

Making Wholehearted Disciples

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of reverence for God and the transformative power of true discipleship in overcoming self-seeking behaviors.

Duration: 1:00:39

Scripture: Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Discipleship", "Righteous Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being wholehearted disciples of Christ, seeking to build a church where every aspect of life burns for Christ. It challenges individuals to make decisions that honor God, prioritize discipleship over mere evangelism, and raise children who are committed to following Jesus. The speaker urges for a generation of believers who are on fire for God, willing to shut the mouth of the devil through their dedication and righteousness.

Transcript

To continue where we left off last session, we were seeing how great a desire God has to be able to boast about someone on earth. To say that there are two verses that characterize the entire human race. As I have studied the scriptures, two verses that characterize the entire human race.

And I'll show them to you. The first is in Romans, in chapter 3. Romans, chapter 3. It says, after describing the sin of man in verses 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and so on. It finally says, in verse 18 of Romans 3. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

That means, remember the word fear is reverence. There is no reverence. It's a very deep word for reverence.

A reverence that brings a holy fear to God, not that we are scared of Him, no. But a tremendous respect and reverence for God. It's totally absent in the world.

And the other verse that describes the entire human race. And by the way, before I get there. It says, one of the ways in which this lack of reverence is manifested, one of the ways is the way we use our tongue.

The way people on earth use their tongue shows that tremendous lack of reverence for God. That throat, verse 13, is an open grave. It means it's all skeletons inside.

With that tongue, they deceive others. That means we say things to give others the wrong impression about our spirituality or whatever it is. Try to impress people that we are very spiritual.

When we are not, that's deception. And there's poison. You know the poison of a snake is inside its mouth.

And the way it attacks people is it puts out its tongue and hits people with its tongue and injects a little bit of poison. It kills people. And that's the picture used here of the human race to show that human beings have no reverence for God.

They are like snakes. And the snake is a picture of the devil. They use their tongue to spit out some poison.

Either to speak evil of somebody or to hurt someone or to get angry with someone. These are all marks of a lack of reverence for God. Take the matter of anger.

You would never be angry publicly with your wife or husband if you have another brother from the church sitting in your home. If he's there, even if you have some anger, you'd control it. But once he's gone away and left the house and only Jesus is there, then you let loose your anger.

What does that prove? When that brother is there, you don't get angry with your wife. You speak nicely and respectfully to her. But the moment the brother is gone and only Jesus is there, you speak rudely.

It shows that you have more respect for a human being than you have for Jesus Christ. It shows that you fear the opinion of a human being much more than you fear the opinion of Christ. Or, the other alternative is, Christ is not in your home at all.

And I think that's the real thing. Even though you may have a verse, Christ is ahead of your home, it's all rubbish. He's not there.

You don't want him there. You don't want him in your home because you won't be able to speak as you like over there. So, the poison of asps is under their lips.

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. You know, finding fault, complaining, grumbling. And what does all this prove? The way human beings use their tongue proves they have no reverence for God.

One of the first things that happens when a man really begins to reverence God, he holds back his tongue. It begins with wanting to say something and asking God for grace and controlling it. And when God sees that you're serious about it, here's the good news.

A day will come when you will not even want to say it because the Lord would have cleansed you on the inside. When divine nature would have taken over and you don't have to restrain it. You know, so that the path towards victory over sin goes through sort of a couple of stages.

In the first stage, you're sort of in a sense under law where you're holding it back though you want very much to say something. It's good. It's better to be under the old covenant than to be under no covenant.

When you're under no covenant, you just do what you like. But when you're under the old covenant, you hold something back. But the good news is there's something even better which is a new covenant where divine nature takes over.

In many areas, it's like this. For example, we start off with wanting to hate people. Then we come to the place where we read God's word and we say, I can't hate him.

And with a great struggle, we love a person. And then you come to the place where you cannot hate a person no matter what he does. Then you know divine nature has taken over that area.

Very few believers come into that place because they're not serious. There's no reverence for God in their life. They fear man.

That means they care for man's opinion so much that they're only concerned that other people in the church, other brothers and sisters, must have a good opinion about me. They must think that my wife and I are very peaceful and happy. Now I'm not saying that you should fight publicly.

All I'm saying is develop a reverence for God. A respect for his opinion. Just like you have a respect for the opinion of other human beings.

So there's no fear of God before the horizon. It's proved in the way we use our tongue. And the other area is what I would show you in Philippians 3. Another characteristic of the entire human race is Philippians 3. Now what I'm saying about the lack of fear of God is universal.

You go to any religion, the world is full of religious hypocrites. In every religion, they're trying to put up a front of being very pious and concerned about God and all, but deep down there's no reverence in their secret life. The other is in Philippians 2, where it says, in verse 21, they all seek after their own interests.

That's another phrase that describes the entire human race. Everybody is seeking after what is good for me. What's good for me and my family.

You go to any businessman here in town or any country in the world, he's thinking of what's good for me and my family. You go to any politician, he's thinking of what's good for me and my family. You go to a poor family here, they're looking at what's good for me and my family.

It's all their interests. When they move their location from one place to another, what are they thinking of? If I go there, it's good for me and my family. Or if I go there, it's not good for me and my family, so I'll move here.

Now, you can't blame them. That is the poison of self-seeking that the devil injected into Adam and Eve has come down, we have inherited it. Now, what is real conversion? What is real being born again and filled with the Holy Spirit? I've looked at it like this.

You know, today there are people who speak about generational curses. A lot of charismatic, some outstanding charismatic teachers who teach a lot of good things, but along with that good things, there's rubbish called generational curse. That means your great grandfather did some witchcraft or worship idols and so you're going to have it.

I'll tell you how that's a lot of rubbish. You're going to have it if you're not born again, sure. What happens when I'm really born again? I was born into a tree called Adam through my parents, physically.

I was born into that tree called Adam and I had a whole lot of generational curses in me. I don't know what all my ancestors did. But I'm in that tree.

And you trace that tree down to grandfather, great grandfather and all the way down, probably they did some terrible things. But one day the Holy Spirit, when I decided to quit that tree, cut me off and grafted me into another tree called Jesus Christ. You know, he said, I'm the vine and you're the branches.

If you were in India, he'd have probably said, I'm the mango tree and you're the branches. You know, because vines are very common there. And I'm now in this tree.

What generational curse have I got here? It's only blessings. Blessing, blessing, blessing all the way. So if a person has got a generational curse, I say, brother, you're still in the wrong tree.

You're in Adam. But you say, I accepted Christ. Yeah, you said these magic words, Lord Jesus come into my heart, but you never got out of that tree.

You kept seeking your own interests. That proves that you were not really converted and filled with the Holy Spirit. Something happens when you get into this tree.

When I was in that tree, I got the sap of that tree. Oh, I got plenty of it. No reverence for God.

Seek after your own interests. Seek after your own interests. Only think of yourself.

And one day the Holy Spirit cut me off and put me into Christ and filled me with the Holy Spirit. And then I get the sap of this tree, which brings a tremendous reverence for God. And seeking after the interests of Christ.

So that when I think of moving from one location to another, I don't think how it will help me and my family, but I think how will it help the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ. Not whether I can make more money by going there, but whether I can further the kingdom of God by going there. Now you say, I met very few believers like that.

You're absolutely right. So have I. There are very few who are really wholehearted. Most people have got a religion that's just enough to take them to heaven.

They're not really interested in a radical conversion. They'd like to have experiences. They'd like to speak in tongues.

They'd like to imagine that they're filled with the Holy Spirit. They'd like to come to meetings where they think of a burning fire and all that type of stuff. They're not willing to pay the price.

And a preacher who's interested in numbers will never tell them the price. He'll never tell them what is their real condition. He will just keep them happy with their irreverence and their continuing to seek.

And you know what he'll do to make them think that they're very spiritual? Let's have prayer meetings. Prayer. Oh.

People like to be known as men of prayer. Isn't that a great reputation to have? So-and-so is a man of prayer. People ask me, Brother Zach, how many hours do you pray? I say, you want me to disobey the Word of God? The Word of God says you shouldn't tell anybody about whether you pray or fast or do.

You're teaching me to disobey God's Word? I won't disobey God's Word even if you pray to force me to do it. But you know, there is a great lust I find particularly in the evangelical circle to be known as men of

prayer. Men who fast.

Men who give. The three things that Jesus said nobody must ever know about in your life. I see a lot of people like to be known as men who fast.

Men who pray. Men who give. I'm a generous man.

It's utter disobedience to God's Word in Matthew chapter 6 because they have no fear of God. People must see your character. Your Heavenly Father will reward you openly when you do these things in secret.

But the people must not know what you do in secret. And so preachers say let's pray and everybody thinks they're very spiritual because they come for a lot of prayer meetings. They pray and they pray all night and give to missions, give for evangelism and in evangelism they feel ah, I'm supporting the Lord's Word.

But if you're seeking your own interest there's no change in your life. If you don't have a reverence for God that makes you tremble at His Word there's no difference between you and the children of Adam. What God does is something that's slowly going to burn up.

I mean it doesn't happen overnight. We don't teach the eradication of the flesh such that there's no more seeking of our own. I mean I've tried to walk this way as I've understood it for over 30 years I'll tell you.

But I'm the first person to say I am absolutely convinced that I'm seeking my own unconsciously in areas that I still haven't got light on. I believe unconsciously despite all the cleansing of myself from the love of money there is still unconsciously love of money in me. Because I say that I'm going to discover it and get rid of it.

If I say no, no, no I'm not seeking my own anymore it's like occupying 1% of the land of Canaan and saying I got it. No brother you haven't got it. There's a 99% of Canaan which is money, impurity which is still there to be conquered.

Acknowledge it and go little by little and conquer the whole land. I want to conquer as much of the land of Canaan as possible before I leave this earth. Or another illustration I use is seeking our own, love of money pride, selfishness these are like huge onions.

I peel off one skin where God shows me there you are seeking your own. I say Lord I repent of it and I peel off one layer of the onion. You think I'm finished with the onion? No, in another situation the Lord will test me to see whether I'm honest.

It's easy to see whether other people are selfish and seeking their own. It's very difficult to see where you yourself are seeking your own. I say Lord I'm sorry show me, show me.

I remember once in my life where I was down in bed with a fever the smallest sickness that knocks me down. I say Lord what are you trying to say to me? Yesterday I hurt my little elbow a little bit, not much it's almost ok now. I said Lord what are you trying to tell me through this? Sometimes it may be a very simple thing like you were climbing up the stairs too fast, remember you're 70 years old slow down a bit.

I say ok Lord, thank you very much. He's very practical it may have nothing to do with sin but God doesn't want me to die on running up the stairs so he says just slow down. God's a very loving father but sometimes, I've known times when I was lying on a bed and I said Lord why this fever? And the Lord shows me something that happened in the previous week.

One little unkind word or one little act of selfishness and the Lord says go home there. You know I'll tell you I wept. I wept and said Lord thank you for the tremendous care you have over me that even a small little thing which other people would even ignore and say oh there's nothing to that.

You show me because you're determined before you come to this earth again to get rid of all selfishness from my life and I tell you I was like you saturated with selfishness from the race of Adam. Saturated with the love of money. Saturated with impurity.

Saturated with irreverence for God but the good news is the onion is becoming thinner and thinner and thinner and thinner and I have a goal. I have a goal to get rid of this onion completely. I don't know whether I'll reach it before Jesus comes but I'm pressing on.

Every bit and God is my witness that every day in my life I find something to repent of. Every single day. Some little twig that's not burning.

I said that's got to burn too Lord. I want a bush that's burning completely where if you could shine a torch into every area of my heart you would see that I'm not seeking my own anywhere. Not just appearing to seek the interests of Christ on the outside.

Who cares for your opinion? I'm not insulting you but I'm just saying I don't care for your opinion because it doesn't matter and I hope you don't care for mine but we do care for what the Lord thinks about us because ultimately he's going to sit on the throne and he's placed us on earth in order to sanctify us entirely. What did we read this morning in 1 Thessalonians 5? Did you read that slowly? Read the Bible slowly. May the God of peace 1 Thessalonians 5.23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely.

Entirely. It doesn't happen in a moment. That's the mistake that these entire sanctification people I think their desire was sincere but their theology was wrong because some of them said they went through an experience where they got entirely sanctified and the flesh was burnt up and when they sin after that they don't call it a sin.

They say that's a mistake. Well the tragedy is that the blood of Christ does not cleanse mistakes. It cleanses sin.

So until you call it a sin it won't be cleansed. So these guys live with sin which they can't call a sin because five years ago it still is that we must be sanctified entirely. My entire spirit entire soul and entire body to be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I want to ask you dear brothers if you just take that one verse and meditate on it for the next whole of 2010 you'll be a different person at the end of the year. My entire spirit my entire personality my emotions, my mind my will, my body also even my physical health God wants to preserve me blameless that I don't sin with my body I don't sin with my soul I don't sin with my spirit He wants to sanctify me entirely and I say Lord however long it takes do it.

That means He wants to separate me entirely from these two He wants to separate me from all irreverence that means I have such a tremendous respect for God that I recognize He is with me all the time I cannot speak one rude word I cannot sign a false statement even if it's only one small little lie there sorry I can't sign it I can't say it because it's a reverence for God and some of the marks of reverence for God I told the people of Israel in Leviticus chapter 19 whenever you see an older grey haired person stand up respect him thus you will prove that you reverence me says God I've taken that seriously and because I

took that seriously that I always would respect people who were older than me if I disagreed with them I would I would never call them by their first name or last name I would always preface it by saying brother so and so as a mark of respect for age I've always done that and I want to say it's gone well with me it always goes well with you when you obey God and respect His word I find such a tremendous irreverence in today's Christians especially among young people but God led me on from there to something higher there in the Old Testament I was told in Leviticus 19 it's somewhere 25 or 30 or something which says show your reverence for me by standing up before a grey haired person and respecting him and I came to the that is old covenant when I came to the new covenant I found in 1 Peter chapter 2 that the new covenant standard is higher there it was honor the old man and show your respect for God here 1 Peter 2 17 says honor all human beings and show your respect for God oh ho this is great you know everything that is only partial in the old covenant has become total in the new covenant they could be sanctified partially in the old covenant now we can be sanctified entirely every day in 7 holy the Saturday now we can have all 7 days holy they could give 10% of their income to God and say ok God you got your income tax I got 90% is for myself but in the new covenant we can give everything say Lord it's all yours and in the old covenant you'd respect the older people in the new covenant you respect everybody everybody in Jerusalem now I can find them everywhere you want to find God everywhere but you don't want to respect every human being you're seeking your own learn I tell you I have been so tremendously blessed since I've learned to speak respectfully to human beings and I'm not saying I've never slipped up I have slipped up at times but then I would have deep times of repentance before God and make our prayers to get rid of this onion we don't respect one another I want to be found always speaking respectfully to my wife I want to be found always speaking respectfully to my children I want to be found always speaking respectfully to my've children wives to small children in the church they're a part of human beings I'm in the new covenant.

So reverence for God is manifested in these little things. And that's how the bush comes on fire. When God, you know, God tests us in little situations to see whether I want what his word says.

Do I really want him to be first in my life? For example, you know, when Jesus saw a great multitude, I always think of this verse whenever I see a crowd. I mean, we have a big crowd here. It's great.

It's wonderful that so many people come to hear such a strong message, but it doesn't excite me. You know why? I'll tell you why it doesn't excite me. I'm never excited.

In Tamil Nadu, sometimes we have, what, 2,000 people? Public meetings, 3,000 people. In Tamil Nadu, we have 3,000, 4,000 people. I'm not excited that people have come to listen to a strong word because I'll show you a verse.

It says in Mark's gospel, chapter six. Mark's gospel, chapter six, it says about Herod and John the Baptist. So as I was saying in Mark chapter six, it says here in verse 20, Mark 6, 20, that Herod, that wicked, evil King Herod used to enjoy listening to John the Baptist.

You read that verse? It's one of the most amazing verses, that Herod used to enjoy listening to John the Baptist. Why was that? Well, he was a fiery preacher, not like these boring Pharisees who had nothing to say. But do you think it changed Herod's life? No, he would enjoy listening to John the Baptist, and then a couple of verses you read later, verse 22, Salome, the daughter of Herodias, came and danced in her half-naked clothes, and he enjoyed that too.

He was an amazing man. He could enjoy listening to the fiery John the Baptist, and in the evening, go and watch a television where there's some half-naked woman dancing, he would enjoy both equally, just like some believers today. It doesn't make a difference to them.

They enjoy listening to a powerful preacher. Remember that all your life, my brothers and sisters. Just because you enjoy listening to a fiery preacher does not make you one bit different from King Herod.

Not one bit different. Does it bring in you a fear of God? Does it bring in you the repentance that John the Baptist asked for? If not, do you find that you can enjoy a wonderful conference like this, and then go and watch a movie, which has got, you say, only five seconds of some dirty sex scene? Five seconds? It's like saying, oh, there's a little bit of poison only in this glass of milk. 99.9% is milk, only 0.1% poison.

How many of you would be honest and say, yes, I've been like King Herod. I've enjoyed listening to a powerful message, and a few days later, I'm watching a little bit of a dirty movie or some filthy scene somewhere. You know what you need, brothers and sisters, a radical repentance, a radical turning around, a reverence for God.

So when there was this big crowd that followed Jesus, we read in Luke 14, amazing words in Luke 14. Luke 14, he said, in verse 25, we read, large crowds were going along with him. I wonder what a preacher today would say when a large crowd comes to his church.

I'd like to meet a preacher today who gets a large crowd coming to his church, and who turns around and tells them exactly what Jesus said. If you fellas don't hate your father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters and your own life, verse 26, you cannot be a disciple of Jesus. What does that mean? It means that Jesus is more important to me than my father and my mother and my wife and my children and my brothers and sisters.

I'm not gonna do anything to please my children if it's gonna displease the Lord. Let my children get offended with me. I will not offend the Lord.

Do that, my brother. Take that attitude and your children will all be disciples of Jesus one day. But you pamper them and don't want to offend them, no wonder they're going astray and gone into the world.

You didn't love Jesus enough. You loved your children more than Jesus. You pampered your wife instead of saying, Lord, you're first in my life.

I'm not gonna please my wife. I'm not gonna fight with her, but I'm not gonna spend my life pleasing her. I wanna please the Lord.

I'm not gonna watch the tears of my mother and change my plans about what the Lord wants me to do. Put the Lord first. Above your father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, and you'll be a disciple.

You know, the trouble with a lot of Christians today, Christian ministries and Christian leaders is the popular thing to do is evangelism. Let's collect more bushes. Never mind whether they're on fire or not.

Let's get more bushes, bushes, bushes, bushes. Brother, I'd rather have one bush on fire than a thousand bushes in my congregation. Sure.

What's the use of that? God wants a bush on fire so we can go out. It is true. The Bible says, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

I believe in that with all my heart. I do not believe it's the calling of every Christian to go into all the world. Nobody can go into all the world.

We are all called to be witnesses for Christ. Every believer must be a witness for Christ, but every believer is not an evangelist. God has made some people evangelists.

Just like you cannot try and teach the Bible like me unless God gives you the gift. I cannot be an evangelist like somebody else unless God gives me the gift and the burden. The burden God gives you in your heart is the will of God for your life.

So, here is this evangelist who goes out doing a very good work, reaching out and preaching the gospel to those who have never heard it. I appreciate them. I respect them.

I get a number of missionary magazines in my home regularly. I'm interested in what my brothers and sisters are doing in North India and other parts of the world and et cetera. But then the same Jesus said, when you go out into these nations, make disciples.

That's the part that's being left out. Then they will become like a burning bush. Otherwise, they'll be just bushes with one or two twigs on fire.

And if you're happy with collecting bushes with one or two twigs on fire, then you'll have a third rate, good for nothing, useless church that is not a testimony to Christ. And that's the condition of most churches in India and most churches that I've seen in other countries too. Because we want to collect twigs.

We want to collect bushes, whether they're on fire or not, it doesn't matter. And you'll never be on fire till you become a disciple. Till you say, Lord Jesus, whom am I on earth but you? I'm not here to please my father or mother or brother or sister or children or whatever they say.

I want to please you. And you'll find that they come along. I remember when I was very young, my father sent me to the military academy to go and become the top admiral of the Navy.

And one day, just about five years after I got my commission in the Navy, the Lord told me to quit and serve him. Did I ask my father or mother who had an ambition for me? No, sir. I put in my resignation letter and sent a letter to my dad saying, dad, no admiral, I resigned.

And then he said, okay, if you're serving the Lord, I'm happy because he was a believer. Then I started serving the Lord. And for eight, nine years, I traveled around like that.

Gradually becoming more and more famous as a preacher. Traveling here, this country, that country, radio program, books and all that. And one day the Lord said, what are you building? He was just like a visiting consultant going around preaching, build my body.

I said, okay, how can I do it? And God forced me into circumstances where I was thrown out of some church and started meeting with seven or eight people in my house. I could have quit that. I could have continued my worldwide travels and all that.

But the Lord said to me, this is what you want. Then my father came to me again and said, okay, you quit the Navy. So do you want to preach the gospel? But what a fantastic gift you have a preacher.

You can be like Billy Graham. Instead of sitting with these seven or eight people in your house, and nobody knows you, just working with people. I wish my dad were alive today to see what God has done.

It was a day of small beginnings. But he's in heaven today, and if they can see from there, I don't know, then he would see and rejoice. But what I'm trying to say is, if I had tried to please my father, I would not be doing what I'm doing today.

And some of you who are concerned to please your parents when God's telling you to do something else, concerned to please your wife, or you want to keep your children happy, you'll never, God sees that you put your children above the Lord. That's what happened to Eli. Eli put his children above the Lord.

He honored, God said, you honor your children more than me. It's never going to go well with you. And that was the end of Eli and his whole tribe.

Finished. You know what was the result of mine? My mother was from an Orthodox Syrian church. It was pretty close to the Roman Catholic Church.

And one day she came to me when she was 75 years old and said, I want to be baptized. And I baptized her. You honor God, your parents will follow in your, the way you're going to follow Jesus, your children will follow.

But if you try to please those other people, you lose everything. So I've seen that. In many cases, I've seen that.

I've seen people who try to please somebody, it never goes well with them. If you want the bush to be on fire, if you want to be a witness for Christ, the Lord says you got to be a disciple. It's not enough to go and preach the gospel to every creature.

Praise God for those who are doing that, but get that person and make him a disciple. Otherwise the job is not complete. Otherwise it's exactly like, you know, bringing people to Christ is like giving birth to spiritual babies.

What would you think of a mother who gives birth to a baby and throws them on the road like these pups and cats throw their kittens away and then gives birth to another baby and throws it on the road? What type of mother is that? I say, you're not fit to be a mother. You're not, you know, it takes 20 years at least to bring up a child to be able to stand on its own legs. In India, perhaps 25 years at least.

What are you going to do? Just have a baby and throw it on the street? You've got to make that person into a man, into a woman. We understand that in our physical homes. How many of you would throw your babies out into the street as soon as they're born? What a lot of labor you have to work with those babies till they grow up to manhood and to be able to stand on their own legs.

God is looking for men. That's what one of our burdens in this conference is that there'll be a younger generation, a younger generation who will take the torch from the older generation and say, or the baton from the older generation and say, we're going to continue to run this race. We want to be available to God to be able to build a church that glorifies his name.

Not just a bunch of people who like to sing good songs on Sunday morning and listen to a good message and go home. And then five years later or 10 years later, you suddenly discover this great preacher was

living in adultery or homosexuality or something like that. And you know what surprises me in such cases? What surprises me in such cases is not that this guy fell.

What surprises me is how these 5,000 people in this church never even knew about it. What type of person? Wasn't there any discernment there? You see there's something wrong here. This is not a brotherhood.

There's no disciple making here. There's no discipleship here. It's just outreach, outreach, outreach.

Let's have more babies and then throw them on the streets. Let's get more babies and throw them on the streets. God is a father.

He's not the director of an orphanage. He's building families. He's not building orphanages.

So when we think of this burning bush where God dwells, remember today, he dwells in the church. And you can never build the church of Jesus Christ in a locality if you only do evangelism. You've got to make them into disciples.

Jesus said that. It's like two sides of a coin. Go into all the world and make the disciples of all nations.

Great. What's the other side of the coin, Lord? Make them disciples. And what do I do after that? Teach them to do every single thing I have commanded you.

Matthew 28, 20. Teach them to love all their enemies. Teach them to be free from the love of money.

Teach them to stop lusting with their eyes. Teach them to stop getting angry. Teach them to do all their prayer, fasting and all in secret.

Teach them not to judge others. Teach them to do unto others exactly as they would want others to do unto you, unto them. Boy, you think you can do that in one week? It takes years.

So which is more important? Both are equally important. One must lead on to the other. If you have babies, you must build them up.

And you must have only as many babies as you can take care of till maturity. It's no use boasting, I've got a thousand babies. How many of them are mature? How many of them are bushes on fire? I'll tell you honestly, I'd rather have a church with two or three people who are on fire for God than a huge crowd.

That's why I said I'm not excited when I see crowds. Jesus was not. He looked at this crowd and said, you guys, I don't know how many of you are interested in hating your father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children.

You're just coming along to have a good time, to listen to a good message. And he said, you've got to be detached from all your attachment to earthly things, et cetera. This is the type of church Jesus is building.

This is the type of people. That's why it says in John chapter six, so many people got offended and left him. I believe that if we follow Jesus in his ministry, there will be people who get offended and leave us.

If people are not getting offended and leaving your church, you are not following Jesus, I can give it to you in writing. Because the church that Jesus built, people got offended and left because his message was so strong. He preached the cross.

He preached death to self. He didn't just make people people and make them happy. He didn't just conduct conferences.

He told Isaiah, I'm sick and tired of all your meetings and conferences. We need to lead people to be delivered from sin. God needs young men and women who will be like spiritual mothers.

Traveling, you know, Paul was the greatest evangelist of his time. And I believe he put any evangelist today to shame, but he did not stop with evangelism. I want to read to you in Galatians chapter four, what he says in verse 19.

Galatians chapter four, verse 19. Read the Bible slowly, slowly, slowly. Have you got it? Galatians 4, 9, 13.

My children, you're already born again. That means once upon a time, I labored like a mother in labor. A mother going through labor, I brought you Galatians to birth.

And now I'm in labor again, a second time. Have you heard of a mother going through labor a second time for the same child? Yes, a mother going through labor a second time for the same child so that this child will now grow up to maturity and be a man or a woman. That's what Paul is praying.

I'm in labor again until you become like Jesus Christ. That is discipleship. Or in other words, until you're like a bush on fire.

Where every aspect of your life is Christ. Where people touch you, they touch Christ. People walk into your home, they sense this is Jesus.

Dear brothers and sisters, that was Paul's burden. And a lot of people were not interested in it. And so Paul had the same experience that Jesus had.

It says in 2 Timothy chapter one. It's the last letter he wrote. He was around 67 years old.

He had labored for the Lord more than 30, 35 years. And at the end of his 35 years of labor, here is what he has to show. 2 Timothy one, verse 15.

You are aware of the fact that all those who are in Asia have turned away from me. They were with me, but they found the message too strong and they left me. They go to other preachers who will not hold them to such high standards.

Okay, and all, all who are in Asia have turned away from me. He speaks later on about Demas, chapter four, verse 10. Demas was once my coworker.

He's left me because he loved this present world. He saw there's not much, we can't make much money hanging around with Paul. I can think of at least two elder brothers who were in our churches.

Very good elder brothers who were with us for a number of years who left us because they couldn't make money in our churches. They went out and pretty soon they made a lot of money. Fine.

God bless them. I would like to see in eternity what they think of their decisions. I would like to know in eternity what you took a decision one day to go into a ministry where you could make more money.

Okay, now you've come to the end of your life. You stand before the Lord and the Lord shows you what your life and ministry could have been and what your ministry became. Tell me, do you think those two

brothers would have regret or not? One of them is already dead.

I do not want to go that way. And I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, many times in your life, you will come to a fork in the road. It's not a straight road.

There are many forks and you'll come to a choice. And the road you take will determine where you end up finally. There was an old American poet who wrote a secular poem about wandering through the woods and the forest.

And he saw a path diverging in the forest. And he says he looked for the path that was less trodden. He saw one path that was more trodden by feet, all the grass has gone out.

And he saw another path not so trodden by feet. And he says, I took the path less traveled. And at the end he says, that has made all the difference in my life.

I would say to you in the Christian walk, choose the path that is less traveled when you come to that fork in the road. It'll make all the difference in my life. Many a time in my life, I've come to a fork in the road and I've had to make a choice.

I know which direction most of Evangelical Christianity is going. And I see another path where I look in front and I see Jesus and I've chosen that. It's made all the difference in my life.

It's made all the difference in my ministry. And my burden is that there'll be a younger generation growing up here who really believe in a life of overcoming, who really believe in a godly home life, who will not pamper their children, but bring them up in godly ways. And who will choose the way of the cross and find at the end of their life as they look back, thank God I took the decision that other Christians wouldn't take.

It's not just once, many, many times you come to the fork in the road, many times. I can think of numerous times in my life that God has said, what are you gonna choose now? Sometimes he doesn't even say anything. Doesn't say anything.

I say, Lord, you want me to take this path or that path? Silence. Lord, I'm asking you, answer me. I'll do whatever you say.

Silence. He's testing me. It's almost as if he's saying, you already know.

Why do we have to have a voice from heaven? You know which is the pathway of seeking your own interest and which is the pathway where my name will be glorified? You have to ask me. And I say, Lord, that's right. I know.

This is the way that will glorify you. I wanna choose it. Even if it becomes a very lonely path after a while, some people get offended, it's fine.

Never, never make a mistake in those where the road becomes a fork. I believe that many of you fine brothers and sisters could have been miles ahead in your spiritual life, miles ahead in your effectiveness for God if somewhere along the way you had taken the right decisions. You can't do anything about those paths, but there are many more decisions in front of you.

Say, Lord, I wanna take that right decision. I wanna be a witness for you. Think of the devil.

Think of Job and the devil. God, the devil's saying, I've traveled all over the world, God. Your children are just a bunch of hypocrites.

They're only interested in meetings and conferences and what they call praise and worship and giving money for missions and evangelism, but show me the disciples. Where are the people who love you more than everything on earth? Where are the godly homes? Show me a godly home where a man has brought up all his children in the ways of God. God, show me.

People who wanna live for you who will not seek their own, whose every decision is based on how will this honor Christ, not how will it advance my interests and my family? And God looks around and says, I agree with you, Satan, but look at that family there. Look at that person there. Here and there, God's heart is thrilled that he can find one.

Somebody here, somebody there, and the devil's mouth is shut. You cannot see anything against that person. Will you be a person who will shut the mouth of the devil? I hope so.

Say, Lord, make me one like that who will shut the mouth of the devil when he accuses your children of seeking their own and no reverence for you and they're all lovers of money, they're all seeking their own interests. Another thing the devil says, look at these two fellows, two people in a church can't get along with each other. What type of church is this, God? There are only 10 people in that church, they can't get along with each other.

And God says that's true of 99.9% of churches, but have you seen that church there? How many of you wanna build a church like that? Or the Lord says, or the devil says to the Lord, look at all these homes. They all preach about wonderful things, but look at the way their children are growing up. All carnal, just nominally having accepted Jesus and the parents are happy.

Oh, my child took baptism. I can get some honor in the church now that my children are all baptized. Shame on you for seeking honor that your children are baptized.

You're not disciples. What's the use being happy? My children took baptism. For your honor, I tell you, so many Christian parents, they want their children to take baptism for their own honor.

What do people say if my children are not baptized and so their life is complete when their children are baptized? How many of you would pray like this? Lord, if my children are gonna live for the world, give them a road accident. Break their legs till they take their life more seriously. You'll be thankful in eternity.

We're all too soft. Oh, Lord, don't let anything happen. Let them be worldly, but don't let anything happen.

God sees that you're worldly in your heart. No wonder your children are worldly too. Pray serious prayers.

Lord, I don't want any of my children to be worldly. If they are worldly, break their legs. Give them a road accident.

Don't take away their life. Give them something serious that they wake up and start living for you. You'll be thankful in eternity that with their broken legs lying in a hospital, they turn to God.

You don't want that, do you? You want them to be protected. No harm to come to them. Let them lose much in eternity, doesn't matter.

You know, we don't really believe what we preach. We don't believe what we preach. There are a lot of people who I've seen, people who appear to have a great burden for missions.

Oh, we wanna have burden for missions. We wanna give money to that mission. Brother, did you train your children to be missionaries? No? Then don't pretend that you have a burden for missions.

It's a lot of rubbish. Which of your children became missionaries to North India? None of mine. I'm called to be a teacher.

I don't even pretend that I have a great burden for evangelism. I thank God for those who do it. That's not my calling.

I do my calling, and a lot of people have tried to make me change my calling. I know God too well to change my calling. But I'm not against them.

I say, God called you to do that, do that, but don't be a hypocrite. That's all I say. Don't pretend to have a burden for something if you don't train your own children for that.

You're a first class hypocrite. There are a lot of people like that. They'll never train their own children to be missionaries, but they want to pretend that they have a great burden for missions.

It's all hypocrisy. I have a great burden to build the church of Jesus Christ, to make disciples, and that's what I'll spend my money in, and that's what I'll train my children for. If God has called you to be an evangelist, be a first class evangelist.

If God called you to be a shepherd, be a first class shepherd. If God's called you to be a teacher, be a first class teacher. If God's called you to be a prophet, be a first class prophet, but don't be a downright hypocrite.

The way you train your children will show me what your burden really is, no matter what you say with your lips, and that will determine the type of church you build. So I want a generation of young people who are gripped by the fact that every part of my life must burn for Christ, and when I build a home from day one, I want my children to grow. I want them to be wholehearted for Christ.

I'm not here to determine what their calling in life is gonna be. That Jesus will determine, but I want them to be wholehearted for Jesus. I want them to build wholehearted homes, and on top of that, we'll build a wholehearted church.

I really pray, my dear brothers, young brothers and sisters who've been in our churches for many years, please recognize that your elders are getting old. They're not gonna live forever. You can't be dependent on them forever, and you can't produce a man of God in one year.

It takes 10 years for God to make a man. You better start and say, Lord, I want to be one of those so that by the time that the Lord carries and our elder brothers are no longer there, there'll be somebody to fill their shoes and be on fire for God and keep the church so that it can be said that God did not leave himself without a witness. And I'll tell you something.

If God doesn't find folks like that here, he'll find them in some other church. Yeah, sure, and I'll say, Lord, do that, but let there be a witness for you in India. Don't leave India without a witness.

Don't leave the states in India without a witness. Not talking about evangelism, people who just raise their hand and say, I've accepted Christ or signed some decision card. I'm talking about bushes on fire.

If you have a few like that in India, I believe the Lord will be delighted. He'll be able to shut the mouth of Satan with these maybe 10 bushes in this whole country, 10 that are on fire for God. You know that 10 people could have saved Sodom and Gomorrah from being destroyed? 10 righteous people could have saved Sodom and Gomorrah from being destroyed, but 100 compromises could not have done it.

I believe India will be preserved through righteous people, determined to be one of them. And I tell you this, you seek His righteousness, you will never lack the earthly things that you need. You may not become a great man or an extremely wealthy man, thank God, but you'll have enough for your needs and God's purposes will be fulfilled in your life.

Let's pray. If you have given your life to Christ, you are a member of Christ's body. And as a member of Christ's body, exactly like every member in your body has a function, you have a function.

It is your responsibility to seek God and say, Lord, what is my part in the body of Christ? I want to fulfill it. At any cost, I want to fulfill it. I don't want to be a lazy, paralyzed member in the body.

I want to fulfill whatever my function is, secret, hidden, public, doesn't make a difference. I want to fulfill my function. Lord, show it to me.

I want to be wholehearted for you. I want to be a disciple. I don't want to be just a convert.

Heavenly Father, I feel a tremendous sense of limitation in trying to communicate what I believe is the burden of your heart. I know it has not been done as well as it should have been done, but I pray that many here would have got a glimpse of the burden in your heart and that your Holy Spirit will touch them. That there will be in this land another generation that is a witness for you in many places through whom you can shut the mouth of the devil when he accuses your children.

Thank you, Father. I believe you will not leave yourself without a witness in these closing days of the age, even in this country. Thank you, in Jesus' name, amen.

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