, I told you we don't collect income tax here our relationship with God is as a father we don't collect income tax I can tell you I'm preaching what I've practiced and it's made my life so restful because my father takes care of my possessions and so brothers and sisters Jesus said one thing I'll close with this verse, Matthew 28 I'll show you this in closing Matthew 28 and verse 19 and 20 let's look at this in closing Jesus said, go into all the world and make disciples of all nations who is a disciple? we just saw that, three conditions love Jesus more than your family, more than yourself and more than possessions he said, go into every nation verse 28, verse 19 I've got all authority in heaven and earth, verse 18, remember that first the Lord says, I've got all authority every place you go, every person you meet remember, I've got authority over him go and make disciples and if you do that and teach people, verse 22 observe what I've commanded you and doing that in your life here's the promise I will be with you till the end of your life then we can say if God be for me, who can be against me when Joshua entered the land of Canaan he saw a man standing with a sword you read that in Joshua chapter 5 verse 13 or 14 and he said, are you a Canaanite? Are you on my side or the enemy's side? it was the Lord he says, I'm not on your side or the enemy's side I'm the Lord and Joshua fell down that picture has come to my mind many times sometimes we encounter in Christianity, somebody is against us and then you meet a brother and say are you on my side or his side? I don't want to know that I don't even want to ask the Lord Lord, are you on my side in this conflict? he says, no, I'm not on your side I'm not on the other side I'm the Lord, you make sure that you're on my side I learned something from that Joshua, that's how he entered the land of Canaan Lord, I don't want to ask whether you're on my side I want to be on your side I want to be where you are and the way I can be where the Lord is by always choosing the path of humility and love I've determined in my life years ago I will always choose the path of humility and I will love even if I have to die for it and therefore I know, not that the Lord is on my side but that I am on the Lord's side make sure of that, and I'll tell you this from the few years of experience I have your life will be at rest, your home will be a little more like heaven your children will grow up to fear God and to love Him, and you will not have inward unrest, you'll be able to sleep peacefully at night you won't be disturbed in your sleep thinking of this, that or the other and you will experience the Lord making you a blessing to many, many people, let's pray please think of all that you heard today and ask the Lord to remind you, even if you can't remember it right now to remind you at the appropriate time of the word of the Lord, that it will bring forth fruit in your life thank you Father for this time thank you for helping all these dear brothers and sisters to listen to me patiently I hope they heard you speaking to them and I hope they heard something that will change their life permanently make them grow spiritually and lead them on the path of the upright that becomes brighter and brighter till the perfect day bless everyone here with the blessing of the Lord that makes rich and in which there is no sorrow we pray in Jesus name, Amen

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