

# Sanctification : 2. a Renewed Soul

by Zac Poonen

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*Sanctification is a lifelong process of transformation, where we allow the Holy Spirit to change our way of thinking and conform us to the image of Christ.*

**Duration:** 51:20

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 5:14, John 7:38, 2 Corinthians 3:14-15, 1 Thessalonians 5:23

**Topics:** "Sanctification"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of renewing our minds in order to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. The mind is emphasized as a crucial part of our soul, even more important than our emotions. The process of renewing our minds may initially be a struggle, but with time and discipline, it becomes almost automatic. The speaker encourages us to submit to the Holy Spirit and seek to understand God's ways, even if there are things we cannot fully explain.

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## Transcript

We're looking at 1 Thessalonians 5.23, Entire Sanctification. May the God of peace himself sanctify you. Yeah, we were looking at 1 Thessalonians 5.23. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely and may your spirit, soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he who calls you and he also will bring it to pass. And we were seeing, first of all, that it's God who does this work and he wants us to have a pure spirit. And I want to speak about the soul now.

God wants us to be pure in our soul as well. And our soul consists of our mind and our emotions and our will. And I want to turn in this connection to Romans chapter 12 and verse 2. The mind is perhaps the most important part of our soul.

And it says here, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. So we see here that transformation, which is God's final goal for us, to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, is dependent on my mind being renewed. As I said, the mind is a major part of this second part of our being, our soul.

So it's more important than our emotions. Emotions are also created by God, but it's to take a secondary place to our mind. But transformation is dependent on my mind being renewed, being changed to think like

God thinks.

And the other thing we see in Romans 12 too is that worldliness is also something which is primarily in our minds. Now, generally speaking, in Christian circles, worldliness is associated with dress and makeup and many things on the outside on your lifestyle and what type of television programs you watch, etc. But worldliness doesn't lie in any of these things.

These are only the outward symptoms of a worldly state of mind. And when we address those issues and try to change people there, you haven't delivered the person from being worldly. There are some very, very modestly dressed people who are thoroughly worldly in their thinking.

There are people who never go to the movies, who are very worldly, because worldliness is in the mind. It says here, don't be, if I were to paraphrase this verse, it would be, don't be conformed to this world in your mind, but be transformed in your mind. The Bible says in Romans 8 and verse 29, that God has predestined us, predestination is another very controversial subject, but very often people think in terms of predestination as to whether God has decided whether to send people to heaven or to hell, but it's got nothing to do with that.

Predestination is for one purpose. He predestined us to be conformed to the image of his son. If God predestined a man for anything, it was to be like Jesus.

So that predestined purpose of God, that we might become like Christ, once I see that that is God's destination, once I see that this is the destination God has for me, predestination means a destination previously determined by God, that God's destination for me is not primarily that I might do a lot of things for him on this earth. That is secondary. The primary destination God has for me is to be conformed to the image of his son and everything must flow out of that.

In John chapter 7, where Jesus speaks about the gift of the Holy Spirit that's going to be given on the day of Pentecost, he expresses it like this. He who believes in me, John 7, 38, as the scripture has said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. Many people place the emphasis on the rivers of living water.

That's what I did earlier on in my Christian life too. But I've come to see that the emphasis should really be on the first part of that sentence, from his innermost being. In the Old Testament, when the Spirit came upon people, their ministry did not come from their innermost being.

It was an external thing. Judges 6.34 says the Spirit clothed Gideon. That's the accurate translation of that word.

Clothed means it's like a person wearing a shirt or a dress. It's something worn and that can be taken off. And this is exactly how the Spirit came upon people in the Old Testament, like a dress or a shirt that they put on and then they took off.

You know, Samson could put it on and take it off. Gideon had it on and took it off. It wasn't from their innermost being.

It was an external thing. Samson could kill that physical lion on the outside, but not the lion of lust inside him. But the moment you come to the Day of Pentecost, it's different.

It's from the innermost being. And if it doesn't come from the innermost being, it's Old Covenant. Any service that I do for God, which is because of external factors, the lowest level would be perhaps somebody serving God for money.

But there could be something better than that. I could serve God because I want to impress people or other reasons. But if it's external, it's an Old Covenant thing.

It has to be from the innermost being. The Holy Spirit has come that everything that flows out of us flows from our innermost being. And that's why true service, as I said, first of all, originates in worship.

We worship and we serve. Originates in conformity to Christ in our innermost being. Because that's God's destination.

He predestined us, not that we might serve God, but that we might become like Christ. And a subsection of that is that I serve God. And a further subsection of that is that I serve God in this particular place or this particular organization.

But if I make that second subsection the main thing, I'm going to completely miss God's purpose. Because his destination is that I might become like Christ. And from that inner conformity, becoming like Christ doesn't mean I don't serve him.

Nobody served the Father like Jesus. He served the Father so completely that he could say at the end of his life, Father, I finished the work you gave me to do. There is a work that the Father gave Jesus to do which he completed.

So to be like Christ is to finish the work the Father has given us to do during our earthly lifetime. But that can come only out of a transformation of our character. If it is to be the quality of work that God intends it to be like.

And so once I see this as God's destination for me. See, the reason I emphasize it is until you see God predestined you not to go to heaven, not to escape hell, not even to have your sins forgiven. He predestined you, Romans 8.29 says very clearly, to be conformed to the likeness of Christ.

It's very clear. There is no other verse anywhere in the Bible which tells us what God predestined us for. It's the only verse which tells us what he predestined us for.

It is to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. That's not character alone, as I said. My work must flow out of that inner conformity to Christ.

And that's where we come back to Romans 12.2 where it says that that transformation is dependent on my allowing God to renew my mind, to change my way of thinking. The world lives in a certain way, people in the world, because they have a certain way of thinking. A certain way of thinking means they have certain thoughts concerning money, certain thoughts concerning pleasure, certain thoughts concerning comfort, certain thoughts concerning how I should behave towards my enemies, and certain thoughts concerning sex and greatness in the world.

They're thoughts. Based on those thoughts, they live. They take their decisions based on their understanding of these different subjects.

So, if my mind has not been changed, transformed from that worldly way of thinking to conformity to Christ, I'm going to bring all those thoughts into Christian work and create a lot of confusion. And that's exactly what's happening. So, I just want to say three things.

First of all, concerning strongholds in our mind. Second Corinthians chapter 10. It says here, we are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.

And we're taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. There are many lofty things and speculations in our mind which are raised up against the knowledge of God. And I have to destroy them.

I have to bring them captive to the obedience of Christ. Destroy a certain way of thinking, not destroy our minds. Our minds must be brought captive to the obedience of Christ.

As I said in the Old Testament, they could not go through into the most holy place. That veil was there. We could say a good Old Testament life was a life in the soul and the body.

Good Old Testament worship was a soul and body type of worship where the body and the soul played a major part. And that's impressive. We see a lot of it today in certain Christian circles where body and soul play a very important part.

But God's looking for worshippers in the spirit, as I said. In the same way, in the Old Testament, they couldn't go into the most holy place. And so this is all that they could do.

They could serve God with their mind and their body. But now in the New Testament, everything has to be controlled from the spirit. The Holy Spirit has to control my mind.

So it's not destroying my mind, but dethroning my mind. There's a lot of difference between destroying our intellect and dethroning our intellect. I believe that's a mistake that a lot of people have made who emphasize the life of faith.

There's a lot of emphasis today on faith. But very often, the type of faith that is proclaimed there is telling you to switch off your mind. That's useless.

Don't use your intellect. But that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says, renew your mind, not destroy it.

And you can't be transformed if you don't renew your mind. And when people want to control you, the first thing they'll tell you is to destroy your mind. Don't think.

Just believe. And that sounds so spiritual. But it's not according to God's word.

Word of God does not say destroy your mind. It says dethrone it. Give it a place.

It's something like, you know, husband and wife. Think of a home where the wife runs the show as the boss of the home. It's not God's will.

So what's the solution? Solution is not to shoot the wife and get rid of her. Because your wife is very useful for many, many things. Otherwise, God wouldn't have created Eve.

The thing is to get her to recognize that she shouldn't be the head, that she can never fulfill her God-appointed function if she takes first place. She's got to be. She got to recognize that she was created for man, like he was created for Adam.

Like it says in 1 Corinthians 11, Adam was not created for Eve, but he was created for Adam. This is prior to sin coming to the world. It was not a sort of change of mind that God had after sin came.

Before sin came, 1 Corinthians 11 says God created woman for the man. It doesn't mean woman's inferior. Not at all.

Any more than Christ is inferior to the Father. In fact, 1 Corinthians 11 speaks about the relationship between man and woman as similar to the relationship between the Father and the Son. Who's inferior there? Nobody's inferior.

I don't believe for one second that a woman's inferior to a man. But Jesus voluntarily took that position of submission to the Father. In fact, 1 Corinthians 15 says that for all eternity he's taken that position.

He's going to be subservient to the Father forever. And that's not a disgraceful position. It's a very honorable position.

And 1 Corinthians 11 says women are asked to follow Jesus' example. What better example to follow than Christ, who voluntarily chose a position of submission to the Father because that was God's plan. So, this is the position of the woman.

And this is the position of the mind in subservience to the Spirit. It's not destroying but dethroning. So, when I'm filled with the Holy Spirit, I'm still going to use my mind.

But it's not going to be supreme like I said earlier. If your mind tells you something in your heart, your spirit tells you something else, listen to your heart. But the mind is very important.

But in the mind there are these thoughts and strongholds which want to have the upper place. And I believe we have in Christendom two extremes. Some who have made the mind everything, who don't give any value to the spirit.

You know, for example, a lot of people who study the Bible. I believe this is a mistake in numerous Bible schools. The mind is emphasized to such an extent that you don't need the Holy Spirit at all.

And when you study, here's one of these strongholds of the mind, you know, when you study the Scriptures without a dependence on the Holy Spirit. And you know how it is, it's described in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 like this. It's like taking a handkerchief and putting it over your Bible and trying to read it.

How much can you understand when you got a handkerchief over your Bible? It says that in verse 14 or verse 15. To this day, whenever Moses is read, when they speak about Moses, remember that's the Scriptures. We can read it like this.

To this day, when they read the Bible, there's a handkerchief over it. They can't read. There's something they can't understand there.

But when a man turns to the Lord, that handkerchief or that veil is taken away. That means you can begin to see what's written there. And which Lord is he talking about now? Not Jesus Christ.

Verse 17. This Lord is the Holy Spirit. He's talking about the Holy Spirit.

This is one place in the New Testament where the Holy Spirit is being referred to as Lord. So, verse 16 means, when you're reading the Bible, if you turn to the Holy Spirit, then it's as if this cloth is taken away and you begin to understand what's written there. So, we can say that anyone who gives such a place of importance to his mind, remember the analogy of the wife running the home, where the husband is probably unimportant, shoved away to a corner, is the picture of a person who does not give the place to the Holy Spirit in his study of the Scriptures, in his understanding of God.

It's what's happening, as I said, in a lot of Bible schools. They're studying the Bible with this cloth on top of it. And naturally, they'll get a wrong understanding.

Now, you have 10,000 different interpretations. But when a man turns to the Holy Spirit, that veil is taken away. And that's why we got to come to the Scriptures and destroy these strongholds of the mind that wants to be supreme and say, come down, listen to the Spirit.

And I believe this is one of the functions of the gift of speaking in tongues. And the reason why Paul said, I thank God I speak in tongues more than all of you, Corinthians, was Paul was such an intellectual man that he needed to keep his mind in secondary place always, dethrone it all the time. And one way he did it was by praying with his spirit often.

He said, I pray with my spirit and I pray with my mind. And he made sure that the spirit controlled the mind. I'm not talking about a public use of it.

Paul hardly ever used it in public. But he obviously used it extensively in private. But it was this dethroning of the mind, not destroying, but dethroning where the spirit rules supreme.

And the purpose of this is, comes back to what we said earlier in 2nd Corinthians 3, the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. And verse 18, this spirit transforms me into the likeness of Christ from one degree of glory to another. So these strongholds in the mind need to be destroyed.

The place of supremacy that the mind wants to have. That place, that desire must be destroyed, but the mind itself has to be used. Now, let me turn to another verse.

Second, I want to speak about the mind as the place where we learn to think like God thinks. Matthew 16 and verse 23. Matthew 16, verse 23.

Jesus turned around and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan. You are a stumbling block to me for you're setting your mind. You're not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.

Is it possible for a born again believer to set his mind on man's interests and not God's interests? There's ample scope for that. There's plenty of examples of that all around us and in our own life. And how serious is that? When my mind has got such a position of importance in my life, it's set on my interest.

Now, when we are born into the world, that's how our mind is. Every child, his mind is set on his interests, whether it's grabbing a toy or wanting something or screaming for something. Right from birth, our mind is set on our own interests.

What's most important for me? What's the best thing for me? People join Christian organizations thinking, what can I get for myself here? The pastors change churches thinking of what can I get for myself here? It's Christendom is filled with it. And this is so serious that Jesus said that such people, according to verse

23, are a stumbling block to him. How many of us realize that, that if I don't get my mind renewed, and here's what renewal means.

It means to be interested in the thing God's interested in and not to be interested in the thing that man's interested in. If I don't get on that way of renewal, it doesn't happen overnight. It's a lifelong process.

This is what sanctification is all about. To get a sanctified soul, a pure soul, a pure mind. It's a lifelong process.

And I have to allow the Holy Spirit to change my way of thinking. And here this verse tells me what, from what to what, from man's interests to God's interests, from my man's way of thinking to God's way of thinking. And if I don't submit to that, if I don't allow the Holy Spirit's willing to do that job, it's his work as I said.

It's not my work. I cannot change my way of thinking, but the Holy Spirit will do it in me. But he will not do it if I don't permit him.

He's such a gentleman that he won't come in anywhere if you don't open the door. But if you permit him, he'll do a thorough job of cleaning, cleaning up and throwing away these wrong ways of thinking and making us think like God thinks, have our mindset on God's interests. Then our service for God is effective.

Then we understand the way God works, God's ways. Otherwise, we're only interested in God's actions. In Psalm 103, verse 7, it says that Israel could see God's actions, but Moses understood God's ways.

That was a vast difference between Moses and Israel. Everybody saw the miracles. You know, the manna coming every day, the rock being split open, water coming out, the Red Sea being split open and the healing through the bronze serpent and many, many things.

Moses also saw it, but Moses saw something more than what all the other Israelites saw. He saw beyond what the Israelites saw because he met God face to face. He was one of those, you know, new covenant people living in Old Testament times, just like we have multitudes of old covenant people living in new covenant times today.

Moses was one of those rare people who somehow got through the veil and lived before God as it were. He saw him face to face. He understood God's ways.

And this is our privilege. Many people are taken up with God's actions. They are excited and they hear, oh, God did this over here and God did this over there.

They're always waiting to give a testimony about what God did in my life, this answer to this prayer. It's all good. I want to tell you there's something better to understand God's ways, to understand his way of thinking.

You see, that's the difference between a child and an adult. A child is interested in what's daddy brought for me from his trip. Are there any chocolates in the suitcase? The things that he can get, things that dad does for him, gets him a new bicycle or something like that.

But a mature son who is in partnership with his dad in the business, is not interested in chocolates and bicycles. He's trying to understand, how does my dad run this business? He's running so efficiently and

here I'm going to take over from him. I want to understand his way of thinking.

And that's the person who's going to be a really useful son in the business. It's the same with God. If you want to join God, the Father, in the business he's doing on the earth today, and you're just taken up with his actions, you won't be a very effective servant.

You've got to get beyond the actions to understand his ways. Why does he do it like that? Why didn't he do that? And there's where our mind comes in. Submit to the Holy Spirit.

There will still be many, many things which we cannot explain. And we must be humble enough to acknowledge, I don't know the answer to that. And as we progress and mature more and more, we'll understand a little more.

But there will still be many things, even at the end of life, that we can't fully explain. But that doesn't matter. We are to progress in understanding God's ways.

Otherwise, as we read in this verse, we are a stumbling block. It's a very serious word. I mean, none of us wants to be a stumbling block to God, at least.

Okay, if we don't do anything, at least let me not be a stumbling block. But if I get into God's work, as all of you are doing, and you don't understand God's ways, do you know that you can be a stumbling block? Then it's far better that you are out of the way. Don't hinder other people who are doing God's work.

It's terrible. And there's a lot of it going on in Christian work today. People are trying to do God's work, and they haven't understood God's ways.

And they are messing up God's work. I see plenty of it in India. In fact, most of what's called Christian work in India, I don't believe it's done the way God wants it to be done.

And that's why it's such a pathetic testimony that we have, not only in India, in the United States, everywhere else too, the nations of the world have not, many people in the world have not rejected Christ. They have rejected the Christ they have seen projected by Christendom. And very often, that's not the real Christ.

I don't believe India has rejected Christ. Not at all. I believe a lot of people in India have rejected the Christ they have seen projected by Christians in Christendom, which is not the real Christ.

And that's because a lot of people in Christian work haven't understood God's ways. They haven't allowed the Holy Spirit to renew their way of thinking. And therefore, they're a stumbling block.

And not only a stumbling block, the other word he used was even stronger. Matthew 16, 23, he said, it's satanic. Get behind me, Satan.

The only two places Jesus ever said that, one was when he directly met Satan in the wilderness, Matthew 4. And the other is when Satan came through Peter, saying something which sounded so compassionate and good. What is the context here? When Jesus said that he had to go to the cross, Peter said, no, Lord, I'll never allow you to go to the cross. You, you're not supposed to suffer.

And Jesus said, that was Satan. A voice that said, you don't have to suffer if you're a Christian. You don't have to take up the cross.

You can do God's will without taking up the cross. Can you believe that that's the voice of Satan? So, it's quite a job, you know, to understand God's ways. And it's very easy if you submit to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will show us.

What does he show us? We read in 2 Corinthians 3, 18, that the Holy Spirit shows us Jesus. And we use our mind as we read the scriptures. And the Holy Spirit shows us how Jesus lived, the principles by which Jesus lived.

And we understand that and say, Lord, those are the principles by which I'm going to live. Those are the principles by which I'm going to serve. It doesn't matter if all the rest of Christendom is not interested in that.

That doesn't interest me one bit. How many of us would have the courage to go a certain way which you see Jesus, is the way Jesus would choose in your situation. Even if everybody around you that you know is going another way.

If you're not willing to take a stand in a situation like that, we can't really serve God. That's what I see here. There was not a single one of those disciples who understood the way of the cross that Jesus chose.

He knew that it was the way the Father wanted him to go. And he was determined to go. It says he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

Not one of his disciples understood it. But he was determined to go. To set our mind on God's interests, to think like he thinks, to look at people and circumstances and everything on earth the way he does.

To set our mind on God's interests. A third thing I want to say. We've seen about the strongholds in our mind that need thought life, that need to be brought down.

We've seen about setting our mind on God's interests. And thirdly, I want to show you a verse in Colossians, in chapter 3, where it says we've got to set our mind on the things that are above. Set your mind, verse 2, Colossians 3, on the things that are above and not on the things that are on the earth.

Similar to what we read in Romans 12, verse 2. Be not conformed to this world. So, the New Testament does speak a lot about our mind not being set on the things that are on earth. And the reason given is, verse 3, if you have been raised up with Christ, I'm sorry, verse 1, chapter 3, verse 1. If you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

The Holy Spirit expresses it in different ways. In Ephesians 2, it says we've been raised up and seated in the heavenlies. So, that's where my mind has got to start thinking in those terms.

Since, positionally in Christ, God has already placed me. Physically, one day I'll be there in the future. But in my spirit, God's already raised me up.

I've died with Christ, I've been buried with Christ, I've been raised up with Christ, I've ascended with Christ. I'm seated in the heavenly places, it says in Ephesians 2, in Christ. And therefore, my mind must look at everything from this heavenly standpoint.

That is transformation. The Holy Spirit changing my way of thinking so that everything that happens around me in my life, I don't allow my mind, my mind wants to think of it, the natural tendency is to think of

it like everybody else in the world would think. But to discipline myself, as the Holy Spirit says, allow me to change your way of thinking.

It's tremendous. You know, in the beginning, it's a battle. It's like learning swimming.

The first day you jump into the pool, you struggle. But after a while, it's almost effortless. It's like learning to brush your teeth.

Barbarian who's never brushed his teeth for 30 years, you try to teach him to brush his teeth. It takes a little while before he learns to do it. He may forget a few days.

But then gradually, I mean, we don't forget. How is it we never forget? It's become a habit. It's something like that.

You know, in the beginning, it's a struggle to discipline ourselves to think, allow the Holy Spirit to make us think of a particular situation the way it would be if I'm really seated in heavenly places physically. Oh, after some time, it becomes almost automatic that we begin to think. For example, if some bad news hits you, and as long as we live on this earth, what the world calls bad news anyway, it can happen anytime to any of us.

And particularly if you're in Christian work, there are all types of things that can happen unexpectedly. One of the things that's really helped me is to say to myself in such a situation, Well, Lord, that's a surprise to me. I never expected that to happen.

But it wasn't a surprise to you. And God knew ages ago that that was going to happen on this particular day to this favorite child of his. That's me and you.

Not just me. God knew that. And yet he allowed it.

Must be with a wonderful purpose. And say, Well, Lord, I don't see yet what that purpose is, but there must be some wonderful purpose. It brings our mind to rest.

That's the way to be free from anxiety and tension and panic. And imagine if over a period of time as we allow the Holy Spirit to change our whole way we look at things, we're looking at it from a heavenly perspective. Can you imagine the rest that it will bring into our lives over a period of time? No matter what news we get.

I say, Well, God's still in control. Is there anything that can happen? I mean, right now when things are going smoothly, we know we have the right answer. God's in control.

He knows everything that's going on. And there's nothing outside of his control. But that's true even when things go wrong.

He's still, okay, as far as the world's concerned, it says something is wrong here. But God is in control then. The devil was, it's still true that the devil was defeated on the cross 2000 years ago.

But sometimes we have to remind ourselves of that. And I find it's helpful to remind myself and ask myself, Who's in control now of this universe right now when this terrible thing has happened? God's still in control. The devil was still defeated on the cross.

It's good to remind ourselves of these facts. I find I need to remind myself of that, of these facts when sometimes casting out demons from people. Sometimes a demon-possessed person can, unexpectedly, you come across such a person and he looks at me in such a terrifying way with his fierce eyes.

And it almost puts a scare into you. And the thing that I asked myself at that time is, Was this one of the demons that escaped on Calvary? Or was this also defeated? Just to reassure myself. I say, no demon escaped on Calvary.

They were all defeated. Then I can look fiercely back into his or her eyes and say, You were defeated, Satan, on the cross. Get out of her in Jesus' name.

It goes. Fear is the opposite of faith. And the devil tries to bring fear into our hearts by allowing us at that moment to forget certain eternal realities.

God is on the throne. The devil was defeated on the cross. That my sins are all forgiven.

That I'm a favored child of God. I love to think of that. You know, I love that word which John uses to describe himself.

The disciple whom Jesus loved. Have you ever thought of yourself like that? I've begun to think of myself more and more like that. Not the disciple who loves Jesus.

I mean, I hope I do. I want to. But the disciple whom Jesus loved.

That's easier to believe. And it's so comforting. I'm one of those favored children of God.

And that's why the lines have fallen unto me in goodly places. My heritage is very pleasant. And everything goes well for me.

It's why my heart is always at rest. Because I'm one of those favored children of God. In fact, Jesus said that, John 17, 23, He said, You must live your life.

Let me paraphrase. You must live your life in such a way that the world should know that the Father loves you like He loved Jesus. That means my whole way of life must be such that people wonder, how does this fellow live like that? I say, I'll tell you.

I'm a favored child of God. I'm a disciple whom Jesus loves. That's why.

That's why life is so wonderful for me. That's why I can be at rest and not be in a panic like all the rest of you are. I'm not talking about you.

No. Don't misunderstand me. I wasn't talking about you.

I'm saying that's my reply to the worldly person. And that should be your reply to the worldly person, too. That's how we are supposed to live our life.

We're seated in the heavenly places in Christ. And we look at circumstances and everything. God's in control.

He's got not only that, He's got a provision. He's got a plan in this thing that He's allowed in my life. And He's made a provision for it so that He's got a solution to that problem.

I love to think of the fact that there was never a person who ever came to Jesus with a problem in the Gospels where Jesus didn't have a solution. Not even one. There was never a person who came to Jesus with a problem where Jesus had to scratch his head and say, boy, that's a tough one.

I don't know how to handle that one. Not even one case. Every single case, He could solve it.

And He's the same yesterday, today and forever. He may not always solve it the way I expect Him to, but He has a solution for everything. He knows the end from the beginning.

And once my mind is set on these things, these eternal realities, these eternal facts, I believe that's the only way we're going to live in a life of rest in the coming days on this earth. Jesus said that things are going to get so bad that men's hearts are going to fail for fear. And that fear comes into the mind.

And it's a tremendous power. Satan has got to attack people. Even God's people are being attacked with fear.

And just like we got to hate sin, we got to hate fear. Jesus told people, don't sin again. He told the woman caught in adultery, don't sin again.

He told the man who was healed after 38 years of lying paralyzed in the pool of Bethesda. He told him in John 5, don't sin anymore. But much more than He said, don't sin anymore, which is important.

He also said, don't fear, don't fear. Just like He said, don't sin. He said, don't fear.

Don't be afraid. Many times, fear not, fear not. But I found that I myself, I did take the command, don't sin anymore, more seriously than I took the command, don't fear.

And I think that's true generally in Christendom, that we tend to hate sin, but we don't tend to hate fear as much. We don't think fear, we call sin evil, but fear is a sort of a weakness. It's not.

When you fear, you're disobeying God's command not to fear. When you get anxious, you're disobeying God's command not to be anxious. Now, is it possible to live a life free from fear and free from anxiety? If it were not, then it would be torturing us for Jesus to say to us, don't be anxious, don't be afraid.

It must be possible even if we have not attained to it. We must believe that. Lord, I believe that I can live on this earth with a mind free from anxiety and fear.

The Bible says in Hebrews 4, there remains a Sabbath rest for God's people. There remains a Sabbath rest for God's people. And let us strive to enter into it and not miss out on it.

Here on this earth, there is a life of rest in God that God has provided and planned for his people. And I want to say to you, that's our birthright. A mind that is set on the things that are above, that looks at everything from a heavenly perspective, that looks at people the way God looks at them.

Sometimes if you find it difficult to forgive someone who has hurt you badly or who is doing a lot of evil to you, someone who is jealous of you or your ministry, I find it all depends on how we look at them. You can look at them with anger and bitterness if you look at them from a human standpoint. But your whole attitude towards them can change if you look at them from a heavenly standpoint.

And I've, you know, tried to look at people who are evil towards me like people who are sick. Why is this person evil? That's not the way, it could be a believer. It could be a believer who is treating you badly and who is evil towards you.

Why does he do that? It's because he's sick. We can say he's like a person who's got cancer. If you go to a hospital and you see somebody sick with cancer, skin and bones, you don't get angry, do you? It's impossible to be angry when you look at a man who's become skin and bones with cancer.

You have compassion. How is it that you automatically feel compassionate towards that person? You say, poor chap, the fellow's got cancer. I mean, I'm thankful that I don't have cancer, but I feel sorry for this poor man.

It's the way you look at it. And when we see sin like that, when we see this evil nature manifesting itself out of this person as just a cancer, you find that you feel sorry for the poor man, not angry. Because you've changed your way of thinking.

You've begun to look at that person like God looks at him. God feels sorry for the multitudes of people in the world who are destroying themselves with wrong attitudes. The more I allow the Holy Spirit to change my way of thinking, to be like God's way of thinking, the less anger I'll feel towards people who are evil towards me and the more compassion.

And I feel sorry for them. It all depends on our mind. I want to say a word about emotions too.

I didn't want to speak too much about it. Just to say this, that emotions also are a part of our soul, but they must be under the control of the Holy Spirit. And that's where I believe again Christendom has gone astray.

Where a lot of things that are today being spoken of as the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it's just emotional exuberance. Because people don't know what is soul and what is spirit. And it's very important to have discernment on this.

Is this just the emotional exuberance of a person's soul? Young people are so often taken up with that emotional exuberance and say, Oh, this is Holy Spirit. It's not. If it were Holy Spirit, it will bring holiness.

After all, that's why it's called Holy Spirit. I remember once some person came to our church in Bangalore and he was from a denomination that believed in a lot of emotional exuberance and a lot of noise. And he didn't find so much noise in our meetings.

So I'm not against noise. I say if it's a matter of your temperament a lot. And he said, Boy, there's no Holy Spirit here.

I said, You mean there's no noisy spirit here? Let's be clear about what you're talking about. I mean, if your Trinity is Father, Son and noisy spirit, mine is not. Mine is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So I say, I'm not against noise, but I think we're filled with the Holy Spirit. We love holiness. So how do you decide we have no Holy Spirit here? Have you come and lived with us in our homes? Have you lived with us? Do you know how I handled money? Do I know how I speak? You don't know any of those things.

You determine everything by one factor. The decibel level of the noise in the meeting determines whether Holy Spirit is here or not. This is the deception that goes on in Christendom today.

So I'm not against it. I believe in making a joyful noise unto the Lord. We believe in shouting, praising the Lord and everything.

But I say that is not the mark of the Holy Spirit. That's the expression of the soul and people are different. And God accepts both types of people, even if we can't.

But holiness is the mark of the Holy Spirit. And that comes through our mind being renewed so that he can lead us on to transformation. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray you'll apply these truths to our lives so that we can live according to the principles of your word and honor you. Bless us the rest of this day in Jesus' name.

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