

(The Law of the Holy Spirit) God's House - a Three Story Building

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the foundational truth of God's love and the importance of living a surrendered, humble life to build a godly home and personal walk with God.

Duration: 49:09

Scripture: Proverbs 22:15, Matthew 5:9, John 17:23, Acts 2:42, Romans 8:1, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 3:14, Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 3:7, 1 John 4:18

Topics: "Law Of The Holy Spirit", "Building the Church", "God's Love"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of building a godly life, home, and church, illustrating that the foundation of our lives must be rooted in the understanding of God's immense love for us, akin to how He loves Jesus. He shares personal experiences of overcoming feelings of inferiority and the necessity of surrendering every aspect of our lives to God to prevent the devil from gaining a foothold. Poonen stresses that a strong personal relationship with God and a loving home environment are essential before one can effectively contribute to the church. He encourages believers to focus on building a community of faith that reflects unity and love, rather than merely individual holiness. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to the church as the body of Christ, where believers work together in harmony to fulfill God's purpose.

Transcript

Great joy for me to be here in these last, I think it's the eighth time I've come. It's always been a tremendous blessing to fellowship and see the opportunity God has given here through this church to reach so many people from this part of the United States. I was told that there are 17 states, people from 17 states who are here.

What an opportunity to spread the gospel. And I've been so challenged to see so many hungry hearts from different places who come at such expense and inconvenience only to hear God's word. There's been nothing else here this weekend, no entertainment.

It's only been God's word. So we praise the Lord and I pray that there'll be fruit from it that lasts for eternity. Personally, I, in India, we are the recipients of the blessing that has come in past centuries, at least for 200 years, from missionaries that have come from the United States, many Western lands,

England, Australia.

And now, of course, missionaries are not allowed to come to India. But in the years when they were allowed, there are, we have had the history of some godly men and women who've come in the 19th and early 20th century who've had a lasting impact on our country and have brought many people to Christ. So, when I come here, it's just payback time.

Repay the blessing that we have received through the years from your forefathers. So, we praise the Lord that God, that God, there is no respect of persons. And we are all one in the body of Christ and we are here to bless one another.

God is never in debt. If America has blessed India in past centuries, God will make sure that India blesses America too. Because He'll never be in debt to anybody.

And He's no respecter of persons. I was thinking of one verse that we could think of today, and that's God's ultimate purpose. In God's work on earth, we thought of the law of the Holy Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus.

Ultimately, the Holy Spirit is not just making individual Christians who are godly. He wants them to build homes that are godly. He spoke a little bit about that.

During the last 35 years in our work in India, we've emphasized four things. The foundation of our life as God's perfect love for us, where every person is valuable to God. Nobody needs live with an inferiority complex.

I have met so many Christians who have feelings of inferiority. And I know what that means because God allowed me to go through that in my younger days. I always felt so inferior because I was not a capable speaker.

I never took part in any public speaking in school or college or any such thing. I was not very tall. I was short and I felt very inferior until God filled me with the Holy Spirit.

Then I became a different person. So I know what it is to feel inferior. And when you feel inferior to others, a lot of Christians, if you really ask them to be honest with you, they'll say we feel inferior.

And the great danger of feeling inferior is, I know from my own experience, I'm not throwing stones at anybody. I'm giving you my testimony. The great danger is we will always try to impress people with what we do because we want to impress people that I'm somebody.

And that's the most damaging thing for your Christian life. When you try to impress people, God doesn't want you to impress anyone. I remember in the early years when I started preaching, my main aim was to impress people with my preaching.

Till God spoke to me and said, what do you want to do? Do you want to impress people or you want to help them? When you preach, I said, Lord, I want to help them. Then he said, stop trying to impress them. I said, okay, I'll try.

And it was not easy because we always have a desire to impress. Even when I prayed in public, I wasn't praying to God. I was praying to impress people who were listening to me.

Haven't you found that? That when you pray in public, you're very conscious of what sort of, what are they thinking of my prayer? And if somebody says an amen or a hallelujah, you get a bit excited. And if nobody says amen or hallelujah, I say, what's wrong with my prayer? And you say something to make somebody say an amen or a hallelujah. I'm confessing my sins, that's all.

But I got light on it. That's a wonderful thing. I used to go home and judge myself and I said, Lord, I wasn't praying to you.

I was just going through a drama there. Saying I was praying to you, but I was more concerned. And I judged myself.

I said, Lord, I don't want it to be like that. Little by little by little, as I peeled off this onion that had many layers of seeking the honor of men, gradually, the onion became thinner and thinner and thinner and thinner and thinner till I could pray in public and it didn't make a slightest difference to anybody said an amen or a hallelujah or whether they were asleep. I was praying to God, but it took time.

It's a wonderful thing to live before God's face and seek with all your heart to be free from trying to impress people. Find your security in one thing. God, your father loves you immensely, far more than you think.

Beyond our asking and our thinking, he loves you exactly like he loved Jesus, his son. Do you know how he loved Jesus, his son? Amazing. He wouldn't allow a storm to drown him in the lake.

Once we read about two, three hundred people carried him to the top of a cliff to throw him down. They couldn't kill him. How the father cared for him.

Herod sent his soldiers to kill him when he was a little baby. The father took him away somewhere else. Imagine having a father who would care for you like that.

That's the thing that comforted me. The greatest truth that changed my life. If you ask me, what is the most important truth in this book? I'll tell you in one sentence.

God loves me as he loved Jesus. That is the greatest truth in this book. And if you don't understand that as the greatest truth in this book, I'd say you haven't read the Bible.

So many Christians major on other things. I believe in women wailing their head, but that's not the greatest doctrine in this book. I believe in speaking in tongues.

That's not the greatest doctrine in this book. The greatest teaching in this book is that God loves me as he loved Jesus Christ. And so I will major on that all my life.

I decided when I started teaching God's word that I would place great emphasis in my teaching on the things that the Bible speaks much about. And the things that the Bible speaks very little about, I would speak, but I would speak very little on those subjects. And the matters on which the Bible is silent.

I will give my opinion and give other people freedom to have their view on that subject. That is the correct way of balanced teaching of God's word. And it's through studying God's word that I discovered that the most important teaching in this book is that God loves me as he loved Jesus.

Provided when you know that verse is in John 17 23. He loves me as he loved Jesus, but it was spoken in relation to disciples who had surrendered everything to him. So that you can claim that promise only if you

have surrendered everything to Jesus.

The reason why so many of us suffer is because there's some part of our life not yielded. I mean, if you've got an umbrella, a really big umbrella, I mean, it's pouring rain, you won't get wet. But if you put one hand outside that umbrella, that hand gets wet.

But if you're completely under this big umbrella, you you don't get wet at all. To me, it's like that. When I'm completely surrendered to Jesus, every part of my life, the devil can't touch one fingernail of mine.

Why does the devil? Why is the devil able to touch certain areas in your life? I don't believe he can even touch my finances. He can't touch my children. He can't touch my home.

He can touch nothing because it's all under the umbrella. But if you have got, you know, like I was saying earlier, some Christians have got private ambitions, which they secretly feel is not in the will of God. Well, that's the thing which the devil will be able to touch in your life.

The rooms in your heart that you don't yield to Jesus are the rooms, whether you know it or not, the devil will occupy. You're not stronger than the devil. And he does not knock and say, can I come in? He just walks in.

And but he cannot walk into a room occupied by Jesus Christ. There's no area that you have surrendered to Christ where the devil can touch you. You surrender your finances to God.

I did that years ago. The devil has never been able to touch my finances. Never.

My wife and I have never starved, even in days of deep poverty. 71 years, I've never been in debt for a single day of my life to anybody. I don't owe anybody any money.

Never did. Because my finances were surrendered to God ages ago. I got victory over getting angry.

I can live with my wife 365 days of the year without raising my voice once because I surrendered my tongue to Jesus years ago. It's that which you don't surrender, which the devil takes possession of. Why do you want the devil to take possession of it? God loves you as he loved Jesus.

Every area of his life, he wants to transform. Why do you feel that God will mess up your life? He won't mess up your life. He loves you more than your parents, more than your wife, more than your husband, more than anybody in the whole universe.

That's the foundational truth. The number one truth on which we must rest our life. It's like the foundation of a house.

And on top of that house, we have three floors. I told you there are four things we teach. Number one is the foundation and then the three floors.

The first floor is my personal walk with God. I said, that's the thing you've got to start with. Once you laid the foundation, God loves me as he loved Jesus and the foundation is solid.

I'm going to build on that. Everything in my life, I'm going to build on this. I'm not going to lay a foundation here and go and build over there.

That's what some Christians do. Some problem comes in their life and then they forget about this foundation that God loves me as he loved Jesus and they go build somewhere else and they get into confusion. Everything in my life, I'm going to found on this foundation, build on this foundation.

God loves me as he loved Jesus and therefore he knows what's best for me. And in my personal walk with God, most important, only two things I say. Always keep a good conscience and always humble yourself.

Always. Don't wait to remove a prick of your conscience, even five minutes. You will slip up because like children learn to walk.

No child learns to walk from the day it comes out of his mother's womb. It takes about two years for it to be steady on its feet. But they start walking when they're 10 months, 11 months, they're walking.

And God is excited when he sees his children not falling into sin, walking. That doesn't mean we never fall. You can be 60 years old and fall outside today.

But you have learned to walk. Falling is very occasional. That should be, that is how it should be in a mature Christian.

You may fall, but it'll be very rare. But you've learned to walk. Keep a clear conscience.

As soon as you're aware that you hurt God or hurt somebody else, set it right. The last verse of Psalm 139 in the living Bible reads like this. Lord, point out anything in my life that makes you sad.

I was so gripped by that verse. Once I printed it out on a card and gave it to everybody in our church. I said, keep this in front of you.

Look at it every day. Lord, point out anything in my life that makes you sad. There are a few things like this that have gripped me, which I sometimes keep in front of my table for many years till it sinks into my head that I don't need it on the table anymore.

One was this. Lord, point out anything in my life, not that makes you angry. He's not angry with me.

That makes you sad. I'm not afraid of God. I'm not afraid that God will hurt me.

I'm afraid that I will hurt God. That's the fear of God I have. The two types of fear of God.

One is the fear that God will hurt me. I have zero fear of that. The other is the fear that I may hurt God.

And I live in that fear every day. Lord, point out anything in my life, which other people may not know, that makes you sad. As you look at me, you feel sad about that one area.

I say, Lord, I want to make you happy. I'm going to get rid of it. I'm going to confess it.

Do I have to humble myself, go and ask somebody's forgiveness? I'll do it immediately. Many years ago, I went to a bank to get a check. And they asked me to come in the evening, four o'clock, and I went.

It was not ready. So I got a little upset with the bank manager and said something rude to him. What I said was, the previous bank manager was more efficient than you.

And I walked. He told me to come back at six. As I went out of the bank, the Lord said to me, go back, apologize.

And don't apologize to him privately, publicly, like you spoke to him. I went back. I turned around.

I said, Sir, I'm sorry for what I said. I shouldn't have spoken like that. I'm glad I pulled out that thorn immediately.

It would have festered in my heart if I'd kept it there. The thing is, if I'd postponed it for a few years, that guy would have gone away somewhere. I'd never meet him for the rest of my life.

I remember once I had to correct a young brother in our church for something, which I thought he did, something to do with the equipment or something. Afterwards, I discovered that it wasn't his fault. And I'd spoken to him a bit strongly.

A young chap, younger than my youngest son. The Lord said, go and apologize to him. I went to him.

I put my arm around him. I said, I'm really sorry for speaking to you like that. Forgive me.

I pulled out that thorn. What did I lose? Nothing. What did I gain? A healthy heart.

Never hesitate to apologize to your wife. I said, Lord, even if it's a lot of beggars and tramps in India, I said, Lord, if I've spoken rudely to a beggar, I'll run after him and say, hey, forgive me. I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you.

Humble yourself always. It's the way to glory. It's the way Jesus walked all his earthly days.

And we have the tremendous privilege of putting our feet in the footsteps of Jesus. Keep a good conscience. Humble yourself.

When people speak evil of you, don't speak back. If people harm you, don't defend yourself. Leave it to God.

As a servant of God, the devil is furious with me. He's got a lot of agents who have tried to attack me and my family in so many ways. That's to be expected.

In fact, I want to be the one whom the devil hates the most on the earth. Isn't that a good ambition to have? I said, Lord, I want to be so devoted to you. The devil hates me right from his guts.

He hates me. But he won't be able to harm me. I'm not scared of the devil.

Because he was defeated on the cross. Every demon was defeated on the cross. I've sometimes had to, a number of times had to deal with demon possessed people and cast them out.

Sometimes they're fierce and they try to scare me. And I just to refresh my own faith, I asked myself, did this demon escape on Calvary? No, he didn't. He was defeated too.

Then I can rebuke him in Jesus name and tell him to get out. And he goes. So many people have tried to attack me, but they've never been able to harm me.

Because everything works for good. So I just humble myself and keep quiet. I say, I have nothing to say.

I remember once a man was so upset with me with some discipline I had to do with the brother. And somebody else got so upset and he heard about it. He phoned me up and began to yell at me on the phone.

He didn't know all the facts. I could have put the phone down and been rude to him. But I held the phone close.

I said, I've got to hear this man because he's really cursing me. You got to keep the phone close to you when somebody's cursing you. Listen to what he's saying.

He went on for a long time. I never said a word. He was a believer.

I said, brother, have you finished? He said, yes. Okay, God bless you. Put the phone down.

Six months later, I get a letter from him. Brother Zach, I'm so sorry. I never knew all the facts of the situation.

Now I understood the whole situation. Please forgive me for what I did. I said, I forgive you long ago.

What would I have gained by arguing with him? Humble yourself. Always go down. Keep quiet.

There are situations where when people have tried to harm me, God has asked me, do you want me to deal with him? You'll deal with him yourself. I said, no, Lord, you deal with him. It's far better.

And I tell you, God does deal with them because there's a verse in the Bible, which says, vengeance is mine. Romans 12. What's the rest of the verse? Say that again.

I might repay. What do you say? Will don't change it to I might repay him if I feel like it. Vengeance is mine.

I will repay leave it to him. I don't desire vengeance. But God says he'll repay him.

What can I do? I don't pull God's hand and say, don't do it. That'll be fighting against God. Some people have asked me this question about second Timothy four.

Paul says, Alexander, the coppersmith has done me much harm. You know, the rest of the verse, the Lord will repay him. He asked me, why does Paul speak like that? Is he upset with Alexander? No, he's just saying, I'm not going to do anything to him.

God says he'll repay him. I'm not going to hold God's hand back. I don't fight against God.

He says he'll repay him. Let him repay him. So don't fight with people.

Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, I would fight. All those who fight with human beings, their kingdom is of this world.

Do you fight with your wife? That's because your kingdom is of this world. Whether you know it or not, you fight with your neighbors. You fight with your husband.

Your kingdom is of this world. Read John chapter 18, verse 36. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight.

John 18, 36. If it were not because my kingdom is not of this world, my servants don't fight. And that's what the Lord showed me.

And the other verses, Ephesians 6, 12. We wrestle not with human beings. But we wrestle with demons and forces of darkness.

Do you know in the Old Testament, the verse was, we do wrestle with human beings. And we don't wrestle with demons. That's the Old Testament.

Show me one example in the Old Testament where people wrestled with demons. Not even one. Not even Daniel.

Some people think Daniel wrestled with demons for three weeks. Read the Bible carefully. He was only praying.

Michael fought with the demons. The archangel. The first person to fight with demons was Jesus Christ in the whole Bible.

Everyone before that fought with Philistines, Amorites. All the things there are. There are many things in Christendom also today.

Don't fight with them. We wrestle not with human beings. We wrestle with demons.

Ephesians 6, 12. The Lord said to me, if you want to overcome Satan, make one decision in your life that you'll never fight with a human being for the rest of your life. I decided that long ago.

I will not fight with people. If they cheat me, I let God deal with them. And I say, Lord, I will not argue.

People sometimes come to argue with me about some doctrine. And as soon as I see them getting hot under the collar, I change the subject. So let's talk about something else.

I'm not here to fight with human beings. And therefore, it is I'm able to concentrate all my guns on the devil and demons. And through the years, it's delivered me completely from all fear of demons.

And what the Lord has said to me is, as there was a time when you were afraid of the devil, now the devil will be afraid of you. I believe with all my heart that Satan is afraid of me. That may not be true in your life.

But that's only because you have not surrendered everything to Christ. One or because you fight with human beings, your neighbor, your wife, other people in the church. Well, the devil won't be afraid of you.

But you take a decision once in your life that you're going to completely stop fighting with human beings and that your kingdom is not in this world. I tell you, the devil will be scared of you. He will.

Because the Bible says in 1 John 4, 18, as Jesus is, so are we in this world. Have you read that verse? As Jesus is to 1 John 4, 18. So am I in this world.

How did Jesus live on the earth? Was he scared of Satan? Or Satan going to attack me next? You know, like some so-called super spiritual Christians are always rebuking the devil. Get away, Satan. Get away, Satan.

Was Jesus saying that all the time? Get away, Satan. He said that twice in his life. Once in the temptation in the wilderness, the other time when he spoke to Peter.

He wasn't preoccupied with Satan. There are some believers who they're always preoccupied with the devil, particularly among certain charismatic groups. That you see the devil here, devil here.

I see God everywhere. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. When my heart is pure, I see God everywhere.

I see God in a Judas Iscariot who comes to betray me. And I'd say like Jesus, the cup which my heavenly father has given me, shall I not drink it? So what if he sends it through a postman named Judas Iscariot, whose face I don't like? Doesn't matter. The cup came from the father.

Do you reject a letter from your beloved because you didn't like the postman's face? How foolish. Never mind if the postman looks ugly or fierce. Who sent the letter? The cup which my father has given me, shall I not drink it? It changes your whole life when you see God.

Blessed are the pure in heart, they will see God everywhere. They'll see God in the things he permits in their life. And those who are not pure in heart, they'll see the devil.

They'll see human beings. They'll take out their sword to cut off people's ears. They'll use their tongue to speak evil of others.

They haven't seen God. Their God is a teeny weeny helpless God who can't help them. My God is the ruler of heaven and earth.

He controls the whole universe. Nothing happens to me outside of God's permission. There may be some things that can happen next year.

I don't know, but it won't take my father by surprise. He's already prepared for it. So that's my personal walk with God.

On top of that is the second floor. That's my home. It's been very important for me.

My home is more important to me than my ministry, believe it or not. I've always kept that position in all the 43 years I've been married. My relationship with my wife and my children is more important to me than my ministry.

I have this order in my life. Jesus Christ first, my home second, my ministry third. Jesus Christ and my ministry are different.

Christ will always be first in my life. I wanted to marry a girl who did not love me more than she loved Christ. That wouldn't be a good wife.

You know, all these people who sing, think, oh, you're the world to me. Well, my wife is not all the world to me. Jesus Christ is all the world to me.

My wife is second. And I wanted her to be like that. I wanted to marry a girl like that too.

And my wife is second even today. She'll never be first in my life. And I hope I will never be first in her life.

My children are not first in my life. My children are third. The Lord Jesus, then my wife, and then my children.

I don't love my children more than I love my wife. That'd be contrary to scripture. In India, even among Christians, it is true that many fathers love their children more than they love their wives.

That's a tragedy of many homes. All these divorces that take place. They fight for the children.

They don't care about the wife or husband. It's a tragedy of Christendom today because they have not been taught, put Christ first. And Christ is first.

Husband and wife will be very close to each other because Christ is in the middle. You'll love your wife much better when Christ is first in your life. He's like the glue that holds you together with your wife and husband.

You fight with your wife. I'll tell you why. Because Christ is not first in your life.

You fight with your husband because Christ is not first in your life. Something else. And most of the things that husbands and wives fight about is earthly things which won't matter 2000 years from now.

Your home relationship is very, very important. It's the second floor. Your ministry is useless if you can't live properly with your wife.

Not only your ministry, it says even your prayers will not be heard. 1 Peter 3, 7 says, you husbands, if you don't live in an understanding way with your wife, recognizing that she's a weaker vessel, you can pray as much as you like. Your prayers will not be heard.

You understand now why so many prayers you pray never get answered? You're not living in a proper way with your marriage partner. You want to bring up your children. If you want to bring up your children properly, the most important thing you can do to bring up your children properly is love your wife.

So your home relationship, we have stressed that in our church for 35 years. Not everybody has listened to us. Oh, that's a sad thing.

Don't think that everybody who listens to me in CFC for 35 years are following it. I see their lives. I see their homes.

I see they haven't listened to me. They thought they are cleverer and wiser. They messed up their life because they don't listen to God's word.

And then once you love your wife, it's fundamentally important to bring up every one of your children in the fear of God. And you got to start when they are one year old. Don't wait.

Don't wait. They understand obedience when they are one year old. And you must teach them, you got to listen to daddy and mommy.

You got to obey daddy and mommy. And we have been very strict with that. And if you are strict with them up to the time they are get to their teenage years, then when they become teenagers, you won't need to discipline them so much.

Then you seek to win their heart. I was very strict with all of my four boys when they were young. I believed in the old fashioned biblical teaching that the way to get foolishness out of the heart is via the bottom.

There's some inward connection there. I don't know how it works, but that's how it is. It's in the Bible, by the way.

It's not my, it's not an original with me. Proverbs 22, it says, foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him. Amazing verse.

Do you know that's why God has put a little extra muscle and the flesh at the bottom so they don't get hurt. Don't beat them on their legs and all is not enough flesh there. There's a reason why God's put a little flesh there on the backside.

God is wise. Proverbs 22, 15. That was by the way, foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

So that's the way we brought them up. I don't regret it. And my, but I'll tell you honestly, sometimes I did it in anger.

Not sometimes, a number of times. And I was aware that I was angry. And every time I did that, I would rush to the restroom in my house, lock myself up and weep before God.

Say, Lord, I'm sorry. The discipline was right. The anger was wrong.

Help me to overcome my anger so that I can come to the place in my life where I discipline like you discipline your children without anger, with love. And little by little by little, I could come there because every time I slipped up, I confessed my sin to God. And after a while, my children detected it.

That dad would rush off to the restroom every time he spanked us. And gradually they discovered what I was doing. And then they respected me.

That I was a man who judged myself. When they grew up, I told them, I said, you never had a perfect father. I punished you sometimes in anger.

They knew that. But I say you had one thing you can be thankful. You had an honest father.

Who was honest about his failure. And whom God helped. And I said, remember that when you become fathers, you won't be perfect.

Today, all my four boys are fathers. They're not perfect. I said, be honest.

When you slip up, get before God and ask his forgiveness. So we have to bring up our children. When they grow up older, we have to win their heart.

I remember once when one of my boys deceived me about something. It wasn't very serious. It wasn't something sinful.

But he was selected to play for a particular sport, cricket, in his school team. And he wanted to go and play in that team that day and not go to his class. And he thought if he would ask me, I'd say, forget about the game.

Go and study in your class. I don't think I'd have said that. I said, go ahead and play.

I was not against my children playing games. But he was not sure. So he packed up his sports dress inside his school bag and went apparently to school.

I discovered it by the time he came back that he had fooled me. So he was 16 years old when he came home. I said, hey, we need to have a little talk now.

Let's go into the other room. And he knew I had discovered. And he came trembling into the other room.

I said, let's kneel down now. Let's pray. And I knelt down with him.

I put my arm around him. I prayed. I said, Heavenly Father, please tell me where did I go wrong as a father that my son should deceive me.

Help me to be a little better father in Jesus name. Amen. I said, OK, son, you can go.

I've got nothing more to say. Ten years later, he was speaking to the young people in our church. And he said, there's a side of my father that you people don't know about.

You only hear him as a strong prophet in the pulpit. He said, I'll tell you another side of him that you don't know. And he told the story.

And he said, that did more good to me than all the spankings I ever got. I want to say to you, fathers and mothers, do you seek to win the hearts of your children? That was my goal. My goal was not spanking them.

My goal was that they will grow up godly, that they will see me as a father who, if I failed, I was honest about it, but who strove to perfection, but who would be honest and who loved them, cared for them. And respected their dignity when they grew up to be teenagers. And not treat teenage children like three-year-olds.

The result is all four of my boys are serving the Lord today. They married God-fearing wives. They're seeking to bring up their children in the same godly ways.

And every one of them has said to me, Dad, you're our hero. Of course, I have to admit that I had the advantage. They had the advantage of a godly mother.

Who prayed for them. Who gave up her medical profession and never earned one cent as a doctor in 43 years. So that she could be a mother and only help poor people freely.

And I know my children recognize that because one of our boys, when he was in college here, he told one of his colleagues, the reason I've been protected in college is because my mother prays for me. Remember that, not my father. My mother prays for me.

You mothers, do you pray for your children? We pray for them regularly. We pray for our grandchildren now. We don't believe we can make it without God's help.

That's the second floor. Only then can I have a ministry. Because the Bible says, if you can't take care of a few children in your home, how can you take care of so many in God's home? So that is very important for me.

My home was more important than my ministry. And that's why the devil could not destroy my ministry. Because he's destroyed many people's ministry by destroying their home.

He's destroyed many homes by destroying their personal life. He's destroyed their personal life by getting rid of their foundation. They're insecure.

So the foundation, the first floor, the second floor, don't try to build the third floor before you've built the first and the second. And the third is the church. And that's also important for me.

Because the Holy Spirit's ultimate goal is not to produce a bunch of holy individuals floating around here and there. God is not... Jesus didn't say, I'll build a whole lot of holy individuals who float around here and there. He said, I'll build my church.

I'm going to get people who become one with each other. So I'm not interested in just producing holy people here and there. I'm interested in building local churches.

That's why I go primarily to places where people want to build local churches. Of people who come together and to be one with each other irrespective of language, community, culture, race, education, whatever it is. Barbarians and Greeks all together in one body in Christ.

That is the tremendous joy that we've seen in different places. And that's what I see in the acts of the apostles. I see that all the gifts that God gave, apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, teachers.

But ultimately it says to build the body, not to build holy individuals. Today we have a Christianity where some people do holy evangelism, bring people to Christ. You ask them 10 years later, where are these people whom you brought to Christ? I don't know, somewhere.

But if you ask Paul, where are these people you brought to Christ? He said, come, I'll show you. In the church in Copticism, in the church in Thessalonica, church here. And the second thing is some people say evangelism is not enough.

We must make people disciples, fine. So they preach deeper life, bring people to holiness, holiness. Okay, where are these holiness people? Where are these people who are living holy life? One over there, one over here, and two, three in this church.

Are they one with each other? No. What's the point of that? Jesus is not building holy people, He's building a church. So it's not enough to have a good personal life and a good family life.

Some people are happy with that. Oh, I'm living a godly life, I've got a good family. Brother, what about the third floor? Are you building the church? I want to build a church.

I spent the last 36 years building the church in different places, not building holy people. That's the ultimate purpose. Why do you make a good brick? In India, we make houses with bricks.

You don't make a good brick. You know, I don't know whether you know this, but in India, when we build a house, we build with bricks, not with wood. And so the truck will come along and bring 10,000 bricks here and dump it by the side of the road.

And then the mason takes the bricks and the cement and builds a house with it. Do you know the difference between 10,000 bricks and a house? A world of difference. And I'll tell you what happens in

India.

Let me tell you, if you keep those 10,000 bricks on the road, by tomorrow, it'll be 9,995. And a few days later, it'll be 9,000. It's amazing how these disappear in the middle of the night in India.

Other people are building their houses. Don't forget. And after a while, there'll be nothing there.

But if you build them into a building, nobody can steal even one brick. How's that? How is it nobody can steal a brick out of a building in the middle of the night? So when I hear a pastor saying, somebody has stolen my sheep. How in the world did he steal your sheep? How did he steal that brick? Because you never built a house with it.

You just pile them up on the roadside. Then you deserve your bricks to be stolen. I have never in my life complained that somebody stole my sheep or my believers from my church.

Never. I mean, there are some loose bricks that fall away. We don't want them in any case.

But we keep good bricks in our building and build a house with it. That's a church. A building of people who love one another, who care for one another, and who are a demonstration to the angels about how people who are so dissimilar can still be one.

Are you satisfied with just living a holy life? Are you satisfied just that you brought up your family well? Where is the church in your locality? What a selfish life it is. I'm living okay. My family is okay.

Let me tell you something that I discovered in 35 years of preaching the overcoming life. Holiness without fellowship with other believers is a deception. Any type of sanctification that does not build fellowship with other sanctified believers is a counterfeit.

You say, well, I go to this big mega church that so many 5,000 people there, great message. Is it a body? Or is it a pile of bricks? You know, in the medical colleges, they have a laboratory called anatomy laboratory. If you go to the anatomy laboratory of a medical college, you'll find a leg here, and a hand there, and a stomach here, and an eye over there, and a ear over there.

All the parts of the human body, but it's not a body. Many churches are like that. They don't function together.

It's a leg here, and a hand there, and eye here. They're all holy. A holy eye, and a holy leg, and a holy... They're not a body.

We don't want those type of individual holy believers. We want a body. I want a holy life.

I want a holy family. I want to raise up children who will carry on the message I preach to another generation. And I want them to train their children to raise them up for another generation if the Lord carries.

That's why God saves us. But then He wants to build a church of humble, God-fearing people who have the spirit of a servant to serve one another. That's why He appoints... That's why in the Acts of the Apostles, He appointed apostles.

Who were like elders to the elders. Who plant churches. That's the way it was in the Old Testament, in the Acts of the Apostles.

That's new covenant. There's a new covenant life, a new covenant family, and a new covenant church. And the gates of hell, the powers of darkness can never make this building topple.

I thank God that I have not only found the way to a godly life and a godly home, but I found a church which is a little bit of a foretaste of heaven on earth. I'm very thankful for that. And I pray that all of you will have such fellowships in your own locality.

Seek and you shall find. If you're passionate about this, you will get it. For 10 years, I longed to see local churches before I actually saw them.

God bless you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us each one to strive for your highest and your best, to see that the life of Jesus brings us not only to a godly life and a home, but also ultimately the whole purpose of the Holy Spirit to build the church of God.

Help us, we pray. In Jesus name, Amen.

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