

Overcoming Satan And Judging Ourselves

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and self-reflection within the church community. It highlights the need for individuals to progress beyond the 'kindergarten' stage of faith, to actively seek spiritual development, and to avoid hindrances such as secret sins, pride, and lack of forgiveness. The speaker urges listeners to judge themselves, forsake all that hinders spiritual growth, and seek God's grace to be transformed into Christlikeness.

Scripture: Matthew 7:3, Ephesians 4:29, 1 Peter 4:17, James 4:17, Proverbs 16:18, Matthew 6:1, 1 Corinthians 5:11, Luke 10:30, James 4:10, Philippians 2:3

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Self-Reflection"

Description

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Transcript

One of the things that I have been concerned about, not only in CFC Bangalore, but in a number of our CFC churches, is the lack of spiritual growth in people who have been here for many, many years. I'm not talking about newcomers. If newcomers are in the kindergarten, it's okay.

But if people have been here 20-25 years and are still in the kindergarten, that begins to concern me as much as it will concern you if your son or daughter sat in the kindergarten for 25 years. It should disturb. And then, if that happens with your child, you'd probably take that child to a doctor and say, is there something wrong with this child that he can't understand? He goes to school every day, but he doesn't seem to be making any progress in his education.

I don't know whether all of you are as concerned about your own progress spiritually as you would be about your children. Are you as concerned about spiritual development as education? You've heard me often say that people choose, even Christians who come to CFC, choose the best for their children in education, the best for their family in medical treatment. Here, people in other churches just sit in their old churches, but here you may come to this church and say, well, I belong to CFC.

It doesn't solve the problem. It still may be true that you don't value your spiritual development as much as you value medical facilities for your family. Supposing you took your child to a hospital and he's not being treated well, any family member, you would be concerned and you would change the hospital.

So, many people say, yeah, CFC is the best church we have found. Good. But you can sit here and imagine that everything you hear and understand in your mind is true in your life.

That's one of the greatest deceptions that Satan puts upon God's people, that what they've understood in their mind, they think they've got it. For example, I think many of you would say you understand the New Covenant, but according to my assessment, I'd say more than 75-80% of people here don't have a clue what the New Covenant is in their life. It's a fact.

I'm talking about this church. I'm not talking about some other church. But you've understood it in your mind.

You can explain it. So we need to ask ourselves why, because Christ is coming and we don't want to stand before him, having wasted our life, especially sitting here and receiving all the opportunities you had to grow. So I want you to think about certain things which, if you pass, good.

For example, this is one of the very important verses, James chapter 1. To prevent ourselves from deceiving ourselves. James 1. How do you deceive yourself? James 1, 26. If a man thinks himself to be religious, or let me read it like this.

If a man thinks that he's understood the New Covenant so well that he can even explain it to others, but he cannot control his tongue when he speaks to his wife, or when she speaks to her husband, or when he's in the office, or when he speaks to the auto-rickshaw driver who's cheated him, or to the porter in the railway station who's cheating him, and he cannot control his tongue, he is deceiving himself that he's understood the New Covenant. His understanding of the New Covenant is worthless. He doesn't understand a thing.

Now do you understand why I say 80% of people sitting here have not understood the New Covenant? Judge yourself by one thing. How much can you control your tongue at home? How much can you control your tongue when you speak to people who are at a lower social level than you, your servants, etc.? How do you treat them? We had a so-called brother here many years ago who, he and his wife, had a servant girl from some poor place here working for them, and he treated her so badly, burnt her skin with some hot plate, and beat her and made her lie in the bathroom, in a wet bathroom. She got so sick.

Her kidneys were affected. She had to be taken to hospital, and the hospital said, are you guys from CFC? They knew about us. And that brother, a few days later when I heard about it, invited me to his little boy's birthday party.

I said, I'll never enter your house till you go and apologize to that poor girl and her parents for treating her like that. Just because you're so rich, and you have so much money, I'm glad that brother left the church. We'll never enter CFC.

We don't want such people who treat others badly just because somebody is in a lower social level. You ask yourself, my brothers and sisters, how do you treat people at a lower social level? I'll tell you something, God will treat you exactly like that. That's the way.

The Bible says that, and I've repeated that verse many times, and I want to say it again. Please turn with me to Psalm 18. I believed in it.

I practiced it. I've had people working in my home, and they saw Christianity in me. See what the Bible says in Psalm 18, in verse 25.

With the kind, you show yourself kind. If you want God to be kind to you, let me tell you one thing. One thing.

Forget about everything else. Be kind to other people, especially to people you think are lower than you. You have to correct them, of course.

Don't we correct our children? But are you cruel to your children? No. Be kind. Even in correction, we have to be kind in correction.

You have to correct your servants. You've got to correct people in your office or factory who work under you. Otherwise, nothing will get done if you don't correct them.

Of course, I remember when I was in the military, I had to even pull up a sailor if he didn't salute me. I didn't care for salutes myself, but if there were two stripes on my shoulder, I was representing the Navy, and I had to keep discipline. But I wouldn't be unkind.

I wouldn't speak rudely. You must not. If you're a Christian, you must be known by the way you use your tongue.

Not just to other brothers and sisters here, but especially when nobody sees you, when people don't know you, and to people who are at the lowest social level. And God sees it. And I'll tell you something.

I've seen it through the years. With the kind, God always shows himself kind. And the reason why many people do not grow is because they are not kind.

But, it says here in the last part of verse 26, but with those who are crooked. Crooked are those who live one life before other believers and quite another life in private. There, it says God will also show himself astute, or the margin says twisted.

That means, hey, this is not the God I expect to treat me. Yes, that's how he's treating you because you're treating other people like that. That's why he doesn't answer your prayers.

You can pray as much as you like, but God's not going to listen. It's very, very important, dear brothers and sisters, that we do not deceive ourselves. Self-deception is one of the greatest problems among Christians.

We imagine that we are, even imagine that we are following Jesus. See, 2nd Corinthians in chapter 11. See, the Corinthians were pretty carnal and worldly and they had disputes and fights and quarrels.

And one of the things Paul told them in 2nd Corinthians 11 is they were listening to people who were preaching another Jesus. Not another God. Not another God of some other religion.

No. They're talking about Jesus, but it's not the Jesus of the Bible. Another Jesus.

And if you go to Christian television today and listen to a lot of those programs, I tell you, many of them are preaching another Jesus. And I'm sorry to say, there are people who sit in CFC and have been here many, many years who have been listening to those Christian television programs from other people for so many years and they have not grown spiritually. And their children are wayward.

Because, they don't realize the effect of listening to another Jesus. Ask yourself, is this the Jesus the Bible speaks about when these guys speak about? When they ask you for money on television, for example. Where did Jesus ask people for money? That's one single item is enough for me to cancel out somebody completely.

Never to listen to him. And all these people who boast in the Christian TV about having raised the dead and all. Are you so foolish to swallow all that? And the people who say they've gone to heaven and come back and tell you stories.

And I've told you many times, Paul came back from heaven and he said, I'm not permitted to speak what I hear there. That's the mark of a man who really went up to heaven. But it's amazing how people are so ignorant of all these things.

And I've seen in talking to some of you, sometimes I quote a very well-known verse, another reference. I say, here's what the Bible says. And the brother doesn't even have a clue that there's such a verse in the Bible.

This is people who have sat in CFC for years. I'm simply amazed. And the reason is they do not study the Bible on their own.

All their Bible study is what they hear on Sunday morning and that's it. Well, I can only warn you, but I'm telling you this. And don't blame me in the day of judgment.

Many of you are going to get a big surprise when Christ comes again and you stand before him and you who think you're so spiritual, you'll get the shock of your life when you discover what Jesus thought about you. So please listen carefully. What is another Jesus? One who forgives your sin but doesn't save you from your sin.

Matthew 1.21 is the first promise in the New Testament which says the name Jesus means He will save, not forgive. He will save His people from their sins. Forgiveness is in the Old Testament.

David wrote in Psalm 103 Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgives all my sins. David, how many sins of yours did he forgive? All of them. He lived in 1,000 years before Christ and he could testify, bless the Lord who has forgiven all my sins.

If you can say that, good. You're in line with David 1,000 years before Christ. But after Christ has come, what should be a testimony? Bless the Lord who saves me from my sinful habits one by one.

How many sinful habits, my brother, sister, have you overcome since you came to CFC? Ask yourself. Some of you are slipping back into those old habits. Some of you, when you were first converted, did not watch the type of movies you are watching in secret now.

Don't fool yourself that you sit in CFC and everything's alright. I'll tell you, in Jesus' name, you've probably lost your salvation. Because you're believing in another Jesus.

And your parents allow all that. Don't afterwards weep when your children go astray. Why are my children going astray? I'll tell you, because you fed them these little poison little bit at a time when they were small.

That's why they go astray. That's why they have all these spiritual sicknesses. That is another Jesus.

And it says here about people in verse 4 who receive a different spirit. Christendom is full of people who imagine they have the Holy Spirit and it does not make them holy. I say, what type of Holy Spirit is this that doesn't make you holy? Evil spirits do a perfect job of making people evil.

Unclean spirits do a perfect job of making people unclean. And you ask some of these people, what does the Holy Spirit do? Oh, he makes us speak in tongues. Really? Well, unclean spirits can make people speak in tongues.

I've heard myself people with demons speaking in tongues. And when the demon is cast out, they stop speaking in tongues. But a demon never makes a person holy.

It's another spirit. You be careful about that in the world. I believe in the genuine gift of tongues.

It's a wonderful gift with which we can praise and worship God in secret. It's for private use, like the Apostle Paul said. But that's not the mark of the Holy Spirit's fullness.

Evil spirits make people evil. Unclean spirits make people unclean. You ask a child, what does the Holy Spirit make people? He will say, holy.

Why is that not happening? I don't mean suddenly, but is there a progression? Are you going from kindergarten to first standard, to second standard, to third standard, year by year? That's my question. I'm not asking whether you got your PhD in one year. No.

But are you progressing? At least from one class to the next. It's very important. I'm saying this strongly because I believe that it's quite likely that we may all be alive when Christ returns.

I don't know when Christ will return. But all the wars and rumors and wars, and especially the plagues that are coming around the world nowadays, I call it a plague. The book of Revelation says there will be such plagues towards the end of time.

To me, that's an indication of the coming of the Lord. It's not something to be worried about. Say, Lord, you're coming.

Fine. I want to be ready. I don't want to just go around with masks and taking tablets.

I want to see my heart is clean. Masks and all, look at the fear people have of getting a little germ. They're so careful.

I believe these masks cost about hundreds of dollars now because there's such a shortage of it. They're so careful about such a small, teeny-weeny germ. And they allow such big sins in their life.

Are they Christians or heathen? A heathen being like that, I can understand. I'm not saying we shouldn't be careful about protecting ourselves health-wise, but I should be a million times more careful protecting myself from sin, from a sinful thought, from a sinful attitude towards somebody, from sinful words, much more than any virus in the world. That's the mark of a Christian, that he's much more afraid of sin than of

sickness.

And I want all of you to ask yourself one question this morning. Are you more afraid of sin, or are you afraid of sickness that's going to spread in Bangalore soon? Which are you more afraid of? Which will you take precautions about? That's the question. That'll show whether you're a serious Christian or not after sitting all these years in CFC.

Dear brothers, please listen to me. I'm not angry with you. I'm really seeking to lead you so that you don't get a surprise on the Day of Judgment.

That's my primary concern. Because I have a responsibility. The Bible says, do you know that the Bible says that I have to give an account for all those who have listened to me.

Let's see this verse in Hebrews 13. Hebrews 13 and verse 17. Obey your leaders and submit to them.

I'm not talking about submitting to them in what they ask you to do in earthly things. But your leaders are those who teach you some spiritual things. If you recognize somebody as your leader, spiritually, then obey him.

I'm not asking you to obey everybody who calls himself an elder or a leader. But if you, the responsibility is on you. If you recognize and have confidence in someone as a spiritual leader whom you respect because of his life and his words, you better obey him for your own salvation.

And you better submit to him. Because such a person is keeping watch over your soul. That's why I speak as I do.

Because that leader has to give an account to God one day. What has he got to give an account? Did you speak the truth? The Lord will ask me, I know. Did you try to impress anybody? Did you just crack jokes to make people laugh? Did you tell them the truth? Were you influenced by anybody's friendship or money or anything? Did you seek honor? Was somebody such a special friend of yours that you would never correct him? That's what the Lord is going to ask me.

That's why the Bible says, don't become a teacher. Because you will get a greater judgment. And it says here in verse 17, let those leaders be able to reply to God with joy concerning you.

Now I never realized this, you know. It's a serious word but I don't understand how it works in the day of judgment. But let them not do it with grief.

Because if they had to do it with grief, that will be unprofitable for you. How does that apply? Think of that. Think of the day of judgment.

And the Lord is going to ask a leader to give an account concerning you. And if they cannot give a proper report about you, that will be grief for you. It will be unprofitable for you.

What does that mean? I've thought about that. I always thought, well, all of us are going to stand individually and God's not going to ask anybody else about us because He doesn't have to. He knows everything about our life.

He knows everything about our life. Why should He ask some leader about somebody in their church? But I believe the Bible. I believe God knows everything about our life.

But, you know, we have the habit of justifying ourselves. I've seen that with 45 years I've seen with people who say something and they'll justify, no, no, no, it was not like that or that is another reason. I've heard it from every Tom, Dick and Harry.

There's hardly anybody I've met who will honestly say, yeah, brother, that was the truth. There's always some justification like Adam, my wife gave it to me or something like that. And you ask Eve and she'll say, the serpent told me.

There's always some other reason. I've hardly found a godly person who will say, yeah, brother, I have no excuse, that was my fault. Rare.

It goes exceptionally well with such people. Always there is an excuse. You ask yourself, especially those of you who think you're pretty spiritual, you ask yourself whether you find a temptation to justify yourself because you don't want to acknowledge that you made a blunder.

You don't want to acknowledge that you were so unspiritual that you didn't have discernment there. That you did something stupid or foolish. You don't want to admit that because you've given an impression of being so spiritual.

So you have to say, oh, but it was because of this and but it was because of that. Jesus said to the Pharisees, you are those who justify yourselves before men and such self-justification is an abomination before God. I never want to have an abomination before God.

No. No, I don't want to justify myself. I see something, I say, yeah, I'm sorry, it's my mistake, I'm not perfect.

I'm pressing on to perfection. Because it will be unprofitable for you. Now, this is a verse I've still not understood fully but I understand it like this if I read it.

That the Lord will ask people when they come before him, is this right? That you did not submit to this person whom I appointed as your leader and of course you come up with your justification. Lord, I did that and I did this and that. Then the Lord will call the leader.

Okay, now tell me. What do you think of this guy? Not because God didn't know but he wants you to hear it from the mouth of that leader. And if he says, yes Lord, I tried to correct the person a number of times but I preached to a number of times to them in the church but what could I do? They just took it for granted.

They assume that everything is okay. And then the Lord will say, okay. Then he'll ask you, have you heard it now? Do you want me to repeat those messages you heard now before you? See, we've got all eternity to judge you.

Dear brothers, this is not some fairy tale. This is actually going to happen and you will not have a chance to live your life again. This is the only chance you get to live this life.

You will not get a chance there to set anything right. It is appointed unto men once to die. Hebrews 7. If you don't know that verse, Hebrews 7 and after that the judgment.

That's all. After that, the judgment. Once you die, that's the judgment.

That's all. But, it says here that Jesus is always living to pray for us. For us, it says in verse, he ever lives, verse 25, to continuously pray for us.

He's always living to intercede. He wants to save us. But he wants to save us from that final judgment and that's why he warns us even now.

Hebrews 9.27 I'm sorry, not Hebrews 7. Hebrews 9.27 It's appointed unto men once to die and after this, the judgment. There's nothing after that. Nothing in between.

Once to die and then the judgment. For the only time I have to correct myself or judge myself is now. And judging oneself is something the world knows almost nothing about.

The devil deceives us that we do not judge ourselves. Let me tell you two or three things we have to be careful about if you don't want the devil to deceive you. Then I'll go into the matter of judging ourselves.

There are many places where I can think of three passages of scripture God's spoken to me. First of all, Ephesians 6. Three passages of scripture to protect you from Satan's deception. Hebrews 6 and sorry Ephesians 6 and verse 12 Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against rulers, world force of darkness, spiritual force of wickedness and heavenly places.

In the Old Testament nobody fought the devil. Nobody. Not even Elijah, not even John the Baptist.

There's no record of Satan in the Old Testament except in Genesis chapter 3 Job chapter 1 and 2 and one place in David's life where he was tempted by Satan and then you read towards the end of the Old Testament with Zechariah seeing a vision. But you never find a single case of anyone confronting Satan directly. In the entire Bible, the first person who confronted Satan directly was Jesus Christ.

God does not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. If God let loose the devil on the Israelites even Abraham, Elijah, Elisha would all be knocked out. Even John the Baptist would have been knocked out.

But when Jesus came so God withheld the devil from doing anything until then. But after Jesus came and Satan was defeated on the cross now it's the other way around. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James 4.7 and we read in 1 John 4.17 As the Lord Jesus is so are we in the world. And I remember once the Lord showing me from that verse as you were afraid of the devil once the devil will be afraid of you from now on. I want to ask you a question.

Do you believe that you can live a life where the devil is afraid of you? As you were once afraid of the devil? So many mails I get from people. Oh brother the devil is harassing me here, the devil is harassing me here. I say are you Christians or what? What do you mean the devil is harassing me here and there? It's because we fight with human beings.

That we cannot fight with the devil. That's what the Lord told me. One of the things the Lord showed me after I got baptized in the Holy Spirit You know when I got before I got baptized in the Holy Spirit I never cast out a demon.

I was scared of demons. I'll tell you. I hope I'd never confess me to demon.

I've heard of big preachers and all who were not baptized in the Holy Spirit once some demon possessed person came there in the room and this preacher was preaching and he said I can't cast out the demon

but I can cast you out so the demon will go. So they threw the man out of the hall. That's the way they deal with them, the old covenant.

Throw the man out and the demon will go. But that's not how Jesus did it. He cast the demon out.

I couldn't do that. But when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit I suddenly got taken into a world which is another world a spirit world where I found spiritual realities the reality of the Holy Spirit the reality of God speaking to our heart the reality of Satan the baptism of the Holy Spirit lifts you into another realm. It's like being lifted up in an airplane to some other level.

Many people who talk about baptism in the Holy Spirit they're still living at earth level and thinking they're baptized in the Holy Spirit tremendous deception 95% of people who say they're baptized in the Holy Spirit are not baptized in the Holy Spirit at all I know what happened to me and one of the things the Lord said to me is from now on don't ever fight with men if you want power over Satan. Refuse to fight with men because if you struggle with flesh and blood you cannot fight with evil spirits. Paul said we don't struggle with flesh and blood Ephesians 6.12 and I decided that day that I will never again fight with a human being.

Not even about doctrine. If somebody comes to me and says brother Zach you're teaching false doctrine. Okay go ahead.

Believe what you like I will not argue with you because I refuse to fight with flesh and blood so that I can fight the devil and make him flee from me so that if I meet a demon possessed person with one word that demon should go and I should not be afraid. Dear brothers this is not for spiritual leaders. It's for every believer.

Jesus did not overcome Satan just for some special group of people. For every single believer. For you.

Even if you're a young believer. I remember hearing of a man of God in China years ago maybe 80 years ago or so 90 years ago who was in that village. He was the one person who really filtered the spirit who would cast out demons and everybody who was demon possessed they'd bring him to that house and one day they brought somebody demon possessed person to his house and he was not at home so his 12 year old son said bring him in and he cast the demon out because he'd seen his dad do it so often and he was living with a clear conscience he did exactly what his dad did and the chap was delivered you don't need to be 60 years old before you do such things it's Jesus who did it on the cross for us and you stand on that victory you're a 12 year old and you believe it.

It can be true for you. It's all a question of faith not of age but you got to stop fighting with flesh and blood. We struggle not against flesh and blood but not against these evil forces if you want power over Satan in your home, if you want to restrain the forces of evil from entering your home from attacking your home attacking your children, I'll give you one advice, stop fighting with human beings stop from today fighting with your wife, your husband your neighbor, your relatives, your in-laws who cheated you for the property or whatever they do, your mother-in-law whatever it is you will not have power over Satan then you'll just come and sit in a church and sing songs but Satan will laugh at you and mock at you, that's the first thing I want to say secondly in Ephesians also in chapter 4 it says here in verse 26 be angry but don't sin there is an anger which is not sinful like Jesus was angry when he took the whip and chased the money changers out he was angry when the Pharisees would not allow him to heal a sick person that's a righteous anger and I asked the Lord once about this how do I distinguish in my mind between righteous anger and

unrighteous anger and I got a very clear answer and you know what I always say, look at the dictionary when you don't know the meaning of a verse look at the dictionary and to me the dictionary is the life of Jesus Christ just like for English we have a dictionary for the Bible we have the life of Jesus the word became flesh so in that word become flesh I understand what the word means and so I looked at Jesus when was he angry? when people were exploiting others when people were making money in the name of religion, to be Christ like you must be angry when people make money in the name of religion if you look at a pastor making money in the name of religion and you're not angry, I'd say you're not Christ like that's all, something's wrong with you you're not Christ like, you're seeking your own honor so that's the place where he was angry or when the Pharisees would not allow him to help a poor helpless person when was he not angry? when they called him the devil when they spat on his face when they beat him, whipped him, crucified him never angry so I learnt from the dictionary I got the meaning when should I be angry? when should I not be angry? meaning is whenever it concerns the glory of God and the things of God I must be angry if it's being dishonored, wherever, by whoever even if it's by a famous preacher doesn't matter, nobody's greater than God or his word but I must never be angry when people do something to me or say something about me, they can call me the devil they can call me false prophet, they can call me any name or they can spit on my face do whatever if I get angry because somebody does something to me I am not it is an unrighteous anger the only place where I can afford to get angry is where something concerns the glory of God if somebody did not respect me forget it, who am I to deserve respect, my savior was washer of feet why should I respect from anyone I must honor all men, yes the Bible says that but the Bible doesn't say get everybody to honor you no, I'm not interested so it's very very important that we don't get angry in anything concerning ourselves when you get angry, make sure it's not sinful anger that's the meaning of that verse make sure it concerns the glory of God, the house of God the name of God those are the things, like for example if you see the name of the Lord being dishonored in this country it should make you angry, not against people but against the devil concerned about all the Christians who are bringing such dishonor to God's name by their behavior yeah, I'd be concerned if Christians bring a bad name to CFC by their behavior, definitely you know we are trying to be a pure testimony for the Lord and here some guy goes and does something stupid and brings a bad name on the church, and he doesn't even repent about it, we've had cases like that there's some justification or the other amazing amazing, the name of the Lord is dishonored by their action and they should be weeping before God and fasting they don't do that there's some excuse they make do you think such people will ever grow spiritually? not in a hundred years till they learn to judge themselves and not find an answer for every wrong thing they did so we must be angry when the name of the Lord is dishonored anywhere in CFC or anywhere but it should not concern you, it's not because you, for example, I often think if I ask somebody in the CFC office to do something, and they didn't do it I shouldn't get angry forget it, ok it's not done we are human, we can't do everything in time the only thing serious is sin we have to be careful that I don't sin there I always say, it's alright some work takes longer than expected fine, something bungles up something blows up we ignore all that, those things are not serious but anger is serious and it says here it gives you a little time limit for those who still haven't got full victory you know, we don't get victory overnight it takes time to overcome anger it's like it takes time to overcome the love of money so you are given a time limit here in verse 26, isn't that good? and if you do get angry make sure you get rid of it before sunset and in those days sunset was the time people went to sleep so what it means is if you do get angry and you haven't got over it get over it before you go to sleep because if you don't do it verse 27 you have given the devil an opportunity an opportunity I want to say to every one of you please listen you had a dispute with your wife or your husband and you went to bed without settling it you have opened a door for the devil in your heart and if he torments you with bad dreams and torments your mind and torments you in other ways blame yourself

because God told you before you go to bed settle it with your husband and your wife otherwise you will give the devil an opportunity be honest now how many times have you guys given the devil an opportunity in your home and you wonder why is this happening well I'll tell you why it's happening because you didn't obey the word of God you went to bed last night without settling matters with your husband or wife how difficult is it to ask forgiveness before you go to sleep from your husband or wife there is only one thing that will hinder you from doing that, your pride how can I the great Maharaja or very often the great Maharani how can I ask forgiveness from the other person Queen I am the Queen Queens don't ask forgiveness should you ask forgiveness from a servant if you have done wrong to that person, yes I don't care who I remember when I got light on this I said Lord if I ever speak rudely to a beggar who comes to the gate I spoke rudely to him to go away I'll go after him and say please forgive me I'm sorry for speaking to you like that I'm serious about it my fellowship with God is a million times more important than my dignity I don't have any dignity when it comes to spiritual things my fellowship with God is very important if you valued it like that I tell you you would have been far more spiritual today than you are I'm telling you the truth many of you you're good brothers and sisters but you're not grown you're getting 100% but you're getting 100% in the kindergarten every year once you use glory I get 100% if a student if a boy tells me Uncle Zach I'm getting 100% every year I say which class are you? always in the kindergarten that's not the way it should be you don't want it to be like that with your children it's better to get 50% in standard one than to get 100% in kindergarten forever think of that make a little progress don't give the devil an opportunity and so verse 29 be careful in future Ephesians 4.29 unwholesome means unhealthy words don't come out of your mouth how careful we are that unhealthy things don't go into our mouth we are very careful here it says don't let any unhealthy words come out of your mouth you remember what Jesus said what goes into your mouth cannot really ruin you, it gets washed out in your system but what comes out of your mouth comes from your heart and that's defiled you already remember this always all of you my brothers and sisters what comes out of your mouth is a million times more serious than what goes into your mouth we are so careful that the food we eat is hygienically prepared we wash our hands so that there is no dirt in our hands when we eat but we are so careless with what comes out of our mouth have you really understood the new covenant now you understand why I said 80% of people sitting here haven't understood the new covenant except in their heads it's true not only here, I find that in most CFC churches we glory in a knowledge of the truth but the reality is not there so what should come out of my mouth then only what is good that will build up people, edification means build up according to the need of the moment and that it will give grace that means people who hear me must get some grace through my words you ask yourself whether that is true and if you want grace to come through your words, you know the law God gives his grace to the humble if you are humble when you speak to people, even when you have to speak firmly there will be grace in your words there will be grace even in your firmness because you are basically a humble person and if you don't do that if you don't speak like that you are going to grieve the Holy Spirit you are going to grieve the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is grieved this person claims to be a child of Christ, look at the way he is behaving so verse 31, let all bitterness be put out of your mouth and let all anger and wrath and clamor and slander, speaking evil of others be put away from you and in contrast be kind to one another, forgiving each other this is the next thing I want to say to you forgive one another as Christ forgave you, if it's an unbeliever, the moment you know that somebody has hurt you forgive the person immediately if it's a brother with whom you are in fellowship, settle it between both of you the Bible says if your brother sins, rebuke him Matthew 18 and verse 14-15 onwards and if he listens to you you have won your brother he doesn't listen to you and it's a serious thing take another brother with you maybe you take the elders, something serious there settle it and it's a serious thing, it says there, if he doesn't listen even to the church elders, then put him out of the church that's serious but our attitude must

always be one of forgiveness even if somebody is put out of the church, we must forgive him there's no doubt about that even if he doesn't listen to the elders, we must forgive him there's no excuse for not forgiving even the people who have been put out of CFC you got to make sure that you have personally nothing against them I make sure of that, 100% forgiven as far as I'm concerned but the church must be kept pure so Matthew 18 verses 15-17 says you got to put him out and we've had, unfortunately had to have cases like that because we believe in certain principles in the church you know, even in the hospitals, they have what's called an isolation ward and the isolation ward is for people who are so severely sick, they don't want other people to get that sickness don't keep them in the general ward that's sensible so, when people are put out of the church it's like an isolation ward they put out because we don't want other people to get that rebellious infection from them it's an act of kindness supposing your own son had an infectious disease which we hope will be cured in a while you yourself will put that son in another room and not let your other children mingle with him why is that, is that an act of hatred it's an act of love that's how we treat the CFC family when someone has got an infection from which they refuse to be healed they can be healed but they refuse to be healed we have to put them in an isolation ward when are they allowed to come back when the disease is gone yeah, we hope the disease will be gone when you put your son in an isolation ward you hope he'll be healed you don't keep him there for the rest of his life if he gets healed that means if he really repents and acknowledges his sin and turns from it and there's proof of it and evidence of it that may take some time sometimes people are put in an isolation ward for months on end or years depends, in the old testament they put lepers outside the gate forever because they have not cured of their leprosy, in some cases Jesus came and cured them then they could come back into the town, otherwise they have to stay outside forever so forgive one another just as Christ has forgiven you, it doesn't matter how big the crime it does not matter how big the crime if you don't forgive, satan will get an advantage over you turn to 2nd Corinthians in chapter 2 I was telling you, there's three areas where in relation to satan getting in one is when you fight with human beings struggle with flesh and blood and the second I told you is when you lose your temper, you don't settle it before the sun is gone and the third is an unforgiving spirit, 2nd Corinthians 2 and verse 10, whom you forgive anything, I also forgive see there was a man who was put in an isolation ward, you read in 1 Corinthians 5, this man had committed a serious crime and you know what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5, I hand that fellow over to satan for the destruction of his flesh so that he will repent, I don't want him to be lost, I want him to be saved, when you put your son in the isolation ward, you don't want him to die, you want him to be healed, and so Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5, I hand him over to satan for the destruction of his flesh, let him get sick, so that he will repent, always isolation ward is for healing so when we put people in isolation ward, it's for healing but sometimes it takes a long time, sometimes it may take 20 years before they repent, ok some diseases, not because the disease needs to take long, because they refuse to take the treatment some people in the isolation ward won't take the treatment, and they remain like that, sick forever, because they are too proud to take the treatment of humbling themselves and setting matters right, ok then you stay there forever probably die in the isolation ward, that's another thing, but here it says, this man was handed over to satan in 1 Corinthians 5 and the entire church excommunicated him you know, they wouldn't meet him, they wouldn't talk to him and it says here in verse 6 sufficient for such a one is this punishment, which is inflicted by the majority what is the punishment? they refuse to go and talk to him they have nothing to do with him not everybody, some people tried for their own personal popularity and honor they would meet this man who was excommunicated and put out in Corinth by Paul yeah, they sought their own honor, so it doesn't say everybody, but the majority took their stand with Paul and said no, we are not going to help him by discipline, by going and helping him, it's like the prodigal son when the prodigal son is in the far country, eating what the pigs are eating if you go and feed him, he'll never go back to his father's house it

looks like an act of kindness on your part but actually, you don't have wisdom God is disciplining that guy by making him go to the level of the pigs and you stop that he never goes back to his father's house, but the wise person say no, let him suffer there I'm not going to send him any food packets I'm not going to give him money, he repents and goes back to his father's house, that is the wisdom of God God's love is shown sometimes by not healing a person not helping a person till the person has come to an end of himself, so that he comes back to God forever, and when he comes back God will make a feast for him, that's how he is isn't that wonderful that's how it is, so some people recognize that, they had the wisdom of God they said we will have nothing to do with him and that was a punishment inflicted by the majority and now he says, the guy has repented forgive him, now don't keep that wrong attitude towards him, comfort him otherwise he will be overwhelmed with sorrow, verse 7 so now go and reaffirm your love for him because the guy has repented he has acknowledged his error, he has turned around and he says if you don't do that, if you hold those old grudges, this guy treated me like this so I'm never going to forgive him, you know what will happen Paul says if you forgive somebody, I forgive him, I know Paul says that I handed him over to Satan once but because he ruined the church testimony, but I've forgiven him and if I've forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, why did I do it verse 11, so that no advantage is taken of us by Satan that's the third thing one, don't fight with flesh and blood Ephesians 6 second, don't leave anger unchecked, settle it and third, forgive otherwise Satan will get an advantage over you if you can sit here my brother, sister, and you can think right now right now, just think for a moment it won't take more than half a minute is there anybody on earth whom you have not forgiven think for a moment a name will pop up in your mind immediately I'm not a magician but I know human nature and I know God loves you and will reveal the name of the person whom you have not forgiven, right now or the persons now God says it's your choice whether to forgive that person or not but you say he has not repented, well that's none of your business he's not your brother in Christ forgive him forgive him and if a person you know the bible says if a person is stubborn and does not repent, he is not your brother, treat him like an unbeliever it says how are you to treat unbelievers, how did Jesus treat unbelievers on the cross, forgive them so even if a brother is stubborn and refuses to repent okay, Matthew 18 says he doesn't listen to you, doesn't listen to the elders, treat him like an unbeliever, treat him like an unbeliever means treat him like Jesus treated the Pharisees on the cross forgive him he's not your brother he doesn't want fellowship with you fine, but forgive him when we understand scripture with scripture I've heard believers who say God, I want to be like God God forgives people only when they repent I will forgive people only when they repent aha, then you're a judge God as a judge can say that I'm not a judge I'm a human being there are other laws for me that I have to forgive people even if they don't repent but I have to treat them like unbelievers they're unbelievers as far as I'm concerned but I forgive them, he may call himself a brother but no he isn't I mean if he were a brother he'd be sensitive to God's voice but he's not repenting so I forgive him completely and I treat him like an unbeliever problem solved I have no fellowship with him, end of the matter please understand this balance lest you take that verse you heard me quote that verse if your brother repents, forgive him and you say, ah, that's a good verse for me my mother-in-law has not repented so I'll never forgive her it's talking about your brother someone who's in fellowship with you and if the person doesn't repent it finally says in Matthew 18, treat them like an unbeliever and treat them like an unbeliever means forgive them if you don't have fellowship with them it's perfectly okay if you don't have fellowship with your mother-in-law the Bible doesn't say you must have fellowship with everybody I'll tell you honestly I don't even have fellowship with everybody sitting here in this church no I'll tell you honestly, I don't because I can see that some people are not walking in the light and the Bible says, it's only if you walk in the light 1 John 1.7, we have fellowship I gladly have fellowship with the youngest believer who walks in the light someone who's trying to live a double life I'm sorry, I

won't have fellowship with them because even God Almighty won't have fellowship with that person but I'll forgive so if you don't forgive, it says in verse 11 Satan will take advantage of you and you're not ignorant of his schemes he may quote a verse to you saying, Jesus said if your brother doesn't repent, only when he repents, forgive him yeah, Satan takes, quotes scripture sometimes to deceive people but he doesn't quote the other scripture which says treat him like an unbeliever, that means forgive him but you don't have fellowship with him we need to understand scripture by scripture, that's why God has appointed teachers in the church and now I want to come to 1 Peter 4 which is the verse which says how do I know I'm part of the household of God I've often taken this verse as the proof that I'm part of the household of God we looked at these three verses where Satan takes advantage of us, remember them? Ephesians 6 where we fight with human beings or Ephesians 4 where we get angry and don't settle it or 2 Corinthians 2 where we don't forgive someone and by the way, those of you who are struggling with anger supposing you're suddenly provoked I want to give you a helpful bit of old covenant advice not new covenant advice is die to yourself and allow the Holy Spirit to fill you, but old covenant also there is a helpful second best so here is the second best way to get over anger the first is to be filled with the Holy Spirit the second best way to get over anger is Psalm 4 this is the verse quoted in Ephesians 4 by the way be angry but don't sin is Paul is quoting from Ephesians 4 and verse 4 tremble with anger but don't sin, this is the exact verse which Paul is quoting in Ephesians 4 be angry but don't sin so Old Testament solution was when you get angry see the rest of that verse, go and lie down on your bed what wonderful advice the next time brothers and sisters when there is a fight in your house, go and lie down on your bed and be still till you cool off like they say that's the second best way to get over anger but whichever way you do make sure you settle it before sunset otherwise the devil has got an advantage over you now we come to 1 Peter 4, I want to show you this verse the mark of being a part of God's house 1 Peter 4 17 the time has come for judgment to begin in the family, the church, the household of God where we judge ourselves first that is the mark of God's house people who judge themselves first who don't justify themselves but who judge themselves first it must begin with us first it says see that's where the church is different from the world you know in the world they put themselves first in everything I want to come ahead of you, I want to push you down and go on top whether it's a company or an office or even in politics, push other people down go on top, even in school there are students who try to push other people down and go on top, this world is full of people who want to put themselves first everywhere you know how children are, go and grab the biggest piece of cake or whatever it is me first, me first, me first everywhere in important things in unimportant things like passing through a door you'll say ok you go first or washing your hands please go first those are unimportant things important things it's always me first, me first including you and me till we get converted but there's one area where the worldly people put other people first you know where that is judging all the people in the world me first in every area except judging, there I'll put other people first now when we are born again we get turned not upside down but right side up we are born upside down spiritually, we get turned right side up so what happens we put other people first in everything now except judging there we put ourselves first that's the mark of a person who's been turned right side up the opposite of the world and so it says here we are now part of the household of God we judge ourselves first when something happened between you and a person don't find out where he went wrong ask yourself where you went wrong ask yourself where you went wrong judge yourself first and then we can be a part of God's house there's a particular area where it's mentioned two verses earlier in 1 Peter 4 about judging yourself don't be verse 15, a murderer I don't think anybody in danger here of being a murderer or a thief I hope nobody here is going to be a thief third evil doer I hope you will not be an evil doer fourth, this is where many people fail busy body in other people's matters you know a busy body in other people's matters is put in the same category as murderer thief evil doer, you say I'm not a murderer I'm not a thief, I'm not an evil

doer but you go poking your nose into things that don't concern you in somebody else's affairs you want to go and find out from somebody some curiosity curiosity to find out things that have nothing to do with you and you poke your nose into something that doesn't concern you a busy body in other people's matters, you want to find out information about others you're in the same category as murderer, thief and evil doer, you'll never hear this in any other church because they don't explain the word of God to people for people, it says don't let anybody suffer like this, you're a Christian it says don't suffer, if you're a Christian, don't suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evil doer or one who's curious about other people's matters or you want to ask people embarrassing questions you wouldn't like them asking you embarrassing questions but you go and ask them are you a Christian or a heathen? ask yourself, next time you do that please remember what I said ask yourself, are you a Christian or a heathen? how will that information help you? knowing something about somebody else which is not going to help you one bit, in fact it will pollute your mind hinder your spiritual growth prevent or disturb your fellowship with God but you go ahead and want to find out this find out that, find out there are people like this who are curious about everything and their tongue is wagging, wagging, wagging some of the people who have been put out of our church are people like that who could not control their tongues elders been removed from eldership because they could not control their tongues wagging, wagging, wagging, wagging and no matter how much I warn them, they still wag and wag and wag their tongues because it's a disease and no matter what treatment you give they never get cured always they want to talk about other people something evil about other people, not good things something bad, bad, bad about this and that this is what I heard, this is what I heard, this is what I heard, this is what I heard do you have that habit? I want to tell you, you will destroy yourself there have been people who have been put out of the church for such reasons you have not been because you have been very careful but maybe you will face your judgment at the judgment seat of Christ please my brothers and sisters take this seriously don't be curious about other people's affairs don't be a busybody trying to interfere in their affairs don't give advice to people who don't ask you for advice no I don't go around giving advice to people I have the right to because I am an elder but even there I am very careful if I sense that a person doesn't like my advice I don't give it if I sense that a person will get offended with my correction I just leave it I try it once or twice I remember a brother who is not in the church now years ago and he came to me and I told him something and he said brother nobody talks to me like that oh I said I am sorry I will never again talk to you like that and I was correcting him in something I never spoke to him after that he left the church pretty soon and he is gone correction is for our salvation dear brothers and sisters this is the way of life that we preach here don't let the devil get an advantage of you judge yourself I judge myself every single day and you may say brother Zack there are things wrong in you of course until I become 100% like Christ 100% there will always be something wrong with me but I can only judge it when I discover it and this old illustration that I have used supposing you put a ice cube in some thick liquid which you can't see beneath the surface you can only see 10% of that ice cube on top the rest is hidden sin is like that what I see of sin in my life what you see of sin in your life is only 10% don't think you are so holy 90% is there hidden underneath the selfishness, self-righteousness self-justification many many other things maybe wrong attitudes but I don't see it if I don't see it God doesn't hold me responsible I don't have to judge myself I can only judge myself that top 10% that I can see so when I say victory over sin it's not over all sin, nobody has that except Jesus but what we can see in other words if I take a knife and slice off that top 10% of that ice cube what will happen all you clever people you know what will happen to that ice cube it won't stay underneath when the 10% is sliced off ice cube comes up a bit that means you see a little more of that ice cube which you did not see before that is how God reveals sin to us if you have not discovered more sin in your life in the last one year, I'll tell you it's because you are not slicing off the part that you can see if you slice off the part that you can see every year you will see something more of

unchristliness in your life something more of the love of money something more of self-righteousness something more of where you are curious about other people you'll get light, you know everything I preach I'll tell you honestly, I preach what I've discovered in my own life I judge myself and if you keep doing that the ice cube will become smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller self will get reduced and reduced and become more and more like Christ this is spiritual growth that's why I said from the beginning ask yourself whether you are getting light on areas of your life which you did not get light on before let me read to you a hymn that I wrote I don't know, maybe 30-40 years ago after CFC started I want you to see the words if I have not forsaken all it's a hymn full of judging myself where did I get it from? I'll tell you I didn't get it from heaven I got it from my own flesh which is the same as yours God invites me if I have not forsaken all in answer to thy loving call means the Lord invites me to forsake all and I hold back something because I think oh, he's taking it away from me he's not taking it away he wants to bless that part and the part that you keep for yourself will never be blessed the part that you give to the Lord will be blessed if I have not forsaken all in answer if I have kept something back from thee God asks for something I hold it back ask yourselves examine yourself as you read these words Lord give me light otherwise I won't see it Lord help me judge myself each day this is what I said 40 years ago when I wrote this hymn to walk this new and living way this is not the old way of the old covenant how can I walk this way? I seek thy grace with all my heart what's my passion? to be made pure just as thou art that's my goal I want to judge myself somewhere else if anything upon this earth attracts me with its sense of worth that's valuable we can use things in the earth but if you are attracted by it that's valuable you need a house to live in, you need transport to move it's alright, you can have all of it but if it attracts you with its sense of worth, this is very valuable if money has a hold on me in other words, you are not holding money money is holding you, your mind many people, their mind is under the grip of money money makes them think money makes them dream at night money makes them take decisions money controls them Lord give me light that I might see you can't see it unless God gives you light third, if all my life revolves around me and thoughts of my own family I, me and my family all the time there are people sitting right here who are like that ask yourself all my thoughts revolve around I, me and my family it's all about me and my family what's convenient for me, what's convenient for my family and you don't think of fellowship with others you don't think of being a blessing to others, all me and my family, but you come to CFC that is a way of living selfishly, if I am living selfishly that is living selfishly, thoughts are about I, me and my family, Lord give me light that I might see ok, let's go to some other area this is where something I did not do so far we've been thinking of things we did ok, let's think of some area we did not do Lord, is there some good I should have done tell me you know the story of the Good Samaritan there was a man lying on the street beaten up by somebody a Levite and a priest went by, what was their crime you know the story did they go and kick the man did they go and steal what was left of his money what was their crime in one word, they did nothing can you commit a sin by doing nothing that's what Jesus said in that parable and the Good Samaritan came along, is there some good I should have done the Levite and the priest, they went to the temple to pray to God, what should they have prayed to God over there is there some good I should have done as I was traveling here is there some soul I should have won some person you're sitting with for years and he doesn't know that you're a Christian and one day at the judgment seat of Christ he says you knew about Jesus and you never told me I thought you were my good friend for 30 years and the most important thing you never told me have I hurt someone thoughtlessly usually in our, those we call our loved ones are the ones we hurt the most we don't hurt our enemies so much except in our mind but our loved ones we hurt with our words have I hurt someone thoughtlessly Lord give me light that I might see ok, again there are sins of not having done something, there are sins of commission and sins of omission omitted to do if someone's failure did someone's failure bring a little delight to your heart has not wrought concern and care within my

heart someone has failed some people rejoice, oh that proves I'm better than him not how Jesus felt, if someone's failure has not wrought concern and care within my heart think of you brothers who've got good children praise the Lord for that and you see somebody else's children going astray how do you feel thank God my children are not like that and you even talk about it have you heard what that person's boy did or that person's girl did have you heard that person is a slave to drink or that person's going to drugs or did you see or did you know what that girl is fooling around with such a person is not fit to be in CFC I'll tell you straight if someone's failure has not wrought concern and care within my heart if I have judged others inwardly Lord give me light that I might see what I preach and what I write is what I found in my own heart in my flesh that's how I got light on it, I didn't get this from heaven these are not words from heaven I got it in my own flesh as I examined myself I found these things in me I have the same flesh as all the terrorists in the world we're all born from Adam the worst terrorist in the world and I have the same flesh I always say that I'm not better than them but God has been gracious to me that's all ok another danger verse 6 if I have cared for man's applause that means I'm waiting for people to appreciate me I always get excited when they say something good about me I've noticed something through the years whenever I write to somebody something good, positive oh brother, it's really good that you did I always get a reply thank you so much brother I appreciate it, thank you very much and they give a very humble reply I don't really deserve it or some false humility like that is the reply to me but whenever I give a word of correction most of the time no reply what is that proof? they love honor they love to be praised and appreciated but they don't like one word of correction tell me the last time you wrote a reply to somebody who gave you a word of correction how quick you are to reply when somebody appreciates if I've cared for man's applause and sought my own and shunned means stayed away from death on the cross if I have feared man's mockery afraid of being laughed at because you're a Christian in your school, college, place of work Lord give me light that I might see I remember all the names people used to call me when I was on a ship because I was a Christian and I would proclaim Christ openly I remember even senior officers would try to punish me by taking me before the commanding officer because I was a witness for Christ ok last verse how to overcome all this if I have not sought thy power in prayer it's the only way to overcome Lord I'm weak all these areas I'm weak Lord I want to overcome if I have not sought thy power in prayer because of earthly toils and care people say oh brother I've got so many things to do so many things to do you know the what I've told sometimes people you say you're so busy you don't have time to read the bible wait till your child gets sick and is admitted in the hospital you'll suddenly find time how do you find time then be honest and say I don't want to read the bible I have no interest in it that's honesty Lord give me some interest in reading the bible but don't say you don't have time you'll always have anything that you want to do you'll always find time if I have not sought thy power in prayer because of earthly toils and care if I'm not longing this is the ultimate height of spirituality to long for fellowship with Jesus Christ if I'm not longing after thee Lord give me light that I might see and go back to the verse the chorus Lord help me judge myself each day to walk this new and living way I seek thy grace with all my heart to be made pure just as thou art let's pray heavenly father as we bow before thee you know lord we're all clever here we understand the language and we've understood it so perfectly that we can even preach this message to others help us to judge ourselves first have mercy on us have mercy on me I want to live in under your grace every single moment of every day every single moment of every day I want to live under your grace and I pray that everyone here will have that passion to pray in Jesus name Amen

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

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