

Some Things I Have Learnt in 50 Years Part 4

by Zac Poonen

The new covenant is an inner life with God, where we are filled with the Holy Spirit and have a continuous and perpetual relationship with God.

Duration: 53:10

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:12

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Faithful Service"

Description

This sermon shares 16 truths learned in 50 years of walking with God, emphasizing the importance of serving the Lord faithfully, trusting in God's provision, and accepting all whom God has received. It highlights the need to prioritize spiritual growth, embrace the new covenant, endure persecution, and be faithful in handling finances with integrity and dependence on God.

Transcript

This is the fourth message in a series I started yesterday evening, which is more like a personal testimony on some truths that I've learned in 50 years. This year has been significant for me, an opportunity to thank God for his goodness, because first of all, I completed 70 years last week. And I was born again 50 years ago, exactly.

And it's been a wonderful 50 years, knowing Jesus better, serving him. I wouldn't exchange it for anything in this world. To serve the Lord is the greatest honor he can give to anyone.

In 43 of those years, I've been in full-time Christian work, and that's been the best part of it all. So I thought I would share in these four sessions 16 truths that the Lord taught me in these 50 years. They are not all the truths in the Bible, but they are truths that have blessed me.

I'll go through them quickly. First of all, God loves Jesus' disciples as much as he loved Jesus. And second, God delights in honest people, those who will take the blame for their sin.

Third, God delights in cheerful givers. He doesn't force anyone to do anything. So everything is a free will, especially giving money.

Number four, we must treat every human being with dignity. God treats us with respect. We must treat all God's people, all people in the world with respect.

Number five, holiness comes by looking unto Jesus, not by self-effort, but just like we look to him for forgiveness of sins, we look to him to make us holy. Number six, the way of the cross is the way of life. If you avoid the cross, you'll never know his resurrection power.

If we die with him, we live with him. Number seven, this world's opinions about us are fit only for the trash can. So we shouldn't be disturbed by what people say, whether good or bad.

They're both fit for the trash can. Number eight, we must be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. We must not be averse to the doctrine of being filled with the Spirit because we have seen fanaticism and extremism.

At the same time, we should not think it's a once for all experience. We need to be filled continually. And number nine, this world's values are the opposite of God's.

That which men esteem highly, the Bible says, is an abomination to God. So we need a reorientation in our thinking of what is valuable and what is not. Number 10, nobody can harm us except we ourselves.

The devil was defeated on the cross once for all. He cannot touch us. All his agents can't touch us.

Nobody can harm us. But we can harm ourselves because we reap what we sow. Number 11, knowing God intimately is the secret of being strong.

Jesus said this is eternal life to know God must be the passion of our life to know God better and better and better to know who he is, what he is like. That increases our own confidence and strength. Number 12, God is a perfect plan for each of us.

He foreordained certain works. It says in Ephesians 2:10 that we should fulfill in our earthly life. And you can never make a better plan than the one God made.

And I want to come to the last four. Number 13, the new covenant is far superior to the old covenant. Now, I wish somebody had told me this when I was converted, when I was 20 years old, that there was a new covenant that God had established.

I didn't have to live in the old covenant. India was ruled by the British, just like you were ruled by the British in the 1700s. We were ruled by the British right up to 1947.

But 62 years ago, we got our freedom. And I'll tell you this, none of us want to go back under the British government today. I'm sure you don't want to either.

Why do you want to live in the old covenant? That was abolished on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came. Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant.

The devil not only hides the truth of salvation and forgiveness of sins from people, and that's why the vast majority of people are not converted. He hides the truth of the new covenant from God's people. I know he hid it from my eyes for 16 years after I was born again.

I called God father, but I was insecure and anxious proving that I didn't know him as father. I spoke about Jesus, that he saves people from sin, but I was not saved from my anger or my lust or my bitterness till I realized that I hadn't entered into a new covenant. I had received forgiveness of sins.

David received forgiveness of sins a thousand years before Christ. He says that in Psalm 103. He says, bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgives all your sins, who heals all your diseases.

Healing is not a new covenant blessing. A thousand years before Christ came to earth, it says in Psalm 103, David experienced healing from his diseases. He experienced prosperity.

It's not a new covenant blessing. It's in Deuteronomy 28. What is a new covenant? A new covenant.

There's a number of things in it. I don't have time to go into it in detail, but I found the main thing was that what was external in the old covenant would become inward in the new covenant. You remember, Jesus said, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me.

He who believes in me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. In the Old Testament, the rivers flowed over a person and outside. That's how they were filled with the Holy Spirit in the new covenant.

They'd be filled inside. Jesus told the woman of Samaria, I'm going to put a well inside you, which will spring up to eternal life. And so I realized that the new covenant was an inner life.

Which is not just external. The other thing I saw was this, that what was occasional in the old covenant was continuous and perpetual in the new covenant. For example, in the old covenant, they would come together every Saturday and praise God.

That was on Saturdays. They came together on Sunday. They'd go back to their murmuring and grumbling and backbiting for the next six days and come back to praise God again on Saturday.

And I found my life was like that as a Christian, except that I shifted from Saturday to Sunday morning and I would praise God on Sunday morning and worship and think we're on top of the world and go back to my old defeated life of grumbling, backbiting, complaining, et cetera, for six days of the week and come back to praise God again. This was old covenant. It was okay in the old covenant.

But in the new covenant, I was to rejoice in the Lord always. Always means 24-7. I never knew that life until God opened my eyes to this truth, that Jesus was the mediator of a new covenant, that I didn't have to live under the old covenant any more than I had to live under Satan's rule in my life.

Jesus said, you shall know the truth. The truth will set you free. We can never be set free unless we long to know the truth.

And I want to encourage you, my brothers and sisters, seek God and don't give up until the truth of the new covenant becomes real. I became so desperate because of my defeated life. Not defeated on the outside.

Outside, my testimony was good. It was inwardly, my thoughts, my attitudes. I said, Lord, I'm living a good old covenant life, but that's not what you came to give me.

You came to give me something inside. I'm rejoicing one day in seven. That's not what you came to give me.

You came to give me another life, and I don't want to miss out on my inheritance in Christ. You know, thirst is a very important requirement. The Bible says, if you seek God with all your heart, you will find him.

That's a law. It's in Jeremiah 29, verse 13. You shall seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Now, if you don't search for God with all your heart, the obvious meaning is that you won't find him. And the tragedy with many Christians is they don't seek God with all their heart. They want a little bit of religion because they want to go to heaven when they die.

But they don't realize that there's a lot more that God has for us, which will make our life on earth heavenly. I found that the New Covenant was, the message of the New Covenant was that you could begin your heavenly life on earth. And then geographically, we'd go to heaven when Christ comes, but the life itself begins right now.

So if Moses could lift the people of Israel to such a high standard of life because of the Ten Commandments, that their life was superior to the lives of people of all other nations on the earth, and he was the mediator of the Old Covenant, what about the New Covenant? How much higher is it? The answer is as much higher as Jesus is than Moses. Why is it that so many Christians who claim to be disciples of Jesus do not rise to a higher level than the disciples of Moses, like Elijah, John the Baptist? Jesus said the least person in God's kingdom would rise higher than even John the Baptist, Matthew 11, verse 11. Why is it that there are so few Christians who can testify to that? The God of this world has blinded the minds of believers and cheated them of their inheritance.

So that's one of the wonderful truths that I discovered, that in the Old Covenant, to use an illustration, it was God wanted to keep the people clean. It was like trying to keep a pig clean. So he gave them Ten Commandments, that's like tying a pig with ten chains, and then you lead that pig through a dirty part of the city and it comes out clean because every time you tug with a chain, any time it wants to go this way or that way.

And I saw that was the Old Testament, where the fear of punishment, the promise of reward would keep people holy. And as long as I was obeying God's commandments because of the fear of punishment or the promise of some reward, pay your tithe and you'll get a promotion in your job or things like that. It was all Old Covenant.

In the New Covenant, it's different. God doesn't lead me like a pig and hold me with chains. Have you seen a cat? You send a cat through a dirty street, it'll come out clean without any chains.

Why is that? It's nature. You see that cat licking itself all the time, keeping itself clean. That's an illustration.

It's a miracle that God has to do to change that pig into a cat, and that's the miracle which is called the new birth. When we're filled with the Holy Spirit, God communicates to us his nature. Let me show you a verse in 2 Peter 1. 2 Peter 1 says there are so many, verse 4, 2 Peter 1, verse 4. It speaks here of wonderful, magnificent, precious promises that God has given us.

And the whole purpose of all the promises of God, it says in this verse, is that I might partake of God's own nature. Do you know that the ultimate purpose of every promise is that you might partake of God's nature? Not that you might make more money or live a more comfortable life, or even that you might be healthy. There's something way a million times greater than all that.

The greatest thing that God can ever give a human being is his nature, and that's the reason why he sent the Holy Spirit to come and fill us inwardly. This is the new covenant. I don't have to be restrained by fear of being caught.

It's nature that God wants to give me, and there's where many Christians have missed out on what God has for them in their life. So that's number 13. Then I want to go on to number 14, 2 Timothy 3, 12.

We will be rejected and persecuted by the world. Now, this is also very different from the way Israel was told in the old covenant. In the old covenant, God told Israel that they would be the highest of all the nations in the world, but the disciples of Jesus were not to be the highest of all the nations in the world.

Says about Jesus, he was despised and rejected of men. He told us in 2 Timothy 3, 12. Let me read this to you.

2 Timothy 3, 12. Now, you're going to read this slowly and carefully to see what it says so that we don't miss out this truth. Every word is important.

Indeed, all, and that word all is very important. All, all. I hope you recognize that includes you.

But it's not everybody in the world. It's not even every Christian. All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus.

All who desire to live without compromising their convictions. Without giving up the principles. All who desire to obey God in everything, who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Heaven and earth will pass away. That word will not pass away. This world is in opposition to God.

And if we follow Jesus, we will be persecuted in one way or the other. Otherwise, that's not scripture. You can take any translation you like.

That's what that verse says. All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. And the way I understood it, I'm giving my testimony here.

The things I learned. I read that verse and I realized that if I'm not persecuted in some way for my faith, it means I don't really desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. I'm compromising somewhere.

And I discovered that pretty early as a young Christian when I was working in the Navy. I was an officer in the Indian Navy for a number of years. That's where I got converted.

And I found my senior officers would sometimes ask me to do things which are against God's word, which is against my conscience. They would do things which are unrighteous and ask me to help them to do those unrighteous things for their own personal gain. And I would have to stand in attention before them and say, I'm sorry, sir.

I'm a Christian. I can't do it. And that is pretty serious in the military.

You can be court-martialed. You can be locked up. It's not like saying no to your boss in an office where you just get sacked.

Here you go to jail. And that happened in different, different situations. And I found I would be given a bad report at the end of the year.

And once I was transferred in half an hour from where I was. They were not major forms of persecution like the apostles experienced, but they were little beginnings. But those were the days when I got a spiritual backbone.

Those are the days I learned to stand up for my convictions. And I was very young. It was between the ages of 21 to 24 that I went through all these things.

And you know how God rewarded me? My aim was to go to the top of the Indian Navy. But at the age of 24, God said to me, I want you to quit your job and serve me. He gave me a much higher promotion than anything on earth I could ever have.

But I believe there are many, many people whom God has a tremendous purpose for. Some of you perhaps. But he's tested you in your office situation, with your relatives, and somewhere in different situations to see whether you will stand up for your convictions or whether you'll compromise.

And where he sees that you compromise and you're ashamed to confess Christ, he just puts you on a shelf. You won't go to hell, but you'll waste your earthly life. And you'll stand in heaven with eternal regret that the one life you could prove your love for Jesus on earth, you didn't do it.

You sought the empty honor of men just fit for the trash can. It's true. Christians are choosing garbage everywhere.

The empty honor and praise of men instead of the praise of Almighty God. How do you want to enter heaven? 2 Peter 1 says you can have an abundant entrance into heaven or an ordinary entrance into heaven. It speaks of an abundant entrance.

What is an abundant entrance? That when we get there, the Lord says, Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord. Do you want that type of entrance? Or do you want the Lord to say, Well, you made it, did you? I never thought you'd make it.

Well, you got there. What type of entrance do you want? Be faithful. Stand up for the Lord with your unconverted relatives.

Stand up for the Lord in the midst of unconverted people in your office. Don't laugh at their dirty jokes. Never mind if they call you Holy Joe.

They call me all types of names in the Navy. It didn't make a difference. God called me for His service.

Is it possible that you're missing something God has for you? Because He sees you're a compromiser. Well, you can't do anything about the past. But you can do something about tomorrow onwards.

I'll tell you, it'll be worth it when you see Jesus. Like we sing in that song. It'll be worth it all when we see Jesus.

Life's trials will seem so small. One look from His dear face. All sorrows will erase.

It'll be worth it all when we see Jesus. Remember that every day. I used to think of Jesus hanging on the cross.

Not ashamed to hang there for me, stripped naked. And I said, Lord, help me always to keep that in mind. That I'll never be ashamed.

Wherever I am. To acknowledge you as my Savior. And my Lord.

So if you desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, you will be persecuted. And you'll be called bad names. Forgive them.

Love them. Jesus, I don't know whether you know these words of Jesus. And let me read this to you.

In Matthew chapter 10, verse 25. Words that are not so well known and not seriously taken by many Christians. These are not the most serious forms of persecution.

But being called bad names is not something we enjoy. But it will happen to a true disciple of Christ. Matthew 10, verse 25.

Matthew chapter 10, verse 25. Listen to these words of Jesus. It is enough for the disciple that he becomes as his teacher.

That's enough. Do you want to be greater than your teacher? No. It's enough for the slave that he becomes as his master.

Do you want to be more famous than your master? Do you want to be accepted in a world that rejected your master? Do you want to be honored in a world that crucified your master? Who are you following? Great Christian TV personalities? Or Jesus Christ, who hung on the cross? There's quite a contrast, I'll tell you, between the two. Many Christian leaders are like film stars. Jesus Christ was not.

It's enough. And then he says, listen to this. If they called the head of the house Beelzebul, means prince of devils.

How much more? How much more the members of his family, of his household? How do I know that I'm a member of Jesus' family, according to this verse? Ask a 10-year-old child to explain that verse, he'll tell you. How do I know that I'm a member of Jesus' household and family? The head of the house was called Beelzebul. What names have other people called you? Has anybody called you a devil? In serving the Lord, I mean, many of you appreciate me and honor me, but I'll tell you some of the names I have been called in India.

And on the Internet. Devil. Son of a devil.

Evil spirit. Antichrist. The head of the serpent.

Deceiver. Murderer. Spiritual terrorist.

Murderer. Dietrophies. False prophet.

I'm honored. I'm a member of Jesus' family. Jesus went on to say that you'd be betrayed.

People would take you to court. That's happened to me too, on false charges. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 13.

He was the greatest man of God on earth at his time, I believe. Mightily used by God, who had surrendered everything. How did the world treat him? How did God allow the world to treat him? 1 Corinthians 4, verse 13.

1 Corinthians 4, verse 13 says. We are slandered. On every side, he was slandered.

The Jewish people particularly said. He's not teaching what Moses is teaching. We have become as the scum of the world.

Scum. You know what that means? Scum. The dregs of all things.

Who is this? The greatest apostle of all. Say Lord, is this how you allow your servants to be treated? That's how he allowed his son to be treated. They looked at Jesus and said, you are a demon.

So, we need to understand. That if we are really following Jesus. We're going to be persecuted in one way or the other.

We may lose our jobs. Because we're going to be honest and truthful. I remember a brother in India.

Who, as an accountant. Had to cook the books and write false accounts. And then he became a Christian one day.

And he told his boss. I can't do that anymore. Well, he said.

We need an accountant who can write false accounts. Otherwise, you lose your job. And he went and discussed with the other Christians.

And other Christians told him. Well, you've got to do a few things like that. If you want to live in this world.

You've got to adjust, you know. But his conscience troubled him. So, he said, I'm sorry.

I can't do it. And he lost his job. And he was so discouraged.

He was living in another part of India. But he'd read some book of mine. And he traveled all the way to Bangalore.

Where I live. Overnight train. Just to see me.

He'd never met me before. And he said, Brother Zak. I just came to ask you one question.

Did I do the right thing? All the Christians were saying. You can't be so upright in this world and live. I said, Brother.

You did the absolutely right thing. Man shall not live by bread alone. But by every word of God.

It's more important to speak the truth. It's better to speak the truth and die. Than for you and your wife and daughter to die.

Than to live telling lies. So don't get discouraged. But I said, I'll give you one more promise.

The Bible says, those who honor me, I will honor. So God won't let you down. You're not going to starve.

Your wife won't starve. Your daughter won't starve. God will honor you.

I don't know how he's going to do it. But he's going to do it. And God did.

God gave him a better job. God honors those who honor him. But think what he would have missed.

Think of that wonderful experience he'd have missed. If he had compromised. And think of the many experiences you have probably missed.

Because in some situation, you chose the way of compromise. Because you thought you would lose something on the earth. And I want to say one more thing in this connection.

And here is where I must tell you that evangelical Christians. Have differences of opinion. And that is concerning.

Whether Jesus Christ will come secretly. For the church. Before the seven-year period of great tribulation.

And then come publicly. To the earth. I think about 90% of believers.

Born-again believers. And perhaps most of you believe that Jesus Christ. Will come seven years before.

As soon as the tribulation starts. And secretly rapture the church. I believed it too.

As a young Christian. Because I was taught that. But as I studied the scriptures.

Carefully. Honestly. I discovered it's not true.

I searched the scriptures. The New Testament. I could not find one verse.

I studied it for 50 years. That taught that. And I discovered it was a teaching of man.

That arose in England about 150 years ago. Nobody believes it in the persecuted countries like China. Or in the old communist countries.

Nobody would believe it. It arose in countries that had never experienced persecution. For centuries.

And it's a very comfortable doctrine. Many of you have heard of Corrie ten Boom. The Dutch lady who was imprisoned.

In the Nazi concentration camps. And came out of it. She went to China.

And she met some of the pastors. After the communists had taken over. And they told her.

The reason why many Christians lost their faith. And forsook Christ. Was because the missionaries never told us.

That we would go through tribulation. And persecution. They always told us.

Jesus will come. And take you up. Take you up.

We waited for Jesus to come. And instead of Jesus the communists came. And we got persecuted.

And it's not been seven years. It's been year after year after year after year. And we lost our faith.

See this doctrine has not prepared people for persecution. 30 years ago I started preaching in India. We must prepare the church in India for persecution.

Most people didn't agree with me. I said 90% of believers. They thought it was a false doctrine.

But it's happening in India today. In the last one year. We've seen more persecution.

More Christians killed. In India. I've never seen it in all my 70 years.

And I believe that one way or the other. Persecution is going to come to every land. And we have to be faithful to the Lord.

If you're looking for a life of comfort. Forget about being a Christian. If you want to follow Jesus.

Remember what Jesus said. In John 16 33. In the world you will have.

Tribulation. But be of good cheer. Don't get discouraged.

I have overcome the world. One last thing on that before I move on. What are the things that are going to take place when Christ comes? Let me show you.

1 Thessalonians 4. Verse 16. The Lord will descend from heaven with a shout. The voice of the archangel.

Listen to all these things. The voice of the archangel. The trumpet of God.

And we'll be caught up together to meet the Lord in the clouds. So here it is. The Lord coming in the clouds.

Angels. Are being taken up from all parts of the earth. Trumpets.

That is the coming of the Lord. Which we know as the rapture. When Christ is going to come to take us.

Now keeping that in mind. When we turn back to Matthew 24. In 1 Thessalonians 4. It doesn't tell us when it will happen.

It tells us what will happen. But when you go to Matthew 24. Jesus tells us when it will happen.

Now listen to this. Matthew 24. In verse 29.

He's just spoken about the great tribulation. In the previous verses. Verse 21.

There will be a great tribulation in those days. And then. Verse 29.

Immediately after the tribulation. Not before. Immediately after the tribulation.

The sun will be dark and the moon will not shine. And then. Verse 30.

The Son of Man will appear in the sky. He'll come in the clouds of the sky. Verse 31.

With the angels and a trumpet. And the elect will be gathered together from the four winds. Did Jesus know what he was talking about? As I read these words.

And I compared scripture with scripture. I said. How in the world did.

Christendom believe something else. An enemy has done this. 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. I read these verses.

Verse 1 to 3. Brethren. With regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And our gathering together to him.

A rapture. 2 Thessalonians 2. Verse 2. Don't be shaken. Or composed.

Or disturbed. By a message. As if it were from us.

Verse 3. This is the verse I want you to see. 2 Thessalonians 2. Verse 3. Let no one deceive you. I believe we need to hear that word.

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come. Until there's this.

Falling away. The apostasy. Great falling away from the faith.

And it's happening all around us today. And the antichrist. The man of sin is revealed.

The son of perdition. Destruction. Whom opposes and exalts himself.

Who sits in the temple and claims to be God. Verse 4. It's after he's revealed. That the Lord will come.

I believe we need to be prepared. For the coming of Jesus Christ. But.

We need to be prepared. For this time of persecution. And tribulation the church is going to face.

Before that. And this is the time when we need to strengthen ourselves. I remember we were taught in the military.

That the more you sweat in peace. The less you bleed in war. And the more we prepare ourselves.

In times of peace. The more we'll be ready to fight the battles. When the time of tribulation comes.

Number 15. Philippians 4:19. We must trust in God alone.

To supply all our needs. This has been a great truth for me. And it's something that's helped me throughout my life.

And especially in the last 43 years. That I've been in full-time Christian work. Now I realize there are different Christians.

Who again in this area. Who have different opinions on this. And I'm just giving you my personal testimony.

I'm not here to judge anybody else. Or condemn anybody else. Or even say that anybody else is doing it.

Who does it differently. Is doing it wrong. I'm telling you the truths I learned in 50 years.

Philippians 4:19. My God. Shall supply all your needs.

And we have many needs. My primary need is for victory over sin. I have other needs.

Material needs. Physical needs for healing. Financial needs.

These are our basic needs. Spiritual, physical, financial. My God shall supply all your needs.

According to his riches and glory in Christ Jesus. I sought God for spiritual needs. Lord, I'm defeated by so many sins in my life.

I want to overcome them. I don't want to be defeated by sin. The devil will be glorified.

If I keep on losing my temper endlessly. The devil will be glorified. If I keep on lusting.

The devil will be glorified. If I click once on an internet pornographic site. That's the devil is going to be glorified there.

And I don't want to glorify the devil. I have spiritual needs. Please deliver me.

Then I have physical needs. When we're sick. It's right to ask the Lord to heal us.

We can ask God. Isn't the father interested in his child's healing? But God is better than any earthly father. And I've sought the Lord for it.

I'm not here. All sickness is due to sin. I don't say that.

I think a lot of our sicknesses. And it's like the flu that goes around. Because we live in a world that's under the curse.

So sometimes people are sick. People are born with birth defects. I don't have the answers to all that.

But I do believe. For myself I have believed. That if God wants me to do something.

He'll give me the health to do it. And as a result of that faith. It's a testimony.

In all these 43 years. I've traveled so many countries. I've hardly ever spent more than.

Two or three months at home. Sometimes six months at home. But I'm traveling so much.

I've never had to miss one single meeting. In 43 years due to sickness. It's God's goodness.

I say God. Jesus Christ is a healer. And I'll tell you something.

Something that's better than healing. Is health. I say let's see God for health.

More than healing. But. You know the Lord tells me.

You shouldn't overeat. And there's certain types of foods. Which are not good for your body.

It's no use telling other people. Not to drink and smoke cigarettes. If you eat all that fatty stuff.

Which they give you. In these fast food shops. It's no different.

You're destroying your body. Just like the guy who smokes cigarettes. Is destroying his body.

God will supply all your need. That will be like. Jumping off the roof of the temple.

And like the devil said. Ask God to protect you. Lord I'm going to eat all this fatty stuff.

In all these fast food shops. But heal me Lord. The Lord says you cooperate with me.

Now if you die early in your life. Because you're a martyr for Jesus Christ. I remember reading these words.

Years ago it really. I've never forgotten it. It says when you.

If you die early. Because you're a martyr for Christ. You'll have great joy.

When you stand before the Lord. But if you die early. Because you ate too much.

Or you ate the wrong type of food. What will you say. When you stand before the Lord.

And I've never forgotten it. I say Lord you will supply all my need. But not if I keep on tempting you.

By doing all types of things. Which destroy this body. Financial needs.

That's another area. Christ money. There are only two gods.

And everybody's worshiping one of the two. Some try to worship both. Like in the Old Testament.

They tried to worship Jehovah and Beal. Have you read these Old Testament stories. How Israelites would worship Jehovah.

And Beal. And you wonder. How in the world.

Can people go and worship Jehovah on a Saturday. And go and worship Beal on Sunday and Monday. It doesn't appear possible.

You'd say if I were living those days. I'd never do that. But do you know today's equivalent of Jehovah and Beal.

Is Christ and money. Do you find people who worship Christ on Sunday. And worship money on Monday.

Lots of them who try to do it. But they're not really worshiping Christ. They're worshiping money.

You can't have two gods. It's just like you can't have two husbands. If Christ is your husband.

You can't have another one. If you try to have another one. You can't have that.

And a lot of Christians. Have a problem in this area. And I've discovered in my own life.

That to lack. To not trust in God. Is one of the greatest insults.

I can give him. And I'll tell you why I say that. If I had a. If my father let's say.

Was the richest man in the world. My own father. And I had a need.

Who would I go to? Would I come to you? Or would I call my father on the phone? The only reason. I wouldn't call my father. Would be if he and I were not on good terms.

And that's why people don't go to God. They go to man. They are not on good terms with their heavenly father.

I decided. My heavenly father. Is richer than the richest.

Man on earth. And. You know what he says in scripture.

He says the silver and gold is mine. The cattle on a thousand hills. The psalmist says if I were hungry.

He says I wouldn't tell you. The cattle on a thousand hills. Belongs to my heavenly father.

I can trust him. For so many Christians. Their faith is only on paper.

Solely on a Sunday morning. He doesn't work in the. Details of life.

I live in a poor country. India is a very poor country. We don't have social security.

You have to pay for everything. Every hospital bill you have to pay for. Your children go to school.

You have to pay for it. There's no free education. In a country like this.

I want to prove in my life. And I said this to God years ago. That if you seek the kingdom of God first.

And his righteousness. And you tell your needs. Only to your heavenly father.

For 50 years. It's true. And now.

I've had the privilege of seeing it. Fulfilled in the lives of many other. Poor villagers in India.

Who are even poorer than me. But I had to prove it in my own life first. And for myself.

As I studied scripture. And I longed. You know God had called me to serve him.

To preach his word. And I'd heard so many boring. Preachers in my life.

I don't want to add to that number. Please help me. Jesus was never boring.

Never. The disciples walking to Amir said. Their hearts burned.

When Jesus spoke to them for three hours. The Holy Spirit. Is of fire.

But the Lord said to me. From Luke 16 11. If you are faithful.

In the use of money. I will give you the true riches. If you are faithful.

In the use of money. Only then. Luke 16 11.

Will I give you the true riches. The true riches of revelation on my word. Anointing of my Holy Spirit.

Those are the true riches. Don't believe that these dollars are true riches. They are not.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit. The revelation on God's word. Where God begins to open up things to you.

That nobody can teach you. And I said Lord I want it. And the Lord said be faithful with money.

I want to share what the Lord has taught me in these years. You know I. Many years ago. I wrote down what I call for myself.

Ten commandments. On money. As a full time Christian worker.

I live in a country where. A lot of people. Keep writing reports.

Particularly to the United States. Asking for money. And I decided I'd never do that.

I would go to my Heavenly Father. Not only for myself and my family. For my ministry.

We have many many churches. I said I'll never. I'm not judging other people to do it.

I told you in the beginning. This is what God told me. Paul supported himself and served the Lord.

He didn't judge Peter. Who received gifts from others. So these are the words the Lord spoke to me.

Number one. Never make your financial needs known to anyone but God. And I followed that.

All these 43 years. Since I left my job. Number two.

That's Philippians 4:19. Number two. Never accept money.

From unbelievers. Third John 7. Never take money from those who don't know the Lord. Number three.

Never expect. Any gifts from anyone. Psalm 62:5. My soul wait thou only upon the Lord.

For my expectation is from him. And number four. Never allow anyone.

To control you. By giving you money. You know that's particularly true in India.

Those who give the money pull the strings. And I wanted only the Lord. To pull my strings.

And number five. Never accept money from those who don't receive your ministry. They don't receive your ministry.

Your ministry they have no right to support you. Number six. Never accept money for your personal needs.

From those who are poorer than you. They have a right to give to the ministry. But if they are living at a lower level than you.

Don't accept money from them. Because I cannot take money from someone poorer than me. To live at a higher standard than them.

A lot of Christian workers do that. But I never felt free to do it. I'll mention something here.

Some years ago. I remember when a number of people were kneeling down. At the time here.

When they invite people to come forward for prayer. More than once I heard a person praying for them. Like this.

Lord some of us here. Are down to our last dollar. Please help them.

I haven't forgotten that. I said Lord. Some of these people kneeling down here are down to their last dollar.

And the Lord said to me that day. You must not receive any money from this church for your ministry. I said okay.

So I told the pastor here. Some years ago. I'm happy to preach here.

I will not receive any ministry. Please use it. Towards paying your mortgage.

Or other expenses. You know the Lord has honored me. By amazing revelations on his word.

When I take a little decision like that. That what I. Don't have. Is maybe a little extra money.

But what I got. Is the true riches. Have you ever heard the Lord say to you.

To give up something. Which you're entitled to. The Lord says give it up.

Give it to that poor person. The reason for the lack of a prophetic word. Today.

Because people are not faithful. In this area. Never be dependent on any man.

For your financial needs. Trust me the Lord says. Number eight.

Never handle God's money. In a way that causes suspicion. Be careful.

That's why in our own church. I never. All the money is handled by other people.

Number nine. This is the best part of it. Never be excited when you get money.

And number 10. Never be depressed. When you lose money.

Because you still have God. I. The Lord taught me that. It's easy to live very simply.

And we have. My wife and I have tried to live. Extremely simply in our home.

You know when you find that. Like somebody said. When you find that you have nothing left.

But God. You'll find that God is more than enough. So.

I want to encourage you brothers and sisters. You may not be in full-time work. But be faithful with money.

The last point I want to say. What the Lord has taught me is this. Number 16.

We must receive. All whom God has received. I want to have as many brothers and sisters.

In Christ. As God has got children. Did you understand that? That means as many children as God has.

I want that many brothers and sisters. I don't want to cut off somebody. Who's a child of God.

Just because he doesn't agree with me. In some doctrine. Just because he's got a different view on some area.

Or because he belongs to another church. I believe there are born-again believers. In the Roman Catholic Church.

Mother Teresa in India. I think she was really a believer. I may not agree with their doctrines.

Or I don't believe in Mary as a mediator. Etc. Okay.

They may have some things wrong in their understanding. But their heart is right. It's the heart God looks at.

So much of doctrinal disagreement is a head matter. I tell you. You'll discover when you stand before the Lord.

He's not going to give you a doctrinal questionnaire. Before he asks you whether you can enter heaven or not. It's your heart.

God looks at the heart. And I've got friends. In the Pentecostal Charismatic Church.

I don't agree with them in everything. But I love them. They're born-again believers.

So God has taught me to accept all whom God has accepted. I may not be able to work with some of them. For example, some believe in infant baptism.

I can't work with them in the church. Because when a baby is born, they want to baptize. And I say, sorry, we're not going to baptize them.

So I say, brother, you start another church. We love one another. And work separately.

So I realize I cannot work with everyone. Some people, for example, have some extreme doctrines on speaking in tongues. Either way.

Some say all tongues are the devil. Some people say everybody must speak. I don't belong to either group.

So it's out of necessity. We have to work separately. But we must be open for fellowship.

With all of God's people. Jesus never said, all men will know you're my disciples when you all meet in one building. No.

He never even said, all men will know you're my disciples when you agree on every jot and tittle of doctrine. No. He said, all men will know you're my disciples when you love one another.

That's the thing. You know, as I go to different places, people ask me questions about my church. They say, you break bread every Sunday.

They must be from the Brethren church. Do you all speak in tongues? They must be from the Pentecostals. Do your sisters all wail their heads? They must be Mennonites.

And like that, there are different questions people ask. Nobody's ever asked me, do you all love one another? Isn't that interesting? What is your doctrinal statement? Jesus said, the one thing that Jesus said would identify his disciples is very often lost in the thinking of many Christians. If you cut off one saint from

God, of God, one child of God, you're going to be the loser.

I don't have to agree with everything they believe in. In fact, many Christians, I don't agree with all that they believe, but I love them and I receive, I can see something of Christ in them, I receive it. It's like, you know, if I go to a store, I don't buy the whole store, I just take a tube of toothpaste and that's it.

So I can go to a believer and just take one thing from his life. I don't have to accept everything in his life. And like that, I can go store after store after store and it's all free, and I pick up all that I need and I become a rich man.

You see, this is how it is. If I can be open to all of God's children, I don't have to agree with everything they believe and teach and all that, but if I can see something of Christ in them, something of Christ's humility or something of Christ's care for the poor, like Mother Teresa had, for example, or something of a passion to reach people for Christ, like Billy Graham has, I don't have to agree with all of them and everything. I can become rich.

You deprive yourself of something of the wealth of Christ when you don't receive all of God's people. So hold your conviction, stay in the church God's called you to stay, but be open to all of God's people and to receive all that God has for your children. And then we shall have no regret when Christ comes again.

Let's pray. As we bow before you, Heavenly Father, help us to be open to many more truths that you have to teach us from your word as we walk with you. Lead us in your perfect will.

We are pressing on the upward way, new heights we want to gain every day. Our heart has no desire to stay. Where there are fears and doubts, we want to press on to higher ground.

Help us each one. In Jesus' name. Thank you very much.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/cMDnIG7m31Y.mp4>

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