

Look Upward, Then Inward, Then Outward

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of looking upward to God, leading to introspection and then outward to serve others. It highlights the need to focus on God's holiness, judge oneself, and be willing to be sent by God to help those in need. The message encourages worship, self-reflection, and compassionate service as key aspects of a Christian life.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1, Matthew 6:9, John 4:23, James 1:26, John 3:16, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Looking Upward to God", "Compassionate Service"

Description

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Transcript

I'd like you to turn please to Isaiah and chapter 6. In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord. See many of these, not many, some of the kings of Judah, like Uzziah, some of the kings were good in the beginning, but after God blessed them, they became proud, and then they drifted away. And so, when you're disappointed with a leader, they should turn to the Lord.

That's what Isaiah did. Isaiah must have had a lot of confidence, here's a king that's come up, and we hope that he will lead Israel, Judah forward, and then he's disappointed. So, one of the first things we learned there is, whenever you're disappointed with a man whom you thought would be godly, or looked up to, sometimes it could be your husband, or you're disappointed with your wife, or some preacher, or some elder, what we need to do is to see the Lord.

Then we will not backslide. A lot of people backslide because they're looking up to some man, and that man disappoints them. I think we will discover when the Lord comes again, and we see the history of all the preachers and many men of God, that there have been in the history of Christianity, I think we will discover that there are very, very few men who really remained faithful to the Lord until the end.

Many, many people start well, they fall away. Just like the kings of Israel and Judah, particularly Judah was supposed to be a better nation. So, at such a time, this verse is very good.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, and I saw the Lord sitting on the throne, lofty, exalted, and that's why the Lord taught us, that when you pray, always begin with our Father who art in heaven. Not your own need, but don't start with your need. You know, whenever we pray, usually our immediate reaction is, Lord, I'm sick, I need food, I need money, I need my child is sick, or something.

Don't begin with that. He said, start with our Father who art in heaven. And I don't know whether we all do that when we pray.

I'm not saying you've got to use those words every time you pray. We may pray, Lord, but the point is, you may start with Lord, we all start with Lord, I'm praying to you, but immediately our mind is on that earthly need, and that's what the Lord is trying to take us away from. Concentrate on our Father who's in heaven.

Very, very important. And I hope that hearing this will slightly change, at least, the way you pray. You'll find it makes a lot of difference in your prayers.

I'll tell you, I begin every day from my bed itself, looking up and saying, Daddy, thank you for this day. And I get in connection with my Heavenly Father as the best way to begin the day. Before you get out of bed, you look up and speak to your Father.

I want to give you some good advice. I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, and we got to see Him and we got to see Him lofty, exalted, and holy with all the angels. The interesting thing you see here in verse 2 is, each angel had six wings, verse 2. And, you know, we think so much about serving God, serving God, serving God, serving God, I must do something for the Lord.

But these angels in heaven, they don't use six wings to fly. Notice that. Out of six wings, verse 2, there's only two wings to fly.

What are they doing with the other four wings? The other four wings they are covering, which means they are worshipping. Four wings for worship and two wings for service. That should be the proportion in our life.

And I tell you, that is not true in the lives of most Christians. And in the early years of my own Christian life, it was not true because I did not have a spiritual father to guide me and say, learn to worship God before you serve Him. What you learn here from the angels is, even though they have never sinned, and there are not sinners in heaven that you've got to go and preach to, yet they are worshipping more than they are serving.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, he told Satan in Matthew chapter 4, let me read that verse to you. See, where Matthew 4.10, is one of the first words of Jesus' ministry. The words that Jesus spoke to Satan, the first words of Jesus' ministry.

Number one was, you shall, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. The second thing is, verse 7, don't put the Lord your God to a test. Don't try and take advantage of God by thinking, oh, He'll forgive me.

The third is, verse 10, you shall worship and then you shall serve. Which comes first? Worship. My dear brothers and sisters, I'm not trying to make anybody here feel condemned.

I'm trying to help you to the real Christian life. Learn to worship before you serve. Begin your day with worship.

Learn from the angels. Four wings to worship, two wings to serve. Your service will become much better.

Things will go much smoother in your life. If you begin your day with worship. And so, there's another word that came to my heart very much in this connection of worship.

That's in John chapter 4. Imagine telling a divorced woman in Samaria about worship. You would think what you need to tell her is about her sins. She was divorced five times.

And we read in John 4.18, she had five husbands. This woman. And the one who she was living with now, she was just sleeping with him.

Not even her husband. Can you think of a sinner like that? I've never met a woman like that. Have you ever met a woman who has divorced five times and now sleeping around with another man? You think what an immoral man.

Who would, do you think God will have any time for such a woman? Yes, Jesus came for sinners. That's a great story there. What you read in John 8 is about Jesus forgiving one adulterous woman who was caught in adultery once.

What about John 4? Where he not only forgave this woman, but you read the end of the chapter, he used that woman to preach the gospel to the people in Samaria. So many people came to Christ, teaching us that Jesus uses repentant sinners, not people who think they are holy. Five husbands and now an adulterous husband.

And what does Jesus speak to her about? He speaks to her about worship. See, it says here, The woman, verse 21, an hour is coming. Verse 23, an hour is coming when the true worshippers will worship the Father.

And spirit means from their heart. Very often the word spirit in the New Testament means heart. Truth means reality.

That means you mean what you say. And the Father, listen, this is the thought that always grips me. Even recently, I almost felt like weeping when I read it.

The Father is seeking for such worshippers. And I look up to heaven and I say, oh God, my Father, are you really looking all over the earth for people who will worship you? Not people who just come and pray, give me this, give me that, give me the other thing. There are millions of people like that.

But someone will say, Father, I want nothing from you. I just want to worship you and admire you and adore you for what a wonderful God you are. It's changed my life.

Just this simple sentence, you shall worship, then you shall serve. And if you take my words seriously, you will see the difference in your life from tomorrow. You have changed the order.

When you change the order, it's like standing on your head. If you try to walk on your hands, if you're a good circus man, you can walk for some time, but you can't live like that forever. We're not supposed to walk on our hands.

We're supposed to walk on our legs. And when you serve before worship, upside down it is, you're trying to walk on your hands. That's the best example I can use.

No wonder you fall down so often. No wonder you have accidents, because you're walking on your hands. Walk on your feet.

That is, worship the Lord first. Learn to admire him and love him and be occupied with him, and then think of your needs. The Father is seeking.

Imagine the longing in God's heart. Where can I find somewhere in CFC, maybe here or there, someone who will worship me sincerely, in spirit, from his heart, not just with his mouth, and in reality. Remember this phrase.

The Father is seeking for worshipers. Be a worshiper. You shall worship, and then you will serve.

And a lot of your service for the Lord becomes useless if you don't worship. That's why even in the Lord's Prayer, turn with me to Matthew 6. In the Lord's Prayer, how does it begin? It's not, give us this day our daily bread. Yeah, that is there.

But that comes further down the line. First is, let me worship. Matthew 6, verse 9. Jesus is telling us how to pray.

We don't have to repeat this prayer. He didn't say repeat this prayer. He said pray in this way.

In this way means this is a pattern, not blind repetition. In this pattern means begin with worship. Yeah, you have needs like, verse 11, give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins. Don't lead us into temptation. All that will come.

But before all that, you have to begin with Father in Heaven. My first three requests are not give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our sins, and deliver us from evil. No, those three requests will come later.

My first three requests are, let your name be hallowed, respected, held high in honor all over India, in Bangalore. Lord, that is my number one desire. Is it your number one desire? And when I get past that, I still don't come to give us this day our daily bread.

That can wait. Lord, my number two desire is, your kingdom must come on this rotten earth, which is ruled by the devil. I want your kingdom to come.

I want holiness and righteousness to be all over the world and in my home. I want your kingdom in my home. And I want your will to be done in my life and everywhere.

So what are my first three requests of a really godly man or woman who is worshipping God? Your name must be hallowed, Father, your kingdom must come, and your will must be done. Jesus said, pray in this way. That means begin with that.

Just like the angels in heaven cover their faces and their bodies and then fly. And you'll see that you'll have more faith when you start like this. You know, if we pray without faith, it's as good as not praying at all.

Prayer without faith is equal to zero prayer. But faith comes when we begin with concentrating on God. So these are simple lessons that Jesus has written down, which sometimes we have not taken them seriously.

So let's turn back and meditate on this. I don't want to spend too much time on all this. Isaiah chapter six, back there.

You'll be disappointed with all the king Uzziah's and all the other people on earth. Then see the Lord, he's still on the throne. Like we sing in that song, God is still on the throne.

And he will remember his own. Though trials may press us and burdens distress us, he'll never forsake his own. So looking up makes a tremendous difference.

So the first direction in we must learn to look is look upward. Man is called to look upwards. That's the difference between the man and an animal.

Remember that. You look at any animal in the world, when you go down the street, cows, dogs, cats, where are they looking? They're always looking down. If you don't believe that, see where all the animals are looking.

Down, down, down, down. Have you ever seen a cow looking up or a dog looking up? No, they have no time for that. And when you have a number of human beings, whose only mind is on earth, earth, earth, earthly things, money and comfort and ease and that, you are no different from an animal.

We were created to look up. So you've learned that. Number one lesson, look upward and worship.

Okay, what is the next step? If you look upward, see what happened to him. He saw everyone there saying, holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of his glory. That's another statement.

It's amazing, you know, verse three is a statement of faith. If you ask me, if someone were to ask you, what is the whole earth full of? You say the whole earth is full of sin. But the angels say the whole earth is full of his glory.

I can see that they look into the future and say, this earth is going to be controlled by Jesus Christ one of these days. That's the faith I have. So even there are wars and rumors of wars and sin and all types of evil.

I praise God that my savior is coming back and he's going to rule this earth one day. And in prophetic vision, I see the earth full of glory, of the glory of the Lord. I live with that faith.

I don't get discouraged. And then the next thing is to look inward. If you look upward and you see the holiness of God immediately, without even trying to think about it, you will look inward.

Like Isaiah saw, woe is me, verse five, I'm ruined. I'm a man of unclean lips. That means I'm not speaking properly.

My words are not pure. And I'm living in the midst of people whose words are not pure. Because my eyes have seen the king.

I want to tell you something here. We talk about judging ourselves in this church. If we judge ourselves, we will not be judged.

1 Corinthians 11, verse 31, very good verse. But how are we to judge ourselves? Not by looking inwards. You look inwards, you'll get depressed.

Because everything inside you is filthy. You may look holy on the outside, but you know your heart corrupt, filthy. Don't look inward before you've looked upward.

That's what I'm trying to say. Look upward and see the goodness and the glory and the power and love of God. Then you look inward, you won't get discouraged.

You say, this God is going to set me free from all the filth inside my heart. The three directions I'm going to teach you to look today. Number one, look upward always.

Then that will automatically lead, when you see the holiness of God, you will look inward and say, I am ruined. Then you'll become specific. My words, Lord, I'm very careless with my words.

Because my eyes have seen the king. I'm not comparing myself with other people. You compare yourself with other people, you'll only congratulate yourself, pat yourself on the back and say, yeah, I'm pretty good.

You'll never say that if your eyes have seen the king. Never. Mine eyes have seen the king and I'm ruined.

Woe is me. Now this prophet Isaiah, I want you to see just the previous chapter, how he was speaking. In the previous chapter, he was looking not at himself.

That word woe, woe means like a terrible calamity must come upon that person. Woe unto that person means some terrible calamity, judgment should come on that person. How does Isaiah prophesy in Isaiah 5 verse 8? He doesn't say woe unto me.

No, no, no. Woe unto those people who are keeping on buying property and not allowing other people to buy anything. They want to live alone in the land.

People who make life miserable for poor people. Keep on buying property and increase the value of goods. And he says, therefore my people suffer.

Then he looks at some other people, verse 18. And he says, woe unto those people who keep on sinning and tell lies, falsehoods. Again, he's looking at others.

Woe to them, woe to them. Let a judgment come on them. Let a judgment come on this group.

Let a judgment come on that group. Okay, he's finished with that. Then he goes in verse 22.

Another group I see. Woe to those other people over there who call evil good and good evil. Who twist the word of God and who substitute darkness for light.

Okay, he's finished with that. Are you finished, Isaiah? No, no, no. There's another group here, verse 21.

Those who are very proud, woe unto them. Those who are proud and wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight. Are you finished? No, no, no.

There's still another group. Woe, 22. Woe to those who are getting drunk and who get drunk and then take a bribe, verse 23, and take away the rights of righteous people.

And he says, therefore all these people are curse on them, curse words on them. Woe unto them, judgment on them. Because of this, verse 25, the anger of the Lord is burning against all of you.

And the same man who says, woe unto, woe unto, woe unto. You know what happens to him when he sees the Lord? He says, verse 5, woe unto me. That is the day that salvation will come for you.

When you have stopped saying, woe unto that group and woe unto that sister over there and woe unto that brother over there. Oh, have you heard that? What about that brother, the way they are doing things? Sister, have you heard about that other sister over there? Woe unto them, woe unto them. You keep doing that sister, you'll sit here in CFC for 40 years and you'll never grow spiritually.

And that's the reason why some of you have not grown. Because you've got very sharp eyes to see, woe unto that group there. Yeah, yeah, and woe unto that other group there.

Woe unto them. You've got your magnifying glasses to see all the faults of everybody there. They say, preach like that, but they live like this.

Turn those magnifying glasses on yourself. Come into the Lord's presence. And there'll be less of this woe unto that group and that group.

You'll say, woe unto me. That'll be the day your salvation will really begin. And what does he think about primarily? Woe is me for I'm ruined.

He says, Lord, all these people are bad, but I'm worse. I'm destroyed. I'm such a wretched sinner.

You know, like Paul said at the end of his life, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners among whom I'm number one. I'm the worst sinner on the earth. We can't feel like that all the time.

But there must be at least some occasions. And I want to ask you if you in your life had at least one occasion where you came before the Lord in prayer and you felt that you must be the worst sinner on the earth. I've had a few occasions like that.

Just a few I can think of. Not where I read a verse and say to myself, yeah, I'm the greatest sinner. No, no, no, no.

But where you see the Lord's holiness and you say, oh, I'm really the chief of sinners. That type of experience, you must have at least two or three times in your life. I tell you, it humbles us.

You will not lift up your head and judge other people so easily. Woe is me. And like he says here, I'm particularly convicted, verse 5, with the way I'm speaking with my lips.

My lips are unclean. I'm judging others. I'm saying things which are not loving.

I'm a man of unclean lips. And the more I've seen the king, the more I see my own corruption. You know why the scribes and the Pharisees in Jesus' time could easily spot the weaknesses of other people, like some of you may be, like I have been also in the past.

It's because they don't see the Lord. They're quick to condemn, quick to condemn. You know what Jesus said to a woman caught in adultery? There's no need of proof.

She was caught in the act. Amazing words in John chapter 8. The Pharisees wanted to condemn her. And Jesus, the holy son of God, who never sinned, you know what he said to her? Woman, I do not condemn you.

Remember those words. I do not condemn you. Learn to speak the words of Jesus to other people.

Brother, I don't condemn you. Sister, I don't condemn you. God will use you if you have that language.

If this, not just in the words, but if this sense in your spirit, a spirit of wanting to help them, not to find fault with them, your wife will be a happier wife at home. If she sees that you don't have a critical attitude, which picks on her for some small fault she did, yeah, if there's not enough salt in the food, just go and get the salt and put it yourself. Why you have to tell her about it? Woman, I do not condemn you.

Remember those words. Brother, I don't condemn you. My dear husband, I don't condemn you.

Those are the words of Jesus in John chapter 8. My dear wife, I don't condemn you. My dear son, I don't condemn you. I want you to improve and I believe you'll be a better boy.

My dear daughter, I believe you'll be a better girl, but I won't condemn you. So many parents condemn their brothers and daughters and sons. No wonder they go astray.

That woman whom Jesus was caught in adultery and brought to Jesus to be stoned to death, Jesus said, he who is without sin cast the first stone and he's the one without sin. But he said, I refuse to throw the stone. No, I'm without sin, but I will not throw a stone at a sinner.

We who have sinned so much are ready to throw stones. Learn the language of Jesus. Woman, I don't condemn you.

Brother, I don't condemn you. Sister, I don't condemn you. Jesus said, condemn not, lest you or yourself be condemned.

So when we look inward, we'll have a lot more compassion on other people. I believe you'll be able to help even your children. If instead of condemning them, you seek to help them.

You've heard me say this illustration even before, but I don't mind repeating it a hundred times. If your little child is playing with some blocks and trying to build a house and you say, listen, son, I'll help you. And you know how children are.

No, no, no, dad, I can do it myself. And he tries and tries and tries and tries for half an hour and messes it up. Then he comes to you and says, daddy, I can't do it.

Never say, I told you so. Never use those words to your wife or your husband or to anybody. I told you so.

That is the language of the expert. Jesus never spoke like that. What should you say to your son? Never mind, son.

You and I can do it together. Let's do it together. You will build wonderful children in your home if you use that language.

Let's do it together. I also made mistakes in my younger days. You will tell your son or daughter, let's do it together.

I've learned something from my mistakes, so I can help you. I'm not better than you, my son or my girl. I learned by making mistakes, so I can help you.

Let's do it together. See if the atmosphere in your home does not change radically. If you start speaking to your husband and wife like that and speak to your children like that, that's what we want to do.

In CFC, we don't want to just build a good church here with more and more people coming. We want to build good homes. How many homes there are here? So many homes.

If the homes are dark, there's no light in this church. We can have wonderful meetings, wonderful sermons, wonderful singing in the presence of Jesus here, then you go back to a dark home. Dark because we're criticizing one another, condemning one another, or sitting and gossiping about somebody in some other church.

If you look upward, things will change. You'll say, woe is me, not woe is so-and-so, so-and-so, so-and-so, so-and-so. Woe is me.

And particularly, I'm convicted, Isaiah says, verse 5, about the way I've spoken. I am a man of unclean lips. That means my language is not good.

The Bible says, if a man doesn't slip up in his tongue, he's a perfect man. That's what it says in James chapter 1. He who does not slip up in his tongue. James 1 and chapter 3, the whole chapter on the tongue.

He who does not slip up in his tongue is a perfect man. The tongue is the most important thing. We've heard much about the eyes, not lusting with our eyes, important.

But more important, that is the tongue. We sin with our eyes. We sin with our tongue, much more than we sin with our eyes.

So he says, my problem is my tongue, Lord. And he sees the sin of his tongue. He's not convicted of pornography or lusting.

No, my lips. He sees the maximum thing he sees in his life is the way I use my tongue. Have you seen that? When you see the Lord, that is what will come to you.

I'm a man of unclean lips. And then, see, it's very interesting. One of the seraphim, immediately, as soon as you confess your sin, the Lord is immediate to do something about it.

Not only to forgive you, immediately. One of the seraphim flew and took a burning coal. But he could, notice something, read the Bible carefully.

He could not touch the coal of heaven. It was burning. Even the angel could not touch that coal, burning hot in God's presence.

He had to use a pair of tongs, you know, metal tongs, to pick up that coal, burning coal. An angel cannot touch it. But with that, he touches Isaiah's mouth.

Meditate on that. An angel could not touch that burning coal. But it could touch the mouth of a man.

Boy, thank you, Jesus. Thank you for your salvation. That holiness, which the angels cannot have, I, a sinner, can have.

The burning coal the angels have to take with tongs can touch my lips and not burn me, but purify me. Meditate on scripture. Don't read these verses quickly and go on.

Don't aim to finish the Bible in one year. Let the Bible go through you more than you go through the Bible. You try to finish the Bible in one year, you'll never meditate on it.

You'll just read and boast, I finished. But did you learn something like this? How the coal, the burning coal, which the angel could not touch, can touch me, a sinner? That holy angel cannot touch it? This is the miracle of God's salvation. That which the angels cannot experience, I can experience.

The fire of God, the angels don't have it. The fire of the Holy Spirit, the angels cannot have it. But it can touch me and burn me and purify me.

And it says, your iniquity is taken away. Your sin is forgiven. Wonderful.

That's what happens when I look up and that leads to looking inward. But don't stop there. The third direction we must look is outward.

Upward, which leads to inward, which will automatically lead to inward, which should lead to outward. Then I think of other people. There are other people who are needy like me.

I can't sit here thinking only about myself. And I heard the voice of the Lord. You know, once you have seen the Lord and you've seen your own need, the Lord will tell you to look out and outward now.

Look at other people. There are needy people around you. Those who are in your inner closed circle.

Like I heard one brother in Tamil Nadu once say like this, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. That is John 3.16. That refers to the whole world. This brother, I remember saying, he said it at the end of a conference.

He said, my world is a very small world. Very small world. That is the people I know.

My relatives, the people in my workplace and a few people in my neighborhood. That is a very small world. It's a small, less than 1% fraction of the whole world.

But God loves that small world also of mine. And God loves this little world that he sent me, his son, into that world. So that these people whom I know should not perish but have everlasting life.

See how he got revelation on John 3.16 for himself. That he was the son whom God sent into this little world of his relatives and his friends so that they could be saved. You know, the word of God has such an amazing depth in it.

That if you just scratch the surface, you'll get very little. That's why it says, blessed is the man who meditates on the law of the Lord. The doctors say, if you eat your food without chewing it and without it being digested, it'll bloat your stomach and you'll get sick.

God has put teeth in our mouth so that we chew the food. And he's put a whole system, which I don't fully understand in our stomach, that digests it and does all types of things. Crushes it and burns it and all that.

And finally it becomes flesh and bones in my body. But if it is not digested, it's not chewed and digested, it just goes out of my system without helping me at all. And that is exactly how a lot of people read the Bible.

20 years later, they don't know the Bible. They don't even remember any verse. Are you like that? You've been a Christian 20, 30 years.

How much of the Bible is in your mind? How much of the Bible is challenging you? How many verses come to your mind in the time of temptation? Meditate from today onwards. I don't have a goal to read the Bible in one year. I'll tell you what I did when I got converted.

I hadn't read through the Bible at all. So I did two things. I said, I'm going to have two Bible readings.

One, I'll read many, many chapters. And then also in addition, I'll have a second reading of mostly New Testament. Just two or three, four or five verses and meditate on that.

So I had two Bible readings. One was a Bible study, not a study, but a reading through. And I finished reading the whole Bible in about seven or eight months.

But then along with that, I also had, that was an important part, that God could speak to me through a few verses I would read. It's good to read through the whole Bible. But along with that, more important, is to read two or three verses every day, particularly from the New Testament, and ask God to speak to you.

And he heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send? Who will go for us? And I said, here am I, send me. How could he say that? Because he had worshipped. He had judged himself.

And once you worship God and you have judged yourself, the Lord will say to you, come, let me send you to someone in need. I've been amazed how the Lord sends me to different places, different people. I don't know them.

But the Lord sends me here, sends me there. And even through the internet now, he sends me here and there. He can do that for you.

You know, he can make you a blessing to so many people, if you will start with looking upward and looking inward. Then he will send you. He will say, can you go for me? First of all, start your own small world of your immediate friends and relatives, those whom you know.

Be a witness to them. You don't have to go and tell them you're sinners. No, no, no, no.

Just love them and manifest the life of Christ to them. Help them when they're in need. Be kind to them.

In your office, you see somebody discouraged, go and say, hey, what's happening? Can I pray for you? The other day, I went to the bank and I heard that the manager had a little accident somewhere on the road. So I asked, I said, how are you feeling today? And the manager said the foot was still hurt. I said, let me pray for you.

And I prayed right there for him. I prayed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that the Lord will touch the foot and bring health. I'm always looking for an opportunity to, just not to convert somebody, but just to

show that I want to be good to you.

Can I help you? Just like if they drop something, I can pick it up and give it to them. Say, can I pray for you? Nobody will say, no, don't pray for me. That'd be a very strange person who says that.

So the Lord will say, who will go for me? And you must say, here am I, Lord. I'm always available to you, Lord. I'm willing to drop anything.

I always told that to the Lord. Lord, even if I'm doing the most important thing, I'll drop it if you tell me to go. Yeah, it happened to me once.

You know, my father gave me some company shares to get some profit from, to live. That's how I lived for 40 years. And sometimes we have to sell them to get money.

And I remember a particular time when I had to go for some meetings. And of course, that was priority. And I went for those meetings and I came back and I found the opportunity to sell that was not there.

I had lost 80,000 rupees because of that not being available at that time. Why? Because I'd gone for some meetings. I said, praise the Lord.

I will not stay to collect 80,000 rupees if God wants me to go for a meeting. The Lord asked me, are you disappointed? I said, not at all, Lord. I had some wonderful meetings there.

Forget this money. You take care of me. I'm not asking for millions.

I'm asking that you just take care of me. And you know what happened? Two years later, I was in a conference. And one person who was at that meeting, which I had gone to, testified that Brother Zach came here two years ago and I got converted.

I said, wow, thank God. What is 80,000 rupees compared to one person getting converted and going to heaven? What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? But the Lord never allowed me to know that for two years to test me, to see would I drop my money to save a soul? I say, yes, any day. And even today, I say, Lord, I said that when the Lord called me nearly 60 years ago.

I said, Lord, I'm willing to check my job, check my profession to serve you. I've never regretted it. Who will go for us? The Lord says in verse 8. He said, here am I, send me.

You don't have to be a full-time worker. The Lord calls maybe one in 10,000 or 100,000 people to be a full-time worker. Most of the full-time workers in India became full-time workers because they did not do well in school.

So the parents say, OK, you're not fit to be an engineer or a doctor. Be a preacher and send to a school. That is the condition of India's preachers.

It says, you take the dregs of people who fail in everything and send them. That is not the right way. God can still use them.

But the point is, unfortunately, that's the wrong impression people have got in this country. But God wants the best. He wants the best.

Say, here am I, send me. And you don't have to be a full-time Christian worker to serve the Lord. There are so many people who are serving in their secular professions.

They're extremely useful to the Lord, who are saying, Lord, send me. And God makes them a witness. And then the Lord gives them a clear message.

This is what you must go and tell people. Sometimes it's a message of judgment, as we see here. So can you remember these three things? Always in your life, look upward first, all the time.

Looking unto Jesus, we run this race. And as we look unto Jesus, it says we are to endure the cross, Hebrews 12, verse 2. Because as I look at Him, I see my own need. There's something I have to die to.

And I'm willing to die to that. I look inward. Immediately after that, the Lord will make me look outward and show me a need over there, or a need over there, to help somebody there.

Maybe in some practical way. Your sisters probably could help somebody in some practical way. There is always some work to do for the Lord in this world.

So it's very simple, dear brothers and sisters. If you can learn to look upward, and it'll automatically make you look inward. And that will lead you to look outward.

And the day will come from your life rivers of living water can flow out. May not be a river in the beginning. You read Ezekiel chapter 47 sometime.

It starts as a trickle. It's a small little water was coming out from under the door of the temple. And it became mighty rivers.

So it's like that. Your service, when I started serving the Lord, it was not some big, mighty traveling here and there. I would go and speak to one person.

I remember going to one brother and saying, not a brother, he was a Christian. I said, say, can I start a... This is when I was in the Navy. I was only 24 years old.

I said, can we start? Can we have a Bible study in your house once a week? Just half an hour. He was not born again. Nobody in his house was born again.

Oh, I said, I'll come once a week and I'll have a Bible study in your house. He said, sure. So every Wednesday, I would go there and have a short Bible study.

And over a period of time, that chap got converted. And later on, he began to serve the Lord when he left the Navy. Imagine if I hadn't done that.

He didn't come to me. I went to him because he's a friend of mine and I just suggested it. Why not ask the Lord, Lord, can I be useful to you somewhere in the midst of my little world? God so loves that little world of yours that he put you, his son or daughter in the middle of that, that they should not perish.

May God help all of us. That everyone here who is born again will be a witness for Christ, beginning with looking upward and being a worshiper. Let's pray.

Meditate on the word of God. Let the word sink into your heart, brothers and sisters. Heavenly Father, please help us.

We are such forgetful people. Remind us again and again what you have spoken so that we shall live our lives in a useful way on this earth, always looking up and leading to it, judging ourselves and then serving you of being a blessing to others. Thank you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4R-SmXshhUY.mp4>

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