

Take The Breaking of Bread More Seriously

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of self-reflection and commitment in the Christian walk, drawing parallels between marriage vows and the covenant with Jesus Christ. It delves into the significance of the covenant, the need for self-judgment, and the symbolism of the breaking of bread in communion as a declaration of unity and commitment to Christ and fellow believers. The message stresses the necessity of daily dying to self, forgiveness, and living in fellowship with God and others.

Scripture: Luke 9:23, 2 Corinthians 4:8, Isaiah 46:3, 1 Corinthians 10:16

Topics: "Covenant Commitment", "Self-Reflection in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

If most Christians are honest about their Christian life and their walk with God, I think they will admit that it is not as it should be, and that they are disappointed with their own life, but it should not be like that. Our union with Jesus Christ is compared in the Bible to a marriage, and in a marriage there is a commitment to one another, and an agreement we sign, or you know, a bride and a bridegroom make vows to each other, that I'm going to be loyal and committed to you, and not to anybody else throughout life. And it's because that type of commitment to Jesus Christ is lacking that Christians find problems in their life.

In the Bible there is a word used in the Old Testament and New Testament, and we use it a lot in this church as well, it's a word called covenant. The name of this church is New Covenant Christian Fellowship. So we need to understand what this new covenant is.

First of all, what is a covenant, and what is the importance of a covenant? So I thought I'd share a little bit along that line today. I want to try and make it simple. My goal is always to ensure that a 12-year-old understands.

If he understands, then it's okay. I often, after a meeting, not always, but sometimes I go to a 12-year-old and I say, did you understand what I said? If he says yes, then I'm happy. If he says no, then I know I've

got to learn to be more simple.

So I'll try and make it simple today. I want to show you some distinctive features of this word covenant, which is an agreement. You know, when you rent a house, you sign an agreement.

When you buy a house, there's an agreement. When you get married, there's an agreement. When you join a company, there's an agreement.

It's a very common thing. That's what a covenant means. But unfortunately, when many people give their life to Christ, they don't realize it has to be an agreement.

You know, when you join a company, there are some terms. If you don't follow those terms, you lose your job. And when people don't follow the terms in marriage, they end up in divorce.

But many Christians don't realize that there is a sacred agreement that they should have made with Christ when they united with him. And because they didn't do that, their lives are sort of shallow, slipshod, and they wonder why. Because you never got into an agreement with Jesus.

Okay. Now, the first time we read the word covenant in the Bible is in Genesis chapter 6. So if you have a Bible, I'd like you to turn with me there and see in Genesis chapter 6, the Lord says to Noah that I'm going to bring a flood upon the all the earth. But he says, you know the story of Noah's flood, and everything is going to be destroyed.

But he says in verse 18, Genesis 16, but I will establish my covenant with you, my agreement, and you will enter into the ark. And then you read about the flood. And then you read later on, after the flood was over, the Lord says again, God says again to Noah in Genesis chapter 9, and verse 9. Now, I'm going to establish my covenant with you and your descendants.

You see, Noah is almost the founder of the human race, just like Adam. Because everyone who lived before Noah was destroyed. Every one of us is a child of Noah and his wife, just like we are children of Adam.

Many people don't realize that. God made a covenant with Noah. And he said, I establish my covenant with you, verse 11.

And listen to this, verse 12 of Genesis 9. This is the sign of the covenant I'm making, that there'll never again be a flood on the earth. And my sign is, verse 13, the bow that I set in the cloud. We call it a rainbow, but that's not what the Bible calls it.

The Bible never calls it a rainbow. God said, I make a bow in the cloud. Remember, just like bow and arrow, the same word.

So the covenant that God made with Noah saying, I'll never send a flood across the earth again. And why did God send that flood? Because man was, everybody was in such terrible sin that God gave up hope that anybody would repent. And finally he said, I've got to start all over again, destroy the whole earth and begin again with Noah.

Now it's something similar that happened when Jesus came and started something completely new. Noah's world was a completely new world. But what I want you to see here is the sign of the covenant is the bow in the cloud.

Have you ever thought of it that the rainbow, which we call a rainbow, the Bible calls a bow, and the bow is aimed upwards. In other words, if that were the actual bow and you fire an arrow, the arrow does not go down. It goes up.

Now Noah didn't probably understand that fully, but the Lord was saying there that a time is coming in the future when this terrible punishment for man's sin, which I sent now with a flood, it's a much greater punishment that has to be given for man's sin. But the arrow will come up to me and God himself will take that punishment. That is the meaning of the bow pointing upwards.

So next time you see a rainbow, remember that it's a covenant that God made with man to show that I will take the arrow next time. This time I judged the world with a flood, but man's sin is never going to be solved so easily with a flood because after the flood, we read again, man fell and went into sin and the whole world turned away from God again. So that is repeated.

So what I want you to notice here is the covenant is established only through death. Let me read you a verse in Hebrews chapter nine in that connection before I go further. Hebrews chapter nine.

Now, if you follow me all the way, you will understand what we are coming to and I believe that if you really are gripped by this, it will change your relationship with God just like it changed mine. So Hebrews chapter nine, it says in verse 16, Hebrews 9, 16, wherever there is a covenant, there has to be a death because the covenant is valid only when somebody dies. So where was the death in the first covenant? That's the significance of the arrow pointing upwards.

There's a death. Now, later on, when you come to the children of Israel, you know, the children of Israel came out of the promised land, sorry, out of Egypt. And the Lord, when he took them out of Egypt, we read in Exodus in chapter 24, in the service, the religious services of Israel, there was always animals being slain.

Every day, animals were being slain in the tabernacle and then later on in the temple. Death, death, death was being emphasized every single day. We got to remember this.

And here we read in Exodus 24, when God and the Lord wrote down all the 10 commandments and Moses took those words down to the people. It says here he took, it's called the book of the covenant in verse 7. That is, the 10 commandments were a covenant that God made with man. And some animals were killed and Moses took the blood and, Exodus 24, verse 8, and sprinkled it on the people, said, this is the blood of the covenant the Lord has made with you.

There was death there. There was death in the bow and here there's death in this covenant too. There's no covenant without death like we read in Hebrews 9. So in the book and upon the people, he sprinkled the blood and said, this is the blood of the covenant.

You know, even in Egypt, when they came out, the Lord told them to kill a lamb and put the blood on the door. Blood is always a symbol of death. When you say the blood of Jesus Christ, it's not the physical blood that cleanses us.

That blood symbolizes death. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross and that death means much more than physical death. In the Old Testament, they only knew about physical death.

But after the Holy Spirit came, he showed us that the real problem with man is spiritual death. And it's because of spiritual death, that means spiritual death means man's connection with God is broken. When Adam and Eve, before they sinned, they had a connection with God.

There was life. When they sinned, the connection was broken. There was death.

So in man's relationship with God ever since, there's been a death in that relationship. And Christ came to restore that relationship. And the only way he could restore it is by dying.

So what did I say life was? Life was union with God. Death is, you know, the opposite of that, separation from God, not just physical death. So when Jesus died on the cross, if he only physically died, he did not pay the punishment for our sin.

Because the punishment is separation from God, not just physical death. And that is why Jesus took the punishment for sin, not in the first three hours, you know, he hung on the cross for six hours. And very often we are taken up with the pain of the nails and the crown of thorns and the whipping and all that.

That was nothing. That's not even a drop in the ocean. And for the first three hours, Jesus did not take the punishment for our sin.

He was caring for his mother and for the thief on the cross and forgiving the people who had killed him. That's what he was doing the first three hours. Then from 12 noon to three o'clock in the afternoon that day, the whole sky was dark, began to pour rain, and it was dark like midnight.

Because at that time, the father had forsaken Jesus on the cross. That connection was broken. That is the death that Jesus died on the cross.

The physical death was not even a drop in the ocean compared to this death. I don't think any of us know anything about what it means to be separated from God. You remember the story Jesus said of a rich man who went to hell? As soon as he went to hell, he never thought he'd go to hell because he was a religious guy.

He was going to the synagogue regularly and singing the songs and listening to the messages. And when he lands up in hell, he gets such a surprise. He never expected to be there.

And he cries out for water and from heaven, Abraham tells him, sorry, you can never come out from there. Those who are there are there forever. Those who are here are here forever.

And that man, that rich man, it's a true story. He's already been in hell for 2,000 years from the time that Jesus told that story about it. It was a true story.

So you can imagine what that man's been going on experiencing in hell for 2,000 years. Not only him, many others. It's that separation that Jesus took on the cross.

So that's the meaning of this blood of the covenant. So the first time that Jesus used that word, now we looked at some Old Testament pictures of what was coming. Now, the first time that Jesus used that word covenant and the only time that Jesus used the word covenant was at the Last Supper.

And there are a number of, in all the four Gospels, the story of the Last Supper is mentioned where he broke the bread symbolizing, this is a picture of my body, he said, which is going to be broken. And then

he took a glass of grape juice and he poured it out because it was red in color. He said, this is a picture of my blood.

So, and then what he said was, turn to Matthew 26. Now, remember one thing that I told you from the beginning. There was always this picture of death whenever there's a covenant.

The bull was a picture of death and the blood was shed at the beginning of the Old Covenant is a picture of death. And here now, Jesus says, when he was 27, when he took the cup and gave thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the covenant.

The same word as Moses used in Exodus 24, but different. This is the new covenant. And in another Gospel, it says, this is the new covenant in my blood, which is very different from the Old Covenant.

So what is the difference between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant? The Old Covenant is only symbolic. They killed goats and bulls, and that blood was a picture of finally how Jesus would die. So in that Old Covenant, only a symbol, the reality of that death was in the New Covenant.

And Jesus, it says here, after verse 26, Matthew 26 and verse 26, he blessed the bread and broke it. I mean, all of you have seen in the Lord's table how the bread is broken and the cup is passed around. And he said, this is a symbol of my body, which is broken for you.

And this grape juice is a symbol of my blood, the blood of the covenant. And then he went on from there and fulfilled it when he died on the cross. But he told them that they were to, later on, the apostles taught the Christians that they were to take part in it.

You turn now, what, 1 Corinthians and chapter 11. So this is where we are coming to how it applies to us. Till now, we've been just seeing the meaning of this covenant and the symbol of it.

Now, here is the one passage in scripture, 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 23 to 32, which explains the breaking of bread, or what some people call the communion, or the Lord's table, or holy communion. Roman Catholics take part in it, Protestants take part in it, but very, very few people know the meaning of it. And very few people live in the reality of it.

And that is the reason for all the shallowness and the hypocrisy there is in Christendom. So here, Paul says to the Holy Spirit, in 1 Corinthians 11, 23, I received from the Lord what I declared to you. The Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread.

And when he gave thanks, he said, this is my body, which is broken for you. Do this, eat this in remembrance of me. In the same way, he took the cup and said, this is the new covenant in my blood.

As often as you drink it, do it in remembrance of me. So as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, what do you do? You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. I don't think most Christians ever think of that.

I know for so many years, I used to go to the breaking of bread. It never meant much to me. But ever since I came into a living relationship with Christ, being filled with the Holy Spirit, breaking of bread became completely different.

It's a very solemn, serious commitment and expression of my testimony before the devil that not only that I belong to the Lord, but that I have been crucified with Christ to my lusts, to the world. And I'm testifying to

that in this bread and the cup. 99% of Christians go through it in a very casual way.

In many places, there's no solemnity about it. It's so trivial, the way so many people break bread and cup. You can pass it around like passing cookies around.

Somebody comes around with cookies and say, take one. People take it and eat it. What do they think about it? Is it like somebody passing cookies around and you take one cookie and eat it and you go back and you don't even think about it? That is the shallow level to which the Lord's table has been reduced in many, many churches.

And that is the reason for the shallow level of the life of all those Christians. I want to say to you, take the breaking of bread seriously. Not just the ritual of it, but the meaning of it.

It'll change your life like it changed mine. Because what does it mean by proclaiming the Lord's death? There are two ways. It says here, you proclaim the Lord's death, verse 26.

One way to proclaim the Lord's death is to get up and say, Jesus died for your sins. That's being proclaimed all over the world. The gospel, Christ died for our sins.

But here, we are not opening our mouth and speaking anything. We are proclaiming the Lord's death without saying a word. How are you proclaiming it here? By solemnly taking that bread.

This is no ordinary cookie. I'm taking that bread and eating it and drinking it. That's why whenever I conducted breaking of bread in Bangalore, I would spend quite a long time, every single time I did it for 47 years, explaining what it means.

I never assume they all know. Even if they know, they need to hear it again. And now what you heard today, I tell you, you will realize that you've broken bread for years without even realizing what it means.

That's what I mean. The solemnity has gone. It's been trivialized all over Christendom.

And unfortunately, by many who claim to be covenant Christians. So, look at the seriousness of this. If you take this in a trivial, casual way, like taking a cookie from that plate and eating it or drinking it, verse 27, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Let me paraphrase that. If you have taken the bread and the cup at any time in a casual way, as if you were eating cookies or drinking a glass of juice, you are as guilty, that's what the verse says, as if you crucified Christ. How many of you believe that? How many of you read this verse that you have crucified Christ afresh by the casual way you came to the Lord's table? That's what it says.

What does it mean that you will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord? It's like saying you are guilty of crucifying Christ. You know, we need to meditate on God's word. Many of us read the Bible because we have a conscience that says, oh, you've got to read the Bible today.

That's not the way to read the Bible. There are, I'll tell you honestly, there are some days, not some days, many days when I read only one verse. That's all.

And I never finished that. I'm trying to understand that verse. In my early days, when I did not know how to meditate, I would read because I wanted to read the whole Bible.

I'd read. It's a good habit to try and finish the Bible in a year and all that. I finished the Bible in six months as soon as I was converted because I wanted to read it.

But in addition to that type of reading, you know, quick covering of the Bible, I'd say there are two types of reading of the Bible you need. One is read large sections so that every few years you read through the Bible at least once. I would say at least once in three years you should read the whole Bible.

And in addition to that, you also need to meditate on some small portion, preferably in the New Testament or the Proverbs or some books like that, to say, Lord, what do you have to speak to me? And even if you spend 15 minutes meditating on just one verse or two verses or three, four verses and ask God to speak to you, the Bible will get inside you. It's like digesting the food you eat. You know, otherwise you read the Bible, it's like putting food into your stomach and then it gets all vomited out because the stomach didn't digest it.

You know that you don't become strong by food that you eat, but the food that you digest. If you eat such a lot of food and only 1% of it is digested, that's all that's going to help you. The remaining 95% is trash.

So if you read the Bible and it doesn't get digested into your system, into your spirit, into your mind, it's as good as not reading the Bible at all. You can ease your conscience, tell people, I read the Bible every day. How much of it got digested? Okay.

So it says here, therefore, because it is like this, it's taking part in the Lord's table is such a serious thing. You must, verse 28, you must examine yourself every time you eat the bread and drink the cup. Let me ask you, the last time you ate the bread and drank the cup, did you examine yourself? Forget about all the previous years, just the last time.

You didn't because nobody exhorted you to examine yourself. The cookie plate came along, you took it and you ate it. That's a tragedy in multitudes of churches.

It must never be true in a new covenant church. Let a man examine himself. It doesn't say an option.

A man must, M-U-S-T, examine himself and only then he must take part in the Lord's table. You take that seriously? I have taken it seriously and it changed my life because for many years, I tell you, for 16 years of my life after I was born again, nobody emphasized this to me. I was an ignorant person sitting in the church and therefore I can say the teachers were to blame, but the fact remains that I never got anything out of it.

I broke bread for years and I got absolutely zero out of it, except that I could tell people I break bread. In the church I went to, they used to break bread every week. So I could say I broke bread every week.

It was an empty boast which accomplished zero in my life. It's not meant to be like that. Let a man examine himself and thus eat the bread and drink the cup.

Why? Because if you don't examine yourself, verse 29, you're eating and drinking judgment to yourself because you're not judging what the Lord went through in his body. And this is the reason, now listen to this, this is serious. This is the reason why many of you are weak physically and spiritually.

You understand the reason why you're weak spiritually? This is the reason. You take the breaking of bread very lightly and this is the reason why some of you are physically sick and are not healed. And a

number, this is serious, that some people even die because they come to the Lord's table casually, treated as a trivial thing.

On the other hand, verse 31, if we judged ourselves rightly, and what rightly is very important, we will not be judged. That verse has helped me tremendously. I'll tell you why.

The Bible says that one day we will all stand at the judgment seat of Christ in order to be examined and judged for everything that we did in our body, which is what we spoke, what we did from the day we were born again, all before that is all blotted out. But from the time you said you received Christ as your Savior, from that time, every word you spoke and every thought that came into your mind and every attitude that you had towards people, which nobody saw, and every action that you did, good or bad, and the motive with which you did, thought, word, deed, attitude, motive, five things that are going to be judged in the final day. All our thoughts, all our words, all our deeds, our attitudes towards people and towards the Lord and motives with which we did these things will be judged one day.

And I've had a great desire ever since I became a serious Christian that Lord, I want in that day of judgment to be completely freed that the Lord says there's nothing to be judged. I have nothing to judge you in. Can you imagine the delight I will get in that day if the Lord says you get a hundred percent? It's the excitement a student gets if he got a hundred percent in the math test.

Can you get, do you aim for a hundred percent? That's the final examination for all of us. The judgment seat of Christ is the final examination for you and me. Are you going to get a hundred percent there? I want to get a hundred percent.

Do you want pass marks? You know, in India, pass marks are 40 percent. And I don't know that any parent will tell his child, okay, somehow get 40 percent and get promoted to the next class. You'll say, aim for a hundred percent, my son, my girl.

Aim for the highest. Don't you do that with your own children when they go to school? What about the judgment seat of Christ? The final examination is more important than any school or college examination you have ever done or will ever do. Are you aiming for a hundred percent? The same thing you tell your children for school.

Are you aiming for that yourself in the most important examination of all? I can stand before God and say, I am aiming for that. For years and years and years and years, I sought the Lord. Lord, how can I get a hundred percent in that day? I don't care if I get less than that in earthly examinations, but I want to get a hundred percent in that ultimate final examination that I'm going to stand for before you.

And this is the verse that helped me. Here's the answer. 1 Corinthians 11 31.

If the Lord said to me, if you judge yourself rightly now, you'll get a hundred percent in that day. That means you'll be judged. It means every problem you get a hundred, a hundred, a hundred, a hundred, a hundred, nothing to be judged, nothing wrong.

I said, wow, is that really true? God's word says that. And I decided from that day, one of the most important decisions I made in my Christian life after receiving Christ as my savior, after being baptized in water and seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And after I was baptized in the Holy Spirit, this is the most important decision I took in my life.

That I am going to judge myself every single day. I took that decision 40 years ago. And I want to stand before you and say, and stand before God and say, to the best of my knowledge, I have judged myself every single day.

I continue to judge myself every single day. I did that yesterday. I did that today.

And I will do that till Jesus comes. I want to get a hundred percent. And it's very simple.

If we judge ourselves rightly, we will not be judged. It's a promise. A promise is like a guarantee from God.

You judge yourself and I will, I have nothing to judge you in the final day. So who are the people who are going to get zero or 30 or 40 and some, I don't know what pass marks are for heaven. I don't think it's 40.

It's much more than that for heaven. I don't know what it is, but a lot of people are going to miss, miss out on it. And all because they did not take the simple, develop the simple habit of judging themselves.

You know what experts we are at judging other people. From the time we have a little bit of sense in our mind, we begin to judge others. Husbands judge their wives, wives judge their husbands and children judge their parents.

We judge our neighbors. We judge other people in the church. We judge the preacher.

We judge all types of people according to our standards. That was wrong. This was wrong.

The other thing was wrong. Why not turn all that focus on ourselves? Like the old saying says, when you point one finger at others, three fingers are pointing at yourself. It's a good saying.

If we judge ourselves rightly. So that's changed my life. But he's now he's going on to say why, verse 30, why are some people weak? Why are some people sick? And why do some people die? And he's explaining that in verse 32 that God allows weakness and sickness to come to you, to discipline you so that one day he won't judge you there.

It's like the teacher giving you school some punishment. Send some type of punishment so that you take your studies more seriously so that you can pass in the final examination. So that's the meaning here that the Lord also disciplines us in some way in our life.

Some tremendous financial loss, something that you hope to get you didn't get, some sickness that came in your family. These are all disciplines of the Lord to save us from missing out on 100% in the final day. I have developed the habit of judging myself even if I have a fever or a headache or anything.

I say, Lord, why? Is this your perfect will for me to live with a fever and sickness? No, I will judge myself. And I have benefited tremendously. I remember I can think of times when I haven't had anything seriously recently, but some years ago when I was down with a little fever of a couple of days, I said, why this? Tell me.

And the Lord reminds me of something I did the previous week, not some great sin which others would call a sin, maybe something I said about someone or some attitude I had towards someone which was inward. And the Lord loves me with a jealous love. You know what a jealous love is? That's one good use of the word jealous.

Jealous love means a very protective type of love that he wants me for himself. Like a husband has a jealous love for his wife that she should not love anybody else but me. So that's the type of love the Lord has for me and for you, a jealous love where he wants you to love only him.

And in that jealous love, he points out something, I judge myself and then I'm okay. So it says, this is why the Lord disciplines us and this is why some people are weak and sick and a number even fall in death. So then my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

So the one place where the Bible says we should judge ourselves is in relation to the breaking of bread. What should I judge myself in? Let me show you, first of all, Luke chapter 9 and verse 23. I told you there's no covenant that can be established without a death.

Luke 9 23 says, Jesus said, if anyone wishes to come after me, anyone, he must say no to himself. That's the first step. We spend all our lives saying yes to ourselves.

I want this, yes. I want that, yes. I want yes to myself.

I'm hurt. Okay, yes to myself. I'm offended with that person because he hurt me.

That is all saying yes to myself. I must say no to myself. That's the meaning of deny myself.

And I must take up not Jesus' cross. I don't have to take up his cross. He took up the cross.

I have to take up my cross daily and follow him. That is what it means to participate in the Lord's table because that broken bread and the poured out cup is a symbol of death. The body broken, the blood shed, and I'm taking part in it, symbolizing the blood of Jesus, the body of Jesus, and I'm saying, Lord, I want to enter into this death of yours.

And I must do that every day, it says here. And the Bible says in, how do I apply that in every day, what we just read? Second Corinthians chapter four. Second Corinthians four.

Some of you are probably seeing new truths in the Bible that you've never seen before today. Second Corinthians four, it says here, some of the trials we go through, verse eight, second Corinthians four, eight, affliction, being crushed, perplexity, despair, persecution, struck down. What is the purpose of all this? So that we can carry about in our body the dying of Jesus.

I have to carry in my body that inward death to self. That's the meaning of this word. If I were to paraphrase it, that I carry in my body always, always, always, always means this very familiar expression, 24 seven, 24 seven, I have to carry in my body death to myself, to my self will, particularly to the way I react when somebody treats me badly.

If self dies, I will love him. I will not hold anything against him. I will not even get upset with him at that moment.

Anger will gradually disappear from your life completely. Bitterness will disappear. I want to ask all of you a very simple question.

Can you honestly tell me today, as far as I can remember, I have forgiven every single human being, whoever did anything against me from my childhood days that I can remember. If you cannot say that, I want to tell you as a warning, as a servant of God, I give you this warning. You will have to answer for that

at the judgment seat of Christ.

You say, but he did me wrong. Sure. If you're not a Christian, okay, excused.

But if you claim to be a Christian, I'm only talking to those who claim to be Christians. If you don't claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, what I'm saying is not for you, forget it. But if you claim to be a disciple of Christ, then you have to do what Jesus did.

The worst crime that was ever committed on earth, the crucifixion of Christ. Immediately Jesus said, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

Whatever crime anybody did against you is smaller than that. And Jesus has given us an example, follow him by forgiveness first. And that's part of this dying of Jesus.

I have to die to my feeling of hurt inside me. How dare he treat me like that? Because I'm a disciple of Jesus, I can take it. Jesus could have hung on the cross and said, Father, how dare these people treat me like this? Don't they know I'm the son of God? He said, Father, forgive them.

They don't know what they're doing. If people knew that I was a son of God also, if you had received Christ, the Bible says he gives us the right to be children of God. If people knew that I was a child of God, they'd be a little more careful in hurting me.

Why do they hurt me? Why do they say things against me? Because they don't know what they're doing. They don't know who they're hurting. And if you're a child of God, the same applies to you.

Forgive them. Father, forgive them. They don't know who they are hurting.

They don't know what they're doing. They think I'm just an ordinary child of Adam. I'm not.

I'm a child of God. Father, forgive them. Follow Jesus.

Always carrying in my body the dying of Jesus. And if you do that, here is a promise God makes for you. There will be a resurrection, an inward resurrection in your life.

There is no resurrection without a death. Jesus did not rise from the dead before he died. And here a spiritual resurrection will take place in us if I accept this spiritual death to myself.

That resurrection is called the life of Jesus being manifested in my body. It's a wonderful thing. The life of Jesus, a life of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, self-control, humility, etc.

Isn't it wonderful to live a life like that all the time? Not just externally, where we smile at people and pretend everything is okay, but where inwardly I'm exactly the same as I appear to be so happy on the outside. This is the life I longed for, coveted for, for many, many years. And the Lord showed it to me.

He said you need two things. One, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit to have the strength to go through this death to self. And the second, once you're filled with the Spirit, you need to choose the way of death every single day.

And God is my witness. I have chosen that. And I want to tell you, I used to get angry.

I used to get angry with my wife, just like all married couples when they first get married, but it's disappeared from my life for years. I can't even remember. I honestly say I can't remember the last time I yelled at my wife.

I can't remember it. It's gone. As far as I'm concerned, my home is a heaven.

I've entered into heaven already in one sense. Bitterness, I can stand before God today and say I've got no bitterness against anybody. You think people haven't done harm to me? I'm a servant of the Lord.

I'm a bigger target of Satan than any of you sitting here, because I've been serving the Lord full-time for 56 years. And those are the biggest targets of Satan are his servants, God's servants. I've told you many times people have taken me to court all the way to the Supreme Court because of religious reasons, because I stood for Christ and exposed people's wrong teachings.

Some of those people who hated me tried to kill me and my wife by trying to blow up my car. God made us escape. I've forgiven them 100%.

I can stand before God and say, Lord, you know my heart. I know who did it. I've forgiven them.

Don't judge them. Not only have I forgiven them, I say, Lord, please don't judge them. I hope they will repent and come to heaven.

That is my prayer for my greatest enemies. My whole attitude, many things changed. A couple of years ago, two and a half years ago, we were away from our home for many days.

In India, that often happens. People watch for homes that are empty. Some people burgled my house because they got nothing there.

They look for gold and currency. There was no gold and no currency there. They were a bit disappointed.

But when I heard it, I said, Lord, I pray that at least one of them will be converted. Somehow give the gospel to at least one of them. I've been praying that prayer for two years, believe me.

I don't have faith to pray for all of them, but I pray at least one of them will get converted so that when they get to heaven, I believe one of them will come to me and say, Zach, I burgled your house, and because of that, I'm in heaven today. I'm praying for that. I pray for it regularly.

I don't believe God would have given me such a burden unless at least one of them is going to be converted who burgled my house. I pray for some Hindu people who have helped me greatly, particularly in this court case, people who helped us. I pray for that person who will find Christ and be in heaven because he helped me in the court case.

It's a wonderful thing when God puts a burden in your heart to pray for people. The Christian life is an exciting life. I've had experiences where I've lost a lot of money.

I said, praise the Lord. I asked the Lord once, Lord, why did this happen to me more than once? I'm not talking about \$5, \$10, huge amounts. I asked the Lord, the Lord said, you've been praying to be freed from the love of money.

This is the answer to your prayer. Praise the Lord. Have you ever praised the Lord for the loss of money? I did more than once because the Lord said he's freeing me from the love of money.

He also said, don't worry, you will never starve. I cared for you from your mother's womb, and I will care for you till your hair is white. Okay, maybe I'll close with that promise.

I say chapter 46 because all of us are growing old, but this is a word that the Lord gave me very clearly. I've experienced its fulfillment already to a great extent in my life. Many, many years ago, the Lord gave me this promise, not only concerning my financial need, because when I left the Navy 56 years ago, I decided to give away all that I earned for the Lord's work, and I emptied my bank account, and I said, I'll trust God for my need, and God provided me then.

He provided me all my needs till today, and this is what the Lord said in Isaiah 46 verse 3 and 4, middle of verse 3. You have been born by me from your birth. I carried you from the time you were born. I carried you from the womb, and till the time you're an old, old man, I am the same God, and your hair gets gray and white.

Even then, I will bear you. I will carry you. I will bear you, and I will deliver you.

I tell you, it's a wonderful life when you live a life of self-judgment and recognize the breaking of bread means that it will bring you into a life of immense fellowship with God. Oh, I'm sorry. There's one more thing I wanted to mention before I close, just a couple of minutes.

You know, 1 Corinthians chapter 10. 1 Corinthians 10. Yeah, this is important.

It's again referring to the breaking of bread. Verse 16 and 17. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 16 and 17.

This cup of blessing which we bless is a sharing in the blood of Christ. It is not the blood of Christ, like the Roman Catholics say. It's a fellowship in the blood of Christ.

Read it exactly. It doesn't say, isn't this cup the blood of Christ? No, it's a fellowship in the blood of Christ, in the death of Christ. The bread which we break, it's not the body of Christ.

It's a fellowship in the body of Christ, and there is, now listen to this. This is the part. There is one bread, and when Jesus broke the bread, there were only 12 people around the table, so one small loaf was enough.

Now, because the number of Christians have increased, sometimes we need to have many more, but still that symbolic breaking of bread is very good. Jesus broke the bread, and this means many of us are one body. That's the meaning of that one bread.

Even though we take part in it, part of it, we are saying we are one body, and that is a very important testimony in the breaking of bread, and that is why we must be careful that when you break bread with others, you ask yourself, do you want to be committed to this group of people who are breaking bread? If not, I would suggest that you don't break bread, because you don't mean to become one body with all the others sitting here. There's nothing wrong in passing the plate, and I used to say that in my church in Bangalore, I say, brothers, you should not take part in this if you are not committed to Christ, number one, but there are two arms to the cross, the vertical and the horizontal, so the horizontal is also important. You must be committed to each of us here.

If you're not committed to Christ, you should not take part. If you're not committed to this church, you should not take part. We're not going to examine you.

The Bible says let a man examine himself, so we leave it to you to decide that, but it's a serious thing, we heard that, if you take part unworthily. In other words, you don't mean it, and you just lightly take part in the bread and the cup. It says we being many, what did we read there, are one body.

One bread symbolizes one body, and we take part in it. Is that what you mean when you break bread and take part, that you look around and say these are the people with whom I'm committed? I'm not just a visitor here. Visitors are always welcome, but they should not break bread.

They should not take part in the Lord's table. Jesus did not invite any outsider to the Lord's table at the first time he instituted it. Only those who are committed to him, and that is the example for us.

Now, I know that sounds a bit exclusive. Yeah, Jesus was very exclusive when he called only the twelve. He didn't go to the multitude and say, ah, who all would like to come for the breaking of bread? Come along.

No. He called only the twelve. We seek to follow Jesus, and I'll tell you this, if you follow Jesus totally, you will be unpopular.

I am one of the most unpopular preachers in India, because I preach the whole truth, but I'm not ashamed of it, because Jesus was the most unpopular person in Israel when he died anyway. But we're not afraid of being unpopular with man, so long as we are popular with God. It says about John the Baptist, who's one of my great heroes, he will be great in the sight of the Lord.

That's my aim. That should be your aim, too. God bless you.

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