

# Superior to the Law

by Zac Poonen

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*Understanding and experiencing the new covenant is crucial for living a victorious life over sin and experiencing closeness to Jesus in eternity.*

**Duration:** 57:55

**Topics:** "Law"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of hard work and honesty in understanding and living out the word of God. He compares the process of farming to the process of spiritual growth, highlighting that just as a farmer works hard to produce a harvest, believers must also put in effort to understand and apply biblical principles. The speaker encourages listeners to think deeply about the scriptures and allow the Lord to give them understanding. He also emphasizes the need for honesty, stating that God loves honest people and that true freedom can only be found through honesty and acknowledging our weaknesses.

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## Transcript

Through the years, I've had the opportunity to observe Christians in many, many different denominations. You know that most of these denominations are divided on the basis of doctrine. You know, like some believe in water baptism, so they have a separate assembly.

Some believe in speaking in tongues, so they separate from those who don't believe. Some believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some believe there shouldn't be pastors.

Church differences in church government and various things like this. But, as I've observed Christians in all these different groups, I find there are people defeated by sin in every single denomination. And there are people who love money in every single denomination.

I'm just talking about the leaders. I'm not talking about the people who sit in the church. We can never judge a church by the people who attend it.

Because the devil can put all types of wolves and crooks in any church. A church must always be judged by its leadership. You see that in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3. The Lord judged each church by its leader, not by the type of people sitting there.

Because the direction of a church is determined by its leadership. And if the leadership is strong and united, then any number of people sitting there with different ideas can't make any difference to the way the direction the church goes. It's something like if there are two people taking turns to drive a bus, it doesn't matter what the passengers think about which direction the bus is going.

It's still going to go in the direction in which the drivers think it should go. The church is something like that with its elders. But it's so sad to see in the world in which we live, a decline in the quality of leadership and I try to think about what is the reason.

And I have come to the conclusion that the devil has succeeded in blinding the vast majority of Christians to the truth of the new covenant. They know there's a covenant, testament, agreement, all mean the same thing. We don't use the word covenant so much, we use the word agreement.

Testament is also the same word. Everybody knows that the Bible has got an Old Testament and a New Testament. It really means in today's language, an old agreement and a new agreement.

And the old agreement God had made with Israel, the new agreement is what Jesus sealed with his blood. In Hebrews 13.20, his blood is called the blood of the everlasting covenant. That means this new covenant is not going to be any change to it.

There's not going to be a third one. This is everlasting. So it's good for all of us to ask ourselves whether we have understood and experienced this in our own life.

I think of the word of Jesus where at the end of the Sermon on the Mount he said, The way to life is narrow and few there be that find it. And I think there'll be many who understand it, but few will find it. The place to find it is in the moment of temptation.

In the moment of temptation, you discover whether you have found the narrow way or not. A lot of people understand it on Sunday morning, who don't find that way in some time of trial or pressure or temptation. So when Jesus said, few there be that find it, he was not saying there'll be very few.

So when Jesus said, very few will find this way, he was not saying that very few will understand it. So each of us needs to ask ourselves, not whether we have understood it. I think if you have heard the message here through the years, you probably understand it so well that you could explain it to others.

But the question is whether you are among those few who have found it. And that is seen in the daily trials of life. When the evil that we face, we discover whether we have found this new covenant or not.

And I really believe that this is the reason why Christians in every single denomination and leaders in almost every denomination know almost nothing of a life of victory over sin. They are not able to testify like the Apostle Paul. Thanks be to God who always, always, always leads us in triumph in Christ.

2 Corinthians 2.14 or what we read in Romans 8.37, in everything we are more than conquerors through him who loves us. See these Old Testament people could not say that. That is why Jesus said that if you enter into the new covenant, you can come to a greater life than John the Baptist who was the greatest under the old covenant.

So what I want to say dear brothers and sisters is, you must not be satisfied with anything less than God's best in your personal life. Those of you who are married, you must not be satisfied with a home in which

there is strife or unrest or quarreling or murmuring or complaining or gossiping or backbiting. You know you'd be surprised to know how many homes in our churches are except all that is normal.

What a shock such people are going to get when they get into eternity and discover what a lot they lost which they could have gained. And the nearness to Jesus for all eternity is lost. You may be in heaven but how close we are going to be to Jesus in eternity is going to be determined by how faithful we are on this earth.

I believe that with all my heart. That's why I want to be faithful on earth. I'll tell you honestly, I'm a selfish person.

I want to be close to Jesus in eternity. I don't want any crown. I don't want any mansions.

You can have all of that. But the reward I seek for in eternity, all eternity, is to be close to Jesus Christ my Savior. That is the reward that the Lord is going to give.

And it says that he will give to every man according as his work shall be. You know just like, why do I say that? Because he's my bridegroom and any bride who loves her bridegroom, go and ask people who are madly in love with each other. Don't they want to be close to each other? It doesn't matter to them whether they're in a hut or don't have much money.

They want to be close to each other. That's the same with me. I'm not bothered whether I live in a hut and in heaven or what sort of clothes or glory I'm going to have.

I want to be close to my bridegroom. And if the Lord says that that is going to be determined by how much I choose to be close to him now. When it's not popular to be close to him.

When most people in the world don't want to be close to him. Then I want to choose to be close to him. That will determine whether he will make sure I'm close to him in eternity.

Everybody will want to be close to him in heaven. Isn't it? Sure. Everybody will go to heaven and say, oh Lord, I want to be close to you.

But the question the Lord will ask is, did you want that when you were on earth? Did you want to be close to me when everybody in your house was gossiping? Did you want to be close to me when everybody in your house was murmuring? Did you want to be close to me in the moment of temptation? Or you just want to live in sin and live like everybody else in the world and get to heaven. And say, I want to be close to me. See, I just want to say all these things plainly to you because otherwise you'll get a very big surprise when Christ comes again.

The Bible says that the world is going to pass away. And he who does the will of God will abide forever. Let me show you that verse.

It's a very important verse. In 1 John chapter 2. 1 John chapter 2 and verse 17. Now I understand this verse like this.

1 John chapter 2 and verse 17. The world is passing away and all its lusts. And the message Bible says the world and all its lusts means wanting, wanting, wanting.

That's it. I want this and I want that and I want the other thing, I want the other thing, I want the other thing. It's on its way out.

But the one who wants God's will, he's all set for eternity. So you see, here's the contrast in verse 17. The world is full of lusts means I want this and I want this and I want this and I can't do without this.

I can't do this, especially when I see somebody else have it. I want it, I want it, I want it. And here's another person living in the same world and says, I want God's will.

I want what will please my savior. I want to do what will please him. I want to sacrifice to please him.

I'm not going this way. And those who go this way will perish. That is the broad way.

But here is the way that he who does the will of God lives forever. So, I don't think many Christians go to this verse to find out how to have eternal life. He who does the will of God lives forever.

And so I want to say to you, dear brothers and sisters, choose the will of God in every situation. The will of God is revealed to us in scripture. The reason I study scripture thoroughly is for one reason.

It's not to preach it. It is to know God's will so that I can do it. You must study the scriptures even if you never preach in your whole life.

Because that's where you know the will of God that will enable you to live forever. And that's what will give you light on yourself. You know, many of us who think we are pretty holy, it's because we don't have much light on ourselves.

I think a lot of us have got a lot of religion. Words, religious attitudes, which is very different from being spiritual. Spirituality is primarily found in extremely low thoughts about myself, in my own thinking.

I don't think I'm an expert who can teach everybody else how to live. I'm not eager to give advice to other people. If you are very eager to give advice to others who are younger to you, you are probably downright religious.

That's one of the marks of a religious person. The Pharisees are always like that, eager to tell people how to live and what to do. Whereas a godly man, he's not like that.

He's very careful with his words. He's slow to speak. He's quick to hear.

And people will go to such a man eager, or such a woman eager for advice, because they know that that person can set him on the path to life, and set him on a path that will bring tremendous profit in eternity. So, we need to understand this new agreement that God has made with man. He's abolished the old agreement.

That's what we need to understand. And I see, you read all the literature there is out in the Christian world, listen to all the tapes, and you'll find almost zero on the new covenant. Because people don't understand it.

And most Christians are living under the old covenant. You know, the other day I heard a message by a very well-known preacher, whom all of you respect very highly, not in this country. And he was saying how he also got depressed for days on end, just like Elijah in the Old Testament.

And I listened to that and I said, boy, here is a man who is respected around the world. And what's he teaching people? Around the world, he's teaching people that you can be a wholehearted servant of God, and live in depression for days like Elijah. Some people wrote to me and asked me what I thought about that.

Whether that was my experience. I said, certainly not my experience. It was my experience for many years, I agree.

But when I saw the new covenant and what Jesus had done, what the Holy Spirit could do, when I knew the Father, it changed. And I said to them, Elijah is not the author and finisher of my faith, I'm sorry. If Elijah is the author and finisher of your faith, go and sit under the juniper tree and be depressed as long as you like.

But the Bible says the author and finisher of my faith is Jesus, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. The author means what? If I take up a book and say I'm the author of this book, that means I wrote it. So when you say Jesus is the author of my faith, that means the faith I have was written, not by me, by Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, Paul said, I am crucified with Christ and nevertheless I live. But it's no longer I, but Christ lives in me. The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.

The faith that he wrote in me. Not the faith that Elijah wrote in me. No.

There are many good things I can learn from Elijah. His boldness to face false prophets. But there are certain things I can't learn from him, like sitting under a juniper tree and saying, Lord, take away my life, I've had enough of it.

Or there are things we can learn from David, but not going to sleep when people are going to battle and getting up and committing adultery. No, I can't learn that from him. You must remember this, the people under the old covenant lived a very substandard life compared to the way God wants us to live.

And if you don't understand the difference, you'll always find a comfort. There are Christian preachers who find comfort in the fact that David fell into adultery. And they fall into adultery, television preachers, and they get up and say, Well, David was a man after God's own heart.

He also fell into adultery and God forgave him and used him again. So, God's forgiven me. Like imagine Paul getting up one day in some church and saying, Fellas, I'm sorry, I slept with some of your sisters here.

You know, but David also did that and sort of, it's okay, God's forgiven me. What respect would you have for Paul's letters after that? I'd throw them out. I wouldn't listen to a man who has been like that, you know.

I mean, in their unconverted days when they didn't have light, they could have done all types of evil things. Okay, forget it. But after they've got light and they become leaders.

I can't imagine that. Look at what's happening in the world today. There are leaders who divorce their wives and get married to their secretaries and they continue to preach.

You just leave that church and go to another church. This is the terrible state in Christendom today. And so, it's all because they haven't understood the New Covenant.

In the New Covenant, there is no such thing as divorce. And there's no such thing as, if somebody did divorce you, there's no such thing as remarriage. It's not there in the New Covenant.

In the Old Covenant, it is there. In Deuteronomy 23, you read. So, we live in a terrible world today, in Christian world.

So, in Hebrews chapter 8, I want you to see this. The Lord says in verse 7, If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. The reason why God made a new agreement was because the first agreement was faulty.

Faulty in what sense? It's not like some car maker makes a car and discovers some fault in that and repairs it in the next model. No, God's not like that. God didn't make a mistake the first time.

No. It's faulty, not in the sense that God made a mistake, but faulty in the sense that it could not do what God wanted man to have. You know, there are certain things it says in Romans 8 verse 3, The law could not do.

So, why did God give the law then? God gave the law to help man to see his sin, to help man to see God's standards, and to see that you can never come up to my standards, and no matter how hard you try, you'll never become as holy as me. You can try and try and try and try and try and try, and for a million years you will not become holy as me. That's what the law taught.

Not even according to God's law in the Old Testament. For example, just take the tenth commandment. You can keep all the nine commandments.

They're all listed in Exodus 20. You know about don't worship idols. That's easy, external idols.

And don't honor your father and mother, don't kill, don't steal, don't commit adultery, etc. And don't bear false witness in court. You know, by the way, there's no commandment in the tenth commandment that says you shouldn't tell lies.

Because God knew everybody tells lies. But what he said was, don't, you know, go to court and tell a lie. That's above the limit.

But in the New Covenant, of course, the commandment is that we shouldn't tell lies at all. Your yes must be yes, and your no must be no. But when it came to the tenth, all those nine commandments you can keep, but when it came to the tenth, the tenth was, you shall not lust in your heart after anything that doesn't belong to you.

Your neighbor's wife, your neighbor's daughter, and everybody in the world is either your neighbor's wife or your neighbor's daughter. Every woman in the world is your neighbor's wife or your neighbor's daughter. So you should never lust with your eyes after, that's in the tenth commandment.

And Jesus spoke about it, he just got it out of the tenth commandment. But people in the Old Testament never meditated on the tenth commandment sufficiently to know what that meant. Jesus spent years meditating on it and he spoke.

He said, you shouldn't lust with your eyes, that's sin. That was in the tenth commandment. You shall not desire anything that belongs to your neighbor.

If God has given you something, that's yours. But you should not desire something that somebody else has. And yet, you know the number of Christians who are supposed to be in the New Covenant who are disobeying it every day.

They look at things and people that God has not given to them and they lust for it. They want what other people have. Do you want what other people have? Do you want someone who is not your wife? Many things like this.

Paul was very honest in Romans 7 and he said, oh he said in Romans 7, when I came to the commandments, I kept all of them, but when I came to the tenth commandment, it said, you shall not covet, you shall not lust. I found all types of lusting in my heart. You know that person, Paul, that fellow was really honest.

That's why God led him into the New Covenant. Now I'll tell you one of the first requirements to come into the New Covenant is to be absolutely honest about the tenth commandment and to say, I can't keep it. Lord, I lusted after that girl who was somebody else's daughter and that other one who was somebody else's wife.

And Lord, I wanted that sari which that other sister was wearing. I liked it so much. Are you a New Covenant Christian? I'm not saying you went and stole it.

I'm saying you desired it and you wanted it. Do you know how people can sit in this church for 25 years and never get over these things? We heard it, but we haven't found the way. Few there be that find it.

It's really true. Because, number one, they are not honest like Paul was in Romans 7 about their own sin. Now I'll tell you how the devil keeps you from being honest about your own sin.

He will show you the faults in other people. You'll be so observant about the faults in other people. It says about the Pharisees, they observed even Jesus carefully.

And they observed everybody else carefully, not to help anybody, but just to covet something which they had or to find fault. So I want to recommend to you, if you are serious about entering the New Covenant, at least now, after some of you have been here 23 years, at least now, if you want to enter in before it's too late, my first step I would recommend to you is to stop looking at the faults of other people. You heard me say that for 30 years.

I'm just asking you to take it seriously from today. Just stop it. Just like if you are a chain cigarette smoker, and I say, stop it from today.

Or if you are a regular pickpocket, to say, please stop picking pockets from today. Is that a serious, is that a difficult command? I'm just saying, take it seriously. That I am going to spend the rest of my life judging myself.

Full stop. And you believe me, to come and see me after 6 months and tell me if your whole life doesn't take a leap upwards that you have never experienced in all your life so far, just because you practiced one habit. I'll tell you something, even tomorrow the devil will tempt you to break that decision you made this evening.

It's such a terrific lust. Few there be that find it. It's there.

We understand it. I'm sure what I'm saying right now, you understand right now, but you know it's like an addiction. You tell a drug addict, you know this drug addiction is bad for you.

He say, yeah, I know it. You want to give it up? Yeah, I want to give it up. Will you decide now, I want to give it up? Yes, I decide right now.

I want to give it up. Give him 2-3 days, and he's back looking for drugs. It's an addiction.

It's like that. You know, because he spent so many years injecting himself, taking it. It's like that.

So many years you spent finding fault with others, looking at their faults, criticizing them, gossiping to your wife and your husband about it all the time. It's an addiction. You can't live a day without this drug.

It's a drug to find fault with others. And now you say today, I want to give up this. Just like that drug addict.

I think you're quite sincere. You want to give it up? Yes, I want to give it up. It'll last about 2-3 days.

And the craving for that drug will come back. You want to indulge in it again. I'll tell you something.

The people who've been delivered from drugs and alcoholism, they really sought God's help. They were honest. You know, there's a group called Alcoholics Anonymous.

It's a group which helps people to be free from alcoholism, from drinking alcohol. And I suppose there are similar things for narcotics, anonymous and various things. And the first thing, when they go to this meeting, each person has to get up and say, I am an alcoholic.

And I want to be free. The drug addict has to get up and say, I am a drug addict. And I want to be free.

You know what you need to do? You need to get up and say, I am a gossip. And I want to be free. I am a backbiter.

We can have a Backbiter's Anonymous class. You know, where people get up and say that. But it's so difficult to say it.

Because it's so shameful to say, I am a drug addict. It's so shameful to say, I am an alcoholic. It's so shameful to say, I am a sexual addict.

Or I am an internet pornography addict. Or I am a gossip, or a backbiter. But I'll tell you this.

We'll never be free until we are honest. God loves honest people. I wrote a little tract for our website called 16 Things That I Have Learned In Life.

It's in one of my books. It's a chapter in one of my books. Some things I have learned in life.

And the first thing I mentioned there is God loves honest people. I am absolutely convinced about this. Dear brothers and sisters, if you are serious, really serious about finding this way to life, I urge you to be honest.

Absolutely, ruthlessly honest. And acknowledge that just like drug addiction, you cannot deliver yourself from some of these terrible habits. Murmuring or complaining or anger.

Anger is an addiction. You can't deliver yourself from it. You say my father was angry, my grandfather was angry.

That's what some drug addicts say. My dad used to take drugs, my grandfather used to take drugs, and I am also taking it. We just grew up like that.

We thought drugs was normal. And in your home perhaps you thought anger was normal. Okay.

And you are continuing that tradition to the third generation. Fine. The drug addict does the same thing.

When is it going to finish? Is Jesus going to come and put an end to this or not? Or is this going to continue into the next generation, into your little children? And they are going to carry it on that generation too. It has to come to an end. It can come to an end when you understand the new covenant.

The new agreement. When you seek God earnestly. The Bible says, you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

I think of all these people who look for jobs in Dubai. They spend lakhs, they are cheated, and again they try, and spend lakhs, again they are cheated. Finally they reach the other end.

They say, we have achieved it. I tell you Christians who are 25% as interested in getting victory over sin, like these fellows who are interested in going to Dubai, boy, you should have got it long ago. Like many other things in life that you pursue after, earnestly, sincerely, you try so hard, and you get it.

It's like that. God is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He told Adam as soon as he sinned.

He says, from now on things are going to be different. The law is, you'll get your bread when you sweat. Without sweating, you won't get your bread.

You know, you got to sweat. That means work hard even to get spiritual bread from the Bible. You really got to work hard.

If you really want to get something yourself, you can be fed. You can be spoon fed. Like right now, what I'm doing is spoon feeding.

You know, babies are to be spoon fed. That's fine. But if you want to get something yourself, if you want to earn your own bread, if you want to get your own bread from the Bible, you really got to work hard.

I mean, if somebody else is earning the bread in your home, bread winner, that's okay. You just sit and eat it. That's how it is in the church very often.

But you should be growing up to be a bread winner yourself. Spiritually, I mean. Well, you got something to give.

For that, you got to really work hard. It's like that in everything. God is not a rewarder of lazy people.

He rewards those who diligently work. Let me show you this verse in 2 Timothy 2. 2 Timothy 2, it says, it seems to be a law in everything in life. It's not just spiritually, even in the secular world.

You really got to work hard to get. 2 Timothy 2, it says in verse 6. The hard working farmer has to be the first to receive his share of the crops. So, the hard working farmer gets a crop before everybody else does.

I mean, everybody has the same type of ground, the same rain, the same seed. Why did this guy get it first? Because he worked hard. Everybody's got the same Bible, same 24 hours a day.

Everybody's got to work. How is it that somebody, some people know it and some people don't know it? They worked hard. How is it some people understood the New Covenant and got into a life of victory because they were honest and they worked hard at it? And then, he's not talking about farmers.

He says in the next verse, verse 7, think about what I say and the Lord will give you understanding in what I mean. And I want to say to that, think about that verse. The hard working farmer is going to be the first one to get his share of the crops.

And Paul was saying that to Timothy who had already been with him for 25 years. This is his last letter. And he says, Timothy, I can't explain it to you.

I'm sorry. You're my closest friend, but I just can't explain it to you. I'm not telling you to read my episodes 20 times and you'll understand it.

No, you won't. He says, you know, the Lord has to give you understanding. Do you know you can come to the best church in the world and listen to the best preacher for years and you won't get understanding? I mean, if there was anybody who could have explained it, it was Paul to Timothy.

And he says to him, listen, Timothy, I can't explain it. The Lord has to give you understanding. So, I've seen this.

A lot of people understand it in their heads and they don't understand it in their hearts. And faith is a matter of the heart. The difference between faith in the head and faith in the heart is the difference between hell and heaven.

In hell, they have faith in the head. The Bible says, even the devils believe and tremble, says in James 2. Faith in the heart takes you to heaven. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, not your head.

So, understanding in the heart is different from understanding in the head. You've got to seek God not with all your head, but with all your heart. If head was so important, God would have made all people equally intelligent.

If intelligence was necessary to know God, God would have made all people intelligent. You know, you'd think that the people who are more intelligent would know God better, but it's not true. I mean, we've seen that in our own churches.

Some of those poor brothers in Tamil Nadu seem to know God and get such revelation when they share something from the word, which I don't get from a lot of very highly educated, intelligent people. PhDs and all don't seem to know the word like that. God is no respecter of intelligence.

He's like color of skin. You know, a lot of people in India think that a white skinned person must be more spiritual. Not true.

He's got nothing to do with color of skin. He's got nothing to do with intelligence. He's got to do with the hard working farmer.

So, you can understand and enter into this life of the new covenant if you really work at it. Go to the word and say, Lord, I really want to know this in my life. Even if it's late, I'm late in life understanding it.

I want to know it now. Let's turn back to Hebrews chapter 8. What did we see there? In Hebrews in chapter 8 we read, What is it the law could not do? First of all, let me show you Hebrews 7.19. The law made nothing perfect. God is interested in perfection.

The law made nothing perfect. And Jesus told us, Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect. It's the last verse of Matthew 5. Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect.

He didn't say be like Elijah or be like John the Baptist. No, he said be like your father. What a standard.

He didn't give you some low example of... You think Elijah is a low example? If you're like Elijah, you're pretty serious Christians. But he said that's not good enough. Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect.

Matthew 5.48. What a standard. But the law could not do that. But the bringing in of a better hope, on the other hand, Hebrews 7.19, there's a bringing in of a better hope by which we draw near to God.

And perfect means not completely like Christ. That will take time to come. But it's like perfect in my conscience right now.

It's something like, maybe you're in the first standard. And in mathematics, you got 100%. Isn't that perfect? That's called a perfect score.

You can't get 101. No matter how much you know, you can't get 101. You can get only 100.

That's a perfect score. But you're not perfect in your knowledge of mathematics, in first standard, even though you got 100%. Next year you go to second standard and you start with 60%.

Because a lot of new things you learn which you didn't know before. And then in the next exam you get 70. In the next exam you get 80.

And finally you get 100% in second standard. That's better than 100% in the first standard. So there's perfection to perfection.

And then you go to the third standard. Again you start with maybe 50%. First exam, 60, 70.

You get 100% in the third standard. And it's all the way. I mean, you go to B.Sc. You're still struggling.

So that is the Christian life. It's like that. Perfect at my present level.

Next year, I may not start with perfection, but I'll be perfect at that level too. It's exactly like a school. The Lord gives me revelation on something new in my life which I never knew before.

And I can cleanse myself. Become a little more like Christ. But He doesn't want us to live in the first standard forever and ever and ever and ever and ever.

Studying first standard subjects. I mean, you'd be terribly disappointed if your child lived in first standard even for two years. Leave alone ten years.

Can you imagine how disappointed God is with many of His children? Forget the other children. Ask yourself this searching question. Is God disappointed with me? Am I in the class where He wants me to be today? Now, if you put your child in the first standard, you expect that by ten years later that he's in the tenth standard.

Don't you think God has some expectation of you that He brought you to new birth some years ago and many years have gone by and you should have overcome certain sins by now. And you've been in a church where you heard about overcoming sin for so many years and even more you should have overcome. And is God disappointed with you? Not angry, but is He disappointed? A good father is not angry with his son who is sitting in the first standard even though he's 25 years old.

He's disappointed. He says, why is my son so mentally retarded? He's 25 years old and he's sitting with these six-year-olds in the first standard. You'd be disappointed.

And I wouldn't blame you for being disappointed if your son is 25 years old and sitting in first standard still. Do you know how disappointed God is? Does that disturb you? Or are you like those children who wouldn't care unless I say, what does it matter if dad and mom pass or fail, it's okay. I play marbles.

I'm good at marbles. Don't forget that. You know how many marbles I won yesterday? Is that what you send children to school for? To play marbles and win marbles? And that's what a lot of people say to God.

Do you know Lord, how many meetings I've been to in my life? It's like winning marbles. What about the really important things like mathematics and science? What do you get in that? That's what's important in school and the important things in life are like that. So in Hebrews chapter 8 it says, When this old covenant could not make man to this place of perfection, he sort of remained perpetually in kindergarten.

We can say that the law could never lead a man outside of kindergarten. It was like a school where there was only one class. Kindergarten.

Whether you're 5 years old or 50 years old, you sit in the kindergarten. That was the law. God says the law couldn't do that.

Why did God keep it like that? To teach man something. And also because until there was one human being who had the Holy Spirit within him, because he lived a perfect life, nobody else could have the Holy Spirit within. Do you know why? That's why nobody in the Old Testament could have the Holy Spirit inside.

Until Jesus came and had the Holy Spirit inside because the Holy Spirit is so holy that he could not come even inside John the Baptist. When it says he was filled with the Spirit in the mother's womb, it's the Old Testament experience of being filled, which is an external thing. We can say he was clothed.

That's Old Testament fullness of the Spirit. There's a difference in New Testament fullness of the Spirit, which is within. Remember this, everything in the Old Covenant was outside, everything in the New Covenant is inside.

Everything. Old Covenant was outside temple, New Covenant is inside temple. Old Covenant is outside murder, New Covenant is inside murder, which is called anger.

Old Covenant is outside adultery, New Covenant is inside adultery, avoid it. Everything Old Covenant is, New Covenant is inside. Old Testament sacrifices were outside, New Covenant sacrifices are inside,

secret, nobody can see.

So, the Holy Spirit's fullness also in the Old Testament is only on the outside, nothing on the inside. Samson was filled with the Holy Spirit, he could deal with lions on the outside, but he couldn't deal with lions on the inside. So, the law could not do anything about the man's inside, and the reason being, man's inside was filthy, with sin.

And until Jesus shed his blood on the cross, and ascended to heaven, man's heart could not become clean. They shed the blood of bulls and goats, as a picture of the blood of Christ, but that couldn't make anybody's heart clean. No.

That's why, even though man like Elijah's heart was not clean. You remember David saying in Psalm 25, Oh Lord, please don't remember the sins of my youth. Now, David was chosen probably when he was 18 or 19 years old.

What are the sins he committed before he was 18, 19 years old? What are the sins you committed before you were 18, 19 years old? But David did some things like that. And when he became a wholehearted man of God, he said, Oh Lord, I'm reminded of those sins I did when I was 16, 17, 18. Please don't remember them against me, he says in Psalm 25.

He doesn't tell us what they are. Thank God he doesn't. I don't want to know them.

I don't want to know about anybody's sins. Do you have a curiosity to know other people's sins? Are you a Roman Catholic priest or something, to find out about other people's sins? I'm not. I'm not interested in knowing anybody's sins.

Knowing my own is enough. I don't need to know anybody else's. Yeah, I don't have a curiosity.

I don't need to know what David sinned. But I know he was a sinner. And he couldn't have the Holy Spirit within.

He says in Psalm 51, You desire reality in the innermost being, truth in the innermost being, and I don't have it. But when Jesus came, shed his blood, died on the cross, went up to the Father, we could now be cleansed. And when the vessel is cleansed so perfectly by the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit could come within.

That's why on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit could come within and fill this vessel. Those 120 vessels. That was different from John the Baptist's fullness, or Samson's fullness, or Gideon's fullness.

It was something from within. You remember Jesus said, in the New Covenant, If you thirst and you come to me and drink out of my, where? innermost being, rivers of living water will flow. John 7, 38.

In the Old Testament, it was on the outside. You know, it's like God poured a ton of water on somebody and it flowed out through him to other people. But Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, I'm going to put a little spring inside you.

It's just going to keep bubbling up and it will become like a river. So, the Holy Spirit couldn't do that until Jesus came and died. And Jesus demonstrated by his life the first human being that walked on the earth and showed man how God wanted Adam to live.

And how no human being from the time of Adam till Christ had ever lived like that. But when Jesus came, God was so happy. This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

And now, you know what the Bible says? 1 John 2, 6. I like the Living Bible paraphrase of this. If anyone says he is a Christian, he must live as Jesus lived. Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Jesus lived.

That's impossible to tell somebody in the Old Testament to do that. That's why you don't find such verses in the Old Testament. Have you ever heard any preacher other than me preach this verse? I'd like to meet such a person who actually, specifically spells out, for example, how to be free from the love of money.

How to be free from anger and lust and things like that. Practically, not just in a general vague, hazy type of way. You have to walk as Jesus walked.

If you say you abide in Christ. What a standard! Now, how do you look at that verse? John Wesley, when he read that verse, he didn't get discouraged. Oh boy, what a burden! I have to walk like Jesus walked.

No! You can look at the same verse in two different ways. Oh, I have to walk like Jesus walked and get depressed. But John Wesley, it was the exact opposite.

You know, you can read Scripture in two ways. The Bible says, if you don't turn to the Holy Spirit, it's like having a veil on the Bible. When you turn to the Holy Spirit, the veil is taken away, you understand it.

So, the veil was taken away and John Wesley read that verse and he says, Boy, this is fantastic! That means God will give me the power to walk as Jesus walked. Boy, how exciting that is! That's how he saw it. Because he saw that every word that God spoke would have a power in it.

You remember in Genesis 1? God said, let there be light. What happened? Did nothing happen? Something happened. When God said, let the earth bring forth trees, something happened.

Because the earth responded. There's such a tremendous power in God's Word. That when I read a verse like this, He who says he abides in Christ must walk as he walked.

I say, Lord, like the earth submitted, I want to submit to that verse. Or I read another verse like 1 John 4 and verse 17. As Jesus is, so am I in this world.

I submit to that. And something happens. I mean the earth can't say, I struggled and I produced these trees.

No! God said, let the trees come forth. It came forth. What can the earth glory about it? You can't glory if you walk as Jesus walked.

God says it and He'll do it in your life. You better just submit. Yeah.

So, one more verse. In Hebrews chapter 8, we read. This is the thing I want to tell you.

In verse 13. And when God said a new covenant, He has made the first covenant obsolete. Obsolete means it's finished.

Cancelled. And whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. Now that was written maybe 65 AD or 35 years after the day of Pentecost, there was still, you know, the early Christians

were all Jewish people.

And it's very difficult to give up habits that for years you have had. For example, there's some Christians who don't eat beef. Because they grew up among Hindus who don't eat beef.

And that became their lifestyle. And they thought there's something holy about the cow. But they're Christians now, but they still can't eat beef.

Because this holy cow is being cut. And so it's very difficult to get this out of the minds of some Christians. I don't blame them.

You don't become spiritual by eating beef. But what I'm saying is that there's a mindset that we have got from our culture and from our traditions which is very difficult to break out of. And those early Jewish Christians were all Jewish people who had a certain mindset that you must be circumcised, you must keep the Sabbath, you must pay your tithe.

And you don't blame them. They had done that for 40-50 years. And then doing for 40-50 years and all of a sudden there's a new message saying all those things are over.

It's very difficult to give it up. They said, no, no, no. We want this new thing, but we want to keep the old also.

That's why Jesus spoke about how people tried to put the new wine into the old wineskins. And he spoke about people putting a new patch into an old cotton dress and the whole thing tears when it's washed. You know that.

So, it took a little time for these people to get out of this mentality. That's what it says here. It's ready to disappear.

But now we're in 2007 AD. But it still hasn't disappeared in some people's lives. Isn't that amazing? The old covenant concept.

We really have to fight a battle. You know there's something that Jesus said in relation to I'll close with this. In Matthew 11 when Jesus spoke about how the new covenant will lift a man higher than the highest person in the old covenant.

He also said something else. I want you to notice that. In Matthew chapter 11 Jesus said Matthew 11 verse 11 I tell you among those born of women no one has arisen, not even Mary my mother, greater than John the Baptist.

It's true. I mean if you're one of those who pray to Mary, it's better to pray to John the Baptist. He was greater than Mary by the way.

Jesus' own words. I don't pray to either. I pray to Jesus directly.

But Jesus said John the Baptist is the greatest but the least in the kingdom of heaven. That means the kingdom of heaven is another phrase for the new covenant. The least person who enters into the new covenant.

Let me paraphrase it like this. John the Baptist was the greatest person under the old covenant. Before the old covenant from Adam's time.

He was greater than Abraham. Some people think Abraham was great. He was a great man but John the Baptist was greater.

Everybody in the old testament the greatest was John the Baptist and even he is inferior. He doesn't have the possibilities that the least person who enters into the new covenant. That's called the kingdom of heaven.

Think of this that the possibility we have and we are missing it. It's like you know your father is a multi-millionaire and he wrote a big will with so many houses for you. You don't know your will because some lawyer cheated you.

You live in a little hut. Because you've been cheated. But if you know it wouldn't you go and claim your inheritance? The devils cheated many many people of the new covenant blessing.

They're sitting in that old covenant hut. Defeated. Worse than John the Baptist.

Worse than Elijah. When Jesus said the father has written his will and Jesus sealed it with his blood. That I can rise higher than John the Baptist and then he said in verse 12.

How to get into this? The kingdom of heaven suffers violence and violent men take it by force. That means you know a Christian is externally a man of peace. He doesn't fight with anybody.

He doesn't fight with the Philistines or the Canaanites or anybody. He doesn't fight with non-Christians. He doesn't fight with people of other denominations.

He's a man of peace. But inwardly he's a man of violence against all the traditions and all the things I have inherited from my parents or from my society or from my church background or whatever it is. I do violence to all those things because I want to possess this new covenant.

These old ideas that I've got in my head I'm going to do violence to all of them. All traditions and rituals and everything that hinders me from pressing on I'm going to do violence to all of that. But you know if you say no we can't offend anybody.

Okay brother. There's not a chance in a million that you'll ever enter the new covenant. You really got to be radical in your mind to get rid of.

I'm willing to offend everybody in the world if I can enter the new covenant. I have offended a lot of people in the process. So you got to be violent to anything that hinders you from following the Lord.

Really violent. Not physically. Physically a man of peace.

Never fight. You won't even raise your voice. But inwardly you stand against everything that hinders you from being a wholehearted disciple of Jesus.

They will possess this new covenant. They take it by force. They say this is my inheritance Satan.

You can't take it from me. This land belongs to God. This wretched habit of mine.

I'm going to overcome it. I'm going to be violent against that sin and that temptation that's making my home unhappy and my life unhappy and so many other things and making me not of use to God in this kingdom. I'm going to do violence to all that.

To the laziness that makes me sleep and sleep and sleep which hinders me from reading the bible. The habit of watching television and television and television that hinders me from knowing the scriptures. I'm going to do violence to that.

If you're not a man of violence I don't know what it is in your life but I'll tell you this. If you're not a man of violence you'll never enter into the new covenant. That's completely out of the question.

You're going to understand it. But you won't find it. The choice is yours.

I hope you'll make a wise choice because remember how close you're going to be to Jesus in eternity depends on that right now. I've made my choice. I hope you make yours.

Let's pray. Jesus never told people, come on take a decision right now like a lot of evangelists and preachers say today. He said sit down.

Go home. Sit down. Count the cost.

See if it's worth it. Before you start building. And once you decide it's worth it then go at it.

And build the whole building. Don't go half way through and leave it unfinished. So I want you to think seriously about what you heard today.

And say Lord I really want to enter into the new covenant. Heavenly Father help us. Maybe there's one or two here Lord I don't know who are really taking this seriously.

That would be wonderful even if there's one or two here. Really taking this seriously in the midst of many who are sluggish about all these things. Lord what delight in your heart we'll find if you find one who really is going to be a man or woman of violence from today.

I pray it will be so. Help us we pray. Each one in Jesus name.

Amen.

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