

# Seek To Be Heavenly Minded

by Zac Poonen

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**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Corinthians 9:27, 1 John 3:2, Ephesians 1:3, Psalms 37:25, Hebrews 12:1, Colossians 3:1, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 15:47

**Topics:** "Discipline in the Christian Life", "Pursuing Holiness"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I want to begin with the verse in 1 Corinthians in chapter 15, if you will turn there. 1 Corinthians 15, verse 47. The first man, that is Adam, is from the earth, earthy.

The second man, that is Jesus, he is from heaven. The natural, it says in verse 46, the spiritual did not come first, the natural, then the spiritual. So Adam is from the earth and the second man is from heaven.

And listen to this, as is the earthy, verse 48, so also are those who are earthy. So one mark of those who still live by the life of Adam is that they're still occupied with the things of earth. That we have to live on the earth.

Jesus lived on the earth. He worked and earned his living as a carpenter. He ate and drank and slept and got tired and did everything that we do as human beings.

But he was not earthy. He lived on the earth and his spirit was in heaven. He was like a heavenly man living on earth.

Whereas Adam was an earthy man living on this earth. So as is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy, verse 48. As is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.

And then he says, just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. This is a great promise. That just like Adam did a great job in making us like him, Jesus can also do a great job making us like him.

So if you turn to Colossians now, you see a similar statement there. Colossians and chapter 3. Similar words. If, 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. Set your mind on the things above and not on the things that are on the earth. So that is how we become heavenly and not earthly.

It's not a question of our body. It's a question of where our mind is. Our body will be on the earth either till we die or till the Lord comes.

Jesus' body was on this earth all those 33 and a half years. But how is he called a heavenly man? Because his mind was all the time with his father in heaven. And so it says here in verse 2, set your mind.

We have to make a choice here. It's not automatic. If it were automatic, we'd all be robots.

God does not want robots as his children, just like you don't want a little robot as your child. You want children who are little children who by choice decide to love you, obey you. God also wants children who are not forced like robots to obey him, but who are the choice say, Lord, I want to love you.

So we have to set our mind on the things that are above. That is how we can be heavenly. And that's how over a period of time, the Holy Spirit will transform us into the likeness of Christ.

The Christian life is a journey. In this New Testament, after the coming of the Holy Spirit, I told you yesterday how the greatest gift that God gave to the church is the gift of the Holy Spirit. And I mentioned yesterday how that has been counterfeited.

It has been abused. All types of wrong teachings have been given to disciples, Christians about the Holy Spirit. So Christians are brainwashed into thinking the Holy Spirit has come to make us rich.

That's why, which is called the health wealth gospel. Now in the Old Testament, God promised Israel, I'll keep you healthy and make you wealthy. But that's an old covenant gospel.

In the new covenant, Jesus said the promise of the Holy Spirit, I'll make you spiritually healthy, spiritually wealthy. We got to recognize this difference. Let me show you that.

If you turn to Deuteronomy in chapter 28, it's important to see the contrast between the gospel that is being preached, false gospel that is being preached by so many people today. And you see it is there in the Old Testament. So in the Old Testament, the Lord said in Deuteronomy 28, which is Moses telling the Israelites before they went into the land of Canaan, just before they went in after 40 years of wandering.

He said, if you obey the Lord, this is how the Lord will bless you. You'll be blessed in the city. You'll be blessed in the country.

What type of blessing? You'll be blessed in your children and your ground will be blessed. Verse four, and your beasts and your cattle and your business, your basket, your kneading bowl. You'll be blessed when you come out and you go in.

And there'll be a blessing upon your barns when it's eight or today in your business. The Lord will bless your business. And he will make you, listen to this, verse 11.

He will make you abound in prosperity. This is given to the Israelites, not to Christians. Paul and Peter did not abound in prosperity.

Jesus did not abound in prosperity. But those Old Testament saints like David and all those other kings abounded in prosperity. But it says here, not only you'll abound in prosperity, you'll have plenty of money and you'll have plenty, you'll be offspring of your body.

That means you'll have many children also. That is a blessing in the Old Testament. And in the produce of your ground means in your business.

And the Lord will open you for the good storehouse of heaven and send rain on your land and prosper you in many ways and make you healthy and wealthy. And if you don't obey the Lord, then verse 20, all types of the Lord will send upon you curses, confusion, and you'll be defeated, verse 25. And verse 27, you'll get all types of sicknesses.

This is the Old Testament gospel. Health and wealth and many children. And if you don't obey the Lord, sickness and poverty and barrenness.

But that's not true today. Today there are many God-fearing people who are not rich, who are not even healthy, who sometimes don't even have one child. That's not the gospel of today.

Everything in the Old Testament becomes spiritual in the new covenant. So convert all that Deuteronomy 28 into spiritual. You will have spiritual wealth, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness.

You'll become a wealthy person in these areas. You'll have spiritual health. You'll be free from sin.

And you'll have spiritual children. The Lord will use you to bring others to Christ. This is the exact spiritual equivalent of that Old Testament blessing.

That's what the Holy Spirit has come to do. In the Old Testament, they gave them power to conquer the enemies in the land of Canaan. The giants of Canaan killed them and occupied their land.

If you killed one giant, you got his land. You kill another giant, you got his land. And that's how little by little they occupied the whole land of Canaan, which we call Israel today.

It was by killing the giants. If they didn't kill the giants, and sometimes you read in the book of Judges, they didn't kill some giants and they didn't get their property. They already beat it.

Now, what is the land of Canaan today? The land of Canaan is a long strip like this, like Israel. That is your body. Your body from head to foot is the land which God wants you to occupy today.

There are many giants living in this land that have ruled, like the Canaanite giants ruled Canaan for years. And they ruled so strongly that the Israelites, when they first went in, they were scared. They said, oh, we

can't conquer these people.

And there are giants that are ruling this land of Canaan, our spirit, our body, from head to foot, the giants of anger that have ruled us for years. And we look at the giant and most Christians say, I can never conquer it. And most Christians in their entire life never conquered this giant of anger.

Anger crushes them, defeats them till the day they die. This is why husbands and wives are fighting all the time. Another giant is sexual lust.

The giant stands up before you like Goliath and says, you think you can conquer me? You can't conquer me. I've enslaved you all your life. You can look like a holy person before others, but you're my slave, sexual lust says.

Another giant is bitterness, murmuring, grumbling, love of money. It's another huge giant. Stands before you and says, you think you can escape me? That giant says, I'll make you love money till the end of your life.

You can sing whatever songs you like and act holy if you like, but you'll be a lover of money till the end of your life. You cannot conquer me. I can make a list of all these.

Seeking honor, another giant, anxiety, fear. You know, these things rule. I'm not talking about unbelievers.

I'm talking about believers. This is, these are the giants ruling this land. And Joshua and Caleb said, no, with the power of God, we can conquer them.

God said, okay, I'll give you the land because you have faith. Now today in the new Testament, God's asking his children, will you have the faith of Joshua and Caleb to say, Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit, every one of these giants will come beneath my feet. There's a place in the book of Joshua where Joshua defeated certain giants and he called the Israelites and said, come and put your head on the neck of these kings.

And you read that in the book of Joshua and the Israelites came and put their feet on the neck of these Canaanite kings and they occupied the land. But you can't occupy the land if you don't conquer the king first. And you know, that's what happens.

If you conquer something, that'll be the area where you get spiritual power and spiritual progress. If you leave some sin defeated in your life, it's not just a question of overcoming sin. When you overcome sin, that land becomes yours.

You come spiritually possessing something which God wanted you to possess. So it's not just overcoming sin. What happened when you killed a giant in Canaan? It's not just that the giant was killed.

It's not just that anger, the giant was killed. You got something from it. You got his land.

You got his property. I remember reading an illustration of this in a book. Somebody wrote like this.

It's a parable of, there was this very ugly looking little, you know, one of these geckos that crawl around on the, in our garden, huge lizards, sitting on this guy's shoulder. This is a Christian. And this gecko, this big lizard was sitting there ugly.

And he was tired of it because he was hurting him in so many ways. And the angel stands in front of this Christian and says, get rid of that gecko, get rid of that sin. That's a picture of some sin in your life.

It could be anger. It could be sexual lust or something like that. Dirty lizard.

We don't see it like that. The devil makes you see it as some beautiful thing that you must cherish and love. That's how people watch pornography.

But it's an ugly gecko sitting there ruining your life, ruining your mind. And the angel comes and says, shall I get rid of it? Throw it out. Excuse me.

And the gecko whispers in his ear. No, no, no, I'll behave myself. I won't harm you anymore.

Just don't get rid of me. And so he keeps it. And then after some time, he gets fed up and says, I can't do it.

But he tells the angel, you pull it out and throw it out. I want to get rid of this. So the angel tears off that gecko, that sin, throws it away.

You know what happens? That gecko or lizard suddenly transforms itself. As soon as it was thrown down, it became a beautiful horse. And the angel said, now you don't have to walk towards the promised land.

Towards heaven, you can ride on this horse. Your progress will be much faster. As long as you kept that sin, cherishing it, loving it, you don't know what you were missing.

You're missing the possibility of fast progress towards God's kingdom, becoming more like Christ. Instead of walking and crawling, you can ride on a horse. That's a beautiful story how when you overcome something, when you ask the Holy Spirit's help to overcome something, that very thing you overcome becomes a thing that speeds you towards God's kingdom.

Makes you Christ-like more and more and more. It's a wonderful thing to realize this. So let me show you one or two passages in the New Testament.

Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 3. This is the New Testament equivalent of Deuteronomy 28. Deuteronomy 28 is the old covenant. Health, wealth, many children.

Now, in today's gospel, these false preachers preach. They preach health and wealth. They don't preach many children because they know people don't like that.

But the full Old Testament gospel was health, wealth, and many children. The New Testament equivalent of that is spiritual health, spiritual wealth, and spiritually many children that I can bring to Christ. And it says here in Ephesians 1, 3, God our Father, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

Not material blessing, not physical blessing, not the blessing of children, but spiritual blessing. Every single spiritual blessing in Christ has been given to us because he chose us, verse 4, before the foundation of the world. So this is the New Testament gospel.

Every spiritual blessing. And then it doesn't mean God doesn't provide our needs. Jesus said if you seek God's kingdom first, all your earthly needs will be provided to you.

You don't have to go after them. He hasn't promised to make us millionaires, but he's promised to provide all our need. That's guaranteed.

He'll never allow you to be homeless. He'll never allow you to be jobless. Impossible.

I believe that. And I don't know if you believe it. I believe it.

I've proved the faithfulness of God right from the time I left my job in the Navy 53 years ago. He's provided all my needs. I sought God's kingdom, not by giving me a lot of earthly wealth, no, but by giving me spiritual wealth and providing me with enough for my earthly needs.

See, what are our earthly needs? We need food. All of us, everywhere in the world. Clothing.

We need a house to live in. And Jesus said, give us this our daily bread. And that includes food, clothing, house to live in, and education for our children, because that's how they will get their food, clothing, and house to live in.

So there are four things that the world lives for. They make money for the sake of, to get a good house, to get good clothes, to eat good food, and to give a good education to their children. These are the main things.

And of course, some people, they want to use money for sinful pleasure as well. But these are legitimate things. And these four, the Lord says, don't be anxious.

Matthew 6. All these will be added to you if you seek God's kingdom first. I can tell you, I've experienced all four without seeking for them. But seeking God's kingdom first, these other things will get added.

I want to say to you, your life, every one of you who are listening to me today, your earthly life, you haven't been a Christian as long as I've been. I've been a Christian for 60 years. But as your time goes on, people who look at your life and know everything about your life, if they could know it, and your values and what you live for, they should be amazed how all these earthly needs were met in your life even though you didn't go seeking after them.

You sought God's kingdom and righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And these other things which the world is seeking after, got thrown in for you without your seeking after them. That's my testimony for more than 50 years.

I proved it in my life, I proved it in my family life, and I proved it in many churches in the cities and in the poorest villages in India. Not just my testimony, it's the testimony of hundreds of people. They didn't become millionaires, but their necessity of food, clothing, a house to live in, to educate their children so that the children could get food, house, and clothing was provided.

So the Old Testament, they lived for that. There were no spiritual blessings. You read the entire Old Testament.

There was no promise that I'll give you victory over sin, I'll give you victory over anger, I'll give you victory over dirty thoughts. There's no promise even I'll take you to heaven in the entire Old Testament. There's no promise that I'll make you overcome in your life.

They couldn't even overcome bitterness or murmuring or anything. No. But in the New Testament, it says I'll give you the spiritual victory in all these things, and these other things will be added to you as a bonus.

Turn with me to this verse in Psalm 37. This is the Psalm of David. David wrote most of his Psalms as a young lad, maybe 20, 25 years old, 18, 20 years old, when he was looking after sheep.

He was anointed as king when he was 20 years old, and he had already written one or two Psalms by then. And then during the next 10 years of wandering in the caves and all, he wrote some more Psalms. But this Psalm is, I think, about the last one.

He wrote it when he was about 70 years old, just before he died. And listen to what he says. Psalm 37, verse 25.

I was young, and now I'm old, but I have never seen a righteous man forsaken. And I have never seen his children or his grandchildren or his descendants begging for bread. Why do people beg for bread? Why do the homeless people on the streets beg, in India or Australia or anywhere? It's because they don't have a job.

So if I were to paraphrase this word, it would be like this. I've never seen a righteous man forsaken, and his children will never go hunting for jobs. They'll get it.

His grandchildren will get jobs. Can you get a better promise than that? There are millionaires in the world today, there are millionaires in the world today whose children are wayward, who go and commit suicide, and whose grandchildren make a mess of their life. Isn't it better to have a promise like this? I've never seen a righteous man forsaken, or his children hunting for a job, or his grandchildren hunting for a job.

I believe that with all my heart. I've experienced a little bit in my lifetime, not only my life, lives of others around me, who, they did not get health and well. But they got every spiritual blessing, and the earthly things needed were thrown in.

It's like you get a salary when you join a company for a job. You don't sign up for bonus, you sign up for a salary. The bonus is thrown in, right? So we sign up with the Lord for the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Turn to Romans 14 and verse 17. Romans 14 and verse 17. When it says, seek the kingdom of God first, what is the kingdom of God? In the olden days, I used to think it was doing missionary work.

Go to Africa or North India or somewhere, to some typical place and preach the gospel. That is seeking the kingdom of God. No, the kingdom of God is not doing missionary work.

You can seek the kingdom of God in any part of the world. The kingdom of God, verse 17, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. That's the Bible definition of the kingdom of God.

So we got to get rid of our own ideas. And when I saw that, I understood, what does it mean to seek God's kingdom first? Here it is. Seek righteousness first in your life.

Never be unrighteous in anything. In money matters, in speech. Always pursue righteousness, uprightness.

And one part of righteousness is love. True righteousness, the righteousness of God is love. I can love every person no matter how they treat me.

I'm not saying I love fellowship with everybody. Jesus loved the people who killed him. He said, Father, forgive them.

But he didn't have any fellowship with them. He loved the Pharisees, but he had no fellowship with them. Lots of people I love whom I have zero fellowship with.

But the devil will never make me hate anyone. The moment hatred comes into my heart, I've got a little bit of hell inside me. Hatred is a characteristic of hell.

Love is a characteristic of heaven. And I want to tell you in Jesus' name, if you have a little bit of hatred or bitterness against anyone, you, whether you know it or not, you've got a little bit of hell in your heart. And that's how you get sickness.

That's how we get a lot of problems. Sometimes we can have hatred against some relative of ours who hurt us in some way or took advantage of us. The world is full of married women who detest their mothers-in-law.

Are you like that? When you talk about spiritual stuff? Let me tell you in Jesus' name, all your spirituality is a lot of garbage. If the Holy Spirit is not able to make you love people who hate you. Whatever you may say, you can speak the right language.

Righteousness is love. But you say, oh, that guy treated me so badly or your mother-in-law cheated you or treated you badly. Your brother-in-law cheated you.

You can say what you like. And you can say this giant is so big, I can't conquer it. Right.

But what about the power of God? Are you going to be like those 10 spies who said these giants are too big? Are you going to be like Joshua and Caleb? I don't care which giant it is. I can conquer it. Hatred, bitterness against any human being.

It will not be found in my heart. I refuse to have a little bit of hell in my heart. That's what we need to say to ourselves.

I'm not going to have any hell in my heart at any cost. No matter what people say or do to me. That can't affect me.

You know, yesterday I was talking about a person. Jesus said to the woman in Samaria, you can have a well of water inside you springing up to everlasting life. That is your own supply of water.

It doesn't depend on whether the city gives you water or not. It's your own supply. So that's what the Lord can do for you.

Where my love is not dependent on how the other guy treats me. If your love for a person is dependent on the way somebody else treats you, you're just a worldly person. The worldly person is also like that.

They love those who love them. They hate those who hate them. But Christianity is so different.

So Jesus said, seek the kingdom of God first. What does it mean? What is the kingdom of God once again? Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. I told you yesterday, the most important thing in the Christian life is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is not primarily to speak in tongues or to preach or prophesy or heal the sick. No, it is to be filled with righteousness, which is love. It is to be filled with love for others, to be filled with joy and peace in the Holy Spirit.

That's what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And you can't do it on your own. You see, you don't have the ability to love people.

Especially those who have troubled you a lot or hurt you a lot or hurt your family. They look like giants, but you believe that God can help you. This is new covenant Christianity.

And many people want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And I say, you want to be filled with love for that guy who's hurt you so much? Tell me honestly, do you want it or not? I mean, don't talk about it if you don't want it. Many people say they want it, but they don't really want it.

That's the thing. So I want to encourage you, brothers and sisters, seek the kingdom of God first. And all these things will be added unto you.

So we don't have to worry. The things that the world seeks after, runs after, food, clothing, housing, educating the children in order that they can get jobs, will be added unto you. And at the end of your life, you should be able to say when you're 60, 70 years old, and I'm 79 now, I can say that.

I did not go seeking after these things. I sought these things, righteousness, peace, and joy, the Holy Spirit in my life, and God added these things. You should be able to say that when you come to my age.

That should be your testimony. That I did not go after these things that the world goes after. I sought to live for God 100%.

And the world says it won't succeed for you. You'll be a failure. Okay.

I have proved by my life, I'm not going to be a failure by seeking God's kingdom first. Is there a God in heaven or not? That's number one. You believe the Bible is the word of God.

If so, there's a God in heaven. The Bible is the word of God. I believe that.

I've believed it for 60 years. Then there's an opportunity for you to prove it. Otherwise, you're Christians in name.

We say, we talk about nominal Christians. But many born-again Christians are like nominal Christians also. When it comes to a crisis, they don't believe what God's word says.

They react exactly like the worldly person. So I will seek for love, joy, and peace in my heart. Always to live in joy, without discouragement, without anxiety, and always to be at peace with God and with one another.

That is the primary purpose of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Then rivers of living water will flow out from us. See, God can do a work in us.

But if the pipe through which the water flows is polluted, what comes out in the tap is dirty water. You can have clean water up in the tank. But when it comes through a dirty pipe, what comes out through the tap is filthy water.

Very often, that's what happens. You can say nice words. But it doesn't have the power of the Holy Spirit.

Turn with me to 1 John chapter 3. 1 John chapter 3, we read about how we will be like Christ only when he comes back. That's the end of the gem. That's the finishing line of the race.

The Christian life is like a race. Hebrews 12 says that. Let us run this race looking unto Jesus.

You know that verse, I hope? Hebrews 12 verses 1 and 2. Let us run this race looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. He ran this race in front of us, and we will run in his footsteps. The starting line of that race for us, for Jesus, the starting line was when he was born.

For us, the starting line is when we are really born again. When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, we are born again. That's the starting line.

The finishing line for us is 1 John 3, 2. When he appears, we shall be like him. That's the finishing line. When Christ appears, we're going to be like him.

So when you run a race, think of a marathon race of 40 kilometers. You come to the starting line, and every minute, you're getting closer and closer to the end of that 40-kilometer race. You're getting closer to the finishing line.

You're not just static. You don't get suddenly transported there by some helicopter or something to the end of the race. Some people think, I'm going to just be born again and have no progress in my life.

Suddenly, when Christ comes, I'll reach the finishing line. I'm sorry to surprise you, but that's not going to be true. You'll get a big surprise.

And if you just say, I'm born again, and you sit at the starting line, you'll find when Christ comes, you're not even ready to be taken. That is not the Christian life. It says it's a race.

And if you don't take part in the race, Paul says you'll be disqualified. Yeah, there are people who can be disqualified. It says here, the finishing line, 1 John 3, 2, is we will be like him when he comes.

That's the finishing line of the race. So what should we do till then? If you have this hope, verse 3, 1 John 3, 3. In other words, if you're taking part in this race and you're running, you will keep on purifying yourself. You keep on taking steps in this race.

From here to here, to here, to here, you keep moving. And every step is taking you closer to the finishing line. You purify himself just as he is pure.

In other words, your goal is the finishing line. What is the finishing line, verse 2? I'll be like him. And you want to run in such a way that as every year goes by in your life, you become a little more like Jesus compared to last year.

And the best person to testify of that, is your marriage partner, who sees you all the time, and your children. Is daddy a little more like Jesus now? Is mommy a little more like Jesus? Is your husband a little

more like Christ this year than last year? Is your wife a little more like Christ this year than last year? If that is not happening, my brother, sister, let me tell you the truth. You're stuck at the starting line, and you'll get a big surprise when Christ comes again.

You may not be there. I've got to tell you the truth. No Christian can stand still and expect to reach the finishing line.

So the finishing line is becoming like Christ. And 1 John 3 says, we keep on running, getting purer and purer till the day he comes. Turn now to 1 Corinthians chapter 9. This is the whole purpose with which you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

The purpose with which we are filled with the Holy Spirit is to make us like Christ in every area of our life. 1 Corinthians 9. Listen to this. Turn to verse 24.

1 Corinthians 9, verse 24. Don't you know? Now, let me, before I start, do you know that the Corinthian church was the most carnal, worldly, defeated bunch of Christians in the first century? They were much worse than almost any church you've seen. Really bad church.

And to such a church, the Holy Spirit is saying through Paul, now listen. Don't you know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives a prize? In a worldly competition, only the person who comes first receives the gold medal. There is only one gold medal.

And one person gets it. But you must run, it says, that you can win that first prize. Who? Every single one in Corinth can win first prize.

Now, this is the wonderful thing about the Christian race. There's no competition with one another. It's not you coming first and me coming second or third or tenth.

No. All of us can come first. That's the meaning of that verse.

And to whom is he writing? Not to a very spiritual church. To a very carnal church. Hey, guys, wake up.

Take your life seriously. You can come first in this race. Even though you've messed up so many years of your life, you Corinthian Christians, take it seriously from now on.

You can win this prize. But if you want to win it, verse 25, you must exercise self-control. All these people who run in the marathon, they discipline themselves.

They deny certain things. You see, they won't eat anything they like. They become fat and they won't be able to win the race at all.

They discipline themselves how much they sleep. They discipline themselves in how much they eat. Everything so that they can win the prize.

And so, he says, we also must do like that. And he tells about himself. Now, you think that a man like Paul, who's such a faithful person, well, he does not worry.

He says, I've got to be careful, too. Verse 27. Read verse 27.

Paul is giving his own testimony. He says, I discipline my body. That means my bodily desires.

What are the bodily desires he had? Same ones you have. Food, sleep, sex, that can be tempted to be lazy, to be lustful, to be a glutton. All these things he was tempted to.

And he said, I've just got to discipline myself in my speech. We can just be careless in the way we speak and hurt one another. He said, I've got to discipline my body and make it my slave.

In the Living Bible, which is a very good paraphrase, this verse is translated like this. Please listen. 1 Corinthians 9, 27.

I make my body do what it should do and not what it wants to do. Got it? I make my body do what it should do according to God's will and not what it wants to do. My body wants to do a lot of things like your body, which may not be in the will of God.

But I've got to make my body do what it should be doing, not what it wants to do. That is discipline. My eyes want to look at something.

I say no. My eyes want to read something. I say no.

Or I'm lazy in the morning to read the scriptures. And my body says, hang on, sleep some more. I say, no, I'm going to get up 10, 15 minutes earlier because I've got to read the scriptures.

I make my body get up. I remember hearing of a man who told a great saint, he said, will you pray that I will get up in the morning to read scriptures and spend a few minutes with God? That godly man said, you promise that you'll put one leg outside your bed and I'll pray that God will help you to put your other leg outside your bed and get up. But I'm not going to pray that God will lift you up out of the bed and put you outside, but that's not going to happen.

It's a cooperation. You promise to take one leg outside your bed 15 minutes early to spend some time in the Bible. I pray that God will help you to take the other leg out.

That's it. It's a cooperation. God doesn't force us into anything.

That's discipline. It's an example of discipline. You know, for example, food.

Why does the Bible speak about fasting? Do you ever fast? I'll tell you, in my younger days, it was a discipline in my life to fast at least once a week. Sometimes when there's a need, then fast and pray for something. But apart from that, just as a discipline, I'll tell you for two reasons.

One, we are all slaves of food. Our body loves food. And I said, Lord, I don't want to be a slave to food.

I want to conquer it. And one way I can conquer it is by occasional fasting. So I would fast three meals in a week.

Sometimes the whole day without food. And just drink liquids to conquer this lust for food. The second benefit of that was it helped me to understand what it is to be hungry.

A lot of hungry people in India, poor people. We can talk about it. We can read about it.

But you never know what a hungry man feels like until you fast for one day. You try it. You can talk about hunger.

And you'll never know what that poor hungry man is feeling like until you fast for one day. And these are the two things that helped me. One is to overcome my lust for food.

And second was to feel compassion for those who are poor, who cannot eat a proper meal. Children, perhaps. Lord, how they must be feeling with their stomachs empty.

It gives greater compassion. I would encourage all of you to do it. You guys are young.

You should be doing it once a week. Skip meals. And if you can't do it once a week, skip one meal a week.

And go to two meals a week. And go to three meals a week. If you can't do it all on the same day, do it.

So it'll really help you. That's one area of discipline of your body. Discipline your tongue.

Not to answer back sometimes. Keep quiet. When you feel that you can give a sharp answer to your husband or your wife, keep your mouth shut.

That's a discipline. It'll bring more peace in your house. And your wife will be surprised.

Hey, what happened to my husband? Your husband will be surprised. What happened to my wife today? She's not retorting like she did before. It's tremendous.

The Holy Spirit will help us. It's a giant you cannot conquer without the help of the Holy Spirit. I'll tell you.

That's why you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. But with the Holy Spirit's help, every giant can be conquered. Now, the last thing.

Verse 27. If you don't do this, 1 Corinthians 9, 27, Paul says, if I don't do it, he says, I myself will be disqualified. I've heard of Olympic races where a person breasted the tape first 5,000 meters, came first and waved to everybody.

And the referee says, sorry, you're disqualified. You crossed your lane at some point. Oh, imagine that.

But the referee didn't stop the person over there. When they crossed the lane, they told them at the end of the race, disqualified. Can you imagine how shattering that is, thinking you've come first? Then you find that you're not even in the list.

That is what can happen, Paul says to me. And I, oh, Paul, you're a great apostle. You mean it can happen to you? Sure.

There's no respect to persons of God. I have to discipline my body. So, I want to encourage you, brothers and sisters, run this race.

Seek God with all your heart for the things that are above, that Christ sits at the right hand of God.

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