

The Blessed New Covenant Standard

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the New Covenant blessings and responsibilities, highlighting the privilege of knowing God as our Father and Jesus as our elder brother. It stresses the significance of seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit not based on deserving it, but on the foundation of God's love for us as much as He loved Jesus, transforming our lives and empowering us for His work.

Scripture: John 17:23, Romans 8:15, Genesis 32:25, Hebrews 9:14, Luke 17:3

Topics: "New Covenant", "Empowerment through the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

So, let me ask you this morning, as the blind man reaches for the white cane and he gets up, did you reach out for the Lord Jesus this morning, saying, I want to walk with you, Lord, every single day, every single moment? I thought of what the Lord has provided for those he loves, and I mentioned the first day how, in the Old Testament, they didn't see that. I just want to share some things of how the New Covenant, we are blessed in a way that people in the Old Covenant were not. In other words, if this was a bunch of Jewish people sitting here, and Moses or any of the great prophets were speaking to them, a lot of things that we could say, which they couldn't tell them.

And sometimes we don't realize the privilege we have of what we experience. It's like many people who have been in CFC, Bangalore, or one of the CFC good churches for some years, when they are transferred somewhere else, or they have to go some other place for, say, a year or two, and they go to some other church, then they realize what a difference there is between what they have experienced in a New Covenant church and some other place. Many of our children who have grown up in CFC, I sometimes wish when they grow up that they go to spend one or two years in some other church, because I find many of them are not really thankful and grateful for what they receive.

I've known of young men who have grown up here, thoroughly ungrateful after all that they have received. Maybe they don't have eyes to see. And very often we don't compare ourselves with what there was under

the Old Covenant.

We should be so immensely grateful to the Lord for what He's done for us. So many things, you know, man's got a habit of taking things for granted. Just like children take their parents for granted.

Let them leave home and go and stay in some college hostel for one year. They'll come back really appreciating their home and their parents, even if their parents are not rich. I believe that thankfulness is one of the great safeguards or protection against backsliding.

If you don't want to backslide, develop one habit. Mark my words. One habit of being thankful to the Lord and thankful to your brothers and sisters.

I guarantee you will not backslide. All backsliding comes when people are not appreciative of what the Lord has done for them. Not appreciative of the church or the elders or their parents.

It's the easiest way to backslide. And I'll show you that from scripture. I like to show everything from scripture so that people don't think this is Zak Poonen's idea.

Turn to Romans chapter 1. In Romans chapter 1 we see a backsliding that goes on from verse 21 to 32. Think of some of the things that happens. This is in the last part of verse 21.

Romans 1.21 Their foolish heart is darkened. Verse 22 They think they are wise, but they are fools. Instead of worshipping the incorruptible God.

Verse 23 They worship animals and images of animals. And so God gave them up to the lust of their heart. And instead of worshipping God, they worship human beings.

And then they have unnatural sex. Verse 26 Women with women, men with men. They abandon, verse 27, the natural function.

These are all signs of backsliding, going down, away from God. Men committing, men with men, indecent acts, verse 27. A lot of people ask these days, is there anything wrong in that? Well, better you read Romans 1.27 or you believe what the world says.

And they did not acknowledge God anymore, so God gave them up. God gave them up. Three times.

Verse 24, God gave them up. Verse 26, God gave them up. Verse 28, God gave them up.

And finally they end up as slanderers, verse 30, haters of God. And wicked, full of wickedness, verse 29. And evil and murder, etc.

But where did it all begin? What is the first step in that backsliding? Verse 21 They did not honor God as God and give Him thanks. Never forget that. The first step downwards is when you stop being grateful to God for first of all, for giving you life.

Like there is a saying in the world that when something bad happens to you don't ask yourself, why me? If you have not asked the same question when something good happens to you. When something good happens to you, do you ask, Lord, why me? So many other people are not getting it. You don't ask when something good happens, then don't ask when something bad happens.

We should be surprised when something good happens to us. We don't deserve it. A grateful person is amazed at God's goodness all the time.

Learn to be thankful, my brothers and sisters, to God. Learn to be thankful to your parents, children. It's not easy to provide for family's needs in these days.

Your parents work hard. Learn to appreciate them. Be thankful to them.

Take a piece of paper on their birthday and write a thank you note to them. Once a year. Is that difficult? To write half a page once a year to each of your dad and mom to thank them on their birthday? I hope all of you children know your parents' birthdays.

Do you know your parents' birthdays, children? When is your mummy's birthday? When is your daddy's birthday? If not, I'm going to ask you tomorrow. You better find out within the next 24 hours. And keep a note of that date and say, I'm going to write a little note to my dad and mom on their birthday.

Even if it's one line. Don't waste 20 rupees buying a card. They throw it in the trash can after that.

Take an ordinary piece of paper and write, I still have with me the little notes my children wrote when they were 3 or 4 years old. Spelling is all wrong. The C is written the other way, not this way.

It's okay. I preserved them. I'm not looking at the spelling.

I'm looking at their heart. They didn't go and buy expensive cards. We didn't have money for that.

Some scrap of paper or some old card which is the inside all torn out and right inside. Thank you very much, daddy, for all that you've done. It's really a good thing.

And also, not only to your dad and mom. Go on from there. Take a piece of paper and write a thank you note to your brothers and sisters.

In your own family. I'm not telling you to do it for everybody else. You don't have to go first cousin, second cousin.

No, no, no. Don't go that far. Just your own family.

Learn to be thankful. And express it. Go and hug your dad and mom on their birthday.

They'll be surprised. They won't get a heart attack. They'll be surprised.

What happened to my son? I've never seen it in 15 years. All of a sudden he comes and hugs me. Learn to hug your dad and mom.

Be thankful. It's an expression of thankfulness. And hug your children.

And parents also. Greet your children on their birthday. You don't have to buy expensive cakes or ice creams or anything.

Many of you can't afford it. But have a little celebration. And it's really something.

It makes a lot of difference. It brings the family bond together. See, my children are all grown up.

We never cease to greet one another on our birthdays. Even today. I think if I remember right, I greet my children and grandchildren.

And I've got 17 grandchildren. And I've got 4 sons. And 4 daughters.

That means the ones they married are my daughters. They are not daughters in law. Because I'm not under law.

I finished with law long ago. I'm under grace. So they are my daughters.

So I've got 4 sons, 4 daughters and 17 grandchildren. That itself is 25. And I've got a wife that's 26.

And I never forget any one of their birthdays. Even though I'm going to be 79 in a few days. Why can't you people do that? You develop the habit of thankfulness.

I sometimes write a note on a New Year to some person whom I'm not corresponding with regularly but some old friend of mine who I remember once writing to someone saying, I remember brother I was there in your town and I couldn't get a cab and you drove me about 40-50 miles somewhere in your car. I haven't forgotten it. I know it happened 20 years ago or more but I haven't forgotten it.

I just want to thank you for it. He just gave me a car ride 25 years ago when some place I had to go urgently and I couldn't get a cab or he didn't have the money. I haven't forgotten it.

Be thankful for people who have done little things for you. That shows you're growing in grace. I'll tell you, I don't want to be a backslider.

I don't want to go to the second step of backsliding. I don't even want and the way I avoid that is by never going to the first step of being unthankful. So I hope you've learned one thing even if you forget everything else in this conference.

Remember one thing. The mark of a godly man is he's thankful for small things. I've learned to say thank you to somebody who brings me a glass of water.

I'll tell you why. Because Jesus said, if someone gives one of my disciples a cup of cold water he will not lose his reward, right? Imagine in the day of judgment the Lord calling up somebody and saying, you gave my servant, Peter a cup of water 2000 years ago. Here's your reward.

I was surprised. I gave a cup of water to Peter somewhere 2000 years ago and here I get a reward. Does Jesus take note of a cup of water? Have you read that verse? That he will not lose his reward? Yeah, I think it's Matthew 10.

But it's something to when you get something be thankful. Jesus is thankful for somebody who gave a cup of water. And I'll tell you I know why he said that to his apostles particularly.

And they were preachers and I know that the most important thing a preacher requires when he's finished preaching is water. Because his mouth gets dry and some people get dry quicker than others. So, be thankful for small things.

Don't just assume. It shows how big you are. I often use this example if a cabinet minister is walking down the road and he drops his handkerchief and his secretary picks it up and gives it to him, he just takes it

and puts it in his pocket.

But if a beggar in front of you is walking down the road and he drops something and you are humble enough to pick it up and give it to that beggar, what will the beggar, will the beggar ignore it? He'll be surprised. A well-dressed man like you picking up his handkerchief and giving it to him, he'll be so thankful. You know why? Because the cabinet minister has got very high thoughts about himself.

He doesn't have to say thank you to anybody. The beggar is so low in the social level that he knows that everybody is superior to him. That's why he gives thanks.

And there, in that illustration, you can understand why you are so unthankful. One reason. You've got very high thoughts about yourself even though you think you don't.

You can think you're a very humble person. Test it out. Are you thankful? Are you thankful for your wife? Maybe she's brought a cup of tea early in the morning for 20 years.

We're so unthankful. If there's a little bit of salt too much or too less, that we are quick to complain in the food to your wife. But what about the things she does? Do you ever give thanks? Dear brothers and sisters, there'll be much better family relationships if we learn to give thanks.

I don't know whether the Old Testament people had that, but it's one of the things that Jesus came and taught us. To be thankful. To be thankful for everyone around us.

It's a great mark of a godly person. I hope we will all develop it. And let me show you an example from Luke chapter.

We read in chapter 17 about 10 lepers. And they you know, lepers were supposed to always stand at a distance because leprosy was very infectious. And so in the olden days, they had to stay outside the city.

But Jesus would often go outside the city to love these lepers and heal them and bless them. So this must have happened outside the city. Because as he was entering a village, verse 12, 10 lepers stood at a distance far away and shouted out, Jesus master, have mercy on us! Because they knew other lepers had been healed.

And he saw them and he said, go and show yourself to the priests. And as they were going, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw he had been healed, turned back and with the same loud voice with which he cried out in prayer, I mean, they had gone away.

Maybe they'd gone a half a mile. You've got to walk back half a mile to see Jesus again. He walked back that half a mile and he shouted out, thank you Lord for healing me! The same loud voice with which he cried out for mercy.

You know, that means, what that teaches us is, with the same fervency with which you pray, Lord heal my dying child or give me a job or give me a house, Lord I'm in the soup here, please get me out of this situation. And the fervently with which you pray, with that fervency we have to give thanks. That's what I learned from a leper.

I tell you, I learned a lot of things from these insignificant people in the Bible. Like a thief on the cross, murderer. Can you learn something from them? Yes.

To take the blame completely. Many, many so called CFC believers need to learn this lesson. From the thief on the cross.

I say, before you go to the foot of the cross of Jesus, go to the foot of the cross of the thief. And learn to take the blame 100% instead of blaming others. Lord, I'm guilty.

That's what took him to paradise. Adam said, I'm not guilty, my wife. That's what kicked him out of paradise.

You can be kicked out of paradise or go into paradise. There's a contrast between Adam, who blamed his wife and the thief on the cross. He didn't blame his parents for bringing him up badly.

He said, it's me. 100% me, Lord. I deserve hell.

I'm good for nothing. I am the criminal. And Jesus said, really? You can come to paradise.

Paradise is made for such people. Not to live perfect lives, but to take the blame. That's equally important, like giving thanks.

Take the blame. So this leper came back and he fell on his face, giving thanks to him. And he was a Samaritan.

Why does it say he was a Samaritan? You know, whenever you read Samaritan in the Gospels, that was like the lowest class of society in India, in the villages, the lowest class of society in many poor villages, more in the North India, are those who carry the dry toilet latrines outside the city and dump it from the rich people's homes and they carry it on their head and clean it out and bring it back every day. It's the scavengers, the people who do the lowest jobs, the people who in our corporation are told to go into the sewage line to clean it up. That's the lowest level of society.

The Jews looked down on the Samaritans because they were not pure Jews. They were mixed up when the Assyrians captured Israel. Many of them married the Jews in that mixture where they were called Samaritans because Samaria was the capital of that part of Israel.

And so the Jews hated and despised the Samaritans so much that whenever they walked the straight road from Jerusalem to Galilee was through Samaria. But they wouldn't go through there. They would take the longer route and walk many more hours because they did not want to go through Samaria.

Like some high class people don't even want the shadow of a low caste person to be upon them in our villages. No Christian should ever be like that. But this Samaritan, Jesus was saying, this despised low caste person was more thankful than all those Jewish lepers.

Very often that is the case. God has chosen the poor of the world, rich in faith. If you check up all the believers in CFC churches and there are a few thousands of them I've seen most of them I've seen one thing.

The vast majority maybe 80% are not upper class highly educated intellectual people. No. Those are all in the other dead churches.

God has chosen the poor of the world, rich in faith. Like Paul told the Corinthians there are not many rich among you. There are a few.

Not many people in high positions. There are a few to show that also is needed to show that it's not only because you are poor that you are spiritual. There are people in very high positions who are also spiritually minded.

People who are very rich who are also spiritually minded to God to show that it doesn't make a difference. If everybody were poor that wouldn't be manifested. But when God can put a few extremely rich people and extremely capable people and very high positions mingling equally with everybody else that's a testimony to Christ.

So that's exactly what we've experienced in CFC. But 80% are like Samaritans. I praise God and you'll find heaven is populated with such people.

That's why in Romans 12 it says learn to mingle with ordinary people. I often tell people in CFC, a lot of them are high class, I say learn to mingle with the poor brothers and sisters who come from Tamil Nadu. How much do you fellowship with them? You have an opportunity.

You're going to be with them in heaven for eternity. So these are the Samaritans. Listen to this.

Jesus said, verse 17, weren't there 10 people cleansed? Where are the other 9? Can you imagine this? Can you imagine Jesus saying, why aren't you coming and saying thank you to me? Do you ever say that? You think he's a very proud person who expects other people to come and say thank you to him. I don't go around saying to people, why didn't you say thank you to me? But I would teach a little child. My little boy learned to say thank you.

That's how Jesus treated these people. For their good. Why do you teach your children to say I'm sorry? Why do you teach your children to say thank you? That's a very good habit.

And Jesus was teaching them that thankfulness is good for you. It's not because I'm standing up here like a Maharaja saying you've got to thank me. No.

It's good for you folks. Where are these 9 people? They've missed something. This man came back and Jesus said, stand up.

Before that, verse 18. When you give thanks for something somebody did for you, this is an ordinary physical healing that somebody got. It's called in verse 18, giving glory to God.

You know how to give glory to God? First step. Thank you Lord for forgiving my sin. Do you know you are giving glory to God when you say that? See, this man came and said thank you Lord for healing me.

Jesus said he's giving glory to God. Some of you have wondered, how can I give glory to God? You learned something today. Just say thank you.

Thank you for healing me. Haven't many of you been healed from flu and fever and cold and cough? I myself was down for 2 weeks with really bad cough. I want to say thank you Lord for healing me so that I can be here and speak.

I want to be thankful for little things. Learn to be thankful. It's a way of giving glory to God when you say thank you to the Lord.

And then, more than that, you see, God always rewards those who have a thankful heart. Jesus said to them, stand up. In verse 19 he told this one man, your faith has saved you.

Sorry, says my margin. Saved you. What did you get till now? Healing.

But because you became thankful, what did you get? Salvation. One leper got healing plus salvation. Nine lepers got healing.

Can you learn something from that? That guy went to heaven. The other nine may have gone to hell. See the difference that thankfulness makes.

Your faith has saved you. The other nine got healing. So, these are lessons we learn about the importance of giving thanks to God.

So in the new covenant, we have to be so thankful to God that God has given us so many blessings that people in the old covenant didn't have. For example, it says in Hebrews chapter 9, that the blood of Jesus Christ is better than the blood of bulls and goats. We know that.

In the Old Testament they used to put the blood of a bull or a goat to symbolize what would one day be the blood of Jesus. But it says in Hebrews chapter 9, that about the blood of goat, verse 13, Hebrews 9.13, the blood of goats and bulls only externally sanctified their flesh, their physical body. But the blood of Christ, verse 14, will cleanse your conscience.

The cleansing of the conscience was never possible under the old covenant. You know sin was only covered in the old covenant. Blessed is the man whose sin is covered.

Forgiven in the sense it was covered. Psalm 32, it says, blessed is the man whose sin is covered. You can look it up whenever you get time, Psalm 32.

It's like, if all the sins are written here on a piece of paper and you cover it with a sheet. Okay, you can't see it. That's how old covenant forgiveness was.

The blood of bulls and goats, covered. When you lift it up, you can see it there. But the blood of Jesus is like taking a wet rag and wiping it all out.

It's gone. You can't see it anymore. Do you know the difference between being covered and being cleansed? We are cleansed.

But the devil still likes to come and remind you. You remember what you did 10 years ago? You remember that terrible thing? And he reminds you of the worst sins you've committed in your life. And in the Old Testament, they were constantly harassed by that.

It says there was a constant reminder in the Old Testament of sins that were committed. Because they were reminded, reminded, reminded. Like you read in Hebrews.

But in the New Testament, you don't have to allow the devil to remind you if you know that the blood of Jesus has cleansed your conscience. Not only cleansed your conscience, but it says in Romans 5.9 that through the blood of Christ, I have been there's this great word called justified. Romans 5.9 justified.

Justified means more than forgiven. For many years, I said justified was just as if I had never sinned. Some years ago, I was listening to a message by my son, Sandeep.

He was saying justified means more than being that the sin is as if you've never sinned. It means being actually declared righteous. And I said, hey, that's right.

It's wonderful. We can learn things from our children. Justified means more than just being as if I'd never sinned.

More than that. If I'd never sinned, that doesn't mean I have the righteousness of Christ. I've never sinned.

But justified means I'm justified with the righteousness of Christ upon me, which is a million times more than just as if I'd never sinned. So don't think of justified as just as if I'd never sinned. Great.

That itself would have been great. But declared righteous with the righteousness of Christ. Christ Himself is my righteousness.

It's not that Christ is there and He gives me His righteousness. No, no, no, no, no. It says in 1 Corinthians 1 that in verse 30, Christ Himself is my righteousness.

Now that's different from Christ giving me His righteousness. Christ Himself is my righteousness. And that is the meaning of going to God in prayer and praying in the name of Jesus.

So I hope you understand a little bit now what it means to pray in the name of Jesus. I'm saying, Lord, I've got no ability to come to You in my own name. Even if I'm being faithful for the last 50 years, I cannot come in my own name.

It is in the name of Jesus. That's why we pray in the name of Jesus in our prayer. Next time you pray in the name of Jesus, remember this.

It's not just a convenient way to end the prayer and say Amen. I'm saying, Lord, everything I prayed today, I'm coming with no merit of mine. My merit, I'll get nothing.

Because I'm coming with Christ as my righteousness. It's almost as though, almost like Jesus himself asking the Father for something. And Jesus said to His Father once, I know that you always hear me.

You read in John 11 at the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus said to the Father, I know you always hear me. And think that in the new covenant, I can be like that. If my conscience is clear, that means everything I know to be wrong, I have confessed.

If I have to ask forgiveness from somebody, I have asked forgiveness. If I have to set something right, I've set it right. And I don't delay it.

The main question I ask married couples is, do you forgive one another? Never go to bed angry. Forgive one another and be quick to ask forgiveness. And most married couples are honest and say, well, Brother Zach, I don't ask immediately.

And most of them are very humble. They say, my partner asks more quickly than I do. I've never heard a married couple say, I ask quicker than my husband.

Thank God. He's better than me. It's a wonderful thing when I hear a married couple in CFC who understood the truth so much that they judge themselves, that they value the other person as more spiritual than themselves.

But be quick. So what I tell them is this time gap between doing something wrong, knowing you've done something wrong and asking forgiveness, if it's one hour, reduce it, reduce it until it becomes zero. And as soon as you're aware you did something wrong, clear your conscience.

Because then when you pray in the name of Jesus, God hears. Because your conscience is clear. Psalm 66 verse 18 says, if there's sin in your heart, the Lord will not hear you.

That's like you dial a number on the phone and God doesn't pick up the phone. He says, Oh, it's that guy. He hasn't asked forgiveness from somebody.

I'm not even going to pick up the phone. Do you know that I believe that more than 95% of prayers that Christians pray are not heard by God. I'm sure that a lot of prayers that many of you have prayed, God never heard it.

And he will not hear it because there's somebody you have to ask forgiveness from. Or there's somebody you have to forgive. It is so important.

And then we can come as Christ as my righteousness before God. Do you know in the Old Testament, it was not like that. You know the New Testament standard, Matthew 6 and verse 14 and 15.

Please turn with me to Matthew 6 and verse 14 and 15. If Two ifs. Capital if.

If you forgive others, your heavenly father will forgive you. You say, hey, I thought if I confess my sins, my heavenly father will forgive me. Yes, you have to confess your sin but you've also got to forgive others.

And to emphasize that, verse 15, if you don't forgive others, your heavenly father will not forgive you. I mean, it is not necessary to say that, but Jesus repeated it so that there's no doubt in your mind. If you don't forgive, that means if there's one human being anywhere in the world, maybe in Alaska or Antarctica or somewhere, one person who did some terrible thing to me 25 years ago, or who scandalized my daughter or my children in some bad way many years ago, I haven't, I've got a grudge against that person till today, who cheated me of some money years ago, made me, got me some terrible loss, told a sort of lies against me in the office, made me lose my job and my family and I suffered so much.

The Lord says, forgive. Well, you have a choice, otherwise you won't be forgiven. Brother, sister, the wisest thing is to forgive.

There are people who have ulcers in their stomach because they haven't forgiven. There are people who live with migraine, constant headaches because they haven't forgiven somebody. Sleepless nights because they haven't forgiven somebody.

That fellow harmed you 25 years ago, but he's still harming you by making you sleepless at night today. Look at the power he's got on your mind. Can't you get rid of him by forgiving him? Very important.

It was not like this in the Old Testament. I'll give you an example, turn with me to 1 Kings. In the first book of Kings, you read about the time when David was dying and when he was dying, he called his son Solomon and told him some wonderful things.

It's like 1 Kings chapter 2, he called Solomon and said, be strong, verse 2, show yourself to be a man, verse 3. 1 Kings chapter 2, verse 3, keep the charge of the Lord, walk in His ways, keep His commandments, His ordinances, His testimonies, according to all that the Lord, the law of Moses, then you'll succeed. So that the Lord will carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, and if your sons are careful in their way, there will not lack of man on the throne of Israel. Your descendants will always be kings of Israel.

If he had stopped there and said, that's it, Solomon, God bless you, and if the next verse was verse 10, then David slept, that would have been great. But it was not like that. He said something more, it's like I say, you make a first class chicken curry and then you put a dead lizard inside it and stir it nicely.

You say, what in the world? If you saw your wife doing that, you say, are you crazy? That first class chicken curry, you're going to put a dead lizard at the end of it? Here's the dead lizard that David put at the end of his advice to Solomon. Now you know, Joab, that is Zeruiah, David's sister by the way, my nephew, my sister Zeruiah's son, you know what he did? He killed a couple of people and in the time of peace, he shed blood. So you must make sure that he's a grey haired man today but don't let his grey hair go down to hell in peace.

Kill him! And then you know, this other man was kind to me, so you please be kind to him, to the sons of Barzillai, they were kind to me and when I was running away, they helped me be kind to him. But then you know this other guy called Shimei, verse 8, he's the one who cursed me when Absalom chased me from the throne and I was going down to Mahanaim and this chap came and cursed me with a violent curse. He called him all types of bad names, you read that in 2 Samuel 15, 16 and all.

And then, when Absalom was killed and David was coming back, Shimei came and met him and said, oh David please forgive me, I'm so sorry that I cursed you. You read that also in 2 Samuel. And I'm really sorry and David said, okay, I swear by the Lord, I forgive you, you're not put to death.

You will not be put to death for cursing the king. He says that. When he came down to me at Jordan and apologized, I swore to him I will not put him to death.

But, Solomon, you did not make that promise, remember? I made that promise. He was a legalist. You must not spare that guy.

Even though I said outwardly I have forgiven you, oh, I couldn't get over the fact that one day he cursed me. Do you forgive people like that? You say to them in their face, yeah, you're forgiven. But you can't get away that bitterness in your heart against that person.

And you pass on that bitterness to your children, to other family members, when you sit around the dining table, tell them the tales about Shimei and others who did wrong to you and pollute those poor minds. Their minds were pure till you went and told them all the stories of people who hurt you. What? I mean, are you doing the work of the devil or what? Their innocent minds are being polluted.

Who's dying? That's not the work of the Holy Spirit. You know how many believers are agents of Satan? When they sit around the dining table of their family, the things they tell. Remember Joab? Remember Shimei? And remember, and some bold son may say, but Dad, you forgave him.

I remember you told him. Yeah, that's okay, but we can't just get rid of it like that. Parents, so-called believing parents, sitting in CFC, maybe even preaching, and destroying their children at home.

That's why your children don't grow up to follow the Lord. You have polluted them at home with all your gossip. And so he tells them, look at the way he puts it.

He doesn't just say, kill him. He says, that gray hair must be, have blood on it. Verse 9, and let him go to hell, but with blood on his gray hair.

Kill him. What's the next word? And David died. That's the next.

Not even one minute for him to repent of that statement. You never know when death comes. You haven't forgiven somebody, and you're in a road accident and you die, where are you going to go? David slept.

Now let me ask you a question. Is David in heaven today? That's a tough question. Think of the times when Jesus spoke about himself as the son of David.

I'll tell you, when a six-month-old baby dirties his underwear or diapers, it's not serious. It's not a big crime. But if a 20-year-old son spoils his underwear with he passes stools in his underwear, that's pretty serious.

David was a baby. Old Covenant people were babies. They were permitted to dirty their diapers, sleep with dirty diapers.

It was overlooked because they were under the Old Covenant. You read Galatians chapter 3 and chapter 4, the Old Covenant people were children. The New Covenant people are adult sons and daughters.

I'm just showing you the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant. Very often we think of the blessings of the New Covenant. Here's one of them.

It's a blessing that I can forgive others and finally die. Or forgive others while I'm alive. Every single day.

Forgive. That's to be like God. We all say we want to be like God.

Our Father. I want to be like you Lord. What do you think God is doing in Heaven? One of the things God does, He's listening to people asking Him to forgive them.

How many people do you think in 24 hours are asking God from Earth please forgive me? Five? Ten? Millions. Millions of Christians doing something wrong and saying Lord they may not ask each other for forgiveness but they ask the Lord please forgive me. What is God doing? Forgiven.

Next second somebody else, forgiven. Next second somebody there in another country, forgiven. Next second another believer over there, forgiven.

Next second somebody in another part of the world God says forgiven, forgiven. I get the picture of God 24 hours saying forgiven, forgiven, forgiven, forgiven, forgiven, forgiven. You want to be like God? I want to be like Him.

Always ready to say forgiven, forgiven, forgiven, forgiven. Even before they ask. I've developed that habit of when I hear somebody tell me Brother Zach you know that fellow told some evil story about you over there.

I say okay Lord. I forgive him Lord. I mean he's not even met me.

He may never ask me for forgiveness. It doesn't matter. I forgive people who don't ask me.

If it's a believer who is in fellowship with me, then I cannot forgive him until he asks because there it results in fellowship. See that's the difference between an unbeliever committing sin against me whom I can forgive immediately like Jesus on the cross. Even if they crucify you, Father forgive them.

They didn't ask Jesus for forgiveness. Forgive him. Because they are unbelievers.

People without any light. But what if it's a brother in the church who's done something wrong for you. Let me tell you what Jesus said.

Luke 17 Luke 17 and verse 3 Be on your guard if your brother not a stranger not an unbeliever if your brother sins as a brother in the church rebuke him. Go to him and say brother that wasn't right the way you spoke. If he's a stranger or an unbeliever, ignore it.

He's on his way to hell in any case. But if it's a brother who sinned against you, are you interested in saving him from hell? Don't just preach the gospel to him. Don't just baptize him.

If he sinned and he's guilty, tell him. And verse 3, if he repents forgive him. Meaning, if he doesn't repent you can't forgive him.

Is there somebody I'm not supposed to forgive? I'll tell you something. I never try to be more spiritual than Jesus. Some believers try to be more spiritual than Jesus, not me.

There are believers, believe it or not, they try to be more spiritual than Jesus. They say even if he doesn't repent, forgive him. No.

I say if he repents, I'll forgive him. But if he's an unbeliever, I'll forgive him even if he doesn't ask. I never see him immediately forgiven.

Even if he crucifies me, Father, forgive him. Why the difference? Because a brother is someone you have to have fellowship with. And you cannot have fellowship with a person if there's an unsettled matter between you and him.

You can be good to him. Of course, I'll be good to everybody. I've got to be good.

Even if a man doesn't ask forgiveness, I'll be good to him. But I cannot forgive that brother if I cannot have fellowship with him because he's violated something. He's cut the wire in the electric cord and, you know, if a wire is cut, the lights go off and some odd carnal person says, ignore it, man, ignore it.

You ignore it, the light never comes on. Connect the wire again. Repair it.

Repair it. And the light will come on. Repair that relationship with your brother.

Then the fellowship will come on like the light. But you are the super spiritual person. Try to be more spiritual than Jesus.

Oh, I'm so good. Even if he doesn't ask me forgiveness, I forgive him. And there's no light.

Because the connection is broken. I want to give you a little warning. Don't try to be more spiritual than Jesus Christ.

That's one mark of fantastic pride. Jesus says, if he repents, forgive him, but I'm better than that. Even if he doesn't repent, I forgive him.

If you become an elder in a church, you'll understand that better. Sometimes people wonder, why is an elder so hard on that other person? Well, if you want to build a pure church and you become an elder, you'll know. And if you're not hard on that person, you'll build a corrupt church which the devil will be ruling and reigning.

That's why some people need to be disciplined in a church. They say, Brother Zach, can't you just ignore it? Forget it. Don't even mention it.

Okay, he did some stupid thing. Ignore it. Go ahead, brother.

You try and build a church like that. I'd like to see you build a new covenant church on that basis, anywhere. I've seen people who try to be more spiritual than Jesus, even some elders.

And I've seen the type of church they build. Chaos. No, I will not build a church like that.

Paul said, I want to present the church as a pure virgin to Jesus Christ. And to present a pure virgin, if you have a daughter who you see is fooling around with, or going to fool around with another boy, you will cut her off with strong words. You will even lock her up in the room.

You can't go out today. I don't want you to meet with this man. And somebody says, Brother, don't be such a hard father.

And his own, that guy's own who gives you that advice, his daughter's like a prostitute, but you kept your daughter pure. Paul said, I want to keep my church pure as a virgin for Christ. And that's why I'm strict.

I praise God for strict elders in CFC. They do more good than all these people who will allow anything to happen. Fellowship is more important.

And it's because a brother is involved, it involves fellowship. The Lord says, you cannot ignore it. The wire is cut.

Don't ignore it. There's no light there. The only way for that light to come is you got to join the broken electric wire and fix it.

Connect the two cables inside and the light will come on. But you keep ignoring it because you love that person so much. You live in the darkness.

That's the reason for darkness in a lot of churches. And it says, what if that connection breaks again and again? Verse 4, seven times in a day. And seven times in a day he comes and says to you, I repent.

Forgive him. What does he say? Not, I'm sorry. There's a lot of difference between saying, I'm sorry and I repent.

Again, let me say, I will not be more spiritual than Jesus. You want to be popular? Ignore what these brothers do. You want to be popular? When he says, I'm sorry, you say, okay, brother, it's forgiven.

You want to be a disciple of Jesus, a godly elder? When he says, I'm sorry, you ask him, brother, have you recognized the wrong that you did? You repent of that, forgiven. If he says, I'm sorry, not good

enough. If he says, I repent, do you know the difference between saying, I'm sorry and turning around from a sin, which is repentance? You know what Jesus said? Heaven and earth will pass away.

My word will not pass away. I believe those words. We are not living in David's time where a person can even on his deathbed say, kill that fellow and still go to heaven.

No. Babies are treated in a different way from adults. You know that.

If a baby does something wrong, people ignore it. If an adult does it, serious. So New Covenant is like that.

New Covenant is not only tremendous privileges, but tremendous responsibilities. There are tremendous privileges we have. And most people, when they talk about the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant, they only proclaim the privileges.

Praise God for that. I do that too. But along with the responsibilities in the New Covenant.

You want to build a New Covenant church? That's the way you've got to treat a brother. Privileges. The tremendous privilege of having a good conscience.

The tremendous privilege of being, God is my father, and not only God is my father, but having Jesus as my brother. Turn with me to John's Gospel in chapter 15. In John 15, Jesus said to his disciples at the Last Supper, verse 15.

John 15 15. I don't call you slaves any longer. I call you friends.

It is a promotion. If a servant in your house is promoted from being a slave to a friend, good. But three days later, just three days later, Jesus gives them another title after the Resurrection.

He tells Mary Magdalene, who saw Jesus the first after his Resurrection, John chapter 20. Go and tell my brothers. Middle of verse 17.

John 20, verse 17. Go and tell my brothers I ascend to my father and your father, my God and your God. That's the first time he calls his disciples my brothers.

There's another place earlier where he told the public, who are my mother and my brothers? These who hear the word of God and do it. But this is the first time that he looked at his, talked about his disciples and said, these are my brothers. They were servants, they became friends, and they became brothers.

And this is the first time he uses this expression my father and your father. Never before did he use it. Most, all the other time Jesus either said my father or your father.

That was many times. But my father and your father putting us in the same boat. Equal to him as a brother.

First time. That's what happened in the Resurrection. In the Resurrection, Jesus became our elder brother.

And do you know when we call each other brother, sister, you know it's a title. Dear younger brother of Jesus Christ. Dear younger sister of Jesus Christ.

So when somebody calls you a sister, you better behave yourself as a younger sister of Jesus Christ. That's why, you know, I go to different places and they tell me, what should we call you, pastor, reverend? I say, don't give me all these low down titles. Give me a proper title, brother of Jesus Christ.

Why you want to call me reverend and right reverend and pastor and reverend doctor and all these things? No, no, no, no, no, no. I'm a brother. Can you find a bigger title than brother of Jesus Christ? Is there anything higher than that in the world? All these pastors who are seeking to be called pastor.

Now many pastors will be offended if you call them brother. They like this low down title of pastor or low down title of reverend or right reverend or metropolitan or all types of things. I can't understand it.

They don't have a clue what New Covenant is. Younger brother of Jesus Christ. God is my father.

My heavenly dad. John 17, 23. He loves me exactly like he loved Jesus.

John 17, verse 23. I tell you, this is the verse that changed my life 43 years ago. Not only the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Along with that, like the Bible says, when the spirit comes into your heart, he cries out, dad. Or as the Bible says, Abba. Abba is the Hebrew word for dad.

Or closer to our Tamil and Malayalam, Abba. That's what it says in Romans chapter 8. You know that the Holy Spirit, when he comes into our heart, he cries out. It's one of the marks of being born again.

Romans 8, 15. He cries out, Abba. Or in English, daddy.

That's how you know the Holy Spirit's come in. I've got a daddy in heaven who loves me. Wonderful.

Nobody in the old covenant could have that. Nobody could go to him and say, daddy. I can do it.

I don't use the word daddy in public. I do what Jesus said. Father.

Father in heaven. But privately, when I'm praying alone to God, I say, dad. I call him dad.

It's like my children call me. I don't sing these songs of Jehovah. There's no God like Jehovah.

There's no God like Jehovah. I say, all Jewish people, please sing that. I'm not a Jew.

I'm a disciple of Jesus. I never sing that song. I sing softly while they're singing that.

I say, there's no God like my dad. Let them sing that. I don't think it's so loud it'll clash with their words.

All the Jews are singing, there's no God like Jehovah. I sing, there's no God like my dad. I take the new covenant seriously.

Every word is important. Let no careless word come out of my mouth. And you heard me use the example.

People have told me this. Isn't God's name Jehovah? Why can't we call him? I said, if my son comes to me and says, Mr. Poonen, can I talk to you? I'll say, are you angry with me? And you go to God and say, Jehovah. I'll say, are you angry with me? Sure.

Any father will wonder why his... Don't say, isn't his name Jehovah? I can call him. If you're a Jew, by all means call him Jehovah. But for me, he's dad.

It means so much to me because it made a tremendous difference in my life. I was an insecure Christian. Always scared.

Shy. Withdrawn. When I was born again.

And I said, Lord, I can't be a witness for you like this. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. And when God filled me with the Holy Spirit, one of the things that happened to me was, he became my dad.

And thereafter, I'm very careful. You know, even some of the well-known sayings, guide me, O thou great Jehovah. No, no, no.

Guide me, O my Heavenly Father. I just don't use that word. And if you ask me why, I say because I'm not a Jew.

I'm a Christian. I'm a born-again Christian. And that's not, for me, that's not the way I call him.

It's very important. Try and take a concordance and go through, look up and see the word Jehovah. And see how many times it comes in the New Testament.

See the Apostle Paul, who was a Jew for 30 years. He said, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He got converted from calling God Jehovah for 30 years to calling God Dad.

We who have never called God Jehovah, we get converted and start calling Him Jehovah. We're crazy. I tell you, you think that's unimportant? You think of your relationship with the Father.

That's why so much insecurity. You don't know God as your Dad. You've got a stranger in Heaven.

I've got a Dad in Heaven. You've got a head of government in Heaven. He's not the head of government for me.

He's my Dad. He may be the head of government for the universe, but he's my Dad. It's so important.

John 17, 23. He says, The world must know and I want the world to know that you have loved them just like you loved me. John 17 verse 23, the last part.

So that the world may know that you sent me and you loved them just as much as you loved me. There are many verses in the Bible that says God loves us. But only one verse that tells us how much He loved us.

Only one. God loves me as much as He loved Jesus. To me, that is the central verse in the whole Bible.

You ask me the message of the Bible in one verse? I'll tell you. God loves me as much as He loved Jesus Christ. Everything else in the Bible flows from that.

That is the source of the spring from which I get forgiveness, from which I get fullness of the spirit, from which God equips me to preach His word, anoints me continuously to preach His word, to build churches, to proclaim the truth. In every way, it flows from one spring, in my life anyway. God loves me as much as He loved Jesus.

It's an amazing truth. Do I deserve it? Definitely not. I'm the last person in the world to deserve it.

But He loves me. He loves those who don't deserve. He fills with the spirit those who don't deserve.

I remember when I was asking God for refilling of the Holy Spirit 44 years ago, I was in such desperate need, broken, defeated, I had hit rock bottom and I deserved to be sent to hell. And instead of sending me to hell, when I was praying and fasting and seeking God, He filled me with the Holy Spirit. Very opposite of what I should deserve.

It's like, I picture it like this, I'm working in a factory and I'm pretty useless with my hands and I mess up this machine and then the manager forgives me, the owner forgives me and then I go to another machine and I mess up that and then one day I mess up the most expensive machine in the factory and the owner of the factory says, come here, I want to see you. And I go to see him. I know I'm going to be fired, sacked and turned out of the office that day.

And he says, I'm appointing you general manager of this factory. And I'm making you of salary five times what you're getting. I said, don't make fun of me.

No, that's what I'm doing. But sir, I messed up all these machines. That's ok.

I know you'll be more responsible now. That's exactly what God did for me when He filled me with the Holy Spirit. When I was at rock bottom, I learned one thing that day that the fullness of the Spirit is not given to people who deserve it.

Some of you are trying to deserve the fullness of the Spirit. You can keep seeking for 50 years. You'll never get it.

Did you get forgiveness of sins because you deserved it? All the people who think they deserve forgiveness of sins and roll on the ground and go give money and light candles and go to temples and mosques and churches, they don't get it. But those who come and say, Lord, I don't deserve it at all. I'm the worst sinner in the world, they get it immediately.

I didn't deserve to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I tell you the honest truth. I'm not trying to be humble.

If there was a person on earth that day, that was January the 12th, 1975. If there was one person on earth who did not deserve to be filled with the Holy Spirit in all the 7 or 5 billion people in the world those days, it was me. I said, I'm going to fill them with the Holy Spirit.

Don't go to God seeking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit thinking you deserve it. You'll never deserve it. Go to Him like you ask for forgiveness of sins.

Lord, I'm utterly undeserving. But I'm seeking you because I want to live for you. I want this power.

It's one of the great blessings of the New Covenant. What all happened to me when the Holy Spirit filled my inside? It's like my eyes were opened. The veil was taken away from scripture and I began to read the same verses I read for years and I got enlightened.

God had become my dad. And a dad tells his children things that he doesn't tell other strangers. What a wonderful blessing to be in the New Covenant.

To know God as my dad. Jesus my elder brother. Like we sing in that song.

That's when I wrote that song. When I understood that in 1907. What He did for Jesus, He will do for you.

As He cared for Jesus, He will care for you. When people tried to kill Jesus when He was a baby, He was so helpless. God saved Him.

I've seen examples like that in my life. I don't have time to tell you all of them. But God saved me, protected me from evil men.

How many accidents He protects because He cares for me exactly like He cared for Jesus. Jesus could not die before His time. They could not throw Him over a cliff.

He could not drown in the sea. No! Because His hour had not yet come. They sent soldiers to capture Him.

They could not capture Him. His hour had not come. As He cared for Jesus, He will care for you.

As He loved Jesus, He will love you. Why is it Jesus didn't get cancer and die when He was 25? I'm not judging people who get cancer. I don't know all the reasons that happens.

But I know one thing. I know that I'm loved just like God loved Jesus. John 17, 23 is the foundation of my life.

My personal life, my family life, my church ministry, everything is founded on one foundation. God loves me as He loved Jesus Christ. You believe it? It's yours.

You don't believe it? It's not yours. Somebody gives you a check for 100 million rupees. You take it, put it in the bank, it's yours.

You look at it, frame it up and put it on the wall, you get nothing. You know that when it comes to money, you know that the only way is you put your name on it, cash it and give it in the bank for them to cash it. It's the same way, the promise.

God loves me as He loved Jesus. Lord, I believe it. Not because I deserve it.

Far from it. I tell you, I'm not trying to be humble. I did not deserve that more than any of you.

I deserved it less than all of you. But God filled me with the Holy Spirit. My whole life has changed.

It's the secret of the Christian life, the new covenant, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Don't treat it lightly. You go to God and say, Lord, I will not let you go unless you fill me with the Holy Spirit.

Like Jacob laid hold of God one day. He spent his life grabbing women and money and all that. One day he said, I grab hold of you God.

Read in Genesis 32. I think it's verse 25. I will not let you go until you bless me.

I will not let you go. When you see God like that, Dad, you're my dad, I've forgiven everybody, I have repented of everything that I know. I don't have victory yet.

No, no, no. I need the Holy Spirit to get victory. But I've forgiven everybody, I've repented of everything, I've turned from everything.

I want you to fill me with the Holy Spirit. Dad, why won't you do that for me? You will do it for me. And then believe he'll do it.

You, unworthy, undeserving you, can experience the mighty miracle of God in your life. Go and seek him. You don't have to go to some meeting where you ask somebody to lay his empty hands on your empty head.

That's not the way to get the anointing. Go before God and say, Lord Jesus, put your nail-pierced hands that's what I often say, put your nail-pierced hands on my head, Lord, and anoint me. That's what I want.

And I tell you, God will do it. Why won't he do it? If he did it for me, I'm absolutely sure he'll do it for you. He won't make you a preacher like me.

If you're coveting to be a preacher like me, forget it. Your gift may be something else. If God has called you to be a little finger and not a tongue, maybe I'm the tongue.

If God says you're to be a little finger, not a tongue, be happy to be a little finger. Be happy to have the ministry God has for you. Don't look for ministry.

Say, Lord, I want the life that Brother Zach has. The same life of never getting discouraged, always giving thanks, and forgiving everybody, and releasing everybody, and free from anger. I want that life, even if I don't have any ministry.

I want that life. Seek for the life. Many people, when they seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they're coveting a ministry.

That's why you don't get it. Seek for the life. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, help us never to forget what a tremendous privilege it is to know you as Dad. To be forgiven, cleansed, and for Christ to become our righteousness. We pray in Jesus' name.

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

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