

(The Church and Satans Wiles) 4 - Free From Discontentment

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of understanding our identity in Christ, the role of compassion in ministry, and the need for Christ to have preeminence in the church.

Duration: 1:10:20

Scripture: Matthew 7:1, Matthew 12:36, Matthew 22:39, Philippians 2:5-6, Philippians 2:14, Hebrews 2:11

Topics: "Contentment", "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God in a simple and understandable manner. He shares how he personally checks with children if they understood his message, and if they don't, he feels the need to simplify it further. The preacher warns that if we cannot communicate the message of God effectively to children, we will fail in our purpose on earth. He also highlights the danger of seeking our own desires and urges listeners to be content with what God has given them. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that the work of Jesus continues through his spiritual body, the church, and that each individual has a role to play in spreading the gospel.

Transcript

There are two statements of Jesus, of what Jesus will do in the midst of the church. I don't know whether you've noticed it. It's in Hebrews chapter 2 where we are told that Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers.

I'll never forget many years ago when the Lord made that very vivid to me. I was thinking of someone else in another denomination, a Christian, another denomination who, you know, a lot of differences in doctrine between denominations and sometimes folks in one denomination can be quite proud of the doctrines they believe. And especially when we are young, we tend to be more arrogant because we are more stupid.

And I was just like anybody else. And so I was wondering, can I call him a brother? Have you ever wondered like that about someone? And then the Lord showed me that the difference between him and me was millions of miles. And the difference between me and that brother was so little.

And he was not ashamed to call me a brother. That changed my attitude to Christian believers in all denominations for the rest of my life. And I'm very thankful.

Hebrews 2.11, it says, the one who sanctifies us, that is Jesus himself, and the one who is sanctified are all from one father. It's quite amazing when you think of it. You know, we talk of Jesus as our potter.

Have thine own way, Lord, thou art the potter, I'm the clay. For the potter to call the clay pot his brother, that's really something. The one who sanctifies, the one who is sanctified are all from one father.

And because of this, he's not ashamed to call us brethren. We are his brothers. And that's why very often I have said to people, do you know that when you call me a brother, that's the greatest title you can ever give me, the younger brother of Jesus Christ.

I said, don't call me with lowdown titles like reverend and right reverend and reverend doctor and pastor and bishop and all that. No, no, no. Call me a brother.

There's nothing greater than that. Because that means I'm a younger brother of Jesus Christ. You're a younger sister of Jesus Christ.

There isn't anything, no greater title you can get on earth than that. And then it says, the two things that Jesus does in the church, verse 12, in case you haven't noticed it. One he preaches, and the other he sings.

He's the leader of all preaching in the church, and he's the song leader in the church. I will proclaim thy name to my brothers. And whenever throughout scripture, the name is associated with nature.

The name of the name that Jesus proclaims is the name of the father. The most important thing that Jesus preaches in the church, the most important thing that Jesus preaches in the church is that God is a loving father. It took many years for me to align myself with the preaching of Jesus, but I have aligned myself now since a number of years, and it's changed my life, and it's changed the lives of many who have heard me preach in many parts of the world.

I will proclaim the name of the father in the midst of the church. Do that, brothers. God's not a teacher, like I said yesterday.

Don't proclaim the name of a teacher, or a policeman, or a judge. One day he will be the judge. That has not yet come.

But today in the church, we proclaim that he's a father, a loving father who understands, who welcomes prodigal children who have made a mess of their life, who reach the level of the pigs. And the other thing he does is, in the midst of the congregation, I will sing thy praise. That's why in our churches, we promote the singing of God's praise and the preaching of God's word, proclaiming him as father.

These are the two things. And it was interesting for me to see that when Jesus was on earth, there's one time, only one time in the Gospels, where it says he sang a hymn. I'm sure he sang many times.

I believe he was a singing person. But it's one time it's recorded in scripture. And I want you to notice that in Matthew 26.

And it's very interesting, the context in which it comes. Though Jesus, I'm sure many times in the years when he was in Nazareth and he would go alone into the wilderness, I'm sure he sang when he prayed. I sing when I pray to God.

Hymns of, songs of devotion and worship and praise, some which are very special to me. One of the things I have prayed for many years is when I read in the book of Revelation that they sang a new song in heaven. And when I read the words of the new song, you know what the words of the new song are in Revelation 5? That he shed his blood and saved us.

I say, hey, that's an old song. I've heard that so many times. Haven't you? And I thought, how in the world is it called a new song? And I learned something about heaven from there.

New means something that's ever fresh. That the memory of Calvary is always fresh in heaven. It's never an old song.

And I said, Lord, I wanted to be like that in my life. Can you think back to the time when you were a dirty, filthy sinner and you came to the cross and you were saved? And how precious it was to hear about salvation that day. I know how it was.

I wept when I realized Jesus died for my sins. I'll tell you, I weep today when I sing about the cross because it's new. One of the things I prayed is, Lord, let me never get familiar with the message of the cross.

Let me never get so familiar with the truth that Jesus shed his blood to cleanse me from sin. Let me never get familiar with the truth that Christ Jesus came to the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. I believe that that is the reason why many Christians don't progress in the Christian life.

All progress in the Christian life is based on a fervent love for Jesus Christ. It's not just knowledge of the scriptures. It's a fervent love for Christ.

And we love him because he first loved us. And if you forget how much he first loved you, you won't love him. There are two reasons why we love Jesus.

Two motivations to love Jesus. Two things by which our love for Christ increases. One is what I just quoted from 1 John 4. We love him because he first loved us.

The more you understand how much Jesus loved you, the more you will love him. And that's why I have spent years meditating on the cross because that's the place where you see the greatest manifestation of God's love. Years and years I've meditated on what it cost, not only the cross, but even Jesus coming down from heaven to this earth, to all the inconveniences he suffered, just to save sinners.

And that's what's made me never give up in being willing to suffer any inconvenience to bring sinners to Christ, to lead them to Jesus. You see, we all need a motivation. And I'll tell you honestly, I don't get any motivation from all the television evangelists of today, but I do get a lot of motivation when I think of Jesus coming from heaven to this dirty slum called the earth.

He came down. And that's the difference between him and today's preachers who, after they become preachers, they go up. They become richer.

Jesus became poorer. There was a fundamental difference. Today's missionaries are not like those old-time missionaries who had the spirit of Christ.

I live in India. I've lived there all my life, and I've seen missionaries of the old-time variety and current missionaries. Today's preachers have come to India as tourists who stay in five-star hotels and drive around in expensive cars with a lot of money to throw around.

The old-time missionaries had the spirit of Christ. They went into forests and jungles, and there were no roads, no running water, no electricity to bring sinners to Christ. And that's the spirit I've always wanted to have in my heart.

We live in a day when Christendom is compromised because they've lost the vision of Christ. So don't let the message of the cross ever become stale to you. It says here in Matthew 26, at the Last Supper, verse 30, he told them, he said, this is my body broken for you.

In verse 28, this is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. And just before he went to the Garden of Gethsemane, the first step towards the cross, it says in verse 30, they sang a hymn. Can you picture that in your mind? Sometimes when you read the Bible, it's good to stop a moment, shut our eyes, and think how it was, Jesus and the twelve disciples singing a hymn.

And I'm sure they were not singing with the style of today's Christian rock, so-called Christian rock. What is Christian rock? I've always wondered about that. To me, it's like Christian adultery or Christian murder or Christian sin.

What is Christian sin? Christian rock. Christian demon possession. Christian drug addiction.

Christian rock music. The rubbish that goes on in the world today under the name of Christian. What you heard just now was some of the finest music you'll ever hear on the face of the earth.

I'll tell you that. I've traveled a lot, and I've heard a lot. Jesus sang a hymn, and I think it was the type of hymns we just heard.

I think that was the way they sang those days. I want to sing with Jesus. I want to sing like he sang.

The two things he does in the church, he preaches and he sings. As I've read that from the time I was young, I said, Lord, I want to preach like you preached. I studied the way Jesus preached, and I said, Lord, I want to preach like that.

And the little bit I can sense of how Jesus sang, I said, I want to sing like that. Those are the only types of songs I want to sing. I don't want to go with this modern trend.

I want to sing like Jesus sang. I want to preach like Jesus preached. And I say, if in our churches we can preach like Jesus preached and sing like Jesus sang, Jesus will feel at home in our churches.

He doesn't feel at home in many churches because he doesn't like the music, and he doesn't like the preaching. Make it the goal of your life, if you have any responsibility in a church, to make sure you sing like Jesus would sing, preach like Jesus would preach. I'll tell you one thing about Jesus' preaching.

His preaching was so simple that children could understand. If the children can't understand you, you need to come down, brother. Many a time at home and in Bangalore when I, my home church, after I

preach, I go to some eight-year-old child and I ask him, did you understand what I said today? And if he says no, I say, Lord, help me, I've got to go come down a little more.

I'll tell you something, a little secret of preaching. If the eight-year-old can understand you, everybody will understand you. It's as simple as that.

Don't seek honor. Don't seek honor in your singing, don't seek honor in your preaching. Must all be for the glory of Christ.

Many years ago, the Lord showed me a verse in Colossians. We've been thinking of building the church and seeing the wiles of Satan and how the church that Jesus builds can never be defeated by Satan. In Colossians chapter one and verse 18, there's a little expression that came to my heart when I was a very young Christian and I was beginning to preach the word and serve in the church.

And I've never forgotten it all these more than 45 years since I first started preaching God's word. And it says in verse 18 that Christ himself might have preeminence or the first place in everything. That Christ might have the first place in everything.

And God said to me that that was his goal, to make sure that Christ had first place in everything. And he said to me that if I made that my goal as well, he would have my, I would have his support all through my life. You can have that too.

Do you want to make sure that Christ has, do you want to have God's support every single day of your life? I want it. I've stood behind pulpits for 45 years and I'll tell you honestly, the thing I wanted more than anything else, more than all the honor of men is that God must support me when I stand here. And it's very simple.

God will support you if your goal is that Jesus Christ must have first place in everything, in your life, in the way you handle your money, the way you decide how to spend your time, the things you want to speak about, the books you read, if you have television, the programs you watch, Christ must have first place in everything. If you run a church, the way you run it, if you handle money, the way you handle it, and you're dealing with people, especially those who are junior to you, those who are less lower than you in society, the way I treat them is the way God will treat me. Yeah, it's not the way I treat the big shots in the world, no, it's the way I treat those who are lower than me in society, those whom society despises.

God is the God of the widows and the orphans. The way I treat widows and orphans, that's the way God's going to treat me. The way I treat those who are divorced and broken by the sufferings they've gone through in life, many, many, many times not due to any fault of theirs, they've come from broken homes, drunken fathers, broken homes, and never experienced the security that you and I experienced, and it's very easy for us to despise them.

Oh, why did they do that? You don't know what all they went through. You don't know what all emotional problems they had as little children. They were abused, taken advantage of, and they grew up and made a mess of their life.

I don't compare myself with them. God gave me a good upbringing, and when God sees that I'm compassionate towards them, that mercy triumphs over judging them, God is merciful to me, and I tell you I want God's mercy. I want it now, and I want it when I stand before him in the final day, and the way I treat those people, that's why I'll tell you honestly, I stand firmly on the convictions of scripture without any

compromise, but my heart is moved with compassion when I see people whose lives are broken, especially divorced men and women, especially divorced women whose lives have been messed up.

I don't treat them in the same harsh way that a lot of Christians do, a lot of Christian churches do, I'll tell you honestly. Without compromising the principles and the teachings of Jesus, I seek to serve them with compassion and help them because Jesus came to save sinners, and to that list of widows and orphans you could say God is a God of those who are in the periphery of society, the strangers, the aliens, those whom society despises, like the five times divorced woman in Samaria whom all of Samaria despised, Jesus cared for her, and I want to have the spirit of Christ, and if we are to build a church, we must let that spirit rule us. It's Jesus who builds the church, and very often he cannot build a church the way he wants to build it because a lot of Christians and Christian leaders bring their own self-righteousness into the church, and they build a church which they think is righteous, but it's their own self-righteousness.

It's the righteousness of the Pharisee. One of the things that God showed me many years ago was that I could either build a religious church or a spiritual one, I could make a choice, and he also showed me that the vast majority of Christians, 95% of them, don't have a clue as to what is the difference between a religious church and a spiritual church. Most people think a religious church is a spiritual one, but let me tell you, the difference between the two is the difference between heaven and hell.

That's why Jesus looked around at the most religious people of his time, the Pharisees, and told them, how can you escape the damnation of hell? To whom did he say that? I mean, today we would say that to some divorced woman. If you don't obey God and you've divorced so many times, or we'd say that to some adulteress or prostitute or some crooked tax collector or, you know, crooked businessman, etc., etc. But Jesus said it to the most religious people on earth at that time, the people, the only people who had the true word of God, the fundamentalists, the people who are sticky about every little thing.

And if I could say it in those words, the people who had the same spirit as sticking to the King James Version of the Old Testament in Jesus' time. Those are the people to whom he said, how can you escape the damnation of hell? The prostitutes and thieves will get into God's kingdom before you. We don't hear much of that preaching.

You just setting certain things right externally, dressing in a certain way. We place so much emphasis on dress that I believe in modesty and dress, 100%. But I say you can place so much emphasis on that, that the heart is not important.

It's giving Christ first place that God looks for. Without all the emphasis on the externals, where have we built churches where people love one another? There's so much of politics and fighting and quarreling and all types of things in churches that have preached external righteousness. It's the same thing in churches that preach the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I'll tell you, I've moved a lot among Pentecostals, Charismatics. It's the same thing. I believe 100% in the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But I say the answer, you'll never find the answer in any of these things. It's in giving Christ first place. Until you give Christ first place, all these things don't find their proper place.

When it says in Matthew 16, 18, the worst we've been looking at that Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will never prevail against it. If we understand something of the character of Satan and

what made him Satan, we see the spirit that he seeks to bring into the church that hinders the building of the church. What was it that made the devil the devil? How did sin first come into this universe long before Adam? I mean, sin came into the human race in Genesis 3, but sin came into the universe between Genesis verses 1 and 2, chapter 1, which is described later on in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

It's not mentioned in the beginning of the Bible because this book was not written for angels, it was written for man. And that's why it's not mentioned at the beginning. Because it's written for man, it begins with the history of man.

But long before man fell, there was this head of the angels with whom our conflict is today. It's important for us to understand it because every time Jesus spoke about the church, and he spoke about the church only twice, by the way. One was here and the other is in Matthew 18.

And both times, it's very significant, he didn't speak about church pattern, he didn't talk about any other thing other than conflict. In Matthew 16, 18 he said, I will build my church, and immediately he spoke about conflict. The gates of hell will not prevail against it.

The church is going to overcome the gates of hell. The powers of spiritual death, the church is going to go against it. The church is going to be, it's not just the church defending itself from all the attacks of Satan, it's the church going against the devil in Jesus' name.

You know, very often, in the early days when I read that verse, I used to picture the church, you know, surrounded by a fort and the powers of spiritual darkness attacking it, attacking it, and somehow the church surviving. You know, like we sing in that hymn, hold the fort for I am coming. And we're sort of hanging on for dear life, because we hope before we sink, Jesus will come.

It's not like that. Think of this. Read that verse again.

It took a long time for me to read scripture properly, because I was influenced by hymnology that was unscriptural. One of those was hold the fort for I am coming. What does it mean when it says the gates of hell? The gates of hell will not prevail against the church.

Who is attacking and who is defending? It's the gates of hell. They're inside the fort. We're attacking.

And so the gates of hell will not be able to stand against the church. So it's not a picture of me sort of standing inside the fort and the Lord saying to me, hold the fort, I'm coming, I'm coming. No.

It's me going against the territory of Satan on earth, and his territory is not in hell. It's the gates of Hades and the powers of spiritual darkness and all around me. And I have to go against Satan.

I've got to register the victory of Christ in the territory of the devil. That's why I don't believe in living in a Christian ghetto, surrounded by all believers' homes all around me. I don't believe in that.

I believe in living in the territory of the devil and registering the victory of Christ there. There was a great missionary called C.D. Studd, an English missionary, who was a world-famous cricketer in his time. And cricket, by the way, is the equivalent of baseball or football or whatever you have here in England.

You know, if you're a famous cricketer, you're the greatest sportsman. And he was a millionaire, too. And he gave it all up to become a missionary for Christ in Africa.

And he said this. He said most Christians were chocolate soldiers. They just melt so easily.

They're not real soldiers for Christ. And he made a little jingle. He said, some want to live within sound of church or chapel bell.

I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell. Some want to live always within sound of church and chapel bell.

I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell. See, that's what Christianity is. It's not running away.

It's like I said, living on top of the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah and all the saints. It's like, I think of many, many places where we have so many, many hundreds and thousands of non-Christians who have come to Christ in our churches. I praise the Lord for that.

For villages where there was no Christian for 2,000 years since the time of Christ, and now there are hundreds of Christians praising the Lord. I praise the Lord for this, to register the victory of Christ in the territory of the devil. I'm not hearing Jesus saying, hold the fort for I'm coming.

I hear Jesus saying, go and make disciples in that place and in the other place and the other place. There are many people making converts. Go and make them into disciples, people who will follow me, people who will love me more than they love money, love me more than they love themselves, love more than their parents, more than, you know, some people always want to be near their children.

We all like to be near our children and our grandchildren. I see my grandchildren maybe a few times a year. But I've told them, I promise you I'll spend years and years with you in heaven.

Give me a little time on earth to serve the Lord in India. And later on I'll make up for it when I get to heaven. We have work to do on this earth, and we don't retire in the Lord's work.

We're going to keep pressing on because there's so much need to register the victory of Christ in the territory of the devil. We're surrounded by the territory of the devil. And I don't encourage people to go and work in some Christian organization.

I don't encourage people to go into what is called full-time Christian work. I don't encourage people to go to seminaries. Seminaries are like cemeteries.

It's a place where people die. I say go and study the scriptures on your knees and go and live in the midst of the workaday world and register the victory of Christ there. Where do you need a candle? Not where there are already a hundred candles burning, but where there's no candle burning.

That's our calling. All seek their own. The world can be described like that.

Christians can be described like that. And I want to say to you what I said in the very first meeting. Ask yourself, my brother, sister, are your decisions made on the basis of what's good for me? How will this make my life more comfortable? How will it make things easier for me? Well, you'll be like the vast majority of Christians.

You'll ease your conscience by going to meetings and conferences and giving a little donation for God's work or missionary work here and there. But I'll tell you something, you'll never accomplish the purpose with which God sent you to this earth. Never.

You'll waste your life. I have to tell you the truth because I don't want your blood on my hands on the day of judgment. I don't want you to turn around to me and say one day when you stand before the Lord, Brother Zach, you knew the truth and you never told us that day when you came to Beaver Springs.

I certainly did tell you the truth, that if you live seeking your own, you'll have tremendous regret on the day of judgment when you stand before the Lord. Determined from today, even if all the others around you are seeking their own. I found myself in an assembly where everybody was seeking their own.

I said, Lord, this is not the way you lived. I hear the word of Christ ringing in my heart from the Holy Spirit. Have the same mind in you which was in Christ Jesus.

Have the same mind in you which was in Christ Jesus. I've often said I need only one verse in the Bible to live my whole life. Philippians 2.5. Have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus.

You don't need any other verse to live your whole life if you're born again. That's all. Meditate on that verse.

What does it mean to have the mind in me which was in Christ Jesus? In every situation when I'm dealing with sinners, when I'm dealing with Pharisees, when I'm dealing with difficult people, when I'm dealing with temptation, when I'm whatever situation I'm facing on earth, when I'm dealing with trial, when I'm dealing with sickness, when I'm dealing with anything in the earth, I need only one verse. Have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus. And the Holy Spirit has come to give me that mind, that same attitude that Christ had.

The NASB says have this attitude in you which was in Christ Jesus who never thought about himself but gave up equality with God. Can you think of anything greater than equality with God? What are all the comforts of earth compared to equality with God? He gave it all up because he wanted to reach me. And have this attitude in you which is in Christ Jesus.

And that's how we are to serve him till the end of our life, not just now and then. Have this attitude in you which is in Christ Jesus who did not seek what he would gain at any time. What did he gain by coming to this earth? He was going to lose everything.

He was going to gain souls. He was going to deliver people from the clutches of Satan. It is other people who are going to be blessed by his sacrifice.

Can you think of sacrifices you have made in your life? I don't mean putting a few dollars in an offering box. I mean real sacrifices that you have made of time, energy, convenience, money, loss of food, loss of anything because you wanted somebody else to be drawn closer to God and to Christ. Or have you gone through inconveniences like coming to a conference here, spend money, spend money staying in a motel and all that expense for what? For you to be blessed yourself.

That's good. But that's not what I'm talking about. Jesus didn't spend all that energy to come to earth to be blessed himself.

No. Have this attitude in you which is in Christ. We have received so much and that's why we don't get that greater blessing.

There is a blessing in receiving. That's why we have conferences. And I praise the Lord that you come and you want to receive.

Now I want to lead you to a higher blessing where it says in Acts 20 verse 35, it is more blessed to do what? To give than to receive. To give to others what you have received and not just to give to ease your conscience. Oh I must start a home meeting now, gather a few people and whenever it's convenient.

Oh not more than once a week. That'll be inconvenient. You know how we seek just to ease our conscience.

We'll have one weekday meeting in our home to ease our conscience. It gets more than that will be inconvenient. It will be inconvenient for my wife.

I remember the years we used to have meetings in our home. Three, four meetings a week. We had three small children at home and with six years the church met in our house.

Those are some of the most blessed years of our life. Our children grew there and they enjoyed it so much. Of course it was a lot of inconvenience but we saw souls blessed.

We saw people delivered from demons and the church being built. And I discovered through the years you can't build a church if you don't have the Spirit of Christ. Being willing to be inconvenienced thoroughly.

I remember the days when my wife went without meals because you had to give meals to other people who came to the house. Unexpected visitors etc. So many things happen when you seek to and reach out to people who try to exploit us, took advantage of us, we made mistakes.

But we said Lord we're trying to build you a church. I want to say to you today as I look back I have no regrets. Dear brothers and sisters I'll tell you this.

You cannot build the church of Jesus Christ if you're not willing to pay the price. And I don't mean money. God's got no shortage of money.

He doesn't want your money. He wants your life. He wants you to lay down your desire to live the way you want to live and say Lord I don't want to seek my own.

See sin came into the universe when one angel. There are many things we could say into that one desire that he had to become like God. You know that that's what it says in Isaiah 14.

He said we don't know what his name was. I mean a lot of people call him Lucifer but Lucifer just means morning star and light bringer or something like that. It's a Latin word.

It's not his real name. Nowhere does it tell us what his real name is. We don't know what his name was as an angel.

We know him as Satan today. But whatever he was he wanted to go above. He was not he was the greatest of all created beings.

Now you would think that if he was the greatest of all created beings and what more can you have than that. But that's the nature of the devil. No matter how much you have you're not satisfied.

He was the highest of all created beings and he was still not satisfied. Many of us think that if we just have a little more than we have right now we'll be satisfied. I tell you you won't be.

You say it's just because I have so little that I'm a little unhappy. If I only had a little more, a little more money, a little more convenience, a little bigger house than I have right now I'd be happy. I guarantee you won't be happy.

The person who will be happy is the person who's happy with whatever condition he is in right now. That's the person who will be happy. Like some old saint said that God has made enough on this earth for everybody's need but not enough even for one man's greed.

It's true because no matter you know once we get into the satanic rut we'll never be satisfied no matter how much we get. Whatever you have you'll want something more. Some advertisement will pop up in some paper or television or somewhere saying you can't live without this.

You need to buy this and you can buy now and pay later. When I see those advertisements I say to myself how did man live for 5,000 years without this gadget and it's a lie. Don't you believe all these advertisements which say you can't live without this.

Man lived for 5,000 years 6,000 years without it. Be happy with whatever God's given you. Be content.

It's that lack of contentment that made the devil the devil. That's why we need to teach our children to be content with what they have. Content with the food that is on the table.

Not satisfy their every woman's fancy for more and more and more and more this and that and the other. You're gonna ruin your children. So many children today have learned absolutely zero about self-denial.

They've been pampered by their parents and given everything they want and the parents are happy just because they go to some church and sing in some choir and can strum some guitar and if they're serving the Lord. Rubbish. If they are seeking their own that's not Christianity.

It's not Christianity you're teaching your children. Teach them to deny themselves. That teach them to be content with what they have.

All the children don't need a separate bedroom. Tell them about Jesus who had four younger brothers and two younger sisters and he never had a separate bedroom in his house. He was a poor carpenter.

He lived in a poor carpenter's home. If you're serious about making our children disciples of Jesus Christ we have to show them always the example of Jesus. I remember hearing my one of my sons preaching in India once in our church and he was saying how he says anyone can see the footsteps of Jesus because there are little footsteps of Jesus.

Two-year-old footsteps of Jesus. Five-year-old footsteps of Jesus. Ten-year-old footsteps of Jesus.

That whatever your age you are you can look and you can see the footsteps of Jesus. That's why he came as a baby. So that you could see how he lived.

He could be he faced everything we face and God in his great wisdom like I said yesterday. God who could make Job the richest man on earth and a very godly man. God who could make Abraham's the father of faith and a very rich man.

Who could make David a man after God's own heart and financially when he was a king for 40 years he lacked nothing. But when he sent his son to earth God did not allow him to grow up in the house of a man like Job or a man like Abraham. No.

There were rich believers those days. There was Joseph of Arimathea who was a very rich man. God-fearing man.

God did not allow his son to be born there. He allowed his son to be born in a poor home. Where I mean I've seen homes in India of carpenters.

And if there are six children they all sleep in the same room. And on the floor there are no beds. You know like sardines next to each other.

I'm sure that's how Jesus slept with his brothers. He grew up in a home like that. There are little footsteps of Jesus that we can show our children to be content with what they have.

Content with what you have. Why? Because discontentment with what God had given is what made the devil the devil. And I don't want my children to become like the devil.

I don't want them to be just singing songs in the meeting going to a church where they have the right doctrine and have the spirit of the devil in their heart which is discontent. Discontent with my surroundings. Discontent with my room.

Discontent with what I have. I need a better car. I need this.

I need that. I need this type of food. What's you singing all those songs and having the right doctrine in the church? If I've got the devil's attitude in my heart.

This is why we're not raising up a spiritual generation. We're not making disciples. Disciples don't come by choir practice.

I'll tell you that. They don't come by right doctrine. No.

They come by getting rid of the spirit of the devil from our lives. Following Jesus. If a person is not a disciple of Jesus whether he knows it or not he is a disciple of Satan.

And one way to be a disciple of Satan is to be perpetually discontent. Discontent with your church, the elders in your church. And I remember hearing the story of a man who moved to a new town and went to the elder brother in his church and said, asked him, what type of church is this? I'm just considering joining it.

So the elder brother asked him what type of church was the last church you were in? Oh, he said, that was really bad. They were all critical, complaining, and unloving people. He said, this church is like that too.

And then the next week another brother came to him, another new person who had moved into the locality, came to him and asked him, what type of church is this? I'm considering joining it. The same elder brother. He asked him the same question.

What was your last church like? Oh, he said, they were not perfect, but we were pressing on. We loved one another. This church is like that.

What's the message? It depends on your heart, what you find in a church, on your attitude. You can go to the best church in the world and spoil it. It's like this brother who went to a man of God and said, brother, I haven't found a perfect church.

Can you direct me to one? And so this man of God said, well, I haven't found a perfect church either. But if you find one, don't join it, because you'll spoil the whole thing. It's like these people who are looking for the perfect man to marry and the perfect woman to marry.

How can you find a perfect man to marry when you are so imperfect yourself? How can you find a perfect woman to marry when you're such an imperfect man? It's like this cartoon I saw once of a skeleton with a lady's dress sitting on a park bench. I mean, she died there like that, a skeleton sitting with a lady's dress, and it's written underneath, waiting for the perfect man. You see, there are so many ways in which we are discontent.

Are you discontent with the wife God gave you? Adam was. He told God, this wife you gave me is the one who led me into sin. Discontent, you know, the poison which the devil has put into the human race, one primary characteristic of it is the same discontentment he had when he was the highest created being.

And he put that poison into the human race, infected the entire human race with it. Our children are born with it. And if you don't eliminate it from your children, they will never be spiritual, even if they sing like angels, and even if they sit in the best, doctrinally finest church in the world.

There's something else they've got to get rid of. You've discontentment and complaining. There's no place for complaining in the Christian church.

The Bible says in Philippians in chapter 2, it says here that we've got to get rid of, I mean, this is one of the least obeyed commandments in scripture. I once, I've seriously thought about writing a book called Commandments in the New Testament that Christians don't obey. And it'll only be verses.

I won't add one sentence of my own, just a list of verses that Christians don't obey. I've got a whole lot of them already. I just got to find time to write the book.

You know, verses like, every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account in the day of judgment. How many Christians have you met who believe that, who are careful about every word that comes out of their mouth, especially when they're all alone at home, husband and wife? How many husbands and wives do you know on the face of the earth, Christians, spirit-filled, speaking in tongues, everything else, who are careful with their speech? Did he say only every idle word that other believers hear you speaking? No. Every idle word that comes out of your mouth, even if it's only your beloved husband or wife who hears it, if it's a careless, backbiting, gossiping word, I mark my words.

Your blood is not going to be in my hands on the day of judgment. You will give an account for it in the day of judgment because heaven and earth will pass away. These words of Jesus will not pass away.

Words that Christians don't practice. Here's another one like that. Philippians 2:14.

Do all things without grumbling or complaining. All means all in every language. Everything in my life I'm supposed to do without grumbling or complaining.

I mean, if something is wrong, there's nothing wrong in saying something is wrong, but there must not be a spirit of grumbling or complaining in this. I mean, if your wife forgot to add salt in the food, there's nothing wrong in saying that, but you can say it as a matter of fact or a spirit of complaining. A lot of things like this, which when the spirit of complaining comes in, it's discontentment.

That's the spirit of the devil. And it says here that if I'm a Christian, now do you know that there was no such verse in the old Testament? Do you know that in the old Testament you were permitted to grumble and complain and murmur and do all types of things provided you did not murder people, provided you did not commit adultery, provided you honored your father and mother. And I'm just going through the 10 commandments provided you did not bear false witness against the neighbor.

You are permitted to do a lot of other things like murmuring and complaining. Oh yeah. But once you come to the New Testament and the day age of grace and the power of the Holy Spirit has come, the standard is higher.

Do all things without grumbling and complaining. Now listen to this because that's the only way, verse 14, verse 15, that you can prove that you're a child of God. And that's the only way you will be a light in this dark crooked perverse world.

It's in your Bible. It's in the King James Version too, by the way. Do all things without grumbling and complaining.

And all of you who are so zealous for the King James Version, ask yourself whether you're obeying that more than worried about a particular translation. Are you obeying that verse? Are you obeying it in every situation? Can your wife testify that you do everything in the house without grumbling and complaining? Oh how the devil has led us astray. Glorifying in particular translations of the Bible, glorifying in speaking in tongues, etc, etc.

What's you speaking in tongues on Sunday morning in the meeting if you complain and murmur with the same tongue in your home in the afternoon? That's a counterfeit tongue. I know when the Lord Jesus baptized me in the Holy Spirit and gave me the gift of speaking in unknown tongues, the Holy Spirit began to control my mother tongue as well. That's how I knew it was the Holy Spirit and not an evil spirit.

If you got the gift of tongues, speaking in unknown tongues, but the Spirit did not control your mother tongue, you better question whether it was the Holy Spirit or an evil spirit. I've heard evil spirits speak in tongues. When the evil spirit is cast out, they stop speaking in tongues.

And I've also seen the genuine gift of the Holy Spirit. About 10% of what I heard is genuine. 90% of the so-called tongues today is all counterfeit.

I'm telling you the truth. A lot of it is not all demonic. About 10% is demonic.

About 80% is just human psychological manipulation. But there is the genuine, sure. But when it is the genuine, it'll also control your mother tongue.

You'll stop telling lies. You'll be careful about your words. You will stop murmuring.

You will stop grumbling. That's why on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon people, it was a tongue of fire on top of their heads. Symbolizing that God was saying that from now on it is this part

of your body that I'm going to use more than any other part of your body.

It was not a hand of fire or a leg of fire. It was a tongue of fire. A tongue to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

And not just on Sunday mornings, but seven days a week, 24-7 like they say. A tongue controlled by the Holy Spirit in my mother tongue. No complaining.

No grumbling. Because that's the spirit of the devil. Grumbling and complaining indicates a discontent with something of my circumstances.

That's what made the devil the devil. I'm not happy God. Even though I'm the greatest of all created beings, I'm not happy.

I want something more. In a moment he became the devil. So when the Bible says, Jesus says, I'll build my church and the powers of hell will not overcome it.

The church has to overcome discontentment. I remember the Lord showing me this. That the Lord said, if you want to preach against the love of money, you've got to overcome it in your own flesh first.

If you want to preach against murmuring, you've got to overcome it in your own flesh first. Otherwise you're a hypocrite. And I said, Lord, please help me.

I made this decision 31 years ago, 32, 33 years ago that I would never preach what I had not first practiced. I got that from Acts 1 verse 1. The things that Jesus began to do and teach. He did and he taught.

And he did and he taught. He spent 30 years preparing the Sermon on the Mount. It wasn't just three hours sitting up on Saturday writing up a sermon.

He lived it and he preached it. Jesus did not practice what he preached. He preached what he had already practiced.

That's what it says in Acts 1. He did and he taught. And Luke who wrote that episode says that's what the gospel of Luke is all about. The first account of Theophilus, the gospel of Luke is a complete description of what Jesus did and taught.

Meaning that now I'm writing a second book, which is a continuation of what Jesus did and taught. That he did and taught in his physical body in Israel. Now he's doing through his spiritual body around the world.

That's the Acts of the Apostles. So I come in in there also. If we can say the gospel of Luke according to Acts 1 can be according to Acts 1. Luke's own description of his gospel of Luke is what Jesus began to do and teach.

So at the end of the Acts of the Apostles if you were to ask how would you describe this book Luke? He'd say what Jesus continued to do and teach now through his spiritual body the Apostles and that continues to the 21st century today through you and me. Do you know that what I'm supposed to do? I'm to continue to do and teach what Jesus did. He lived without murmuring and complaining.

He was happy with whatever circumstances he found himself in. That's whatever circumstances. If people called him the Prince of Devils, it's amazing.

You know people were speaking evil about me and Jesus said in Matthew 10 he said that if they have called the head of the house head of the family Prince of Devils how much more the members of his family. You read that? They called the head of the family the Prince of Devils how much more the members of the family. I want to ask you brothers what is the worst name somebody called you? Have they ever called you the Prince of Devils? Are you a member of Jesus family by the way? He said that if they called the head of the family Prince of Devils how much more the members of his family or nobody calls you bad names because you're so you're such a so diplomatic and careful in the way you present yourself.

You want to be accepted by everybody. Don't cause offense to anyone. Well no wonder they say good things about you.

You need to ask yourself whether you're a disciple of Jesus. I remember reading when they called him the Prince of Devils in Matthew chapter 12 he told them have you spoken against me the son of man you're forgiven. I asked the Lord once I said Lord what is this thing you kept on calling yourself the son of man the son of man and I got a paraphrase of that from the Lord himself.

I haven't seen it in any translation but I felt the Lord was saying to me that that meant I considered myself an ordinary man. Oh that changed my whole understanding of Jesus. You know it's somebody called him Prince of Devils Matthew chapter 12 and he would say have you called me an ordinary man the Prince of Devils you're forgiven and the Lord said to me always think of yourself like I thought of myself as an ordinary man.

Never anything other than that. I want to ask you my brothers and sisters do you consider yourself an ordinary man like Jesus or do you consider yourself maybe a leader spiritual man holy man. No wonder you don't grow spiritually.

No wonder you don't get new revelations of Christ. I've got amazing revelations of Christ since I decided I would be an ordinary man. I will never be a great preacher or this that or rubbish the world's christened world seeks after.

I'll be an ordinary man till the end of my life and I want to build a church of ordinary people like Jesus was an ordinary man. Have you called me an ordinary man the Prince of Devils you're forgiven. I mean what crime is it to call an ordinary man something I mean if you called a big shot by that name he'd probably sue you in a court but Jesus is just an ordinary man.

We are not ordinary people. That's why you get offended when somebody says something or you hear somebody said something about you behind your back and you get hurt because you're not an ordinary man. You're not an ordinary woman.

That's why you got hurt. Maybe you control your tongue but you got hurt. I refuse to get hurt because I'm an ordinary man.

That's how we overcome Satan. That's how we build a church against which the gates of hell will not prevail. Satan before he became Satan was not an ordinary angel.

He was the head and he knew that he was. No wonder such people become like the devil. You know that two expressions that have gripped me tremendously particularly over the last few years.

One is an ordinary man which is my translation of son of man and the other is the way John describes himself in his gospel. Have you noticed how John refers to himself in his gospel? Is it he doesn't use his name. Do you remember a disciple who loved Jesus? No.

A disciple whom Jesus loved. Do you know the difference between the two? I can be pretty proud of myself when I say I'm a disciple who loves Jesus. I'm not like you fellas.

I'm one who loves Jesus. He never thought of himself like that when he was 95 years old. This godly saintly man who'd walked with God for 65 years.

If there was a man on earth who could have said I'm a disciple who loves Jesus it would have been him but he didn't use that title. A disciple whom Jesus loved. That's what the Lord spoken to me.

Till the end of your life think of yourself like this. One an ordinary man and second a disciple whom Jesus loved. I find my security there.

I find my happiness there. I'm not in competition with anybody because that other person is also a disciple whom Jesus loved. But if I say I disciple who loves Jesus that may put me in competition with somebody or make me feel I love Jesus more than you do.

But when I put it the way John put it, a disciple whom Jesus loved, it eliminates that spirit of competition. It makes me realize that God loves that brother just as much as he loves me. I'm just one of his children.

Now frequently I shut my eyes and meditate on how it'll be like in heaven where you know the Revelation 4 and 5 this great multitude singing worthy is the Lamb, thou art worthy O God. I like to look forward to my future home. I like to see those visions of how they will be praising Jesus.

I mean some people like to think of the mansions they're gonna get in heaven and the crown they're gonna wear. To tell you frankly I don't I never get any dreams about that and I don't think about that either. You can have my mansion by the way if there is one over there.

I'm not particularly keen on sitting in some 14-bedroom mansion. What'll I do with it? All these people who say I've got a mansion over the hilltop and all. Brother that's for you.

I'm looking forward to meeting Jesus and being close to him all the time. You can have all the mansions. It is a language Jesus uses.

I believe that the greatest reward in heaven is going to be closeness to Jesus and they're gonna cast the crowns down their feet. I'm not gonna go around to the crown trying to show off that I got a bigger one than you. No it's all rubbish what we think a crown means closeness to Jesus.

That's how I interpret it and if we see it like that you know we can be prepared for eternity. If we remain low in our own estimation the devil will never be able to overpower us. You can overcome everything in your life if you humble yourself because God gives us grace to the humble.

The devil became the devil because he was discontent and he was proud and we cannot build a church that overcomes Satan if you have proud people in it and if you have discontented people in it. Don't think that we can build the church just by right doctrine and by right forms of dress and right forms of pattern and all that. No it's a spirit.

It's in the spirit world that we've got to overcome Satan and that spirit that makes us feel discontented with what God has given us or what makes us feel proud of some gift or ability God has given us. Maybe our appearance when you look into the mirror and proud of the way you look or your intelligence or your ability or you can be proud of your children. Oh my children are all holy and born again not like those people's children.

God have mercy on you dear parent. You're raising children for hell with that type of spirit and your church will have a smell of hell with that type of spirit. If you find your children better than someone else's children fall on your face and pray for those people's children.

That's what Jesus would do. It's a devil who would go around boasting that my children are better than theirs and my children are more modestly dressed than theirs. Is this Christianity? No this is Satan through and through yet it masquerades under the guise of holiness.

We haven't understood holiness. The primary characteristic of holiness is humility. I'm an ordinary man.

I'm a disciple whom Jesus loved. If you keep yourself there with your face in the dust I guarantee the devil will not be able to conquer you in your entire lifetime and you'll be able to build a work for God that will last for all eternity. I will build my church and the gates of hell will never be able to prevail against it.

God wants you and me to do that work for him here on this earth. Let's pray. Let's bow our heads before God.

There is forgiveness with God so that he can be feared and revered and if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us. Don't worry about anybody else's sins now. Just confess your own and say Lord I confess my sin.

I want you to forgive me. I want to take my Christian life far more seriously than I've ever taken it so far. Thank you for giving me light.

I know you're here because your light shone into my heart. Lord I want to go on with you. Thank you father for showing us our conceit, arrogance, pride, stupidity that's prevented us from building a mighty powerful church right where we live.

With all our boasted knowledge we've done so little for you because we've been deceived by the pride and arrogance and discontented spirit that's been in us. Cleanse us Lord. Deliver us that we can do a work for you that will last for all eternity.

Pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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