

(The Church and Satans Wiles) 1 - a Revelation of Christ

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking a revelation of Christ through the Holy Spirit and not seeking our own, which is the root of all sin.

Duration: 1:04:50

Scripture: Matthew 16:16

Topics: "The Nature of the Church", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the ongoing battle against Satan's deception throughout the Bible, illustrating how humility and a genuine pursuit of Christ's revelation protect believers from such deceptions. He highlights that true knowledge of Christ comes not from human intellect but through divine revelation, as seen in Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah. Poonen warns against the dangers of seeking one's own interests, which he identifies as the root of sin, and stresses the importance of building a church centered on Christ rather than on human ambition or material gain. He encourages believers to seek a deeper understanding of God's character, which is rooted in love and kindness, rather than fear and self-interest. Ultimately, Poonen calls for a church that reflects the love of Christ, where members do not seek their own but rather serve one another in humility.

Transcript

I see the whole Bible as a book that describes how Satan constantly seeks to deceive God's people with one thing or the other and how those who humbly seek the Lord are protected and delivered from that deception and we need to study the scriptures like that because right in Genesis chapter 3 as soon as man's created you see Satan coming in and he's not destroyed until Revelation 20 you have just two chapters in the beginning two chapters at the end without the devil and you have him all the way in between Jesus ministry begins with Satan tempting him and when Jesus spoke about building the church and that is the body of people that belong to him he said these words in Matthew chapter 16 and verse 18 he was speaking to Peter in you know Peter had just confessed that you are the Christ the

Son of the Living God Matthew 16 verse 16 and Jesus said blessed are you Simon Barjona Matthew 16 17 because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you in other words you didn't come to know who I am by your human cleverness or intelligence and even today remember you cannot know Christ by study or human intelligence but my father in heaven revealed me to you revealed who I really am my great desire

through the years has been for an increasing revelation of Christ and I would urge all of you to pursue that towards the end of Paul's life he said that I may know him even though he had known the Lord for 35 years by the time he wrote Philippians 3:10 he says I still want to know him because Jesus said that eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ it's not living forever it's knowing God

the more I know God the more I have of eternal life the more I know Jesus and so many people who had studied the Bible in Jesus time didn't know him and I believe there are many people today who study the Bible who don't know him the father reveals him to us Jesus once said in Matthew 11:25 onwards he says no one knows the son except the father is the father who revealed Jesus to Peter and then you see how important this is he said now Peter I'm telling you something you are Peter a small little stone that's what the word Petros means but on this rock which rock this rock you just confessed this rock of a revealed Christ I will build my church there are many people who are seeking to build the church of Jesus Christ today who haven't seen this revealed Christ and they will discover

when Jesus comes back again that what they have built was not the church of Jesus Christ look at all the mega churches today many in this country my own country too that's not what Jesus is building he's building a brotherhood where Christ is central not any man where people come to fellowship around the person of Jesus not just to meet a man or listen to a man God may use men but the very fact that many of these men are so inaccessible it's so difficult to meet them proves to me that they're not really servants of Christ the very fact that these people are so interested in money proves to me they're not servants of Christ when Christ is revealed to you you can build a church on this rock you got to see the connection you are the Christ the Son of the Living God and Peter says Jesus says

blessed are you because you didn't get that by study or intelligence my father revealed opened your eyes to see who I am and on this rock I will build my church I know in my own work in India I've seen that church built in different places and it's always been as a result of seeing who Jesus was seeing him as fully God and fully man seeing him as one who's got all authority in heaven and earth seeing him as one who who created this universe and bears this universe but found the load of my sin too heavy to bear on the cross you've got to see Jesus like that you'll never love anything or anyone more than him once you see him like that he'll change your whole life it changed my life nearly 50 years ago when I was converted and keeps changing my life even now as I see his glory and beauty as

the father reveals him to me more and more by the Holy Spirit it's one of the great deceptions of the devil has been to confuse the ministry of the Holy Spirit to just supernatural gifts I believe in supernatural gifts but Jesus said when the Holy Spirit has come he will take of the things of mine and show it to you that's what he said in John 16 that's the main ministry of the Holy Spirit and I've just enjoyed exposing myself to this ministry of the Holy Spirit of taking the things of Christ and showing it to me and as I see it and I'm enthralled by the sight it's like just like Peter you know when nobody else could see Jesus they thought he was a Beelzebub the Prince of Devils some some people thought he was a prophet some people thought he was like Elijah etc etc but Peter saw

something which others didn't see and I've seen things of Jesus that I see a lot of Christians around me haven't seen and how do I know they haven't seen it because it doesn't their lives don't seem to be changed much for example I don't believe that God ever intended that his children should ever be depressed gloomy anxious fearful if any of these things are true in your life depression anxiety fear gloom complaining murmuring scary dreams at night where you get nightmares I want to tell you in Jesus name that's not God's will for you you know what you need you need the Holy Spirit to show you the beauty of

Jesus it'll change you completely I tell you it will it changed me you can't see all of Jesus in one day you got to see him more and more and more as the Holy Spirit shows you because

it is on this rock that the true Church of Jesus Christ is built you build on any other foundation you'll discover in eternity that's not the Church of Jesus Christ you know people try to imitate a pattern sometimes people have come to our conferences in India and say we want to build a church in our locality brothers act just like you have here and I see you can't do it Jesus said I will build my church you know that a man can't do it he said on this rock I will build my church he's never given that he uses men he can use me he can use you but you must recognize that he's the one who builds a church and the other thing I want to say is wherever this true Church of Jesus Christ is built and let me say this before I move on many people are satisfied with living a holy life I believe in

living a holy life I've pursued holiness for many years and I've God shown me more and more and more and more of what his holiness is like which is very different from man's understanding of holiness but I've seen also that holiness alone is not the ultimate goal of God because with holiness I can live a very individual life I'm holy and I can you know like the olden days the monks used to lock themselves up in a monastery and spend their time in prayer and meditation pursuing holiness and we can be like that too we may not lock ourselves up in a monastery but we can go away from society you know we can say oh this place is too sinful we can't live here we got to go to some place where there are holy people what's the difference in that in a monastery I mean you don't have walls but it's

the same principle we got to go away in the midst of holy people and spend our time there whether you know you don't need to light a candle where they're already a hundred candles burning you need to light a candle where there are no candles burning in the place where people are living in sin that's where Jesus was Jesus didn't gather with holy people once when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration with holy people like Moses and Elijah Peter said Lord this is great I'd like to be here all the time of course I'd like there like that too you know imagine spending all your life with Peter and Elijah and Jesus what's better than that or some people who are somewhat like that holy people and Jesus said no we have to go down the mountain because down in the valley there are demon-possessed

people there are people who need me I can run away from all those sinners and live with holy people and think I'm building the church no I'm running away from the place Jesus wants me to be he wants me to be in the midst of sinners the fundamental characteristic let me tell you this my brothers and sisters until you understand the fundamental nature character of the nature we got from Adam the fundamental part of that nature we got from Adam we will never know what it is to be free from sin and let me tell you in one word it is seeking our own we seek our own that's what happened to Adam when the poison of sin got into his system and you see that immediately when God asks him whether he committed sin whether he had eaten of the tree he sought his own he said I've got to protect myself

even if I accused my wife put the blame on her I've got to accuse my I've got to protect myself and that's the way he accuses his wife oh she's the one Lord she's the one who came and gave it to me you see how that poison got in right there and it's spread in so many forms through the years you look back at the decisions you've made in your life and you'll see most of those decisions were based on what can I gain if I make this decision what can I what can my family gain if I make this I seek my own and that's why this prosperity gospel is so popular you tell Jesus you tell people that Jesus can bless you materially and prosper you what is there any man in the world who doesn't want to prosper materially and everybody's seeking their own and if you present to them a Jesus who helps you to

seek your own that's another Jesus but people will gravitate towards that Jesus yeah I want him and that's why you have huge crowds for these healing meetings what are they going there for are they going there to learn how to deny themselves and die every day and follow Jesus oh no they're not interested in that they're interested in something for themselves I want some healing I want some money I want a better car I want a better house I want a better job it's all seeking your own they are in the center of their life and there are preachers who preach a Jesus who revolves around them to serve them like if you read the story the children's story of Aladdin and his lamp he rubs that lamp and a genie appears and says Oh master what do you want me to do I want this and the genie goes and

does that and then he asked him what he rubs it another time what do you want master and I want this and he does that it is the same thing with today's Christianity prayer is like rubbing the lamp and Jesus appears at least they think Jesus appears another Jesus what do you want Lord I want to be rich I want to make money I want this I want that it's all seeking one's own and as long as you're seeking your own the root of sin remains there you can get rid of the fruits like you know speaking evil and you can start being kind to other people and so a lot of preaching today is just a self-improvement program you know because when you behave nicely you get a better reputation I mean there are companies which conduct management seminars for their stuff where they got nothing to do with Christ

it's just that if you behave properly you they teach people how to sell sell goods and be a good salesman and you know be kind and gracious and all that that's what's happening in many pulpits today self remains in the center what do you why do you think that salesman is acting so nicely he want to get some money out of it he's getting a commission out of it it's exactly the same with preachers many Christians until you see that seeking your own is the root of all sin you'll never be free from it you'll keep clipping bad fruit like anger or lust or internet pornography get rid of these things these are all fruits or because and when you get rid of these things you become a decent sort of human being you don't become holy holiness is another category altogether so until we see that I Jesus

came to lay the axe to the root of the tree and the root of the tree is what can I get out of this how can I get the most out of it and put the blame on others whatever it is to look back on the decisions you've made in your life and you'll see a lot of those decisions were based on if I go here that'll be better for me that'll be better for my children that'll be better for my family so I choose to go there if I go here that won't be so good and I won't go there everything is centered around me and my family what is the difference between such a believer and a godless atheist who does his business he's also motivated by the same principles what's good for me maybe he's got some bad habits like drinking and smoking and gambling which you don't have and because the external part of your

cup is clean compared to his you think you're holier than him because his external part of his cup is dirty with drinking and smoking and gambling and you're the outside of your cup is clean because you don't drink you don't smoke you don't take drugs but when you look at the inside of the cup both are equally dirty that means both are seeking their own he's seeking his own and you're seeking your own what's the difference except that you've got a reputation as a good Christian he has got no reputation at all well he's got one good quality that you don't have he's not a hypocrite but you are he doesn't claim to be a Christian he's I'm not a Christian I just seek my own you see this is where we find many Christians are not really satisfied in their Christianity I've been as I said a

Christian for nearly 50 years and I tell you I'm excited with my Christianity my Christianity exciting there's never a boring day in my life I'm not trying to sell anything I'm telling you the truth I found God to be the

most wonderful person to spend your time with he's so understanding so kind so good he never scolds you wouldn't you like to be with somebody like that who never scolds you who's so warm and pleasant and it was really fun to be with he's not a boring person like a lot like the devil told you he was no he's not a boring person you know a lot of young people don't want God because he's the all this Christian life is so boring how did he get that impression because they saw so many boring Christians that's why they got that impression but it's not true it's an absolute lie

God is the most interesting person in the whole universe I thought of that in relation to you know all these people who can produce very interesting television programs I'm not talking about dirty movies I'm talking about all these very beautiful children's programs and how they produce pictures of animals and a lot of God's creation about the universe and things like that and you know some of those things are so gripping and I asked myself who's the who gave this person the ability and the intelligence to produce something so gripping that was my father in heaven who gave him that I mean he's using it to make money that's another thing but it is my father who gave him that ability imagine how wonderful it'll be if I can get in touch with this father himself directly and spend time with

him the one who gave this person the ability do you know this God do you know Jesus like that when I was a young Christian I never knew Jesus like that even after I was born again for more than 15 16 years I never knew Christ like this I knew I was scared of hell and I want to go to heaven I never knew Jesus and the most wonderful person you could be with so we need to see this that Christianity is not just a matter of being holy God is to deliver me from seeking my own and one of the ways in which he delivers us from that is by putting us with other people who are also seeking their own and I tell you it's wonderful it says you know iron sharpens iron you get a man and a woman married both are seeking their own boy if they're really humble themselves they'll both become holy if they're

not pursuing holiness they'll fight with each other like most marriages even Christian marriages but if they realize that God put us together we're not perfect I know my wife seeks her own and I know I seek my own but God's put us together so that we can help one another to be sanctified and holy get more light on one another and become more like Jesus and not only in marriage in the church have you heard people come to you I've heard people come to me and say brothers I I went to that church and they don't show any love I know such a person will never fit into any church I see wearing the Bible doesn't say you've got to go expecting people to love you the Bible is full of verses it does you've got to love other people but haven't you met lots of people say oh there's no love in that

church well you're supposed to go there and give them give them some love not receive it's more blessed to give than to receive and this is how we go to a church again we're seeking our own what can I get out of this church in the poorer countries a lot of people in India anyway go to a church because they want money ah the church is full of generous people kind people good people and so they go they're seeking their own if you allow such people to flourish in the church your church is destroyed you may think that you're doing a lot of kindness to such people you're not really helping them if you're not delivering people from seeking their own you're not building the church you're just building a nice club of kind people who help others there's a lot of social work and in the same way if

we allow people to come to a church expecting to be loved and served and this that and the other we're not helping them to grow the church is a place where God puts together imperfect people but they become one and Jesus said all men will know that you're my disciples when you love one another and that's the one thing the devil sort of hid from people everywhere I've you know when I travel different places people

ask me about my church and the type of questions they ask me always show me which group they are from some people ask me do you break bread every Sunday then I know they are from the Plymouth Brethren any part of the world I know they're from the Plymouth Brethren and then if they ask me do you all speak in tongues I know where they are from Pentecostals or Charismatics and then

there are other groups who say your sisters veil their heads all the time 24 hours then I know where they're from you know so many questions like this do you all live in a community yeah that's the hot rice but I've never heard anybody ask me till today do you all love one another no that's the last thing people are interested in knowing it's always the externals do you break bread every Sunday your sisters veil their heads every 24 hours do they wear jewelry do you speak in tongues and yet what did Jesus say all men will know you're my disciples not when you carry a Bible not when you speak in tongues not when you veil your heads not these are all human definitions not when you remove your jewelry when you love one another and you know what is what is one of the primary characteristics

of love you read in 1 Corinthians 13 love does not seek its own that's one of the primary characteristics of love so put that characteristic of love into the mark of Jesus disciples with Jesus himself said and how does it read all men will know you're my disciples when you don't seek your own you got it do people recognize you as Jesus disciples because they look at your life and they see that you don't seek your own in the midst of a world full of people are seeking their own they see you're not seeking your own hey how is this he must be a disciple of Jesus it's not in breaking a bread it's not near external appearance it's not in the type of clothes you wear you know there are people who feel if somebody wears a suit and a tie boy he's pretty worldly I wish it were so easy to get rid

of worldliness just by removing your tie it isn't brother don't fool yourself that's all for honor we get in some circles you get honor by wearing a tie in some circles you get honor by removing it that's all and all of us seek if you seek honor you will conform to your particular groups convictions to get honor otherwise they'll think I'm worldly who cares whether they think I'm worldly I want to be free from worldliness in my heart and the mark of that is I don't seek my own but if I seek my own in my heart and I've got all the external trappings of being spiritual I'm a hypocrite those are the very type of people whom Jesus turned on and said you hypocrites you clean the outside of the cup but the inside is full of dead men's bones and filth what is that seeking your own I never knew

this for many many years but you know when you pursue after Jesus the Bible says let's fix our eyes upon Jesus and run this race as we run this race the Lord begins to show us more and more and more and more when I started my Christian life one of the first things I saw understood was that watching movies was wrong okay got rid of that little by little but if at the end of your life all you know is that watching movies is wrong you haven't progressed have you discovered new things that the Lord wants you to be free from that's how through the many years I discovered that seeking my own was just as bad in God's eyes as watching dirty movies how many believe that if I seek my own honor there are many ways I can seek it I'm not gonna build the Church of Jesus Christ I've been deceived by the

devil so we need the Holy Spirit to show us Jesus and he's gonna build his church so as I said the Christian life is not just pursuing holiness myself but God building me together with other people you know this was not possible in the Old Testament in the Old Testament you just could not get people together and make them one and let me tell you something you know very well what which may surprise you when I say it like I say it even Jesus couldn't do it make 11 people one he preached to them for three and a half years were they one at the end of those three and a half years no each was seeking to be the leader what

type of church was that just like a lot of churches we see today but Jesus said it's good for you that I go away you got to see that in relation to the fact that they were not

one with each other as long as he was with them they would never be one with each other even if he stayed with them for 300 years but he said when I go the Holy Spirit I will pray to the Father and I'll he'll send you the Holy Spirit and then you fellas will be able to do something that even I could not do when I was here you read that in John 14 verse 12 you will do greater things and I've I could do what is that you will be able to build a church where nobody is seeking to be the leader I've seen churches like that built where nobody's interested in being a leader or they're interested in being servants Jesus couldn't do that in his lifetime not because I'm greater than Jesus no but we have the Holy Spirit that can dwell in hearts and they can not seek their own and become one with each

other so if you're living a holy life good but you're far short of God's purposes if you're not also a part of or seeking to build together with others a church of people who come together who do not seek their own all men will know you're my disciples when they see that you don't seek your own that's the type of church I want to build I mean to get 30,000 people in a church who come to listen to me and all seeking their own that's not the church no that's just you can start with 30 people who seek their own and end up with 30,000 people who seek their own what type of church is that I'd rather have 10 people in a church who don't seek their own any day because Jesus said that all men will know you're my disciples when they see that you don't seek your own do you belong to a church like

that are you like that yourself that is true holiness and the test of that is in your relationship with your wife your husband first of all you know Jesus said you'll be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and for me Jerusalem is my own home your home that's Jerusalem and then Judea the next circle around you and then Samaria and the outermost parts of the earth so to be a witness for Christ to demonstrate what the Lord has done in delivering me from seeking my own is first manifested in my home and then in the local church and if the local church is not becoming like that it's because they are not hearing the truth from the pulpit you know a farmer can't get potatoes in his field if he never sold potatoes no no matter how much he prays I mean if he's so tomatoes and he comes to me brothers I

pray that I'll get a harvest of potatoes as you can't get it what did you so I saw tomatoes well that's what you're gonna get prayer is not gonna change that and if you preach a certain type of message in your church that's the type of fruit you're gonna get in your church okay you preach healing good we need healing from sicknesses you may get a few people healed but they lost seek their own at the end of it and probably go to hell as well you haven't really accomplished anything it's not the Church of Jesus Christ so if we don't preach salvation from sin that is salvation from seeking our own we're not going to get a church of people who don't seek their own and is it enough to hear one message like this no I preach some of these truths in churches in India for 25 years and I still find

it there they're still seeing their own some people will never be free from it the devil is so clever and that's why when Jesus spoke about building the church I want you to see in Matthew 16 18 he said I will build my church in the gates of Hades and that means the forces of spiritual death Hades is connected with death and I see the gates of Hades as a symbol Jesus was using for the powers of spiritual death will not be to overpower the church that I'm building what are the forces of spiritual death it's not demon possession that's an extreme form demon possession it's very easy to deliver people from demon possession in the name of Jesus every demon will flee but there's something which does not flee just by one rebuke in the name of Jesus and that is the sin of seeking our own that

doesn't I wish it would go with one rebuke it doesn't it one has to see the evil of it you know you never get rid of something until you see it's evil you never get rid of a sin until you see that that was a that Jesus died for you'll never get rid of seeking your own until you see that that's why Jesus suffered on the cross because you sought your own and you keep seeking your own and that's why he suffered yeah we can shed tears and say oh Lord you suffered so much for you but what for because I live seeking my own I don't want to deny myself I don't want to take up the cross the message of the cross of taking up the cross is almost absent in Christendom today when people are told to repent they're told to repent nowadays just of stealing and gross sins which even multitudes of

unbelievers don't commit what is repentance repentance is turning away from seeking my own and we don't hear that type of preaching today you know there can be a lot of preaching of fire and brimstone you'll go to hell if you do this you'll go to hell if you watch internet pornography you go to hell if you smoke cigarettes you'll go to hell if you belong to the Roman Catholic Church you'll go to hell if you watch dirty movies R-rated movies and people think boy we need to hear preaching like that I'm not I remember my younger days when I knew God less I thought that was a great thing you can be impressed when when you're young and you don't know God you're impressed with that type of preaching you think boy that's a fiery message you know what it produces a bunch of people who clean the

outside of the cup they're scared we need to see how God leads people to repentance have you ever read this verse in Romans chapter 2 maybe you have read it but I don't know whether you've taken thought of it it says in Romans chapter 2 and verse 4 that God leads you to repentance by kindness have you ever thought of leading people to repentance without fire and brimstone but by kindness by telling people about God's kindness I mean if you hear him if you hear a message on God's kindness if you're a young person you know the fiery type you'd say ah it's not great you're more impressed by a fire and brimstone message but it says here God leads people to repentance not with fire and brimstone but with kindness I mean can you do it better than God himself are you cleverer than God you see

how the devil deceives us I believe in hell and I believe in warning people about hell but I don't see Jesus always going around preaching about hell and scaring people to go to heaven I see a lot more preaching of Jesus revealing the father he came here to explain that God's a good God the kindness of God don't you know this he says that the kindness of God is meant to lead you to repentance that's God's way and I'll tell you something the people who turn from sin with the fear of hell it doesn't last very long and they don't go very far in the Christian life but the people who are moved to turn from sin when they see the kindness and goodness of God they turn from sin more permanently and get more and more understanding of what sin is that they can turn from at least that's how it's

been in my life I have when I think of what Jesus the love that Jesus had for me to free me from sin that's what made me turn more and more Lord you you love me so much if you wanted to be and I see sin as a disease that Jesus wants to free me from but the devil deceives us you know we think the devil deceives us by getting us into dirty habits but see what Paul says in 2nd Corinthians 11 I'm thinking in relation to what Jesus said the gates of hell shall not overpower the church I need to understand how the devil seeks to destroy me and destroy God's work look around at so many many churches today I remember in my younger days I went from church to church to church to church because I was looking for that which had the New Testament pattern which had the best doctrine I was born into a

church where I was sprinkled as a child it was called the Syrian Orthodox Church where they prayed to Mary prayed for the dead never preached the new birth sprinkled as a baby and according to them made a

member of God's kingdom that way but from that point one day I was born again when I was 19 and a half years old and I went from church to church church looking for the truth the right doctrine and I found in every church they had better doctrine than the other but there was just as much fighting and just as much seeking one's own and just as much love of money and as in the other church and I found that doctrine didn't seem to deliver people from seeking their own I found that better doctrine didn't deliver people from the love of money better doctrine didn't deliver husbands and wives

from fighting with each other so what is the use of all this better doctrine if it didn't deliver people from anger I found there were people in almost everyone every one of these denominations who watched internet pornography you think it's only the people out in the world there are Pentecostals there are brethren the Baptists and Methodists born-again people watching internet pornography what does the doctrine do for them there are Baptists Methodists Pentecostal husbands and wives who fight with each other yell at each other there are every single denomination people who are depressed and gloomy even though the Bible says rejoice in the Lord always who never obey that command so there's something wrong I knew there was something wrong the doctrine alone I believe in doctrine but I saw

that doctrine alone is not the solution no there's something else something more we need to see what Jesus came to save us from the devil has deceived us let me turn to 2nd Corinthians 11 Paul says in verse 2 he says I'm jealous for you with a godly jealousy for I betrothed you I got you engaged he says to the one year to marry Jesus Christ one day he will come and the marriage of the lamb will take place but today in our spirit we are married to him Romans 7 4 says that but there is another there's an actual marriage gonna take place when the bridegroom returns and I'm engaged I'm his bride I will become his wife Revelation 19 describes that but I'm his bride and Paul says I got you engaged to Christ and I want to present you one day to him as a pure virgin that's God's will what does it

mean to be a pure virgin none of us are pure when we start out we are impure we've been molested by the devil none of us are virgins spiritually speaking when we come to Christ but the wonderful thing is that we can allow the Holy Spirit to work in us and make us a pure virgin and you know what that means to become a pure virgin to be free from seeking our own in anything then you're a pure virgin when your decisions in life every decision you make is no longer influenced like in the olden days by how will this benefit me how will this benefit my family but it's governed by will this glorify God will this promote the kingdom of God and I'll tell you this when that becomes the motivation in my life I may not run away from that sinful city because it's full of sinners to some remote village

where are there a bunch of holy people meeting together I may remain in that city to be a witness for Christ because I'm not seeking my own I'm seeking the good of others to bring them into this kingdom imagine if Jesus had spent all his time with holy people where would you and I be he spent so much time with sinners that they called him the friend of sinners have any of you been accused of being the friend of sinners we we sort of get a satisfaction when people say we are the friends of holy people are we following the friend of sinners I see so much of this I want to seek my own I want to seek what's good for my family so I want to run away from all the sinners and I want to be in the bunch of holy people I want to sit on top of the Mount of Transfiguration forever let me get Moses and

Elijah and Jesus we live here forever I couldn't care less for all those sinners out in the valley that's not Christianity just by the way it's just another holy way of seeking your own and we can pat ourselves on the back and say we're not like all those sinners who live out there we're holy what holiness the external part of your cup is clean and that's why you have so many problems in your local church despite all this

holiness look at the holiness churches in this country and in our country in my country in India holiness churches full of fighting and quarreling and selfishness and love of money and every imaginable evil the gates of hell are over parted because they haven't understood that the root of sin is you don't seek your own to follow Jesus means that he came from that pure

atmosphere of heaven into a sinful filthy earth to redeem people who were in sin and for me to follow Jesus means to go away from the from surroundings which may be so comfortable for me because I want to promote the kingdom of God I want to reach people build a Jesus Christ now I'll tell you honestly I'd rather live on top of the Mount of Transfiguration myself if I were to seek my own that's the best place to live I mean imagine sitting with a bunch of people who at least outwardly appear to be like Moses and Elijah we have our meetings and you know the services are not too long it's only once a week we go there spend our two hours and ease our conscience and we do all the rituals that Christians are supposed to do and once or twice a year we go for a conference now children are growing

up well and we may discover when we stand before Jesus in the final day that we missed out his will completely you stand asking Lord why did I miss your will I really sought to be with holy people because you sought your own the Bible says let this mind be in you which is in Christ Jesus Philippians 2 of 5 who did not seek his own who did not consider equality with God is something to be grasped but gave it up to redeem sinners let this mind be in you is it in me that's the root of sin to deliver me from the mind which the devil has put inside me of seeking my own it says here so I'm afraid that I betrothed you to a Christ is to be a pure virgin but I'm afraid he says I'm afraid that like the devil the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness he will lead your minds astray from simplicity

and purity of devotion to Christ it's in the mind that sin begins in the heart and the mind and it's in the heart and the mind that holiness begins it's in the mind that I think what will benefit me what will benefit my family and I choose that I'm a go to church I'm gonna go to a good church I may dress modestly I seek my own and the devil has deceived me like he deceived Eve let's turn back to Genesis 3 and see how did he deceive Eve because he's Paul is saying here this is how I fear that you won't be pure virgins for Christ did he deceive Eve by I mean there are a lot of things the devil could have the devil's evil saturated with evil Jesus called him a liar Jesus called him a murderer I mean Eve the devil could have suggested to Eve listen why don't you go and kill your husband take

one of those stones and smash his head don't you think the devil would have loved to see Eve do that or Adam do that to Eve he never suggested it why didn't he suggest to her to kill her husband why didn't he suggest to her to hurt him in some way or do something evil no what he suggested was that which looked okay I mean he said to him he said to Eve what's wrong in taking part in this tree you'll know good and evil what's wrong in knowing good and evil I'm not asking you to do evil oh no he's crafty that word craftiness which we read in 2nd Corinthians 11 we see it here in Genesis 3 1 the serpent was more crafty I want to tell you my brothers and sisters you may be the cleverest person on earth you may think you're very very smart you may be smart in business you may be smart in your

profession a lot of scientists and engineers who think they're very smart but I'll tell you something you're not smarter than the devil you are not and the sooner you acknowledge that the less the devil will be able to deceive you I acknowledged that long ago I am NOT smarter than Satan he is crafty and that's why I cling close to God and I study his word because that's the only way I can be free and protected from his craftiness Paul said in 2nd Corinthians 2 we're not ignorant of the wiles of Satan he said we're not ignorant of Satan's craftiness not with his own cleverness but because the Holy Spirit revealed to him so why

where do you see the craftiness of Satan here I mean if he told her to go and kill her husband that wouldn't have been any craftiness there that had been open evil

he won't tell you to do things that are obviously evil he was trying to insinuate something put something into Eve's mind you know this thing is really good for you why doesn't God allow you to eat it because he doesn't want you to be like him that's what he said God knows or say chapter Genesis 3 5 that if you eat from this your eyes will be open he doesn't want your eyes to be open he wants you to be blind your eyes will be open and he doesn't want you to have your eyes open he doesn't want you to have knowledge of good and evil because then you'll be like him he doesn't want you to be like him and Eve digested that mm-hmm yeah that makes me think perhaps what he says is true that's how he got deceived you know by portraying God as other than he really was God is perfect love he never

seeks his own in everything he seeks our good but he somehow succeeded the devil succeeded in making Eve think that God wasn't perfectly good that God was trying to rob her of fun of enjoyment and fun and happiness that God was a spoiled sport and he succeeded once he got that into Eve's head he had won the victory already now he could make her do anything now I want to tell you that is the reason why so many young people today do not want God because the God they have seen the Christ the Christ they have seen portrayed by other Christians is a boring Christ who's come to take away all the fun from your life who's come to take away all the happiness it's like that story I heard of one long-faced serious Christian who was trying to witness to somebody about Christ they don't want to don't

you want to accept Christ and that man looked at him and said no he said I've got enough problems of my own already thank you it's true the way a lot of Christians live their long-faced sour face appearance drives many people away because they think God must be a God who takes away if it takes fun out of people's lives and I tell you it's really true a lot of people think God won't allow you to do this God won't allow you to do that God won't allow to do think these are not sinful things but God won't let you do this God won't let you do that you know there are some people who say God God won't let you have any fun on Saturday you can have fun on six days of the week but Saturday you can't have any fun which God is that does he change his character suddenly on a Saturday there's so many

wrong concepts of God and you know what our calling is to clear the mist to show people this is a false God that the devil's portraying before you what was the craftiness of Satan to portray a false God before Eve he used the Pharisees to portray a false God before the Jewish people till Jesus came and cleared away the mist and said that's not the true God God's a loving father many things changed in my life when I believed when I understood God as a father when the mist was cleared away when the Holy Spirit showed me the father showed me Jesus revealing the father changed my life completely it showed me for example that sickness was never God's will for me I'll tell you why because Jesus said if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children how much more shall your

heavenly father give good gifts to those who ask him how many of your fathers will give sickness to your children tell me anyone if you being evil will never give sickness to your children you are you accusing Almighty God of giving you some sickness do you know the number of Christians who says God has given me this and God's given me that I must be a terrible God I don't believe in such a God I believe in a God who's a loving father but yet I noticed that in 2nd Corinthians 12 that he permitted his greatest Apostle on earth the Apostle Paul to have a sickness a thorn in the flesh which he prayed and prayed and prayed never got rid of how is that Paul said it was a messenger of Satan and he prayed God you can't allow a messenger of Satan in my life take it away take it away take it in

the Lord never took it away was that a loving father yes it was because that sickness was accomplishing something in Paul's life which is more necessary for him than health that was humility do you know that humility is more necessary for you than health do you know that holiness is more necessary for you than health it'll revolutionize your life and the day you see it and so I'm not saying that God's people will never be sick I mean the Apostle Paul was sick till the end of his life never got healed but it is to accomplish something there's no purposeless there's no sickness without a purpose that's what I'm trying to say it will accomplish something if it doesn't accomplish something it cannot be from God so that's what I changed my attitude to sickness after that I said whenever I'm

sick I say Lord I you either heal me or give me something better than health one of the two definitely but I'm not gonna just sit by and accept this is the old God put this upon me God puts nothing evil on me he's not sitting in heaven and scheming that what should I bless that child with cancer perhaps and this child of mine tuberculosis and that one a road accident this you think God Almighty in heaven is planning all this what all wrong concepts be Christians have and they talk about God allowing this and God allowing that we live in a world which is under the curse of sin and a lot of things happen because we live in this world but we have a father who cares for us I must never let the devil take away from my mind the fact that God is a good God like we sing in that song God is good

all the time he is and that should be our testimony the devil is crafty and that's why he doesn't allow you to obey all of God's Commandments Wow how many Christians who are not serious about God's Commandments why is it they're not serious to obey God's Commandments because they say oh it'll make my life miserable if I start obeying all of God's Commandments and so they obey only the external ones you know about dress and jewelry and breaking your bread and speaking in tongues and not the really serious ones like put away all anger be anxious for nothing rejoice in the Lord always love all your enemies bless all those who curse you does God want us to do those things he certainly does it's a loving father who has given us those Commandments and I eagerly seek to obey every one of them

because I know he's not telling me to do those things to rob fun from my life he's telling me to do those things because he wants me to be a happy triumphant Christian don't let the devil deceive you my brother sister we have missed so much of what God wants us to have because the craftiness of the devil has portrayed God in a different way than he really is and so we accept so many things which we are not supposed to accept I can think of numerous you know we started our church 32 years ago in Bangalore we've been running it for 32 years and I can think of numerous occasions when I was down in bed with a fever on a Wednesday evening when there's a weekday meeting and which is our weekday meeting day and I would say Lord I don't believe you want me to lie in this bed when your people are

meeting in the church service I'm gonna get up and go and I would get up and go and I know the moment I appear in that church they expect me to speak and I knew that if I get up here if I come to the church service they'll expect me to speak so I'd go there with this fever and sit there while the singing is going on and get up to speak and my fever would go away and I would speak there for one hour and come back home that's happened to me I'm telling you the truth now I could have allowed the devil to say oh feel sorry for yourself have you ever got the devil to make you feel sorry for yourself go and tell your sorrows to somebody else I don't have any sorrows because I cast them all on the Lord I do what the Bible says roll your burden on the Lord and he takes care of it when he's taking

care of it why should I tell you about it dear brothers and sisters the Christian life is far far more wonderful than you have experienced so far and he invites you this weekend to come up higher let's pray there is no

one whose life is sunk so low that Jesus cannot lift him up to the highest heights there's no one here whom God doesn't love there's no one here whom God wants doesn't want to live a happy triumphant Christian I want to say to every one of you God wants you to live a triumphant life in your personal life in your home life and he wants to use you to build his church where you are don't let the devil rob you of God's plan purpose for your life Heavenly Father I thank you for these dear brothers and sisters who have traveled such distances and come here for this weekend

spending time energy money because they're seeking something from you I know that you're a loving father you're a rewarder of those who diligently seek you and these brothers and sisters are diligently seeking you I pray father in Jesus name and I'm not just praying a ritualistic prayer father I'm praying sincerely that you will do something this weekend for these folks who are seeking you fulfill your promise in Jesus name Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16915.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-church-and-satans-wiles-1-a-revelation-of-christ/>

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