

Taking Sin Seriously

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon stresses the critical need for Christians to take sin seriously and live with a genuine fear of God, reflecting this in their speech and actions towards others.

Duration: 1:08:28

Scripture: Genesis 4:6-7, Leviticus 19:32, Matthew 12:34-35, Matthew 12:37, Romans 3:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Philippians 3:17, James 1:26, 1 Peter 2:17

Topics: "Following Jesus", "Evangelism"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of following the example of missionaries and early Christians who sacrificed greatly to spread the Gospel. It highlights the need for genuine missionaries who are passionate about reaching the lost for Christ, unlike those who come for short-term trips for personal reasons. The speaker challenges listeners to live a life of purpose and impact, focusing on respecting others, controlling the tongue, and being a light in the world by following the footsteps of Jesus in love and faith.

Transcript

You heard a song in a couple of Indian languages. India is a unique country. I don't think there's another country like that in the whole world because we have about 20 or more languages in one country and about 300 dialects.

So, if you go from one state to another state in the same country, nobody understands what you're saying because it's a completely different language. So, to reach India you need to know many languages. And I really appreciate those missionaries who came to India in early years, right from the late 1700s with William Carey from England and many others who came at great sacrifice to live, many of them, their wives died there, their children died there.

They were real missionaries. The people who come to India on short-term mission trips today are tourists, they're not missionaries. I've never seen, they come to ease their conscience, you know, from western countries to spend a few weeks in India to feel compassion for the poor and maybe to teach their children how much better out there in the western country than in the poor country.

These are not missionaries, they're tourists. I have no respect for them, zero respect. They're seeking their own, they're seeking their own good and all that.

Whereas the missionaries who came before 1950, before the Second World War, there's another quality of people who committed themselves, who lived there, they didn't come to ease their conscience, they didn't come to teach their children to appreciate the good they have in western countries. They came with a tremendous passion to reach the lost for Christ and they sacrificed a lot translating the Bible into Indian languages at tremendous cost. And I think their real worth will be appreciated only when Christ comes.

I've just not seen that quality of missionaries now in India anywhere. None of them. All the preachers and everyone who comes now, I really have no respect for them compared to the folks in the early days.

And that's why when my children were small, I taught them to write missionary biographies. It's a very great thing. I don't know how many of you have read biographies of missionaries.

But when I was a young Christian, the biographies of missionaries challenged me more than anything else to see how people who were so gripped by the life of Christ that they were willing to give everything in order to spread the Gospel. And that's what challenged me when I was working in the Navy to say, hey, what am I doing with my one life? You know, just go to meetings, sing a few songs, ease my conscience on Sundays that I have and then spend the rest of my time increasing in Bible knowledge, more Bible knowledge, more Bible knowledge. And I said, Lord, I want to do something with my life before I leave this earth.

I don't want to just drift along like all the other Christians. Ease my conscience by going on Sundays to service, church service. We have only one life.

And when we come to the end of that life, we must have no regret about how we lived that life. I find two expressions in scripture that describe the whole world. Let me just share that with you.

One is in Romans chapter 3 and verse 18. This is a description of the whole world. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

And when a person is really converted, that word should no longer be true in their life. There must be a tremendous fear of God or a reverence for God in my life. And when I reverence God, I respect people as well.

One of the marks of the fear of God is that I respect human beings. In the Old Testament, let me show you a verse which the Lord taught the Israelites in Leviticus chapter 19. In Leviticus 19, He gave them one way by which they could test whether they fear God or not.

Leviticus 19 and chapter 32. You shall rise up before the grey-headed and honour the older person because thus you fear God and the Lord. So the Lord taught the Israelites that one way they show their respect for God was by showing respect for older people.

And that is something that is completely gone from today's Christianity. People just don't have any respect for older people. But like I said earlier, everything that was only partial in the Old Covenant has become total in the New Covenant.

It's 10% in the Old Covenant, it's 100% in the New Covenant, it's one day in seven in the Old Covenant, it's seven days in seven in the New, and you gave away your older son to God, now you give all your children to the Lord. And in the Old Covenant, you respected older people to show your fear of God. In the New Covenant, 1 Peter chapter 2, how do you show your fear of God? 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse, this is

New Covenant, honor all men, not just the older ones.

Thus, and love the brotherhood, thus you fear God. So my reverence for God in the Old Covenant, if I were an Israelite, would be shown by my respecting older people. My reverence for God in the New Covenant is shown by my respecting all people.

When I speak rudely to somebody, because I think he's inferior to me, I don't respect God. The Lord taught me to speak respectfully to all people, even to little children. If I don't know how to speak in a good way to little children, I don't fear God.

I'll tell you something, my observation is the vast majority of Christians do not fear God. And this is one proof of it. They don't know how to speak respectfully to others.

Wives don't know how to speak respectfully to their husbands. Husbands don't know how to speak respectfully to their wives. All their religion is a bunch of rubbish, garbage.

Their Christianity, their Bible knowledge, their preaching is a lot of garbage. Because it is garbage, because they don't know how to speak respectfully to one another. It's as simple as that.

We are the light of the world and that light is seen in the way we speak. I know I had a problem with my tongue. And I never sought for the gift of speaking in other tongues.

God gave it to me when I didn't seek for it. What I did seek was for the gift of speaking in a godly way in my mother tongue. And I said, Lord, help me to control my mother tongue.

I don't care whether I get other tongues or not. And if I get the gift of speaking in other tongues, and I can't speak in a controlled way in my mother tongue, that other tongue must be a counterfeit. I've seen a lot of many pastors who speak in other tongues.

But who don't know how to speak respectfully with their mother tongue. I say, your other tongue is garbage. Throw it in the trash.

When God gave me the gift of speaking in other tongues, the way I checked it was to see whether I could control my mother tongue, whether I could control my anger, the way I speak. That's how I knew the gift was genuine. I didn't want a gift that didn't help me to control my mother tongue.

You mean the Holy Spirit can supernaturally enable me to speak a language, which I haven't learned, and he can't control me in the language I have learned? That must be a lot of nonsense. I'm amazed how so many Christians are deceived by this. Thousands, millions, because they want to show off to others.

I've got something. Why don't you show off to others by controlling your anger? Show Christ. I'll show you a verse that challenged me.

James chapter 1, verse 26. I have for a long time wanted to write a book on verses that Christians don't believe. The second chapter will be verses that Christians don't obey.

Here's one of those verses. Verses that Christians don't believe. James 1, verse 26.

If anyone thinks he's a very spiritual Christian, and he cannot control his tongue, his whole Christianity is worth zero. How many Christians believe that? That if you cannot control your time, your Christianity is

worth exactly zero. Verses that Christians don't believe.

I'll show you another verse. When I get time, I'll write this book. Matthew chapter 13.

I'm sorry, Matthew chapter 12. Matthew 12, verse 34. You brood of vipers.

How can you, when you are evil, speak what is good? A viper will only put out poison from its mouth. It's a pretty strong word. Jesus is very strong.

Now some people tell me, Brother Zach, you speak so strongly. I say, you haven't read what Jesus spoke. He used to say things like, if you stumble a little child, get a heavy millstone and tie it around your neck and go and jump in the sea.

I never said that. He would say things like that. Strong words.

And here's another one. Vipers who spit out poison from your mouth. There's something fundamentally wrong with your nature.

That's why all those evil words come out of your mouth. That's why you can't control your tongue. These are the words of Jesus.

How can you, being evil, speak what is good? Because, you have to, verse 33, make the tree good first. Then the fruit will be good. The tree is known by its fruit.

Verse 33. By further, the good man. Verse 35.

Out of his good treasure, brings forth what is good. And remember, the good he's speaking of in verse 34 is the words we speak. The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.

Verse 34. The problem is not with our mouth. We think, oh dear, I lost my temper and I lost my testimony.

No, your problem is not with your mouth. The problem is with the heart. The heart is not clean.

There was a very godly missionary in India named Karmichael. One of the most godly women who came to India. She lived, I think, 50 years in India, never going back to her home in Ireland.

And helped so many, many poor orphans and little children who were thrown in the temple. Girl babies were thrown in the temple to grow up to become prostitutes for the priests there. And she would dress in a sari and go and pick them up.

Now, this is 1930, 19 and all, you know, and she didn't want, there's a very beautiful story about her. That when she was a little girl in Ireland, she prayed. She had brown eyes and she wanted blue eyes.

And she heard a preacher once in the meeting say, if you ask anything in Jesus' name, he'll give it to you. So, she went as a little girl and prayed to Jesus that night, Lord, give me blue eyes. And she woke up next morning and looked in the mirror and her eyes were still brown.

She thought she hadn't prayed hard enough. She prayed again, prayed again, and the next morning it was still brown. But when she came to India, India, nobody has blue eyes.

And she wore a sari. She looked exactly like an Indian. There are fair Indians, but no Indian has got blue eyes.

But because she had brown eyes, she looked so thoroughly Indian that she could go into the temple and people thought she was an Indian. And she could quietly pick up these babies and take them to the orphanage that she was running. Then she understood that God did answer her prayer by not changing the color of her eyes because God had a ministry for her.

That's why she was born with brown eyes. You know, like it says, before we are born, God has formed us in our mother's womb with particular abilities and gifts for the ministry we have in the future. Anyway, A. M. Carmichael once said these words, if you are carrying a cup of sweet water, like orange juice or something, and somebody shakes you hard, no bitter water will save you.

Only sweet water will spill out. That is impossible. Only sweet water will spill out.

So when somebody irritates you and shakes you really hard, what spills out of your mouth is what was always in your heart. Don't think that that person who suddenly made your heart bitter, be thankful to that person that he shook you and showed you what was in your glass. You got to be thankful.

Oh brother, thank you. I thought I was carrying sweet water in my heart all this time. You really have to be thankful to your wives and husbands who nag you and irritate you and shake you up really good so that you know what's in your heart.

Not to condemn you, but so that you can cleanse yourself and say, Lord, thank you. I discovered something. Out of the goodness of your heart comes good.

Out of the evil man, verse 35, out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. And I tell you, when we think of the light of the world today, we are the light of the world. It's not just to strangers and other people.

We are always very kind to strangers. I remember a wife telling her husband, if you speak to me as kindly as you speak to the stranger who comes to the door, that's enough. How do you speak to the stranger who comes to your door? Imagine if you speak to your wife and your husband like that, how sweet your life at home will be.

But we are kind to strangers, but we are rude to the ones we call loved ones. Really? Loved ones? Out of the evil of our heart comes forth what is evil. Imagine Jesus would say, I say to you.

That's like, you know, you write something in a letter and you underline it. That's what Jesus is saying in verse 36. I say to you.

Verses that Christians do not believe. Listen. Every careless word, useless word, that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment.

How many Christians believe that? How many Christians believe that all the useless words, careless, rude words, hurting words, you know, subtle words in which there was a sting hidden in it very subtly. It looked very kind, but there was a sting in it. Spoken to those whom you call your loved ones and beloved and all that.

It will render an account in the day of judgment. I don't think most Christians believe that. And how is it they're not convicted that they keep on speaking such words and they say, well I repented and I asked

God to forgive me.

But your repentance was not serious because it doesn't seem to have improved your speech. We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I'll tell you, before we seek for other tongues.

And if you have other tongues and you're pretty proud of it, check up whether the Spirit of God is controlling your mother tongue. Otherwise, go before God and say, Lord, now please give me the gift of speaking in my mother tongue properly. And let me not fool myself that I'm a little more spiritual than others because I can boast of some other tongues.

The gift we all need is to speak kindly in our mother tongue, respectful to people. That is the light that has to shine from us. Because every word, I'll tell you, I have taken it very seriously.

If I think I'm spiritual and I cannot control my tongue. And that tongue, it can also mean letters that you write because that's your tongue really. I'm not saying they shouldn't be sharp.

Jesus was very sharp when He spoke. You're like vipers, He said. When it comes to preaching God's Word, we have to be very sharp.

Not seek any honor. That's the other thing. I find most preachers seek honor when they speak.

They want to impress people by, oh, I'm a very gracious type of person. We must be like lions when we preach God's Word in the pulpit. But outside the pulpit we must be like lambs.

Jesus was a lion and a lamb. And I want to say to you, be a lion in the pulpit and a lamb outside. Most Christians are lions outside and lambs in the pulpit.

It shouldn't be like that. It should be the other way around. Jesus was a lion in the pulpit.

But when He spoke to people He said, alright, I don't condemn you. He would tell a five times divorced Samaritan woman, I'll give you the water of life. Boy, He was like a lamb.

He was so compassionate and speaking to individuals. A crooked, cheating tax collector like Zacchaeus would say, Salvation has come to you, Zacchaeus, go and be free. But in the pulpit He would say, die out, stomp around your neck and go and drown yourself.

Cut out your right hand, pull out your right eye. He was a lion in the pulpit. We need to know where we should be a lion and where we should be a lamb.

So that's how Jesus was and I want to encourage you, my brothers and sisters. Yesterday I spoke about the humanity of Jesus, how He was tempted like us. That's the thing that changed my life.

And once I saw that, it became the passion of my life to study the life of Jesus. And I spent 40 years now studying the earthly life of Jesus. Knowing that by the power of the Holy Spirit, I could walk like Him a little better every day.

Always quick, be always quick to acknowledge your mistake. Be always quick to ask forgiveness because we have not become like Christ yet. We have a long way to go and if you are humble enough to acknowledge that you have not yet become like Jesus, you will really be quick to apologize to anybody in the world, to your children, to your husband, to your wife, and to a beggar if you hurt somebody.

In any way, if you did something wrong, you want to set it right immediately because you want to be like Christ. The passion of your life is to become like Jesus so that the glory of Christ will be seen more and more in your life. Not that we increase in knowledge, not that people appreciate us because people don't see most of our life.

Do you know that even your closest friends know only about 10% of your life? You can live with your wife for 30 years and she still may not be able to discover whether you love money. True. You can live with your wife for 30 years and she still may not know whether you are having dirty lustful thoughts in your mind.

She doesn't know. So if you seek even to impress your wife, you will never be a spiritual person. The light in your life must shine not only before people, it must shine before the devil.

The devil knows areas of your life which a lot of other Christians and people who see you don't know. There are private areas in your life that even your husband and wife don't know. Which the devil knows.

Are you interested in letting your light shine before the devil? Who sees other areas of your life that nobody knows? The false accounts that you keep and people you cheat and unrighteousness and money matters and the devil sees all that. Is your light shining there? I'm more interested in letting my light shine there than just before a whole lot of believers who see 5% of my life. How many hours do other people see you in a week? Maybe 3-4 hours a week.

Where should our light shine? The areas of our life having no part dark. No part dark. Is that your goal? Every careless word we shall give an account on the Day of Judgment.

I really believe that. And that's why I want to confess every word that I've spoken that hurt others. Careless words, useless words and rude words because I know they can be cleansed by the blood of Christ but if I confess it and I don't repent of it then I will do it again.

You know when you find yourself falling again and again into the same thing you can be pretty sure that you confessed it but you did not repent of it. If you repented of it you wouldn't fall so frequently. You may still fall but it won't be so frequent.

We need to not only turn from sin but we need to hate sin. The Bible says about Jesus he hated sin. It's one thing to give up sin it's another thing to hate it.

I hate disease. That's why I'm very careful when I feel I can pick up a disease. That's why we wash our hands before we eat because we know we can pick up infection.

That's why we are careful when we go near people who are sick with the very highly infectious diseases that we don't want to catch that disease we are very careful. We go to a hospital or we wear masks doctors wear masks because we are very careful that we don't transmit our disease to somebody else and we don't pick up disease from someone else. I wish we were just as careful with sin.

Exactly careful. Imagine I want to wear a mask because I don't want to pick up sin from other people. I want to wear a mask so that I don't say words that are sinful.

If we were as serious about sin as we are with sickness I tell you all of us will be a lot more holy today than we are at the moment. But we have to take these words seriously verses that Christians don't believe

every careless word. How many of you believe that in the day of judgment everything we have done in our life will like come on a screen and we will be judged before the whole world.

It says in 2 Corinthians 5 that in verse 10 we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may be recompensed for the deeds done in the body according to what he has done good or bad. Therefore since we know the fear of the Lord we persuade men. We appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every single one will be rewarded for what he did in his earthly body on earth whether it was good or whether it was bad.

And that's why he says in verse 9 we have only one ambition whether we are at home in heaven yeah it is referring to heaven in the previous verses that is my home or absent from home here on the earth.

You know a true Christian is like a foreigner a foreigner comes and lives in India as a tourist for a few months he knows he is a foreigner he has come as a tourist I have come here as a tourist I am not an Australian citizen I don't belong to this country I know I am a tourist I am not settling down here and I say that is exactly the attitude of a true Christian to his entire life on this earth exactly like I have when I come to Australia I am a tourist and everybody around me knows that Zac why don't you believe me I am a tourist here why don't you settle down here I am a tourist I don't mean you shouldn't have houses please don't misunderstand me don't misquote me but what I am saying is the attitude to the things of earth is I am a tourist I am just here for a short while my home is

in heaven and Paul says whether I am at home or I am absent from home I want to please him that verse challenged me to want to please God when I go to heaven it will be very easy I am sure when you get to heaven you will never want to please anybody but God you won't be looking around to impress Peter or Paul or Zac Pruitt or anybody else you will only want to please God that is easy in heaven but Paul says it is exactly the same for me when I am away from home from this earth in other words when I go up to heaven the same desire I had on earth to please him is just going to continue there won't be any modification of my passion will there be some modification in your desire when you get to heaven that now you have to get rid of trying to please people you are only going to please God no,

that is how it should be right now when you are away from home you have one ambition you know young people have ambition that is the word used in verse 9 we have an ambition it is good to have an ambition if it is the right one an ambition to please God just like let me paraphrase verse 9 to you I have a great ambition Paul says to please God exactly like I will want to please only God when I get to heaven let me encourage all of you to have that ambition I want to only please God here on the earth so that when I get to heaven there won't be any modification of my ambition it will be the same with what I say or what I do because we are all going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ and everything we did on earth and said on earth is going to be revealed in that day it is all going

to be played on a screen I used to think how could God remember all the things that every human being ever from the time of Adam billions and billions of people every single thing they thought they did and they said and I realized that God doesn't have to remember any of that and whether you know it or not your memory is like a videotape that has stored everything you ever did said thought attitudes you had to people it's better than these other videotapes which can only copy the outside this wonderful memory videotape can copy inner attitudes little bitternesses and it's painful you can't fool that videotape you can't even edit it everything is there the good, the bad the right motives, the wrong motives and in the day of judgment all that God has to do is press the rewind button it goes

back to zero and plays from the day you were born every single word you spoke every single thing you said did inner attitudes thoughts everything will be played back except what you confessed and repented of and asked the blood of Jesus to cleanse that will be erased and if you are faithful to your conscience not to impress people but in your conscience to really confess every known sin a thought, word, deed, attitude, motive that will be cleansed and only the good parts will be left the videotape will only show all the good things you did and you really look like a saint over there is one who never did anything wrong because all of that was repented and confessed and cleansed in the blood of Christ it's wonderful of course some people can take advantage of that and say well it doesn't

matter how I live I just confess everything after I've lived a life of sin and it will all be wiped out right? but when people watch your videotape in the day of judgment they'll say what are all these long blank spots in the videotape so even though they may not see it they may have some questions in their mind as to what was happening so I believe it's true everything we ever spoke and did but we can go to a higher level I don't I mean that's the lowest level which I just spoke about now I want to be free from sin because I don't want the embarrassment of it all getting exposed in that day but a higher level is I want to live a pure life because I love Jesus not because I'm afraid it will all get exposed I don't care whether it gets exposed I love Jesus and that's why I want to keep his

commandments I love him and that's why I want to always speak kindly to people and respectfully even if they don't speak respectfully to me I follow a savior who when they slapped him and killed him said father forgive them but they don't know what they're doing I've thought of that you know you mean when you kill a man you don't know what you're doing what does it mean to crucify such a good man and not to know what you're doing what did Jesus mean when he said forgive them is ok I can understand that God father forgive me but they don't know what they're doing how can that be that you kill a man and you don't know what you're doing I think what Jesus meant was they don't know whom they're killing they think it's just a man it's not son of God you have to say that to your wife and

husband too because when they speak rudely to you they don't know who they're speaking to they're speaking to a son of God father forgive her she doesn't know to whom she's speaking father forgive her he doesn't know who he's speaking to I'm a child of God you know we wouldn't speak rudely to a son of God we wouldn't speak rudely to a high authority we don't recognize in each other Christ dwelling in that person and not only in each other I read in the book of James that all human beings are made in the image of God see James in chapter 3 verse 8 no one can tame the tongue it's a restless evil full of deadly poison with it you know we come to the church service and bless our Lord and Father and say wonderful things to Him and with the same tongue we curse human beings or speak rudely to

people who have been made in the likeness of God see that's it's an amazing revelation to me it's the only verse in the Bible that I have found which teaches me that even after man's fall he's still said to be made in the likeness of God that wicked man there's something of the likeness of God in him and I like to read the Bible and think in pictures because Jesus spoke in pictures and I find I understand the Bible much better when I picture it in some way so I picture this verse made in the likeness of God this guy doesn't behave like God at all the picture I have is you know in India we have sometimes especially like we've just had an election still going on during election time they put big posters of candidates people who are wanting to be members of parliament and then after

elections are over people tear away that you see a little bit of the face one eye or one hair or something left there you sort of can make out I know who this guy was from his eye over here and that's the picture I

have of human beings who were once perfectly in the image of God most of it is torn away by sin and a little bit is still there a little bit is still there in that sinner in that beggar in that rude, crude person a little bit of the image of God is still there believe it or not dear brothers there is still a little bit of the image of God in your wife and in your husband you may not see much of it but it's there and recognize it from that little bit the rest of it is all torn off but from the little bit you see there was someone made in the image of God it's a wonderful thing

to see that I said Lord please help me that I'll never never speak in a rude way that I'll have the power of the Holy Spirit to control my temper that I don't insult someone made in the image of God with my words would you speak to Jesus like that?

I was sick and you visited me Jesus said I was hungry and you fed me I was thirsty and I came to you and you gave me a drink I came in ragged clothes and you spoke kindly to me you recognized me in those weakest and the smallest of my brothers I want to do that to me that is Christianity I want you to do that for me the only people Jesus spoke strongly to was religious hypocrites to people who made money in the name of religion in the temple there he was unscathed he wasn't gentle there he didn't go to those money changers and say will you gentlemen please remove your tables from here no he just turned the tables and opened the doors for the doves to fly out and drove the sheep out you know the only time I see Jesus violently angry was when he saw people making money in the name of

religion the only time and if you want to be like Jesus you got to be violently angry today with television preachers and every other preacher who exploits poor people to make money out of them to fill his pocket if you are not angry with such people you are not like Jesus Christ you are a diplomat seeking your own honor I don't want to be a diplomat seeking my own honor I want to be like Jesus I want to be gentle towards adulterous women to five times divorced women like Samaritan women to murderers and thieves who are being crucified I want to be gentle towards them but I want to be ruthless towards Pharisees religious hypocrites and humbugs and people who are making money in the name of religion this is what it means to be like Christ full of grace and truth unfortunately I find

Christians are gracious to the wrong people and they go hard on people they should be gentle we got it all upside down that's why I say we must meditate on the life of Jesus if you want to be the light of the world meditate on how Jesus was one more word here in Matthew 12 I didn't conclude that section Matthew 12 this is the word which is really strong we have all heard about justification by faith Evangelical Christians are very strong we are justified by faith because the Bible says so please see the other side of the coin don't have half truth here is the other side of your coin Matthew 12, 37 you are justified by the way you speak and you will be condemned by the way you have spoken can you have a higher authority than Jesus can you have a higher authority I am telling you how you

will be justified in the day of judgment you say but Paul said we are justified by faith I know but Jesus said you will be justified by your words you mean you accept Paul but you don't accept Jesus what type of Christian are you I will tell you I accept both I am justified by faith but a faith that is living that is manifested in the way I speak I am justified by my words and I am condemned you will be condemned by your words I have hardly ever heard a sermon on controlling the tongue on anger being a sin there are many people who have come to CFC who said brother Zach I never even knew that anger was a sin but I came here I said well thank God you are here before you died so you know the truth God is merciful have you ever heard him tell you something say something which I couldn't show

you a verse for and he said how is it that we read the same bible and we don't see these things I will tell you why because the bible says that God of this world has a tremendous power The Bible says that, 2nd Corinthians 4, the God of this world has blinded the minds of people, verse 4, that they might not see the light.

So Satan has a power, he's got power to do many things.

One power he has is to blind people's eyes so that they don't see the light. You think he doesn't do that to Christians? Sure. He spoke about baptism.

How is it so many believers still believe in infant baptism? There's only one reason. Satan has blinded their eyes. They read the scriptures and they don't see it.

If a blind man says this wall is black, who will argue with him? I say, I hope his eyes will be open because it's not black. And if a blind person says there's infant baptism in the Bible, I don't argue with him. I say, maybe the God of this world has blinded his eyes, what can I do? When his eyes are open, he'll see it.

It's the same thing with victory over sin. There are plenty of verses that speak about victory over sin. And not just in the Old and New Testament.

Do you know where victory over sin is mentioned first in the Bible? You haven't heard my message on that? Yeah, some of you have. Genesis 4. You mean victory over sin is mentioned in Genesis 4? Immediately after the first sin mentioned outside the Garden of Eden? The first sin mentioned is Genesis 3, inside the Garden of Eden. The first sin outside the Garden of Eden is Cain.

Before he killed Abel, he had a wrong attitude to Abel. And the Lord points that out. And do you know what He tells him? People ask me, why do you speak so much against anger? I say, because that's the first question that the Lord asked the man after he left Eden.

Genesis 4, 6. Why are you angry? Did you know that is the first question that the Lord asked the person after man was thrown out of Eden? Why are you angry? And I think the Lord is asking some of you, husbands and wives. Why are you angry? The same question He asked Cain. And why is your face swollen? Why is your face like that? Why aren't you cheerful? You know, when you're angry, it can be seen on your face.

You can't fool people. It's on your face. Others can see it.

Your partner can see it. And the Lord said to him, If your attitude was good, let me paraphrase verse 7, If your attitude is good, your face will be cheerful. When your face is not cheerful and bright, it always indicates the wrong attitude in your heart.

These are the words of God to Cain. You can see it in your face. God has made the face to be like a reflection of what is in the heart.

It's true. If your attitude is right, towards God, towards all people, your face will always be cheerful. God has not made man's natural look to be frowning.

No. The natural look is cheerful. I read somewhere that it takes about, I don't remember the exact number, about 14 muscles to smile and about 45 to frown.

So it should be easier for us to smile than to frown. But why do we frown so much? Why do we use 3 times more muscles to frown? There's something wrong in our attitude. And if your attitude is good, your face will be cheerful.

But if your attitude is not good, then sin, like a tiger, is crouching at your door. What would you do if you knew there was a live tiger that escaped from the wild and is sitting outside your door? I'm sure you wouldn't open it slightly to see if it's there. Because if you put its paw in it, then you wouldn't be able to close the door.

And it's desire. Sin is like a tiger or a lion that's crouching. That word crouching, we always use in relation to wild animals.

Crouching. That's the word the Lord used. Sin is like a wild animal crouching at your door.

Just waiting. It's desire is to you. And here's the first time God speaks about victory over sin.

You must master sin. That's not a Roman 6 message. It's a Genesis 4 message.

It's the very first message. God didn't say that sin must be forgiven. No, He said you must conquer it.

That wrong attitude towards your brother. So dear brothers and sisters, the things that we find in our life, that God speaks to us about, we need to conquer it. And they couldn't conquer it in the Old Covenant because they did not have the Holy Spirit.

The two wonderful blessings we have in the New Covenant besides forgiveness of sins, because we had forgiveness in the Old Testament too. David says in Psalm 103, Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgives all your iniquities. But he couldn't say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, who helps me to overcome all sin.

O Lord, thank you so much that you forgive me, David says. But when I see God, I can't help it. You can't blame Him because He didn't have the Holy Spirit.

Today, we have the Holy Spirit. You can do mighty things for God. You know that David could conquer Goliath but he couldn't conquer Bathsheba.

Who's stronger, Goliath or Bathsheba? I hope you know. Samson put their lions into pieces but when he saw Delilah, oh, she tore him up. Who's stronger, a lion or a pretty woman? Well, if we are careful in these areas, we can't overcome.

Samson couldn't. David couldn't. They did not have the Holy Spirit.

Is it possible that you also are defeated because of the same reason? You don't value being filled with the Holy Spirit. There's another thing David and Samson didn't have. They did not have an example that went in front of them.

There was nobody who could say, follow me. Moses couldn't say that. The only thing we read about Moses' family life was he fought with his wife.

Exodus chapter 4, you read it. That's the only thing we read about his family life. He did not get his children to obey God's word that says they must be circumcised, Exodus 4. And the other thing we read about his family life later on in Exodus is he asked his heathen father-in-law Jethro, please guide us

through the wilderness when God had already given him a pillar of cloud.

Shameful. He listened to his father-in-law's advice as to how to administer Israel as if God did not know. You know, his father, like a good administrator, said, make little groups and make somebody over them and somebody over them and somebody over them and finally you'll be at the top of the pyramid.

How is it God didn't think of that bright idea? And a heathen priest like Jethro could do that? You know how God did it? When Moses said, Lord, this burden is too much for me later on in Numbers, he didn't give this pyramid pattern that's followed in Christian churches and in the corporate world that Jethro suggested. He said, Moses, get me 70 elders. I'll pour my spirit on them.

And the same spirit that's upon you will be on them. And that's the way this congregation will be around, not on this pyramid structure. That was God's way.

You know, Moses didn't have the Holy Spirit within him to guide him. That's why he listened to his father-in-law and listened to, and fight with his wife and not get his son to obey God. But we're not in that age.

We're living in a new age where the Holy Spirit fills us. We have an example who said, follow me. And we have others like Paul behind Jesus who say, follow me as I follow Christ.

And there should be many other people behind Paul who say, follow me as I follow Christ. And if you're an elder brother in a church, that's what you should be saying too. Follow me as I follow Paul in Christ.

In other words, it's like climbing a Mount Everest and Jesus has reached the top and Paul has, he never reached the top even at the end of his life, but he went pretty far along that way. And others, godly men through the years who pursued after the footsteps of Jesus and Paul who turned around and said, follow me. We are behind.

We look at those footsteps. I remember, and I will forget, I told you once about some religious people in India who took me to court because I wrote a tract exposing their own doctrines. They sued me for defamation.

I'd never been to a court for 59 years. This was about 15 years ago. And the first day I went to the court, I didn't even have a lawyer.

I didn't know what to do. We were all a bit confused. And every lawyer we had said, you've got to tell lies.

And I said, sorry, we don't tell lies. Then finally we found somebody who was willing to let us speak the truth. And I remember the first day I went to the court.

Before I stepped in, the Lord said to me, don't be afraid. Religious people took me also to court. So you will look for my footsteps here on this court.

You will find it. So I looked for the footsteps of Jesus in that court. And I saw the footsteps of Jesus were faith and love.

Faith in a Heavenly Father who could say to Pilate, you have no power against me, except what my Father gives you. That's faith. You really need that when you face earthly authorities who are against you.

And the other is love. Love those people who took you to court. Forgive them.

Those are the footsteps of Jesus. And I walked in those footsteps. The court case was not important.

The important thing was that I didn't sin for getting anxious and afraid for having bitterness against those who took me to court. I could shake their hands and say, God forgive you, brother. God bless you.

And I could stand there without fear. The footsteps of Jesus are everywhere. We can teach our little children the footsteps of Jesus.

He obeyed his earthly father and mother. That's the best thing you can teach your children. I used to tell my children when they went to school, I said, what type of friends did Jesus make when he went to school in Nazareth? Do you think he made friends with all the rich, posh type of children? No, I don't think so.

I think Jesus would have made friends with some of the poorer children whose clothes were a bit torn. I don't mean these fashionable torn jeans. That's not what I'm talking about.

I'm not talking about that type of stuff. I'm talking about really poor people. Or maybe the one who stutters or stammers or a bit lame.

Jesus made friends with such people. And I say, when you go to school, you must make friends with them. Be like Jesus in school.

If you're good at mathematics and you find someone who's weak at mathematics, go and sit down with them after the class is over and spend 15 minutes helping him with his mathematics. Don't you think Jesus would have done that? It's a wonderful thing from early childhood to teach our children to follow Jesus. You can see the three-year-old footsteps of Jesus.

The 15-year-old footsteps of Jesus. Thank God he didn't come to earth as a poor old man but he came as a little baby. So you can see different sizes of the footsteps of Jesus as a teenager tempted by pretty girls in Nazareth.

Look for his footsteps. Whenever I'm tempted as a young man, I say, Lord Jesus, you were tempted in Nazareth just like me. I want to have the same attitude to this temptation that you had when you faced it in Nazareth.

And as I grew up in my work, I said, Lord, I want to have the same attitude to money that you had. Jesus handled money as a carpenter. There's nothing wrong in earning money.

There's nothing wrong in making a profit in your business. People ask me, can I make a profit in my business? I say, do you think Jesus made a profit in his carpenter shop? Of course he did. Otherwise, how would he feed his family? But he never cheated anybody.

He was righteous. Maybe he'd give an occasional gift to a widow. He was good.

And there was a large-heartedness in Jesus. He was not always calculating how much more money can I make as a carpenter. That's not his attitude.

I want to earn my living and I want to be good to the poor people. That's how he was. And then later on when I became a preacher, I began to study the way Jesus preached.

And I found it was so simple the way he spoke that even little children could understand. And I said, Lord, that's what I want to speak. I was so excited when I got a letter from someone in the United States who watched me on the internet and said, Brother Jack, we watched many preachers as a family.

But when we listen to you, my 8-year-old says, Dad, this man, I can understand. I'm so excited when I hear an 8-year-old say that. That's more important to me than the intellectual saying, boy, that was a scholarly message.

Oh, God, forgive me. Why did I speak like that? You know, to study every aspect of the life of Jesus it's been my life's passion. It's changed my life.

How did he speak to people? How did he give a message? He was never boring. He was always interesting. He was always very simple.

He used hundreds of illustrations. And you know, you and I can do that if we love people. And I asked the Lord, what is the secret to his life? And the Lord said, I will always give you a word for my people if you have two things in your heart.

If your heart is filled with my word, that means you've got to study it. And your heart is filled with love for God, for my people. I will always give you a word for them.

And I want to say to all of you who ever get a chance to preach God's word, fill your heart with God's word. And fill your heart with love for people. And you will not want to impress them.

You will want to help them. And all of us ought to be witnesses for Christ in our place of work, in our neighborhood, in our relatives, anywhere we must be with. You know, we haven't, in our churches, we have not done big crusades of mass evangelism.

That's not our calling. But we've grown from about 8 people that we were when we started in our house 40 years ago to maybe 4,000 or 5,000 in 50 churches. And that's been mostly by personal evangelism.

Somebody would call along their colleague at work and say, why don't you come with me to church next morning? Many times on Sunday morning, some brother would introduce me to a Hindu young man and say, this is my brother Zach, this is my friend who works here. I said, hello, welcome. So happy you could come to church.

I hope you'll come again. And they always come again. One day they get converted.

And then they get converted, then he brings his brother along. He gets converted. Then he brings his mother along.

She gets converted. And then somebody tells me, Brother Zach, out there in that other village, there's a relative of mine. They'd like to have a little meeting there.

I said, great. So we go there. And you know, this is how the work spreads.

And it's not by big crusades and decision cards. No, we've never done that. But personal evangelism.

I always tell people, you spend such a lot of money on birthday cards, greeting people on their birthday. Fine. Why don't you add a little DVD along with it? Cost you a few cents more, that's all.

Or a little booklet with a little note saying, this helped me. I want to greet you on your birthday and here's a little gift that may help you. You never know.

You may bring somebody to Christ. And what does it cost you? What does it cost you to give a little booklet to somebody or a DVD or someone? This is what it's to be light to the world. A light that sheds its rays in all directions.

That's our calling. So don't sit back and say, oh, that's the job of the elder or the preacher. No, it's your job.

You've got to be filled with the Holy Spirit and let the light shine. Even little children. We had a little girl in our church who made friends with another Catholic girl in her school.

Close friends. They would always come when their parents came to the gate to pick them up at the end of the school day. They'd come together and like that the parents became friends.

And the father who was in our church invited the other one saying, hey, why don't you come to our church? Come and test it out. And he got converted. And his wife got converted.

And then he called his brother and his brother got converted. This is how it's done. You know, like you put a stone into the lake and the ripples go.

That's how it works. These people are not scholars. That little girl was not a scholar.

Anything but that. Just a little witness for Jesus. Anybody can do it.

So I want to encourage all of you. Don't be satisfied that you're going to heaven that you've found a wonderful message that's changed your life. You have a responsibility.

In India, we have postmen who go house to house distributing the letters. And we have things called, I don't know if you still have it maybe you don't have it nowadays in Australia. It's dying out in India.

It's called money orders. It's the old way of sending money. We fill up a form with an address and give the money in the post office here and that would go to the post office a thousand miles away in some other place.

And the postman would take that slip with the address and the money. That's how money was delivered. So when a postman leaves his post office in the morning he's got his bag full of hundreds of thousands of rupees.

Not one cent of it is his. He looks like a very rich man as he goes with his bag but he's going house to house and saying somebody sent a money order for you. Is this your name? Here's the money.

Sign it. It goes to the next house. And if he's been a faithful postman he comes home, comes to the post office with his bag empty.

Unless he's a crook. The Lord has given us a gospel. You know what Paul said? I'm a debtor to the whole world.

That postman was a debtor to a hundred people. He had to clear that debt before he came to the post office in the evening. God has given us a gospel which many in the world haven't heard.

And God has given us a new covenant message which other believers haven't heard. We are in debt. There are people you know.

Forget about the non-Christians maybe you're not bold enough to go to them. What about sharing the new covenant message with some person who you know was born again? That's a little easier. Just a tract or a book or just an internet website when you send an email.

With all the gossip that goes on in the email, why not add a little link to a message that helps you? Are you afraid of being unpopular? Are you ashamed to witness to Jesus? Are you indirectly denying Jesus like Peter by keeping quiet about something? Unless they think you're a religious fanatic I said, let the whole world think I'm a religious fanatic. I'm a witness for Jesus Christ. And if we had more witnesses for Christ the Lord could reach a lot more people.

The responsibility is yours. We've only gone one hour over time so it's okay. God bless you all.

That's great. Heavenly Father please help us to be the light and the witnesses for you that we are meant to be on earth where you kept us here. Fill us with the Holy Spirit that we can be what you want us to be.

In Jesus' name.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/syPt2-m8OS4.mp4>

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