

Revelation Given To Those Who Become Like Babes

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, dependence on God, and maintaining a clear conscience in order to truly enter into the New Covenant. It warns against pride, prejudice, and the danger of dead works done with wrong motives. The speaker highlights the need to approach God's Word with a childlike humility, seeking revelation rather than relying solely on human understanding.

Scripture: Matthew 11:20, Matthew 11:25, Hebrews 9:14

Topics: "Humility", "Dependence on God"

Description

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Transcript

So like I've been saying, these very short talks on the New Covenant are all, like they say in the restaurants, starters. They're not the main meal. That you have to go to God yourself and get, in order to get you started and thinking along certain lines.

And God doesn't want us to be spoon-fed for every little thing. Once you get started on a certain line, just meditate on that. For example, what I said in the last session, meditate on that and God will show you many areas.

You know, remember the Apostle Peter, he had such a prejudice ten years after Pentecost, that he did not want to go to the house of a Gentile. Imagine, it can be so deep-rooted. So don't think it's not there in you.

The Apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, after ten years still had this prejudice. It is there in us. And even after that, even after the Lord opened his eyes through that vision and took him to the house of a Gentile, many years after that, he was still afraid to be seen eating with the Gentiles.

That Paul had to rebuke him, you read in Galatians chapter 2. So don't assume, yeah, yeah, I heard that, I'm free from all that. Be a little careful before you say that. I mingle with non-intellectual people.

Be a little careful when you say that. It may not be true fully. That means there's a lot of prejudice in us which we don't realize and we will never enter into the fullness of the New Covenant or to the life of Jesus Christ if I don't destroy that 100%.

If you leave one of these little Canaanites living in the land, you'll never occupy the land. Those little Canaanites grow up to be giants one day. So eliminate them all if you want to possess the land, to use that Old Testament illustration.

Okay, another aspect of the New Covenant is what I want to begin by sharing from Matthew chapter 11. We were speaking about mystery and revelation in the last study. In Matthew chapter 11, we read that Jesus denounced, verse 20, the cities in which the miracles were done because they did not repent.

Repentance was missing. And then, but they were all very clever people, you know, all these people in the cities, the Jews, Jewish people, some of the most cleverest people in the world, but they did not repent. You can be very clever and understand so much of the Bible.

They knew the Bible. When repentance is missing, learn from this verse, Jesus will denounce you. It doesn't matter how much of the Bible you know or how much of the Bible you can explain, where there's no repentance, whatever else you may have, Jesus denounced them for one reason.

They did not repent. And it was so bad that he told them, verse 24, it'll be more tolerable for Sodom. You know the type of sins Sodomites were involved in.

And he tells people who don't repent, you're worse off than those guys in Sodom. Those are the words of Jesus Christ. And then, it's in this context I want you to see, verse 25, at that time Jesus said, at that time, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the clever and the wise and the intelligent and revealed them to infants.

Is there anyone sitting here who's not clever, wise, and intelligent? I don't think so. You may think you're not, maybe compared to somebody else sitting here, but you are clever, wise, and intelligent compared to perhaps 95% of the rest of the world. And that can hinder you from revelation.

You need to understand that. It won't hinder you from living an old covenant life. No.

You can live a wonderful old covenant life with all your cleverness and your wisdom and intelligence, but you cannot enter into the new covenant if you are proud of that. Not if you have it. You can't avoid having it because we are born with it.

But if you are proud of it and it's revealed to babies. Again, the word revelation. Revelation is given by God to babies.

And I remember when I first began to think of this verse and I said, Lord, I want to enter into the new covenant and it has to come by revelation. How in the world can I get it? Because even if I'm not the cleverest person around, I have certain amount of cleverness and intelligence with me. I was born with it.

I didn't manufacture it. What can I do? It's like the color of my skin. I can't change it.

And if I'm born a little cleverer than somebody else, what can I do, Lord? It's something I'm born with. And then the Lord showed me, it's got nothing to do with your cleverness or intelligence, but it's got to do with the pride you have in your cleverness and intelligence that hinders you from getting revelation. Ah, thank

God.

Then I realized I don't have to get rid of my cleverness and intelligence, but I have to get rid of the pride that comes in so subtly. There are many subtle ways in which it comes with, when I can look down on somebody when they can't grasp a joke as quickly as I can. And you inwardly think, that guy's a bit dumb.

He's like a tube light that comes on a little later, but I come on immediately. And things like that, you know, you look down on someone because something, why can't they, why can't they understand that? We don't realize, especially if you're a little educated, how much there is of this little looking down on someone else, because you studied in some well-known college and you're proud of proclaiming that fact and etc, etc, etc. And you think other people are not at your level.

It's very easy. I know Indians who come to the United States or go back to India and think they're a superior class. It's very easy.

It could be any little thing that just exalts me a little over the others and immediately I'm doomed, because God gives his grace to the humble. So then we can ask ourselves, so I said, Lord, how can I get revelation? I said, be like a baby. Whether you're clever or dumb, intelligent or stupid, makes no difference.

Be like a baby. Now what does a baby have, which clever, intelligent people don't have? That will bring me into the new covenant, if I can understand it. Cleverness and intelligence will not bring me into the new covenant.

It'll make me a good old covenant scholar. See Matthew chapter 13, you know, Jesus told his disciples in verse 11, Matthew 13 11, to you it has been granted to know the mysteries. There again that word mysteries.

It's a new covenant word. It's never found in the old covenant. I've discovered through the years that I preached on the new covenant for so many years now in so many places and I found very few people understand it.

There are people who can even explain it with PowerPoint presentations who have not understood it in their life because it's all intellectual understanding. It's a mystery and it's mysteries can be known only by revelation and revelation is to given to babies, not to the clever and the intelligent. That's the danger for most of us here.

But to you it has been granted, he told those unlearned ignorant fishermen who are less educated than all of us sitting here, he told them, to them it has not been granted. Sorry, they're not being given because they are so proud of their intelligence. And then he spoke about all these parables which most people can't understand and then at the end he said this, listen to what he said at the end of this number of parables.

Verse 52, it's a very important verse. Let me put it like this, describe has to become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven. Then he will understand the relationship between the old covenant and the new covenant.

I'm paraphrasing that word, that verse. The scribe is the scholar, the intelligent guy who's got the PhD or a PhD, Doctor of Theology. He studied the Bible and he knows everything and he can explain it.

He knows where the verses are, he knows all the 617 commandments given by God in the Old Testament, knows all of them and can explain it. And that's why people have to go to the scribes to understand. Many Bible teachers today are like scribes who've understood and they think they can explain to everybody.

But the scribe has to become a disciple. A disciple is not known for his head knowledge or known for, he can find a verse, he immediately can quote verses easily or compare the scripture with that scripture, the other scripture. No, the disciple is known by the fact that he has seen Jesus.

He's seen the way Jesus walked. He may not be able to explain it. He may not be able to explain the new covenant but he walks the new covenant.

Do you know there are a lot of people who can't explain the new covenant who walk that way and a lot of people who can explain the new covenant who don't walk that way. So don't value understanding. Be a disciple of the kingdom of heaven.

Your goal must not be to be a scribe but a disciple of the kingdom of heaven. In James chapter 3 it says don't be many teachers because you'll receive a bigger judgment. So what does a child have? What does a baby have which clever people don't have? If you really want to be a baby you've got to meditate on it.

Number one, a baby has no high thoughts about itself. Zero. You think of that one week old baby lying in a cradle.

Is it thinking there how smart I am or what do other people think about me when they look at me or if someone says boy how cute you are and they remember that for the next few days that somebody said I'm so cute and or if somebody goes and pinches them and hurts them deliberately the next day that person comes he smiles at him he's got no remembrance this is the guy who pinched me yesterday. It's wonderful to be a baby. It's part of humility that you don't remember the evil other people did.

I want to encourage you brothers sisters meditate on what it means to be a baby because revelation is given to them. I've done it for years because I wanted revelation desperately and I said Lord I've got the handicap I've got a big handicap because I'm clever and intelligent. How can I overcome it? The Lord said meditate on being a baby.

Be like that. Be like one who's got no high thoughts about yourself. You're not you don't repeat yourself in your mind the good things somebody said about you.

No baby thinks about all the nice things that you know how a lot of people come to see and say nice things about a baby. The baby doesn't even remember one thing of that. Lord I want to be like that.

That all the nice things people say about me I don't even remember one thing of it because I won't get revelation. Are you desperate to get revelation? Then be like a baby. That's the new covenant otherwise you'll be a scribe.

There are lots of scribes sitting in CFC churches who can explain the old covenant on the difference between the old and the new covenant beautifully but they have high thoughts about themselves. Very very important. They have grudges against people.

The baby has zero grudge against anyone and there are other things about a baby. A baby is helplessly dependent. It's not a shame to admit it.

I can't do anything. My dad and mom have to do everything for me and a true child of God is like that helplessly dependent on Jesus like the branch in the tree. I cannot do anything.

I cannot do anything. That's the way I always have to be. For years and years now more recently I've tried to speak God's Word helplessly dependent on the Lord because I know that's the most effective way of doing it.

Now I say that because I spent many years studying it. Now don't try to do that if you haven't studied God's Word because you'll waste people's time if you try to do it without studying God's Word. But this is the way a baby is and I'm not ashamed.

The baby's not ashamed to admit that I can't do anything. My dad and mom have to do everything for me. Any pride in us that I've accomplished something.

What has a baby accomplished? A six-day-old baby. What has it accomplished? Can you remember the things you accomplished in your life? Aha! No wonder you don't get revelation of the new covenant. No wonder you're so defeated by sin in your life.

No wonder you lose your temper. No wonder you murmur, you complain, you grumble and you love money and all these things. It's because you meditate too much on the things you feel you've accomplished in your life.

You're not like the others. Aha! I'm a little higher. I'm esteemed by others.

You won't get revelation brother. Meditate on being a baby. There's more to that.

As I said, there's only a starter. The other thing about a baby is it has got an absolutely pure conscience. There's not a single sin in its conscience.

Can I be like that? Yes! By the blood of Christ, I can be like that baby without a single sin on my conscience. Without the blood of Christ, impossible. See it says in Hebrews in chapter 9, Hebrews chapter 9, verse 14, how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish, cleanse your conscience.

Cleanse my conscience not only from sin, which I need to be cleansed from, that is 1 John 1 9, if you confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us. And 1 John 1 7, if you walk in the light he cleanses us from all sins, blood cleanses us. But also from dead works.

Here it is not mentioning about sin. Here is mentioning about dead works. You know what dead works are? Dead works are good works, not bad works, not sinful works.

Good deeds done with a bad motive. Bad motive means for my own honor. Something which I want to get something out of it.

A good work done for some some other gain for myself from it. You know a preacher for example can preach a powerful sermon and it can be a dead work because he's wanting either money or honor for it. So if you preach a sermon and everybody appreciates it and you want that honor, not if you get it, you can't avoid getting it.

Jesus got honor too. But if you want it, it's a dead work. Your wonderful sermon was fit for the trash can.

God throws it into the trash can and he says it's a dead work and I have to repent of it. And the blood of Christ not only cleanses me from sin, but from all the dead works I've done in my life and gives me light on the dead works. And if you confess that, and I believe one way of knowing that I'm walking in the light is God gives me more and more light on my dead works, not just on my sin.

To get understanding on sin is almost like a low level. You know there are different levels of Christian growth, but when you go beyond sin you get light on dead works and you cleanse yourself from that and you can have an absolutely clear conscience. That's another thing a baby has.

So strive for this. If you want to enter the new covenant in your life and not just be a scribe of the new covenant, but a disciple of the new covenant, then say Lord I want to really have the humility of a baby, the helplessness, helpless dependence on you that a baby has and a totally clear conscience at all times. And that's possible because as soon as you're aware of something you confess it.

I say it's like removing a thorn from your foot. If a thorn gets into your foot you remove it immediately and I can say for example, for example if I say something like this I always walk 24 hours a day without any thorn in my feet. What do you think? That's arrogance? How dare you say that brother Zach? Can you always walk without any thorn in your feet? Yes.

But if I say I always walk 24 hours without sin on my conscience, you say oh that's arrogance. Why should it be? If you can always walk without thorns in your feet, without a single thorn in your foot, why? I'm not saying I never got it, but if a thorn gets into it I pull it out immediately. That's why I walk without thorns in my feet.

Why can't I say the same thing if I believe that the blood of Christ can cleanse me not only from sin but from dead works. I can be like a little baby and I can get that revelation from God which the scribe never gets. This is a very important area of the new covenant.

In the new covenant it is not understanding but revelation. It's not by study but by revelation we understand even the mystery that I spoke of earlier. And all the mysteries of the new covenant, for example the Bible speaks about the mystery of iniquity in 2nd Thessalonians 2. I don't have time to talk about it.

That's also called a mystery, the mystery of iniquity. I'll never understand any mystery in the new covenant if I come with my cleverness and intelligence to scripture. So when I come to the scriptures I say to the Lord, Lord in the things in the world I can use my intelligence and my ability but when I come to the things of God I have to say Lord I don't understand anything here.

I've come like a babe to understand. You see how in the Old Testament the clever Balaam could not understand what his donkey understood. His donkey could see an angel and Balaam himself couldn't see it.

He couldn't understand what God was saying. It's very easy to be blind like that to something which is so obvious to somebody else. We must be humble enough to acknowledge there could be glaring inconsistencies in your Christian life which are so obvious to other people.

It's good to humble ourselves and say Lord help me to have a low estimate of myself. I want to always live like a helpless baby in humility and recognizing that I can live with a clear conscience every single moment of my life. Dear brothers this is the new covenant life God wants all of us to live.

Can you imagine what will happen in a church where every single brother is seeking to go this way. I believe it will be the most powerful church on the face of the earth because there's no arrogance there. There's no one looking down on the other.

There's an esteeming of one another. So may God make us into a new covenant church.

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