

Love Is the Greatest

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes that love is the greatest commandment and the key to fulfilling God's purpose in our lives.

Duration: 59:26

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, Luke 7:47, Luke 18:13, Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:14, Ephesians 5:2, Colossians 3:14, 1 Peter 3:7, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Gods Love", "Christian Fellowship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining a deep love for Jesus by understanding the depth of His sacrifice on the cross and the significance of forgiveness. It highlights the need to prioritize fellowship with God above all else and to love others as Christ loved us, focusing on genuine, sacrificial love that reflects God's mercy and grace.

Transcript

I have been thinking of God's people missing their birthright, missing their inheritance, losing a large portion of what Christ purchased for us on the cross. Forgiveness of sins is only like cleaning the cup or cleaning the pipe, the channel. I mean, we clean a cup at home for a purpose, to fill it with something useful.

We clear out a channel or a pipe so that the water can flow. So any Christian who is satisfied with the fact my sins have been forgiven, that's great, and that's all there is. We can say the devil has robbed him of his inheritance in Christ.

And some of them, not some of them, but many of them, many Christians will discover it only when they stand before Christ. The whole purpose of prophetic preaching in the church is to throw light on the schemes of Satan, on the ways in which he seeks to deceive God's people, rob God's people. Jesus said the thief comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

He wants to rob us of our inheritance because when we are robbed of our inheritance, we don't have the power that God wants us to have. Then he can kill us easily and take away our weapons, take away our power. He can destroy our lives.

And when I see the very low standard and state of affairs among so many Christians, and even in our churches, so many families have not come into the glory of a new covenant life of peace and love, joy, it

really, I'll tell you, it makes me angry at the devil and say, Lord, I want to serve you more wholeheartedly. I hope it makes you angry, too, at the devil. Don't waste your time getting angry at human beings.

That'll accomplish nothing except serve the devil's purposes. You want to get angry, and all of us got a lot of anger pent up in our hearts. Turn it all against the devil.

Let loose at him with all the bullets you have of anger. I don't want to waste any bullet on a human being of anger. I'm angry at the devil because he's robbed God's people.

He's robbed my brothers and sisters. He's made their lives miserable. He's made this world which God created such a terrible place.

He's fooled people with false religions. He's fooled Christians with a false Jesus. He's deceived Christians into thinking something is the Holy Spirit, which is not the Holy Spirit at all, which doesn't make anybody holy.

I'm amazed that so many people swallow all this. And so I'm concerned that we should, not only me, but if you hear the truth, you should lovingly share this with others who are blinded. If you can't share it in love, don't share it.

If you're going to share the truth of God in a critical, judgmental way, or in a way to make people condemned, saying, why aren't you doing this? Or why aren't you? That's not the way. Then it's better to keep quiet. God never scolds anyone.

God never tells anybody, why aren't you doing this? Why aren't you doing that? Preachers say that. God never. And it's because so many preachers don't know God that they speak like that.

I know in the days when I knew God so little, I spoke like that too. I'm not here to throw stones at any preacher. I have sinned in that area myself.

And so I don't have any, I'm not qualified. Jesus said only one without sin can throw a stone, and I can't. But I've learned a lesson and I can share with other people.

Don't do that. You know, you don't have to do the stupid things I did in my younger days. God never scolds anyone.

And as a father, we must correct our children, but not scold them. There's so much of deception in the world today. So much of missing out on what God has offered for us in Christ.

So much of living under the old covenant. The old covenant was given by God only temporarily to show man that you can't make it. To show you your sin and to show man that no matter how hard you try, you can't make it.

I hope all of us have learned that lesson. No matter how hard you try, you can't come up to God's standard. You cannot.

You may think on the outside, you may do a lot of things that appear spiritual, but God is interested in the inside. David said in Psalm 51, Lord, you desire truth in the innermost being. That's where he wants truth.

And he couldn't get it from anybody in the old covenant. And he never expected it because he gave the law only to show man. And 1500 years, he kept Israel under the law.

You know, the sad thing is, even today, 2000 years later, Christians have still not learned that lesson. You can't make it. You'll never come up to God's standard, no matter how hard you try.

And that's why you need to, first of all, find deliverance and freedom from the guilt of the past by receiving Christ as your Savior and accepting his righteousness. A lot of Christians know about forgiveness. They don't know about justification.

They don't know that the only way I can stand before God, even if I'm forgiven, I'm still not good enough. So what if my past is forgiven? What about all the corruption in your nature and mine today? How can I stand before God with all that corruption, even if every sin I committed in the past is forgiven? That's why I need to be justified. Justified means Christ clothes me in his righteousness, puts his righteousness to my account, and I'm happy when God looks at me.

He doesn't see all the filth. Aren't you happy? Aren't you happy that he doesn't see all the corruption? He sees me in Christ. I rejoice in that, and I want you to rejoice in it.

But more than that, I don't have to live with this righteousness clothing me and inwardly forever be corrupt. The other part of the good news is that God sends his Holy Spirit within to, while clothed in the righteousness of Christ, while accepted by God, inwardly a tremendous transformation is taking place or should take place with the Holy Spirit. And this is where Satan has robbed so many of God's people.

Let me turn in Romans chapter 8. It says, Romans chapter 8, it says here in verse 3, what the law could not do. That is what the whole old covenant could not do. That means what nobody before Jesus came could experience.

We could put it like that. What Moses could not experience, what John the Baptist could not experience, who was the greatest person born up to Jesus, what nobody in the entire human race up to the time of Jesus could experience, what the law could not do, God did. That's what he did when he sent Jesus in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin and condemned sin in the flesh.

Why? Why did he do all that? Why did God condemn sin in the flesh of Jesus when he hung on the cross? All sin was condemned there in the flesh of Jesus when he says, 2 Corinthians 5.21, God made him to be sin on the cross who knew no sin so that we might become the righteousness of God in him, not some rotten righteousness that I have accomplished by discipline and yoga and controlling myself. Paul says, I don't want the righteousness of the law. I don't want it.

It's rags. I throw it away. I want this glorious garment of the righteousness of Christ.

And so that verse 4, the requirement of the law might be fulfilled inside us now. What is God's ultimate purpose? Listen, here is God's ultimate purpose for you. That that holy requirement he had even in old covenant times for man, which could not be fulfilled through the law, what the law could not do can now be fulfilled, not on the outside.

No. Not that which gives you a good testimony before men, but that it can be fulfilled inside you. Inside who? Inside us who no longer walk according to the flesh.

It doesn't work inside everybody. We know that, but it will be accomplished in every Christian who chooses, who makes a choice to walk according to the spirit and not according to the flesh. In other words, who has decided, I'm going to walk, I'm going to live my life according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and not according to the promptings of my fleshly nature.

All of us know, we hear those promptings pretty regularly in our life, the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the promptings of the fleshly nature. And if there's a cry in your heart and say, Lord, I want to live all my life according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, you know what will happen? Romans 8, 4, never forget this verse. You live according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, not according to the promptings of the flesh.

God's holy requirement will be fulfilled inside you. The Holy Spirit will work it in you. He will write, he will put his law into your mind and write it into your heart.

That's wonderful. What is that holy requirement of the law? Let me turn. Now we're going step by step, like doing an arithmetic problem.

We understood what God's goal is. This righteous requirement of the law must be fulfilled inside me if I live by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. You know, the Bible is really very simple.

So many preachers have made it a very complicated thing. One of the charges God has given me in my ministry is to remove the veil from the scriptures. It's over so many people.

The devil's put a veil on people. And on top of the veil, the devil has put so many preachers that put another veil on top of it, making it even more difficult for people to understand. As Jesus said that the Bible can be understood by babes.

He spoke in a way that little children can understand if we read it simply and if we meditate on it, if we take a little time to think about it. Matthew chapter 22. You know, Jesus was asked once the same question.

Verse 36, Matthew 22, verse 36. Somebody came to him and said, Teacher, which is the great commandment of the law? And different people have different understandings. Even today, there are some people who call themselves Christians who say the great commandment is the fourth commandment.

That is, you must keep the Sabbath. And that lady was the leader of that group, said that I think she had a vision or something where she saw the 10 commandments and the light shining on the fourth one. And I think the Jews expected some answer like that.

You know, that Jesus just says Sabbath or something like that. But he didn't say that. In fact, he didn't mention any of the 10 commandments.

But he said two things which summed up the whole 10 commandments. He said, I'll tell you, the great commandment in the law is not one, but two, two sides of a coin. And I have to show you both sides.

First, you shall love the Lord your God. Listen carefully. This is the righteous requirement of the law, which God wants to fulfill inside us.

If it's not fulfilled inside you, the devil has robbed you. He's deceived you. The Holy Spirit is not working in you as he wants to, if this is not being accomplished more and more.

It's not a question of evangelism. It's not a question of preaching or even attending meetings. Lots of people who attend meetings are just religious people.

Here is the righteous requirement of the law, which God longs to be fulfilled inside every one of us. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart. If I love God with all my heart, how much place is there in my heart to love my wife, my children, my house, my job, my bank account, my money, my property, my reputation.

Anything. There is no place left in my heart for these other things. How is it then you love those other things? I'll tell you, because though you have given some place to God in your heart, the righteous requirement of the law to love God with all your heart has not been fulfilled.

You know, that is the meaning of being pure in heart. The only man who is pure in heart is the man who loves God with all his heart. Pure in heart is different from having a clean conscience.

A clean conscience means you have confessed every sin that you know and you cleanse. You say, Lord, I'm sorry. You confess to God, you confess to man, but there are a lot of people who have a clean conscience who don't have a pure heart.

You know that. You can confess every sin and yet you may love something other than God. Well, you say, Brother Jack, aren't you supposed to love your wife? Sure.

And I'll tell you something. I've learned through 38 years of marriage that I can love my wife far better and far more if I love God with all my heart. If I tried to love my wife the way all these cinemas teach and the way romantic novels teach, I'd have been having problems with her even today.

I'd have been fighting and quarreling even today, occasionally, like all these people who follow the cinemas do. But when you love God with all your heart and He fills your heart with love, you'll love your wife in such a way that you'll never raise your voice against her. You'll never have a bitterness or a grudge or a complaint against her any day, 365 days of the year.

That's the righteous requirement of the law. It comes through not loving your wife but by loving God with all your heart. I'll give you an example.

Let me take an example. If I'm the right hand and my wife is the left hand, how does my right hand love the left hand? It's not by always hanging on together. I don't have time to always be with my wife.

I have to serve the Lord and I have to go many places and she's not with me. This right hand loves my left hand through the head. That's how it loves.

This right hand knows this left hand is part of the same body and it gets hurt even if a mosquito bites. This one does something about it. Why? Because it's connected to the head and through the head loves.

So if this right hand is completely submissive to the head, it doesn't have to love the left hand. It'll automatically love the left hand much better than if you just connect these two hands together by some type of wire. I tell you, you'll love your wife much better if you love Jesus with all your heart.

If you don't believe it, try it. Try it from today and tell me a year later if it doesn't work. It will.

You'll love your children better. You won't scold them so much but you'll correct them. You'll help them.

You'll encourage them because you love God with all your heart. You love the brothers and sisters in the church, some of them who are difficult. Does God love his difficult children? Oh yes, he does.

Otherwise, where would we be? Who are you thinking of? Somebody else? I'm thinking of myself. I hope you're thinking of yourself and not thinking of somebody else. I know that brother over there or that sister over there.

You see how our mind is. God loves his difficult children. He loves us and when we love him with all our hearts, we love everyone.

I'll tell you that. I've discovered that more and more and more. The older I get, the more I see.

Not because it's written in 1 Corinthians 13, because I've experienced it. Love is the greatest. Not even faith.

Today we have a preaching that tells you faith is the greatest. Almost every Christian television preacher is telling you about faith, faith, faith, faith. Yeah, faith is there.

Hope is there that one day Christ will come and love but love is the greatest. I have no doubt in my mind about it. You can have faith for many things and go to hell.

You know that? You can receive many things from God. No Christian ever received as much as those Israelites received for 40 years in the wilderness. Have you ever received bread dropping from heaven into your house even one day of your life? Well, imagine if that happened one day.

It went out and Jesus sent bread for you. It'll stink in one day, by the way, if you keep it for yourself. You got to share it with others.

But the point is that the Israelites received that for 40 years. God was not happy with them. They went to hell.

They had supernatural healing, miracles, water coming out of a rock, all types of things. They went to hell. You can have faith and you can have miracles and go to hell.

But there'll never be a person in hell who loved God with all his heart and who loved others as himself. That'll be impossible. So Jesus said the greatest commandment is love God with all your heart and with all your soul.

My mind is a part of my soul and my personality. And if my mind also, I want to love God. That's why when I see something on television which my mind says, God, the Lord won't love that.

I want to turn it off. I want to turn away. And if I'm sitting in somebody's house and they're watching it, well, I'll want to go to the bathroom or something like that and excuse myself and say, sorry, it's time for me to leave.

That's the best thing. I'm not interested because I've got a mind which for so many years in my foolishness, I corrupted with sin. At least the years that are left to me, I want to give it to God.

I want to use this mind to understand the scriptures and I've tried to use my mind to understand the scriptures for 45 years so that I could use my mind to bless other people, to clear out the cobwebs in

people's minds about what God is like, about the new covenant, about Jesus, about the glory of Jesus. Why don't you use your mind for that instead of watching filthy movies, instead of corrupting it with useless stuff that you read? I'll tell you honestly, my testimony, I'm not trying to be humble. I have studied this Bible for 45 years.

I still feel I know so little. One of the things I recently got, I don't usually buy things for myself, but I got something recently which has helped me. Somebody gave it to me.

Something where I can put a headphone on and keep on listening to the Bible wherever I go. Sometimes I have to make long journeys. A couple of days ago I had to make a long two and a half hour road journey from where I was to the airport.

I finished the Gospel of Matthew and boy did I get revelation for the first time. For the first time I got revelation on certain things. This is after reading it for 45 years.

You're missing something. Love God with all your mind. I'll give you one of those revelations I got.

Right in the first chapter of Matthew, there's something that blessed my heart and I said, Lord, I want to try and practice this more and more. In Matthew chapter 1, it says about Joseph discovering that Mary had a child, but he didn't know it was by the Holy Spirit. He thought she had been unfaithful and become pregnant.

So Joseph, it says in verse 19, was a righteous man and didn't want to disgrace her. I want to tell you what I've said many times before, the mark of a righteous man. The first mark of a righteous man mentioned in the New Testament is that he does not want to disgrace other people.

He does not want to expose the sins of other people. He wants to cover the sins of other people. If you're like that, you're a righteous man.

If you want to go around exposing the sins of your wife, your husband, other people in the church, you are a thoroughly unrighteous person. He was a righteous person. He was under the old covenant, but he still had grace or he still had an understanding of God to not disgrace her, but to send her away secretly.

He said, let me just hide the whole thing. Let her get married to somebody else. I won't tell anything about the stories I know about her.

How happy Joseph must have been that he did that, because later on when he discovered the truth, how terrible he would have felt if he had gone around telling stories about Mary before that. Have you ever felt terrible about telling some story about somebody and later on discovering it was not at all true? How much better it would have been if you had just kept quiet, at least learn a lesson for the future. I had already seen that before, but what struck me was this other part.

In the New Living Translation, it says, While he was thinking about this, he went to sleep and God spoke to him in a dream. I thought, Lord, before I go to sleep, let me also be thinking about how to do good to somebody. What a way to go to sleep.

God may speak to you in a dream, if you go to sleep like that. So many people, before they go to bed, they're thinking about how they're going to fight with someone, how they're going to answer someone who's going to argue with them, and how they're going to teach that other fellow a lesson, and how they're

going to make a little more money here. Listen, even if you spend your whole day doing that, just before you go to sleep, think about how can I do some good to someone.

While he was thinking about these things, he went to sleep, and God spoke to him. That I discovered after 45 years of reading the Bible. Just to show you a taste, to encourage you to study the scriptures, there's a lot in here.

You don't need great knowledge of anything. You just need to read carefully and stop and think. But there's so much in it.

To love God with all our heart, with all our mind, is what God wants to accomplish in us. It also says in Matthew 22, in that passage, that you should love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first commandment.

And the second is like that. You must love your neighbor as yourself. Whatever you don't want other people to do to you, don't do to other people.

Whatever you want other people to do to you, do to other people. That's what Jesus said. It's the golden rule in Luke chapter 7. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Whenever you're thinking of treating someone in a certain way, think to yourself, would you like to be treated like that? When you're tempted to yell at the maid servant in your home, before doing that, just stop a moment. At least from now onwards. And ask yourself, would you want your boss to yell at you like that? Correct you, yes.

I certainly want, if I'm working in an office, I'd like my boss to correct me if I'm doing something wrong. But I don't want him to yell at me as if I'm a good for nothing, useless person. Treat other people the way you want God to treat you.

See, these are laws in scripture. Honor your father and mother and it will go well with you. And we should be a testimony to that at the end of our life.

My father and mother lived to a ripe old age. One was 80 and one was 90 before they passed away. But I can honestly say before God, I honored them.

I didn't always agree with them. After I left their home, I did as the Lord led me. But I honored them until the end of their lives.

And I want to say today to you, it's gone well with me. It has. We had a young maid servant who worked in our home for many years.

And God is my witness that I always tried to treat her the way I wanted God to treat me. Sure. Did good as far as possible even after she got married.

Because that's the way I wanted God to treat me and I want to testify today. God's been very good to me. I've treated God's children.

Tried my best to help them in many ways. God's dealt very well with my own children. It's a law.

Treat others the way you want to be treated by God. The way you want to be treated. It's a simple law.

Do you know how much you miss in life? Do you know why there are so many problems in your life? Because you treat other people so badly. I mean, it's the most foolish thing to do. Don't you want it to go well in your life? I want it to go well in my life.

I want it to go well with my children. There's so many wonderful promises in the New Testament that we can claim. If you love your neighbor as yourself, I tell you it's the best thing for you.

It's the best thing for your children and grandchildren. The seed of the righteous person is blessed. If you want it to go well with your children and their children, be a righteous person.

God's given me so many promises. Let me just show you some of the promises God's given me concerning my own children. Which I've just claimed, you know.

I mean, you can claim it too. It's in Scripture. This Bible is not written just for me.

It's for you. But we miss something when we don't claim it. Here's a verse that God gave my wife and me right before we had any children.

It says here in Isaiah 54 and verse 13. All your sons will be taught of the Lord, or as the meaning in the margin says, will be disciples of the Lord. And the well-being of your sons will be great.

I mean, years before we had any sons. Long before we had any sons, days before that, the Lord gave that to my wife separately and to me. And we said, Lord, we just claim it.

In the Message Bible it says, all your children will have God for their teacher. What a mentor for your children. Then there was another one.

And that's in Isaiah 59. Now I'm just saying this so that these checks are in your name as well. Take it to the bank of heaven and cash it.

Isaiah 59 and verse 21. As for me, this is my covenant with them. My spirit that I have placed upon you.

And the words that I've given you to speak. They're not going to leave your mouth. Nor the mouth of your children.

Nor the mouth of your grandchildren. You will keep repeating these words. And it will never stop.

It will go on from generation to generation. Boy, I tell you with all my heart. I don't mind if all my children are poor.

God is my witness. If the Spirit of God will be upon them. And they will speak God's Word.

They will be the richest people in the world. That's what I wish for my children, grandchildren. I don't desire anything else because I've known from my own life.

That money is not everything. Sure. Makes no difference to me whether I have much or little.

I'm just as happy. I was just as happy when I had little as I am today. Another verse.

Isaiah 61 and verse 9. I'm reading in the message translation. Isaiah 61 and verse 9. In the middle of that verse it says. Your descendants will become well known all over.

Your children in foreign countries will be recognized at once. As the people whom I have blessed. It's amazing how specific God's promises can be.

You can go to God and say Lord. I just go to the Lord and say Lord. I don't want just my life to be blessed.

I want rivers of living water to flow out from me. First of all in my own home. To my children, grandchildren.

To my people in my home church and then to other churches. I can't do it. God told Abraham I will bless you.

I will make you a blessing. Then you'll be a blessing to others. No matter how hard I try I can't be a blessing to anybody.

I can't even be a blessing to my children. But if I open myself up to God and say Lord. I give you my word.

I want to treat other people the way I want you to treat me. Will you make a covenant with God today? If not for any other reason. At least for the selfish reason that you want your children and grandchildren to be blessed.

I mean that's not the best reason. The best reason is that you want to glorify God. But if you can't do it for any other reason.

Do it because you want it to go well with you. And you want it to go well with your family. Treat other people at least from today.

The way you want God to treat you. Let God write that law into your heart. That every time you speak to people.

And every time you have to deal with people. I'm going to say. I want to.

In your heart I want to treat you the way God treats me. God's been tremendously good to me. I want to be exceptionally good to you.

I don't want to be miserly and tight-fisted towards you. I want to be large-hearted. God's been large-hearted towards me.

Jesus told his disciples once. Why should you freely give to others? Because you have freely received. Freely you have received.

He said in Matthew chapter 10. Freely give. The tragedy with so many Christians is they will acknowledge.

They have received freely. What they don't deserve. What they don't give.

They become tight-fisted. Keep things to themselves. And it stagnates.

Have you seen a lake? Where the water comes in. Rain falls, falls, falls, falls, falls, falls. And there's no outlet for that lake.

And you can't drink the water of that lake. It's weeds and rubbish. Because it's just receiving, receiving, receiving, receiving, receiving.

And next year it will be receiving and receiving and receiving. And it will be filthy and filthy. You won't even want to go and swim in that lake.

There are some Christians like that. They receive, receive, receive, receive. They never give anything to anyone.

They stink. And then there are others. Have you seen a river? How is it people can even drink from a river? Because when you stand in front of a flowing river, every second, every second, the water in front of you is fresh.

It's new. It wasn't the water that was there five seconds ago. That's gone.

It's gone. It got something and it passed it on. It got something from the snow in the mountains.

It got so much, let me pass it on to others. Think of the millions of people who get blessed through a river. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Simple devotion to Christ. Is what leads us into this type of love. We read in 2nd Corinthians in chapter 11.

2nd Corinthians chapter 11. What is, what is Paul's concern? For his flock in Corinth. He says I'm jealous for you.

2nd Corinthians 11 verse 2. Because I promised your hand in marriage to Christ. I betrothed you to Christ. And I want to present you one day as a pure virgin to her husband.

Paul was a man who took his ministry seriously. He knew that he had to present every one of those people as a pure virgin to Christ. And he was so concerned that they were not pure.

They were fooling around with the world. And he says I'm afraid that like the serpent deceived Eve. By his cleverness.

Your mind. Will be led astray. You'll be lured away.

From. Simple. Pure.

Devotion to Christ. When do you go astray? When you have lost your simple. Pure.

Devotion to Christ. Oh you don't have to do serious things. When you have lost that fervent love for Jesus.

You've already gone astray my brother. You didn't know that. You didn't know you had fallen.

The Lord told the leader. The elder of the church in Ephesus in Revelation 2.4. You've left your first love. You had it once.

But you just left it. And remember from where you have fallen. Is that a fall? That's what he says there in Revelation 2.5. Remember from where you have fallen.

To lose your first love. To leave your first love for Christ. Is the greatest fall you can have.

So bad. That the Lord says I'll take over the anointing from you. If you don't repent.

Many of us may repent when we lost our temper. Blasted with our eyes. Hurt somebody with words.

Did something but. When was the last time you repented? Because you say Lord Jesus. I've lost my love for you.

Have you ever. Wept on your pillow at night. And said Lord I've stopped loving you like I did before.

I've done it. I do it often. I said to me that's the most important thing.

I don't care for preaching. I'll tell you honestly God's my witness. I don't care for preaching.

That's just an overflow of my love for Christ. It's love for Jesus that burns in my heart. That's how I was when the Lord saved me.

47 years ago. And that's where I want to be till today. I want to evaluate my life.

Not by ministry. Not by books or tapes or CDs or outreach. The Lord told me years ago.

Don't ever evaluate your life. By the success in your ministry. Evaluate your life.

By your love for me. And I've kept that before me. You know it's possible to have a very successful ministry.

And to have a great outreach. And to lose your love for Jesus. You read that in Revelation chapter 2. That leader in Ephesus.

The church in Ephesus had a wide ministry. Boy they were reaching people. You read in Acts chapter 19.

They were reaching all over that area. But they had lost their love for Christ a little later. What is the use of all that outreach? And I say Lord I don't care for outreach.

I want to love you. And if there is any outreach. It must be just an overflow of my love for you.

If I was to anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over. But that comes out of my following the Lord as my shepherd.

So keep that in mind. We go astray when simple devotion to Jesus is gone. That's gone.

You've gone on to something else. Something good. But it's not simple devotion to Christ.

Does that happen to you? The reason why you can't love other people. Is because you don't love Jesus with all your heart. The reason why we love money.

Is because we don't love Jesus with all our heart. The reason why the world looks so attractive. Is because we don't love Jesus with all our heart.

The reason why television programs are more interesting than the Bible. You want to know? Because you don't love Jesus with all your heart. I tell you honestly.

Everything changes. The whole focus changes. When you see the glory of Jesus.

You start loving him with all your heart. You say Lord that's the way I want to love you. And when we love him like that.

Love will come in our hearts. For unlovely people. You know the Lord said in Matthew chapter 5. How we were to love and that's been a challenge to me.

I mean the way we are even supposed to love unbelievers. Jesus said in verse 43. Matthew 5 43.

You have heard that it was said. You shall love your neighbor. And hate your enemy.

But I say to you love your enemies. And I love the message translation here. I'm telling you to love your enemies.

Let your enemies bring out the best in you. Not the worst. Let your enemies bring out the best in you.

Not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time. Respond with the energies of prayer.

For him. But then you are working out. Of your true selves.

Your God created self. This is what God does. He gives his best.

The sun to warm. The rain to nourish. He gives his best to everyone.

Regardless whether they are good or bad. Nice or nasty. If all you do is love those who love you.

What reward can you have for that? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you. You expect a medal for that? Any run of the mill sinner can do that.

But what I'm saying is. Grow up. Grow up.

Your subjects of the kingdom. Of God. Now live like that.

I like that. You know I was thinking the other day. How good God is.

He allows terrorists to live a long life. You and I wouldn't do that would we? When terrorists get married. They get children.

We would make their wives barren. I know a lot of things I would do. If I were in God's place.

Which God doesn't do. I thank God I'm not in his place. But it's taught me something.

Of the goodness of God. Lazy. I mean you can't tolerate some little problem.

With some brother in the church. Boy. Imagine loving a terrorist.

I say Lord I want to love like you love. I really want. I know that everything else.

Is hollow. Love is the currency of heaven. You better exchange.

Your earthly currency for that. Before you. You know migrate and go there.

If you do. Please have the currency of heaven. The church is supposed to be a little.

Pocket. You know like of heaven on earth. It's like if you go to Delhi.

You'll see a building called. The. Embassy of the United States of America.

And people who live there. Belong to the United States. They live according to the laws of the United States.

But it's a little. Representation of the United States in a country like India. And so.

What's our church supposed to be an embassy. Of the kingdom of God. Here in Bangalore.

I hope you're behaving like that. And not behaving like all the other people in Bangalore. The embassy of the kingdom of God.

The Bible says that. Second Corinthians 5:20. We are ambassadors.

The thing is in that embassy there's only one ambassador. We've got. 200 ambassadors here.

There's no use just putting a badge and saying ambassador. You've got to live like one. An ambassador of Jesus Christ.

A representative of Jesus Christ. To love people. And that can only come.

If we love God with all our heart. And that love for Jesus. I was thinking about that you know.

There are two ways. In which I have discovered. That my love for Jesus can increase.

In all these years of my life. There are two things I meditate on. Very frequently.

Only two really. One is. How much he loved me.

It says in 1 John chapter 4. And verse 19 we love him. Because he first loved us. On John 4 verse 19.

And it says here we love him. Because we love. Not just love him.

Which means we love other people. Not because they love us. The verse in the world is.

We love other people because they love us. The verse in the Bible is. We love other people because God loved us.

You see the difference? We love. Because he loved us. You ask me why do I. Why do you love me brother Zang.

Because God loved me. It's not because you're such a great guy. You may not be a great guy.

You may have harmed me in some way. You may have spoken against me. It doesn't make a difference.

I love you because God loves me. It's got nothing to do with how you treat me. It's got nothing to do with how you speak about me.

Behind my back. God loves me. I love because he first loved me.

You stick to that. And you'll be a Christian. You change that verse to.

We love you because you love me. You're out in the world again. We love because he first loved us.

And so the first thing I need to meditate on is. Which I've done through all these more than 45 years is. How much Jesus loved me.

I meditated, meditated, meditated on the cross. How much he. I mean not just in the early days.

It was just the physical suffering. That I understood on the cross. But as I meditated, meditated, meditated.

Trying to understand how much he loved me. The Lord opened my eyes to see more and more that. His physical death.

Was not enough. You know I was thinking if some non-Christian asks me. Someone who studied the Bible.

Mr. Poonen. What is the punishment for your sin? And I say my punishment. No supposing you ask me.

How is your sin forgiven? I say Christ died for me on the cross. Oh he died for you on the cross? Physically? What is the punishment for your sin? Is physical death the punishment for your sin? I say no. I have to be separated and forsaken by God.

For eternity. And he says really? Then did Jesus suffer that on the cross? Or only physical death? Then my eyes were opened. To see that the.

Cup with Jesus prayed in Gethsemane. Lord father please take this away from me. That cup was not physical death.

Physical death is part. Of the punishment for sin. But it's not all.

Adam died. The moment he ate that tree. Not physically.

He didn't physically die 930 years later. But spiritually. He was cut off from God immediately.

In the day you eat you will die. And he died. That's the punishment.

Jesus bore on the cross. He made him to be sin. When Jesus hung on the cross.

In three hours he cried. My God my God why have you forsaken me? It's the only time in his life. He called his father God.

He never called his father God. In all eternity. All the days of his life.

But once for me. He hung on the cross. As my substitute.

Bearing my punishment. Paying my debt. Paying a debt that I could never pay.

And he paid it. And because he was an eternal being. Unlike me who is a finite being.

In three hours. He faced the concentrated punishment. Of what all human beings would suffer in hell for eternity.

You know concentrated. Not just me suffering in hell for eternity. But all human beings suffering in hell for eternity.

Take all of that punishment and concentrate it. Was put on Jesus in three hours on the cross. I tell you. That really opened my eyes. Then I understood his struggle in Gethsemane. When he said father. Take this cup away from me. I don't want to break my fellowship with you. I don't mind physical death. I'll go through that a thousand times. But my fellowship with you. Which you and I have had for eternity. You may not want to lose that. It's like somebody wrenching off your head. The Bible says the head of Christ is his father.

Father I don't want that. See we don't understand that. Physical suffering means so much to us. We weep when we see movies like The Passion of Christ. Or some other film about Jesus. Because we live so much in the physical world.

Physical suffering is the biggest thing for us. Physical sickness is what we want healing from. More than from sin.

The physical world means so much to us. That's why the physical suffering of Jesus. We think so much of. What about this fellowship with the father. Fellowship with the father. Means so little to most believers. Because they can break fellowship so easily. And forget about it for days on end. Jesus wouldn't want it even.

Fellowship to be broken in for a second. Think of a husband and wife. Who have a quarrel and don't talk to each other for two days.

Two days. No fellowship with the father. They may pray.

Religious people pray. All religions pray. They may pray but there is no fellowship with the father.

If your fellowship with your wife is broken. Bible says that in 1 Peter 3.7. Your father will not hear you. Your prayers will be hindered.

But they can carry on. Okay. Let her humble herself and come and ask my forgiveness.

I am the head of this home. Fellowship with God means nothing to 99% of believers. No wonder they cannot understand.

In a million years they won't understand. What Jesus suffered on the cross. But when fellowship with the father becomes more precious to you.

Than physical health. I tell you. I want to be in that place where fellowship with my heavenly father. Means much more to me. Than even physical health. Then we will understand a little bit.

Of what Jesus suffered on the cross. That's when I began to understand it. When the spirit meant more to me.

Than physical suffering. When break of fellowship with the father was painful. Then God opened my eyes.

To see what Jesus went through on the cross. You see. You can hear me.

I say oh that was a great revelation. I have heard people say to me this. After a meeting where I shared this.

Brother Zach I never thought of that. You know they have got something now. To talk to other people about.

Or preach to somebody else. They are not. They are still living in the mind.

It's a new thought. An exciting thought. It wasn't a thought for Jesus.

It wasn't a thought for me. When fellowship with the father. Means so much to you.

That you will never allow. Even one moment of. Anything to break that fellowship.

If you hurt somebody. You go and ask forgiveness immediately. Whether your wife or anybody.

Because you want your fellowship with the father. When it means like that to you. You will really value.

What Jesus suffered on the cross. When I saw that. I said Lord.

I see now in the garden of Gethsemane. There is a cup. You can come up to heaven.

Because you haven't sinned. But all those people. Will die.

I thought of myself. The father telling Jesus that. Zach Poonen will go to hell.

The Lord thought of that. Okay. Then I will go to the cross for his sake.

What am I going to give in return. To Jesus. For that.

Go to a few meetings. Give a little money in the box. Shame on me.

I said Lord. All of my life. Is yours.

I don't want anything for myself on this earth. I want everything for you. All I have is yours.

It will never be mine. Live for you. Die for you.

Yeah. That's what increased my love for the Lord. Preserved it through all these years.

The second thing. The one who is forgiven. Jesus said in that story.

Of a man who was forgiven 500. Another person was forgiven 50. But.

Who will. Who will love more. The one who is forgiven more.

And Jesus said in Luke chapter 7. The one who. Is forgiven much. Loves much.

Verse 47. But the one who is forgiven little. Loves little.

Anybody here who has been forgiven little? Nobody? I've been forgiven much. I'm amazed that the Apostle Paul. Who lived according to the righteousness of the law.

Blameless all his life. Never committed adultery. Never committed murder.

Never bore false witness. Honored his father and mother. Did all that according to the righteousness of the law.

Blameless. Says about himself. I am the chief of sinners.

Blameless chief of sinners. We think chief of sinners is some murderer. Adulterer, debaucherer.

Who's molested so many women. And done all types of things. No, no, no, no, no.

The one who says that is the man who lived. One of the most upright lives in Judaism. It's got nothing to do with all these external sins.

It's got to do with. How much you see the holiness of God. And how much you see.

You have violated that holiness. In your thoughts. In your heart.

I've seen and said Lord. I am the greatest sinner on the face of the earth. It's a question of how close you are to God.

If you're not close to God. You'll think a lot of other people are rotten sinners. The devil thinks so.

Maybe you think so too. Because the closer you are to the devil. The more you accuse other people.

And think they are horrible. But the closer you get to God. The more you feel.

How terrible like the public. And Lord be merciful to me the sinner. And I think of how much he forgave me.

All the wretched sins of my life. He forgave me, forgave me, forgave me. He who is forgiven much.

Loves much. Don't ever say the Lord forgave you much. You can't love much.

Don't ever say the Lord loves you. You can't love him. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you.

To show you the glory of Jesus. And to love others as he loved us. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father. Help us not to forget what we have heard. That the seed which the Holy Spirit has sown.

Will be watered. Bring forth fruit. I want to encourage you brothers and sisters.

Water the seed. Let it bring forth fruit for eternity. In all of your lives.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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