

The Final Examination of the Christian

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance and turning away from sin, highlighting the need to take sin seriously and seek forgiveness for past wrongs. It stresses the significance of offering our bodies to God, not just material offerings, and the accountability we will face for our actions in the day of judgment. The speaker urges listeners to repent and live a life that glorifies God, acknowledging the need to overcome sin with God's help.

Scripture: Acts 17:30, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 12:36, Hebrews 10:5, Hebrews 10:30, Romans 12:2, John 6:38, Matthew 11:28

Topics: "Repentance", "Accountability to God"

Description

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Transcript

One of the things I'm very thankful to God for is physical health. As you get older and you see many people sick and unable to move out or knocked down with something or the other, I'm very thankful that God has given my wife and me health to be able to travel. Not for our own comfort, it's never easy to travel, I'll tell you that.

In the early days, travel is exciting, you go from place to place, but after four or five years, the excitement wears out and when we've been traveling for 50 years like we've been doing, it's wearing and tiring. But the joy I have, to tell you honestly, it really is, I'm not exaggerating, is to see hungry people like you who are eager to hear the word and who are eager for fellowship. That just thrills my heart and it's a great joy to be able to go to different parts of the world where God has now planted different churches related to CFC and where there are people who are really seeking, not perfect people, none of our churches are perfect, none of our people are perfect, I'm not perfect first of all, but people who are seeking to press on to perfection at different levels.

Some are in the kindergarten still, some are in the first grade, second grade, some are a little higher up, but everyone's got one goal to complete their earthly education. They don't want to drop out of school.

God has placed us on earth to get an education, a spiritual education.

Jesus got a spiritual education when he was on earth. Do you know that? Let me show you that verse. There are many interesting verses which sometimes we miss.

Hebrews chapter 5, the education that Jesus got when he was on earth. What could he learn being Almighty God? As God, nothing. But he came to earth as a man and when he was a little baby, the language they spoke in those days was a language called Aramaic.

I don't know what that is, probably a version of the Hebrew. But he had to learn whatever is the ABC equivalent in that language right from childhood. And he had to learn that 2 plus 2 was 4 and 3 multiplied by 3 was 9. He had to learn all that and grew up and to learn the scriptures.

And so there was an education beyond that. I mean this is the education all of us get, our children can get. But in Hebrews 5 verse 8, although he was a son, that's the point.

He's the eternal son of God who knew everything from all eternity. But when he came to earth it says he emptied himself. Philippians 2, 5. He emptied himself and became a man.

Emptied himself of all that position and power and knowledge he had as God. Otherwise he would have come here as God. If he had come here as God, he'd be no example for us.

It's like an angel with wings trying to teach us how to swim across a river. I'd say get rid of your wings first, otherwise you can't teach me. And if Jesus came to earth as God, as some people believe he was only God, then he cannot be my example.

He cannot say follow me. I'd say I can't follow you. Like I said, if an angel with wings tries to teach me to swim, I'd say I can't follow you, sorry.

But if he takes off his wings and gets a body like mine, then you can teach me to swim because this body is pulled down by gravity. And I say our human body is pulled down by sin, temptation, pulled down by temptation rather. If we yield to that, we sin.

If we don't yield to it, we don't sin. So Jesus had a body that was subject to temptation. But he never fell into it.

He always overcame it. Always. We have fallen many times from childhood.

But he never fell. But it was a body subject to temptation. And so from childhood, he had to be tempted in the areas that children are tempted, and how young boys are tempted, and young men are tempted, like that all the way to adulthood, how full-time preachers are tempted, etc.

So he learned obedience from the things which he suffered. Now when we hear the word suffering, we immediately think of physical suffering. That's the only suffering we can think of.

Cancer, injuries, and injuries to the body and all that. But the suffering Jesus endured was not physical. Physical injury is not a serious thing, as serious as spiritual.

What is the things that he suffered from which he learned obedience? So every word there is important. He was tempted to disobey, but he learned obedience. That's the first thing we learn.

Throughout his life, he was tempted to disobey his father, but he resisted it and he obeyed. That is overcoming temptation. And because there were desires in his body, that temptation tried to attract those desires, he had to say no to that.

And that saying no to it was suffering. That's the suffering spoken of here. You know when you have to deny yourself something, that is a suffering.

And that is a suffering that Jesus went through inwardly, where basically we have a self that sits on the throne of our heart, when we are born into this world, that wants its own way. Okay? All of you who got even one-year-old children know that. There's a self inside that child that is stubborn.

It wants its own way from the age of one. As soon as it climbs out of the crib, it wants its own way. That is what is in man.

It's called my will. Now having my will is not a sin. Yielding to my will is a sin.

Adam had his own will. He was not a robot. He had my will when he was created and he did not sin.

It's when he went into the garden, Adam and Eve, and yielded to my will instead of God's will, that's when he sinned. God's will was, don't eat from that tree of knowledge of good and evil. My will for Eve was, I want it.

It's attractive to me. It makes my mouth water. The devil's just told me that it can make me very clever and make me like God.

I'm gonna listen to him. What about what God said? Well forget about that. God is loving.

He'll overlook it. Well he did not overlook it. They got thrown out of Eden for disobeying God once.

If you want to know how serious one sin is, go to Genesis chapter 3 and read. Why were Adam and Eve kicked out of the garden of Eden? For how many sins? One. They lost paradise and came to a sinful earth for one sin.

That is to teach us at the beginning of the Bible how serious one sin is. Sometimes we think, oh just once. I just lusted once.

Uh-huh. That's not serious, is it? A little bit of cancer, a little bit of poison, a little bit of potassium cyanide. You don't need much.

It's like that. So my will is what makes us sin. And Jesus had a thing called my will.

Sure, otherwise he was not like us. And he never did it. That was the suffering he had.

When you say, when you have to say no to my will, you see how much a child has to suffer inwardly when you say no, you're not going to get that. A child says, dad I want this. No, you're not going to have it.

I want to go out and do this with my friends. No, you're not going to. Those friends are not good.

You're not going to go out with them. And that child suffers. What is suffering there? It's not a physical suffering.

There's inward, my will is being slain. And he has to do his dad's will. Now in the same way, every temptation that comes to us is basically appealing to my will.

Come on, do what you feel like doing. And you know that God is saying in your conscience, that's not good. A lot of things Jesus says, go right ahead.

There's nothing wrong in that. You're going to have your meal, fine. Go ahead.

You got to go and work, fine. Many other things, the time to go to sleep, fine. But there's certain things where God says, no, that's not good for you.

But my will says, I want it. And you yield to my will, you sin. Whether it's watching pornography, or getting angry, or stealing money, or submitting false tax returns.

Whatever it is, it's my will. You know, God says to you in your conscience, that's not my will. But you say, keep quiet, I'm going to do my will, because I am going to gain something through this.

Either a little money, or a little pleasure, or a little something for myself, or my, you know, my dignity, and my prestige. I'm going to establish myself as the head of my home, and I'm going to keep my wife in the proper place, and make her submit to me. That's not the way you're supposed to live with your wife.

But my will, why is it husbands and wife clash? Because both of them have got a thing called my will, and they clash. Is this my will that Jesus had? But he did not yield to it, and therefore he suffered. You read that in John chapter 6. In John chapter 6, you read a one-line summary of the earthly life of Jesus Christ.

His entire 33 and a half years is summed up in one sentence. John 6, 38. I call this the one-line autobiography of Jesus.

Jesus writing his own life story. Here it is. I came from heaven, that's how it began.

And what did he do on earth for 33 and a half years? I never did my own will for 33 and a half years. But for 33 and a half years, I did the will of him who sent me. That is the biography of Jesus Christ's life in one sentence.

And when he says follow me, he said this is the way I lived. Do you want to follow me or not? This is where we have to follow him. I did not do my will, but the will of him who sent me.

That's where suffering came. And all through his life, he offered his body to the Father to do his will. Turn with me now to Hebrews in chapter 10.

These are all in your Bible. I'm sure you've read them sometimes. Because we don't meditate on the Word of God, we don't get into the depth of it.

Like I told you, if you eat food and it doesn't get digested, it does you no good at all. Your food, when you eat it, it's like reading the Bible. When you meditate on it, it gets digested, then only gets converted into parts of your body.

Until then, it does not do you any good. You'll either throw it up and get rid of it. So the Word of God, it must produce fruit in you.

So listen to this seriously. When Jesus came, all through his life, he never did his own will. As I told you, having your own will is not a sin.

Adam had his own will when he was created. That was not sin. When he yielded to that will, he sinned.

Always, every sin is a yielding to your own will against the will of God. Where your will is agreeing with the will of God, it's fine. You do it.

When God says do it, you do it. But where your will clashes with the Word of God, your will says this, and God's will says this, that's where disobedience comes in. In Hebrews chapter 10, we read about Jesus coming into the world in verse 5. When he comes into the world, that is when Jesus comes into the world, he says it's not sacrifices and offerings you want, but a body that you want.

Isn't it a wonderful verse to preach in a church? God doesn't want your offerings. Have you ever heard a church preach that? We preach it. We're about the only church that preaches it.

I don't know whether you know our attitude to offerings in CFC. The first CFC Church was born in India. It started in our house 44 years ago.

And one of the things I discovered through, by then I had been a Christian for 16 years. I was 35 years old. And as I observed Christianity in India from the age of 19 to 35, all Christian denominations, I observed them very carefully.

I visited many of them, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Brethren, Pentecostal. I visited all of them. And I saw one thing in common.

It was a statement made by a French atheist in the 18th century called Voltaire. He was an atheist, very skeptical of all that he saw. And he saw these various Christian groups in his day, Roman Catholic, Lutherans, and even the Methodists were there those days, the early days of Methodism.

And different groups. And what he said was, I've observed all these Christian groups very carefully. They've got different doctrines.

You know, some preach this doctrine, some preach that doctrine. But when it comes to money, they all have the same doctrine. They all love money.

It was a very interesting statement. I observed exactly the same thing which Voltaire, the atheist, discovered in the 1700s, I discovered in the late 1900s. It's the same in India.

Every Christian group is after money. They're always sending letters to America or Germany or somewhere to send them money for this and money for that. And sometimes those Christian organizations exist only on a piece of paper.

The folks out in the West don't realize that there's no building here. There's no church here. There's no orphanage here.

But there's a paper with a letterhead saying some fancy name, Grace of God Orphanage or something like that. It only exists on paper. And sometimes where they have children in their orphanages, it's a man's own children or his sister's children or brother's children gathered together.

And I saw all this going on and I saw all these people from the United States sending money to all these places. And I'd never been to the US then, way back in the 70s, 60s. And I thought these American people must be the most gullible people on the earth.

They don't even find out whether what's happening here is where this money is going. It's just being swindled by this clever crook who calls himself a director of a non-existing orphanage and collects money. Yeah, there were sincere people out there who gave the money but they didn't come here to check up what is actually happening here.

And then I realized every group is like that. The priests are after money. The pastors are after money.

They take an offering. I remember I heard of one church here that one of my sons attended when he was a student. And he said, Dad, you cannot believe what I saw.

Right at the beginning of the service they passed the bag around and collected money and then the sermon went over and then by then they had counted the offering. And at the end the pastor says, we haven't got enough money. We're passing the bag around a second time.

Can you believe it? I said, no, I can't believe it. It's happening. It was a craze.

Everywhere in the world it was like this. And I said, Lord, if we start a church it has to be different in the area of money. Otherwise we are just going to go down the same path with a slightly different color.

Blue, green, orange, whatever it is. But it's the same old love of money. We don't want that.

So we made some policy decisions there right at the beginning. I'm basing it on this verse. Offering you do not desire.

Verse 5. What does the Lord desire? He doesn't want our offerings. It says here so clearly. That means God's not after money.

He owns the whole universe. Why does he want your money? Will your billionaire on earth come ask you for money? Have you ever heard of a billionaire coming and asking you for money? That's the way I felt like it. That all these people begging for money, asking this person, that person for money.

I felt supposing the, I don't know who's the world's richest man today, but whoever it is, if his son or daughter came to me and said, hey, Mr. Poonen, can you give me some money? Hey, you want money and your father is the richest man in the world? Ah, I know. Your father must have disinherited you. That's why you're a pauper.

Okay, what do you want? You want \$10? Here it is. The richest man's son coming and asking for money because the father disinherited him. So when a somebody richer than the richest man is our Heavenly Father.

He's not a billionaire. He's a trillionaire or whatever it is. Quintillionaire or whatever you call it.

He owns the silver and gold and everything on earth and his son, that you, this pastor or preacher saying, can you please give me \$10 for our work? It's an absolute shame. And I felt, Lord, we're not going to do that. Even if you have a rotten old church building, because we can't afford anything better, we will not beg for money.

We will not insult you, our Heavenly Father, by such cheap actions. So we made some policies. One, no preacher or elder in our church, we never had pastors, we called everybody elders.

No preacher or elder in our church will receive a salary. Zero. And we followed that now for 44 years.

We have a hundred and fifty elders in all our nearly 75 to 100 churches with thousands of believers. Not one of them receives a salary. Not one of them is paid by the church for any service.

I say, if you want to be paid, find some other church, not our church. We're not here to criticize you, but we say that's not the way God has called us to go. Secondly, we will never take an offering in our church, because sticking a bag in front of somebody is like saying, give me some money now.

It's almost like these people who put a knife behind you and say, give me your money. It's something like that. Give me your money and I'll tell you how much to give.

At least ten percent. So we say, I don't see all that. In the Old Testament it was true.

They had to give ten percent of their grain or their sheep to support the Levites. But in the New Covenant it's not like that. It says God loves a cheerful giver.

Now how can you know whether a man is cheerful when you stick a bag in front of him? So we said, we will never pass a bag around. And they graduated from bags to plates, because in a bag you don't know how much the guy is putting in. But when you put a plate in front of him, the guy will be embarrassed to put just one dollar there.

He has to put more because others are watching him. It's very clever the way people discover new new ways of getting money from people. So we decided we're not going to try any of these gimmicks.

We say we will never take an offering. But we read in the Bible, in Mark chapter 12, that Jesus sat next to the offering box. You remember that story? And a widow came and put two mites into that offering box.

And Jesus saw it. And he took all his disciples and see what this widow put in there. So I said, offering box, that's the thing.

We'll keep an offering box and Jesus will sit near it, like he did in the old days, because he's the same yesterday, today and forever. And he's the only one who will watch who's putting anything there. We're not going to have people watching it.

Jesus will sit next to the offering box, just like it says in Mark 12. And he will watch who puts in and who puts in less or more. That's between him and them.

Not between him and us. So we decided to keep the offering box and say those who want to give can put it whenever you want. So that's how they have one in the door there.

That's how we do it in every church. Not always in a door, but we can block somewhere. But we have some conditions written in most of our churches above that offering box.

Five conditions. Number one, are you born again? In the third episode of John, for each of these conditions, there's a verse. In the third episode of John, it says only those who are born again do not receive anything from non-Christians or Gentiles.

So that's number one condition. It's a great privilege to support the work of God, but you have to be a child of God first. Otherwise God doesn't want money from anyone who's not his child.

Now that's not taught in many churches. They pass the bag around and say whether you're born again or not, just give money. We say no.

You cannot put money in that box. We put a notice there. If you're not born again, don't give.

Secondly, are you in debt? Do you owe money to somebody? Then what you're putting there is that guy's money, not your money. That guy says, hey give me my money first before you give to God. Right.

And Jesus said that, give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. You remember that sentence? Then give to God what belongs to God. So who has first priority over your money? Caesar.

That may be somebody you borrowed some money from, or taxes. Give that first, Jesus said. Then give to God what is God's.

So that's the second thing. If you're in debt, Romans 13 8, don't owe anybody anything. Give that.

Then if you're in debt, don't give money here. Your house mortgage is exempted because that's not a debt. Because the money you borrowed, there's a house there.

It's equal. There's no debt there. Or you took a car on a loan, there's a car there.

There's no debt there. But other loans that you took, I say clear that first. And then thirdly, one Timothy 5 8 says, if a man doesn't take care of his family, he's worse than an unbeliever.

So do you have needs in your family that are urgent? Maybe you're too poor to feed or educate your children. Then go ahead, feed and educate them. We don't want those children growing up one day saying, the church stole our dad's money, and so we never got enough food or education.

We don't want any child in our church to ever say that. Feed them, clothe them, educate them, and then give to God. And then fourthly, do you have anybody who's got a, have you hurt somebody in some way? Jesus said in Matthew 5, if you hurt somebody and come with your offering to the Lord, don't put it.

Don't give the offering to God. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and give your offering.

So that's the number four condition we put there. If you've hurt somebody, go and ask his forgiveness. Then come and give your offering.

Otherwise God will not accept it. And number five, give cheerfully. That means don't give in order to get a reward from God.

Some people say, give 10% to God. God will give you a better interest than the bank. We don't teach all that type of stuff.

We're not doing business with God. He's not a businessman. He's a father.

And he doesn't want your money. Give cheerfully, not reluctantly to ease your conscience, or some pressure from someone, or to do business with God. I'll do this for me.

What will you do for me? No. Give cheerfully. Say, Lord, I don't want anything from you.

I'm so thankful for what you've done for me. Here is my offering of gratitude. If you have fulfilled these five conditions, give.

And you know, India is a poor country. And we decided to follow that, not only in the cities, but in the poorest villages. And somebody asked me once, Brother Zak, with all these filters that people are to go through, do you finally, does anybody put anything into this box? I said, sure.

Do you know that every church building that we ever built in India, and we have built a number of them, we have to build church buildings in India, because you can't rent many places. They belong to non-Christians. They will not give it for church purposes.

If you have a meeting in a house, and the house is rented, belonging to a non-Christian, he'll tell us to vacate if you're going to have a church meeting. So we are compelled to meet. We can't meet in many houses.

And we have to meet in a proper church building. But every single church building that we have built in the villages, in the towns, in cities of India, we have built with taking zero loan from a bank. Now if we explain this church policy with these five conditions, which bank will give a loan in any case? You see, that's the way you collect money.

Sorry, we can't trust you to repay the loan. And so we never went to a bank, and we, every building, I just want to say that to say that if you honor God, he'll honor you in the poorest country in the world. Sure.

So that's the policy we followed. We said, God does not want your offering. Hebrews 10.5. What does he want then? Your body.

Romans 12.2. In view of the mercies of God, present your body. Do you know the equivalent of the Old Testament physical lamb was Jesus on the cross, the Lamb of God. The equivalent of the Old Testament circumcision was the cutting off of the lusts of the flesh that we do and throwing them away.

The equivalent of the Old Testament going into the Red Sea and coming out from Egypt is a picture of water baptism. The equivalent of the Old Testament cloud coming down upon the Israelites is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The equivalent of the Old Testament Egyptian soldiers buried under the Red Sea is the old man which God crucified on the cross.

The equivalent of the giants of Canaan are the lusts in our flesh that we have to kill. God killed the old man. He killed the Egyptians.

But we have to kill the Canaanites. We have to mortify it. So exact.

These pictures in the Old Testament. Everything in the Old Testament has a picture here. The serpent lifted up in the wilderness.

A serpent. Can a serpent be a picture of Jesus Christ? Yes. Jesus said that in Matthew chapter 3. As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness so shall the Son of Man be lifted up on the cross.

2nd Corinthians 5 21 says Jesus became sin on the cross. You know we don't realize what a price he paid there for us. He actually became sin.

Not his sin. He had never sinned in his whole life. He became sin.

It was a serpent. There's a picture of Christ hanging on the cross. Boy, that makes me weep and wants to make me love him like anything.

Everything has a picture. So what is the Old Testament tithing a picture of? There they offered that tithe. In the New Testament what should we offer? Our body.

Not a tithe. Where do you get that from brother Zach? Here Hebrews 10 5. Not an offering but a body. Dear brothers and sisters let me tell you God doesn't want your money.

He's not a beggar. He's the richest person in the universe. But he does want your body.

I remember once when I was many many years ago before the early days of my before CFC was born I was traveling. I was coming from abroad into India and you know they were very strict on customs duties. If you bring anything from abroad you had to pay duty on that item that you bring.

Even if it's a small item. And the Lord told me don't be like other people who hide everything in the corners of their suitcases so that nobody can find out what's there. Put it right on top.

Let the customs people see it and pay your duty. And then the Lord said me something I've never forgotten. I have no shortage of money the Lord told me.

I'll give you enough money more than enough to pay your duty but I do have a great shortage of righteous people. Don't add to the shortage of righteous people by being unrighteous yourself. I have no shortage of money but I have a shortage of righteous people on earth.

I said Lord I'll remember that all my life. I will never be a slave to money because you have no shortage of money. But you have a shortage of righteous people.

I'm not going to add to that shortage by impurity, by watching pornography, by losing my temper. I'm not going to add to the shortage of righteous people on this earth or by cheating the government in any taxes or by not paying back my debts. And so all my life I'm 79 years old today I have never been in debt even one cent to a single man because I didn't want to dishonor God.

If he didn't have money my wife and I never bought something. We never believed in buy now pay later. No.

Earn now then buy. And we don't regret it. Little little things you know it's in the little things that we disobey God.

When your children disobey you where is it? Is it when they go out and murder somebody? Or they go and commit adultery or they steal a bank? That's not why your children obey, disobey you. Children's disobedience is small things. When they're out playing games and the mommy says come in time time to come for dinner or time to do your homework.

No mom just wait. That's why they disobey you. And Christians disobey God not in the big things.

Small little little things. God wants your body. He wants your eyes that you never sin with your eyes.

He wants your tongue that you never sin with your tongue. That is what he wants not your money. So Hebrews 10 5 offering you don't desire but Jesus is saying but a body you prepared for me.

Jesus didn't come to earth to pay his tithes. No. He came to give his body and he said again you have taken no pleasure in offerings but as it is written in the Bible verse 7 the book is the Bible I have come with this body never to do my own will but to do your will.

That is what God wants that you give your body to God and say father in this body I will never do my own will I will do your will. That's what he wants not not your tithes and your offerings. And after saying that he said again a second time.

How many times does God have to repeat it? Because he knows how many Christian preachers will preach the opposite. Offering you don't desire. Verse 8 a second time.

You don't take any pleasure in that but what does he take pleasure in verse 9 I've come to do your will. He has taken away that first covenant which required offerings and tithes and all that. He's taken it away in order to establish the second covenant verse 9 which is he wants our body.

Now do you understand that the equivalent of the Old Testament offerings is your body. I like to have a scripture to prove everything I teach. Everything.

The equivalent of the Old Testament tithing and offering is you presenting your body. So don't think you can escape by saying Lord I'll give you my tithe instead of my body. Let me use my eyes as I like to watch what I like to read what I like.

Let me use my tongue to speak what I like to do whatever I like with my tongue. Let me use my body take it wherever I like but I'll give you my offering. It's like bribing God.

You know how people bribe government officials. Here's the money let me do what I like in this company. It's a bit corrupt but here's some money just keep quiet.

You think you can bribe God like that? You give your money to God and say Lord let me do what I like in my body but here's your money to keep you happy. You cannot bribe God and a lot of people give money to try and bribe God. It does not work and if you don't discover it now you'll discover it in the day of judgment.

Your money will be in the trash. He'll ask you what did you do in your body? Let me show you that also. I'll show you everything in scripture.

2nd Corinthians chapter 5. 2nd Corinthians in chapter 5 and verse 10. One day we will all appear at the judgment seat of Christ. Don't ever forget that.

In India in schools we tell children be prepared for the final examination. In the olden days in the schools in India I remember when I was in school the most important examination was the final examination and you had many monthly tests to prepare you for that but whether you got promoted to the next class or not depended on how you fared in the final examination. So the end of the school year we had a final examination in maths and science and geography and history and social studies and all that and only if you passed in that you could go to the next class.

So here is the final examination. At the judgment seat of Christ we're going to be examined and what is God going to examine that day? Here it is. 2nd Corinthians 5.10. Not how much money you earned, not how many times you went to church.

No. 2nd Corinthians 5.10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that we will be rewarded or punished. Recompense means rewarded or punished.

It could mean both. A recompense can be for good or for bad. So you'll be rewarded or punished like in the school final examination.

You'll either pass or you'll fail. You'll either sit in the same class or go to the higher class. Recompense for what? For what you did in your body.

According to what you did in your body, whether good or bad. Not according to how much money you put in the offering box. No.

Not according to how much missionary work you did or how many times you went to church. But what you did in your body 24 hours a day, every day of your life, that is going to be what you are judged with. That's why we tell people be careful what you do with your body.

Let me show you another verse. I often say this is one of the verses which most Christians just do not believe. A verse which most Christians that I've met do not believe in.

Matthew chapter 12 and verse 36 and 37. Read it and tell me whether you believe it with all your heart. Matthew 12 verse 36 and 37.

You've had it in your Bible all your life. I'm sure you've read it. But did you take it seriously? Jesus, I tell you, every careless word that men shall speak, every useless word, they shall give an account for it in the day of judgment.

Not the big massive things. Careless, useless words that you spoke to hurt people. Words that were lies.

Words of anger. Words of gossip and judgment of others. Useless words that produce no profit.

One day you'll give an account in the day of judgment. Do you know there's a recording going on of your whole life in your memory? Our entire life from the day we were born has been recorded in a tape in our memory. And one day all that the Lord will do is press the rewind button when you stand before him and play back on a video screen on a play back on a screen this videotape of your memory for the whole world to see what you did, what you spoke, what you thought, what your attitude was.

That also comes on that videotape. It's an amazing videotape that you can record your attitudes and your motives with which you did certain things. Everything is going to be accounted for in the day of judgment.

That's why he's given you a conscience. It tells you that was wrong or what you're going to do is wrong. What you're just going to sign there is a false statement.

Continuing to look in that direction is wrong and you tell your conscience shut up I don't want to listen to you. You say that to your conscience again and again again the conscience will shut up and you'll have no more sensation to sin. That is called spiritual leprosy.

My wife worked among lepers for many years so I got a little understanding of leprosy. One mark of leprosy is when you get leprosy on your skin there's no more sensation there. You can scratch it, pull it, do anything.

I've heard of people with leprosy trying to turn a stiff key in a lock. It's the lock is stiff. They twist the key.

It's bent that metal key and the hands are bleeding but the leper doesn't feel a thing. He doesn't feel a thing. I've heard of people with leprosy at night when they're sleeping the rats come and bite off their toes and eat them and the leper doesn't feel a thing.

He wakes up in the morning and say hey where's my toe gone? That never happens to you because you don't have leprosy. Loss of sensation is one of the worst sicknesses you can have when you don't feel pain. You think pain is a problem? Pain is one of the greatest blessings you got in your body.

Never forget that because when you have a pain in your stomach you know something's wrong and you take some treatment for it. When you have a headache you know something's wrong. When you get hurt somewhere, pain tells you do something about it.

You break a bone, you feel pain. Pain is the greatest blessing in your body and pain in your conscience is the greatest blessing in your spirit. Don't devalue it.

Pain is telling you something's wrong in your body. Set it right and pain in your conscience is telling you what you're doing is wrong. Set it right.

You don't listen to it and we account for it in the day of judgment. The only way the sins in our videotape can be erased, thank God there is a way. When you repent, say Lord I'm really sorry for what I did there.

I never want to do it again. Please give me strength never to do that again. That thing which is on my videotape which I did 20 years ago which nobody knows but you know and my memory knows it.

It's stored there. The thing that I did 35 years ago which I myself tried to forget because it's so terrible. My videotape has not forgotten it.

It will come back in the day of judgment. Lord I want it removed. It can be removed by repentance.

Lord I'm sorry for what I did. I want never want to do it again. I believe that Christ hung on the cross and suffered hell for that sin.

Please blot it out with your blood. It will be cleansed. That's the only way.

Thank God if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Thank God for the gospel. But if you take advantage of that and say that's great.

Then I can keep on sinning and keep on asking the blood to erase it. And in the day of judgment when my videotape is played none of these things will be visible. I will not be put to shame.

Nobody will know. Ah yes they will. Because when the videotape is played they'll see all these big blank sections in it.

Hey what were you doing that time? There's a blank section the videotapes running and there's nothing happening there. And then another place another blank frequent blank sections of things in your life that

are wiped out. Everybody will know.

They won't know what you did. But there's certainly know that you were up to some mischief there which had to be blotted out. I don't want that embarrassment.

God will blot out my past but I tell you one thing. He wants us to take seriously from now. One last verse.

Maybe you did not know all these things which you are hearing today. But you know them now. Acts chapter 17.

It's one of my favorite verses which I say to encourage people. This is a word for your encouragement. Acts of the Apostles chapter 17 and verse 30.

Remember it all your life. It's a message of hope and forgiveness. Acts 17 verse 30.

God has overlooked your times of ignorance. But now he's telling people everywhere to repent. Means turn from your sin.

Acknowledge your sin and give it up. Maybe up till today you never knew how serious sin was. How serious careless words were.

How serious some of those things were which you thought it's all forgotten. It happened 40 years ago. Nobody knows.

It happened 25 years ago. Even my wife doesn't know it. It's all forgotten.

Nobody knows it. No no no no. It's in your memory.

But God's willing to overlook it because you are ignorant of the seriousness of sin. I believe if you saw the seriousness of watching pornography, if you really saw what damage it does to your soul permanently, you would never watch another pornographic thing even for one second. But because you don't know the damage it's doing to you.

It's like people who take drugs. They don't know the damage it does. You know the drugs ruin you so you avoid that.

But you don't know the harm pornography does to you. Ignorance. It's like illiterate, poor illiterate women in some village don't know cancer is a serious thing.

They can even take poison not knowing how bad it is. So there's a lot of spiritual ignorance among people. But now those times of ignorance is over.

You have come to the church. You've heard God's word. I've often told people in my church.

It's a dangerous thing to come to this church if you're not serious about holiness. If you're not serious about holiness, I tell my dear friends, please don't come to this church again. Go to some other church.

Don't preach on holiness. God will not demand much from you because to whom more is given, more is required. The examination level is much higher in the 11th grade than it is in the first grade.

Sure. And a church that is preaching 12th grade stuff will have a higher examination. God will examine them by then some church that is only preaching kindergarten stuff.

So it's a serious thing that you've heard many things. But okay, the times of ignorance up till now you were ignorant of what you heard today and these days. And that some of you who listen to me on the Internet have heard before that you were ignorant.

God says, I overlooked them. It's gone. I will not hold you responsible for that.

The blood of Jesus Christ takes care of that. But now that you know, repent. He's not saying overcome sin.

He's saying turn away from sin. Run in the opposite direction. And little by little, God will help you to overcome it as well.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, please help us to take these things seriously that we can live a life on earth that glorifies you. Help us not to forget your word that is our body that you desire.

Pray in Jesus' name. Now, just, you know, there are about 30, 40 books at the back, and I just want to mention some of them for your benefit. Most of these books, like little ones, are only about \$4 each.

And some hard-bound ones are \$10 each. We don't, just by the way, I don't get one cent from this. I don't believe in royalties.

I'll tell you why. Because Jesus and Paul didn't believe in royalties for what they spoke and wrote. Most Christian authors make millions through their royalties.

We get nothing. We don't want it. We trust in a Heavenly Father who is the richest person in the universe.

One very important book for those who have failed in their life is called The Purpose of Failure. How God can bring something good out of your failure. And this is a book of various events in my life.

It's like a little testimony of my life. I never wanted to write it, but one of the magazines in India wanted me to write little, little articles for them every month for four years. And they accumulated it and made a book out of it.

It's called A Day of Small Beginnings. It's entirely personal testimony of my life. And this is a book, which is the most recent one, of how we have tried to do God's work in CFC churches in the last 44 years.

It's called God's Work Done in God's Way. Not just God's work, but God's work done in God's way. And so if you're serious about doing God's work in your hometown or wherever you are, in God's way, here's the book I would recommend.

And here's a book that Santosh here, the elder of this church, has written called The Congregation, The Club, and The Church. There's a world of difference. All churches are not true churches.

Some are congregations, some are clubs, and some are churches. You can read and know the difference. God bless you all.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/K01piPq1RWE.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-final-examination-of-the-christian/>

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