

The Call of God - the Glory of Jesus

by Zac Poonen

The key to eternal life and a victorious Christian life is to know God and surrender everything to Him, trusting in His goodness and sovereignty.

Duration: 55:42

Scripture: Habakkuk 2:4, Matthew 6:33, John 4:1-42, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38, 1 John 5:4

Topics: "Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of living by faith and surrendering everything to God. He references the Bible verse in 1 John 5 that states faith is the victory that overcomes the world. The preacher also highlights the need to surrender our ambitions, plans, and desires to God's will for our lives. He encourages listeners to live a life of security in God, rather than relying on worldly notions of security. The sermon concludes with a prayer for faith, assurance, and acceptance of God's call.

Transcript

We were looking at that verse where Jesus said, eternal life is to know God. And I was saying how it's increasingly become my desire to get people in our churches in India to have a passion to know God. This has been the thing that has helped me the most in my life.

Not a doctrine, not an experience. Doctrines and experiences have their place, but it's the knowledge of God that brings wisdom, not knowledge of the Bible. A lot of people know the Bible and have many experiences, and they don't grow in wisdom.

When they come to some complicated situation in life, they don't know how to handle it. They react just like any atheist. They make choices just like people who don't know God, even though their knowledge of the Bible is far superior to other people's.

I want to encourage all of you, my brothers and sisters, make the knowledge of God your greatest desire, to know Jesus Christ intimately, personally, to allow the Holy Spirit to show you more and more of the glory of Jesus every day, and to conform you to that likeness. We can see it in little places here and there in Scripture, where the Holy Spirit shows us the glory of Jesus. For example, when Jesus was speaking to the woman of the well of Samaria, I saw something of the glory of Jesus there once when I was reading it.

You know, these little glimpses the Holy Spirit gives us, shows us what God is like, and that removes all the false concepts of God that we have received from childhood, from the devil, from the religious Christian upbringing we have had. I believe all of us have got a wrong concept of God from the religious Christian upbringing we have had. That's made us sort of afraid of Him, and I believe the only reason why people don't surrender everything to Him is because they don't know God.

They think He is unworthy. Would you hesitate to give all your savings to someone whom you could trust 100% and who said to you, that I'll give you back 100 times what you give me? You wouldn't hesitate. You'd gladly do it.

But that's what the Lord says. But you find in so many areas we hesitate. We're calculating in our giving.

We give, but we always keep an account of how much. Think of a wife who had that type of relationship with her husband, where she was always calculating how much he gave and how much he yielded. You can be pretty sure that's not a happy marriage.

And that's how it is with a lot of Christians. It's not a happy marriage between them and Jesus Christ. They're always calculating.

Yeah, they give, but they keep a record of it. As I read here in John 4, I see that as Jesus was speaking to her about the water that He could give her, He then came to the point where He wanted to expose her sin. And so even though He knew as a prophet, He knew what was her private life, He said to her, Go and call your husband to see whether she would be honest.

And she said, I have no husband. Jesus said, Yeah, that's right. You have no husband.

But you've had five husbands. The one whom you now have is not your husband. This you said truly.

And she felt uncomfortable. And you know what we do when we are uncomfortable. We change the subject.

And that's exactly what she did. She said, I want to ask you about worship. Our fathers worshiped here.

And you people say we should be in Jerusalem. How do you think we should worship? And here is where I see the glory of Jesus. He didn't say, Wait a minute, let's clear this matter first.

He said, Okay, I'll tell you about worship. You see the glory of Jesus there? He was so sensitive to that sore point that He just skipped it and went on to talk about something else. He never wanted her to feel uncomfortable.

How is it with us? Do you ever make your wife feel uncomfortable? Do you ever make your husband feel uncomfortable? Okay, they did something wrong. Or a brother. Or a sister.

We have to see the glory of Jesus first. And the Holy Spirit shows us what Jesus is like. Then He transforms us into that likeness.

So that's why I say, This is eternal life. To know Jesus Christ and the Father whom He explained. The more you see Him, the more your life will be transformed.

And all that false zeal which goes under the name of Holy Spirit fire will go. And will be replaced with a gentleness that accomplishes more than that zeal. I know that from my own life.

I know the times in my younger days when I thought every meeting was meant to beat people up with the word of God and make them all blue, beaten up left, right and center. And you know, I've discovered that Christians like to be beaten when they come to church. They feel good when they are hammered and clobbered.

They feel that's a good meeting. I really got hit today. And you know what the Lord showed me? The Lord said, You're like a surgeon who takes people into an operating theater, cuts them open, exposes the cancer and wheels them out.

Say, go. Yeah, there is cancer there. It needs to be cut open.

But if you're a good surgeon, you'll remove the cancer, stitch them up, give them a painkiller so that they can sleep and go peacefully out of the operating theater. That's the way the message needs to be preached. And I wasn't preaching it like that.

It doesn't mean I don't expose the cancers now. I do still in my church. But I stitch it up.

I give a painkiller. There's a world of difference. That's healing, not just clobbering and hammering.

But that comes when we see the glory of Jesus in the way He dealt with people. He was so sensitive. And I believe, as I said earlier, if we make this our goal, we'll make a lot more progress in the Christian life in six months than just with increasing a lot of knowledge.

There is no secret for victory. There is no secret of the deeper life that you're going to hear in some tape or the other or some conference or the other. The answer is in Jesus.

In Him. Everything is in Him. And I was thinking also what I said in the morning about joy.

We can hear a message like that that New Covenant righteousness is a righteousness with joy. And I want to pretend that I've got this joy. So I go around with a perpetual smile like people say smile Jesus loves you.

And I don't believe Jesus was going around with a smile always looking like an idiot down the street. He doesn't like that. Smiling is not rejoicing.

I mean there is a place for smiling and laughing but I want to say this. The joy of the Holy Spirit can be in your heart even when externally you may be going through pain, sorrow, difficulty, trial. Think for example if you are having a difficulty with a difficult child who is rebellious he won't be smiling.

But you need not lose the joy of the Holy Spirit in your heart. Jesus was a man of sorrows but He had joy deep within. So we need to distinguish between that superficial type of joy that I have seen in a lot of charismatic circles which is not deep, it doesn't last.

They look spiritual when they speak in other tongues in the meeting very carnal when they speak in their mother tongue afterwards to somebody else. It doesn't last, it's all in the meeting. And in the meeting they look very exuberant trying to work up joy.

That's not what I am talking about. Jesus didn't have that type of joy it was a deep joy that was deep within. He didn't have to show it to impress people that He was full of joy.

It was there all the time. I say that because you know some people's temperament naturally makes them externally exuberant. Doesn't mean they are spiritual.

I'll never forget once when I was in a charismatic meeting and I saw a man sitting down in the third or fourth row really clapping and his was the most cheerful face in that whole meeting. I said, boy this man is really full of the joy of the Lord I really want to meet him after the meeting. So after the meeting I went to him and within about five feet I could smell the alcohol.

Yeah, there are many spirits that can make you full of joy. And I discovered something that day it's easy to fool other people. It's what we heard earlier Merv say, you know I want to impress you with many things.

I want to impress you that I have this new covenant joy. You know, I've had an experience and now I can wave my hands in the meeting unlike the olden days when I was sitting like this. Do you think you've got the joy of the Holy Spirit because of that? You just changed your Christian culture from one to the other, that's all.

And you're an inward looking man trying to look exuberant that's not it. Jesus didn't say go into all the world and make extroverts of people for outgoing and exuberant. He said make disciples.

Those who give up everything to follow Him. And who will have this joy produced by the Holy Spirit which is deep within because of a simple childlike trust in our Heavenly Father who works all things for our good. You know, one of the blessed things when we surrender everything to God is that He makes everything work together for our good.

That's what the Bible says. And that's what gives us joy. My Heavenly Father is on the throne.

There are times in my life like in the life of all human beings when I'm tempted to be discouraged. Sometimes when things go wrong sometimes when suddenly something happens which I didn't anticipate and sometimes for no rhyme or reason at all. I don't know why.

I suppose just because I've got a flesh and I'm living in a sin-cursed earth I can't think of any reason. Tempted. But I know it's not God's will for me to be discouraged.

Even for a single moment. It's not God's will that I should feel depressed and gloomy because once I yield there it's easy for the devil to knock me down further and make me sin more. But I can't get away from this feeling.

So what I do? Well, I say, Lord, there may be so many things going wrong around me and there are a lot of other things I can't explain why they're happening. I've prayed and the answer doesn't seem to have come. I don't know why.

I've prayed with whatever faith I have. I don't have any more. Sometimes I pray like that father.

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. And at the end of it all it looks as if that problem still remains.

But I say, Lord, all of these things and let there be ten thousand more things which go wrong. Do not alter the fact that God is on the throne of the universe. He's still running the universe.

That hasn't changed just because some small little thing happened over here. And Jesus Christ still has all authority in heaven and earth. That hasn't changed.

He hasn't given that over to the devil or to the American president or to anyone. He's still got all authority in heaven and earth. That hasn't changed.

So I say, Lord, I say that with my mouth so that I can confess with my mouth and be saved. Saved this time from I was saved from hell long ago but to be saved from discouragement now. If you believe in your heart and you confess with your mouth it says you'll be saved.

You'll be delivered. So, I say, Lord, that's true. Another thing that cannot change is the fact that Satan was defeated two thousand years ago on Calvary.

That does not change. These are facts that do not change. Satan's got no power over me.

He was defeated. Long, long ago. He hasn't been destroyed.

That I know. But he's been defeated. And if these things are true, then God is on the throne.

Jesus Christ's got all authority in heaven and earth. Satan's been destroyed. And, Lord, I believe another thing is true.

As far as I know, I have surrendered everything to You. I desire nothing but Your will in my life. Therefore, I believe that Your promise in Romans 8.28 that every single thing that comes into my life over which I have no control is going to work for my good.

There was this old prayer prayed by a saint. I don't know who prayed it. You've probably seen it written on plaques in different places.

Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. That means the calmness of mind to accept certain things I cannot change. The courage and boldness and I would say faith to change the things that I can.

And the wisdom to know the difference which is which. That's a good prayer. Lord, there are certain things I can never change.

There are aspects of my personality with which I'll live forever, I suppose. There are certain habits that have become so much a part of me maybe I can never change them. Not sinful habits, but things which I'd like to make better.

And other things, certain circumstances I can never change. That's fine. Give me the calmness of mind to accept it.

And then there are a whole lot of other areas which can be changed by prayer, by faith, by persistence, seeking God. And now, Lord, give me the wisdom to know which is which. Which falls in this category and which falls in that.

And I see that the things which I am personally responsible for and which I can change is a very small circle. It's very little. And so I'm very blessed.

And you're blessed too because things you can change are really very little. You know that. Whole lot of things that other people are bothering you and you can't do anything about it.

It's circumstances over which you have no control. You don't have any control over the thunder or the lightning or the rain and so many other things and things that are happening in society and so many things I don't have control over. I have very small area.

That's all I've got to worry about. Make sure that in this area, in this circle, everything is surrendered to Christ at all times. Lord, I'm totally surrendered.

I mean, it could be in a difficult situation. I think of the real possibility that in a year or two we may have some persecution in India of Christians which you have never experienced for 50 years. It's got worse in the last year and could be worse in the days to come.

Okay. Well, it's not outside God's control. It's not something that He doesn't know about.

It's not something that's going to take Him by surprise. In fact, He knows it already. He knows the exact date when something is going to happen.

Two years from now. He knew it long, long ago. He doesn't take Him by surprise.

That's the thing that has encouraged me so much. When something suddenly comes upon me, maybe the evil of men that they have tried to do to me, maybe some rabid religious group that's trying to harass me or persecute me or a cult group or whatever it is. And they do something and I'm taken by surprise and momentarily there's a shock.

There's nothing wrong in that. I mean, if I saw a cobra coming out of that, under that chair, I would get a shock momentarily. But I don't live with that for the next two weeks.

It's a momentary reaction and that's natural when something suddenly comes into your life. You don't have to feel discouraged about that. Oh, what am I going to do now? No, that's not unbelief.

That's just we are human. It's that natural reaction. But then, we take stock of ourselves and we say, God's still on the throne.

Jesus Christ still got all authority in heaven and earth. That doesn't change. The devil's been defeated and all things outside my little circle and this particular thing is certainly outside my circle.

I couldn't do anything about that. That's what that fellow did. God deals with.

And when I have that faith, God is a God of love who deals with all these things and makes them work for my very best. I should praise the Lord. I have joy though there may be feelings of pressure.

And the feelings, I don't live by feelings. I confess my faith and keep on confessing it and after some time that temptation to discouragement and depression goes. I'm not telling you a technique I'm not teaching psychology here.

I don't believe in psychology. See, psychology tells us to believe what's not real. Faith tells us to believe what's real.

There's a lot of difference between the two. A lot of Christian preachers and even in charismatic circles very often it's psychological manipulation of people. I don't believe in that.

We either have a genuine work of the Holy Spirit or I want nothing. It's either nothing or a genuine work of the Holy Spirit. I don't want to work up a revival emotionally to satisfy myself and convince other people that I'm a man of God or some stupid thing like that.

I don't want that. Let God work in His own time. So, I'm not talking about a psychological technique here.

I'm telling you if you know Jesus as Lord of the Universe I'm not talking about a psychological technique here. I'm telling you if you know Jesus as Lord of the Universe and His promises and He takes care of all these things I can gladly surrender everything. No hesitation and be secure, wrapped up in the love of God.

You know that song Loved with everlasting love. One verse says Oh, pillowed on the loving breast Oh, to lie forever here Self and all cares resign and lean upon Him. Secure.

That's how we are to live in this world. And particularly in times of pressure and difficulty that we may be facing that we may face in the future. We need to learn to live like this and then we shall be triumphant.

No matter what comes. The world can never overcome us. Satan can never overcome us.

Jesus said I will build my church and the gates of hell will never prevail against it. And I used to think of also Lord, what about all those things which I'm reaping today because of some things I did in the past. You know, that's another thing that can bother us.

Particularly if you've lived a lot in sin. I mean a lot of people have the good fortune right from childhood to have been brought up in a very God-fearing home. They've never committed any gross sin and they've grown up pure and holy.

Well, that's good. I envy them. But I think 99% of Christians are not like that.

99% of believers have come from broken, difficult situations. They've messed up their life and then they come to Jesus. Like Paul, the chief of sinners.

Like Mary Magdalene, the first person whom Jesus gave the privilege to see him after his resurrection. Jesus did some unusual things. You know, to show how he valued people who were picked up from the gutter.

We think that it's only those who have had that very pure upbringing from childhood who can really come to great heights. It's not true. Now, what about people who've made a mess of their life and then later on, after they are converted, it could be something happening today which is a consequence of something that happened that you did wrong some time ago.

Not outside your circle, but inside your circle. You did something wrong 10 years ago or 5 years ago and today some consequences of that has come up. And one day the Lord showed me the answer to that also.

And it really comforted my heart. I saw the goodness of God. I thought in the story of the prodigal son, if one day, I mean a few days after he had come back home and there was this feast and he's back and accepted by the father, supposing one day one of his creditors from the far country to whom he owes a lot

of money comes to the door and the father opens the door and says, I want to meet your son.

He owes me a hundred thousand dollars or whatever it is. What will the father say? Will the father tell the son, Well son, that was before you came back. You better go and deal with him.

I can't do that for you. I take care of all your problems after you come here. What happened before, you better go and settle.

I don't believe he'd say that. I believe he'd face that creditor and tell me, Well, how much does he owe you? That much? Here it is. Go.

And I believe that's what God does, even concerning our past. When the consequences of that catch up with me today, God meets that at the door and deals with it. The most blessed life you can ever live.

I tell you this, is where you've surrendered everything at the feet of Jesus. All your ambitions, all your plans for your future, your life, your money, your time. And say, Lord, I want nothing but your will for my life on this earth.

I want to spend my earthly days doing whatever is your plan for my life because that's the very best I can do. Then, in the world in which we live, there's this matter of security. We think certain places are more secure than others.

Certain areas of the country we think are more secure. If I live there, I'll be secure. And certain countries are dangerous, so they're insecure, so perhaps I shouldn't go there.

For myself, I've seen one thing. The most secure place in the whole world is the center of God's perfect will for your life. He who dwells in the secret place is the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

And that doesn't matter whether you're in India or America or Honduras or Saudi Arabia or Russia or wherever the Lord calls you. If that's the place where God wants you to be, that's the most secure place in the whole world. You cannot find a safer place than that.

You can be killed in the streets of what you think is the most secure town in the world. No, God has made the world such a place of insecurity, purposely, so that people will not find their security in any nation or city or money or in the world. I also believe that all this economic system and the confidence that people have in money and various things, God is going to shake it all one day.

I have no doubt about it. The Bible says that every created thing will be shaken. I want to warn you of that, brothers and sisters.

Don't put your confidence in money or in land or investments or anything. Use them as long as you have the opportunity. But don't ever put your confidence in them.

Say, Lord, I do this. If it's gone, it's gone. I'm not bothered.

My foundation is in you. That never changes. God gives us time.

We must use it carefully. God gives us money. We must use it or invest it wisely.

We must take care of what God gives us and everything, but never should our confidence be in these things. We are not to be like that rich man who says, soul, sit back. You have laid up many goods for yourself for many years.

God is going to shake that type of confidence. Things are going to be shattered around us. People who have confidence in some earthly system so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain.

And we will discover in that day that the most secure people in all the world were those who surrendered everything to Christ and were in the center of God's will. I had to face up to this at times when I went to countries like Saudi Arabia or China or places like that to preach the gospel. Lord, can I, I mean, if you don't want me to go, I don't want to go.

I don't have any lust to go to some place just to say I went. There are some people who have that type of lust. But I don't want, I only want to go if I can edify people and it's just the same to me if you send me to Afghanistan or the United States.

It's just the same. Exactly the same. One, there is no preference over one, over the other.

Because I know if I am in the center of your will, that's the most secure place in the whole world. There is no more secure place than that. Therefore I have no hesitation to surrender everything, to do what you want me to do, to go where you want me to go, because I am secure in your love.

Now you may not be called to travel different places, but I want to say that to you in your local situations. Don't compare your lot with somebody else's. God's plan for all of us is not the same.

And if we believe in a God who loves us like he loved Jesus. See, that was the verse which I often talk about. It's in John 17, 23.

That's the verse that delivered me from insecurity in my life. If it helps you, you can take it. But in my younger days as a Christian, I was very insecure.

And when you are insecure, you are always... One of the things you do is try to impress people. It's insecure people who are always trying to impress. The more secure we are in the love of God, we don't want to impress anyone.

Because we are so happy with our Lord. I mean, it's like if a girl is deeply in love with a man and spending time with him, well, she is not bothered what all the other men in the world think about her. Is she? Not at all.

Let them think what they like. I and my beloved are happy together. What does it matter what others think? This is the type of relationship which Jesus jealously desires from all of us.

That type of relationship with Him. Like a bride in a bridegroom with our beloved. And it doesn't matter what anybody else in the world thinks about it.

But it says in John 17.23 that one of the things which we need to know and the world needs to know through us, Jesus said, is that the Father loved us, has loved us as He loved Jesus. Now, that was a revelation to my heart. I never read it in a book or heard it on a tape.

That was the only place in the whole Bible where it says how much God loved me. There are many places in the Bible where it tells us God loves us. But the extent of it, as I searched the scriptures, I found this was the only verse.

And it was an amazing verse. That the extent of God, the Father's love for me. The last part of verse 23.

This is it. As much as He loved Jesus. And from that, I came to many other truths.

I mean, if that is true, it says Jesus is the firstborn son, the elder brother, and I am one of His younger brothers. And I know as a father, I would make no distinction between my sons. What I do for one, I do for the other, exactly.

And with God, there is no partiality. If there is no partiality with God, what He did for the eldest son, He will also do for the younger son. Otherwise there is partiality.

If you do something for your elder son, which you will not do for your younger son, you are a partial father. God isn't like that. Bible says, that He determined that Jesus should be the firstborn among many brothers.

The eldest among many brothers. Romans 8.29. And there is no partiality. What He did for Jesus, He will do for you and me.

It is a tremendous revelation to my heart. That means, as He cared for Jesus, He would care for me. That's what brought security into my life.

The very first time Jesus got up to preach a sermon in Nazareth, they didn't even let Him complete the sermon. They stopped Him in the middle. Now, I have had instances where I am invited for three days and they stop me after two days and say, we don't want to hear you anymore.

That's happened to me a couple of times. But I have not been so radical that they stopped me in the middle of a sermon. Jesus was really radical.

They stopped Him in the middle of a sermon and said, we don't want to hear you anymore. And not only that, we want to kill you. And they took Him out to the top of a cliff there in Nazareth to throw Him down.

And the Bible simply says, He quietly walked through their midst and went away. Isn't that amazing? How did He do that? He wasn't lifted up by the Spirit and taken away just as He quietly passed through their midst. And I tried to figure out what happened there.

Maybe they were arguing among each other how to throw Him down or where to throw Him down. And while they were arguing, He just quietly went off. And when they looked around, He wasn't there.

God can do those things. It says in the Old Testament how He got the enemies of Israel fighting with each other so they killed each other off. But what came home to me was this, that Jesus could not die there because God had not arranged for Jesus to die by falling over a cliff.

He had arranged for Him to die three and a half years later on Calvary. How in the world could they throw Him over a cliff here? That was impossible. How in the world could He drown in the middle of the lake of Galilee even if there was the greatest tornado in the world on that lake? It was impossible.

That's why He was at rest. Twice in the Gospels it says in John 7, 30 and John 8, 20 they could not arrest Him. Why? Because His hour had not come.

It's as simple as that. It's not because He manifested some great power or He was very clever and He sneakily escaped. No, His hour had not come.

That's it. And I thought, boy, if God loves me like that, then I don't have a care in the world. Every place is equally secure if I'm only wanting to do the will of God and I only want to please Him and I don't want anything for myself in my life.

If I can sign over my life totally to the Lord and say, Lord, I want nothing for myself. I don't want honor. I don't want money.

I don't want fame. I don't even want what the Christian world calls success in my ministry. I can be a God for some people.

Success in my ministry. How much success did Noah have at the end of 120 years of preaching? They'd have turned him out from any mission board if he said, well, nobody's converted here. It's just me and my family.

That's all. No. He was happy that he had pleased God.

That was enough. So there's security there. We can gladly surrender everything because we know He cares for us as He cared for Jesus.

Every day of Jesus' life was mapped out in the Old Testament. Everything that He did was so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And I believe this is the same with me.

You may think that's arrogance. According to your faith, be it unto you. If you believe, it's for you too.

That God has planned out your life and no one can touch you without God's permission. Your hour has not come. They won't be able to touch you.

When your hour comes, we are ready to go. It all depends on God's hour. It doesn't depend on the plans and schemes of men.

And when we realize that, we're glad to surrender everything. That's why the Bible says in 1 John chapter 5, this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Now, as I've moved around Christians for 40 years, I've discovered that most people, when they talk about faith, they think of these two things.

You know the Bible says four times, the righteous shall live by faith. It says that in Habakkuk chapter 2, verse 4, Romans 1.17, Galatians chapter 3, and Hebrews chapter 10. Four times, the righteous shall live by faith.

I don't know whether that expression is used here in this country, but in India, if you ask a Christian, are you living by faith? He'll say, no, I get a regular salary. I'm not living by faith. Living by faith to him means that I'm a full-time Christian worker with an uncertain income.

That's the only meaning of living by faith understood by almost every single Christian I have met. And the reason is they've got their understanding of these phrases from magazines and books and not from the

Word of God. Do you know how much our language is not the language of the Word of God? The Bible says the righteous shall live by faith.

There's not a single place in the whole Bible where living by faith has got anything to do with money or an uncertain income. And how in the world did this idea get into the heads of so many people? That's one of the clearest proofs how the devil can brainwash people to believe a phrase which has got no foundation in Scripture, use it all their life and think they're using it right. Till one day somebody asks them, where do you find that in the Scriptures? Everybody's using it, but everybody's wrong.

You know that everybody could be wrong? People think if many people are doing something, it must be right. That's what the Roman Catholics say, 800 million people can't be wrong. But then the Muslims say 1000 million people can't be wrong.

And the Jehovah's Witnesses say hundreds of thousands of us in the world, we can't all be wrong. And the Mormons say we are hundreds of thousands, we can't all be wrong. No, they could all be wrong.

If it's in the Scriptures, it's right. So, that's one. You know, the first understanding of faith is of course common to all Christians.

By grace you are saved by faith. If we think of faith in relation to salvation, and then this matter of living by faith. Now, the other use of faith which I find nowadays more popular in the last 20-30 years is faith is always related to healing or prosperity.

If you've got faith, you'll have healing, you'll have prosperity. If you don't have faith, you don't have healing, you don't have prosperity. But, the Bible says in Hebrews chapter 12 that Jesus, verse 2, is the author of our faith.

He's the one who writes His faith in us. Paul says, I don't live anymore, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. Galatians 2.20 Jesus is the author and perfecter of faith.

So when I look at Jesus, He never needed healing. He was always healthy. And He certainly didn't have prosperity.

He didn't have a place to lay His head. But then people say, Oh, that was Jesus. He had to sacrifice many things for us.

Okay, let's go to His chief apostle, Peter. He didn't have prosperity. He was a poor man.

Paul, another great apostle. He didn't have prosperity. Faith has got nothing to do with prosperity.

Then what has it got to do with? Now let me explain it to you. It is a confidence in God's love for us which believes that everything He has commanded in the New Testament is for my good. That's faith.

It's got nothing to do with healing or prosperity. Now I'm not against if God makes you, heals you or prospers you. Praise the Lord.

All I'm trying to say is that's not the faith which Jesus is the author of. And a lot of people get condemned unnecessarily because they don't go to the Word of God. They go to all these magazines and books.

Faith is this, that when I see something in Scripture, I believe that that is the very best thing I can do. And I do it because I have confidence, total confidence in a God who loves me perfectly, whose plan is far better than anything I can make myself. See, when we make a plan for the future, we can't see the future.

I don't even know what's going to happen tomorrow. And we make a plan. And here Almighty God says, listen, let me make the plan for your life.

And He knows the whole future. He knows everything that's coming. He knows all the circumstances.

And He makes a plan. What fools we are to reject that and make our own. For example, when God says, you must forgive every single person who has harmed you.

Do you believe that's for your good? If you really believed it, you'd jump and do it immediately. You wouldn't wait one minute to forgive another person. But why is it we nurse that bitterness and that hurt for some time and get some happiness out of it or feel happy when some harm comes to that person who hurt us.

It's because we don't believe God. We're not living by faith. We don't believe that God's commands are for our very best.

What's the reason? Because we're babes. You know the commands you give to your little children when they're small, they don't understand it's for their good. They don't understand.

In India, some of you homeschool your children. In India, there's no possibility to homeschool anyone. There are no such facilities.

So children have to be sent to school. And they're sent to school at the age of 4 or 5. They don't want to go. They cry and the father drags them to the school and leaves them there weeping and goes away.

And the child thinks the father is very hard to leave the child out there. He doesn't understand what's good for him. And when you don't understand that what God has said is good for you, that's the clearest proof that you're a babe.

That's how we know. An adult understands. You don't need to drag that 14 year old boy or someone who's older who's understood the value of education to a school.

No. And when we understand that God is a God of love and every single thing He has commanded, I'm just taking one example, is designed for our very best in every area to make us useful in this kingdom, to make us spiritual, to make us godly, so that we don't waste our lives on earth, so that we can accomplish the maximum possible with our one earthly life. See, that's the thing that's gripped my heart.

I say, Lord, I don't know how long I'm going to live. But I want to do the maximum possible for You before I leave this earth. Not for any reward in heaven.

Far from it. But to express my gratitude to You for dying for me on the cross. That's all.

Do you want to do that? Do you want to express your gratitude to Jesus not just with words, but saying, Lord, I want to do the maximum possible for You on this earth before You come. That's the only way I can express my gratitude. I don't want to live a lazy, undisciplined life, just drifting along like so many other Christians.

I want my life to count for You. Please show me what Your will is. Show me what I can do for You here on the earth.

And let me begin with small things. Let me begin with witnessing to one person. But let my life count for You.

I don't know whether you have that passion. You know, for we can stand in heaven for eternal ages and say, thank You, Lord, for dying for me. Thank You, Lord, for dying for me.

Thank You, Lord, for dying for me. For eternity, you may say it in heaven. It'll all sound hollow if on earth we didn't say thank You with our lives.

If there's no sacrifice in your life on earth, if you just sought comfort and ease and wanted to live for yourself and were indisiplined and lazy and you go to heaven and shout, thank You for dying for me, it'll sound hollow in your own ears. Because in the time when you could prove your love, you didn't. Now is the time to say, Lord, let my life be an expression of gratitude for Your dying for me on Calvary.

Let my whole life be an expression of gratitude for Your dying for me on Calvary. Let me not just say these things as empty words. These are not just things to be talked about in the meetings.

This is what must grip my life every day, morning till night. My thoughts must revolve around how can my life be an expression of gratitude to Jesus? How can I make my life count more for God before I leave this earth? Lord, everything, You can have everything I have. My bank account, my time, my money, my ambitions, my plans, everything are Yours.

Do you think You can make better use of all these things than God can? You've got to be foolish to believe that. God can invest Your life and make such an investment with it that it'll count for all eternity. And make it such a blessing to so many people.

And you can be a very, very ordinary person. I believe that. I came to Jesus as a very, very ordinary person.

I still believe I'm a very ordinary person. But I said, Lord, I want my life to count for You. I don't want to say thank You with words but with a life that You died for me on the cross.

I don't want to just sing to You. I want to mean it with a life. And little by little I found God opening up avenues to serve Him.

He'll do exactly the same for you. What He did for Jesus, what He did for another, He'll do for you because He loves you as He loved Jesus. That's faith.

Lord, I believe Your plan for my life is the best. If you can believe that, you've got faith. And you surrender to Him.

God's plan for your life is the best. Everything He said in His word is the best for me. I believe it.

That's faith. This other type of faith that's being proclaimed today to get this and to get that and get the other thing from God, it's a counterfeit. I say, let God give you what He sees you need.

If you keep seeking His kingdom, He'll give you all that you need. You don't have to seek all these things like the Gentiles seek. He'll give you whatever you need and the things He gives you will never harm you.

The things you go seeking in this world can harm you. So let's have wisdom. And let's surrender to Him.

Let's pray. I believe that the word of God we've heard demands a response. And if you don't respond now, the chances are the devil will make you forget it.

The challenge of it. And you can miss out on what God's trying to do with your life. You can't do anything about the past.

You can't do anything about the years wasted or the days wasted, the opportunities wasted. But we can all do something about the future. About what lies ahead of us.

That's all we can do. Anything about. We say, Lord, of the years that are left to me in my life, I pray that it'll count for you.

I pray I'll give up the follies of this world and the silly things that I'm attracted by and let there come a seriousness into my life to be a disciple of Jesus, to be devoted to you, make my life count for eternity so that when Jesus comes again I will have no regret. Heavenly Father, help us to live by faith in your goodness and your love. And Lord, we pray you give an assurance to everyone who's responding to your call at this time.

Put the seal of your acceptance in their heart tonight. Anoint them with your Holy Spirit and refresh their heart and give joy in their hearts as they are sure of your acceptance of their sacrifice. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4114.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-call-of-god-the-glory-of-jesus/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net