

# Spiritual Enemies And No Earthly Enemy

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant, highlighting key differences such as knowing God as Father, the defeat of Satan, increasing in glory, complete justification through Christ's blood, worship in the spirit, the importance of family life, understanding the true meaning of the Sabbath, God working in us, unity among different races, the importance of revelation over mere study, and the shift from fighting human enemies to spiritual battles against evil forces.*

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:24, Colossians 3:5, Ephesians 6:12, Matthew 5:44, Jude 1:3, Isaiah 11:9, Psalms 137:9, Mark 12:30, Luke 17:3, John 13:34

**Topics:** "New Covenant", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So before I share what's on my heart for today, I just wrote down the things we have already talked about in the last 10 sessions. Just a quick revision on the difference between the old covenant and the new covenant. It's not something for us to to just make a list of or make a powerpoint presentation, but to experience in our life.

First of all, to know God as Father and not as God. We know him as God but our Heavenly Father primarily. That relationship and second thing, to be absolutely convinced that Satan has been defeated.

They never knew anything about that in the old covenant. Today we have that certainty on the cross. Satan was defeated.

We start from that position. They didn't know anything about that. And number three, sorry that was in the first itself, God is our Father Secondly, I spoke about increasing glory.

In the old testament, a lot of people started out very well and declined. You know, Moses backslid to the point where he couldn't enter the promised land. David backslid.

He started out as a man after God's own heart but ended up committing adultery. But in the new covenant, it's the other way. It's from glory to glory to glory, becoming more and more Christ-like.

And the third is we are completely justified by the blood of Christ. We are absolutely certain that we can come before God as if we have never sinned in our whole life but we are totally righteous our entire life. That's what the blood of Christ does to us.

Nobody could come to God like that in the old covenant. And then number four, we don't primarily worship with our body and soul and emotions. It's there but it's subservient to the spirit.

We worship in the spirit which means we have bow before God and everything we have is His. We don't desire anything but God on earth or in heaven. And number five, we value the importance of husband-wife relationship which is not at all important in the old testament.

It's very very important. In fact, that is the second floor on which we build the third floor of the church. And number six, it's very important to bring up our children right.

In the old covenant, even Samuel, his children were all wayward. He wouldn't qualify to be a new covenant elder. But in the new covenant, the way you bring up your children is very very important and God gives us grace for that.

So family life. And then number seven, the real meaning of the sabbath. To them, the old covenant sabbath was just not doing work on one day.

But in the new covenant, it is recognizing that it is the Lord himself who sanctifies me. It's not the imitation of Christ. A lot of people when they hear things in the church, they try to imitate Jesus.

That is old covenant. Remember that. If you think imitating Jesus is new covenant, Mahatma Gandhi tried to do that.

He was not a new covenant Christian. Imitation of Christ is an external thing. You can ask, what would Jesus do? That sounds very spiritual.

But it is old covenant. In the new covenant, we partake of his nature. What would Jesus do is a good standard to have.

But I can do it externally like Mahatma Gandhi. The sabbath brings me into the rest where it's God's nature from within. And that's what I continued in the next, number eight, to say that it's God who works in us to will and to do his good pleasure.

And we work it out because we take the yoke from him. We partake of his nature is the greatest promise that God has given us in the old covenant. They're both related number seven and eight.

But one emphasizing the sabbath where Adam had to first spend a day with God and be at rest in him then go out to work in the garden. And number nine, we mentioned that in the new covenant, it is not just one race, not only Jews. If you went to an old covenant community, everybody was one race.

In the new covenant, it's all different, different races and nationalities. So an old covenant church, if you go to an old covenant church, you look around everybody's one community because it's more comfortable to be all in one community. In the new covenant, it's eight, nine different communities even in one church,

even in a small church.

Now that's not comfortable for us. We like to be with our own people who speak the same language and our same background. That proves you're an old covenant Christian.

It's one of the things we've got to mortify and put to death. A lot of people don't think of that as something can be put to death. And then number 10, I mentioned about the importance of revelation and not just study.

Study will make you a scribe who knows the scriptures. Revelation will make you a disciple. And I mentioned how that revelation is given to those who are humble like little children who trust in their father helplessly, dependent on him, acknowledging that they know nothing and thus receive revelation from God which was not there in the old covenant.

In the old covenant, you didn't have to be like a child. You just studied and studied and studied. Okay, now we come to number 11.

One of the things you've seen in the old covenant is very frequently children of Israel fighting with the Ammonites, Moabites, Hittites and the Canaanites all being slaughtered, even the children being slaughtered of the Canaanites. And a lot of people have a question. How is it such a holy loving God would allow little children to be killed? And the reason was he said if you allow them to live, they'll grow up.

Little Canaanites become big Canaanites like little snakes become big snakes. And they will lead you astray into what they have absorbed from childhood into idolatry and evil. So they must be killed.

And there are passages like this in Psalm 139 which says, not Psalm 139, I think it's 138 or 137, which says, Lord, how blessed will be the person, Psalm 137 verse 9, how blessed will be the one who takes the little ones of Babylon, hits the head of these babies against the rock and smashes their heads against the rock. Can you imagine something like that in inspired scripture? This is what a lot of people can't understand. How can a God, you say this is the God of the Bible, how can He say that the little ones, their heads should be dashed against the rock? That's old covenant.

The enemies were all human. In the new covenant, we don't have any human enemies, zero. Our enemies are all spiritual.

The devil and his demons and our flesh and its lusts. Turn to Ephesians in chapter 6. It's a very, very important distinction. You may not dash any child's head against the rock.

I'm sure none of you will ever do it. But you can have a bitterness against someone which makes you just as good that if you don't have the opportunity, you'd probably be put in prison if you dash somebody's head against a rock. So you wouldn't do it.

But you can have that thing in your heart where you hate someone or you don't like somebody else's child or you don't like another person because something in you hates him. That is an old covenant person. Even if you sit in NCCF, if you have a earthly enemy, you are under the old covenant.

Ephesians 6 verse 12. Our struggle or our baffle is not, n-o-t, not, never against, flesh and blood means, against any human being. We do not fight with human beings.

But we fight against the evil rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places, Satan and all his enemies. Satan and all those demons. Now I remember, it's many years ago, the Lord said to me, if you want to have power against Satan and have authority to overcome Satan and his enemies, you must make one decision in your life firmly that you will never, never, never, never fight with human beings.

That you'll never fight with your wife, first of all. You'll never fight with your husband. We can have discussions, but the discussion must never become a fight.

Never. You can disagree, but the disagreement must never become a fight. We must not fight with people of other denominations.

We are not to fight with pulp groups or other religions. No, we don't fight with any human being. We don't care how they disagree with me, however much evil they have done to me, I will not fight back.

Love your enemies. There was no such command in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, it is there because I don't have earthly enemies.

So, I want to... Now, we must make this very practical. You should be able to say, I do not fight with human beings. And that begins in your home.

Any person, I don't mean where you accidentally said something hurtful to your husband and wife, which you immediately repented and pulled back. That's not a fight. What I mean is where you have a fight with someone and you go to bed angry with each other.

Dear brother, sister, I'm sorry to tell you that even if you're sitting in NCCF, you are an old covenant Christian. If you fight with any human being, you fight with that wicked neighbor who throws the garbage into your compound, you are an old covenant Christian. You say it's tough to be a new covenant Christian.

It's not tough. It is impossible without the help of the Holy Spirit. We start off our Christian life thinking this is difficult, you're not yet ready.

When you come to the place, it is impossible. Then you're ready to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You take a branch in a tree, you think that that branch can produce fruit by itself? You think it's difficult? It is impossible.

As long as the branch thinks it's difficult to produce fruit, it's not ready. That branch has to say it is impossible for me to produce fruit. I have to stay in the tree.

Then it'll produce fruit without effort. That is the life of rest. The life of rest in God.

The Sabbath rest. It all links up to the same thing. Then God wants to bring us to that place where His nature flows into me like the sap of the tree into the branch.

And that's how I love my enemies. That's how I can do good to those who hate me. And God will give us opportunities.

I mean when I have, I've had, I mean I'm a servant of the Lord, so you know that I'm a number one target of the devil. And the devil doesn't attack directly. He attacks through human beings who try to harm me in so many ways and imprison me and hate me and all types of things.

And I've decided I'm not going to hate one of them. By God's grace, the love of Christ will come forth from me and I will pray that it'll go well with them. I do good to them and I wish good to them.

I won't have any fellowship with them. No. Jesus didn't have fellowship with the people to whom He said, Father forgive them.

Sometimes we mistake forgiveness for fellowship. There's a world of difference between forgiveness and fellowship. Don't confuse the two.

We can, we have to have a forgiving attitude towards everybody in the whole world. But we can have fellowship only with those who have that same brokenness in themselves. That's why Jesus said, I mean if your enemy, let me paraphrase many words that Jesus said, if your enemy hurts you, forgive him.

If you love him, bless him, despitefully use him. But Luke 17 3, if your brother, that's different, if your brother sins against you with whom you have fellowship, wait till he repents. Then forgive him.

Have you read that verse? Why? Because there it's a question of fellowship. Forgiveness we must have towards everybody in the world. So our attitude is, I will not have an enemy.

I refuse to have. Somebody may consider me their enemy. That's none of my business.

But I've decided I will never have an earthly enemy. I will not have a grudge in my heart at any time against any human being. And I want to say to you that many of you are overcome by the devil's tactics and schemes and you're not able to get light on the ways in which the devil tries to trip you up or hurt you here or hurt you there or trouble you here and there because he knows he has power over you because you have earthly enemies.

Are you serious about wanting to have power over Satan? Decide today that you will never again fight with human enemies. I'm telling you from a few years, not from the beginning of my Christian life because nobody taught me this in the beginning, but for since a number of years I decided I will not have an earthly enemy. I will never fight with my wife.

I disagree with her. It's okay. We bear with one another.

But I will not fight. I will not shout and get angry and do this that or the other to anybody, even to those who hurt me, the non-Christians or people who attack me or want to do evil to me. I will not have an attitude that that is my enemy.

I don't have any enemies on this earth. As I said, that doesn't mean fellowship but I'm determined. So whenever you read about putting the little ones to death, it is those little little thoughts and attitudes.

Whenever you read in the Psalms, put those little ones to death and beat their head against the rock. Think of that small little grudge you have against somebody. Smash the head of that against a rock and finish with it.

And the wrong attitude you have towards someone, kill it. Kill it. Put to death the members of your body which are evil.

It says in Colossians 3 verse 5, put to death. That's how it is in one translation. The immorality, impurity, these are the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and all the otherites.

Passion, evil desire, greed, etc. There are many many things like this. For example, in Galatians it speaks about crucifying the flesh.

In Galatians 5 24, these are the enemies we have to crucify. Galatians 5 24, put to death the flesh with its passions and desires. Smash the little ones of the flesh to the rock.

Put their head on the rock and smash them. Which are these Amonites and Amorites and all the otherites? Verse 19, immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery. Here's a list of enemies.

And there are many more. They must all be put to death just like Israel was ruthless against the enemies in the Old Testament. Whenever I read about Israel defeating the Canaanites and killing every one of them, burning them up, I say, Lord, that's what I have to do to the lust in my flesh.

That is a new covenant Christian. And if you are zealous about it, as zealous as the Israelites and as Joshua and his armies were to finish off even the last little Canaanite, I'm determined to finish the last little thought or attitude or, you know, motive which is wrong. I'm a new covenant Christian.

So you see it's a pretty high standard. Many of us can think, oh because I come here and I have understood a few truths, I'm a new covenant Christian. The test is practical.

Do you have one earthly enemy? Do you fight with human beings? Do you fight with your wife? Do you fight with your brother-in-law? Do you fight with your mother-in-law? Oh, you're not a new covenant Christian. You're a million miles from being a new covenant Christian if you fight with your mother-in-law. You know, we have four daughters-in-law and my wife and I, we've had them for 14 years now.

We've never had a fight because we believe that in the new covenant, mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relationship, which the world thinks is the most horrible, impossible relationship, must be the best. It must be so in your case if you claim to be a new covenant Christian. Unfortunately for many, many new covenant Christians, so-called new covenant Christians, it's only theory.

A few things. Oh, I get victory over sin in this area. I overcome this or that.

Test yourself in this area. Is there a single human being whom you fight with or you have arguments with and you can't? We must fight for the faith. Jude says, we contend earnestly for the faith.

Stand up for the doctrine. I'd fight with all my heart for the truth of the gospel, the truth of the new covenant. But with human beings, no.

Even when somebody comes to argue with me about a doctrine, I will not fight with him. I remember once a brother came to my house and arguing about some doctrine. I said, listen, if you want an explanation about the doctrine, I'm willing to spend hours with you explaining scripture.

But if you want to argue with me or convinced about it and you're going to convince me, I say, let's talk about cricket because then we won't argue because you and I are, we both want India to win, right? Okay, let's talk about that so that we don't have a fight because I'm not going to fight for anything. So if you take this attitude, it's a very simple thing, but determine in your heart that you will never have a wrong attitude or bitterness or enmity towards a single human being. It has to begin in the heart and particularly you'll find if somebody has, particularly Christians, it's sometimes easy for us to have a wrong attitude towards somebody who's preaching all the time.

For example, Jesus spoke against all these Pharisees who were deceiving widows and poor people and he drove out the money changers, but he didn't hate them. And we must drive out all the pastors who love money from our churches, but we must not hate them. They must not be our enemies, but we must not allow them to be in the church of the Living God.

We must not allow any such person to come and defile a new covenant church. So that's contending for the faith. So we've got to distinguish between contending for the faith and not hating even our worst enemy.

Amen.

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