

Pressing Forward to Become Christlike

by Zac Poonen

God's goal for us is to become like Christ, and the path of the righteous is zero backsliding.

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Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "Christian Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the ultimate destination God has for each individual, highlighting the need to align with His purpose and mission for our lives. It discusses the significance of being transformed by the Holy Spirit, removing veils that hinder us from experiencing God's presence and living in His light. The message encourages a deep repentance and a commitment to living a life that honors God's Word and brings blessings.

Transcript

There are many who are new in our church, means you've been here probably only one or two years. And it's important for you to know the direction in which our church is going and the direction in which we expect every person who comes to this church to go. And more than what we expect, the direction in which God expects all of us to go.

See, a lot of corporations and churches and all have what they call a mission statement. We have only statements that are written in Scripture. God has a goal for us.

And many Christians have not understood that goal. So for those of you who don't know, or those of you who have forgotten, let me show you what the Bible says is the ultimate destination. Just like when you travel in a train, your ticket will show you where you are destined to go.

And you should get on a train that's going in that direction. There are lots of trains in the railway station. But you don't get on to the most beautiful one, or the color you like, or the big one.

You go into the train which is going to your destination. Even if it is small, not so attractive, it's going to your destination. So when you choose a church, it should be the way you choose a train.

Is it going to the destination you want to go? Now today there are churches that tell you how you can become rich. Good. Those who want to become rich, join such churches.

But that is not God's goal for man. God's goal is not making people rich. And the proof of that is, some of the richest people in the world are not Christians.

In fact, the richest people in the whole world are non-Christians. So that itself proves that that particular type of teaching is not God's goal for Christians. Because if a person is going towards God's goal, there will be no one on earth to be better than him in that area.

If, for example, like some people teach, God's goal is that we should be healthy, then the healthiest people in the world should be Christians. But even the apostle Paul had a sickness. Timothy, the finest of Paul's co-workers, had a sickness.

Constant stomach problems. What happened? Was it because they were not wholehearted? These are verses that teach us health is not God's goal. And Jesus was poor, Paul was poor, Peter was poor, which proves that wealth is not God's goal.

Something else is God's goal and we need to understand that clearly. And it's possible sometimes that we lose sight of that. You know, it's like if you have to change trains at different stations.

Again, you've got to get into the right train. So let me turn you to Romans 8.29. Those who have been here many years will know this is the verse we always show in the scripture which tells us the goal towards which God wants us to be moving. Romans 8.29 Those whom he foreknew.

Now foreknowledge is a word found in the New Testament. Foreknowledge means God knows from all eternity past who all are going to respond to his call. If you have responded to the call of Jesus Christ God knew about it before he created the world.

He knew about it before the universe was created. If you're going to be a backslider, God knew that also before the worlds were created. And where you're going to end up as a backslider or a wholehearted Christian, that also God knows from beforehand.

That's foreknowledge. And those whom he foreknew who are going to be faithful to Christ till the end He gave them a destination. He predestined.

Predestined. It's very clear the meaning of that. Pre means before.

Destined means destination. It's like you get a railway ticket you're predestined to go to Bombay or Delhi. It's written on the ticket.

You may have bought it 60 days earlier but when you get into the train you know where you're going. So it's exactly like that. We need to see here what is God predestined for those whom he foreknew.

Now if you're not one of those whom God foreknew, you can go where you like. God has got no destination for you. But if you're one of those who responded to the call of Christ and God knew you before the worlds were created then this is the only destination God has for you.

Now when you travel in a train there may be many other blessings that you have while traveling and etc. You know you can eat good food and various things. You can see sights along the way.

But that's not your destination. Those are little blessings along the way. And there are little pains and difficulties in a train journey as well.

And so also in the Christian life. But we must be clear about our destination. Predestined to become conformed, to be conformed to the image of his Son Jesus Christ.

So there we see the goal. Never forget this verse. The goal of the Christian life as far as God is concerned is that we might become like Jesus Christ so that, that's not the end of it because when we become like Jesus Christ then Jesus Christ will be the elder brother.

First born is a New Testament phrase for eldest brother. You know if you have only one son you don't call him first born. You know what if you have only one son you call him only begotten.

John 3.16 God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son. He had only one when he came to earth. But after the resurrection Jesus told Mary Magdalene Go and tell my brothers that I have risen.

The day of his resurrection he became the first born. See that's why we have our meetings on Sunday not on Saturday because Saturday Jesus was in the grave. Sunday is called the Lord's day because it is the beginning of a new creation when Jesus became the first born of many brothers.

And so you see that's why we call each other brother. You need to understand that. I tell people don't call me by such low down titles like pastor or reverend or right reverend and all those useless titles.

Call me by the highest title younger brother of Jesus Christ. Can you give me a better title than that? You think reverend and right reverend and doctor reverend and left reverend and all these people you think any of these things are better than younger brother of Jesus Christ? Not at all. That's why you are a younger sister of Jesus Christ.

Don't think there is a bigger title than that. That's why I never allow anybody to call me any other than that. That is the highest title.

A younger brother of Jesus Christ, the eldest brother. You need to see your position. The first born of many brothers and sisters is included.

And that's how it's going to be in heaven. But today we are working towards that goal of becoming like Christ. Now if you don't have that goal, you got some other goal in life that God is going to make you rich or God is going to make you healthy I don't know whether you'll end up as a younger brother of Jesus Christ.

I don't know. That's none of my business how God is a judge. And may God have mercy on you.

But if this is your goal, I can assure you, you're going to be a younger brother and sister of Jesus Christ for all eternity. I want to be there. I'd rather go by scripture than by all the clever things that men teach.

A lot of these false teachings come out of the Old Testament. Whenever you find a preacher quoting mostly from the Old Testament, you can be sure there's something wrong. We must see the Old Testament as being fulfilled in the New Testament.

Then it's okay. And that's how I see it. I mean we don't tell people to kill lambs today because we say the Lamb of God died on the cross, Jesus Christ.

We don't tell people to tithe today because that was income tax. God blessed them. And God was the head of the government in Israel.

And just like we pay income tax, God said you have to pay income tax. The rich and the poor had to pay the same level. 10% everybody.

But today God has become our father and no father collects income tax from his children. So if a preacher tells you, you've got to pay income tax, then God is not your father. My God is my father.

He doesn't collect any income tax from me. Does that mean a child will never take care of his father's needs? Well you tell me, you children, if your father is in need, would you do something for him? We'd give more than 10% if needed. But we give it joyfully for a father.

Think of some of your fathers who sacrificed a lot to educate you, care for you. If you are grateful, Jesus said once to the Pharisees, you people are so evil that the Bible says honor your father and mother and you read that in Mark chapter 7 when your father is in need, you tell him, hey I've given that money to God, I can't give it to you. He says you have neglected, canceled out God's commandment.

It's right for a child to honor his father and take care of an aged father who sacrificed so much for you. And when I think of my heavenly father, he's not in financial need. But he's done so much for me that I'd give everything for him.

That is the only spirit in which we serve the father. So this is the goal. The goal of our life is not to reach the world or to bring people to Christ.

Those are all subsidiary. The main goal is that I must become like Christ. And in becoming like Christ, first of all, it's my life and my character.

Remember, for 30 years, Jesus never preached or healed or cast out demons. He just lived a godly life for 33 1/2 years. Out of that 3 1/2 years, he had ministry.

Now if you do mathematics, 3 1/2 divided by 33 1/2 is 10%. So we can say 10% Jesus life, he had what we call ministry. That's about the importance of so-called ministry.

But 100%, he had a life. So his ministry came out of his life. In the Old Testament, it was not like that.

You did not have to have a life to have a ministry, because the Holy Spirit was upon people, not inside people. The first person within whom the Holy Spirit was, was Jesus. And then on the day of Pentecost and many others, till then he was upon people in the Old Testament.

And when the Holy Spirit is upon people, he can equip them to do many things. Elijah and Elisha even raised the dead. It's amazing what they can do.

Preach powerful sermons like John the Baptist. Many wonderful things, but the Holy Spirit is upon. But they cannot overcome sin.

The Holy Spirit was upon David, but the guy went and committed adultery and killed that woman's husband and married her. Or Samson, he had mighty power of the Holy Spirit upon him, but he was living in sin. All these Old Testament examples, even Elijah, the mighty power of God came on him and he could stop the sky from raining and send rain down and bring fire down from heaven.

But when it was all over, he got so discouraged and he said, Lord, take away my life. I'm scared. I'm scared of a woman.

She might kill me. Imagine that. So you see, all the great Old Testament saints, even John the Baptist in prison, he said, Oh Jesus, are you really the Messiah? I'm not so sure.

Imagine John the Baptist saying that. That is the result of the Holy Spirit not being inside people. The greatest Old Testament people had doubts, fears, anxieties because the Holy Spirit is upon them.

But the ministry was fantastic. So don't be impressed today by somebody who has a wonderful ministry. Maybe the Holy Spirit is upon him.

Jesus said in the last day, many will come to me and say, Lord, we cast out demons in your name. We did miracles in your name. And I will say to them, I never knew you.

I never knew you. That means I never had an intimate relationship with you. The word know is used in the Old Testament with the husband-wife relationship.

The most intimate relationship between husband and wife is called knowing. And Jesus said, I never knew you. I mean, you guys did so many things for me.

But I didn't have that intimate relationship with you. And I wonder whether the Lord has to say that to some of us here. We keep on stressing in this church.

You must have an intimate personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It's like something and ministry is when the whole vessel fills up and overflows. That's ministry.

I want all my ministry to be like that. I don't want my ministry to be just the Holy Spirit upon me and me preaching powerful sermons or doing here and there. No, I want an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ which fills up in my heart every day and overflows.

That's called ministry. So remember, this is the goal. And when we go this way, let me show you this promise in Proverbs 4, verse 18.

Proverbs 4, verse 18 says, The path of the righteous is like the sunrise at dawn and it becomes brighter and brighter until the full day when the sun is overhead. This is the path of a truly righteous person. Zero backsliding.

So if your goal is to become like Jesus Christ and all your ministry is not just ministry but the overflow of a personal devotion to Christ. I want every message that I preach not to be something I just sit and study and prepare and come and vomit it all out on Sunday morning. That's rubbish.

It's as bad as vomit. It must come out of a personal devotion to Jesus Christ. Every day of my life I seek to live in a personal devotion to Jesus Christ because that is the tree of life.

That's the tree of life we read in 2 Corinthians 11, verse 3. Satan tried to draw Eve away from the tree of life. It's a personal devotion to Christ. So if I keep that personal devotion to Christ, overflow will be ministry and then my path, here's how I know whether I'm on the right path.

It will become brighter and brighter until the day Christ comes back. Dawn, sunrise is when I'm born again. Christ comes into my heart.

The darkness has gone. The sun has risen. Christ has come into my heart.

And you all know the day when that happened, like we sing happy day, happy day when Jesus washed my sins away. But from that day, most Christians live an up and down and very often down more than up backsliding life. That's not God's will.

And the reason you do that is because you haven't seen the goal. You got into the wrong train. You went to a church that taught more about tithing and healing and ministry and things like that and go to heaven when you die and you did not get into the right train.

You did not get into a church which taught you, you got to become like Christ. That is God's goal. God's goal is not taking us to heaven.

God's goal is not healing us. God's goal is not making us rich. God's goal is not trying to make us possess earthly things or earthly blessings.

God's goal is to make us like Christ. And if you had got into the right train, I'll tell you this, and if you had walked in that, stayed in that train, you would not have backslidden even one day in your life. All backsliding comes because we have lost sight of our goal.

Maybe some of you got into the right train in the beginning and then got off at some station and got into some other train. Well, no wonder you're going in the wrong direction. But if you had stuck in the same train, however inconvenient it is, your life would have been so much more glorious because just like the sun, the picture is the sun rises.

Have you ever seen the sun backsliding? Never happened. It comes higher and higher and higher and higher and higher and higher till it comes perfectly and that's the day when Christ comes back and we become 100% like Him. When He comes, 1 John 3 says we will be like Him.

But from the time we are born again till the time we become like Him, the path God has ordained for us is brighter brighter, brighter, brighter. Zero backsliding. That is God's will for you.

You must believe it, at least today. Even if you have backslidden many times in your life, will you make a decision today, Lord, at least from today I'm going to walk on the path of the righteous. I decided that quite some time ago.

There will be zero backsliding in my life. You tell me with your own children. You know what backsliding means? Backsliding means a child going from 4th standard to 3rd standard.

Not staying in 4th standard. Staying in 4th standard itself is bad for 2-3 years. But going from 4th standard to 3rd standard? I've never heard of a child doing that.

But I've seen a lot of believers like that. They were at a certain level and they've gone down. The day they were converted, they never watched any filthy movies.

Now they started watching filthy movies. They've gone from 4th standard to outside the school. Why is that? Either they're not really born again, they're not filled with the Holy Spirit because they're not eager to be filled with the Holy Spirit, or they sat in the wrong train.

They were not challenged Sunday after Sunday to become more like Christ. Or they took it easy. Now this verse in the New Testament is described in 2nd Corinthians 3.18. Whenever I see an Old Testament verse, I try to find out what is the New Testament equivalent of that verse.

Because everything in the Old Testament was fulfilled in the New Testament. So that's why I say an Old Testament verse by itself means nothing. For example, we've talked about tithing, 10% income tax in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, God said, you must give 10% of what you get in your field or a flock, bring it to God. What is the New Testament equivalent of that? The New Testament equivalent of that is in Romans 12.1, present your body as a living sacrifice to God. Old Testament is tithing, New Testament is a body.

The one thing God asks us to present to Him is not our money. It's our body. Your eyes, your tongue, your passions.

Isn't it much easier to give money? That's why many people give money instead of their body. Supposing the Lord were to say to you, in the next one month, you must never look at anything or anyone whom I don't want you to look at. Your eyes must be 100% pure.

Your tongue must never get angry for one minute, not even one second. Never speak a rude word to anybody, just for one month. And you mustn't listen to any gossip.

Turn away from it. Never go to a place where God doesn't want you to go. Present your body so that your mind also, it says also present your mind in the next verse, Romans 12.2, that you don't think about things which are unclean.

Now, which do you want? Live like that for one month or, other alternative, give 10% of your monthly income. Which is easier? You tell me which is easier. People take the easy route.

Lord, here's your 10%. Take it. Leave me to do what I like with my eyes, my tongue, my thoughts.

I have to get angry with my wife and husband sometimes. Give me freedom to do that. I'll give you your 10% income tax.

This is why so many Christians do not want the New Testament standard. They prefer to go to the Old Testament. Jesus said that.

They drink the old wine and the new wine, Luke chapter 5, and they say the old wine is better. That is the reason for the pathetic standard of Christians in the world today and in India. The pathetic standard of Christians.

You know, so many people worry about India having 2% Christians. I'm not worried. If India became 50% Christians, like the present 2%, there'd be more disgrace to the name of Christ.

I say, thank God it's 2%. At least the disgrace to Christ's name is very little. But in this 2%, we want to gather, we want to ignore this 2%, we want people to be a light in the midst of darkness in India.

And that's why God has raised up CFC, and that's why God's raised up many of you to be witnesses for Him. Okay, the New Testament equivalent of it, in 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18. This is Proverbs 4.18 in the New Testament.

2 Corinthians 3, verse 18. This is the verse that tells us more clearly than any other verse in the Bible what the Holy Spirit's ministry is. The mirror here is referring to the word of God as we read in James chapter 1, verse 23-25.

So, without a veil on our face, in the Old Testament it says there was a veil on their face. They couldn't see. Just like the veil in the temple in the Old Testament.

They could not go into God's presence. There was a veil. But now, when Jesus died, the veil was rent, torn into two.

And Jesus was saying, the way is open, I have died. And the way is open now, right into God's presence. Without a veil, I go straight and look at God face to face.

You know, God told Moses, nobody can look at me, they'll die. I go in and I say, Lord, I'm ready to die to myself so that I can look at your face. That's a promise in the New Testament.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall, what? See God. How can you see God? God told Moses, you cannot see my face and live. He said, yes Lord, I don't want to live.

I want to die to myself. And then you'll be able to see God inwardly. So, we, without this veil, it says we see in the Scripture, we see the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We see it. When I read Scripture, I'm not studying the Scripture to prepare a sermon. In my younger foolish days, I did that.

And foolish people still do it. They study the Scripture to prepare a sermon, to impress other people. Now, I'm not saying you should not study, or you should not prepare a sermon.

That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that's not the number one reason why you should study the Scriptures. Your number one reason to study the Scriptures must be to see the glory of Jesus Christ in it.

And then if you have to preach a sermon somewhere, go ahead and prepare for it. But that's not the main goal with which we study the Scriptures. We look at the glory of Jesus in the Scriptures, that's the first ministry of the Holy Spirit, that my eyes are open to see the glory of Jesus Christ.

And then, I'll tell you honestly, in the last many, many years, again and again, God's been showing me different parts of the glory of Jesus Christ that I never saw. I mean, even last week I saw something which I'd never seen for 57 years in my study of the Scriptures. It's like that when the Holy Spirit opens your eyes.

And a familiar passage in the Gospels that I'd read many times, and suddenly the Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see something that I'd never seen for 57 years. Because it's like a well that never runs dry. Are you finding the Scriptures like that? Some people say the Bible is boring.

I say that's because you don't allow the Holy Spirit to teach you. You sit with your mind, which is a very boring teacher, and it will be boring. But if you get the Holy Spirit to teach you, it's a very interesting book.

That's the first thing. But once the Holy Spirit shows you the glory of Jesus Christ, and I see my own need, like Isaiah, he said, Oh Lord, I'm a sinful man. The Holy Spirit doesn't leave us there.

It says He then changes us into that likeness. In other words, the Holy Spirit shows us, here's what Jesus was like. And I say, Oh Lord, I'm so discouraged because I'm not like Him.

And the Holy Spirit says, don't get discouraged. I showed you that in order to make you like Him. Allow me to make you like Him.

And I say, sure. Lord, every part of my life, take my eyes, my tongue, take every part of me and control me with your Holy Spirit. I want a Spirit controlled life, a Spirit controlled mind, a Spirit controlled body.

And little by little, just like that train, if your ticket is to Delhi, every minute, you're getting closer to Delhi. Every minute. I was so many, maybe, I don't know, 1,500 kilometers away when I started.

But now, some minutes have gone by, an hour has gone by. It's only 1,400 kilometers now. Hey, I'm getting closer.

And by the next day, I still haven't reached. Boy, it's only about 800 kilometers now. You see how any train you get into, if you're in the right train, every minute, every second, you're getting closer and closer to your destination.

And that is the meaning of brighter and brighter. That if I'm going on the right path, the path of righteousness, every year, I'll be a little more like Christ. Can you look back over the last one year and think of at least one area where you became a little more Christ-like? Ask your wife.

Ask your husband. Whether there was some area where they saw a change which they hadn't seen for so many years. Then you're on the right train.

Otherwise, you're not. By right train, I don't mean this building. Please recognize that.

A lot of people sitting in this building, we don't know where they'll end up. But the right train is that personal choice you make every day to become like Christ. And it says, there it says brighter and brighter in Proverbs 4.18. Here it says from glory to glory.

From one degree of glory to another, to another, to another till one day we have the full glory of Jesus Christ in our life. That is the path God has designed for the righteous. And I want to say that's for every person who's born again.

And if that's not happening in your life, you're on the wrong track. For example, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church. I haven't got there yet.

But I'm on the path. And if you are not loving your wife a little more like Jesus Christ loved the church this year than you did last year, I want to tell you you're going in the wrong direction. Your train is going in the wrong direction.

For example, if you loved your wife more on the day you got married think of all of you husbands who are here. If you loved your wives more on the day you were married and less today because you saw so many weaknesses in her I want to tell you, you're on the wrong track. Your train is going in the opposite direction.

Because if it is going in the right direction you're not perfect to love as Christ loved the church none of us is, but you'd be moving in that direction where you'd be denying yourself more to love your wife as Christ loved the church and that's just one area. Or a wife. Submit to your husband as the church submits to Christ.

You'd love to do it on the day you were married but if you find you're rebellious and fighting and quarreling today and you think just by sitting in CFC you're on the right train, I want to say to you in Jesus' name, you are not on the right train. I want to tell you the truth. It's not because I hate you, it's because I love you.

I want you to know the truth and wake up before one day Christ comes back and you find that you're nowhere near His kingdom. I want all of you to be in God's kingdom. That's why I speak the truth.

That's why I decided long ago that I'd never take any money for preaching. Because once you start taking money for preaching, you can't tell people the truth. Yeah, that's true.

Because I want to tell you the truth because so many people are going astray because preachers are not telling them the truth. Here is the truth. God wants you to become like Jesus Christ.

In every area. So, consider these things. In every area God wants you to be like Christ.

If you're handling of money, if you love money more today than you did last year, I want to tell you you are on the wrong track. Maybe you haven't come completely free from the love of money. None of us have.

But you should be a little more free than last year. And much more free than 10 years ago. If you're in a train going to Delhi, you should be closer to Delhi after 6 hours.

Not further away. Predestined. What is your destination? How much did Jesus love money? Is that your destination to be completely free from it? Or loving your enemies? If I cannot love some enemy of mine, I'm not going on the right track.

I'm not even making an effort. Now, loving your enemies does not mean going around visiting them and fellowshiping with them. Jesus never visited or fellowshiped with the Pharisees.

He could not. They were his enemies. They hated him.

They'd kick him out of the house. But he loved them. A lot of people misunderstand love and fellowship.

I have many enemies. I can say before God I love all of them. I can also say I fellowship with almost zero of them.

No. You can't have fellowship. Because they're not interested.

But we must love them. We've got to bless everyone who curses us. This is what it means to be like Christ.

Father, forgive them. For they don't know what they're doing. Do you know the number of times I've had to say that? Whenever I hear someone who's said or done something, and I hear that very frequently against me, I say, Father, forgive them.

He doesn't know what he's doing. I'm not upset with him. And the picture the Lord has given me is, don't get angry with them.

Do you ever get angry when you see a leper with his hands all eaten up and nose all bitten up? Do you get angry with him? No. And the Lord said, that guy's like a leper. That's why he hates you.

That's why he curses you. That's why he's speaking ill of you. You're crazy if you're angry with him.

Look at him like a leper. Love him. Be merciful to him.

Poor man, his hands are eaten, his nose is eaten. Spiritually he's like a leper. In God's eyes, love him.

Bless him. Pray that the Father will forgive him because he doesn't know what he's saying. He's stupid.

One day he'll stand before the Lord. He'll see what a crime it was for the things he said. And that day he'll wake up.

Forgive him. Now it's out. I tell you, it's wonderful to obey God's word.

The Holy Spirit will make us more and more like Christ. In a particular situation he'll show you, this is what you must do now. That's why it's important to read the scriptures.

So now I want to come to the motive with which we do these things. The motive is very clear in John chapter 14. You see, in the New Testament, the important thing is not just what you do, but why you did it.

It's very important to understand this. In the Old Testament, what you did was important. In the New Testament, what you do is important, but more important is why you did it.

For example, let me take the matter of tithing. I call it Old Testament income tax. Okay, tithing is Old Testament income tax.

Now, let's take income tax today. When a man files his income tax, I don't think anybody loves to pay income tax. They have to do it, otherwise they'll get into trouble.

And so they file the income tax return. They don't have to say, Hallelujah, praise God, I can give so much money to the government. No.

You don't have to be very excited. You can be upset, oh the government is charging so much. Angry, okay, but you're honest.

And you file it and pay the money. The government is not bothered whether you're angry or upset. So long as you pay the money, they're happy.

Whether you come with a smile to the bank or with an angry face to the bank, the government is happy so long as the amount is correct. That is how tithing was in the Old Testament. When they came and gave the grain to the Levites or their sheep, they could have said, yeah, here it is.

Take your 10%, you Levite. I'm free. God would have said, fine.

You obeyed the commandment. There was no requirement in the Old Testament you have to give it cheerfully with a happy, smiling face. No.

Because what you did was important. But in the New Covenant, why you do it is more important. That means God loves a cheerful giver.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9.7 So how I do, in the Old Testament it was how much you give. In the New Testament it is how you give. Motive is very important.

So what is the motive for our obedience? John 14 and verse 15. Very important verse. If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

That is the only motive for obeying God's commandments. Do you know why Jesus obeyed the Father even unto death? Because he loved the Father. It wasn't a grinding, Oh Father you are telling me to take up the cross every day.

Oh Father you are telling me to die to myself every day. Oh no. He was delighted.

Every morning he was happy to get up and say Father I'm delighted to put myself to death today and to walk in your way because your way is the best. And when you become a little more like Christ, that's how you'll begin every morning. When people cross your path and trouble you and irritate you.

Thank you Father. One more opportunity to die to myself and partake of the life of Jesus. Hallelujah.

If you love me, keep my commandments. Old Testament was, you read in Deuteronomy 28, if you fear me, you better keep my commandments. Otherwise I'll punish you with you read Deuteronomy 28, you'll be punished with madness and blindness and sickness and curse and all types of things and they feared and said no no we don't want all that, okay then obey me.

But in the New Testament it's not like that. If you love me, keep my commandments. And you ask the Apostle Paul, Paul you prayed three times to get rid of that sickness which you call the thorn in the flesh.

This terrible eye disease that you had. And God hasn't healed you. You're such a great mighty man of God and you prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed and God said no.

You've got to keep that sickness. You still love him? Paul said sure. My love for Jesus and obedience to his commandments has got nothing to do with whether he heals me or not.

I don't care if I'm not healed of a hundred sicknesses. I love Jesus. Why? Not because he heals me.

Because he loved me and gave himself for me. That's all. Even if he never does any other thing.

In other words, what he did on Calvary was enough. And after that he never answered one single prayer of mine. Fine.

I still love him. I don't love him because he answered my prayer. That's Old Testament.

I love him because he first loved me. Gave himself for me. That's what Paul would say.

You ask Timothy the same question. Timothy, you've been suffering with this constant stomach problem. You read that in 1 Timothy 5. Do you still love Jesus? Sure.

What about your healing? Oh, that doesn't matter. He died for me and I'll give my life for him. That's how both of them, both Paul and Timothy were martyred for the sake of Christ.

Why did they take all those risks in their life? What is it for? Is it for some reward? No. It's because they loved. And I want to say to you if you do something in order to get some reward from God like some pastors will say if you give money God will bless you more.

You're not living in the New Testament. You're living in the Old Covenant. In the New Covenant there's only one motive for obedience.

Only one. I love Jesus because he loved me. And even if he gives me no answers to my prayer, nothing is answered I will still serve him till the end of my life.

That's the happy Christian. That's the one whose life is going to get brighter and brighter and brighter and brighter till Christ comes again. So never forget this.

This is the foundation for our Christian life. I obey him because I love him. And I don't want anything from him.

If he gives me anything it's like a bonus. You know the Bible speaks about laws. Now I'm not saying God does not give a reward.

I'll show you. Do you know the last promise in the Bible? Let me show you the last promise in the Bible. Revelation 22.

The last promise in the Bible is in Revelation 22 verse 12 I'm coming quickly, Jesus says and my reward is with me to give to every man according to what he has done. According to his work. That's the last promise in the New Testament.

So God is going to reward Jesus is coming. When he comes he's going to reward people not with money or houses or lands. It's going to be a reward which will be the greatest reward we can have in heaven.

I've thought about that you know. Jesus used examples like the Bible speaks about crown of life and I've gone to prepare mansions for you. Those are all word pictures.

The fire of hell is a word picture. It's going to be much worse than physical fire. I'll tell you that.

Hell is being forsaken by God which is worse than being burnt in the fire. The worst example Jesus could take was fire so he used lake of fire but it's going to be much worse than that. In the same way the blessings of heaven.

He talks about crown of life and I've gone to prepare mansions for you but it's going to be much better than mansions and crown. I mean what will I do with a 10 bedroom house in heaven? I don't want it. I say you can have it.

What am I going to do with so many crowns on top of my head? The Bible says they cast their crowns before the Lord. On earth a crown is a big thing. On earth a 10 bedroom house is a wonderful thing.

It is a picture of what is going to be valuable in heaven. Have you ever thought what is going to be valuable in heaven? Supposing the Lord says to you on earth if somebody says you ask for anything I'll give it to you. You'll probably ask for gold, houses and lands naturally because those are the things valuable on earth.

But supposing you go to heaven. What do you think is the most valuable thing that you would ask the Lord for in heaven? I've thought about that. What is the one thing which will be most valuable in heaven? I say I'm going to be like Jesus.

That's going to take place when Christ comes again. But after that for all eternity what is going to be the most valuable? The equivalent of crowns and mansions on earth. I believe it will be closeness to Jesus Christ.

And this is my conviction. And the Lord says my reward is with me. The last promise in the Bible.

According as each man's work will be. I see it that not everybody is going to get the same reward. Very clear.

According. You think every Christian is equally whole hearted? You think every Christian has sacrificed as much for Christ? I mean you've seen people around you who have sacrificed hundred times more than you have for Christ. And if the reward is going to be according to what they have done that guy is going to get a greater reward than you.

What is that reward going to be? Closeness to Jesus Christ. And I understand it like this. That for all eternity there are some people who are going to be much closer to Jesus Christ than others.

And what will it be based on? It will be based on how they lived their Christian life on earth. Not just what they did but why did they do it? Did they give money in order to get something from God? No reward. They are doing business with God and God is not a business man.

Did they do it out of love? And gratitude? Oh, it would be a great reward. What they did? How much they sacrificed? Why they did it? And what will the reward be? Closeness to Christ. Now if you say, well I'm not so interested in closeness to Christ as long as I get to heaven, that's okay.

Well, the equivalent I could say in today's terms is, so long as I live in Bangalore, it's enough. Well there are people living on the streets in Bangalore. And there are people living in good houses in Bangalore.

Would you be happy just living in Bangalore? A person says, I'm living in Bangalore. Great city. Where are you living? I'm living on the streets.

It's not exactly the same as living in a house. And that's a picture of how it will be in heaven. Whatever is the equivalent of that.

Not everybody is going to be as close to Christ. I believe in rewards. But the reward will not.

If you work for reward, you get no reward. That's an interesting thing. You work because you love Jesus.

You sacrifice because you love Jesus. That's the motive. And the person who, Lord, who says, Lord, I want to love you and obey all your commandments.

The reason I read the Bible is to find out is there some commandment I have not obeyed? Have you ever read the Bible like that? I have. Lord, is there something you have told me to do and I have not done it? For example, the Bible says, owe no man anything. I took that seriously in my Christian life.

In all my Christian life, I have never been in debt for one single day. If I borrowed something from someone, a book or something, I'd return it. I have nothing with me that belongs to somebody else.

Because of one verse which says, don't owe anybody anything. If somebody has done me some service, somebody did a job for me, I must repay in some way to him. Maybe I can do something in return for him.

Because owing is not just money. Somebody did some service for me, I must do something for him. So that I'm not in debt to him.

Or I must pay him money. If you take advantage of people, you know, that happens unfortunately sometimes in a good church. People say, ah, this is a nice church.

I can get people to help me and care for me and come and look after me when I have a baby. What is that? And what do you do for them in return? You give them some measly amount when you're earning 20 times, 100 times what that person earns. You should go and hang your head in shame.

Really? That type of thing happens. Happens in the CFC. Believe it or not.

Because people are not on the right train. They're not seeking to become like Jesus Christ. Jesus said, if a person gives one of my children a cup of water a cup of water is the cheapest thing you can ever give to anybody.

Jesus said, I'll give that person a reward. I've learned something from that. I've learned from that, first of all, to be thankful even to someone who gives me a cup of water.

And never to forget it. And always to in some way reward those who serve me. Where did I learn it from? I learned it from Jesus Christ.

Are you like that? That's how God is. You see, it's a wonderful thing. And am I the loser? No.

Maybe my bank account will go a little down if I bless others with it. But I'm not a loser. God takes care of me in wonderful ways.

I can tell you that honestly. So, don't serve for reward. But there is a reward.

Serve because you love Jesus. So if we seek to understand what are some of the laws you know, everything in this world, I mentioned the other day works according to laws. That's why we know exactly when the sun will rise tomorrow morning up to the last second.

We can know exactly where the star will be, where this planet will be even 25 years from now. Because we know that God has made this whole universe run according to laws. It's exactly the same in the spiritual realm.

Exactly. And if you can understand some of those laws, you can benefit from it. You know there are so many advantages of knowing the law of gravity.

Because water always flows down. We know that. There are many advantages of knowing that law.

Water flowing down and different things, how gravity operates. Scientists have discovered so many things which based on laws. Let me tell you some of them.

One of the most important laws in God's economy is what's mentioned in 1 Peter 5, verse 5. I don't have the time to go through all of them but you can meditate on them. Number one. God gives His grace to the humble.

That's a law. It's a law which works universally among Christians. Now if you are humble and you don't ask for grace, you'll still get it.

That's a wonderful thing. You don't have to ask for it. God gives His grace to the humble.

But you're not humble and you ask God for grace, you won't get it. To me, I use the picture of grace like a river. Haven't you seen when the rain falls on the roads and where does the water accumulate on the roads? In the lowest part.

If there's a puddle in some road, it's because there was a low part there. There was a pothole there. That got filled up.

Because water tends to flow. You don't have to pray to the water, come on, please come down there. No, it automatically flows to the lowest place.

And I'll tell you something. You don't have to pray for grace. If you humble yourself, it'll automatically come.

We can pray for grace, that's okay. But if you don't humble yourself, you don't get it. It's a law.

Just like the law of gravity. God gives His grace to the humble. And if there are two people, the humbler one will get it first.

Or more of it. Another person who's not so humble will get grace, but not so much. Because His grace is directly proportional to humility.

The Bible says in Philippians 2, God exalted Jesus to the highest place in the universe because He humbled Himself to the lowest when He came to earth. It's not because He's the Son of God. It's the same law operated in Jesus Christ.

He came down lowest, so He's exalted to the highest. You know what Jesus once said when two people came to Him, to His disciples, saying, can you give us a seat on your left hand and right hand? He said, I can't give that. My Father determines it.

But I know who the Father is going to give it to. I don't know the names, but I know who the Father will give it to. To those who humbled themselves on earth closest to the level Jesus humbled Himself.

Nobody can go as far as Jesus, but anyone who's humbled himself maximum on earth among all the billions of people who lived on the earth, they'll be on the left hand and right hand of Jesus. I don't have the slightest doubt about it. I don't know who they are.

It may not be some apostle. It may be some poor widow in Africa who nobody's heard of, who's humbled herself the most. Don't think that you have to be a great preacher or any such thing.

Humility has got nothing to do with gift. Gift is another thing. But humility is a matter of character.

Jesus humbled Himself before He preached. 30 years He humbled Himself obeying an imperfect father and mother. That was humility.

And all types of things. You know, when they slapped Him, He didn't say anything. He said, okay.

He didn't threaten them, saying, hey, you slapped me. Do you know who I am? No, no, no. He didn't threaten anybody.

He was willing to be ill-treated. He humbled Himself. And if you are determined to go this way that Jesus went, I guarantee you, whether you like it or not, whether you pray for it or not, grace will come upon you and grace can do wonderful things.

Grace is what makes you grow in wisdom and become more and more like Jesus Christ. Because the Bible says in Luke chapter 2 verse 40, grace was upon Jesus as a baby. As He grew up, grace was upon Him all the time.

That's why He lived such a wonderful life. I see the secret there. If I have the same grace upon me, I can become more and more like Christ.

I cannot make myself like Christ. That is impossible. God's grace can make me like Him.

God's grace can give me character. God's grace can give me the ability to overcome my anger. Sin will not rule over you because you are under grace.

Anyone who is defeated by sin, you have to say you did not get grace. If in some situation I have sometimes accidentally said a rude word to somebody and I have gone and wept before God. I said, Lord, one rude word.

Why in the world did I say that? I shouldn't have said that. The Lord says to me, you didn't get grace at that moment. Why didn't I get grace? Because at that time I was not humble.

Thank you, Lord. That has happened to me a few times and I have learned the lesson. I hope I have learned it.

Always choose the way of humility. Because I will always get grace. I will not lose my temper.

I will not speak rude words. I will not fight for earthly things. God gives His grace to humble.

A second promise I want to give you is how to overcome the temptations of this world. It says in, it's amazing, the answer the Bible gives 1 John 5 and verse 4 This is the victory that has overcome the world. Verse 4, even our faith.

Overcoming the world is by faith. Okay, I will show you the law in Matthew chapter 9. The law is in Matthew chapter 9 and verse 29. I love to quote this law many times.

Be it done for you according to your faith. That's the second law. First one, God gives His grace to the humble.

Here is the second one. You will not get as much as you want. You will get as much as you have faith for.

Faith is like a vessel. The bigger your vessel, the more you get from God. The smaller your vessel, oh, God can only do this much for me.

Okay, you will only get that much. Somebody else says, no, God can do so much for me. He comes with a huge vessel, He gets so much.

You know that. When it rains, everybody won't get the same amount of rain. You put a small cup there, that's all you get.

You put a big huge vessel there, you get much more rain. Was it because God poured more rain on that man? No. He put a bigger vessel.

According to your faith. Be it unto you. You come to God with very little faith.

I am not sure whether God can do this. I tell you, God will not do it. Particularly if it is a promise in God's word.

I took Romans 6.14 very seriously. Sin cannot rule over you. I said, Lord, you can do it.

I can't do it. But I have faith that you can do it. And He does it.

So remember in every situation, it is not according to your desire. It is not according to your need. It is not even according to your prayer.

It is not even according to the prayers of other people. It is according to your faith. That's a law.

Just like the law of grace. OK. Here is a third law that I can tell you.

Matthew 6.33. These are all New Testament laws. If you seek the kingdom of God first, all your earthly needs will be added to you. Not what you want.

There is a difference between what we want and what we need. You understand with children. There are many things children want, but you don't give them what they want.

You give them what they need. God has not promised to give us all that we want. That's the mistake a lot of Christians make.

They go to God and say, I want this. Well, there is no promise that you will get it. But Philippians 4.19 says, My God will supply all your need.

But to whom does He give it? Matthew 6.33 Seek God's kingdom first and His holiness, His purity, His righteousness and all your earthly needs will be added to you. You don't have to look for them. You have to work, of course, but God will add to you.

And I want to say to each one of you, my dear brothers and sisters, at the end of your life, you should have that testimony. I mean, I'm nearing the end of my life. When Christ comes again is when I hope I end my life.

But before that, I want a testimony in my life that I spent my life seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness. And every earthly need was added to me and my family. Now let me explain.

God seeking God's kingdom does not mean being a full-time worker. It does not mean preaching. It does not mean traveling.

It does not mean going here and there preaching the gospel. No! Romans 14.17 says, The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And all of you can seek it.

You're a mother with children. You cannot travel anywhere. You can seek the kingdom of God first.

It means the rule of God upon your life. Those days they used the word kingdom. Today we use the word government.

Do you understand the government of God? Do you know the government of India? We live according to the rules of the government of India. Not some other government. So seek the government of God in your life.

That means live by God's rules in your life. And all your earthly need will be added to you. For example, one of God's rules is forgive others.

You'll be forgiven. So seek God's kingdom first and His holiness all the time. And all that you need will be added to you.

You know how there's so much of unrighteousness in the world today. Will you determine that you'll never be unrighteous? That you'll never do some small wrong thing to make some profit? Just like we teach our children, don't cheat in the examination to get a few more marks. You teach your children that.

It's okay. It doesn't matter if they get less marks. Let them be righteous.

You've got to be like that in your life as well. I will not sign this wrong statement to get a little more money. I'll be righteous.

I'll be upright. Even if I get less money, that's fine. You know how in so many offices people put claims for my travel expenses? They tell lies.

Because everybody's doing it. But everybody's going to hell. Whenever you say everybody's doing it, don't forget everybody's going to hell as well.

So don't use the excuse everybody's doing it. But I'm a Christian. That is darkness.

And I'm righteous. I'm going to be righteous. And if I get a little less money, God will bless that little less.

You know, if I get unrighteous money into my bank account, you know what'll happen? I'll tell you. It'll be a curse to me and to my children. I don't want a curse upon my children.

That's why I often said, Lord, I don't want one rupee in my bank account that is unrighteous. No. I don't want any black money.

I don't have any black money. I never had in my life. And I don't want any.

Zero. You think you'll suffer loss? You think all these people with black money are the only ones who are going to be blessed? I tell you, you'll be righteous and God will meet all your need. In fact, in that passage, he's talking about anxiety.

Don't be anxious. Don't be anxious. And in the context, what the Lord is saying is, if you want to be anxious about something, be anxious about seeking God's kingdom.

That you never do what is wrong. That's a law. Now here's the fourth law.

Galatians chapter 6. Galatians chapter 6 says, verse 7, Whatever a man sows, he will reap. If you sow to the flesh, verse 8, you reap corruption. You sow to the Holy Spirit, you reap eternal life.

It's a law. You can't change it. It's like in the world.

If you sow potatoes, you get potatoes. You sow tomatoes, you get tomatoes. You sow rice, you get rice.

You can't sow rice and get wheat. Impossible. So you can't sow to the flesh, to the lust of the flesh, do all types of wrong things, and reap eternal life.

That is as crazy as saying, I sow rice and I get wheat. No farmer is so stupid. Don't be stupid in the Christian life.

What you sow, you will reap. That's part of God's law. It doesn't change.

If you sow to the flesh, you'll reap corruption one day. And when you reap that corruption, don't wonder why you reaped it. Why is that fellow not reaping corruption? He sowed to the spirit.

You sow to the flesh. But another thing I want to tell you is, you don't reap as soon as you sow. It takes time.

A farmer sows a seed and he gets a crop a long time later. He's got to water it, care for it. And the crop is 100 times what he sowed.

One seed produces a 100-fold crop. So if you sow to the flesh, you can reap a 100-fold corruption. And if you sow to the Holy Spirit, you reap a 100-fold eternal life.

It's a law. Once you understand these laws, you say, I want to live by these laws of God. Because it's for my own good.

OK, meditate on that. I don't want to spend too much time explaining it all. God wants us to think about Jesus used to speak in little words and then let the disciples meditate on it.

OK, here's a fifth law. Acts chapter 20. It's the words of Jesus.

It's one of the few words of Jesus found in the Acts of the Apostles. Law number 5. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20 verse 35.

Here's a law of God. He's not saying there is no blessing in receiving. There is a blessing in receiving.

Many of you are receiving the word of God right now and you're being blessed. And when you get your salary from your office, a job God gave you, you got a good salary, that's a blessing. Because you can rent a house or build a house and live comfortably, that's a blessing.

But there is a greater blessing in giving. That's a law of God. It's more blessed to give than to receive.

You can't change it. Jesus said that. So when you learn to sacrifice something and give, you get a greater blessing from God.

Not in terms of money. God's blessings are never in terms of money. There is some greater blessing that you get and you'll discover one day when Christ comes back that every Christian who got a greater blessing than you was one who learned more than you to give.

Yeah, it's true. Learn it now. I don't mean just money.

Many of you don't have much. Maybe you're poor. You don't have much money to give.

God's not asking for that. What about sacrificing something else in your life? Time? Energy? Something for God? Lord, I want to do something for you. Like we sing in that song.

That all my life I want to give something for God. That my life will be showing something given for God. At the cost of personal self-denial, it's more blessed to give than to receive.

I remember one brother many years ago came to me and said, Brother Zach, I can't remember verses. I read them. I try to memorize them and I still forget.

How do you remember so much? I'll tell you how. It is more blessed to give than to receive. You read a scripture and it blesses you and you keep it to yourself, you'll forget it.

That's why you're forgetting it. I don't keep it to myself. When I get a blessing from scripture, I share it with somebody.

Maybe in an email. Maybe in a phone call. Or, in my case, even from a pulpit.

But many of you don't get into the pulpit. You can share it with people on email, phone call. Something you got from God.

You give that scripture to somebody. God says, I'll bless you. That will remain in your mind.

You know why so many scriptures that you read, you forget? Because you never share it with anyone. You selfishly keep it to yourself. You're a hoarder.

You know what a miser is? A miser is a hoarder. He accumulates, accumulates, accumulates everything for himself. You receive so much in the meeting.

You keep it. Keep it all to yourself. No! You got a blessing, I know.

But if you learn to give it out to somebody. For example, you receive something from here this morning. And you share it with one person.

In an email. Or in a phone call. Brother, this is what I heard.

Sister, this is what I heard today. I'd like to share it with you. One minute.

There's a blessing there. It is more blessed to give than to receive. And it's not only money.

It is money also, but I can give my energy. I can give many things. I can give my life to help others.

It's not just, you know, sometimes we serve God by serving other poorer people. In many ways. But it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The world says it is more blessed to receive than keep on accumulating, accumulating, accumulating money, accumulating knowledge. Accumulating Bible knowledge. It's false.

It's more blessed to give than to receive. And then, number six. Here's another promise.

Romans 8, 28, well-known verse. It's not for everybody. But if you love God and you want to fulfill His purpose in your life, everything, by everything, God means everything that will happen to you will work out for your good.

And what is that good in the next verse? Make you more like Jesus Christ. Always read Romans 8, 28 with verse 29. Always.

Most Christians separate the two. What God has joined together, let no man separate. And God has joined Romans 8, 28 and 29 together.

A lot of Christians have separated it. And that's why they don't understand it. I always put it together.

If you love God and you're called according to His purpose, everything that people do to you will work for your good. In other words, somebody did something evil. Maybe somebody in your office hindered your promotion or sacked you, fired you from your job or some evil.

It'll work for your good. People take you to court. It'll work for your good.

It's happened to me. It'll always work for your good if you love God and you want to fulfill His purpose. So when somebody does something to you and you say, He did evil to me.

Let's assume it was something very bad somebody did to you or your family cheated you of your property or something like that. And you complain, He did something evil to me. What are you actually saying? You know what you're saying? Brothers, I want to say, I don't love God.

I don't want to fulfill His purpose in my life. That's what you're saying. Because if you love God and you wanted to fulfill His purpose in life, that fellow cannot do evil to you.

How did he succeed in doing evil to you? When the Bible says, if you love God and called according to His purpose, everything will work for your good. How is it that did not work for your good? Because you did not love God. Because you did not want to fulfill His purpose.

So I will feel ashamed to say that somebody did evil to me. I want to say, I'm nearly 78 years old now. Nobody in the world has ever done evil to me.

And I'm not boasting. I'm just quoting Romans 8.28. Not that they made me richer. If somebody stole my property, He hasn't made me richer.

If somebody stole your family inheritance, He didn't make you richer. But it made me more like Christ. Yeah.

All the evil. Being taken to court made me more like Christ. Facing insults and false accusations.

I've faced so many false accusations in my life. I don't hate any of them. It's made me more like Christ.

Sure. How can you fulfill a scripture which says, bless them that curse you, if nobody curses you? If you say, Lord, I want to live a life where nobody will curse me. You're like saying, Lord, I want to live a life where I never obey one scripture.

I don't want to live like that. I say, Lord, I want to obey every scripture. Well, then people will have to curse you.

People will have to hate you. How can you love those who hate you if you have nobody hate you? So I never pray, Lord, don't let anybody hate me. Because then I won't be able to obey a scripture.

Don't let anybody be my enemy. I never pray that. Because then I won't be able to obey the scripture which says, love your enemies.

You know, when you look at everything in the world from God's point of view, what people call a curse is actually a blessing. Yeah. Everything that happens will work for your good.

What a wonderful promise. Wonderful. Meditate more on it.

And never again complain. Remember this, what I said. Every time you complain, somebody did harm to you, somebody did evil to you, what you're actually saying is, brothers and sisters, I don't love God.

I don't want to fulfill His purpose. That's what you're saying. I will never say that.

I want to love God with all my heart because He gave His life for me. I want to fulfill His purpose in my life. Therefore, I always say, everybody in the world is doing good to me.

You know how rich I am? Millions of people in the world are doing good to me. They try to harm me. It's like these water filters.

You put dirty water in and pure water comes out. That's how it is. Romans 8.28 is like that for me.

So, I don't know. Some of you have complaints against others. Right? Be honest.

Let me ask you something. How many of you can honestly say, I don't have any complaint against my mother-in-law. She has done so much good to me in my life.

Can you say that? Some of you can't say that. You cannot say, my mother-in-law has done me so much good in my life. Why can't you say it? I'll tell you why.

Be honest. I don't love God. It's got nothing to do with my mother-in-law.

You don't love God. You don't want to fulfill His purpose. That's the only reason.

Say that from today onwards. This is what we teach in CFC. Your life can be blessed.

My boss did evil to me. Yeah, that's because you don't love God. You're not called according to His purpose.

I tell you, a man is victorious if he lives according to the laws of God. One last one. Number 7. Matthew 5 and verse 7. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

It's a law of God. The more merciful you are to others, the more merciful God will be to you. I want God to be tremendously merciful to me because I'm not perfect.

That's why. I'm not committing obvious sin, but I make mistakes. I make mistakes that cause problems for other people sometimes.

You know, sometimes you're driving. You don't want to hurt anybody, but accidentally you hurt someone. It can happen.

When you're driving a scooter or anything. There are so many things. Even in a home you can accidentally hurt somebody.

Or in your workplace. And I want God to be merciful to me for all my mistakes. God says, be merciful to others.

Don't jump on others when they do something wrong. Let it become a habit with you. That you're immediately merciful.

Why? Because there's a law which says, if you're merciful to others, God will be merciful to you. You know, that was written even in the Old Testament. You read in Psalm 18.

Scripture is so wonderful. You never feel like stopping when we study Scripture. Psalm 18.

If you read this verse, all of you must know this verse. Psalm 18 and verse 25. Psalm 18, verse 25.

With the kind, God shows himself kind. And verse 26. With the crooked, God shows himself astute, twisted.

So if you find that God is dealing with you in a rough way. OK? Some of you feel God is dealing with me roughly. You must have dealt with somebody else roughly too.

Look back and see. Did you treat somebody roughly? You know the answer. God treats roughly.

Those who treat other people roughly. God is merciful to those who are merciful. God is kind to those who are kind to others.

I want God to be kind to me all the time. And I say, Lord, I want to be kind to everybody. One last verse.

James chapter 2. James chapter 2. It says in verse 13. This is a word of judgment. Judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy to others.

Mercy triumphs over judgment. You know what mercy triumphs over judgment means? That means when somebody does something wrong, it may be accidental, it may be deliberate. Sometimes deliberate, very often accidental.

Somebody did something wrong that caused problem for me. Maybe on the road, maybe in the office, maybe at home. And immediately, my attitude towards that person is judgment.

How can you do this to me? OK? Judgment to you will be merciless from God. Because God is the final one who judges. And it says there will be zero mercy in the way God judges you.

On earth and in eternity. But if your attitude is forget it, it's OK. Perfectly OK.

Maybe somebody serving you hot coffee in some restaurant spills it on your pant. OK. We all make mistakes.

Forget it. That's one example. Those are small things.

There could be bigger things. Learn to be merciful. The reason why some of you have not got mercy from God is because you have not been merciful to others.

You're not merciful even to your husbands or wives. Or to your children. You're so hard on your children.

No wonder God is so hard on you. No wonder you don't seem to... Your train doesn't seem to be making much progress towards your goal. Year after year after year you're defeated by the same old sins.

It's like your children having problem with addition. Son, can you add 25 plus 25? No dad. Can't add 25 plus 25.

Five years you're still struggling with 25 plus 25. That's right. That's how some people are.

They have not made progress spiritually even after so many years. You'd be very concerned if your child was like that. But you're like that.

How much have you progressed in being merciful to others? Have you learned it? 25 plus 25? Have you learned to be merciful and not to judge? Be quick to be merciful. It's a wonderful life. I can tell you from many years of my own experience it's wonderful if you live according to the laws of God.

Meditate on these laws I gave you and live by them and you'll see what a difference even the remaining 8 months of this year can be in your life compared to all the years gone by. I've sought to live by God's laws. It's made all the difference in my life.

It's made the difference in my home. It's made the difference with my children. It's made the difference with my business.

It's made the difference with my earning and everything. Earthly things but heavenly things first. It's made the difference of being able to sleep properly at night.

It's made the difference of being completely 100% free from anxiety. All these things. What a wonderful life.

It will even lower your blood pressure. Believe me it will. If you follow these laws because those laws affect our body as well.

I pray that all of you will be gripped by this and we'll see that this is the way God wants every one of us to live. We have to live according to the laws of God. Let's pray.

We thank you Father that you have prepared such a wonderful life for us in the new covenant of the Holy Spirit and we want to live in the light of that all our days. Please help us. Everyone here Lord, let's not miss out on anything that you have for us.

We believe that you brought everybody here today, who is here today to listen to this message so that their life can be changed permanently. We pray that it will be so. We pray that nobody will miss out on this.

Whatever our past may have been help us to repent, turn to you. I want to urge you my dear brother, sister take a moment to say Lord I don't want to live the coming days the way I've lived in the past. I really want to change Lord.

Please help me. Why do I why am I always defeated? Why is my train stuck? Why is my train going in the wrong direction? Help me to wake up Lord. I really want to take my Christian life seriously from today.

Live by your laws and experience the blessing of it. Thank you. In Jesus name.

Amen.

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