

# The Foundation and Three Floors of the Church

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of having the attitude of Christ, which is an inner thing that comes from partaking of God's nature, and not just an external imitation.*

**Duration:** 1:14:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 22:37

**Topics:** "Church Growth", "Christian Living"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of building a strong foundation in personal life, family life, and fellowship within the church. It highlights the need to walk in the light, honor parents, and encourage one another daily. The speaker stresses the significance of humility, obedience, and love in all relationships, drawing inspiration from the example of Jesus in various life stages.

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## Transcript

I want to turn first of all to a verse that I've often quoted to all of you. Philippians in chapter 2 and verse 5. Philippians 2:5. Have this attitude in yourselves which is also in Christ Jesus. I have said many times that with this one verse, just one verse, you can live your entire Christian life.

Whenever you're facing a situation where you don't know what to do, think of this verse. Have the same attitude that Jesus had towards your parents, towards your family, towards those who work with you, towards other believers, towards the devil, towards Pharisees, towards everyone in the world. Have this attitude in yourself which is in Christ Jesus.

There is no situation you can face in life, no relationship, where you cannot use this verse. So that's why it's a very important verse and that is why it's very important to try and study the life and attitude of Jesus as described in the scriptures. As we have often looked at 2nd Corinthians 3:18, the main ministry of the Holy Spirit, listen to this, the main ministry of the Holy Spirit, 2nd Corinthians 3:18, is to show us the glory of Jesus in the Bible.

Not to give us doctrines. People who concentrate on doctrines end up fighting with others. But to show us the glory of Jesus in the scriptures and to change us into that likeness, because we cannot change ourselves into that likeness.

Some people go to that first step of seeing the glory of Jesus in the scriptures, but they think they can imitate that. There's a very well-known book called the imitation of Christ. You cannot imitate Christ.

That is, we're living under the law and those who try to imitate Christ may get a reputation before men, that they're very humble and very holy and loving and kind and all that. But God has not called us to imitate Christ. God has called us to partake of his nature.

Imitation of Christ can sometimes be like a wolf in sheep's clothing, where on the outside we imitate Christ. Whereas if the nature is changed, you don't have to imitate. You've heard me use the example of trying to train a dog to meow like a cat.

You can try to train it, train it, and it does it. But in a moment of anger it will still bark like a dog. So imitation of Christ is something like that.

You try to imitate Christ and you succeed for a while, but in a moment of provocation the old Adam comes out. So I want to encourage you, don't think the imitation of Christ is Christianity or spirituality. It is have the attitude which Christ had, which is an inner thing.

Out of the heart proceeds all good and evil, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. And whenever you say something or you write something to somebody, remember it came out of your heart. And don't try to cover it up.

Because if you cover it up, you know, so often people do something and they say I'm sorry. Or they say something and they say I'm sorry. But that doesn't solve the problem.

If you don't see that it came out of your heart, you will do that again and again and again. You get a reputation that you apologize. It's nothing.

Concentrate on this verse, it can change your life, believe me. If you say Lord what I want is not an external imitation of Christ that brings me credit before others and honor of men, but an inner attitude towards everything, towards money. Constantly ask yourself, is my attitude to money the same as Jesus Christ? I keep asking myself that all the time.

Is the way I look at women the same way Jesus looked at women? Keep asking yourself that. Don't give up. Is my attitude to my enemies the same attitude Jesus had? What is the attitude? Forgive them, love them.

And this is the more difficult one. What is my attitude to Pharisees? We like to be kind to Pharisees. Jesus called them vipers, hypocrites.

I'm not asking you to go and call them that. Jesus had nothing to do with these Pharisees. He avoided them.

Whereas you may seek honor by trying to fellowship with them, because you get a reputation as a loving person, to fellowship with those whom Jesus would have nothing to do with. So you lose your reputation if you have the attitude of Jesus. There are people who are willing to be like Jesus up to the point where they don't lose their reputation.

When it goes beyond that, and you see Jesus walked all the way where he became unpopular, there they don't want to follow him. There you can clearly see, if your eyes, if you are willing to listen to the Holy

Spirit, that you are seeking honor to become like Christ. As you heard in CFC, that is not the genuine thing.

And that's why you have so many defeats in other areas. You wonder why you are trying to become like Christ here, and you are defeating others because you are trying to be like Christ on the outside. It doesn't work.

So distinguish between imitation of Christ and having the attitude of Christ. The Bible never tells us to imitate Christ, because you cannot do it. It's like a dog trying to imitate a cat or a pig trying to imitate the cleanliness of a cat.

It's not possible. God has to give us His Spirit within and change our nature. The most wonderful promise in the whole scripture is what we read in 2nd Peter in chapter 1, once our sins are forgiven.

It speaks about these magnificent and precious promises. What a way to express God's promises. 2nd Peter 1.4. God has granted us by His glory and excellence, as it said in verse 3, His precious and magnificent promises.

Those are new covenant promises. Not the old covenant promises of getting the land of Canaan and getting money and health and many children. No.

Precious and magnificent promises are new covenant promises and the purpose of all these promises, it says here, is that you might not imitate, but partake of the divine nature. Let me give you a comparison. From our parents, all of us received a nature.

Not just our physical looks, but there's something else all of us got from our parents. It's our nature and that nature is exactly the same in you and me. In everybody.

In the terrorist who blows up other people and the very kind person who helps other people. The inner nature they all got from their parents is the nature of Adam which is self-centered, which seeks its own, which does not basically fear God. Whether you believe it or not, that is the nature that you and I got from our parents.

And what a wonderful job that nature did in making us thoroughly evil inwardly. And when we are born again, the purpose of God is in just the same way to give us another nature which will rule us exactly like the old nature ruled us. If you are willing.

The old nature came to us without a choice. Whether you like it or not, you got Adam's nature from your parents, you and I. But God's nature, there's a choice. And the wonderful thing is, you know like when you get married, once you get married, there's no choice.

You can't give up your wife if you discover later that she's an evil woman or you can't give up your husband. But when God gives us his nature, he gives us a choice every day. He says if you want, you can reject it.

After 10 years of being a disciple of Jesus Christ, you can turn around and say, I've had enough of this. I don't want to be a disciple. And you can go away.

And you can lose your salvation without any doubt. Because God never forces you at any point in time or in eternity to follow him. Remember this, even after we die and go into eternity, God will give you freedom,

complete freedom.

The angels have complete freedom. Some of them rebelled some years ago and became the devil and his demons. But the angels that are in heaven today, you think they are robots? Who just move about like computerized robots obeying God? Not at all.

Every one of them have got the same free will that they got when they were created, which Lucifer had, which made him the devil. The angels in heaven today have the same free will. Why is it they serve God for millions of years? So you see, if I have a free will in heaven for all eternity, is there a possibility that I may suddenly turn away a million years from now and turn away from God and go to hell? No.

Because when we get into heaven, we would have been completely transformed into the likeness of Christ. And Christ had a free will on earth. Christ had a free will in this filthy earth and never sinned.

He had a choice, but he never sinned. And when I get that nature, how can I ever sin? Impossible. That's the nature I'll get in heaven.

And if Christ could live that life on earth of perfection, how much easier it will be for us to live that life in heaven. That is why I know that I will never go away from God for all eternity. Not because I don't have a free will.

Not because God will make me like the planets that automatically obey. No, no, no, no. There'll be no automatic obedience in you and I even after we go to heaven.

It'll be a voluntary choice, but it'll be a choice that we choose every single moment exactly like Jesus Christ. So when it says have the same attitude that was in Christ, who is the one who is going to be gripped by it? I'll tell you. If you think the most wonderful thing in the world is to make a lot of money, you will not want to have the attitude of Christ.

I'll tell you that straight. Most people in the world want to make a lot of money. There's nothing wrong in earning money.

Let me remind you that. The Bible does not say money is the root of all evil. Never.

It says the love of money is the root of all evil. It says those who long to be rich, not those who are rich, but those who long to be rich, whose goal in life is to make a lot of money, they will go astray. I've no doubt about it.

So, it's not money, but if that's your goal in life, I might as well tell you now, right now, you can't have the attitude of Christ. Just forget it. Otherwise, ask God to change your attitude.

The other thing is if your aim in life is to become someone great and honorable by this wretched world, you want this wretched world to admire you, you can never have the attitude of Christ. You've got to reject that because Jesus never wanted to be great and honored in this world. He wanted to please God.

So, you have to have some basic desires. I mean, if your desire is not to please God, you're not going to have this attitude of Christ. It's impossible.

It's pointless even asking the Holy Spirit to help you. So, if there are things like that which you're pursuing or if the pleasures of sin, to be tempted is okay because Jesus was tempted. To be tempted with the

filthiest things, that's okay.

I believe Jesus was tempted with the filthiest things. You and I are tempted with. Otherwise, you cannot say that he was tempted exactly like us.

Think of the filthiest thing you ever were tempted in your life. Jesus was tempted with that. Temptation is not evil.

It's when you yield to that temptation that sin comes. It's important to know that. In the early days of my Christian life, I couldn't distinguish it in temptation and sin and I'd condemn myself because I'm tempted with something.

But I've discovered that God allows us to be tempted and God allowed Jesus to be tempted and that's what comforted me. This filthy thought that came to my mind, it came to Jesus' mind. He rejected it.

I'm going to reject it too and I'm pure. So, I see that if you're not desirous, if so-called you're born again and you have no desire to turn away from sin, then I would first of all say your born again experience is not genuine. That's the first problem with many, many people.

There are many brothers and sisters who come to this church in past years who have told me, Brother Zach, I never knew what it was to be born again till I joined CFC. Because in other places, they never talked about sin. So how can I turn away from sin if I don't know what sin is? I turned away from drinking and smoking and gambling and I thought that was sin.

That's not sin. There are hundreds of people in the world who don't smoke or drink or gamble. Are they all Christians? No.

Don't you yourself know some upright non-Christians who don't smoke or drink or gamble? But many people think these external things are repentance. Many have told me this, that they've really understood what sin is only after coming here. And it's only then that they saw what turning away from sin is.

And only then could you really be born again. You cannot be born again if you don't repent. Repentance means turn away from sin.

So if you don't know where sin is, how do you turn away? Supposing you're in some place where you don't know which direction is north or which direction is south and you want to go north, how will you go north if you don't have any sense of direction? You don't know which is north, south, east, west? So in the same way, if you don't know where sin is, how will you turn away from it? So it's very important to understand this. That's why we speak so much about sin because that's how we can turn away from it to God. That's how we can have the same attitude that Christ had and God's will is that I said that we partake of his nature.

Not imitate his nature but partake of his nature. That is what the Bible calls eternal life. Eternal life does not mean living forever.

Because the people who go to hell also live forever. They don't die. They don't cease to exist.

If that's eternal life, people in hell have got eternal life. But it's not true. There's only one person who had eternal life, that was God.

Because eternal life does not mean that which has no end but that which had no beginning and has no end. Who has got that? Not even the angels, only God. So when God gives us eternal life, it's his life.

Do you know that the angels don't have eternal life? The angels live forever but they don't have eternal life. Those who go to hell live forever but they don't have eternal life. Eternal life, we can change it to call the life of God, the nature of God.

That is eternal life. So when Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, lay hold of eternal life, he's not saying try to live forever. Timothy will live forever even if he's unconverted.

But he's saying lay hold of the life of God. Wherever you read eternal life, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in should not perish but have the life of God. But have the life of God.

I hope you never forget this. It is not living forever. It is having the life of God which begins right now if you allow the Holy Spirit to take possession of your life.

So when we think of having the same attitude that Jesus had, I've often said that the church is like a three-story building. You've heard me say that also. So I want to explain that again very clearly for the benefit of many here who may not have understood what that means.

The church is like a three-story building that we build with our life. And every building has got a foundation. Think of a building that's got a foundation.

This building has only got two floors. But think if you had a third floor. That's how a church is built.

The foundation is our perfect assurance that God loves me perfectly. The love of God is the only foundation on which I can build a building that will never shake. If you look at your life, the reason when you got discouraged, at that moment you don't really know whether God loves you.

Or whether you committed some sin and you think God's forsaken you. You're not founded on God's love. You remember when Peter was going to deny the Lord.

The Lord told him, I prayed for you. You read that in Luke 22. I'm not praying that you should not deny me.

Now with my wisdom, if I was there, I would say, Lord, please don't let Peter deny you. That's a terrible sin because you said that if you deny me before men, I'll deny you before my father. It's a terrible sin.

It's almost the worst sin because Jesus never said if you commit murder, I'll deny you before my father. But if you deny me before men, I will deny you before my father. So which is the worst sin? And Peter's going to do that once, twice, thrice.

Lord, please don't let him do it. Jesus never prayed that. He never prayed that Peter would not commit that sin.

And sometimes God does not stop us from sinning. And I'll tell you why. Because every other method to humble Peter had not worked.

And when God tries various means to humble you, and it doesn't work, he will allow you to sin. That which he hates. Because that's the only way he'll humble you.

And some of you have experienced that. I think we have all experienced that. Where God tried to humble us in various ways, and we still remained proud, and God allowed us to fall into some terrible sin, and that humbled us.

And then we realized, oh Lord, I'm nothing. So that's why God allowed Peter to fail, to humble him because there was no other way. So if you respond to God's pleadings, then God won't have to adopt that last method of trying to humble you.

But that was why Jesus did not pray. Because if he had prayed, don't let him fall, Peter would never have been humbled. But because Peter fell, he got so humbled that he was prepared to receive God's grace.

God's ultimate goal was to give Peter grace. And I want to say that's true for all of you and me. Whatever God does, his aim is to give you grace.

And that's why he takes you through different, different circumstances. That's why when Paul had a terrible sickness, which he called a thorn in the flesh, and if you read Galatians 4 sometime, I believe that it was a sickness with his eyes. Probably his eyes were always with pus and couldn't be cured.

And that's one reason he stopped in Galatia and had to, could not move on. And as a result, a church was planted there and he tells the Galatians in chapter 4, you accepted me even though my physical appearance was repulsive to you. You know, if you see a man sitting up here and preaching with his eyes dripping with pus, it's a bit repulsive.

He's got to keep wiping it off. And the Galatians accepted Paul even though they saw him with it. He said, in fact, you loved me so much that you were willing to take out your eyes and give them to me.

That's what indicates to us that his problem was with his eyes. And he prayed, Lord, please get rid of this. This is such a repulsive thing.

I mean, I'm to preach the gospel and these people always see me like this. Will you heal me? Will you heal me? For your glory, heal me. I don't want it just for my convenience.

Jesus said no. Imagine Jesus saying no to his greatest apostle when he has this thing dripping out of his eyes all the time in front of people and he's a preacher. And imagine if he were on television like this.

You can really see how he'd pray that he'd be healed. And the Lord says no. Paul, you've had such amazing experiences.

You've gone up to the third heaven. You've planted churches. You've raised the dead.

You've written scripture. You are in tremendous danger of becoming proud. And so I have to give you something like this permanently so that you will always remain humble.

That's the reason God allows some things in our lives, some failures and disappointments which you thought God would answer. No. He says no.

He says no. Because God wants to humble you and break you and bring you down because he says my grace is enough for you. So Paul, even though people may despise you for the way your eyes are dripping, they will see the mighty anointing and grace upon your life.

And they'll be drawn to the Lord. Forget about what they think about you. They'll be drawn to me.

Are you happy with that? Paul said, oh sure. Then he said I'll glory in my infirmities so that the power of Christ may rest upon me that other people may be drawn to the Lord. If that's your goal, God will work amazingly with you.

He won't answer all your prayers. Some sicknesses he will not heal. Some prayers he will not grant.

But his anointing will be so powerful upon you and his grace will be upon you so much that he'll make you a tremendous blessing to others and build a church through you. So that's just in passing. I say that because when it says here about have this attitude which is to be in Christ, it goes on to speak about his humility.

You've often heard me say the three secrets of the Christian life are humility, humility, humility. And that's what we see in Philippians 2, 5-8. From God he became man, man he became a slave, and as a slave he finally died as a criminal all the way down.

Humility, humility, humility. That's what it says. Have this attitude in you which is in Christ Jesus.

So if there's one attitude that we need more than anything else from the life of Christ, it is humility. And it is the most difficult thing for human beings to have, and I've found through the years it's the most difficult thing for Christians to have, it's the most difficult thing for CFC believers to have, genuine humility. And that is because they don't meditate enough on the life of Jesus.

You walk with a humble man, you will become humble. And you walk with the humblest man that walked on the earth, you'll automatically become humble. The humblest man who walked on the earth was Jesus Christ.

So if you're not getting grace in your life, it's because you're not humble. If there's one sin that's defeating you, whatever it is, go before God and tell him the truth and say, Lord, I am not getting grace in my life because if I'm under grace, sin cannot rule over me, but this particular sin is ruling over me. I don't seem to get victory over it.

Don't just cry about it. Just be honest and say, I am not getting grace. You know, it's like the rain is falling and you're wet.

That means you're not under this building. You're outside. Maybe your hand is outside.

It gets wet. If you're under grace, sin cannot rule over you. It's like saying if you're inside this building, not a drop of rain can come on you.

As clear as that. When you're under grace, sin cannot touch you. Why does it have power over you? You're not under grace.

You're outside. Maybe part of it is outside. Then go to God and say, Lord, I know why I'm not getting grace because you give grace only to the humble.

Please show me where I lack in humility. So, I would say the connection between falling into sin is directly related to pride. It's the proud who fall into sin because the proud never receive grace.

God is resisting them. And that's why humility is so important. So, look at the life of Jesus.

The foundation of his life was his perfect assurance in his life that his father loved him. His relationship with his father was most important and he knew that the father loved him. And that's why God told Peter, the Lord told Peter, I'm not going to pray that you will not fall, but I'm praying that your faith will not fail.

That's in Luke 22. You can take some time to read it. Your faith will not fail.

Faith means what? That means, Peter, when you hit rock bottom, you've denied me three times, you've committed the most terrible sin, not once, but three times. Don't feel when you hit the bottom that your father in heaven will forsake you. No.

When you hit rock bottom, and I say this to anybody who is here like that, when you hit rock bottom and you're fed up with yourself and you feel there's no hope for yourself and you feel you've been defeated by that sin so many times that you'll never get victory, at that point, your faith does not fail. It means you look up to God and say, God, one thing I know, you still love me. If you can say that, at that point, your faith has not failed.

To look up to God and say, I know you love me, when everything's going well in your life or you got a promotion or you got a healing or you got an answer to prayer, that's easy. But when you hit rock bottom and everything's failing around you and your sickness is not healed, your prayers are not answered, and so many things going wrong, you can still look up to heaven. God, I know you love me.

That's clear. Even though I fail so miserably, I know you love me. That is what Jesus prayed for Peter.

And that's what encourages me that he prays the same prayer for me. That I will never lose faith in one thing. That whatever may happen, God still loves me.

And I can come back to him. You see, that's what made the prodigal son come back to his father's house. He had made a mess of his life.

He had wasted the father's money, probably millions and millions of rupees worth of money, because his father was a very rich man. He had wasted it all, but he knew that when he went back, the father would accept him, at least as a servant. But he was so amazed that the father's love was far greater than what he thought.

That's what Jesus is trying to tell us in that story. You see, if he had heard in that far country that his father had died, and the elder brother was now running the house, he would never have come back. It's like that.

Some elder brothers are like that. Nobody wants to go near them, because they are not like the father. But he heard the father was there.

And it's wonderful when we can be like that, as elders, and say, hey, it doesn't matter if you have been with the pigs for 50 years, you are welcome to come back, if you really turn. Not if you want to bring the pigs with you. No, no, no.

We don't want the pigs in the father's house. If you are willing to leave those pigs and turn around, you are welcome, no matter how many years you wasted. That is the love of the father which Jesus wanted Peter to be founded in.

And that's the love of the father God wants every one of us to always be founded in. Now you can take advantage of it. You can take advantage.

It doesn't matter. If you have that attitude, you will ruin yourself. It's like the prodigal son saying, oh my father is so good, I can go back to the pigs again.

I think I'll take a visit to the pigs again. That's exactly what some people do. Oh God is so good, he has forgiven me.

So it doesn't matter if I go and commit that sin again. It doesn't matter if I take this particular sin lightly again. It doesn't matter if I take adultery lightly, or it doesn't matter if I take anger lightly, or it doesn't matter if I keep a little bitterness in my heart and don't take it seriously.

My father loves me. That's like going back to the pigs after experiencing the feast at the father's table to say, let me just visit the pigs for a little while. Can you imagine how crazy that son would be to do that? Do you know the number of believers who are doing that? Who have tasted at the father's table in CFC many times and then once in a while want to visit the pigs? That's exactly what it is, to go back to a sin which you know Jesus will forgive you, because he says, oh I know if I come back the 10th time to my father's house and say, father I have sinned, he'll accept me.

What sort of a son are you, if you're like that? Keep visiting the pigs and come back, oh my father, I know the father is good, but you'll ruin your life. And I'll tell you another thing, that if a person continues like that, taking advantage of God's goodness, there's a time can come in his life when he'll never want to leave the pigs at all. He'll be with the pigs forever, for all eternity.

So we must be founded in God's love, that's very very important, that God loves us immensely and that everything he does for us is in love, even though you don't understand it. You know, just like a little two year old cannot understand why his mother takes away the sharp knife from his hand. He cries because he thinks that shiny knife is so wonderful to me, my mother doesn't love me and takes away the knife from his hand.

We are so stupid, when God takes away something from us, we think he doesn't love us. We're just like that two year old. Or the 16 year old girl whom the mother says, you shouldn't dress like that when you go out.

And she thinks, why can't I dress like and be fashionable like the other girls in my college or like others in the world. And the father says, no, you're not going to leave this house dressed like that. Very few mothers and fathers are so strict unfortunately today.

Nowadays everybody just yields to the girl, oh we don't want to offend her, don't want to offend her, let her live like that, let her be worldly, let her go to hell finally, it doesn't matter. What an evil father and mother that is. But think of a strict father and mother who says, no, in this house we make the rules, we're not going to let you dress like that in that evil way as if you're going to some striptease or something like that.

No, we're going to dress properly. So, that's a love which that teenager doesn't understand. She'll probably understand 20 years later when she's got her own children or 30 years later.

Then she'll understand it, but right now she doesn't. That's how it is with many of our children. They don't understand the strictness of the parents until they become parents themselves.

Then they appreciate the strictness of the parents. There are many people sitting here who don't understand the strictness of an elder until one day you go into, one day you make a mess of your life and then you wish you had listened to the strict advice of the elders or one day you go to some other church and you wish you were in a church where the elders were a little more strict. So, many people don't understand that, but God's love is like that.

God's love is one which wants our eternal good, not our present good. Just like you parents. If one day your child says, Daddy, I don't want to go to school today.

I want to just play here. See all those children in the slums, they play the whole day in the mud. Why don't you let me be like that? Why do you force your child to go to school? Why do you take your child to school even if it's crying? You won't even let that child avoid school just because one day you say, Daddy, I'm not feeling too well today.

You say, No, go to school. Why are you so strict? Why do you force that child? Why is it the child doesn't understand? Why don't you yield to the child's whims and fancies? Now you can understand what God's love is like. He desires your good that even when you say, No, I don't want to go, He lets something happen to you.

Because He wants your eternal good. It's exactly the same way you force your child to go to school. So, we need to have a balanced understanding of God's love.

When we say we are founded in God's love, God's love is very, very kind and very, very strict. The glory of God was seen in Jesus Christ full of grace and truth. There's a song we sing, There's no place where all your failures have such a kind forgiveness given as in heaven.

Heaven is the place where they look upon your failures in the kindest possible way. But heaven is also the place where you have the strictest person in the universe, Almighty God. Your parents allow you to do a lot of things.

Let me tell you that, you children and you teenagers. Your parents allow you to do a lot of things. Almighty God would never allow you.

I'm telling you the truth. Because your parents are too kind. God is kinder.

That's why He is stricter. Your parents are not so kind. And that's why they allow you to grow up with all these worldly habits, which ultimately will hinder your spiritual growth, will prevent you from being a useful vessel for God in the days to come.

Because your parents are so kind and so gracious as you think. They let you do this and they let you do that. They don't really love you.

They are not wise. Your father in heaven is wise. And that's why he is very, very strict.

And our salvation is to have that type of love. And if you fathers and mothers want to be like God towards your children, you got to have the strictness of God and a love that is strict. So when we think about foundation being the love of God, don't think it's a sentimental type of wishy-washy type of love that gives you everything you want.

You want ice cream, you have ice cream, you want chocolate. No, God does not like that. God is very strict.

He allows us to go through all types of trials and difficulties because He wants to make a man out of you. He wants to make you strong. He wants to make you a son of God, a daughter of God.

So He is not wishy-washy like your parents allowing you to do whatever you like. He is very, very strict. He will not allow certain things.

Think of one verse like this and see how strict God is. I am just showing you one verse, I could show you many. Matthew chapter 12.

Can you imagine anything more strict than this? This is Jesus saying about the day of judgment. What will God judge in the day of judgment? Listen carefully. Matthew 12 verse 36.

What will God judge in the day of judgment? Every single careless word you speak will be, you have to give an account in the day of judgment. You say, really? You mean all the words that I spoke to my wife, I have to one day give an account to God? Absolutely. Not just generally did you love your wife.

No, no, no, no, no. Every single word that you spoke in a careless, hurting, hurtful way to anyone. Sometimes you have to hurt people when you speak the truth.

That's different. Jesus hurt people when He called them vipers and you generation of vipers, you hypocrites. I am not talking about those words where you speak as a prophet of God.

I am talking about where you are angry with someone because of your personal offense. If you think that you don't have to give an account to that in the day of judgment, you are sadly mistaken. Heaven and earth will pass away.

This word of Jesus will not pass away. I'll tell you before God, I've taken that verse very, very seriously. I try my best.

I'm not perfect, but I'm working towards it. To never speak a careless word anywhere. Even in my ministry, I have to be careful because sometimes I speak strongly and I have to speak strongly and I go before God and say, Lord, was that too strong? Okay, I've got to moderate it or sometimes the Lord says that was not strong enough.

It's got to be stronger. But I don't want to speak careless words. Words deliberately meant to hurt that person you say you love.

You give an account in the day of judgment. That's how strict God is. Why? It's like you're making sure the vegetables are washed, the fruit is washed before you cut that apple and make your child.

Why wash it? Why you want to peel off the skin of the apple? Never mind if 10,000 flies sat on it and all the muck from the gutter is on that apple. Why don't you let your child eat it? Why are you so careful to wash it and peel off the skin? Oh really? You don't want one germ to get into your child's mouth when God is like that? He loves you just like that? That He doesn't want any filth to be in your mouth? That's exactly why He puts that standard. You know the way you are so careful about hygiene in your house.

God is equally careful about spiritual hygiene in our words, in our attitudes. Why are you so careful about hygiene in your kitchen and in your house? Because you love your children. You don't say, well, in the slums they are not careful about hygiene.

So what? But in my house I want to be careful about hygiene. It's exactly like that. God's love is like that.

If you can see it like that, you will completely change your attitude. You say, Lord, if I want to be hygienic with something that will only give me a stomach upset, don't I need to be more careful about spiritual hygiene that will give me a heart upset? Which I'd say a heart upset is much worse than a stomach upset. A stomach upset will finally go after one or two days.

But if I defile myself in my heart, it can have a permanent damage to me. So God's love is like that. So once I understand God's love clearly, I say, Lord, I want to be founded on this love for the rest of my life.

I don't want to build anywhere else. This is where I want to found myself, particularly if you found a first class hospital in Bangalore which is absolutely free and the hygiene is the highest standard and the treatment is the best and the treatment is free. Which of you will not go to that hospital? You will not go to any other hospital.

That's how I go to God. That's how I build my house on God because that is the most hygienic thing I've ever found on this earth. The love of God is so perfect.

It loves me so much that it disciplines me when I do something wrong. Thank God. Pulls that knife out of my hand because I'll hurt myself with it.

Rebukes me for words I've spoken. I want that love. I want to cling to this Lord and say, Lord, treat me like that every single day.

And when you see if I'm getting puffed up, give me some thorn in the flesh so that I will not get puffed up. I don't mind 10,000 thorns in the flesh, but I don't want an atom of pride. You pray to God like that.

You may not make a lot of money and you may not become famous, but you'll really become spiritual in a very short time. Be founded on the love of God and don't question it. On that foundation we build what is called the first floor, which I say is walking in the light.

That's the first floor. Your personal life. Walk in the light.

That means keep a good conscience. The conscience is the voice of God in the heart, inside the heart of every human being. As soon as he is born, one thing a human being has, which no animal has, nobody else has, is a conscience.

And that conscience is the first voice of God that children hear telling them, don't tell a lie. Every child has it. Over a period of time you can suppress it, suppress it, suppress it.

You can kill it. Till by the time you are 20 years old, you can tell a lie and you don't even hear that voice rebuking you. You can assign a false statement with a clear conscience.

How does that happen? Because you have killed the voice of God in your heart. By again and again, when the voice of God says, don't tell that lie, don't speak like that, you killed it, you killed it. When the voice of God says, go and apologize to that person for the way you spoke.

No, no, no, that's too humiliating to go and apologize. You are killing that voice. I'll tell you one day, you won't hear it anymore.

And then one day you are saying, Oh God, please show me your will, what should I do now? Some people tell me, I can't hear God speaking. I'm not surprised. You had that voice from childhood brother, you killed it.

And now you say you can't hear it. Well, I'm not surprised. You killed that voice of conscience so many times.

And now you're desperate to know God's will in a difficult situation. Shall I take this job? Shall I marry this person? Shall I go here? I don't hear God speaking. Well, you won't.

But you killed it through so many years. Repent now. The wonderful thing about this is, hearing can be restored.

You know how Jesus opened people's deaf ears and they could hear once again? You pray to Jesus. Say, Lord, I'm like one of those deaf people. I don't seem to be able to hear your voice sometimes.

Because I take the blame. I killed it myself. I killed my conscience for so many years.

But Lord, restore it to me. Please restore it to me so that I can hear your voice again. And give me grace, Lord, that I will listen to it in future.

So this is the first floor of the Christian life where I always seek to walk in the light of God with a clear conscience. And let me tell you this, this light will keep increasing. It's like going from first standard to second standard to third standard to fourth standard, on and on.

PhD and post PhD and all that. It's endless. Where one day it will become like Jesus Christ, the light he has.

But it starts very little. Small little things God will test you on. I remember in my life, when I was born again, you know, I was in an orthodox church where I was sprinkled as a baby, which they called baptism.

And then I was born again. I really was born again. But then there was, people said, you must be baptized in water.

And then other people said, if you are baptized in water, the orthodox church will throw you out. And those are the people who need to hear the gospel. So why don't you stay there and preach? So this was tossed around in my mind.

And I never obeyed for one and a half years after I was born again. I never got baptized. But I studied the word.

And in the Bible, there was no infant baptism. Not even one. But I found there were a lot of people around me who were infant baptized.

So when I read scripture, I was clear that after I am born again, I must be baptized. But I struggled with it and I did not obey. Let me tell you something.

For one and a half years, I did not grow spiritually. I was in the same level. It's like being in the kindergarten without learning anything.

Failed, failed, failed, failed. Because something God told me, I did not obey. And it came to the point where when I would kneel and pray, the Lord would say to me, you are not listening to me.

Why should I listen to you? Oh, that woke me up. God's not going to listen to me because I don't listen to him. Then I said, I don't care which church throws me out.

From today onwards, I'm going to obey what I see in the word of God. And that started me on another path, which I've started following from that day, which changed my life. I was 21 then.

That's 57 years ago. And I decided to take baptism and suddenly, I began to hear God speaking to me. Why? Because I suddenly, my ears got open.

I could hear the next step. God doesn't show me the next step till I take the first one. It's like a torchlight.

You know, Psalm 119 verse 105 says, your word is like a lamp to my feet. It's like today we can see a torchlight. So if you have a torchlight, you can only see about 10 feet.

If you want to see the next 10 feet, what do you got to do? You got to walk these 10 feet. Then you'll see the next 10. When it says, thy word is like a lamp or a torchlight to my feet, you'll never see more till you walk forward.

The light God gives you, obey that, then you'll see some more. Is there somebody sitting here and God's giving you light on something? To settle some matter? To ask forgiveness from somebody? Or to obey in some area and you're not obeying? Let me tell you in Jesus' name, you will not see any more. You'll get a lot of knowledge and you think that is growth.

No, knowledge is not growth. A dog may be very intelligent, but it can't be a child of God. And you can be very intelligent, it doesn't mean you're spiritual.

It says you obey that you get more light. So this light will increase if you do what God tells you. And then God showed me the next step after baptism.

That there were things I had, you know, cheated the government and all in previous years, I had to give back that money. But I never saw that till then. Then I gave back that money and then God showed me the next time, little by little by little.

And in a few years, in two years after my baptism, I shot up spiritually. I began to understand the scriptures and so many things got revealed to me because as soon as God showed me something, I obeyed it. Go and settle that matter.

I immediately settled that matter. Go and write a letter and ask forgiveness from that person. I wrote it immediately.

Go and return that money you took wrongfully. I returned it immediately. And I found, believe it or not, in two years, I got such revelation on scripture and even an anointing to preach the word just because I decided I'm going to obey each step.

Obey your conscience. Don't be satisfied that other people think you're okay. The wonderful plans God has for you which will never be fulfilled if you don't walk in the light.

The Bible says if we walk in the light, 1 John 1.7 we have fellowship with him. And walking is different from standing. There's no such thing as standing in the light.

In the Christian life, it's only walking in the light. That means there has to be progress. So that's the first story, what we call the ground floor, in some places the first floor, the first story of the Christian life is our walk with God, our personal individual walk with God which has got nothing to do with your wife or your husband or anybody else in the world.

It's got nothing to do with anyone else in the church. Your personal walk with God, there's a one floor of your life that you're building. It's built on this perfect love of God.

So you understand how this church is constructed, where you listen to your conscience every single time. And if any of you are like that right now, not listening to your conscience, do it today. If you haven't forgiven somebody, forgive that person right now.

And if you have to ask forgiveness from somebody, go and ask forgiveness as soon as this meeting is over. Call up that person or write a letter and settle it. And you will see, you'll experience the same thing I experienced, a sudden growth in your life.

You're missing out on something. You really are missing out on something because you're standing on your pride and saying, no, no, no, let him first come and apologize to me. Okay.

Then you're ruining yourself forever. Humble yourself. Humble yourself.

As I've often said, when two people have a conflict, husband and wife have a conflict or two people have a conflict, who should take the first step? The answer is when God and man had a conflict, who took the first step? God. God was the one who took the first step and humbled himself and came to me, even though I was the one who did the hurt. You want to be like God? We say we want to be like Him.

Take the first step. The most spiritual person is the one who always takes the first step in a husband and wife conflict. It's not a question of who did wrong.

Whoever is most spiritual. God did not do any wrong. When there was a conflict between God and man, He took the first step, not because He did wrong, but because He was most spiritual.

And if you and your marriage partner, there's a conflict and the other person did wrong, who should take the first step? In the world, they say, the psychologists say, the person who did wrong, God says, whoever is most spiritual. But we follow God's example. He humbled himself.

It's a wonderful thing. Believe me, it's a wonderful thing. If you're determined in your life, I'm always going to humble myself.

Always, always, always. I will never in my life stand on my pride. If somebody says I'm wrong, even if I don't think so, I say, okay, I'm sorry, please forgive me.

I may not feel I'm wrong, but he feels I've hurt him. Okay, brother, I'm sorry for having hurt you. I still feel I'm right.

I'm willing to ask his forgiveness because he thinks I've hurt him. He may be totally wrong. Maybe ten years later he'll realize that.

I remember once, some years ago, I had to take a decision in a Christian organization. I was chairman of that organization and I had to take a decision on somebody and he had to be removed from that position. And some friend of his, who did not know the whole story, called me up on the phone, somebody who knew me, and yelled at me for about 15-20 minutes, why have you done this and what type of person you are? I did not say a word.

I could have put the phone down. That's insulting. I don't do that when a person I know, he kept on, after 15-20 minutes he stopped and I said, brother, have you finished? He said yes.

I said okay, God bless you. And I put the phone down. I never said a word to him.

Six months later, he writes a letter to me. Brother Sahak, I'm really sorry. I never knew all those circumstances.

Now only I know the circumstances why you had to take that strong step. Please forgive me. I said, I forgave you long, long ago.

You never gain anything by arguing on a telephone. I'll tell you that. You'll gain a lot by just keeping your mouth shut.

It's true. You'll become a more spiritual person and probably bring some conviction to the other person. So, keep your conscience very clear.

That's very, very important. On top of that, we build a second floor. Now don't try to build a second floor before you build the first one.

Like any building, you can't build a second one before the first one. The second floor is your family life. First your personal life, then your family life.

Your family life, everybody's got a family. If you're unmarried, you're a two-year-old child. Your parents are your family.

And in all these areas, Jesus is our example. You know, God could have sent Jesus as a full-grown man like Adam. Because if somebody has to die for the sins of the world, okay, Jesus comes as a full-grown man and dies for the sins of the world.

That's okay. But he could not have been an example. He could not have been an example for a two-year-old or a ten-year-old.

How should a ten-year-old live a godly life? Jesus says, follow me. How should a three-year-old live a godly life? Jesus says, follow me. That's why he had to be born as a little baby, so that he can be an example for us in all stages of life.

He grew up in a family. And his family, listen to this, those of you who feel you are more spiritual than your parents, don't some of you feel like that? Okay. Jesus was more spiritual than his parents.

Agreed or not? Of course. He was perfect. Do you think Jesus sometimes saw Joseph and Mary getting angry with each other? Or having a little fight? Yes or no? Are you Roman Catholics, by the way? Mary never sinned? I'm not a Roman Catholic.

Mary was a sinner. And before Jesus was born itself, she says, God is my Savior. She knew that.

They were sinners. Have you seen new covenant couples fighting? Can you imagine an old covenant couple like Mary and Joseph? I'm sure they fought. Who saw it? Jesus.

Do you think Jesus despised them? Do you despise your parents because you see some failure in them? Jesus never did it. That's where a small child can follow Jesus. He saw, not only the fighting, he saw so many wrong things in those parents, which his sensitive conscience pointed out, that's wrong.

The way Joseph, my earthly father, is doing it is wrong. Maybe Joseph as a carpenter probably did some few things wrong in his business. And Jesus, no, I wouldn't do that.

I've known believer parents, children, who despise their parents. And it never goes well with them. I'll tell you that.

Okay, your parents don't have as much light as you. Maybe they are non-Christians. But do you know the Bible says, honor your father and mother.

It doesn't say honor your father and mother if they are God-fearing believers. No. Just honor your father and mother, full stop.

Period. That's it. You don't have to agree with your father and mother.

You don't have to obey them if they tell you to worship idols. No. Because God is above them.

God has told you not to worship idols and you don't obey your father and mother. But you have to honor them. Definitely.

Example is Jesus, who had imperfect parents. Why is it some of you say, how can I listen to my parents, but you're willing to listen to your boss at work, who's more imperfect than your parents. Why do you listen to your boss? Because money, money, money, that's important.

You don't get any money by respecting your parents, but you get money by respecting your boss. So please remember this, that Jesus is our example in honoring our parents. So family life is for everybody, even for children.

Build your home before you move on to building the church. And so God tests us in those years when we are children. What does it say in Ephesians 6? Ephesians in chapter 6, we read these words, children obey your parents, verse 1, for this is right in the Lord.

In the Lord means if they tell you to do something which God tells you not to do, like worship an idol, lovingly, respectfully say, Daddy, I respect you, I love you, thank you for all that you've done for me, but please don't ask me to bow down to an idol, because I have a different conviction on that. It doesn't make me respect you less, I will still honor you, but please don't ask me to honor that idol. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise.

In the Ten Commandments, there was only one commandment that had a promise. You read it in Exodus 20, one commandment had a promise. If you honor your father and mother, it will go well with you, verse 3, that you may live long on the earth.

I want to say to all of you parents, do you want it to go well with your children? Yes or no? I'm sure your answer is yes. If so, obey this. Teach them to honor their father and mother.

Don't let them despise parents. Don't let them ever speak in a despising way to you. If they do it, pull them up, rebuke them.

I always did it. I said you're not going to do anything, even if you're studying for the exam, stop it. I don't care if you fail in your exam tomorrow.

You stop studying and go and apologize to mommy for the way you spoke, for the way you reacted, then continue with your studies. You'll study better if you do that. We must teach our children to honor your father and mother.

Also to me it involved, speak respectfully to them and speak respectfully to anybody who's older than you. I've seen a lot of young people, particularly in Western countries more than here, who just don't know how to speak respectfully to older people. They have no respect in the way they address them.

They call them by their first name, as if they are equal to them. Can you imagine that? Even the non-Christians in India have more understanding of that. But I see a lot of people, this is, you know, the declining backslidden Christian culture in many Western countries, that the young people don't even have any respect for older people.

Don't let that happen here. Teach your children always to speak respectfully to older people. We had servant maids in our house.

I would never allow my children to speak disrespectfully to any of them. I did not believe in the social levels. This is high class, low class.

There's no high class, low class with me. All are the same class. We all got kicked out of Eden and Adam and we all came from the same root.

There's no question of a caste system. But I tell you, there are Christians who say they have no caste system, but they don't treat their servants like human beings. Something is wrong with that Christianity.

It's a hypocritical Christianity. Someone who is in a low caste, who comes to the church, they will speak nicely. But the same low caste servant at home, they don't.

Why is that? Hypocrites. They seek honor in the church, but they don't get honor in the home. So they don't speak to them properly.

I never allowed my children to do that. You know when it speaks about home life, we need the power of the Holy Spirit for this. It says in Ephesians 5 verse 18, be filled with the Holy Spirit.

That's the first step. It's the only verse in the Bible which speaks about being filled with the Holy Spirit. And when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you know what will happen? Verse 22, wives will be subject to their husbands.

Verse 25, husbands will love their wives. This is all the result of verse 18. And children, chapter 6 verse 1, will obey their parents.

Chapter 6 verse 4, fathers who are spirit-filled will bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If you're a father and you're not teaching your children the word of God, go and be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's more important to bring your children up in the instruction of the Lord than to speak in tongues.

And not only that, I haven't finished. And when you're filled with the Spirit, if you're a servant in your office, you'll obey verse 5, your masters. And if you're a master, verse 9, you will treat your servants in the way God treats you.

He has no partiality. That means God has no caste system. You tell me how you treat your servants at home.

I'll tell you how God will treat you. I will give you an exact description of how God will treat you, if you just tell me how you treat your servants at home. It's exactly the same, because God treats us as we treat other people.

We are so much below God. The way you treat somebody who's beneath you, God will treat you exactly like that. I want to tell you my testimony.

I have always been good to the best of my ability, to every servant that's ever worked in our house, financially and otherwise. And I want to say, God has been very, very good to me through the years, given me beyond what I deserve. Be good to those who you think are inferior to you.

So that's our home life. Husband, wife, very important relationship, bringing up children, submitting to your parents. Bringing up children is also important as part of the home life.

Don't try to preach elsewhere. The Bible says, if you can't take care of your children at home, what are you going to teach other people? I want to ask you parents, please listen to me. What is your relationship with your children? Some of your parents are here and your children come here.

Both are believers. Do your children respect you? If not, ask why? Are your children married? Your son-in-law, daughter-in-law, they are born again, probably they are here or somewhere. Do they respect you as a mother-in-law, as a father-in-law? If not, ask yourself why? I know you'll say the fault is with that person.

The world is full of people. From Adam's day, they say the fault is with the other person. Adam said the fault is with my wife, the wife said the fault is with the serpent, and you say the fault is with my daughter-in-law or with my mother-in-law.

That is the old Adam, Adamic habit. Why not consider the possibility the fault may be with you? Home life. The world knows everywhere the conflicts that mothers-in-law have with daughters-in-law.

Everywhere there are daughters-in-law who commit suicide because of this in our country. What does the New Covenant teach us? If a New Covenant mother-in-law also has problems with her daughter-in-law or son-in-law, something is wrong with you brother, sister. Or if a New Covenant father-in-law has a problem with son-in-law, daughter-in-law.

I mean, I'm a father-in-law to at least four married sons. I'm a father-in-law, my wife is a mother-in-law. I see, can I respect them? Can I fellowship with them? Do they respect me and love me? Ask yourself.

Don't put the blame on the other person. Please don't be like Adam. Be like Jesus who hung on the cross and took the blame himself.

That's why Jesus had fellowship with one thief on the cross. That thief on the cross took the blame himself. The other thief on the cross, like Adam, blamed somebody else.

He says, it's not my fault, take me down from the cross. Jesus hung and said, I take the blame for other people's sins. And the thief on the cross said, I take the blame.

Jesus said, then you and I can walk together. Why? Because they both took the blame. You don't take the blame.

You cannot walk with Jesus. You'll be like the other thief on the cross. Fellowship with Jesus is the most wonderful thing.

You got to be the opposite of Adam. So determine that you're going to be a new covenant mother-in-law, new covenant father-in-law, no matter how your son-in-law or daughter-in-law is. And determine that you'll be a new covenant son-in-law, new covenant daughter-in-law, no matter how your mother-in-law or father-in-law are.

It's very easy to say, they're like this, so I'm like this. Then what salvation have you got? Somebody slapped me on the face, so I slapped them back. They spoke to me like this, so I speak to back like them.

Don't try to build a church, brother. Don't try to build a church, sister. Forget it.

Just build your home. Build your home relationships. That's the second floor.

Don't try to build a third floor and be so ambitious. I just built the second floor. Then we go to the third floor, which is building the church.

That is building fellowship. You can't get there. I'm not saying that you have to be perfect in any of these areas.

The wonderful thing about this construction is, all these things go on simultaneously. Foundation, first floor, first, second, third, all go simultaneously. But if I'm ignoring some of the lower floors, I can't build the church.

That's what I'm trying to say. You don't have to be perfect anywhere. But remember that if you don't watch your personal life and you don't watch your family life, you will not be able to build the church properly.

Always remember, that is the third floor. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 3 concerning an elder, if a man cannot take care of his own house, how can he take care of the house of God? If he can't take care of four children and bring them up in the fear of God, how is he going to take care of 100 people in a church? That's reasonable. If a man can't bring two or three children up in godly fear, where in the world is he going to take care of a church with 100 people? Impossible.

If you're going to have problems with your son-in-law and daughter-in-law and mother-in-law and father-in-law, are you trying to build a church? Forget it. Forget it. Build the second floor properly first.

Concentrate on that. I know some people have heard this from me for years and they just ignore it. Okay, you ignore it.

But see what the result is, how much you're building the church. I mean you can be a member of a good church, but your contribution to that church, spiritual contribution to that church can be zero. You know there are many people who sit here and their spiritual contribution to the church is zero.

And part of the reason is they're not building the first and second floor. They're not able to build fellowship with one another. They're not able to encourage one another.

It's very easy to build fellowship. You only got to humble yourself and walk in the light. If you walk in the light, you'll have fellowship with God.

And it's not always being together. See, I will use the example of these two hands work so well together when you're lifting a table or you're playing some musical instrument. Not because they're always hanging around together.

It's not by always meeting each other that we build fellowship. This hand is in touch with the head. This hand is in touch with the head.

Even if they don't hang around together, they have wonderful fellowship. I've met people who I sometimes haven't seen for months on end. Immediately our fellowship is close because we are both walking in the light.

So it's not always by visiting each other that we build fellowship. That's good, but that's not the main reason or the main way by which we fellowship. Be connected to the head.

If you have fellowship with the Lord, we could fellowship with one another. And beyond fellowship, the Bible says, encourage one another daily. Hebrews 3.13 that one of the ministries we need to have, you don't have to be a preacher for this.

Encourage one another daily. It doesn't take much to encourage somebody. Maybe a verse of scripture that blessed you.

I want to read something to you. When my son Sunil, at the age of 17, left for the United States, Brother Ian Robson went and met him in 1996. Just before he left, I think probably the day before he left.

And hugged him and gave him a small slip of paper which was handwritten. And this is what was written in that. Sunil told me this.

The note was, Dear Sunil, here is a word to hold on to. 1 Corinthians 1 verse 8 and 9 from the Living Bible. He just quoted a verse, nothing else.

Jesus guarantees that you'll be counted free from all sin and guilt on that day when He returns. God will surely do this for you. For He always does what He says.

And He's the one who invited you into this wonderful fellowship with His Son, even Christ our Lord. Those are not Ian's words. Those are Paul's words.

He was just quoting. Every word was from 1 Corinthians 1 verse 8 and 9 in the Living Bible. You'll be counted free from sin and guilt on the day when He returns.

God will surely do this for you. Because He always does what He says. And Sunil wrote, God bless you, your brother Ian.

That was the note. Fourteen years later, Sunil wrote a note saying, Dear Brother Ian, I have kept that scrap of paper in my wallet for 14 years since the day I arrived in the U.S. And I've literally held on to that word that you gave me. The contents of that note have encouraged me through many rough college years and through my work life, reassuring me of my security and salvation through Christ.

And most importantly, the personal guarantee of Jesus has kept me free from condemnation. What did he do? Did he preach a big message? That he could help a young brother for 14 years? I'm just using that as an example to tell you, it doesn't take a lot to encourage people. You don't have to be a preacher.

Maybe just one verse that came to your mind that you give to someone and you never know. Do you think Brother Ian knew the effect this would have for 14 years on that young man? No. And you may not know.

So I mention that only to say, how do we build up the church? I can't preach. Never mind. Can you give one verse to somebody that blessed you? Don't do it if you don't love the person.

You love the person and give a verse to that person. You may not know the effect it has on that person for the rest of his life. Encourage one another.

More than exhort and correct one another, encourage one another. You can build up the church. So remember these things that we heard.

And I pray there will be some fantastic results in our life in the days to come. Let's bow our heads in prayer. Dear brothers and sisters, please be rooted in God's love as you think about the days ahead.

There is no word of condemnation in the church. Every word is a word of encouragement. Even the word of rebuke is a word of encouragement.

If there is some one thing that God has spoken to you, say, Lord, I want to do that. Even if you can't do many other things, think of the one thing God has spoken to you and do that. Heavenly Father, please help us all, step by step, to develop the same attitude that Jesus had in every area of our life.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/6JXtHpFhOiA.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-foundation-and-three-floors-of-the-church/>

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