

# Reconizing That We Are Nothing

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and dying to our own self, as exemplified by Jesus, in order to experience salvation and resurrection.*

**Duration:** 50:21

**Scripture:** Philippians 2:5

**Topics:** "Humility And Pride", "Godly Humility"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and coming to a place of being a 'nobody' in our own eyes, following the example of Jesus who humbled himself to the point of death on the cross. It highlights the need to recognize our weakness, rely on God's grace, and flee from sin, idolatry, immorality, and the love of money. The speaker stresses the significance of God exalting the humble and the danger of pride, drawing parallels between the paths of Jesus and Lucifer in humility and pride.

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## Transcript

So today the world celebrates Christmas, which they think, mistakenly, is the birthday of Christ. I personally don't believe Christ was born in December. I personally believe he was born around September.

Anyway, that's not the issue. But since the world is celebrating the birthday of Christ, it's good for us to know why he came. I remember once someone told me, I was seeking God, saying, tell me Lord, should I celebrate your birth? Give me a verse from scripture.

She found a verse which I had never thought of myself. It says about Jesus Christ being after the order of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7 verse 3, who had no beginning of days. We all had a beginning of days, that's why we celebrate our birthday.

But Jesus had no beginning of days, and that answered her question. He is eternal. There was no birthday for him.

He existed for all eternity. And that's why the Bible tells us to celebrate his death, and not his birth. None of us celebrate death.

We celebrate birth. But Jesus came to die. He existed from all eternity.

He had no birth. But he came to die, and he told us, remember my death. Remember me when you break bread and drink the cup.

But beyond all that, I mean I'm not interested in getting into a controversy with people over Christmas. I think it's more important to understand the principle behind his coming to this earth. And we thought a little bit about it last time.

And how we are to follow in his footsteps. And that's what I want to see, because the Bible says that we are to walk as Jesus walked. And when we think of Jesus as our example, he said, he gave us an example.

It says in 1 Peter 2 that we should follow in his footsteps. You know that verse in 1 Peter 2. Christ gave us an example. That's a great verse, 1 Peter in chapter 2. That we should follow in his steps.

1 Peter 2, 21. Christ left us an example to follow in his steps. He suffered for you, and his suffering, his first steps.

The very first step that he took. That we need to first learn. You know a lot of people are trying to follow Jesus' steps when he was 30 years old.

If you say, how are we to follow Jesus? They say, oh do miracles, and I presume walk on the water, and raise people who are dead for four days. And all people try to do things and bluff others about what they have done, etc. And deceive people.

Those are not the steps we are to follow first. Let's take the first step. Let's learn the ABC before we go into postgraduate studies and all that.

So let's think of the first step that Jesus took. And that was for God to become man. That was the first step.

So how can we do that? That's what we need to learn before we go into other things about the way he fulfilled his ministry. Let me turn to Philippians 2 again, which we looked at last time. And it's so clear here.

Philippians 2 verse 5 and 6. Have this attitude in yourself, which was in Christ Jesus. Who although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped or held on to. But emptied himself, taking the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men.

This is what people around the world are supposed to be celebrating today. But do you think they have understood anything about this? That's why I say a lot of the celebration of Christmas is so empty. If you want to understand what it means for Christ to be born on this earth, here's where you've got to understand it.

This is where he began. Have this attitude in yourselves. He says that example should be the one you follow.

You must have the same mind. When? Just for a few moments? No, all through our life. We must have this attitude which is in Christ, which is what? He was God and he came down and became a man.

A slave. A slave. I've tried to understand.

How does that apply to me? I'm not God. None of us are. So how can I follow him in this tremendous step that he took? So, I look at it like this.

God is the highest being in the universe. And here, if he became a man, that coming down is such a great descent that for me to follow that means I, as a human being, must descend until I become a nobody in my own eyes. Then I have followed him.

Many of you have celebrated Christmas for years. I want to ask you. Have you become a nobody? Are you? Can you honestly say that your own opinion of yourself is you're a nobody? Never mind what other people think of you.

A lot of people esteem Christ today. The world worships him. Even when he was on earth, people worshipped him.

But in his own mind, he was just an ordinary man. He would always say, I'm a son of man. When they wanted to make him a king, he refused to be a king.

He was Lord. We may have our gifts, we may have our talents, and we may have our abilities. We don't deny them.

Jesus once said to his disciples, you know, he didn't have a sort of a wrong, a low self-esteem, you know, which says, oh, well, I'm good for nothing. He never said that. He said in John chapter 13 and verse 13, he told his disciples in John 13, 13, you call me Lord, and you are right.

There's nothing wrong in saying that. You call me teacher and Lord, and you're right. I am.

If you say to me, Brother Zach, you're an elder, I'm not going to say, no, no, no, I'm not an elder, I'm just a nobody. No, you're right. I am an elder.

God's given me that responsibility. If my children turn around and call me dad, I don't have to say, no, no, no, I'm not your dad, I'm just a nobody. That's artificial.

That's stupidity. Jesus said, you call me Lord and teacher, that's what I am. But he had descended to the lowest level.

So it's not a question of not recognizing who we are in relation to others, but the thoughts we think about ourselves, that's where we need to be nobodies. Because it's only then that God can use us. Through many years of knowing the Lord, I've come to this conclusion, that God's great, the work that he seeks to do in all of us is to reduce us down to zero, so that he can use us mightily.

And the more he succeeds in reducing us to zero, the more mightily he can produce the life of Christ in us, so that we do not sin, so that we overcome sin, so that we manifest the glory and the grace of Christ, so that the devil's afraid of us. The devil's really afraid of those who've become nothing in their own eyes. He's not scared of people who think they're somebody.

I'll tell you why. Because he became the devil by thinking he was somebody. You know that's how he became the devil? The way Jesus went and the way Lucifer the devil went are two opposite directions.

You see the contrast in Isaiah chapter 14. Isaiah 14 is the opposite of Philippians 2. That's why I'm pointing it out to you. If you are not familiar with it, let's look at it.

If you know it, look at it again. Because you can always learn something more when you look at it another time. He's talking about the one who was the head of the angels.

We don't know his name. In the Latin they call it Lucifer, so it's sort of become popular, but that's not his name. Isaiah 14.12 How have you fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn? That's all God calls him.

God doesn't tell us what his name was when he was up in heaven. It's not important for us to know. It was not Lucifer.

Lucifer is just the Latin of star of the morning. You have been cut down to the earth. Why? Because you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven.

Jesus said, I will descend to earth. You see that? Jesus was there equal with God. He didn't hang on to that and said, I will go down to earth.

Satan, who was before he was Satan, he was in the highest of the angels and he said, I'm not satisfied with this high position as the head of the angels. I will ascend to the heavens. I will raise my throne above the stars of God and I will not only go to the heights of the clouds, verse 14, I will make myself like God.

And the moment you think like that, the eternal law of God operates. It's an eternal law. God humbles the proud.

As soon as he got this in his heart, he didn't, you know, do something. He just said in his heart, I'll make myself like this. You'll be thrust down to Sheol.

That's the first sin that was committed in the universe. Pride, lifting up oneself. God pushed him down.

And I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, every person who falls into any sin, there is only one reason. Pride. You keep on falling into some sin, face it.

You are a proud, arrogant person. There is no other reason. And therefore, when you try to get victory over sin, God pushes you down because it's an eternal law of God that began with this one who became the devil.

I will humble those who are proud. And if God pushes you down, you're not going to get any victory. You're going to keep falling.

Have you understood now why you keep falling into sin? Because God's not exalting you. He's not lifting you up. He's pushing you down because it's his eternal law.

Let me repeat it. He lifts the proud. That's written twice in scripture.

James 4 and 1 Peter 5, verse 5. And in contrast to that, we see Philippians 2. Now we see the opposite in Philippians 2. Because if sin came this way, by someone trying to exalt themselves, then salvation must come the opposite way, by someone humbling themselves. And all those who follow the devil exalt themselves, whether in the world or in the church or anywhere. And all those who follow Jesus humble themselves, whether in the world or in the church.

And you can sit in the church and exalt yourself. And there are people out in the world who try to humble themselves and put you to shame. Yeah, there are some people in the world who are so modest about their accomplishments.

I've met atheists and non-Christians who are very modest about their accomplishments. They won't try to show off the way some Christians do. We get a lot of surprises when we stand before the Lord in the final day.

A lot of people who you thought were wonderful Christians are probably in hell. And only one reason. How did the first person go to hell? How did the first person go to hell? Pride.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus, why did the rich man go to hell? Pride. He thought, I have worked so hard and my business has prospered and I've made all this money. I'm not being lazy like that beggar down the street.

Such a man definitely deserves to go to hell. He's not humble enough to acknowledge that it's God's blessing that gave him all that he had on earth. What about you, brother, sister? Now see the opposite in Philippians chapter 2. Now here's one who is not a created being, the second person of the Trinity, equal with God the Father from all eternity.

And there was no need for him to come to the earth. When the race of Adam sinned, God could have just wiped them out or sent them to join Lucifer and the others in hell. And he would have been absolutely righteous if he did that.

But he didn't. And we got to be so thankful for that. We got to be so thankful Lord, I deserve hell.

But you sent your son. You came down to earth. You humbled yourself.

And you came down and became a man. And what did God do? According to the eternal law of God that he exalts the humble. It says here when Jesus humbled himself and went even lower, he was willing to be born in a stable, in a cow shed.

He was willing to be called devil and Beelzebul and demon possessed. And he was willing to be called mad and ill-treated and illegitimate child and I don't know what all names they called him. He is willing to let people slap him and crucify him.

And because he humbled himself, verse 8, last part, even to the death on a cross, according to the eternal law of God that operates equally with everyone, God exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. That's why he's got the highest place in heaven today. He had the highest place in heaven in eternity because he was equal with the Father.

But today, if he has the highest place next to the Father in heaven, it's because he humbled himself. It's not because he said, I'm the son of God, I've got a right to come back there. No.

See what it says? He humbled himself, verse 9, therefore, for this reason, God highly exalted him. Don't put your own ideas there. There was a reason why God highly exalted him and that's because he humbled himself to the lowest place as a man never fighting back with people who abused him, criticized him, spat on him.

He said, that's okay. I'm just an ordinary man. He would keep on saying, I'm an ordinary man, you're forgiven.

I'm an ordinary man, you're forgiven. When he said, I'm the son of man, that's what he meant. I'm an ordinary man and you're forgiven.

You call me Beelzebul, prince of devils, okay, you're forgiven. I'm an ordinary man. Don't speak against God.

He was God himself but he pointed to the Holy Spirit and said, don't speak against the Holy Spirit, that'll be serious. Speak against me, it's okay. Therefore, God has exalted him highly.

It says, have this attitude in yourself. And that exaltation begins on this earth with exaltation over sin. To be exalted over people as a president of a country or an elder in a church, it means nothing.

There are hundreds of elders of churches I have met in my life and pastors whom I have zero respect for because I don't see godliness in them. I don't respect a man because he hangs a cross around his neck or wears a skullcap or something like that or calls himself a pastor or reverend or right reverend or whatever other they call themselves. I have no respect for them.

I respect a man if I see Christ in him. If his words are anointed and come straight to my heart and I feel that God is speaking through him, I would respect him. But not because he has a title.

Not because he says, I've been a believer for 20-30 years. So what? You could be a thorough backslider today or even have lost your salvation even though you were saved 20-30 years ago. I respect people who are humble, who have low thoughts about themselves.

And you know, humility is not something you can put on. There's a humility that even world leaders put on. It's artificial.

Humility, like pride, is not something, it's something inward. If it's not inside, you cannot pretend to be humble. I've seen enough people in my life, Christians, who pretend to be humble.

I can see through them in half a minute. As soon as they open their mouth you can make out, these guys are not humble. You look at their face.

There's something about them. They lack humility. It's like the order that comes forth from our body.

You know, when you work hard and perspire a lot, there's an order that comes forth from your body which you cannot prevent. It comes forth. That's why we have showers.

That's why we use deodorants and things like that. It comes from within. Pride is like that.

It comes from within. If you have such thoughts when you're alone, you think about what a wonderful guy you are and keep thinking like that or how much better you've done things than somebody else and you're so quick to criticize this person and that person and the other person, you're quick to criticize your wife or your husband or that person or the other person, the way that person brought up their children is not the way I brought up my children. No wonder, brother, sister, you're so defeated.

No wonder God is so limited in His ability to speak His prophetic word through you. He's not going to exalt you because He knows the thoughts you're thinking about yourself when you're all by yourself. They're pretty high thoughts about yourself.

And you know also that you didn't begin like that. I often tell people in this church, don't ever forget what you were when you first came to this church. I know a lot of people who have forgotten it and I see their spiritual state today.

Financially, they're very well off, but I see their spiritual condition pathetic. Pathetic. They're not aware of it themselves like body odor because when they are alone, I don't know what they're thinking, but it's obvious from the odor that comes forth from their spirit that they're thinking pretty high thoughts about themselves.

They're proud because they think God has blessed them because they got more money now than when they first came to the church. They think they are blessed by God because their children are doing well. I can show you a lot of people out in the world whose children are doing well who are atheists and who made a lot more money than you and me.

It means nothing. Dear brothers and sisters, let's learn this lesson. God became man and says, have this attitude in you that I must seek to go down and become a zero.

That is the meaning of being crucified with Christ. You know, in this church, perhaps more than other churches, we speak about the way of the cross. The way of the cross is the way of death to self.

We can say that a person has really become zero when he's died. He can't lift a finger. He's got no thoughts.

He's got nothing to do now. He's completely dead. And there, a person has become zero.

And when we speak about dying with Christ, it's really the same thing. What am I saying today? Nothing different from what we've always said that we've got to die with Jesus Christ. Take up the cross every day.

Let me paraphrase it. Consider yourself to be a zero every day. That's what a dead man is.

And then, we will taste of his resurrection. The Apostle Paul tells the Galatians in Chapter 6. Please turn with me to Galatians in Chapter 6. And we read there about this possibility of thinking that we are something when we are nothing. Galatians 6 and verse 3. If anyone thinks he is something or somebody when he's actually nothing, he deceives himself.

But let every man examine his own work. Then he'll have some reason for boasting. Examine your own work means ask yourself, brother, before you think you're somebody or sister, how much victory over sin did you have last week? Examine your work.

How you lived during the last week. How did you conduct yourself at home? How did you conduct yourself in a place of work? How did you conduct yourself in the midst of busy traffic on the road? Or when you travel in a train or a bus? Examine yourself before you think you're somebody or a very wholehearted spiritual Christian. And then you see how you think you're somebody when you're a nobody.

You're living a defeated life. Backsliding, coming back, backsliding, coming back and you still think you're somebody. Some of us have been in the church for a number of years and because of that we think we're

somebody.

It's very easy to think like that. It says examine your work. Just examine your work for the last one week or the last one month.

How has it gone with you? Has God constantly exalted you so that sin could not pull you down? If not, what are you thinking you are? You're a somebody? If anyone thinks he's a somebody when he's a nobody, he's just deceiving himself. How much longer are we going to deceive ourselves? This is the message of Christmas time which the world doesn't understand. You think the people who have celebrated Christmas have understood how God became man and has given us an example that we should go down like that? Do you think they've understood that? No.

They've only understood how to waste a lot of money buying expensive gifts and giving it to other people and think they've manifested the spirit of Christ by giving gifts to others. When you can give gifts to others it only manifests that you're a very rich man. That's what it manifests.

That poor person who doesn't have any savings, he cannot give gifts like you. Not because he's not Christ-like but because he's poor. But a lot of people think I'm Christ-like because I give gifts.

No, sir. You're rich. Therefore you could give gifts.

But the real thing that we need to learn at Christmas is that God became man. And let that attitude be in you. Come down.

Descend. So that God can exalt you. Now Paul does not preach what he's not practiced.

Turn to 1 Corinthians in chapter 3. You know, here's a man who had such fantastic experiences. He had this dramatic conversion on the Damascus road where he saw Jesus face-to-face. None of us have had that.

He met Jesus face-to-face. He heard Jesus directly speaking to him numerous times. He had angels coming and visiting him at different times.

He was once physically transported up into the very presence of God. And one way I know it was real he mentioned this in 2 Corinthians 12 is that he says I'm sorry. I can't tell you what I heard there.

I'm not permitted to. Today we have a whole lot of people who say they've gone to heaven and talked to Moses and David and Paul and they come and tell us all the things they spoke over there. And I say, that's rubbish.

And they're telling lies. They may have had a dream. Did you have a dream last night? You thought it was real? Well, they had a dream.

Some people have a dream that they go to heaven and talk to David or Paul or something and they think it's real. It's just a dream. But Paul's was real and the proof of it was first of all that he kept quiet about it for 14 years.

That's how I know it's real. When a person talks about it the very next week about some angel he saw you know that this is all a hoax. A man who's a man of God he doesn't have to boast about it.

He'll keep quiet about something for 14 years. You read that in 2 Corinthians 12. He wasn't itching to tell people I went to heaven.

And even when he said it he said I can't tell you what I heard there. This is the man who's taken up to heaven who's raised the dead. There was a man sitting in a meeting who fell down the window and died and Paul raised him up from the dead.

He healed so many sick people. He planted churches. He wrote scripture.

At the end of all this what does he say? 1 Corinthians 3 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 6 I planted he's talking about the Corinthians that he went and he planted a church there. Those believers were planted by him. Apollos a co-worker went and watered that means he taught the word of God to them and watered those plants.

But who caused them to grow? God caused the growth. It's not a doctor who heals you. It's not a medicine who heals you.

It's God. Do you know that a doctor if you got an injury in your hand he cannot make those two bits of skin join. The best doctor in the world cannot do that.

All he can do is stitch it so that it's close together. God makes it join. Even a simple thing like that.

There's no doctor in the world who can combine two bits of skin in your body. You can only bring them together and let God do a miracle and make it join together and become one. So that you can take off the stitches.

Paul is humble enough to recognize that. Many doctors are not. Paul is humble enough to say I planted but Paul has watered but God was the one who was causing the growth.

So what about the one who plants and the one who waters? What are they? He gives us the answer in verse 7. The one who plants is nothing and the one who waters is nothing. So you ask Paul what do you think of yourself? Paul says I'm just a nobody. He says that about himself.

I am nothing. God is everything. And when we talk about glorifying God in our lives I want to say this.

The only way I can really glorify God in my life is if I allow God to be everything in my life and me become nothing. That is also the meaning of saying to Jesus I want your will not mine. Do you think that young man who is determined to marry some girl and whether it's God's will or not calls himself a believer says she's a believer I love her I'm going to marry her do you think that man thinks he's a nobody? No.

Do you think that man has died to himself? No. He may have some religious whitewash and call himself a believer but he's doing his own will. And there are lots of young people like that.

They go where they want they do what they want they live as they like they spend their money as they like they spend their days as they like they're not nobodies they're not dead. No wonder they are perpetually defeated in their life according to God's eternal law that he humbles the proud. On the other hand you see some others God exalts the humble.

So that's if you haven't learned that lesson we haven't understood anything of the Christmas message of Christ coming to earth at all and one way God humbles us is by making us aware of our need of one

another. I can tell you personally my study of the word did not give me victory over sin. I'll tell you honestly I studied the word thoroughly by the time I was 26.

I think I knew the scriptures to challenge almost anybody. I spent 7 years day and night studying scripture when I was in the Navy. But it didn't give me victory over sin.

My being filled with the spirit and speaking in tongues did not give me victory over sin. I was still defeated. You go and ask all the people who are speaking in tongues whether they have overcome sin in their life.

They boast a lot and that itself shows they haven't overcome sin. So you see how what is it that helped me then? The blood of Jesus cleanses me I believed that with all my heart for 52 years. Never doubted it for one second.

It didn't give me victory. I finally I'll tell you honestly victory became a reality in my life. When in addition to all these I don't despise any of these in addition to all these God placed me in a body.

36 years ago He placed me along with other brothers and sisters. They were not as gifted as me. But the Lord showed me I need them.

And I'll tell you something many of the revelations in God's word that God has given me in these last 36 years amazing revelations from God's word almost all of them have come when I've been fellowshiping with others. Not when I'm sitting alone reading the Bible. I'll tell you honestly I got a lot of knowledge sitting alone reading the Bible but many times a revelation would flash into my mind when I was talking with another brother.

Or he would ask me a question and that would challenge me to think about it and I would get a revelation. And I asked the Lord about this. I said Lord why is this that I don't seem to get revelation when I'm reading your word but so often in fellowship with others.

And the Lord showed me that I He's trying to teach me how much I need the other members of the body of Christ. And that's why all these 36 years I have valued fellowship in the body. It's been my protection.

It's kept me from Jesus has kept me from falling through keeping me in fellowship with the body. I feel sorry for a lot of Christians who sit even in CFC who don't value that fellowship. And I'll tell you something God's taught me some amazing things as I've sat listening to brothers and sisters who are much younger than me who are less educated than me.

As I go down to the villages of Tamil Nadu so often in the last 30 years I've sat there and listened to people who can't speak one word of English who are not gone even finished high school but who know the Lord and as they share the word I sit there and listen to them and God blesses me and speaks to my heart. Now if I sit there and think that oh I'm a somebody I planted this church what can these guys teach me I'd be lost today. But God's taught me how I need those brothers.

I've got some amazing revelations that have come from other brothers sharing the word. I was speaking last Wednesday about something I received many Wednesdays as I've sat here I've listened to different brothers and sisters much younger than me speak it I've just sat and listened and been blessed as I've heard as God has spoken to my heart and preserved me and challenged me and given me revelation. I was sharing last Wednesday what one young sister shared three verses that for the first time in my life it hit me I know those three verses for years but I never saw those three verses till last Wednesday as

relating to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And you were here Wednesday you heard me share that but I'll repeat it for you the first one is 1 Corinthians 10 and 13 which says that God is faithful who will never allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. That's the Father making sure that his child is never never tempted beyond his ability. I ask all of you who have been through school whenever you sat for your examination did any teacher throughout your time in school give you a question paper that was not for your class? If you were doing a sixth standard examination did you get a tenth standard question paper? Never.

I don't think any of us have experienced that. When you go through a trial and you say that's too much for me you're actually saying God you are more stupid than any teacher I ever had. No teacher ever gave me an examination paper too tough for me but you have come and given me a trial too tough for me.

No wonder you're defeated brother. You insult God by saying to him this is too much for me. Have you ever said these words this is getting too much for me.

Your school teachers were cleverer than God right? God will never allow you to be tested beyond your ability. I believe that with all my heart. It's because you think you're a somebody that you don't overcome.

The trial was something you could have passed but you thought you were somebody so God didn't exalt you. The problem was not that the trial was too much the problem was with you. You were too proud.

What a wonderful verse the father ensures that I'll never never never in my whole life be tested beyond my ability. I don't know what massive temptation the devil has stored up for me in the future but I know not one of them will come to me without my father filtering it to see whether I can handle it. And the second verse that was quoted was from Jude 24 which speaks about the ministry of the son of God.

Jude 24 where it says unto him Jesus who is able to keep you from falling he's able to keep me from falling Jesus keeps me from falling he's able to keep me from falling. In the early days I used to say I got victory over sin till the Lord corrected me and said don't say that say Jesus kept me from falling and that's what I say now. The Lord keeps me from falling because if he doesn't keep me I can't stand a single day.

I can't overcome sin if Jesus doesn't keep me from falling. He keeps me he says I have you in my hand no one can pluck you from my hand. I'm in his hand and so he keeps me from falling.

If he takes away his hand I'm finished. It's as simple as this. This Bible is kept from falling because I'm holding it up.

If this Bible somehow suddenly gets some high thoughts about itself and says I have overcome gravity really? I've got to remove my hand and discover you haven't overcome gravity. That's how you know we begin to think I have overcome some sin. No brother Jesus keeps me from falling.

Always recognize that. Recognize we are nothing. And the third verse is 2 Corinthians 12 which speaks about the ministry of the Holy Spirit who gives us grace.

2 Corinthians 12 and verse 9 My grace is sufficient for you the Lord said for my strength is made perfect in your weakness. The Holy Spirit is the one who communicates grace to us. And he says my grace is enough for you to overcome every weakness.

If you recognize you're weak you know in the moment of temptation if I recognize I'm weak I will run. The Bible says flee from temptation. If a worm comes in front of me I don't run.

But if an African lion comes in front of me you know what I do? I run. Because I'm not weak compared to that worm but I'm pretty weak compared to that lion. Even an Alsatian barking dog is enough to make me run.

So when a person plays around with temptation on the computer going to sites that he should not go to he thinks he's pretty strong. I can handle that. Really? No wonder you fall.

No wonder you're a slave to internet pornography. Because you think you're strong. You're not weak.

Only strong people fall into sin. Only strong people lose their temper. Only strong people lust.

Weak people run away. Those who feel I'm nothing. I'm scared.

I don't want to. If God allows me to face the temptation then he'd give me grace to overcome it. I'm not going to go and look for temptation.

Like we pray lead us not into temptation that is too strong for us but deliver us from evil. Flee from idolatry. Flee from immorality.

Those are the words in scripture. Flee from the love of money. I'm scared.

With money. I'll tell you honestly. Idolatry, immorality and money are the three things the bible tells us to flee from.

We're told to run away from these things. Flee from idolatry. Flee from immorality.

Flee from the love of money. Why do I flee? Because I'm weak. Idolatry.

I'm scared that I can give some place to something in my life that other than God. That's idolatry. Immorality.

I'm scared as a man I can be tempted. And so I steer clear. I want to keep a little distance from women.

Do you keep that distance? Flee from the love of money. Do I say, Lord I'm scared. Too much money can destroy me.

Keep me away from this. I'm weak. I'm helpless.

How many of you feel when you got a sudden jump in salary and you got 50% more than what or 100% more than what you earned. Oh God, I'm weak now. You didn't feel weak, did you? You felt pretty strong.

No wonder, brothers and sisters, you're not growing. No wonder God's not making rivers of living water flowing through you. My grace, my strength is made perfect in weakness.

When I recognize that I'm weak, that in my flesh dwells nothing good. I cannot overcome. I'm nothing.

Then God will enable me to be an overcomer. That's what I have to learn from Jesus. Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God is there. The Spirit is there to give me grace. But God gives his grace to the humble.

This has been God's way right through the ages. He brings a man down to nothing. We thought about Moses.

Mighty, powerful man at the age of 40. God had to humble him and make him so weak. Then he said, I can use you.

You know, when he was 40 years old with one blow of his hand, he could hit an Egyptian and kill him. And it says in Acts 7, he thought the Israelites would see that and say, boy, what a muscular man. He's going to deliver us from the Egyptians.

Imagine if Moses had tried that method of killing the Egyptians one by one. How long would it take him to deliver the Israelites? He would have been killed long before that. But when he was weak and helpless, 80 years old, a weak old man, and the whole Egyptian army comes at him, the Lord says, just lift up your rod.

And the whole Egyptian army was buried under the sea. What could he do as a mighty 40-year-old? Kill one man. What could he do as a weak 80-year-old? Bury the whole Egyptian army.

It's a lesson. God's power is manifested in our weakness. He waits.

Why does it say about Jesus that when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, what do you do when you hear someone, loved one, is sick? You rush. There's these amazing words in John 11. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, John 11, 6, he stayed two more days in the same place.

Have you ever heard of anything more crazy than that? When Jesus heard that one whom he loved so much was sick, he said, oh, he's sick, he better stay here two more days. Why was that? There's a spiritual lesson here. He was waiting for Lazarus to come to zero.

So he waited one day, two days. He can still move his fingers. He can still get a bit upset with Mary and Martha.

No, he's not ready yet. Wait a few days and now we hear he's buried. No, still wait.

Just make sure he's dead. Let him be there for four days. Ah, now we can go.

You know what God's waiting for in your case, brother? You're saying, Lord, like they send a message to Jesus, please help me. Lazarus is sick. You're sending a message.

Lord, give me victory. He's not coming. Right? He hasn't come.

He's waited two years, twenty years. You know what he's waiting for? He's waiting for you to die. To come to zero.

And say, Lord, I can't make it. He's waiting for you to stop despising other people. Stop thinking that you're somebody.

Stop comparing yourself with others and think you're superior to them. How easily that comes to us. God blesses you a little and our head gets swollen up and immediately God has to resist us.

That is the main reason why we don't go from strength to strength to strength. I'll tell you the history of many, many Christians. They really humble themselves, especially after they hear a message like this.

And then God blesses them, they go up. And they become blessed and they get puffed up and God has to push them down. And then they hear another message or something and they humble themselves, God lifts them up.

This is the reason for this wavy type of Christian experience. Sometimes on the mountain top, most of the time in the dumps and again on the mountain top. He doesn't have to be like that.

It says we can go from glory to glory to glory to glory if we keep on going down like Jesus instead of keeping on going up like Lucifer. This is the message that the world that celebrates Christmas needs to understand. God became a man, have this attitude in you.

If you're a man, go down like him to zero. And God will exalt you. No sin will be able to rule over you.

No demon will be able to stand before you. I'll tell you this honestly. If ever in my life, I mean there are a number of demons I've cast out.

Every single time with one sentence, no screaming, no yelling. If ever in my life I speak to a demon inside a person saying get out in Jesus name and he does not go with one quiet sentence, you know what I do? I don't yell and scream there. I go and humble myself before God and say Lord something's wrong with me.

How in the world did that demon stay there when I told him in the name of Jesus to go? That never happened to you Lord. He would speak a word and ten kilometers away the demons would leave. Do you know what amazing authority and power Christ wants all of us to have? The demons tremble when they know that you're coming there.

Why aren't we all like that? I'll tell you my brothers and sisters because we think we are somebody. Let's go down from today onwards and make this new year a blessed year. Learn that we are nobodies.

Let's pray. Bow our heads before God. Dear brothers and sisters, don't let this word be taken away by the birds of the air.

Don't let it just give you a temporary boost. Say, Lord, help me to see clearly the way Jesus went and the way Lucifer went so that I never make a mistake about the path in which I have to go. Not just for a few days but all the days of my life.

I never want to exalt myself. I want you to exalt me. Thank you, Lord.

Hear us, Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen.

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