

The Gospel of Christ's Glory

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of taking up the cross, looking at Jesus, and being filled with the Holy Spirit to understand the inner life of Christ and to live a life of honesty and authenticity.

Duration: 58:43

Scripture: Isaiah 55:6, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 4:3, 2 Corinthians 4:5, Galatians 4:19

Topics: "Christ's Glory", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not hiding behind masks of pretense but seeking to be transformed into the likeness of Christ by the Holy Spirit. It challenges believers to focus on the gospel of the glory of Christ, to be open and transparent in their lives, and to serve others as slaves for Jesus' sake, not seeking personal honor or recognition.

Transcript

So, if you will remember, yesterday we were looking at 2nd Corinthians in chapter 3 and we saw how in the old covenant Moses wore a veil or a mask to cover his face and one of the reasons mentioned here is so that people would not see that the glory underneath that veil, 2nd Corinthians 3 verse 13, so that people would not see that the glory underneath that veil was slowly getting less and less and less and less. I mentioned how that is a mark of old covenant life where the inner glory in our life is becoming less and less and less and less and so we put a mask over our face so that people don't see that that glory is becoming less in our hearts. We want to put a mask pretending that everything is okay when everything is not okay.

But then we saw that when we turn to the Lord, if you turn to the Lord, the Lord is the spirit, verse 16, if you turn to the Holy Spirit, he throws away that mask. Then of course we don't need a mask over our face and I believe one mark of the fact that you are filled with the Holy Spirit is that there is no mask over your face. You are not living a life of pretense anymore.

You may not be very spiritual, you don't have to be very spiritual to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Do you know that in the early church you read in the Acts of the Apostles they were filled with the Holy Spirit the day they were born again? How spiritual were they on the day they were born again? And they were filled with the Holy Spirit. So, being filled with the Holy Spirit does not mean that you are spiritual.

We need to understand the difference between health and maturity. To be spiritual is to be mature. Do you know the difference between being healthy and being mature? A six-month-old baby can be healthy, but it's not mature.

But a six-month-old baby can be sick. That's wrong. You can't expect a six-month-old baby to be mature, but it can be healthy.

So, you may not be very spiritual, but you can have a good conscience even when you're six months in the Lord or one day in the Lord. So, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, it just means we are healthy. It doesn't mean we are mature.

Maturity comes over a period of time. When we are born again, our capacity is like a little cup. God fills it, but it's so little water in a cup.

And as we walk with the Lord, and as we take up the cross every day, that cup will become a bucket, and then God fills us again. So, now there are two believers. One is the size of a cup, and the other is the size of a bucket.

One is more spiritual than the other, even though both are filled. You understand? The cup is full, the bucket is full, but one has got more than the other. And then after a while, he grows some more in the Lord, taking up the cross.

He becomes like a tub. He's filled again. And the tub is much bigger than a cup.

And then finally, he becomes a river and many rivers. That's the ultimate goal, that many rivers of living water will flow from us. So, a man like Paul, who was filled with the Holy Spirit towards the end of his life, and three days after he was converted, when Ananias laid hands on him.

He was like a little cup that day, when Ananias laid hands on him, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. You look at him 30 years later, and there are rivers flowing out. So, don't confuse health with maturity.

Don't confuse being filled with the Holy Spirit with being spiritual. It takes many years to be spiritual, but you can be filled with the Spirit today. But you need to be filled with the Spirit again, tomorrow.

Because, hopefully, your capacity will increase. It should increase. Many people, their capacity doesn't increase, and that's a sad thing.

So, here we see, one mark of being filled with the Spirit is, there is no mask in our life. I'm not pretending anymore. It's an old covenant life, like Moses.

When you put a mask over your life, over your face, you pretend that everything is alright. When underneath, the glory is slowly getting less, and less, and less, and less, and less, and less. Now, haven't you had that experience? That you come to a conference, and God meets with you.

Suddenly, God's really met with you. Everything's going to change. And the glory is there.

Then, one week after the conference, or two months after the conference, the glory has faded away. And then, when the glory has faded away, after all the wonderful things you testified, when you went back home from the conference, what God met with me, and all the fantastic things you're going to say next week in your church meeting. And then, you find two months later, the story is different.

What happens? We are no longer honest. And then, begins the life of pretense. Then, we have to wear a mask.

Then, we have to pretend. Yes, praise the Lord, it's going well with me. That's a mask.

And that shows you're not filled with the Holy Spirit. When we turn to the Lord, it says, verse 16, the mask is thrown away. You don't have a mask anymore.

I'm happy for people to see me just as I am. I've not become like Jesus yet. I've got a long way to go to become like Jesus, but I don't want to pretend anymore.

My dear brothers and sisters, let me tell you why Christian denominations have gone down. Why Christian leaders have fallen away. Number one reason, they start wearing masks.

They live a life of pretense. Their outward life looks more spiritual than their inward life. That is the reason for backsliding and finally going down into the drain.

So, be very careful of that. The Lord is the Spirit. And if you come to the Lord with an unveiled face, says in verse 18, and you see the glory of Jesus, and we keep fixing our eyes on Jesus, something which is emphasized in the New Testament is this.

We must run the race looking at Jesus. Our eyes must never be away from Jesus, not even for a moment. Not even at the best of men or the worst of men.

I mentioned that yesterday how Peter sank in the sea when his eyes were taken away from Jesus. So, when we take away the mask from our face, it says we can see the glory of the Lord. This is another problem with wearing a mask in our face.

When we pretend that we are more spiritual than we really are, you know what happens is that we can't even see the glory of the Lord. You know, when we wear this mask, and you're pretending to everybody else that you're more spiritual, now you look up to the Lord, you can't see him because you've got a mask in your face. How can you see the glory of the Lord, verse 18, when you get rid of the mask? Many of us can't see Jesus very clearly.

In the moment of temptation, in the moment when you're tempted strongly, the only thing that will help you to overcome that temptation is to see Jesus. To see that Jesus came in your flesh and he was tempted and he didn't sin. But why is it you cannot see him in the moment of temptation? Because all your life you're living with a mask.

You're living this life of pretense before people. You try wearing a mask over your face with everything covered, looking very spiritual, and then try to look up at somebody, you can't see anything. That's why we can't see Jesus.

But it says when you turn to the Holy Spirit, the mask is torn away. And verse 18, without a mask, we see the glory of the Lord very clearly. That must be our passion.

It's not enough to say we would see Jesus. Do you want to see Jesus? Throw away the mask from your life. You'll see him very clearly.

Otherwise you can sing till eternity. And as long as you're pretending, I want to repeat that a hundred times if necessary, as long as you're trying to pretend before people that you're more spiritual than you really are, you will not see the glory of Jesus at all. And then, of course, the next step, being transformed into that image, will also not take place.

So what is step one? Get rid of the mask. Get rid of the veil. It's one of the most important messages that we need to speak in our time.

If we say that we are in the last minute before the coming of the Lord, what is going to happen when the Lord comes? When the Lord comes, if there's only one minute left for the coming of Christ, what is Jesus going to do when he comes? He's going to strip away every mask. In one minute, everybody's going to see you as you really are. Why not let them see you like that now? If it is going to benefit my life.

In one minute from now, the Lord is going to strip my mask away and everybody's going to see me as I really am. Why live this life of pretense any longer? I mean, if you've got a million years to wait, okay. At least you can hold on, but even then it will be stripped away.

But we're in the last minute. What is the message for our time? Strip away the mask. Turn to the Lord.

Let the Holy Spirit strip that mask away and look to him and see the glory of Jesus. And if you take that step, you not only see the glory of Jesus, it says here the Holy Spirit in verse 18 will change you from one degree of glory to another. Now, is this something, some optional subject in the Christian life? You know, when you study in a school or a college particularly, there are certain subjects that are compulsory and there are certain subjects that are optional.

If you want, you can take them. If you don't want, you can take them. Now, I'll tell you, in today's Christianity, they say the most important subject is go and witness to other people and read the Bible and pray.

I know I was told there are four compulsory subjects in the Christian life. One is read the Bible, pray, witness to others, and seek fellowship with others. These are all good subjects.

And I was told I must try and do that every day. But do you know what the Bible says? The Bible says I must take up the cross every day. The Bible says I must look at Jesus every day.

The Bible never says you must read your Bible every day. The Bible doesn't even say you must pray every day. It says you must pray always.

The Bible does not say you must witness to somebody every day. And the Bible doesn't say you must seek fellowship every day. It does say that every day you must encourage one another so that you don't get hardened.

But the Bible does say, Jesus said you must take up the cross every day. And the Bible says we must run the race looking unto Jesus. That is the most important thing.

Then these other things like reading the Bible and praying and witnessing and fellowship take their proper place. When our focus shifts from the main thing and the optional subjects become the main subjects and the main subjects become the optional subjects, then we've got it wrong. I want to tell you taking up the cross is not an optional subject.

It's the main subject. Looking at Jesus and being changed into his likeness is not an optional subject. It's a main subject.

And then comes the other things. We witness as we get opportunity. We fulfill the gift that God has given us in the body of Christ.

It may not be the same as somebody else's. So here he says, when I throw away the mask, the Holy Spirit fills me and he shows me the beauty of Jesus. It's a wonderful thing that when Jesus came to earth, see the way the Trinity works.

When Jesus came to earth, he didn't speak about himself. He spoke about the Father. And then Jesus went to heaven and the Holy Spirit came and the Holy Spirit didn't speak about himself.

He spoke about Jesus. And so if the Holy Spirit fills you, you will speak about Jesus. Remember that.

If a person is always talking about Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, I have a question about that. Because I want you to listen to what Jesus said. In John's Gospel, chapter 16.

I'm just saying if you read the word of God, you will not be confused with the confusion. There is in Christendom today. John 16.

And he's talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit in verse 13. When he, John 16, 13, the spirit of truth has come, he will guide you into all the truth. And here in the Message Bible it says, he will not draw attention to himself.

He will not speak out of himself. But verse 14, he will glorify me. He will take the things of Christ and show it to you.

Let's read it again. When the Holy Spirit comes, he will not talk about himself. He will not draw attention to himself.

What about all these ministries, they say they are filled with the Holy Spirit and they're always drawing attention to themselves. That is not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to himself.

Jesus said that and I believe that. The Holy Spirit will glorify Christ. Any ministry or person that draws attention to himself or even draws attention to the Spirit is wrong.

I'm not saying we shouldn't talk about the Holy Spirit. Romans 8 is full of references to the Holy Spirit. But the direct attention is always on Jesus.

He will glorify Jesus. And I believe that if you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you will glorify Jesus. You will talk more about him.

You will become more like him. And you will see more of his glory and become like him. He will glorify me.

And all things the Father has are mine. Therefore I said the Holy Spirit will take of mine and reveal it to you. He will reveal to you the hidden things in Jesus' life.

Let me tell you one simple rule. Please try and remember this. If your life is an external type of life, that means you're only interested in the outward things of the Christian life.

The outward things are going to meetings, reading the Bible, praying, witnessing. A lot of things in the outward things in the Christian life, they are necessary. But they are like the leaves on a tree.

God never made trees without leaves. Trees have got leaves. But we read that when Jesus once came to a fig tree and he saw all the leaves, he cursed it.

A fruit tree has plenty of leaves but it's not only leaves. We can say a fruit tree must have leaves and fruit. And in the same way in our life there are leaves.

The leaves are the external activities of the Christian life. The fruit is character which comes from within. And that is important.

So listen to this. When your main aim in Christianity is to do the external things right, going to meetings, reading the Bible, having a good testimony before men, and all the external things of your life must be right, you will see only the external aspects of Jesus' life. Because you are an external man.

You will see the outward things Jesus did. You will read in the Gospels that he healed the sick and he raised the dead and he multiplied the loaves and he preached and all the external things. But when you become an inward type of man, the Holy Spirit will show you the inner things in Jesus' life.

What were the inner things in Jesus' life? There were greater miracles inside than outside. Do you know that the Bible says that Jesus could cast out demons with a word? He could raise the dead with a word. But when he had to overcome temptation inside, it says he prayed with loud crying and tears.

Which was more difficult for Jesus? To raise the dead or to overcome temptation? Think about it. Many of you and most of Christendom, they have lived an external life. They are only interested in their external testimony.

And so they only know about the external life of Jesus. What do you hear of Christian preaching today? It's all about the external life of Jesus. He did this, he did this, he did this.

Mostly about his miracles and his preaching. Who knows about the inner life of Jesus? Those who want an inner life themselves. Do you know why you have such a shallow external life? Because you are interested in the external life of Jesus.

You are interested in the leaves, the activity in Christendom. Try and look into the inward life of Jesus. It says here, he will take of mine and reveal it to you.

Disclose. Disclose means a little secret. He is going to show it to you.

There are secret aspects of Jesus' life. And they are not in the Gospels. In the Gospels there is nothing secret.

I mean even an unbeliever can read it. And know that Jesus raised the dead. And Jesus washed the feet.

And Jesus did so many external things. Very good things. He touched the lepers.

And he did so many wonderful things. You don't need anybody to disclose it to you. Do you need the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that Jesus touched the leper and healed him? You don't have to have the Holy Spirit at all.

You don't even have to be a Christian. There are non-Christians who read the Gospels and admire what Jesus did. But to know the inner life of Jesus, you must desire an inner life yourself.

I know in my own life, I never understood the inner life of Jesus till I wanted an inner life myself. The day I prayed, Lord, make my outer life and inner life to be the same. There must be no difference.

My inner life must be exactly the same as what I speak and what I appear to be. That was the time the Holy Spirit began to take the inner things in Jesus' life and show it to me. And those inner things was how he conquered temptation.

See, Hebrews in chapter 5 we read. Hebrews 5. Now I'll give you a classic example. You can read one verse and interpret it in two ways.

Depending on whether you're an external Christian or an internal Christian. The same verse. Just listen to it.

Tell me, how do you interpret this verse? It's talking about the days when Jesus walked on the earth in his flesh. Verse 7. Hebrews 5 verse 7. In the days of his flesh. Now that's very simple English.

It's not saying in the last day of his flesh. No. In the days of his flesh means during all the 33 and a half years he was on earth.

If I speak about the days of my flesh, that's not talking about today. It's talking about my whole life. In the days of his flesh.

He prayed. Supplication means specific prayer. With loud crying and tears.

He prayed to whom? He prayed to the only one who was able to save him from death. And he was heard. Because of his godly fear.

Okay. Now we can find out whether you are an external Christian or an internal Christian. Tell me, what do you understand from that verse? One question.

Which death was Jesus asking to be saved from? You know the Bible speaks about two types of death. Physical death and spiritual death. Physical death everybody knows.

James 1, 14, 15 says, Sin, when it is finished, brings death. That's not talking about physical death. Because Jesus had no sin and he died physically.

And if this verse is talking about Jesus' physical death, then we have to say God did not hear his prayer. God did not hear and answer his prayer because he died. And I tell you, the vast majority of Christians, because their life is external, they think only of the external death.

And Jesus was praying, Oh God, Oh Father, Oh don't let me go and die on Calvary. Have you heard of martyrs who used to go singing to the fire to be eaten by lions? And can you imagine Jesus as a coward saying, Oh Father, don't let me go to the cross? That's a shameful thing to dishonor Jesus by saying he was scared to go to the cross. He wasn't scared to go to the cross.

He was more bold than all those martyrs who went singing when they were being thrown to the lions. He never once prayed to be saved from physical death. And then we realize there must have been another

death which he could have faced, which he never faced in heaven because he never had the flesh.

But in the days of his flesh, he knew the greatest danger. Listen to this. Dear brothers and sisters, what is the greatest danger you are facing? Is it terrorism? Are you afraid that in some plane crash you may die? Are you afraid that you'll get some cancer or tuberculosis or some sickness and you'll die? Is that the greatest thing you're afraid of? That's what people who live an external life are afraid of.

I'm afraid I'll get a road accident. I'm afraid I'll get a cancer. Physical death, physical death.

The whole world is full of people who are afraid of physical death. They take insurance and all because they say I may die. I don't know, this short two-hour plane trip, I may die or this car accident or a lot of accidents on the road.

There may be terrorists blowing up hotels. I better not go here. They live in fear of that all the time.

Do you know that Jesus was never afraid of that? But there's another death that Jesus really wanted to avoid. And that is the death which is the end result of sin. So we can read this like this.

He prayed with loud crying and tears that he might never sin. And when I say he might never sin, it means that he might never speak one unnecessary word. That would be sin according to his standard.

According to our standard, it's only when you speak 10,000 unnecessary words that it becomes sin to us perhaps. But for him, one unnecessary word was sin. He could not have one sinful thought even for one second.

That was sin. You know, Christians today tolerate sin so much that they can have so many sinful thoughts in their mind and still get up and talk about victory over sin. Hypocrites, hypocrites of the first order.

But for Jesus, one thought was enough. That was sin. He was polluted.

One wrong attitude towards one human being for one second. That was sin. Now you try living like that even for one hour or one day and you'll find it's pretty tough.

Imagine living like that for 33 and a half years. There was only one way he did it. He prayed.

He prayed. He didn't pray because he read books on prayer. He never read a single book on prayer.

He never prayed because he read in some book that some man of God spent four hours every morning in prayer that sort of convicted him and condemned him and he started praying. That's how today's Christians are condemned. You know, today there's such a tremendous ministry of condemnation going on in Christendom.

Why aren't you a missionary? Why aren't you going to North India where there are people dying? A fellow feels condemned. I better go. Why aren't you praying for four hours? You know, Martin Luther prayed for two hours every day or whatever it is.

John Wesley prayed for so many hours. He would feel condemned and he started praying. It's a ministry of condemnation.

Have you ever heard me preach like that? Because I'm not an old covenant servant trying to bring condemnation on people. No, Jesus didn't feel condemned and start go to pray. No, he prayed because

he was in desperate need.

I'll give you an example. Supposing your little child is dying of some sickness. How do you pray? Do you read some book on prayer as to how I should pray because my child is sick in the hospital? You don't need any book then.

You don't need any exhortation to pray. You don't even need somebody to tell you to fast. It's automatic because my child is dying.

Oh God! We all know how to pray when things are serious like that. That is how Jesus prayed when he wanted to avoid sin. I'll tell you this, my brothers.

I'll tell you honestly. When you and I, when you and I, I include myself, start praying to avoid sin the way we would pray when some precious loved one is dying. We'll stop sinning pretty quickly.

That's the way Jesus stopped sinning. When was the last time? You know, we say, oh brother, what to do? I'm not yet like Jesus. I'm still falling, falling, falling, falling.

How long are you going to go on like that? With the same old sins? When was the last time you prayed with loud crying and tears that you should overcome some sin? See, it's very easy to say, oh brother, what to do? I'm weak. No, you don't believe you're weak. I believe you sinned because you're strong, not because you're weak.

It's a lie which the devil tells us that, oh, we're sinning because we're so weak. No, sir. We're sinning because we are so strong.

If you were weak, you would pray. Only weak people pray. Strong people do not pray.

If you do not pray, you are a strong person. You are convinced that you are a strong person. You don't need God's help.

You're pretty much okay yourself. You're clever, you're rich, you're healthy, you're educated. Why do you need God? You don't need to pray.

You're pretty strong. And that's why we don't grow spiritually. And that's why we don't have a ministry.

Oh, God hasn't given me a gift. Put the blame on God. Put the blame on God.

That's what Adam said in the Garden of Eden. Oh, you gave me this life. What to do? I sinned.

Do you know the number of Christians, even sitting in our midst, who say, oh, God hasn't given me a gift. I can't do it. Put the blame on God.

Take the blame yourself, brother, sister. Say, I have not sought God earnestly for the gift of prophecy. That's why I never got it.

Don't say God never gave it to me. The Bible says, the Holy Spirit says, earnestly desire the gift of prophecy, that you may encourage others, and challenge others, and build up others. That is for every single believer.

Acts 2, 17 says, I'll pour out my spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Prophecy does not mean get up in the meeting and preach. That may be a prophet, and a person who's a teacher, or something like that.

But prophesying is just speaking to other people, words that will encourage, and edify, and build them up. Instead of all the gossip that so many Christians are engaged in, and the backbiting. Why is it that more Christians are not prophesying in their conversation with each other? Encouraging, and building up, and challenging.

What is prophecy? 1 Corinthians 14, verse 3 is, anyone who speaks to other people, to build them up, and to encourage, and challenge them, that's prophecy. You understand in a pulpit to do that? You can do that when your two mothers are sitting at home talking to each other for five minutes. Something that will encourage, and challenge, and edify.

Why don't we do it? Oh, God hasn't given me a gift. That's a lie. I want to encourage you, don't be like Adam, who blamed God for his sin.

When he sinned, he said, God, you gave me this wife, and she gave me the fruit. That's why I sinned. And you say, you haven't given me a gift, God.

That's why I can't prophesy. That's a lie. You didn't seek Him earnestly.

What to do? I'm keeping on sinning. Blame God for it? No. You did not pray like Jesus prayed, with loud crying and tears.

We're lazy. We don't cry out to God. And we say, I can't get victory over sin.

God hasn't given me victory. Let us humble ourselves, and take the blame ourselves from now on. Say, Lord, it's my fault that I'm not more holy today, than I should be.

I should have been ten times more holy, a hundred times more holy today. I've come for so many conferences, but I'm just playing the fool. I'm increasing in knowledge.

Leaves, leaves, every year, the leaves increase in my tree. But where's the fruit? Where's the fruit of godliness? Where's the fruit of purity and humility, and freedom from the love of money, and freedom from the pursuit of the passions of this world? Where's the fruit of that? Where's the fruit of a passion, to know God's mind by reading His word? Do you think Jesus automatically knew the scriptures, when He was born on this earth? You know, in one of my books, Living as Jesus Lived, I mentioned how Jesus was just like us, and by the age of twelve, He knew the scriptures. Now when He was born, at age one, He did not know how to read or write.

No baby knows how to read or write, when they're one year old, or even two years old. It's only by the time they're three or four, that they even begin to read and to be able to understand. Or let's say five, when they understand something.

So in about seven years, from the age of five to twelve, without a Bible, remember, He never had a Bible at home, He heard all the instruction Jesus got about scripture, was through listening to Mary mostly, and maybe in the school that He went to, where they taught from the scriptures, and on the synagogue, He would listen, and listen, and listen. In seven years, He came to know the scriptures. I took that as a

challenge, when I was converted.

And I said, Lord, I'm born again now, in seven years, I must know the scriptures. Thoroughly! I spent all my time, I've got an advantage Jesus didn't have, I've got a Bible at home. I've got many translations of it, to know different aspects of the meaning.

And I decided, I can do it. Jesus came in my flesh. Of course, He denied Himself certain other things, and if I want to know the Bible, I must deny myself other things.

And I got to know the scriptures in seven years. I'm telling you honestly, almost all the data knowledge of the Bible that I have today, I learned in the first seven years after I got converted. I got revelation on that, in the next 40 years, that's another thing.

But that basic information, I want to challenge you, how many of you will take that seriously, you young people? And say, if Jesus could learn the scriptures from the age of 5 to 12 without a Bible at home, I'm going to follow Jesus. Don't just sing, follow, follow, I will follow Him anywhere. Say, Lord, I'm going to follow you here.

Let's take one step at a time. I want to follow Jesus in the way He learned the scriptures in seven years. Because that is what helped Him to overcome temptation.

And, you know, when I wrote that book, and I sent it to a publisher, the Brethren Assembly publisher for publishing it, one of the questions they asked me was, what are you trying to say? You mean Jesus had to learn like us? No, they said, when He came as a baby, He came with all the scripture in His mind. Which baby is born with all the scripture in His mind when they're born? Have you ever seen a baby like that? Then you have to say, Jesus was not made like His brothers in anything. But that's not what the Bible says.

Why do we say that? Because we don't want to take the responsibility to study the scriptures in seven years like He did. So, we say, no, no, no, He was not like us. That's why He knew the scriptures.

Why did He overcome sin? No, no, no, He was not like us. That's why He overcame sin. No, He was exactly like you and me, but He prayed with loud crying and tears.

He got up early in the morning and went to pray while we're sleeping and we say we didn't get victory over sin. He was exactly like us, but He took His life more seriously. He denied Himself certain things because He knew God was the most important thing for a human being on earth.

And for most of us, God is not the most important in our earthly life. There's something else which is more important. Well, no wonder we don't get victory over sin.

No wonder we don't prophesy. We think it's God's given somebody a gift. He'll give you that gift.

There's no partiality with Him. Certainly, there's no partiality in victory over sin. If there's another brother who can testify that I have finished with anger in my life.

If another brother can testify that I rejoice in the Lord always. I'm never depressed. I'm never in a bad mood.

What God has done for others, He can do for you. There's no partiality with God. All I want to say is this.

Let's get rid of the mask and let's stop blaming God saying He didn't give me this or He didn't give me that. Start taking the blame 100% yourself and say, I'm too lazy and that's why I don't get victory. I'm too lazy.

That's why I don't know the scriptures. I'm too lazy and that's why the church suffers when there should have been spiritual leaders in the church today. I've been sitting in this church for 10 years, 15 years and I've just been a passenger here because I've been a lazy person just coming here, receiving, receiving, receiving and never taking my responsibilities seriously except to sweep the floor and distribute the badges and distribute the food and things like that which are not the most important things in the church.

The most important things in the church are to have a prophetic word. It doesn't matter if we don't eat food. You know, I went for a conference of a denominational church some years ago where they had, I think it was a two or three day conference.

They asked me to go and speak there and they said to me, Brother Zach, this is a denominational church, some of those, but they were born again people. They were all born again people. Some of their leaders wore robes.

You know, they're priests, etc. But they were born again, all of them and they wanted me to speak to them because in a previous time they had this retreat once a year and in a previous three day retreat they spent the whole retreat reading my book, Living as Jesus Lived, to all their leaders. So the next time they wanted me to come myself and they said, Brother Zach, we want to tell you something.

During these three days, we fast. But, you know, you're a speaker so we don't ask you to fast. You can eat food and come and speak.

I said, certainly not. I can't speak to you if you do something which I don't do. I'm going to fast with you.

And, you know, we had a three day conference without eating anything. We drank. You could drink juice or coffee.

We drank water. But no eating, no food for three days. It was so blessed.

Shall we do that next year? Over here? I'm all for it. Imagine people whom we despise. Denomination of people.

We are CFC. We can learn a few lessons sitting at our feet. We tried that one day in one of the elders conferences, eating in there itself.

Some people were disturbed by the time it came to lunch time. They had to eat some bananas and bread and all that. It can't even go half a day.

And we said, no, God hasn't given me victory. God hasn't given me the gift of prophecy. That's not the reason, brother.

This kind does not go out without prayer and fasting, Jesus said. You've got to be more serious about your Christian life. Otherwise, demons have power over you.

And the demon will not go unless you pray and fast and show that you're serious about God in your life. Just like you'd be serious if your dear daughter or son was dying. Or your dear dad and mom was dying.

How would you pray then? You wouldn't need anybody to exhort you. You wouldn't need to read any book on prayer. Jesus never preached a sermon on prayer.

Did you know that? People ask me, why don't you preach on prayer? I said, Jesus only spoke once about prayer, and that is the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. That's all he said about prayer.

One or two parables, and that's all he said. He wasn't preaching sermons on prayer. He just prayed.

But today there are so many books written on prayer and examples. Dear brothers and sisters, a weak person will automatically pray. Why do you pray when your child is desperately sick and dying? Because you're helpless.

You're weak. Now if the doctor says to you, that's okay, your child is recovering. Tomorrow you can take him home.

You stop praying. Because now you're no longer helpless. You're okay.

The doctor has helped you. But if the doctor says, call the relatives. Time is over.

I give him only 48 hours to live. Then you start praying. Because you're weak now.

Even the doctor has given up hope. Prayer is dependent on how much you recognize your weakness. Jesus prayed with loud crying and tears.

The Holy Spirit will show you this inner life of Jesus. We read in 2 Corinthians 3. Let's turn back there. The Holy Spirit will show you the glory of Jesus.

And change you into that same likeness. Have you seen a little bit of the glory of Jesus today? What is the message for this time? That Jesus raised the dead. So, let's raise the dead.

I remember one brother in our church in CFC. Believe it or not, this happened in CFC. In one of the Wednesday meetings.

He had been watching a lot of Christian television. And all these preachers who talk about raising the dead and healing the sick and all. And he got up in the church.

Wednesday meeting. And said, you know, we should have faith for raising the dead. And I told him, brother.

I told him after the meeting. I said, brother, first clear your debts. Then we will go to raising the dead.

That is a PhD stuff. Let's deal with the kindergarten stuff first. You are so much in debt.

D-E-B-T Not D-E-A-T-X. That we can wait. Debt.

Let's clear our debts. The delusion that is in Christendom today. And people sit in CFC for 20 years and are fooled by that delusion.

It proves that they have not respected the word of God that they have heard. They have not respected the leadership in the church. And so they live defeated, deluded lives.

They have no respect for God's word that they hear. They have no respect for the leaders who have set an example for them. And what is the end result? Lives are wasted.

Don't be like that, dear brothers and sisters. You young people who have got a life ahead of you. Make use of your life.

Make sure your life counts for God. And don't be ashamed of the church in which you heard so many truths. I have seen another thing.

People have grown up in this church and received so much in this church. And grown up and their entire foundation is from the church. They go away somewhere.

They become a little spiritual and they are not grateful for all that they have heard. They are almost ashamed to acknowledge where they got all that truth from. Do you think God will honor such people? Not in a thousand years.

When we seek honor for ourselves. So here it says The Holy Spirit comes to change us. Once we see the glory of Jesus.

He will change us into that likeness. Now the important thing I want you to see here is the next verse. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 verse 1. Therefore since we have this ministry.

Ministry is a great word in Christendom today. Ministry. Brother I am engaged in ministry.

Ministry. Why aren't you engaged in ministry? What does Paul say his ministry is? In plain simple English he says the Holy Spirit shows us the glory of Jesus and changes us into that same likeness and he calls this my ministry. What was his ministry? His ministry was looking into the face of Jesus.

Seeing that glory and being changed into that likeness and going around and showing other people the glory of Jesus and getting people changed into that likeness. That is Paul's ministry. And I want that to be my ministry till the end of my life.

I want to see the glory of Jesus and become like that and I want to show that glory of Jesus to other people and get them to be like him. That is Paul's ministry and that's going to be my ministry. And I'm not bothered with all these television preachers and all the other preachers today talk about ministry.

Don't be fooled. A lot of people talk about evangelism. I say great.

I'm all for evangelism. If you're going to show people the glory of Jesus and make them like Jesus. But what do we see in today's evangelism? Somebody's asked to say, say Lord Jesus come into my heart.

He's still yelling and shouting at his wife every day for the next 20 years. He still loves money. He lives for the world.

He's interested in himself. What type of convert is that? That's not evangelism. That's a shameful way of doing evangelism.

But many people say, Brother, why aren't you doing evangelism? I don't want to do that third-rate type of evangelism. I want to make a person a thorough, proper convert. This is my ministry.

Seeing the glory of Jesus, becoming like that through the Holy Spirit, showing that glory to others and getting them to be like him. I want to ask you, how many of these so-called evangelists are making other people like Jesus? Tell me. How many of their converts are even told to become like Jesus, to be free from the love of money, to love all their enemies, to pray with loud crying and tears to overcome sin? Have you ever heard the gospel preached like this? No! Because the devil has fooled people.

Now let me read further. We don't lose heart. We don't, I say this, I don't get, I don't lose heart even though everybody accuses me of not doing evangelism.

I don't give up. I'm not bothered what they say because I know God. I don't lose heart.

We have renounced the things hidden because of shame. He says, I don't have a mosque now. I don't have to hide anything in my life.

My life is open. I'm not like these other preachers who are going to hide certain things, who send out prayer letters when they really want money. Isn't that a deception? To say it's a prayer letter when it's a begging letter for money? There are millions of prayer letters going out like that today.

That's dishonesty. He says, we have renounced all those hidden things. We are not walking in craftiness, adulterating the word of God.

We refuse to wear masks and play games. Message Bible says, we don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. We don't twist God's word to suit ourselves.

But we keep everything we do and say out in the open so that people can see and judge for themselves that we are living in the presence of God. That's how we must live. Everything in my life is out in the open.

You can come and look at my bank account. You can come and live with me and see how I speak to my wife 365 days of the year. You can come and see how I bring up my children.

You can see how I run my house. You can come and listen to what type of music I listen to in my house. You can come and see everything.

There's nothing hidden. Do you have things to hide in your life? Things that are hidden because of shame? There's a mask. You don't want people to come into your house and see what all goes on there? Well, but then that's because you're the fruit of some third rate evangelism.

This is first rate evangelism where we see the glory of Jesus and the Holy Spirit makes us like that and we go around showing that glory to others and making them like that and we're not content until they have become like that. You know what Paul said to the Galatians? I don't have time to show it to you. He said in Galatians 4, I'm like a mother, you know, wanting to give birth.

I'm in labor and travail until Christ is formed in you. Not until you say Lord Jesus come into my heart. No.

I'm in labor and travail. He says until Christ is formed in you. Galatians 4.19. I'm in labor.

Do you understand what a mother goes through when she's in labor? She's in such agony. I've heard women say when they're delivering a baby, I wish I could die. The pain is so great.

I don't think any of us men will ever understand it. And Paul says, there's a spiritual labor I'm going through. An agony.

Because you Galatian Christians, you have taken up with rules and regulations. I came there and I started you off in a life in the spirit, but you started in the spirit and you ended up following rules and regulations. You've become legalists of the first order.

I started you off on the new covenant and you switched back to the old covenant. I'm in labor now. Until Christ is formed in you.

Not until you say the magic words, Lord Jesus come into my heart. Okay, finished with you. Let's go to the next person.

No. He says, I'm in labor until Christ is formed in you. That is what he calls in 2 Corinthians 4.1, his ministry.

Read the Bible carefully and you'll see there's a lot of difference between the way the apostles did their ministry and what's called ministry in the world today. Let's turn back to 2 Corinthians 4. And it says here in verse 3, 2 Corinthians 4.3 If our gospel is hidden, you know this gospel that you've been listening to for the last 45 minutes. This gospel of the glory of Christ.

If it is hidden, and I tell you it is hidden from the vast majority of people who call themselves believers today. It is hidden. It is hidden to those who are perishing.

Those who are happy to live in their sin. Those who are happy to keep on watching internet pornography. Those who are happy to keep on watching filthy movies.

Those who are still happy to keep on getting angry day after day. Those who are happy to keep on lusting and be anxious and fearful and jealous and bitter. Those who are happy to be backbiting and gossiping and come and sit in CFC.

They are perishing. Well, to those who are in that type of life, this gospel is hidden. Oh, brother's act is so extreme.

It's because it's hidden. Brother, this is the real gospel. But it's hidden from you because sin is so precious to you.

You love your sin. Then this gospel will be hidden. The God of this world, Satan, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe this message.

Which message? That we can see the glory of Jesus and become like him. That the Holy Spirit has come to conform us to the likeness of Christ. That God predestined us before the worlds were created that we should be conformed to the image of his son.

Because he wants to populate heaven with younger brothers of Jesus Christ. And he blinds people. Now, this is the most important part you got to see about this verse.

What does he blind people to? Not that they are going to hell. No. That they might not see the light of which gospel? The gospel of the glory of Christ.

Have you heard the gospel of the glory of Christ? Who prayed with loud crying and tears so that he might not sin? Who loved all his enemies? Who blessed all who cursed him? Who did not love money even, even this much? That's the glory of Christ. Have you heard that gospel? Has the Holy Spirit shown you that Jesus did not love money even this much? And is he making you more and more like that? Can you say that you are more free from the love of money today than you were one year ago? I can say that. I'm not boasting.

I'm telling you the Holy Spirit has shown me the glory of Jesus in this area, that Jesus did not love money one atom. I haven't come there yet. I'll tell you honestly, I haven't come there yet.

But it's a long way from where I was 30 years ago, 20 years ago, 10 years ago, 5 years ago, even 1 year ago. Even 6 months ago. Jesus did not even have the slightest smell of lust in his eyes or his mind against women.

He's looked at women with total, total purity and compassion. Longing that they will become like God the Father. Longing that they'll become like Jesus.

Do you look at women that way? If not, you have not become like Jesus. But are you passionate to become like him? This is the ministry we have in this church and this is the need of the hour. The need of the minute.

We are approaching the second coming of Christ. You better hurry up, brother. There's not much time left.

This gospel of the glory of Christ. Not the gospel of going to heaven. That gospel of going to heaven is not found in the scriptures.

The gospel in the scriptures is the gospel of the glory of Christ. It's very clear that we might gain the glory of Christ, it says in Thessalonians. Here is the gospel of the glory of Christ.

But if you want to preach that gospel, listen to this. Elder brothers, all elder brothers, there's a word for you here. Because you preach in your churches.

If you want to preach that gospel, you have to stop preaching yourself. A lot of preachers are preaching themselves. They're trying to show what great preachers they are.

You can never show the glory of Christ if your aim is to convince your congregation that you're a better preacher than X, Y, or Z. Or if your aim is to show that you are an anointed speaker, or you get up and speak and you feel, oh God, use me mightily. Brother, you will never show the glory of Christ. Your whole aim is to show that you are some type of prophet, some self appointed prophet.

A lot of people like that, who get up and try to, there are people who in the olden days try to imitate me, and I used to have to rebuke them. I say God wants only one Zachariah. Please, please.

He doesn't want another. He wants you to be you. He doesn't want you to have my ministry, and I don't want your ministry either.

I don't want Mother Teresa's ministry. I want my own. You must want your own.

God's made you unique to be yourself. Don't imitate anyone. Don't preach yourself.

He says, Paul says, I don't preach myself. We preach Christ Jesus as Lord, and you can never preach Christ Jesus as Lord unless you preach the second part, we are slaves for Jesus' sake. We are your slaves for Jesus' sake.

I believe, let me say this, one of the sad things I have seen in some of our churches, we have elder brothers who are not willing to be the slaves of their congregation. Then they can never preach Jesus Christ as Lord. They want to be masters.

They want to show that I'm bigger than you. I'm better than you. You've got to submit to me.

Their favorite verse is, submit to the elders. You know what I've said in CFC? You don't have to submit to me. I'm nobody.

I've even said in CFC, I'm not your elder, unless you want me to be your elder. If you don't have confidence in me, I don't want to be elder. I have absolutely zero lust to be anybody's elder.

I want to help people if they want help. But beyond that, I have no desire to be elder brother or be called by some special title or get some honor from anybody, not even from a young brother. Do you desire honor in your church? No wonder people are not seeing Jesus Christ as Lord.

If you want to preach Jesus as Lord, I'll tell you, preach this other part of it. Yourself as a servant of theirs, as a bond slave of theirs for Jesus' sake. Ask yourself whether you behave towards your congregation as a servant seeing to clean up their mess.

Have you ever heard a servant yelling and shouting at his master? Have you ever heard it? I mean in some rebellious factory you may hear it when they go on strike. But a good servant will never yell and shout at his master. But the way some elders yell and rebuke their congregations, not in the spirit of Christ.

Jesus did rebuke, but it was in a different spirit. But very often it is a different spirit with which many elders preach. Let me encourage you.

Preach Christ Jesus as Lord. I believe then the glory of Christ will be seen much more in our churches. We shall enter the new covenant ministry ourselves and lead the whole church into a ministry of the new covenant.

This is the greatest need. The devil has blinded people from seeing this new covenant gospel of the glory of Christ. And we've got to come back to that.

Let's pray. Let's bow our heads before God and let me say what I said yesterday. Call upon the Lord when He is near and repent of that specific thing which God has spoken to you.

Ask God to give you light on the glory of Christ and where you are unlike Him. Heavenly Father, help us to honor you, to live for your glory, and we pray that throughout the rest of this conference we shall have the heavens open over us and we shall see the glory of Christ. We shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, be drawn to you to become more like you.

We want to really turn all our hearts to you and follow you the rest of our days. Pray in Jesus' name.

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