

# Reality in the Christian Life

by Zac Poonen

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*The speaker challenges listeners to seek a higher standard of living, beyond mere 'life' to 'abundant life', and to live a life of reality, consistency, and victory in Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:00:53

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:21, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:7, Romans 6:14, Romans 8:37, Philipians 4:4, Colossians 2:16

**Topics:** "Hypocrisy"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the precious and magnificent promises that God has given us in the scriptures. He explains that these promises are not meant to solely bring us health or wealth, but to transform us and make us partakers of God's nature. The speaker highlights the fallen nature of humanity, using the analogy of a pig being naturally dirty. He warns against the deception and hypocrisy prevalent in the world and encourages listeners to seek genuine godliness and inner reality. The speaker also shares his personal journey of realizing the need for authenticity in his own life and the importance of living out the truths of the Bible consistently.

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## Transcript

Well, brothers and sisters, it's a great joy for me to be here with you and to share God's word with you. 28 years ago, I was in full-time Christian work, but I came to a crisis in my life. It was a crisis related to reality.

I felt that what I was preaching was not 100% true in my inner life. I was projecting an image before others, which is not really true. What I mean by that is, I mean, I was not living in secret sin or anything like that.

I was thinking of things like, I would say that the word of God says, Rejoice in the Lord always, but I was not rejoicing always. If you rejoice six days of the week, you're not rejoicing always. Then we must be honest and say, Rejoice in the Lord six days of the week.

That's what I mean by unreality. And many other verses like that, Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph. It was not true in my life.

And I said, Lord, I don't want to be a hypocrite. I discovered that Jesus hated hypocrisy more than almost any other sin. If you read the four gospels, you'll find that he spoke more against hypocrisy than he did against almost any other sin.

I know Jesus hated murder, adultery, theft, but I don't see him speaking so much against those sins. We got a whole chapter against hypocrisy, Matthew chapter 23. I don't see a whole chapter against adultery and murder.

Not that those are not sins, but the preeminent sin among religious people in the synagogues in Jesus' time was hypocrisy. And the preeminent sin in the 21st century among religious Christians is hypocrisy. Presenting an image which is not true in one's daily life.

Giving others an impression that we're on top of the world when we may not be. Well, anyway, that was my condition 28 years ago. And I said, Lord, if I'm not going to change, I'm going to quit the ministry.

I'm not going to preach because if I continue to preach, I'll just become a greater hypocrite. And if I continue that way, I'll just go to hell. And I don't want to go to hell.

I'd just rather keep quiet and at least be honest. And that's when the Lord met with me and filled me with his Holy Spirit and showed me more in the scriptures than I'd ever understood before. I'd already been a Christian, but by that time for at least 14, 15 years, I was born again and baptized and been a Christian, born again Christian for 15 years.

And yet I never knew that there was something more that scripture offered. You know, Jesus said in John 10, 10, I have come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly. There's a difference between life and abundant life.

And I think a lot of Christians have only life. Yeah, they're born again. Their sins are forgiven.

They've managed to get a seat in heaven. But is that all that Jesus came to offer? And that's the reason why the name of Jesus is so dishonored among the heathen, because of the way Christians live. There was a, one of our old presidents in India, the second president of the Indian Republic was President Radhakrishnan, a man who respected the Lord Jesus Christ a lot, though he was not a Christian himself.

But he was a man who observed the Christians in our country for many years. And he made a statement, which has always rung in my heart. He said, you Christians make such extraordinary claims, but you live such ordinary lives.

And when I looked at my life, I said, that's true. I mean, this is a non-Christian saying it, but it's a true observation, that a lot of Christians make such extraordinary claims in their church meetings. But when you look at the way they live, they live ordinary lives.

They praise God in other tongues on Sunday morning, and shouted their wives in their mother tongue on Sunday afternoon. Same Sunday afternoon. Is the Holy Spirit only able to control other tongues and not mother tongue? Something is wrong.

Something is wrong there. That's what I mean by unreality. That's what I mean by making extraordinary claims and living ordinary lives, just like all the non-Christian and the heathen around us.

Do we really have something more than them in our life? I'm not talking about how loudly we worship or how emotionally we sway to the music. You just got to get a little drunk to do that. I remember I was speaking at a charismatic convention 27 years ago in Bombay.

And I was sitting on the platform and I saw a man there in the fifth or sixth row, who was clapping and so cheerful. His face was bright and radiant and he was clapping and singing louder than anybody else. And I said, boy, I've got to go and meet this man after the meeting.

He seems to be so spirit filled. So I went down after the meeting and by the time I came within about five feet from him, I could smell the alcohol. That's what made him so free.

And I realized that you don't need the Holy Spirit to have that type of freedom. But you do need the Holy Spirit to overcome your temper, to control your tongue, to rejoice seven days of the week, 24 hours a day. That's the meaning of always.

Well, anyway, the Lord met with me and he changed my life. And today I can say before God that I only preach what God has worked in my life. I wouldn't dream of speaking anything else.

I want to hate hypocrisy like Jesus hated it. You know, the Old Testament, Moses gave the Israelites ten commandments. And the sins described in the Ten Commandments, the sins related to man, man to man, are about the same sins that any worldly person would also call a sin.

Murder, adultery, theft, bearing false witness in court, desiring somebody else's property or somebody else's wife. These are sins that most worldly people, most decent worldly people would also call sins. But Jesus, when he came, he hardly ever spoke about those things.

He hardly ever spoke about the Ten Commandments. I once made a study of the Gospels to see what were the sins that Jesus spoke against the most. And you know what I came up with? Sins which are not listed in the Ten Commandments at all.

Can you tell me offhand some of the sins that Jesus spoke against the most? Hypocrisy, pride, selfishness, inner impurity, inwardly impure, unbelief. Do worldly people consider any of these as sins? Hypocrisy, that's not considered a sin in the world. Pride, nobody considers that a sin.

Selfishness, people say everybody is selfish. A lack of concern for other people. Inner impurity, well everybody is inwardly impure.

Unbelief, nobody ever thinks of that as a sin. And yet these are the things that Jesus spoke against the most. Because Jesus came to deal with the root of sin.

You know the law which Moses brought, we can say was like an ointment that you rub on the hand to prevent the sores from coming out. So every time a sore came out, you rub the ointment and then the sore would go. But then it would come on this hand.

So you're thankful you have a tube of ointment, you rub it there and then it goes out from there and comes on your leg. And that's how people lived under the law. They could never finish with sin.

Sin was always coming forth, sometime here, sometime there, sometimes in the other place. And you always needed the law to deal with it. But then Jesus came with grace.

And some people have the idea that grace means, well it doesn't matter now if you sin. Because God sort of changed his mind about all these things. And now even if you sin, the blood of Jesus is always there to cleanse you.

So the end result is that with this false understanding of grace, a lot of Christians, their standard of life has become lower than the standard in the Old Testament. It's true. Some of the sins that you hear about Christian leaders and well-known evangelists falling into, can you imagine Elijah falling into such sins? Or Moses? Or John the Baptist? Or Jeremiah? Or Isaiah? Or Ezekiel? No.

Their standard of life was far higher than the standard of life of the average Christian preacher today. Do you think those fellows are running after money like a lot of today's preachers are running after them? How is it that Moses could lift those Old Testament people to such a height through the law, through the tube of ointment, and Jesus, whom these preachers and other Christians are supposed to be following, seems to have brought people to such a low standard. That's a cheap grace.

It is another Jesus. It's not the Jesus of the New Testament. The law came through Moses.

Grace came through Jesus Christ. Which is meant to lift us higher, law or grace? Grace. How much higher? As much as Jesus is higher than Moses.

That's the answer. If you have faith for that, you'll say, Lord, I'm not going to rest satisfied with this cheap Christianity, this third-rate useless grace that is being preached in the world today. I want the real thing.

How many of you would be happy with a cheap counterfeit of some valuable product? You'll want the real thing. Nobody would be happy with a counterfeit diamond or counterfeit gold. A lot of Christians are going in for a counterfeit gospel and for counterfeit grace.

They imagine that they are rich. It's like a man who's got a string of false diamonds and he thinks he's wealthy. It's only glass.

It's not diamonds. And if only our eyes would be open to see that what we call grace is not grace. If it were grace, you know what would happen? Let me read to you in Romans chapter 6 and verse 14.

Sin shall not be master over you. Sin shall not have dominion over you. For you're not under law, but under grace.

So there's a question sometimes in a meeting I say, even the six-year-old children who can read English can answer this question. Any six or seven-year-old child can answer this question because the answer is in this verse. How do you know when you are under grace? Can you give me the answer from that verse? Sin shall not have dominion over you.

If sin has dominion over you, are you under grace? No. That is a simple test in the word of God. Let God be true and every man a liar.

My brothers and sisters, what I'm trying to say to you is, I'm not trying to condemn any of you. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world and God has not sent me here to condemn anyone. What I'm trying to say to you is, there is a life much higher and better than you have experienced that the devil has robbed you of.

Don't let him rob you any further. A much higher life than you have experienced. Don't be satisfied with a superficial Christianity which looks nice on the outside.

You know, Jesus said, make the tree good, then it will produce good fruit. A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit. And Jesus came to lay the axe to the root of the tree, to root it out, to plant a new tree.

That's what he came. He came to root out this Adamic nature that you and I have got. This Adamic nature that is full of greed and covetousness and lust and bitterness and jealousy and anger and strife and the lust of the eyes and the love of money and the possessive habit to material things and the selfishness and the covetousness and all the corruption that comes with that.

He's come to lay the axe to the root of that tree and cut it out altogether. Grace is like an antibiotic. You know, when a person goes to the doctor and says, doctor, I'm using this ointment to get all the sores from me, but I keep needing the ointment all the time.

And the doctor says, hey, I've got some good news for you. The scientists have now discovered an antibiotic that will go, that if you take it for a few weeks, it will go inside and hit the root of the disease so that these sores will stop coming on your body. Won't you prefer that? Then you can throw away the tube of ointment.

That's what grace is supposed to be. Grace is supposed to be not like the law where you have to always keep rubbing it to keep the sin from coming out, but an antibiotic that hits the root of that sickness inside so that it doesn't come forth. To hit the root of lust and the root of greed and the root of selfishness and everything so that sin has no opportunity to come out because the root has been hit.

And yet, many Christians that I have met, and I know this was true in my life too for many years, are like a man who's got a bad tree, let's say a bad apple tree in his compound. But he wants everybody to think he's got a good apple tree. So what does he do? He's got a sharp pair of scissors handy.

Whenever a bad fruit comes out, he quickly cuts it off before anybody can see it. And he goes to the market and buys a whole lot of good apples and ties it up here and there in this tree, very cleverly. And people who come to see him say, boy, you've got a lovely apple.

Yeah, you say, I water it and I take care of it. And you know the whole thing is a hoax. Is your Christianity like that? Are you tying things up on Sunday morning or whenever you meet people? That gracious, nice, Christ-like look and all the other things to fool people that you're a spiritual person.

It's an act. You know the word hypocrite is not an English word. It's originally a Greek word.

If you look up any concordance, it'll tell you. Hypocrite is a Greek word, which means actor. That's what it means.

And what Jesus, if you were to translate that word into English, what Jesus told his disciples, beware of hypocrisy. What he was telling them was beware of acting. Don't be a hypocrite.

He was saying, don't be an actor. You know what an actor is like. Think of one of these Hollywood stars who's acting like, say, Moses or John the Baptist or something in a biblical movie.

On the stage, when he comes on the stage, he's a holy man, you know, speaking about repentance and God and all that. But once the shooting, film shooting is over for the day, he goes back to his third wife and he has divorced the other two and goes back to his drunkenness and evil habits till the next morning shooting. The next morning shooting is again John the Baptist or Moses.

This is acting. Acting means he's putting on a performance for the show. And Jesus said, don't be an actor.

Don't put on an act before other people. God wants us to be true through and through. That's God's will.

And that is the message of the New Testament that God can do it in our lives. It was not possible in the Old Testament. You know, it says in Colossians and chapter two.

Colossians chapter two, it says concerning the Old Testament laws in verse 16, it speaks about they had laws in the Old Testament about food and drink and about the Sabbath day. You know, they were told to keep one day in seven for God. And on the Sabbath day, they would come to the temple and they would clap and shout much louder than we shout and much clap much better than we do and raise their hands and blow the trumpets and use all types of instruments.

You read in the Psalms about that. They would dance and they would praise the Lord. You would when you watch them, you would think they are the holiest people on the earth.

But you wait till Sunday and you'll find it's a different story. Because Sabbath is over now. Now Sabbath is over the next six days, they could live as they liked at home, fight with their neighbors and be greedy and cheat in their businesses and do all types of things till the next Saturday came.

On Saturday, they would again be holy once again. This is how it was in the Old Testament. One day in seven, they had to praise the Lord and do all the right religious things.

And then the other six days, they lived just like all the other people in the world live to make money and to enjoy themselves and do everything that every worldly person does. And you know that a lot of Christians are like that. Only thing is not on Saturday, on Sunday, they shift to the day, but there's not much difference otherwise.

They come on Sunday and they'll praise the Lord and clap and shout and play the instruments and do everything else. And then Monday onwards, they're like everybody else. They fight and they quarrel, they're greedy, they're selfish.

And they are watching all those filthy movies on television and polluting their minds. And with that pollution of the minds for six days of the week, then seventh day, they come and praise the Lord. It's all an act.

We fool one another, but we don't fool the devil. He sits back and has a good laugh. And we don't fool God.

We're only fooling ourselves. I want to say to you, my brother, sister, you're only fooling yourself. You're not fooling God.

You're not fooling the devil. We need to wake up. Don't let the devil make a fool of you.

There is a life that God calls us to, which is a life of reality, reality, where this is what I prayed for. I said, Lord, I want my outer life to correspond with my inner life. I want to be the same person when I stand in the pulpit on Sunday, as I am at home on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, every day of the week in my office.

I want to be a Christian. I want to behave like a Christian, not only Sunday morning, but when I'm traveling on the roads in India, where people don't obey the rules of the road. They irritate you in so many ways.

Okay. I want to be a Christian there. I want to be different.

I want my light to shine in the darkness. I want to be a Christian in my place of work, in the way I handle money, in everything. I want reality.

Because Jesus hated hypocrisy more than anything else. Number one sin he hated was hypocrisy. And I say, Lord, I want that to be the number one sin I hate as well.

Acting. I don't want any acting in my life. I want to hate hypocrisy with all my heart.

That's what Jesus hated. And that's what I want to hate. That is God's will.

And I believe that if we seek to glorify God, this is where we will begin. And it says here about the Sabbath day in Colossians 2 17, that this was only a shadow. The Sabbath day was only a shadow of the reality which was to come in Christ.

And the reality was this. The Lord was saying, what you do now, only one day of the week. Rejoice and praise me in my presence.

I'm going to do a work in your heart through the Holy Spirit. That you'll be able to do that seven days a week. This is a shadow.

That will be the reality. That is God's new covenant promise in Christ. That it can be fulfilled in Christ.

What? That which they could experience only for a short time in the Old Testament. And that's why you have promises. I mean commands in the New Testament like always giving thanks for everything.

Have you read that in Ephesians 5 20? Always giving thanks for everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 4 4. Rejoice always in the Lord. In the Lord always.

Second Corinthians 2 14. Thanks be to God who always leads us in his triumph in Christ. I read these verses and I said, Lord, I mean this seems to have been the Apostle Paul's experience.

He's not bluffing. The Holy Spirit would not inspire him to write a lie. If he was not rejoicing always.

If he was not always being led in triumph. If he was not always living victoriously in his life. If he was not always giving thanks for everything in all situations.

And yet I said, Lord, I don't seem to be experiencing it. That means I've missed something fundamental. And before I leave this earth, I want to experience it.

I want to experience that abundant life which you came to give before I leave this earth. The Bible says God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. You know, the precious things are not found in the surface.

I've heard here that in South Africa, you've got to go some three, four, five kilometers into the ground to get the gold. That's it. The precious things are always pretty deep.

And can you imagine the amount of effort people must have made to dig a mine five kilometers into the ground? Why would anybody do that? Because what you get when you take all that effort is so valuable. I wonder whether Christians would take that much effort to seek after God. To seek after God, to know his power in their life.

I wonder. You know, the Bible says, God says, you will seek me and you find me when you search for me with all your heart. How much if you were walking in the grass at night and you lose a five cent coin? How long would you look for it? Would you spend the whole night looking for that cheap coin? But supposing during the day you accidentally misplaced a hundred thousand dollars somewhere, you'd spend a long time looking for that.

How do you seek for God? You seek for God like a five cent coin? No. Okay. You look for a little bit.

If you find it, well and good. If you don't find, doesn't matter. I've got other more important things to do.

Well, then such people never find God. God says, you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. God wants to lead all his children into an abundant life.

He doesn't want us to come together for times of praise and worship and listening to God's word as merely a time when we, for a temporary period, we experience something wonderful or heavenly and then we go back to our homes and we can't solve our problems and we can't overcome our impatience and our temper and all those things. See, that would be like the people who go to the drinking saloon, to the bar. You know, a lot of people who have a lot of problems in their home and difficult wives and who are facing very difficult situations or some discouragement in their place of work, they go to the bar and they spend two hours in the bar and they drink.

And for two hours, they forget all their problems. They drink with their friends and it's like heaven for them. But when they go home after that two-hour drinking period, are any of their problems solved? No.

The same old messy situation is there at work and at home with their children. It doesn't change at all. And what do they look forward to? They look forward to going to the bar again, another two hours with my friends.

And I feel that sometimes Christians go for a time of praise and worship exactly like that. They don't go to the bar, they go to the praise and worship session. For two hours, we are in heaven, we are with our friends and we forget all our earthly problems and when we go back, we behave exactly the same way.

Our problems are still there, nothing has changed. Is that Christianity? No, it isn't. And we can say, oh, I long to go back to my praise and worship session.

That's just like that man longs to go back to the bar. Jesus Christ has come to change our life, not just give us a temporary kick like, you know, taking a drug, like these people who take cocaine and things like that. For a few hours, they have a high and then when they come down to reality, they find nothing has changed in the world around them.

I want to ask you, is that your experience? That you come to a meeting and you get a kick? And then after some time and the effect of it wears out, you find that you're just the same person? That's not the will of God. The Holy Spirit has come to change us permanently, not to make us rejoice for a few hours every week, but always. Not to keep us pure for a few hours every week, but always.

In Philippians chapter two, it says. Think of this word. I want to share a number of verses like this.

I could show you Philippians 2, 14. Do all things, all things without grumbling or disputing. Do you know that that's the standard in the New Testament? See, these were verses which are never found in the Old

Testament.

You go to the Old Testament, you'll never find a verse which says rejoice in the Lord always. They could not do it in the Old Testament. You know why? You know why? They could not be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit could not dwell in anybody's heart in the Old Testament. And when the Holy Spirit cannot fill a person's heart, he cannot rejoice in the Lord always. He may be able to rejoice in the Lord once a week.

Like those Jews did, and like a lot of Christians do. So I seriously question whether these Christians who rejoice for one day in a week are filled with the Holy Spirit or not. I doubt it very much.

They have an emotional experience, but they're not really filled with the Holy Spirit. If they were, they would be rejoicing in the Lord always. Because their experience seems to be exactly like the experience of a lot of people in the Old Testament.

Sabbath day they came, and they had a wonderful time. But the rest of the week, they grumbled, and they complained, and they fought. And that's Old Testament life.

And yet the New Testament has these wonderful, challenging words like the ones I quoted. Always giving thanks for everything. No matter what happens, to always give thanks for everything.

Because the New Testament Christian believes that God is on the throne. That Satan was defeated on the cross. That my sins are cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ.

That even if I don't have all the things which I ask God for, He knows what is good for me. And He gives me what He knows is best for me. And He makes everything work together for my good.

That's why we can give thanks always for all things. In all circumstances. In every situation.

Paul says in Romans chapter 8, in all these things, we are more than conquered through Him who loved us. How many Christians are there, even among those who claim to be filled with the Spirit, who can say in all things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. These were the verses that challenged me.

And I said, Lord, I want them. I want them. I want the fulfillment of these verses in my life.

That I can say like Paul, in all these things, I'm more than a conqueror through Him who loved me. That the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not just something that temporarily gives me an emotional high, but something that fulfills these verses all the time, every day. So I see that the Old Testament was one day in seven, and the New Testament is seven days in seven.

What they could experience only once in a while, we can experience all the time. That is one of the fundamental differences, the Old and the New Testament. The other thing is, what the Old Testament could only do externally, the New Testament can do inwardly.

That is the wonderful thing. You know, the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon people externally, gave them power to do so many things on the outside. But it could not help them inside at all.

And if your experience of the Spirit only makes you do things outwardly, clap your hands, smile, be cheerful, but does not deal with, say, the problem of lust in your heart. I don't want to disappoint you, but I want to tell you the truth. Yours is an Old Testament experience.

In the New Testament, God writes his laws upon our heart. You know, in the Old Testament, people like Samson had an experience of the Holy Spirit which could tear a lion into pieces. Wouldn't that be a wonderful thing to experience? I don't think so.

Let me ask you, who is more powerful, a lion or Delilah? You know the answer. Samson could tear a lion into pieces, but Delilah tore him to pieces. Why? Because he did not have the Holy Spirit within.

The Spirit came upon him on the outside. He could do some things on the outside. And whenever my experience of the Holy Spirit is only something that produces external manifestations, but does not change, bring purity into my heart.

Into my thought life. Into my eyes. It's a counterfeit.

It's either a counterfeit or an Old Testament experience. It's not what the New Testament promises. And that's what I want to say, that the devil is cheating believers left, right and center.

He's telling them, I'll make you rich. That's an Old Testament promise. The Old Testament is there.

You go to the Old Testament, it promises to make you rich. It promises to give you many children. It promises to bless your barns.

It promises to bless all those things. But it does not promise in the Old Testament that you can get victory over lust in your heart. It does not promise in the Old Testament that you can get victory over murmuring and grumbling and complaining and shouting at your wife and shouting at your husband.

There's no such promise in the Old Testament. It only promises to make you rich financially and prosper your business and things like that. I tell you honestly, I'm not interested in those things.

I'm interested in overcoming sin. Do you know the first promise in the New Testament? The very first promise in the New Testament? You shall call his name Jesus, Matthew 1, 21. He's not going to make us people rich.

He's going to save us people from their sins. How many of you believe honestly that to be saved from sin in your heart is a million times more important than making money? When you believe that, God will give it to you. But if you think that making money is more important than being saved from sin, you get it.

You seek and you shall find. People go to India and look for tigers and they find tigers because they go looking for the place where the tigers are in the forest. You seek and you will find.

You look for an Old Testament promise, you'll get it. You look for a New Testament promise which says sin will not rule over you and you get that. It depends what we seek.

If you're happy with the spirit coming upon you and doing things for you externally, that's all you'll have. But if you want that New Testament experience which they experienced on the day of Pentecost, that inner life, that inner abundant life of overcoming, you can have that. It's not somehow struggling to survive.

It's a life where we are not afraid of the devil. It's a life where the devil flees from us. The Bible says resist the devil and he'll flee from you.

The Bible says the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet. When you lose your temper at anybody, tell me where is the devil? You tell me. Is he sitting on your head or is he under your feet? You know the answer.

He's certainly not under your feet when you lose your temper. He's sitting on your head. Is that the type of life that God has called his children to? So what if you're a millionaire and the devil is sitting on your head? I'd rather be a poor man with the devil under my feet.

I'll tell you that any day. It's a question of what you value. If you're satisfied with your substandard, defeated Christian life, you'll never get anything more than that.

If you're satisfied with material things, you'll never get anything more than that. The Bible says that God is such a good God. He makes the sun to rise in the good and the evil.

He makes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous. That's in Matthew chapter 5. I'm just quoting scripture. Jesus himself said that he makes the sun to rise in the good and the evil, makes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous.

In other words, here is a godless, here is a God-fearing farmer who plows the field and sows the seed and God sends the sun and the rain on his farm. And next door to him is an atheist, godless farmer who doesn't care who's for God. And God sends the sun and rain on him too.

So material blessings come to good and evil people. Do you know what you have to be to get God's material blessings? The sun and the rain and all those blessings. You have to either be good or evil, that's all.

Do you qualify? Then you'll get it. But if you want inner purity, that's another thing. That's the real wealth of eternity.

The Bible says we brought nothing into this world, 1 Timothy 6. Therefore, we can take nothing out. Have you noticed that? There's a therefore. And that's what a lot of people haven't realized.

The reason why we can take nothing out is because we brought nothing in. Have you ever checked a dead man's pockets to see if there's any money inside there? There isn't. He may be dressed in a suit and a tie and all, but if you look in his pockets, there's nothing there.

He can't take anything out. You know why he can't take anything out? Because it says in 1 Timothy 6, because, verse 7, because we brought nothing into the world, therefore we cannot take anything out. You know the meaning of that? When you and I came into the world, we came without a stitch of clothing.

No money, nothing. All that we earned on earth was a loan God gave us. So here you are, my child, use this, use it wisely.

It's only a loan, whether you earn \$10,000 a month or \$200 a month, it's a loan. When you leave this earth, you'll have to leave it behind. It's only for a period.

It's like if you take your little child to somebody's house. Supposing you take your little four-year-old child to somebody's house and those people are good enough to let your child play with little cars and toys and all that. And like little children sometimes do, your child takes some of those little toy cars and all puts it into his pocket when others are not looking.

But a good mother, when they leave the house, will check his child's pockets to see if there's anything in the pocket. And when she finds those little cars and all that the boy has put into his pocket, she'll take it out and say, son, when we came to this house, we brought nothing here. So when we go, we'll have to take nothing out.

So that's what God says. Son, daughter, when you came to this world, you brought nothing here. When you leave, you can't take anything out.

You were allowed to play with these things while you were here, but now you're going. But there is one thing God will permit you to take when you leave this earth, only one thing. That's your character, because that's your permanent possession.

That's your permanent possession for eternity. If you have learned to love your enemies while you're on earth, you can take that with you. If you have learned to forgive those who hurt you, if you have learned to bless those who curse you, if you have learned to do good to evil people, if you have learned to keep your mind pure in a filthy world, if you have learned to turn your eyes away from filth and impurity, and if you have learned to keep your mind pure, that's your character.

You can take it with you. That's the only thing that has got eternal worth. And that's what the Holy Spirit is seeking to accomplish in us.

And that's why when some filthy image comes on your television screen and the Holy Spirit says, turn that off or change the channel, He doesn't force you. He won't force you. You need not turn it off.

You need not change the channel. But the Holy Spirit will tell you, you're a hypocrite when you stand on Sunday morning and sing, Oh, holy God. What holy God? You don't believe He's holy when you're watching television.

It's all hypocrisy. It's all acting. That's how the devil has made fools of today's Christians and they don't even realize it.

You think because they've got money and God's blessed them. You know what the devil told Jesus? I'll give you all this. Everything.

He showed him all the riches of the world and said, I'll give it to you. Because I have the power to give it to whom I like. Just bow down and worship me.

Jesus said, no, I'm a worshipper. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, Him only. Dear brothers and sisters, we're living in days of tremendous deception.

I don't believe that I will convince everybody. The greatest prophets could not convince everybody. Jesus himself could not convince everybody.

But Jesus did say, he who has ears to hear, let him hear. That in the midst of many who were satisfied with their defeated substandard life, there would be some who would seek after God, after genuine

godliness, after inner reality. And the Lord looked for them, for such people 2,000 years ago, and he looks for such people today.

The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth. It moves to and fro throughout this congregation this evening. To look for even one or two or three who are seeking for reality, who are fed up with hypocrisy, fed up with unreality, fed up with superficiality, fed up with the impurity of their lives, fed up with the double standards with which they live, and who are not satisfied with wealth or health, but who are longing for purity, who want to respond to the call of God who says, be holy because I am holy, says the Lord.

You don't need any other argument. Be holy, says the Lord, because I am holy. As he, your father, who has called you is holy, so be holy in all manner of conversation.

And that's the reason why he's given us the Holy Spirit. Have you ever wondered why Almighty God, in his great wisdom, when he gave a name to the third person of the Trinity, called him the Holy Spirit? Why didn't he call him the noisy spirit? Because the primary characteristic of the spirit would not be noise, but holiness. That's why.

Otherwise, it could have been father, son, and noisy spirit. It's not. It's father, son, and Holy Spirit.

And I'm amazed that a lot of Christians who claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit are not holy. I say, what spirit is it then? I know when God baptized me in the Holy Spirit, I spoke in tongues. I've spoken in tongues for 27 years.

I praise God for it. But I tell you, that was not the biggest thing. The biggest thing that happened was God made my heart pure.

He began to write his laws in my heart and mind. That's what changed. I got a spirit of praise in my life.

That's true. But there was a spirit of praise in my heart. That's what happened.

And I'm concerned when I see the devil cheating God's people of what Jesus Christ bought for them on the cross. I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ has bought for you a far better life than you are experiencing right now. Don't let the devil cheat you of it.

Don't let the devil cheat you with rejoicing one day in seven, when Jesus says you can rejoice seven days in seven. Don't let him cheat you. Don't let the devil give you only one seventh of what God wants you to have.

Or something substandard. God wants you to have the real thing. The real diamond.

Not a counterfeit. Not something to hang around your neck like these artificial diamonds to impress other people that you're a very wealthy woman. Do you want the real thing or just to impress other people? There are a lot of people who go around with artificial pearls and artificial diamonds.

What do they wear it for? Just to impress others. Is your Christianity like that? Or are you interested in real wealth? Real spiritual wealth. The nature of God himself.

Do you know the Bible says in 2nd Peter chapter 1 that the greatest promise of all, the greatest gift that God can give us, the most wonderful thing that God can ever give us. Please listen. 2nd Peter 1 verse 4.

God has given us precious and magnificent promises.

We all agree there are wonderful, precious and magnificent promises in the scriptures and the purpose of all these promises is not primarily to make us healthy or wealthy. It is to make us partake of God's own nature. Do you know what that means? I was born with Adam's nature.

It was easy for me to fight. Isn't it easy for our little children to fight? To tell lies? To be selfish? To grab toys for themselves? All children are the same. I was the same and you were the same.

Because we had Adam's nature. It was easy to lust. It was easy to tell lies.

It was easy to be angry. Why? Because I had nature. It's easy for a pig to be dirty.

You think it's difficult for a pig to be dirty? It's the easiest thing in the world for a pig to be dirty. So easy. Soon as it's born.

This is God's nature. As soon as we are born, we've got a nature which teaches us to sin. Every child, whatever religion, to tell lies.

Do any of you teach your children to tell lies? Do you teach your children to fight? No. It's nature. It comes forth.

And here is the wonderful promise. That just like I had Adam's nature, the Holy Spirit can give me God's nature. It'll be easy for me to be pure.

It'll be easy for me to tell the truth. It'll be easy for me to be patient. It'll be easy for me to love my enemies.

It'll be easy for me to overcome sin. If I partake of God's nature. It's nature.

Isn't it easy for a cat to keep itself clean? Yes or no? Yes. It's so easy. What's it that makes the difference between a cat and a pig? Nature.

A lot of Christians are like pigs who are trying their best to be clean. Deep within they love to be dirty. But that'll spoil my testimony.

So I have to be clean. That's not Christianity. Christianity is where God gives us his nature.

That's the abundant life. And that, the precious and magnificent promises are that we might have this nature. And for years I didn't understand it.

I couldn't experience it. And I realized I couldn't experience it because I didn't value it. Because God says you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

And I thank God a time came in my life and I said, Lord, I want this more than anything else in the world. I don't want money. I don't want honor.

I don't care what people think about me. I don't want a ministry even. I want divine nature.

You go to God like that and tell him that you want that more than anything else in the world. And I tell you in Jesus name, you'll get it. He'll give it to you.

He is no respecter of persons. He will give you what you've never experienced. That's the whole purpose of these wonderful promises.

Let's come to him in faith. I love that question that Jesus asked the blind men when they came to him for healing. He asked them a question.

He said, Do you believe that I can do this for you? Not do you believe you can produce this yourself? Do you believe I can do this for you? And they said, Yes, Lord, we believe. I believe it's the same question the Lord is asking us today. Do you believe that I can do something in you and give you a new nature? Because it's promised in his word.

The precious and magnificent promises are designed so that we can partake of his nature. Not imitate him. It's not a pig trying to imitate a cat.

No, no, no. It's a change of nature from within. A nature that does not want to hate others, does not want to be jealous of others, does not want to murmur and complain, just like the first nature I got wanted to murmur and complain and fight and quarrel and be jealous and everything else that God can give me another nature.

That is Christianity. Life under the law, however, was the old nature struggling, struggling, struggling, struggling to live according to God's standards and always failing. That's life under the law.

Life under grace is where we partake of God's nature. Let's open ourselves to that. Now, the wonderful thing about all this, my dear brothers and sisters, is it doesn't matter if you didn't understand what you heard this evening.

Understanding is not necessary. If you got a hunger and thirst for this life, that's more important than whether you understood everything. Jesus said, if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me.

If you believe that he can do this for you. Are you willing to break free from the traditions of men? Are you willing to break free from the opinions of your friends? Are you willing to walk alone with God? It may be a lonely path, but it'll be a happy path. Are you seeking popularity? Are you seeking victory? Heavenly Father, I pray for those who are hungering here this evening, who are dissatisfied with their defeated life and who, I believe, have faith that you can lead them to something higher.

You will grant them their... Lord Jesus, be glorified. These dear brothers and sisters whom you have placed in this land to be your witnesses, not just in words, but by life. I pray that they will be like lights shining for you in the darkness in this country.

Bless them, fill them with the Holy Spirit. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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