

Seek To Walk The Narrow Way Always

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of starting churches that preach the whole purpose of God, not just a partial gospel. It highlights the need for churches to focus on obedience to the teachings of Jesus, including denying oneself, taking up the cross daily, and following the narrow way that leads to life. The sermon challenges the idea of superficial Christianity and stresses the significance of building a strong foundation on obedience to the Sermon on the Mount.

Scripture: Matthew 7:13, Matthew 7:24, Luke 9:23, Acts 20:26, John 3:17

Topics: "Whole Gospel", "Obedience to Christ"

Description

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Transcript

In one of our earlier sessions, I mentioned that when there are so many churches in the world, particularly in Christian countries, to start a church where there's no church, okay, I can understand. Go to Afghanistan someplace, there's no church. Or many other places in the world, even parts of North India, many villages where there's no church.

To start a church, I fully agree. But why, in cities and countries where there are already so many churches, I mean an outside observer, a non-Christian, even some Christians, they think, will ask, why are you guys starting another church? Aren't there enough already, bringing confusion in the minds of many people? Well, the answer to that is, really, is anything that calls itself church, the Church of Jesus Christ. 500 years ago, why did Martin Luther, in Germany, decide that the Catholic Church is not right? We must have another church.

If he hadn't decided, perhaps all of you sitting here would be Roman Catholics today. No, I'm not saying it would be like that. If Martin Luther failed, God would have raised up somebody else.

It's not that if one person fails, God's work won't be done. It'll be done. It'll be done by somebody else.

But he did not fail, so he accomplished God's purpose. As one principle you must remember, that if you fail to do what God wants you to do in your life... I mean, you know, before you were born, God had a plan for your life. The Bible says that in Psalm 139, before we were born, he planned our life.

If you don't know that verse, let me show it to you. Psalm 139. Very important verse.

I know it's helped me tremendously, that's why I share it with you. Probably I've shared it before. I don't mind repeating it any number of times, because it's a very important truth, and some truths need to be repeated ten times before we understand it fully.

Psalm 139, when you were in our mother's womb, it says in verse 13, you wove me in my mother's womb. And in my mother's womb, verse 16, you saw my unformed substance. And in your book, when it talks about God's book, it's not a book like our Bible.

It's his mind. God's books are all in his mind. And there's limitless, countless books in there for every human being that ever existed on the face of the earth, billions and billions.

In his mind, with your name written on it, and my name written on it, in God's mind, all the days that were ordained for me were written down, when there was not even one of them. That means before I came out of my mother's womb, the Lord planned every day of my life till the day I die. Every day.

That's been a tremendous challenge to me. I hope it is to you, that my life is not an accident. I was not born by accident.

I'm not just a social security number, or an other number, or any type of number you have in your country. I'm a distinct individual. There may be other people who have your name, but you're distinct.

In God's eyes, God's mind, there's a section with your name on it, and every single day, from the day you were born, to the day God planned for you to die, is recorded. Not every year, every day. He doesn't say the years that were ordained for me, the days that were ordained for me.

And the Lord knew, for example, in my case, that up to the age of 19 and a half, though I heard the Bible from a young age in Sunday school, I would not respond to Him. He knew that. In my case, He knew that when I joined the Indian Navy, I would not seek His will.

I just joined because I liked it as a profession, and because others around were going in for the military service in those days, in 1954, I also joined. Exciting. I didn't pray about it.

I didn't pray about it at all. Like many of you took jobs, you didn't pray about it. Many of you came to Australia, did you pray about it? I don't know.

Every day. So what, does that mean I made a mistake? The thing is, God overrules our times of ignorance. That's a wonderful verse.

Acts 17, verse 30. It's a great comfort to me. And it will be a comfort to you when you think of the years of your life where you disobeyed God, you couldn't care for Him, and you didn't worry about Him, and you committed so many sins and so many stupid things that you and I did, and we feel so sorry about it now.

And then we begin to think, Lord, if I messed up my life so much in the past, can You still do something with my life? And the answer is yes. Why? Acts 17, verse 30. The times of ignorance, God overlooks.

I praise God for that. I believe Paul was inspired when he said that. I was ignorant of the seriousness, I was not ignorant of Jesus Christ and what He did for me, but the seriousness of living life on earth.

The seriousness of being created to live on this earth for the glory of God, that seriousness hadn't gripped me when I was 14 or 15. I just decided to join the Navy, the way you chose a profession on your own perhaps, and decided to go where you want on your own. Seeking what? Seeking advancement in the world, seeking money, seeking all the things of earth, plus add on a little bit of Christianity as well.

So whenever you go where you want to go and settle down, you say, okay, let me look around for a church now, because I'm PS, postscript, I'm also a Christian, it's not the main thing I live for. I've got other things to live for, like making money and getting a good job, but I also want to be a Christian, so let me look around for a church. That's how we all were in the beginning, ignorant.

We don't realize that God's got a tremendous purpose when we were born. The question is, will we ever realize it, at least sometime later on in our lives? I never realized it when I joined the Navy, but boy, when I got converted at the age of 19 and a half, at that time my ambition was to go to the top of the Navy, to become the Admiral of the Navy, and when I got converted, one thing happened to me, I have to say. My conversion was not a 90 degree conversion, it was 180 degrees.

My ambitions changed almost overnight. You know, there are people who turn 90 degrees when they come to Christ, Lord, I'd like to go to heaven, I want my sins to be forgiven, but don't disturb me, I've got a lot of ambitions on this earth as well, and along with that, I'd like this God accepts you. Think of the prodigal son, you see that picture behind me, that's the prodigal son's father welcoming the prodigal son.

What for? Did the prodigal son come home wanting to be a godly boy? No. Why did he come home? Ask yourself. He came because he was hungry.

He wanted food. There he was eating what the pigs were eating, and he said, boy, why should I eat this pig's food, even the servants in my father's house are getting good food, let me go back for the sake of food. Then of course he had to come back and say, I'm sorry, I ran away, but if he had plenty of food out there in the far country, he wouldn't have come back, oh no.

He wasn't repentant because he dishonored his father and spoiled his money, he wanted food. It was a selfish reason with which he came back, and I want to say the vast majority of Christians, when they initially turn to God, they come with a selfish reason. I don't want to go to hell.

Selfish reason. I want to go to heaven. Selfish reason.

It's not, I've dishonored God for so many years of my life. I want to honor God now on. It's not, I've loved money all these years of my life.

I want to stop loving money. I want to love God. Nobody gets converted like that.

Maybe very, very few people. You ask yourself. A conversion, most conversions are sort of 90%, maybe 120 degrees, 90 degrees, 120 degrees.

180 degrees is a tremendous thing, where your ambitions completely change. If it doesn't happen in one day, it should happen pretty quickly after you're converted. Otherwise your Christian life will remain shallow.

There are people who never turn around 180 degrees, even after 25 years. Sometimes I wonder whether their conversion is real. And that's why they never seem to reach the goal.

You know, the goal is directly behind you and you want to get there. God's goal is behind you. The only way to get there is turning around 180 degrees.

If you turn around 90 degrees, where are you going to get there? If you turn around 120 degrees, where are you going to get there? The thing that will take you soonest to your goal, if God is behind you, is a 180 degree turn. In other words, you say, Lord, from now on, I want to live for your glory and to please you and no more for myself and my ambitions. Do you think God will make you starve? I told you the other day, you seek God's kingdom first.

Everything you need will be added to you, without it, and for your children and your grandchildren. What more do you want? And you'll also have heaven, first of all. Not just heaven, but you'll be able to accomplish God's purpose for your life.

Everything that is written in God's mind for you, particularly on the day you were born. Say, then what about the years I've messed up? For example, supposing God has planned for you to live, say, 67 years on earth, and you already wasted 30 years of that years living for yourself or living for money or being half-hearted, taking a little bit of the Bible and not serious. You wasted 30 years of God's plan, and now you say, okay, Lord, what about the rest of my life? Can you do something? God says, yes.

And he says, I'll give you an example of a man who wasted the first 30 years of your life, the Apostle Paul, not only wasted, the Lord says, he killed some of my children. He persecuted my children. He did worse things than you did in 30 years of your life.

He was not only turned away, not only not a servant of God, he was a servant of the devil for 30 years. But when he got converted, wow, his conversion was 180 degrees, because he knelt down on the Damascus Road when he knew it was Jesus whom he had persecuted. His question was two questions.

Don't forget that. On the Damascus Road, Paul asked two questions of Jesus. And the first question was, who art thou, O Lord? Who are you? Acts 9.5. Who are you? He said, I'm Jesus.

The first question you need to ask yourself, Lord, I want to know you. Knowing him is eternal life. That's the first thing you need to know.

Lord, who are you? I don't know you well enough. I want to know you better. You may say, I know Jesus.

And the next question, which was an unasked question, what will you have me to do, Lord? And the Lord said, go to Tarsus, and I will show you what you are to do next, Acts 9, and go into the city. There I'll tell you what you must do next. Who are you? What do you want me to do? Two questions you must ask all your life, every day, not verbally, but Lord, I want to know you better.

I've known you a little bit, but who are you, Lord? Let me see more of your humility. Let me see more of your love. Let me see more of your purity.

Who are you? Let me see you. And second question, what will you have me to do? And the Lord did not give him a blueprint for his whole life. Okay, Paul, the next 37 years, I'm going to do this for you.

No, no, no, no. I'll show you one step at a time, just like the pillar of cloud in the wilderness took the Israelites little by little by little. He didn't give them a map to go to Canaan.

No. Day by day, first of all, your first step, Paul, go to Tarsus. No, not Tarsus, sorry, go to Damascus, go into the city.

You do that. Then I'll show you the next step. And when you see the next step, next day, I'll show you the next step.

It's day by day by day, just like the pillar of cloud. I never knew when the Lord brought me to himself and I was converted in 19 and a half. I didn't know.

I didn't even know when I was going to get baptized. I was not baptized. I was baptized one and a half years after I accepted Christ.

Because all that time I struggled with child baptism. I was baptized as a child and I thought, oh, that's enough. And people told me, you know, if you take adult baptism, your church will kick you out and you won't be able to witness to them.

Why do you want to sit with people who are already born again? Stay here in this church where people are not born again and witness to them. And I was young and foolish and stupid and I said, hey, that sounds like a good argument. Why should I go in among the midst of people who are already born again and got nothing to tell them? Let me mingle with these unconverted nominal Christians in this church and let me witness to them.

And one and a half years, I believed that false teaching. And all those one and a half, because the Lord assured me there's no child baptism in the Bible. It's only adult believers baptism.

And I, finally, whenever I knelt down to pray, the Lord would say to me, you're not listening to me. Why should I listen to you? I got fed up. I don't care which church throws me out.

I'm going to get baptized. When I took baptism, the Lord showed me the next step, which he never showed me before. He said, there's certain cheating that you've done in your past unconverted life.

You've cheated on certain taxes and customs duty and all when you were in the Navy. Return that money to the government. Pay back your taxes.

Okay? And I sat down and calculated and it was a huge amount, about five or six months salary of mine as a naval officer. And that is quite a lot of money. And it took me quite a while to save up that money.

And then I saved it all up. And one day I emptied my bank account and paid back all my dues. My bank account was empty.

My heart was full. Then the Lord showed me the next step. And then the next step.

Apologize to somebody you hurt in something in the past. Little, little things, you know, see the Lord tells you something, don't say that's too small a thing. Let me give you one example.

When I was 21 years old, the Lord reminded me of something I had done nine years earlier as a 12 year old boy. It's amazing. You do something wrong when you're 12 years old and it stays in your mind for nine

years.

When I was 12 years old, I used to have a habit of, a hobby of collecting stamps. You know, some people have that hobby. I don't have, I don't think many kids have that hobby now.

They're too busy with their video games on their cell phones. But in those days we didn't have cell phones. I used to collect stamps, foreign stamps.

And if you had a duplicate of something, you'd exchange it with others who collected stamps. So like that we, that is a common thing in those days. So I did this when I was exchanging stamps with somebody whom I knew, while he was not looking, I stole one of his stamps.

And nine years later, the Lord reminds me of this. Now, it was worthless. I'm sure he had stopped collecting stamps and I had stopped collecting stamps.

But the Lord said, you did something wrong, write a letter of apology to him. And I tell you, writing that letter of apology was more difficult for me than returning five a month's salary. Because there it was just money, here it was a version of humbling myself and looking so stupid to write to somebody saying, brother, my dear friend, nine years ago I stole one stamp from you, which is worthless for you and me, but please forgive me.

Do you think I'm crazy, off my head or something? But the Lord said to it and I did it. And I tell you, the joy of the Lord filled my heart when I did it. Don't say that something the Lord tells you to do is stupid.

You miss out on something because you think, hey, that's too trivial. Nothing is too trivial. It may be big, like five months' salary, or it may be small, like returning a small stamp or apologizing.

I'm so glad I did that, otherwise I would have been having a chain on my leg for the last 60 years. Many people don't run because there's a chain on their leg. Something unsettled from their past.

I'm glad I got rid of it. I'm glad I didn't stand on my stupid personal dignity or anything like that. I'm very happy that I did what the Lord told me.

I'm sure I probably did a hundred other things wrong, but I need to do only what the Lord reminds me of. You don't have to torture your mind and say, what all did I do wrong? The Lord will remind you exactly what you need to do. If he doesn't remind you, forget it.

I don't torture my mind thinking, what all did I do? I say, Lord, remind me. Whatever you tell me to do, I'll do. But day by day, I found that the Lord showed me, and about three years after my baptism, the Lord said, put in your resignation and quit your job.

Now, I told you what my ambition was to go to the top of the Indian Navy as an admiral. And when I turned around, I said, Lord, that's no longer my ambition. I want to live for you now.

But he didn't tell me immediately to quit. It was little by little by little. If the Lord leads us step by step by step, he won't lead you to third grade from the kindergarten in one year.

He'll lead you there in three years. And after another seven years, he'll lead you to 10th grade, just like in a school. The Lord teaches us step by step.

Supposing every year of your school education is planned by your dad's mind, he leads you step by step. The same way God has planned my life and has planned yours. And think of the Apostle Paul.

You know what Paul said when he was 67 years old? Let me read you something which will surprise you. When Paul was 67 years old, he said in 1 Timothy, sorry, 2 Timothy chapter 4, 2 Timothy in chapter 4, verse 7, 2 Timothy 4, 7, middle of that verse, I have finished my course. What is this course? The course means the plan God planned for my life before I was born.

What we read in Psalm 139. Every day of my life was planned by God before I was born. And I finished it.

And you say, hang on, Paul, how did you finish it when you messed up the first 30 years of your life? You messed up 30 years of your life, killing Christians and persecuting them. And you say at the end of another 37 years, you finished your course. How in the world is that? You know the answer to that is because many of you may say, how can I finish my course when so many years I didn't even care for God and even after you're born again, so many years you were half-hearted or didn't care for the Lord and did so many wrong things after you were converted.

And I always say, if you commit the same sin after you're converted, that is like a hundred times committing the same sin before. To lust after a woman before you're born again and to lust after one after you're born again is like lusting after a hundred women after you're born again. It's a hundred times more serious.

To tell a lie before you're born again, to tell a lie after you're born again is like telling a hundred lies. More serious. To whom more is given, more is required.

Do you believe that? And so, Paul, here's the answer to that. It's a wonderful truth. The times of ignorance, what did we read? God overlooks.

Isn't it wonderful? It's a very liberating word. That's what Paul would say. When he quoted Psalms, he was not quoting, he was saying from his own experience, Acts 17:30.

Times of ignorance, God overlooks. Folks, here's the good news. All those 30 years God overlooked.

Say, forget it. He said, Paul, I knew that you would not respond to me for 30 years. So I made allowance for that in my plan for your life.

I thank God for the years God made allowance in my life where he knew that I would be half-hearted or I would backslide, and I did backslide because I was so discouraged that what I was seeking for didn't work out after becoming a Christian, but I got so fed up with that and I sought God initially and God filled me with the Holy Spirit again, and that's when we started the first CFC Church, and my life was completely different after that. But I say, Lord, what about those years before? For example, I was converted when I was 19 and a half, and I can honestly say until we started our first CFC Church when I was 35 and a half, 16 years later. Those 16 years, I can't say I was living in sin, but I wasn't really doing all that God wanted me to do.

In fact, I was wandering around Babylonian Christianity here and there. I didn't know. I didn't have a spiritual father to guide me.

I never had somebody who sat like this and spoke to me directly about my need. In all my life, I wish I had, but I never had one, and so I had to find out everything from the Scripture myself. You're very blessed if you have somebody who can teach you things so that you don't waste more of your life.

I know. I'll tell you. It's like an orphan.

Only an orphan knows the value of a father and a mother. Those who have had parents never realized the value of their parents. Go to an orphan, and he'll tell you how blessed it is to have a father and a mother.

Think of an orphan who's finally picked up by somebody when he's 16 years old, and a man picks him up and says, okay, I'll be a father to you. That's how I was for the first 16 years of my Christian life. I was an orphan.

I was an orphan spiritually, but then God became my father, real father, and boy, I appreciated that so much. And I decided, Lord, what I missed in my life, I want to be to other people for the rest of my life. I want to be a spiritual father to all those who want to receive that instruction.

I will never force myself on anybody. There are so many orphans in Christianity, insecure, defeated, wandering, having no purpose in their life, living for things that are empty, that they regret for all eternity. Help me to save them from that regret, and the Lord has helped me.

Anyway, but the Lord showed me, just like he made allowance for Paul's ignorance, he's made allowance for my ignorance too. And I believe that when I come to the end of my life, whenever that'll be, I believe I'll be able to say, I finished my course, even though there were many years where I drifted in the early days. But last 44 years have been really wonderful.

The Lord has planted so many churches of like mind here and there around the world, and I'm so encouraged. You brothers don't realize what a wonderful thing it is to hear these truths all together soon after you're converted, instead of wasting 16 years in ignorance, or like Paul, 30 years in ignorance. So don't worry if some years of your life were wasted.

Just make sure that you don't waste any more. Paul was so sorrowful about the years that he wasted, he said, I'm going to press on. I'm going to determine to go the way the Lord wants me to go.

So in that connection, I want to turn to Matthew's Gospel. In Matthew's Gospel, I want you to turn to Matthew chapter 7. Matthew's Gospel chapter 7, in verse, this is, you know, the Sermon on the Mount is the longest sermon that Jesus preached that's written in full in the Scriptures, Matthew 5, 6, and 7. And the important thing to see there is, at the end of that sermon, he uses three examples to illustrate that sermon. Very very important.

So let me read that to you. The first illustration is, this entire Sermon on the Mount, if you want to live it, Matthew 7, 13, Matthew 7, 13, is like entering through a narrow gate and walking a narrow way. It's a lifetime thing.

It's not a once for all going through a gate, no. It's a gate plus a way that leads to life. Some people think it's only a gate that leads to life.

Read. Matthew 7, verse 14. There's a gate and a way that leads to life.

What if you come through the gate and don't walk the way? It's like coming to the starting line of the marathon race. You know, if you get represented, if you get selected to represent your country in the Olympics, in the marathon, that itself is a fantastic honor. Just think of that.

If you were selected by your country to represent that country as a runner in the marathon race and you come to the starting line of the marathon race in the finals, boy, that's an honor. But if you stand at the starting line, you're wasting your life. That's what many Christians have done.

They come there, they enter through the gate and they stop there. Hey, the gate is not the whole thing. There's a way to life.

You got selected to run the marathon for your country, great. Now run it. The finishing line is over there.

The life is over there. There's a way to it. That's what many Christians don't realize.

Christianity is not a once for all entry. It's a way that we walk all through life finally, the way that leads to life. The marathon race is a way that leads to the finishing line.

The starting line is not the finishing line. I wish I could tell that to every Christian who was born again. The starting line is not the finishing line.

Every fool in the world knows that. In a race, the starting line is not the finishing line, but many Christians don't know it. They think starting line is finishing line.

I'm born again. I'm on my way to heaven. Brother, have you read Matthew 7, 14? There is not only a gate, but a way that leads to life.

So what we preach in the church is not only the gate, but the gate plus the way. And that's what a lot of people object to our preaching. They say, it's only a gate.

I say, you can go around preaching it's only a gate, but that's not true. Jesus said there's a gate plus a way that leads to life. Okay, that's one illustration.

The second illustration is two trees, two ways. One is a narrow way that leads to life, and the other is a broad way that leads to destruction. And the other is, we read here in verse 17, a good tree and a bad tree.

It's not trying to put good fruit on a bad tree to make it look nice. If you try to do a good action in your life, to impress other people, and you haven't changed inwardly, that's like tying up good fruit in a bad tree and everybody says, wow, what a nice tree that is. It's a deception.

It's a bad tree, but you tie up a lot of good fruit here and there. A lot of Christians are like that. They do a few good actions and get a reputation, but the nature hasn't changed.

When they're all by themselves, or when they're in their home, they're different people. Tree is bad, but when they come before other people, they tie up a lot of good fruit and get a reputation as great saints. Hypocrisy.

Change the tree itself. That's the second. The Sermon on the Mount is talking not about tying good fruit into a bad tree.

It's not, okay, I will stop lusting after women. I will start speaking the truth. I'll stop getting angry.

Okay, fine. That's tying good fruit into a bad tree. The Lord says, no, your nature must change, man, so that your nature will hate lusting after women.

Your nature will hate anger. Your nature will hate telling lies. That is a good tree.

If you just change a few habits, you know, we preach against certain sins in the church and we give up those sins, and you try to behave well, that's tying a good tree to a bad fruit. I hope you'll be gripped by this, something fundamental here to understand. The third illustration, two ways, two trees, and the third is two foundations.

Rock foundation, sand foundation, verse 24 to 27. Two types of houses. Outside the house looks great.

Maybe the house on the back foundation looks better, but you know the important thing in a house is the foundation, particularly when the floods and the rain come and the storm. The rain and the floods and the storm are not testing the beauty of the house, not your external impression of Christianity. Now remember this, all this is a conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount.

So I would say Matthew 7, 24 to 27 is a picture of two churches, not only of two individual Christians, but of two churches, two types of churches, and that answers the question of why another church. You read Matthew 7, 24 to 27. Whoever hears these words of mine, which are these words, let me mention some of them.

I'm just reading from the previous chapters, be poor in spirit, Matthew 5, 3, mourn for your sins, verse 4, be gentle, Matthew 5, 5, hunger and thirst for righteousness, Matthew 5, 6, be merciful to others, Matthew 5, 7, be pure in heart, verse 8, be a peacemaker, verse 9, be willing to be persecuted for the sake of righteousness, verse 10, Matthew 5, 11, be willing to suffer insult and seek to overcome anger, Matthew 5, 22, overcome lusting in the eyes, verse 29 onwards, never divorce, divorce is serious, and speak the truth always, verse 37, and don't resist evil, if somebody hurts you, just forgive him, and don't love just your friends, love your enemies as well, and do good to those who harm you, and when you pray, don't let anybody know about it, when you fast, don't let anyone know about it, Matthew 5, verse 16, when you give money, don't let anybody know about it, give it secretly, and don't try to serve God and money, verse 24, you can't serve both, you've got to choose, and don't be anxious, because God cares for you more than He cares for the birds and the flowers, and don't judge others, don't condemn others, judge yourself, okay. You listen to all these words, I think every Christian in the world, who's a serious Christian, would have read Matthew 5, 6, and 7. If you read the Bible and the New Testament only, you'll definitely come to Matthew 5, 6, and 7 within a week or two of reading the New Testament. And then Jesus said, if you hear these words, Matthew 7, 24, like you heard some of them just now, and you take them seriously and do them, then you've built your house on a rock.

But if you don't do them, then you've built it on sand. You understand them, and you hear about it, but you go about your daily life without ignoring all these things, you're building your house on sand. There are two types of churches.

In both churches, they preach the Sermon on the Mount. Everybody hears it. But in one of these two churches, they emphasize obedience to that.

They keep on emphasizing, you must do this, you must do this, you must do this. Week after week, after week, after week, after week, every command in the New Testament, they keep emphasizing, you must do this. When it says, for example, in Ephesians 4, let me give you one example, Ephesians 4, and verse 32.

You know that verse, Ephesians 4, 32? Everybody's got it in their Bible. There are many churches that take Bible studies through Ephesians. And sorry, not Ephesians 4, 32.

Ephesians 4, 31. Sorry. Ephesians 4, 31.

What are the things that you must put away in your life? Please listen. All bitterness, all wrath, that is very serious anger, all anger, that is a gentle type of anger, all clamor, slander, speaking evil of others, and all hatred. Now, if I say, put away all the chairs from this room, how many chairs will be left? Zero.

When it says, put away all bitterness, how much bitterness should be left in your life? Against anybody? Against your mother-in-law? Against your brother-in-law? Against your boss? Whoever, all bitterness must be put away. Zero is left. When it says, all anger must be put away, how much anger is left in your life then? All chairs must be removed from this room.

How many are left? Let all slander, speaking evil of others, be put away. How much is left? Haven't you read these verses before? Here is a church that preaches Ephesians 4, 31, and here is another church that emphasizes obedience every week to Ephesians 4, 31. These are two different churches.

On the outside, they look great. Okay. In fact, the house built on sand where there's no obedience is so big.

It's a mega church. The house built on the rock is only small, maybe 15 people in that church. Which church would you join? Tell me.

The big one? The nicely painted one? The one with the good curtains? Or do you check what's the foundation here? Do they preach obedience to the sun and the moon? Very important. Choose the narrow way. It's not a broad way.

In fact, I believe it's so narrow, it's like these style gates. There are some railway stations where there's a style gate. Only one person can go through.

You can't even take your wife through it. You go there and the style rotates. You go through and the next person can.

The narrow gate is like that. Two people cannot go through. You can't take your wife through it.

You can't take your child through it. It's one person at a time. The other person has to choose themselves whether they want to come through that gate.

And the way is so narrow. If two people try to walk, they'll fall over the side into the pit on either side. One person at a time.

And you got to look at Jesus who's down in front and the apostle Paul who's down in front. And like Paul says, follow me as I follow Christ. We follow Paul and we should be able to say, follow me as I follow Paul and follow Christ.

And the people who follow me should be able to say to others behind them, follow me as I follow brother Zach and follow Paul and I follow Christ. There's a whole line of people like this. Who are the ones? The people are walking the narrow way.

The broad way is different. Come along, fellas. Let's all go together.

We're having fun. They don't bother about me. And Jesus said, the way to life is very narrow.

You cannot take anybody with you there. They can follow you if they like. I want my wife and all my children to follow me.

I want my grandchildren to follow me, but I can't drag them with me. Sorry. I love them so much, but I can't drag them with me.

They have to make their own choice whether they come through the style gate or not. That's the type of church I want to be in because I know that's founded on the rock. What is that? Obedience to the sermon on the mount.

Not just listening to it, not having Bible studies on the mount. A lot of churches that have Bible studies on the summit of the mount that never practice obedience. They don't never emphasize it.

They do emphasize it. It's once in five years, they have a Bible study on it and they emphasize, then they forget about it. Then they're always talking about who we are accepted in Christ.

And it's so blessed and what heaven is like. And they take Bible studies on revelation on how wonderful it can be and how the antichrist will come. And of course we will never be here at that time.

They just, they talk about all the things which have nothing to do with their daily life. You know how many Christians like to study the Bible in areas which have nothing to do with their daily life? They like to study Old Testament studies, study the tabernacle. For example, what do you think a young 20 year old, young born again, Christian sitting in your church, think about it.

What do you think is his biggest struggle? You tell me, you young men, think of a young man, 20 years old. He's sitting in your church, born again, he's accepted Christ. What is his biggest struggle? You tell me the answer.

All of you men were 20 years old once. What was your biggest struggle? Was it understanding the tabernacle? What the tabernacle means or what is going to happen in the revelation when the antichrist comes? Was that your biggest struggle? No. It was not even money.

Not at age 20. Maybe when you were 40 years old, you were after money, but at age 20, your biggest struggle, I can say without any hesitation, in every generation, to every nation, it's sex. Sexually dirty thoughts.

How many messages have you heard in your life on overcoming sexually dirty thoughts? How many messages are preached like that? Which church preaches on such things? That's like going to a hospital with a serious injury on your head and the doctor puts the medicine on your leg. What type of hospital is that? And you go again the next Sunday, they put it again on your leg and your head is bursting with injury. That's exactly how I felt when I sat in a church when I was 20 years old for years, 20, 21, 22, 23.

I never heard one message on overcoming dirty sexual thoughts, which every young 20 year old man is struggling with. What's the point in having a church like that? They studied the tabernacle in that church. What do the curtains of the tabernacle mean? I say, I couldn't care less what they mean.

My struggle is something else, brother. What's going to happen when the Antichrist comes? I'm not interested. I'm interested in what's happening in my life right now.

That's why we need another church that puts the medicine where the sickness is, that heals the wound, not deals with something which has got nothing to do with their problem. The church that preaches the narrow way that leads to life. The church that preaches, don't try to tie good fruit onto a bad tree to give people the impression you're a good tree.

Cut down the bad tree, die to yourself, take up the cross and ask the Holy Spirit to give you a new nature. Jesus said, you cannot be my disciple if you don't deny yourself and take up the cross. Turn with me to Luke 9.23. Luke 9.23, Jesus said, this applies to anybody, Luke 9.23, not every church preaches this.

If anyone, anyone means anyone in the whole world, wants to come after me, he must deny himself. There's no other way. If he wants to come along this narrow way, one at a time that leads to life, he must deny himself and it says daily, don't forget that word daily which comes there.

He must deny himself daily, take up his cross means die to himself daily and then follow me. He cannot follow me if he does not deny himself daily and take up his cross daily. Tell me, do you do that? If you're not doing it, I want to tell you the truth.

You're not following Jesus, whatever you may think about yourself. You can imagine that you're a good Christian, but you're not following Jesus if you're not denying yourself and not taking up, dying to yourself daily. How in the world did you, can you follow, say you're following Jesus without doing the conditions which Jesus said? You know what denying yourself and taking up your cross every day means? This narrow way and why don't you do it? Because you're not hearing it preached in your church regularly.

How many times in a year do you hear messages about taking up the cross and denying yourself daily? I believe that should be, even if not in so many words, should be the sum and substance of what we preach because you got to do it every day. Then doctors will say take your vitamins every day. You take it every day? So that's what you need? People about blood pressure, take your blood pressure tablet every day.

People got diabetes, take your diabetic tablet every day. Don't forget that. They don't forget that because they know if my blood sugar level goes up, I will die, but they don't realize if I ignore denying myself and taking up the cross, I won't walk the narrow way.

They're not positive about it. I tell you, most Christians I have met are more afraid of sickness than of sin and that's why they're defeated. The only person who will deny himself and take up his cross and die to himself every day is the one who is absolutely convinced that sin is more serious than even cancer.

Sin is more serious than getting the disease of AIDS. I want to hate any sin. To get angry with my wife once, to raise my voice at her once in a year is more serious than getting cancer.

You tell me how many of you believe that? Tell me how many preachers have you heard preach that other than myself? You see how few people are preaching that? Is it true or not? Jesus said if you get angry, you're guilty. If you open your mouth and say something, you're guilty of the Supreme Court and you again

open your mouth, same thing. Jesus said you're guilty enough to go to hell.

You read that in Matthew chapter 5 and verse 22. Why another church? Because churches are not preaching the sun and the mount. Churches are not preaching that you're going to take up your cross, deny yourself every day, and only then you can follow Jesus.

They're told, you've accepted Christ that day. Oh brother, everything is okay. You're going to go to heaven.

Just speak in tongues now and you'll be okay. Think of the surprise these people are going to get when Christ comes again. And you say, they say to the Lord, Lord, but our pastor said I've accepted Christ and I'm okay.

A pastor made, put his hand on my head and told me to babble something and I spoke in tongues and he said, you're okay. And the Lord will say, could you read English? Yes Lord. Did you have a Bible in English? Yes.

Did you read Matthew 5 and Matthew 7? Yes Lord. Did you read there about the narrow way and about obeying the sun and the mount? Yes Lord. Why didn't you do it? But my pastor said that's not important.

You're going to listen to your pastor or my word. Such a man will have no answer to give to the Lord in the day of judgment. His mouth will be shut.

That's why I tell people. I remember a brother who came to our church many years ago and he heard some of the strong stuff me preaching and he was new, you know, and he went to some other brother and said, this brother Zach, he preaches all strong stuff. And I called him.

I said, brother, I love you. I want to tell you something. I'm not at all bothered what you think about me now.

If you listen to me in the day you stand before Jesus Christ, you hug me and thank me for speaking the truth to you, even if it hurts you. I'm more interested in that. I'm more interested in the marks you get in your final examination, not in getting the approval of people today.

That's why we need another church that preaches the whole truth of God. One last verse, Acts of the Apostles, chapter 20. Acts of the Apostles, chapter 20, the Apostle Paul said, verse 27, he told the elders in Ephesus, I did not shrink, hesitate from declaring to you the whole purpose of God, not 50% of it, not 75% of it, 100% of the sermon on the Mount, 100% of everything that Jesus taught.

I did not hesitate to declare to you the whole 100% purpose of God because of that. So what Paul, therefore, verse 26, I'm innocent of your blood. Therefore, I'm innocent of your blood.

I've heard preachers say, give a tract with the gospel to somebody and you're innocent of his blood. Nonsense. You give a tract to 25 people, you think you're innocent of their blood just because you gave them a tract? No.

You've just increased their condemnation thereby. Jesus did not come into the world to condemn the world. If you give a tract to 25 people and they all go to hell, you can't say in the day of judgment, Lord, I'm not guilty.

They gave them a tract, you've increased their condemnation. Jesus did not come to increase condemnation. He didn't go around giving tracts to everybody.

God, John 3, 17, God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world. I did in my younger days. I used to sit in a bus and give out tracts to people.

I stood on the streets when I was 23 years old and give tracts to people. Most of them would throw it on the ground. I increased their condemnation and I thought I was clearing my hand of the blood of people.

I was not. When I read this verse, I discovered how I can be innocent of the blood of all men. Acts 20, verse 26, 27.

I have to preach to them the entire purpose of God. All that Jesus taught. There's a series of mine on our website called All That Jesus Taught.

It's 40 hours. Listen to it sometime. It's on our CFC website.

I found one thing that a lot of people are outside CFC take some of these messages more seriously and listen to it more than people are inside CFC. Familiarity brings contempt, but take it seriously. So that's why we need another church, a church that proclaims the whole purpose of God.

And that's the only church I want to sit in because I need to be reminded of these things all the time. Just like, and I need to take a shower regularly. Do you take a shower once a week or once a month? Why do you shower regularly? You took a shower six months ago.

Why do you take it again? You need to be reminded of these things only once in a while. There's so much dirt in the atmosphere that we get polluted every day with dust. That's why we shower.

And if you're working in a very dusty area, some mining area or something, you'll shower every day. But spiritually, we need the same thing. We need to be exposed to the truth every day.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/MC3AygwloEs.mp4>

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