

Our Father's Goodness Is the Root

by Zac Poonen

Understanding God's love as our Father is essential to experiencing His goodness and bearing fruit in our lives.

Duration: 57:50

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-4, Luke 6:36-38, John 14:15, Romans 2:4, James 4:6

Topics: "God The Father", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God as a loving Father, highlighting the need for Christians to repent out of gratitude for God's kindness, tolerance, and patience rather than out of fear of punishment. It encourages believers to focus on doing everything for the glory of God, rooted in a deep relationship with God as a loving Father, and not to be manipulated by guilt trips or pressure from preachers. The message stresses the freedom found in surrendering to God, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and living a life motivated by love for God and others.

Transcript

All Christians know, all Christians know that Jesus loves them. But I think very few have really understood how much God the Father loves us. And this was true with his disciples also.

They could see Jesus. Jesus was, come as a man like them. And the Lord was so keen to let his disciples know that the Father loved them.

You know, there are many Christians who never talk to the Father. They only talk to Jesus. You see that in their prayers.

There are very few Christians who pray like Jesus said, Father. Most Christians pray Lord Jesus. It's like the Roman Catholics pray Holy Mary.

They're disobeying scripture. Because they feel you can come to Jesus only through Mary. And Jesus said to us, pray, when you pray, say, Father.

He wants us to have a relationship with our Father. There are some Christians who don't believe in the three persons in the Trinity. They just knocked it out completely.

Now, we may believe in the three persons of the Trinity. But if we don't experience them individually, we really don't believe in them. God is one.

But Jesus, he said, if you have seen me, you've seen the Father. One of the main reasons why Jesus came to earth was to explain to a world that didn't know that God was a loving Father. How important is this? Well, certainly I can say in my own life that for many years I was a very insecure believer.

And all the reason for my depression and discouragement was because I didn't know the Father. I mean, I could say God was my Father, but I didn't know him. So, maybe that's the reason why you don't overcome your depression and your discouragement and your bad moods.

I'll tell you honestly, in my testimony, for many years I've never had a bad mood. Never been depressed or discouraged. It's truth.

I can't glory in it because God did it in me. But it came when God revealed one truth to me. And if you want to know it, it's in Scripture.

It's the greatest truth which I have discovered in the Bible. And you've heard me speak about it many times. It's in John 17 and verse 23 that Jesus prayed that the world may know that the Father sent Jesus and loved us as he loved Jesus.

And I have never in 68 years of my life ever heard anybody teach that. It's there in Scripture. How has the devil succeeded in hiding this wonderful, to me, the most wonderful truth in the whole Scripture? From people.

And how is it that many of us who have heard me say that many times are still not so sure? The Father loves us as he loved Jesus. That's one verse in Scripture that teaches that and it's the greatest truth in the whole Bible. And that means he has no partiality.

He will do for us all that he did for Jesus if we fulfill the same conditions. Now in John chapter 16, Jesus said to his disciples, in verse 26, in that day, he was referring to John 16, verse 26. He was referring to the day the Holy Spirit would fall upon his disciples.

It was the day of Pentecost. He said in that day, when that day comes, something's going to happen, which has never happened in the history of humanity right from Adam until now. You know, something unique happened on the day of Pentecost.

Because then people could come into a living relationship with Christ as the head. And God's purpose for man could begin to be accomplished at last. It was a new creation.

Something new that had never happened from the time of Adam when those disciples were opened their beings to the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit came into them, and it says in Romans chapter 8, that came into them and cried out, Abba, Dad, Father. That's what happened.

That's what happens when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit. He comes to know God as his Father. That's what happened to me when I was filled with the Holy Spirit, just like on the day of Pentecost.

Now here it says in John 16, verse 26, In that day you will ask in my name. Yeah, we go in the name of Jesus. And I don't say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf.

He says, I don't have to go to the Father and say, please do this for so and so. Please do this for this person. No.

He says, I won't do it. Why? Because the Father himself loves. They have to be convinced about it.

And we need to be convinced about it, too. And we will know more of that love. I mean, the Father's love is, you can't change it.

It's unconditional, unchanging. But for us to know it, you know, it's like a lot of God's blessings. God's blessings are out there.

But for us to experience them, we must have faith. We don't need to ask God for it. We just need to take what he's already offered.

For example, there's a promise in Hebrews 13. It says, I'll never leave you, nor forsake you. I mean, that's one of those few promises in Scripture without any conditions.

So, I don't have to go to God and say, oh God, please don't leave me. Please don't forsake me. I'll tell you honestly, I never pray that prayer.

Because I would need to pray that prayer if that verse was not in Scripture. Or if I don't believe it. I'm not too sure whether God will leave me because I don't believe the Bible.

Then, of course, I say, oh God, I hope you won't leave me. He says, I'll never leave you, nor forsake you. I say, Lord, I just claim that.

Thank you. You're not going to leave me, nor forsake me. I mean, I can run away from him.

That's another thing. It's like a father who tells his son, listen, I'll never leave you. But if the son one day decides to run away from home, that's another thing.

And if people have fallen away from God, it's not because God forsook them. It's because they ran away. So, what you need to pray is not, oh God, please don't leave me.

You need to pray, Lord, please don't let me ever run away from home like the prodigal son. But this promise is absolute. There are many blessings like that which I can take if I trust him.

And here it says, the father himself loves you because you have loved me. There's a special love the father has for those who love Jesus. John 3.16, it says, God so loved the world.

That's for every Tom, Dick and Harry in the whole world who believes or doesn't believe. But there's a special love the father has for those who love Jesus. You know, just like we as human beings, we love people to different degrees.

You may love your neighbor, the Bible says you should do that. But you love your children more, naturally. I mean, that's the way God intended it.

So, when you say you love your children and you love your neighbor, there's a difference in the degree of love. God loves the world, John 3.16. But God loves the father, loves some people specially. Those who love Jesus.

And if you want to know that love of the father more and more, you've got to love the Lord more and more. The more you do that, the more you'll know the father's love for you. And I tell you, that will solve all your problems.

And when I mean all your problems, I mean all your problems. I've known the Lord for nearly 50 years. And I'll tell you, he's certainly solved all my problems.

Not always the way I expected, but in a better way. That's why I always leave it to him to decide to solve my problems the way he wants it. And I'd give you that advice too.

And when he does it his way and not your way, even if it's a bit inconvenient, submit to it. You'll be very, very happy in the long run. Years later, when you look back, you'll say, Boy, Lord, it was good that you did it your way and not mine.

So you need to understand something about the father. And it's from that root that real fruit will come up. And if you're wondering in your life, why is it I'm not victorious? Why is it I'm not filled with the Holy Spirit? Why is it I'm not more effective for God? Why is it the fire sort of cools down in my life and disappears? And why is it I find some people who are always aglow with the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit and on fire for God? I'll tell you the reason.

They have taken root. I want to show you a verse which is unrelated to this, but there's a little fragment of a verse in 2 Kings chapter 19. 2 Kings chapter 19 where it speaks about root producing fruit.

2 Kings chapter 19 and verse 30. It says, the surviving remnant of the house of Judah. That's a picture of us believers.

We're under the new covenant. The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will take root downwards and then bear fruit upwards. It takes root downwards, then bears fruit upwards.

So we're not going to be able to bear fruit upwards if we don't take root downwards. The more we take root downwards in the love of our Heavenly Father, the more the fruit of the Spirit of perfect peace and a balanced life, a life that's not rocked by circumstances, can become more and more true in our life, and a life of tremendous usefulness and fruitfulness for God's kingdom that will bring forth fruit for eternity. It's possible for every single one of us.

There are no exceptions. I want to say to you in Jesus' name, that for every single one of you, God has got no partiality. He created you.

He allowed you to come to this earth, and He's allowed you to come to know Jesus, and He's allowed you to come to this church today to hear this message so that your life can be changed forever, if you believe it. If you say, Lord, I believe. I want to show you a verse in Psalm 103.

Psalm 103 says something about our Heavenly Father here. They didn't know Him like this in the Old Testament. Some of these things in the Old Testament were prophetic, and people could experience it only after the coming of the Holy Spirit.

I want to say this also before I come to this verse. See, you're hearing me in your mind. You hear with your ears and it goes into your mind, and you understand.

I always try to make Scripture simple so that you can understand. But don't ever think that because you understood something, you got it. If I were to explain the theory of electricity here for you in such a way that you understand it, that doesn't mean you've got electricity in your house.

That's another thing. I can tell you all the advantages of having, say, a washing machine. That doesn't mean you've got one in your house.

So, understanding, I can explain the digestive system of your body. It doesn't mean your digestive system is working properly. This is a mistake that many Christians make.

Remember this, that what you hear in any meeting, or on a CD, or anywhere, is something that goes into your mind. You must take that before God. Because the Bible says in James 4, that God is very jealous for our spirit.

It's a lovely verse, James 4.6. He's jealous for our spirit means that as a bridegroom, he doesn't want anyone coming between him and his bride. And that's you. He doesn't even want me to come between you and him.

You know, every preacher who comes between a child of God and Jesus Christ is a deceiver, a spiritual adulterer, who is coveting somebody else's wife. It's true. A lot of preachers, when they attach people to themselves, they are committing the sin of stealing somebody's bride.

It's serious. And if the bride is Christ's bride, it's very serious. You know, you're supposed to be the bride of Jesus Christ.

That's why I never allow anybody to be attached to me. Those of you who have known me in this church for 32 years, you've seen that. I've never allowed anybody to be attached to me.

Those who have tried to get attached to me, I shake them off. They may get offended, but it's for their own good. I remember once telling a brother in our church, I said, I'm not bothered if you're offended with me.

I know that at the judgment seat of Christ, you'll turn around and thank me for what I did. I'll tell you why. Because the Bible says I must not covet somebody else's wife.

If you're the bride of Christ, I'm going to connect you to Christ. It's like I see myself as the servant of Abraham who brought Rebekah all the way from Mesopotamia to Canaan, where Isaac was living. Imagine if he tried to get Rebekah to be attached to himself.

That would be terrible. He was always trying to get her attached to that Isaac who she was going to meet in a few months. It was a long journey.

So, God is very jealous for our spirit. And so, it's very important that what you hear from me, you say, Lord, I want this to draw me closer to you. I want you to make this real to me by filling me with the Holy Spirit.

If you pray that prayer, then the things that you hear will become living to you. The connection between you and Christ will become very strong. Now, I mention this because a lot of people don't do that when they go away from a meeting.

They listen and they say, oh, that was a great meeting. I heard something. I understood something.

And it remains in our head. It never comes down into our heart because we never seek God about it. If God challenged you in some meeting, He's jealous for your spirit.

He wants you to go and seek Him sometime, best on the same day, and say, Lord, I want you to make that real in my life. I want to know in my life what it is to know God as a father, to know you as my dad. I want to know that.

I really want to know it. Then He calls. So it says here in Psalm 103, verse 13, Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.

Again, fear means reverence, not afraid in the sense of afraid that He'll hurt me. You know, there are two types of fear of God. One is the fear that God will hurt me.

And the other is the fear that I might hurt God. Do you have a fear that you might hurt God? I have that fear. I have it all the time.

I don't have any fear that God will hurt me. Once upon a time I had that fear, but it's gone. And it'll never come back.

You must never have a fear that God will hurt you. That's a scary, unhealthy type of fear. It can make you sick.

It can make you sleepless and anxious. But if you have a fear that you might hurt God, that's a very healthy fear to have. So it can be also translated as reverence.

Reverence for the creator of this universe. Reverence for a father. For those who reverence Him, the Lord has tremendous compassion.

It says in verse 14, He always remembers. He knows our frame and He remembers that we are but dust. We are dust.

He knows that our physical body is so weak. He knows how easily we fall. He knows how this dust has an attraction to the dust of this earth.

He knows it. He knows how we are attracted by pretty faces. Pretty faces are also dust.

Just the molecules are arranged a little differently. That's all. Pretty faces.

We are attracted to that. Dust is attracted to dust. And gold dust.

Boy, that's silver dust. That's also pretty attractive. But it's dust.

And we are dust and we are attracted to dust. That's all. And He knows that.

He knows. He remembers. I thank God that He's not a hard task master who says, Why do you have that attraction? No.

He is mindful that we are dust. But He also knows that if He allows us to keep on getting attracted to dust, we'll miss our calling. And so, when He breathed into Adam, He gave him a spirit.

And when Jesus, later on, in John 20, breathed into His disciples, you know what He did? He was doing something similar that He did to Adam 4,000 years earlier. Jesus breathed into Adam 4,000 years earlier, but Jesus didn't give Him the Holy Spirit. Adam didn't have the Holy Spirit when God breathed into Adam there.

But when, in John 20, those disciples already had a spirit. They didn't need a second breathing to get a spirit. We all got a spirit when we were born.

When Jesus breathed into them in John 20, He was putting His Holy Spirit there. And that was fulfilled finally on the day of Pentecost. But the beginning was when Jesus breathed into them.

And on the day of Pentecost, His spirit controlled them completely. But something happened when Jesus breathed into them. And I think that's what happens when we are born again.

We could say, in a sense, that John 20 was a born-again experience of the disciples. And then Acts chapter 2, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's what we need, too.

So, in us, when He breathes in and the Holy Spirit comes in, something comes in which nobody in the Old Covenant had. Something that's pulling us away from dust. And pulling us up.

Away from the attractive things of dust. Because God knows that we'll ruin ourselves. Think of the number of human beings in the world who ruin themselves with dust in the form of pretty faces.

Or dust in the form of gold or silver. Or dust in the form of cocaine or heroin. It's all dust.

It's all dust. Think of the people who have been attracted dust to dust. And not allowed the Holy Spirit to lift them up and free them from this slavery to dust so that they can live not like the animals.

You know the animals are also made of dust. You know that when your body decays and dies finally, and a dog or a pig dies, your dust, you won't be able to distinguish between your dust and that pig's dust. It'll be the same.

Think of that. It's pretty humbling. That all that pretty face you think you have is all going to disappear.

And the dust that finally ends up when you die is going to be no different from that rotten old pig. But, if you allow the spirit which that pig doesn't have, the Holy Spirit, in the days when you walk on earth in this dust to lift you up, you'll have something eternal to go to heaven with. God gives us the opportunity.

Our whole life on earth is a period when we can gain riches or lose them. That's up to you. You can spend your life pursuing after things that'll perish with this earth.

Just like the animals. The animals, you know, they pursue after food and sex. Animals are crazy after sex.

It's not just human beings, by the way. It's part of the animal, part of man. And food.

They fight for food. They fight for sex. And sleep.

And they build little dwelling places for their little ones. You know, even the snakes and the rabbits do that. And they care for their little ones.

They protect their little ones fiercely from anybody who comes anywhere near them. You can do all that and still be an animal. But there's one thing those animals can't do.

They can't be detached from the things of earth. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. A man claims to be a believer, child of God, etc., etc., etc.

And his mind is always occupied with the things of earth. We can say he's like an animal whose face is always to the ground. Have you seen the cows who roam the streets? Have you ever seen a cow look up? I've never seen one in my life.

They're always looking down. What about dogs? Have you seen a dog looking up anytime? I mean to the heavens. Maybe he looks up at you as your master or something.

But never to the heavens. You don't see dogs looking up. They're looking down always.

Every animal is like that. Where can I get some food? You know, smell around for food, smell around for sex. Where can I go and lie down somewhere? That's all they're interested in.

Dust to dust. It's a wonderful privilege God's given us. He remembers that we are dust.

And he wants us to know him as our father. That's why he sent his spirit into us. So that we can be lifted up from these things that we live on earth, we eat, and we have sex with our wives, and build houses, and live and take care of our children.

Above it all, we recognize that we're creatures of eternity. And we train our children also to recognize they're creatures of eternity. That's the only way.

If we don't teach our children that right from day one, it's going to be difficult if you wait till they're 14, 15 years old, I'll tell you that. And I don't mean just take them to church. I don't mean send them to Sunday school.

Don't ever think that God has put the responsibility of bringing up children on Sunday school. It doesn't say Sunday school teachers bring up the children properly. It says fathers.

Your children have gone away from the Lord, my brother, take the blame yourself. If they're not living for the things of eternity, if the things of time and earth mean more to them than things of eternity, the blame falls smack upon the father who did not bring them up properly from day one. He brought them up like the pigs bring up their little piglets.

He occupied with the things of earth. So be careful. Our father remembers that we are dust, but he also wants us to be free from that attachment to dust.

So that we are lifted up to the things of above. One of the things that Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6 is in our relationship with our heavenly father, it's motive that matters more than anything else. It's not what we do, but why we do it that's more important.

Remember this. Matthew chapter 6 he said, be careful when you're trying to be good so that you don't make a performance out of it. I'm reading from the message Bible.

It might be good. Man may applaud, but God won't applaud that. You know, when we do something and we're doing it for someone else to notice.

We do some good, we want other people to notice. Now why is it that that good that was done, God doesn't reward for it? He says here, you don't have any reward. They have their reward in full already, he says in verse 2, the last part.

Verse 1, you have no reward from your father in heaven. No reward for what? Verse 1, for practicing righteousness. For helping the poor.

You give so much money to the poor and you stand before the Lord waiting for a reward on the final day of the Lord. There's nothing for you. Nothing.

Lord, I gave thousands. Yeah, but you wanted people to know about it. That's why you gave it.

Sorry. What a shock people are going to get. Where the preachers have not taught them what it says in Matthew chapter 6 verses 1 to 4. And some other guy who gave only 10% of what you gave, he gets a reward because he did it in secret.

And you wonder why that fellow who gave only 10% of what you gave gets a reward because he did it in secret. That's the thing that matters with God. It says here, you have no reward.

Verse 1, but the one who does it in secret, verse 4, the Father will reward him. You see the contrast? You do righteousness or you give alms to the poor, verse 2, no reward if you have done it for anything other than to please your Father. Now, it may not be to please men.

When you say please men, one of the men you may try to please is yourself. You know that? I may not want to please other men. I get a satisfaction.

Ah, I gave some money to the poor. I gave some money to the church. Or I did something for someone.

And I pat myself on the back and say what a good boy am I. No reward. Another fellow does exactly the same thing. Not one bit more, not one bit less.

And he gets a fantastic reward from God because he did it to please the Father. Now the same thing Jesus said about prayer. He says, you pray in order to be seen by men, verse 5, no reward.

But you pray in secret, last part of verse 6, and your Father will reward you. See, three things he spoke about, giving, praying, and the same thing when he said about fasting, verse 16, you fast, you go without food, and you talk to everybody about it. No reward.

You won't even get what you fasted for. But somebody else fasted, verse 18, in secret, the Father rewards him. You know, I've kept my eyes open these 48 years that I've been a believer.

I've looked around and I've seen something. I've seen that God rewards certain people. And certain other believers don't seem to be rewarded in that way.

Why is that? I look around in our own churches, and I see God blesses certain people amazingly, and others not so much. What's the reason? I'll tell you. He sees in secret.

He sees in secret everyone, what they are doing it for. Not what they do, but what they are doing it for, whose approval. So motive, that's what I meant by, you know that verse I quoted in 2nd Kings 19, take root downwards and bear fruit upwards.

So the root, it means, if the root is the motive, the fruit is the action. I may do good to you, the fruit is good, but the motive may be something else. You know how sometimes we go and do good to people because we want some benefit from them.

Or we go and praise somebody, flatter somebody because later on you want to get some benefit from that man. God sees all that. That's good fruit to say something nice to somebody, but there's no root there.

Just wither up. You know how plants without a root wither up? Well, that's how it is. So, in the Old Testament, root was not important.

Not at all. You never find this type of teaching which we see in Matthew 6 in the Old Testament. You go to the Old Testament, who are the people whom God rewarded? Those who did certain things on the outside.

You know, you offered your sacrifices. The priest didn't say, hey, what's your motive? Are you doing this in secret before God? No. He's not bothered.

Make sure it's a clean, healthy lamb. That's all, not a sick one. That's all I want to see.

I'm not going to examine your heart and see what's your motive. When somebody brings his tithe, and by the way, tithe in those days was not money. No.

It was the crops. They had crops. They grew.

They were all farmers those days. They didn't work in factories and offices like today. They were farmers.

They had crops and the Lord said, remember that I blessed your farm and if you want to acknowledge that I blessed your farm, give me 10% of that and give it to the Levites who I have told them to work in the temple the whole time. They don't do any other work. They don't have farms.

I have not allowed them to have farms. How will they eat? You've got to give them. That was the whole principle of the tithe in the Old Testament.

The Levites were not allowed to have any property. Very clear law. You must not own property.

Property was divided among the other tribes. Not to the Levites. All of Canaan.

Levites got zero. Then how in the world are they going to have food? There were no food shops and all of that. You had to grow your own crops.

So all the Israelites were told, all of you must give 10% to the Levites. And if all the ten tribes gave 10% to the Levites, every Levite would have as much as you work out the maths of that, every Levite would have as much as anybody else. You know, if ten people give 10%, that's it.

Everybody's got enough. Same as everybody else. So, now the tragedy today is a lot of pastors and preachers quote that and say, we are the Levites today.

You've got to give your 10% to us. Go and ask those pastors one question. Do you own any property? Uh-huh.

And you're not a Levite, brother. And if you want a verse to quote to them, I'll give you some weapons. Numbers chapter 18.

You come here and you'll hear the truth. Numbers chapter 18 verse 20 and 21. Numbers 18 verse 20 and 21.

The Lord said to Aaron, you're going to have no inheritance in this land. When you go into the land of Canaan, you and your children will have nothing. You and your children will have nothing.

No portion. The Lord said, I am your portion. I love that verse.

I am your portion and your inheritance. And to the sons of Levi, that's all the tribe of Levi, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance in return for the service which they perform. We're not allowed to have any land.

So, nobody today who owns land or a house can say he's a Levite. And that's the sin of today's pastors who go around collecting money claiming that they are Levites. It's a deception.

It's a deception because they know that 99.9% of people sitting before them don't know this verse. They don't know the scriptures. And so they fool people left, right and center.

They are con men. Beware of them. Particularly the ones who come on television.

They own a hundred times more than their flock. The people who support them. So, you know, the Lord recognizes that we are dust and he knows our need and he wants to lead us into something much higher.

And that's why he says take care of the root. So, in the Old Testament, if a man brought his tithe, God didn't ask him, what's your motive in giving the tithe? And if you had asked him the motive, he'd have told you pretty frankly. Yeah.

Motive? Because the Bible says that if I give my tithe, God will bless me more. I'll get a better crop next year. I mean, I'm pretty honest about it.

That was the reason every Old Testament person would give. What's your motive? If that's your motive, well, I don't know. God may bless you.

I don't know. But certainly you're not going to get an eternal reward in heaven. That I can guarantee.

Sure. Absolutely certain. There will be no reward if I'm doing it with some wrong motive.

The only motive I'm permitted to have to do anything for God is the glory of God. See, that's another verse which comes only in the New Testament. 1 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 31.

Here it speaks about the most ordinary things we do in life. Now these are verses which would never be found in the Old Testament. Nobody in the Old Testament was ever, could ever dream of living at this standard.

You see, like you've heard me say, New Testament is college education and Old Testament is school education. I mean, you know the difference between a person who's even come to 10th standard and a person who's got a PhD. I think there's some difference between them.

That's the difference between Old Testament and New Testament. 10th standard in school and PhD. Which do you want? Spiritually.

So, in the Old Testament there were no such commands like for example this one, 1 Corinthians 10 31. Whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. They didn't do everything for the glory of God.

No. They did it so they could be blessed by God, so that they wouldn't get sick. God said if you don't pay the tithe you're going to get sick.

You know that famous verse that pastors use, Malachi 3.10 Bring your tithe into the storehouse lest I smite you with a curse. Let my house be filled with your tithes. I mean anybody could see that's Old Testament.

In fact that's the last page of the Old Testament. It's finished. You come to the New Testament.

You'll never read it again. But that's the reason people did it. I don't want God to smite me with a curse so here Levi, here's your tithe.

Why are you giving it? I don't want God to smite me with a curse. Or I want to be blessed. But here in the New Testament it's different.

Whatever I do for the glory of God. I come to the meeting not to meet others and say hi to them. It's not a club.

I come to the meetings to serve Sunday service for the glory of God. I eat and drink for the glory of God. Of course we can enjoy it but it's for the glory of God.

Everything. Everything in our life. The spiritual man is the man who gradually rounds up everything in his life and makes it all serve the glory of God.

Now, we don't get there overnight. For example, I can't stand here and say every single thing I do is for the glory of God. But I'll tell you this.

It's a lot better than it was 40 years ago. And a lot better than it was 5 years ago. Because I'm gradually getting everything in order in my life.

When we are born, we're not doing a single thing for the glory of God. We're doing everything for ourselves. Right from the day we are children.

We grab for ourselves and we think of ourselves and then we get converted and everything doesn't change overnight. You know. Things change only on the outward very often.

We go to church and we pray a little and read the Bible and maybe give up a few sins. But we haven't come to the place where we are doing every single thing for the glory of God. But from that day, like an education, you don't learn everything in kindergarten.

But you should be going, going, going higher, higher, higher and higher. Where gradually, everything becomes for the glory of God. Your actions and your everything.

I mean, if you see television, you'll only see those programs which are clean. And where Jesus could sit with you and watch them. Anything.

If we are not gradually purifying our lives to make it more and more for the glory of God, then our roots are not taking proper, not going down properly. The root is important. Remember.

And this root. My Father wants me to be free from being attracted to dust. And the way I can be free is saying, God, I want to seek things for your glory.

And I'll tell you this. It'll turn out for your good as well. Because God's a good Father.

He's a compassionate Father. He doesn't say, do it for my glory because He wants something. What does He want out of me? What is there that I can give Him? What is there that I can give Him? Nothing.

I can only give Him what He gave me. A little bit of what He gave me. You know, it's like your little child uses his or her little pocket money to go and buy a little gift for you on your birthday.

Where did he get the money from? You know, everything we do for God is like that. But it brings delight to your heart as a father, right? That your little boy or girl took that little money and bought a small little gift for you. That really touches your heart.

And that's how God is. Don't think that we are doing Him a great favor when we give something to Him. There's nothing you and I can give Him, which is not already His.

He wants us to be blessed. When He says, do it for my glory, it's for us, our sake. Not for His.

He doesn't want anything. He had millions of angels worshipping Him before He even created Adam. Don't ever forget that.

All these people who complain about God being like this and God being like that, why does God treat me like this? Brother, you don't have a clue about what God is like. He had millions of angels worshipping Him before He created Adam. He wanted nothing from Adam.

He wanted to give Adam something. And when He brought you to Christ, He doesn't want anything from you. He wants to give you something.

But He's got to change your priorities. He's got to make us change the way we look at things and the way we do things. Because then only He can give us what's good for us.

And that's why He says, don't be centered in yourself. That'll destroy you. Be centered in Me.

Seek My glory in everything. And so when we think of repentance, I want to talk about a few words about repentance in Romans chapter 2. How does God want us to come to repentance? You see, the Old Testament prophets preached repentance. John the Baptist preached repentance.

And Christian preachers also preached repentance. Jesus preached repentance. But the underlying reason why we need to repent is different.

The repentance is the same. Turn around from that sinful way of life. Turn around from that worldly way of life.

But what's the reason? In the Old Testament, the prophets would say if you don't repent, God will punish you. He'll let the Babylonians come and capture you and take you captive. You'll be slaves like you were in Egypt.

They didn't repent. The Babylonians came and took them. So, it's threatened.

And you know, we can, there are preachers who preach like that. If you don't repent, you'll go to hell. Fire and brimstone.

And there are some young people who want to preach like that. They think that's the greatest way of preaching. Have you heard me preach once like that in these 32 years? Not even in the days when I didn't have much light.

Not even in the days when I was a legalist and a Pharisee. Why? Because I never hear Jesus preaching like that. He spoke about hell more than anybody else.

He never said, repent, otherwise you'll go to hell. He said, repent for the kingdom of heaven is near. There's a lot of difference between saying, repent, otherwise you'll go to hell, and repent for the kingdom of heaven is near.

God doesn't want anybody to perish. He doesn't want anyone to go to hell. And yet millions go to hell every day.

Here it says in Romans chapter 2 verse 4 Do you think lightly of the riches of God's kindness and tolerance and patience? These are not scary words. Kindness, tolerance, patience. These are very comforting words.

I'm not scared of any of them. And the riches of God's kindness, tolerance, and patience, not knowing that all this is meant to lead you to repentance. So how does God want us to come to repentance in this day? What's the motive? What's the reason I repent? I don't want to go to hell.

No. God will punish me. I'll get some sickness.

My children may suffer. Is that why you repent of some sin? You know there's a denominational, I don't want to mention the name of the denomination, there's a particular denominational church, which has these ritual prayers. And one of their ritual prayers is, Lord save me from sudden death.

Would you pray that prayer? Save me from sudden death. You know why they pray? Because I may have some unsettled quarrels, which I'd like to settle before I die. Don't let me die in a road accident or something like that.

Because I have some grudges against somebody which I'd like to forgive. You know these people who on their deathbed call people, say, please come and meet me now. I want to ask your forgiveness and I want to give back whatever.

Why wait till your deathbed? Because when people get on their deathbed, they really know they're going to meet God now. I mean, all of you sitting here don't believe that can happen any moment, but the guy on the deathbed, he really knows. And when you come near to meeting God, you say, hey, I've got certain things to settle.

So don't let me have sudden death. I'll tell you, I'm not scared of sudden death. Because my life is always settled.

I don't have to settle anything with my wife or my children. I don't owe any debts to anybody. I can go right now.

That's how we should live. So my repentance is not because, oh, if I don't settle that, I'll suffer. No, it's because God's been so good to me.

God's been so tolerant, so patient, so kind. The motive for your repentance makes a lot of difference in the quality of your Christian life. You know how you taste a really good chicken biryani and you say, hey, or mutton biryani, and they say, these guys know how to put certain spices and no matter how much you watch them, you can't do it.

There's a trick about these fellas. How they make it so tasty. There's something in the ingredients you can't make out.

You can't sort of dissect it. The quality of that biryani is so different from the one this person makes. Because there's something in it.

And I tell you, the quality of some people's repentance is totally different from the quality of other people's repentance. Makes a difference in our life. Because there's some ingredients in that repentance, which is not in the other fellow's repentance.

I mean, that guy repented because he didn't want to go to hell, whereas Christian life is going to be very shallow. But this person repented because God is so kind to me. God's so tolerant, so patient.

He's been so good to me. Oh God, how can I ever live like this forever? I've got to change. See, because knowing God as a father, not as a CEO of the universe who's going to straighten you up.

As a father. I tell you, it all depends on your knowing God as a father. It'll change the quality of your Christian life.

Your repentance itself probably needs to change. And every day, you know, you hear a message and you can feel guilty. There are preachers who specialize in making people feel guilty.

And in the days when I didn't have light, I did it too. I thought that was the best way to get people to do something. Make them feel guilty.

You know? There are many ways of making people feel guilty. Psychologists can teach you that and preachers who study psychology can discover ways of making people feel guilty. The church has done so much for you.

What are you doing for the church? Better do something. And you do something. Are you doing it for the glory of God? You felt guilty.

There are people who go as missionaries to North India not because God's called them. They feel guilty. What are you doing making so much money when there are people dying out there going to hell every day in North India? You're sitting there and you're comfortable in your house.

Yes, I volunteer for missionary work. There are so many ways of doing it. Why aren't you going house to house giving tracts and witnessing to people? You go house to house and look stupid in every house and try to witness for Christ.

This whole business of making people feel guilty to give money, guilty to go house visiting, guilty to go as missionaries somehow whip up their guilt. Preachers are doing it all the time. Why are you earning so much money? Why aren't you giving something to God? I'll tell you this.

I don't want any of you to give to God on that basis. We're not sending you on a guilt trip. A guilt trip.

Many preachers send their flock on a guilt trip. Do you ever find Jesus speaking like that? Never. Guilt trip is from the devil.

It's not from God. That's not Holy Spirit anointed preaching. It's psychology.

Manipulate people's thinking. Make them feel guilty. You can do anything with them.

You can twist them around your little finger. You can mold them into any shape you like. They will submit to you for the rest of your life.

Just make them feel guilty in every meeting. Don't liberate them. I'm not throwing stones at any preacher.

I know in the days when I was a stupid legalist, I did that myself. My intentions were good. I got to get these people to be spiritual.

But I was trying old covenant methods. Then I got more light and I saw it's knowing God as a Father. I never put pressure on anybody to do anything.

A lot of people have asked me, why aren't your children full time workers like you? Guilt trip? Make me feel guilty? Make my children feel guilty? I thank God, I'm not guilty. My wife's not guilty. None of my children are guilty.

Because we can see through all those psychological tricks. In fact, somebody wrote an email to one of my sons, suddenly, saying, why aren't you a full time worker like us? He wrote such a lovely email in return to him. We've got it on our website, by the way, CFC website, if you want to read it.

It was so good. He never told me about it. He sent me a copy of it after he had sent it.

It was really good. One of the things I like in that letter, he said, was, Jesus is not my examiner. Always checking.

To me, he said, the Christian life is not that I got 70, he got 73, she got 87. No, no, no, no. Jesus is my friend.

I walk with him, I tell him my struggles and my problems, and he helps me. See, that's how we are to live the Christian life. God's a loving father.

Jesus is a friend. Remember this, brothers and sisters. Don't ever anybody send you on a guilt trip.

God, everything we do for God must be out of love for him. For example, it says in Luke chapter 6, that's another favorite verse for some people. But it's because it's right out of the context.

Have you heard this verse? Luke chapter 6 verse 38. Give and it will be given to you. Have you heard it? Give and it will be given to you.

And the way preachers twist it is you give to God and God will give it to you. That's not what it says. It says, give to men and they will pour into your lap a good measure running over.

What are you supposed to give? And he's not talking about money. Verse 37. He's talking about giving pardon to others.

Forgiveness to others. Be merciful to others. Verse 36.

It's nothing to do with money at all. Let me read the whole thing. Be merciful.

Verse 36. Love your enemies. Verse 35.

Do good and lend to them. Don't expect anything in return. And be merciful to them.

Don't judge them. Don't condemn them. Verse 37.

Pardon them. This is what you must give. You got it now? Give goodness and mercy and pardon and kindness and what will happen? They will also bless you in the same way.

It's got nothing to do with money. Don't let people fool you by verses taken out of context. Dear brothers and sisters, it's a wonderful life if we see that God is our father.

He's rich in his kindness towards me. He's loved me so immensely. And even obedience in the New Testament.

Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments. John 14, 15. If you don't love me, don't keep them.

That's all. More here. More here.

I want to liberate all of you. And I hope you'll go out liberated, knowing that God loves you immensely. The Father loves you.

He wants you to come to a wonderful life. And how much you sacrifice is up to you. But don't do it for a reward.

Do it because Jesus gave everything for you. Let's pray. Let's bow our heads before God.

Allow the Holy Spirit to liberate you from guilt trips. Don't let any preacher put pressure on you to do this, that, and the other. God is jealous for your spirit.

He wants to have a direct connection with your spirit. And he wants to be the one who, the only one who prompts you to do anything. Respond to him.

And let him fill your life. I tell you, don't be afraid of being filled with the Holy Spirit. It's the best thing you could ever experience in your whole life.

Don't be afraid of surrendering everything to God. Your life will be far more fruitful and far better and happier than you could ever do it if you planned your own life. Yes, Lord, we are so foolish.

We're such idiots when it comes to spiritual things. Please help us to be wise, to surrender everything to you, and to allow you to fill us with the Holy Spirit so that our life can be free from guilt trips and free from condemnation and free from discouragement and depression and mad moods and all the wretched things that the devil has put on the race of Adam. Please, Lord, help us to really experience all that you came to bring, not just forgiveness of sins, but a wonderful life.

Thank you, Jesus.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/BaydqfRuuS4.mp4>
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