

# The Light of God Is His Love

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of making Jesus our hero and understanding His love to inspire a passionate and committed Christian life.*

**Duration:** 1:01:58

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5

**Topics:** "Love Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of maintaining a constant and passionate devotion to God. He highlights that many people experience a temporary surge of enthusiasm during Christian meetings, but it quickly fades away. The key to remaining steadfast is understanding the intensity of God's love for us. The speaker encourages the audience to make Jesus their hero and to imitate his character and actions. He also emphasizes the need to walk in the love of God and to diligently seek Him, as He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

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## Transcript

I want to begin with one of my favorite verses for young people in the book of Lamentations, which is in, just after Jeremiah, Lamentations and chapter three. Lamentations, chapter three, and we want to turn to verse twenty-seven. Lamentations three, twenty-seven says, it's good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth.

If you can understand when you're young, what it means to bear the yoke of Jesus. That means to have that yoke kept on two bullocks, I have one end of it, and I walk with him exactly like he walked on this earth. You have to, first of all, be gripped by the fact that the most wonderful life that anyone ever lived on earth was the life of Jesus.

Now if you think somebody else's life is great, you know, someone who has become great in the world, then you won't be taken up with the eagerness to have the yoke of Jesus. But if you're convinced of one thing, as I am, that the best life anybody can ever live is the life Jesus lived. And you know like young people have heroes, they put pictures of their heroes on their walls, because they admire them.

Some have cricketers, some have musicians. They are their heroes. And you don't realize what a hero does to you.

You see these people who make rock stars, they're heroes. And they want to become famous and make money like them. Do you know what it does to them? Some of them become so mad, they even die at these rock festivals.

Can you imagine the intensity of their admiration for a hero? Imagine, my brothers and sisters, if from a young age, Jesus really became your hero. Like these people worship rock stars and cricketers and all types of sports players and athletes. If Jesus is your hero, that means you've, you know, like these young people are so gripped with someone, you're thinking of Jesus all the time.

Like they'll say, I wish I could play cricket like that person. Or if I could play music like that person, be so famous. Or if I could play the guitar like that person, or the keyboard like that person, or sing like that person.

And you say, if I could live like Jesus, with the same intensity. You know the hours of practice young people do to play cricket, to try and become some great cricketer, or play some musical instrument to become some great musician. Hours! Nobody ever becomes great cricketer, or great athlete, or great musician by just having a casual entrance for one hour once a week.

You will never be able to follow Jesus if you have an interest in Him for two hours a week on Sunday morning. I'm not saying that we have to think about Him all the time. We've got to do work, you've got school, college, work.

These people who have heroes in sports world or music world, also work. They earn their money. But they have a lot of spare time, in their spare time their mind goes back to their hero.

And if their hero is playing a game, that's the game they want to watch on television. If their hero is singing some music item in a concert, they'll go so far, spend so much money to watch that concert. And stand in a queue.

Can you think of some of these people who stand in queue here to get into the cricket stadium? Previous day they come and sleep. Can you imagine someone trying to be like that to get into a meeting to hear about Jesus? Sleep there the previous night to be able to get a chance to get in and listen to Jesus. Boy! Can you imagine what God will do with such a person who's got such an intensity? There are people who do that all types of things.

I mean in Bombay they used to sleep at least 24 hours earlier to get a ticket in the train. Particularly in the holiday season. Oh Lord! Give me that intensity.

That if I can see your face and be gripped by you, I'm willing to sleep overnight to get in the queue. Because if only very few people are going to get an opportunity, I want to be one of them. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

I want to tell you that. Remember that my young people, dear young people, all your life. There is no partiality with God.

What He did for others, He will do for you. And the most wonderful truth we have heard in the church, what He did for Jesus, He will do for you. But there was an intensity in Jesus' life.

An intensity of interest in the Father. The Father was His hero as a man. And Jesus must be our hero.

I don't know how to convey that. But it changed my life when I was a young man. I had a lot of other interests before I was converted.

Worldly interests. Not necessarily sinful. I didn't have a passion to go and commit sin so much as getting on in the world.

I mean I had all the lusts that everybody else had. But my desire was to get on in the world and I would work hard for it. And then one day I met Jesus.

It changed my life completely. My ambitions, my desires, my interest in the world and money and everything. Because I got a hero now.

A lot of young people are without a hero. And the devil fills that vacuum with someone in the world. Now if you make Jesus the hero of your life, you'll want to know.

I mean for example, think of, let's learn something from these worldly people. If they make a hero, they watch and watch how that cricketer bats or how that player plays basketball or how that musician plays the keyboard or a guitar. And they watch and try to imitate that person.

I mean there are people who comb their hair like their favorite heroes and dress like them. Can you think of the intensity of it? You become gradually like this hero you worship. And I tell you, there are very few Christians in the world who have Jesus as their hero to the same intensity as a lot of young people in the world worship music stars and sports persons.

Very few. There are a few I believe. Think of these missionaries who are willing to sacrifice money, health, everything to go out to some place only because they love Jesus.

What did they get out of it? In fact, some famous missionaries like Hudson Taylor and C.D. Studd and all we hear about, biographies written about them. But do you know, you may find in heaven some people in God's eyes who are greater than Hudson Taylor and C.D. Studd about whom nobody wrote a biography. But the Holy Spirit recorded it.

I don't even know their names. I believe there will be some people, maybe there are some Indian people who have gone up to North India and who have sacrificed and lived for God in sincerity. Why did they do it? Nobody wrote their biography.

They never got any money. They were not part of some western mission organization. They loved Jesus.

Jesus was their hero. And we are going to meet some of them in eternity. And we are going to compare notes about our life.

You and I are going to compare notes with those people. And they will tell us what they lived for. And every sentence they say will make us ashamed.

I mean, if we were non-Christians, knew nothing about Jesus, we won't be ashamed. We say, I never knew all this on earth. We are going to be ashamed because we knew.

We knew so much. We knew the same Jesus they knew. But our devotion to Christ was so weak and so many other interests on earth crowded it out.

You know, you can have a secular job and have a tremendous passion for Jesus. Most of these people who go to rock music concerts, they are not full-time musicians. 99% of them are in a secular job.

But along with their secular job, they have a tremendous passion for rock music. Can it be done? Sure. Most of these people who flock into cricket stadiums, crowd out there and spend so much money to get into a stadium, they are not full-time cricketers.

No. 99% of them are in a secular job. But cricket is a passion for them.

They know the score. They know the records. They know who is breaking a record.

They know the world record for this and world record for that. What about Christians? How well do they know the Bible? We wonder, why don't we see the days of the apostles? I'll tell you, when we have Christians with that type of intensity, like these rock music fanatics have for their musicians, we will see once again apostolic days. And I pray that we shall see that in our country.

For years and years and years, it's been the burden of my heart and of many of us here, at least some of us here, that India will see a revival that has to come through you young people. Don't despise yourself, my dear brothers and sisters. Don't say, well, I have failed so much.

You know, God picks up failures. There's a little booklet that's written in the second century. It's not part of the Bible.

I don't even know who wrote it. But it's called the Epistle of Barnabas. We don't know whether Barnabas wrote it or somebody else wrote it or somebody else called Barnabas, not the Barnabas in the Bible.

I don't know, but it's got some good things in it. One of the things it says there is, in order that God may show that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, He chose some of the worst sinners to be His greatest apostles. Yeah.

In order to show that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, God chose some of the worst sinners in the world to be His greatest apostles. I believe that. I don't know what all sins Paul committed in his younger days.

But he was not foolish enough to go and confess it all publicly. But he did say he was the chief of sinners. David was a man after God's own heart.

He says in Psalm 25, Oh Lord, don't remember the sins of my youth. Remember not the sins of my youth. It's not mentioned in scripture.

We thought David was a very pure young boy, but he was very conscious of a lot of sins in his youth. That's the boy God picked up. To be a man after his own heart.

God has never called any of you Satan. No. How would you feel if Jesus turned around at you and called you Satan? But he called Peter Satan.

And that man became the greatest apostle on the day of Pentecost. He did something so terrible that Jesus said, That Satan is speaking through you. Peter? Okay.

Another time he went and denied the Lord. I don't know Jesus. Oh, no, no, no, no.

I don't know Jesus. Three times. It's like if you went and said that you worshipped some other God, and you don't know Jesus.

Oh, no, no, no. I don't know Jesus. Three times you did that.

Imagine God picking you up and making you a great apostle. So when we make Jesus our hero, we find that he came for sinners. He would turn around to people who thought they were very holy.

And there are a lot of Christians today who think they're very holy. And he turns around to them and says, I didn't come for you, you fellas. I came for those who recognize they're sinners.

I remember once speaking to a nominal Christian couple after a meeting. I said, you know, you need to be saved, but you'll never be saved until you come to Jesus as sinner. The trouble with you is, I said, you're coming to Jesus as Christians.

Jesus didn't die for Christians. Do you know that? Do you know that Jesus did not die for Christians? He died for sinners. And you come to Jesus as a Christian, he'll never accept you.

No. He didn't die for Christians or Hindus or Muslims or Buddhists. He died for sinners.

And everyone who came to him as a sinner, even if it was the last minute before he died like a thief on the cross, even if he had murdered lots of people and stolen from lots of people and no opportunity to set it right, if he came as a sinner, he'd be forgiven. And he'd go to paradise. But I don't want to be saved at the last minute.

I'll tell you why. Because I'll have such regret in heaven. Imagine that thief on the cross.

What regret he'll have in heaven? Oh Lord, I'm here in heaven, but boy, I wish I had at least a few years to show my gratitude to you. That's what you and I have. You and I have the opportunity after we are saved to show our gratitude by a life of intense commitment, devotion, passion, fire, zeal for Jesus.

And then when we look at Jesus' life, say, what was it that made Jesus' life so passionate? He said, I always do the things that please the Father. Always. He never pleased himself.

He always wanted to please the Father. Now I want to tell you the secret of Jesus' life. He was sure of one thing.

And that was that the Father loved Him. You know, that was the great secret of His life. And you and I need to know that one truth more than any other truth.

The greatest truth in the whole Bible is this. Jesus loves me. God loves me.

As He loved Jesus. I want to say to you, my dear young people, you know, it's no use my telling you to be zealous and intense and all that. It'll last for a little while.

It'll be like a pep talk, you know, like football coaches and basketball coaches give people a pep talk just before they go for a game. Stir them up and put them in passion for that 90 minutes that they are playing. It's not like that.

For a lot of people, Christian meetings are like that. They go through 90 minutes of worship and listen to a message and go out all on fire. But it fizzles out.

It's all over. The only thing that'll keep you constant, constant, constant, constantly devoted is when you know the intensity of God's love for you. I think of this verse I want to show you in Psalm 86.

Psalm 86 and verse 5 Thou, O Lord, are good, ready to forgive, abundant in loving kindness to all who call upon Thee. Just think if you can believe this. Ready to forgive.

Good, ready to forgive and abundant in loving kindness. I saw the message translation says big hearted, large hearted to all who ask for help. You know, supposing you're in some financial need and you've seen from past experience that there are some large hearted brothers who won't ask you to repay your last loan but will help you another time and you'd rather go to them than to someone who asks you 25 questions Why do you want it? When are you going to repay it? Can you do this? Can you write it down and tell me how much? I don't know.

You'd be hesitant to go to them. But someone who's large hearted and ready to help. That's how God is.

Always ready to help those who ask for help. And if you can see God like this but you say if we preach like that don't you think people will take advantage of God? A lot of preachers think those thoughts and that's why they become legalistic preachers. How do I know? I was one of them myself.

I didn't go by scripture. I went by my reason. And my reason said if you keep on preaching that God is a big hearted God people will take advantage of Him.

Don't let that happen in your congregation. So I leaned upon my reason and preached what my reason told me instead of what scripture told me. It brought me into bondage.

It brought other people into bondage. And I know that's happening in many of our churches today. Oh, if we preach God is so large and ready to forgive people will take advantage.

I'll tell you something. I've learned not to lean on my own reason now. It took a long time.

But I've learned what scripture says. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Don't lean upon your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him. He will direct your paths. God says, now I've understood.

God says, I know some people will take advantage of me. But the Lord says, even if you preach me as a strict God people will still take advantage of me. So what difference does it make? You think in all the churches where people are preaching God as a very strict God people are not taking advantage.

Of course they are. The only difference is nobody gets into liberty there. But if you preach God as He's found in the Bible.

Ready to forgive. Large hearted to help. Not picking on people for oh, that's not the way to dress when you come to church or that's not the type of shirt or clothes you should wear.

God is not like that. I mean you may have met some people who call themselves God's children or like that. I want to tell you God is not like that.

And it took me a long time to discover that. I hope it doesn't take you as long. He's large hearted.

He doesn't make people feel uncomfortable when they come to Him. I mean, do you do that? Would you make people uncomfortable when they come to your home? And if somebody comes to your home I never forget, I saw one of these films on Jesus. And sometimes when you see a film on Jesus you see something so vividly which is written in the Bible but you don't see it in the Bible.

And I saw this film on Jesus where Matthew had invited him to his house for a meal you know after Jesus called him at the where he was keeping the accounts and said follow me and Matthew left his job and Levi, his name is Levi or Matthew he was from that priestly tribe and he made a grand feast. Now remember he was a very rich man. He was an accountant for the Roman government.

Chartered accountant for the Roman government. You imagine how wealthy he was. But he was a very worldly man.

He was one of those pharisee types. And so he had a grand feast in his house. And in this film they show Matthew before Jesus met him asking Peter to pay up his taxes for all the extra fish he caught and all that.

And Peter is pretty upset with his Matthew and then Jesus decides to go to Matthew's house and Peter calls Jesus aside and says you are going to this fellow's house? This guy is forcing me to pay up taxes half of which he swipes. And Jesus says I go anywhere I am invited. And then in the night they go along to this house and the disciples won't go in you see because they are standing outside.

Because they are holy. They won't go to this worldly person Matthew's house. And as they come near all this dancing and all these dancing girls and all not properly dressed and that's how they entertain those days.

Matthew had that type of entertainment. And Jesus walks in and of course holy Peter and James and all stand outside. And Jesus walks right into this worldly crowd of people and when Matthew sees him oh he says to everybody okay stop the master has come and we want to listen to him.

And sitting next to Jesus is one of these worldly dancers who decides to come and sit next to him and listen to what this master has to say. And the other side there is another one and Jesus sits there. I mean some of you holy people would be pretty horrified right? To sit in such a but Jesus was quite comfortable there.

He was not polluted by all this. And then he told his story. While Peter and others are looking through the window to see what's happening inside.

And he sits there in Matthew's house and says I want to tell you a story. He says there was a father who had two sons. And he tells the whole story of the prodigal son.

How the prodigal son went and wasted his money and riotous living with all types of women and drinking and all that. Everything was going on right there. And then the elder brother came and he was standing outside the house looking to see what's going on in here.

It was so vivid. So true to what Jesus was. Did Jesus encourage all that? No.

He came to save people from all that. But before he could save them, he accepted them as they were. You know that's something you and I have got to understand.

Jesus accepts you as you are. Now some Christians may not accept you as you are. That's because they are not like Jesus.

They are like the Pharisees. You feel sorry for them. Don't worry about them.

I remember once the brother told me not from our church, one of the other churches some other group. He said, Brother Zach, I have been tremendously blessed by all that you write and your messages. But you know, I go to some of your churches and they are so stiff and they are so legalistic and they don't make you feel comfortable or at home there.

So I don't want to be a part of this. So I said, see we are a growing church and like in a growing family there are babies. And don't judge the home by how the babies behave because babies are the same in every home.

And I used an example. I said, supposing I invite you to my house and one day you come to my house and I have a little two year old son or daughter who opens the door and says, Who are you? I don't know who you are. Bang! And he goes around saying, I went to Zach's house and he shut the door on my face.

I say, you are the fool then. I didn't shut the door on your face. A two year old child shut it.

How much sense do you expect a two year old child to have? Don't judge me by a two year old or a one year old. Actually in our churches also we have one year olds and two year olds. Don't judge the church by the two year olds who slam the door on your face or ask you stupid questions or we don't want to be a bunch of holy people who say we don't want to have any more children.

We only want adults here. No! We want children. We love children.

We love spiritual children who are newly converted and who are babies who take time to grow up. Who are not spiritual in 24 hours. Not like instant coffee.

Ah! Spiritual. No! Nobody becomes spiritual like that. It takes years.

But you know, I have many times felt, I mean if you have a burden for India. My burden for India is Lord, we have failed you as Christians in this country. That we have not presented Jesus as he really is.

And people have turned away not from Jesus Christ. They have turned away from Christianity. Around the world people have turned away from Christianity.

And many times I tell people, I also have turned away from that Christianity. If a non-Christian man tells me, a Hindu man tells me, Ah! These Christians. I say, I agree with you.

You reject that? I answer, I also reject it. And he is surprised to hear I reject it. I say, yes.

That's not, that's the Christianity I had for 19 years of my life. I rejected it. I don't want it.

And the thing is a lot of people who are born again still go to that fantasy version of Christianity and give a wrong picture of the love of God. Jesus was so secure in the fact that God loves him. And it's not just Jesus.

We look at Jesus and say, well, he is a person who never failed. But you know Paul, the apostle Paul lived one of the most wonderful lives any human being could live. But unlike Jesus, he had failed so many

times.

Even after he was a believer, he failed. And he was not ashamed to admit his failures. Do you know who wrote the book of Acts? Anybody know? Who? Luke.

And do you know that Luke was a, he was the only non-Jewish person who wrote scripture by the way. He was a Greek. He wrote two books, Luke and the Acts of the Apostles.

But the other thing about him, he was a doctor, but he was a very close associate of the apostle Paul. I think it was part of God's goodness to Paul to give him someone who could keep him a bit fit medically and physically. Tell him what to eat and what not to eat.

God is good. But apart from that, he was a man with a very sharp mind. Who wrote and he was inspired to write the Gospels.

He had never been with Jesus. But he made so many inquiries and he wrote so many things that other people never wrote about. I mean think that you would have never heard about the story of the prodigal son if it was not for dear old brother Luke making all those careful investigations.

Imagine Matthew wrote it and he left it out. Mark wrote a Gospel, he left it out. Because John wrote much later.

But Luke wrote it and he included it. There are some other things like that that Luke included which are not found in the other Gospels. We don't read in the other Gospels about the shepherds coming and to meet Jesus.

No, it's not there. I mean Matthew wrote about the wise men, but he never wrote about the shepherds. So Luke was a person who investigated very carefully.

And then he wrote the Acts of the Apostles and he must have told Paul, listen Paul, I'm writing about your travels. How do you think Luke would have written Acts of the Apostles? He wouldn't have wanted to write that Paul made a mistake in circumcising Timothy or Paul made a mistake in shaving his head and making a vow and Paul got upset with the high priest towards the end of his life. He didn't have victory over anger at that time.

Do you think you would write that? Supposing you were writing that about some great man of God whom you admired, would you write all that? Or would you conveniently leave all those things out? Paul was a very wise man. He knew that Luke won't write all these things. So he said Luke, if you're going to write about my life, you have to put those things in.

Otherwise I won't let you write. I've got the copyright in my life. You have to tell the whole truth.

You have to tell people for 2,000 years they must know that I, the great apostle, made some stupid mistakes in my life. And that towards the end of my life I lost control of myself and yelled at the high priest and called him a whitewashed wall. You know, otherwise we'd never have known that Paul made those mistakes.

But Paul was not discouraged by all that. He was so secure in the fact that God loved him. Are you secure in that? Are you absolutely convinced that God's nature is love? You know, we have this verse here, which we're going to have as a theme for this conference, walking in the light and having no part dark.

And do you know what that means, walking in the light? Very often we think of it only as walking in purity. But think of light as love. If you read John's epistle, he says God is light and he says God is love.

So that means light equals love. If 2 plus 2 is equal to 4, and I say 2 plus 2 is also equal to anything else? 4. That's Hindi, by the way. 4 equals 4. Knowledge.

It equals knowledge, it equals a lot of other things too in other languages. That means 4 equals 4 equals knowledge. So when it says God is light, God is love, it means light equals what? But when you read of light, what do you think of? Oh, holiness.

You read that and say walking, you sort of get scared. I did, anyway. Maybe all of you clever people didn't, but I did.

But I gradually began to see that when God is light, it is God is love. Are you afraid of walking in love? I mean God's love? Are you afraid of hearing a message? There is no hatred in God! Are you scared of that? When you hear there is no darkness in God, you say oh, oh, I don't understand. Supposing you heard it like this, supposing you read that verse like this.

Walk in the love of God, there is no hatred in him at all. Doesn't it change the whole context of that? That's exactly what it means. Like, 4 equals char, light equals love.

It will change your life. If you understand that. Those of you who get an opportunity to preach God's word, it will change your preaching.

And it will change your church. It will give you boldness as a young person. You know the devil is always trying to rob us of our boldness and our confidence.

And he knows that he can't scare you with some other book from some other religion. So he scares you from the bible. With verses.

If Paul had lived like that, he'd never have done all that he did. I want to say to you, my dear brothers and sisters, God is much better than what you thought he was. He is the most wonderful person to be with.

Have you ever met somebody whom, it's always fun to be with that person. He's all not, first of all, he's not a busybody into your private matters. And he's not always trying to find fault with something or the other in you.

And he accepts you just as you are. And forgives you any stupid things. And he can take a joke, you can make fun of him and he's happy.

Okay. Can you think of somebody like that? I mean, apart from me. I'm pretty arrogant, right? But if you can think of somebody, maybe not me.

I'm sure there are people much better than me. But I want to be like that. There's no doubt about that.

But if you can think of somebody like that, who you know, it's real fun to be with. Maybe somebody your age. Like me.

Someone younger. Who's like your age. And then multiply that by about a million and you know what God is like.

Multiply that by about a million. And you know what God is like. He's a good God.

He likes fun. He likes humor. He's not this long face God to the Pharisees.

And if you have portrayed that type of God to other people, it's a wrong teaching. You are guilty of a false doctrine. You didn't realize that.

Well, now I'm telling you. You've been preaching a false doctrine with your face. I remember hearing a story of a long-faced Christian who was walking in the light.

Trying to have no part dark. Who tried to tell another person, don't you want to be a Christian? He said, no thank you. I've got enough problems already.

I've got enough problems already. I don't want to be a Christian. If this is what Christianity means.

I believe that's what many of us are doing. Giving a wrong impression. I'll tell you one of the things that really burdens my heart.

I say, Lord why don't we have some prostitutes coming to our meetings? Why don't we have some drug addicts coming to our meetings? I've really sought God. I believe we have failed. In Jesus meetings there were prostitutes.

There were sinners. There is some part of Jesus Lord that is missing, even in CFC. How is it so many Pharisees congregate in our meetings? The Pharisees didn't congregate in such crowds to Jesus meetings.

A few of them came, but they're mostly sinful people and he changed them. He didn't leave them in their sin. Think Mary Magdalene whom no Pharisee could ever convert.

Jesus converted. If you want to know the attitude of the Pharisees to sinful people, think of that story of that woman who came who was well known in the city as a sinner. Well known sinner, that means the most well known prostitute in Luke chapter 7 in the city from the red light area of that city came to Simon's house and began to wash Jesus' feet and Simon said, Oh, thought Jesus was a prophet.

But now I know all these what my fellow Pharisees are saying is right. If this person was a prophet he would have known what type of woman is washing his feet. And Jesus knew what Simon was thinking.

He said, Simon, let me ask you something. There was a man who owed who had two debtors, two people who owed him money. One man owed him 500 pounds or whatever you like and the other owed him 50.

He forgave both of them. Who will love him more? And Simon said, I suppose the one who was forgiven more. He said, that's the difference between you and this woman.

You don't realize how much you've been forgiven. This woman has been forgiven much so she loves me much more than you. You didn't even give me water to wash my feet when my feet were dirty.

You didn't give me water to wash my feet. You know how we take advantage of Jesus? Many of us, we take Jesus so lightly. And there are other sinful people who come who are so thankful for what the Lord has done.

They say, Lord, I want the rest of my life to be devoted to you. We're so stingy when it comes to giving money to God. But those people who've been forgiven so much, they're so large hearted because they've been forgiven much.

Those who have forgiven much, love much. That's one of the things that's burdened me. I said, why is it, Lord, in so many of the churches I go around, you don't find prostitutes sitting there.

Is it because you are not there and some aspect of Jesus is missing from that church? Where are the drug addicts? Is it because we're not interested in drawing them to the Lord? Oh, they're hopeless. There's no hope for them. There's hope for some guy like me who didn't fall so deep.

Did Jesus come only for sinners who have fallen to a certain level but not really deep? I have to say that we have failed. I have failed. I acknowledge that before God.

And I say, Lord, tell me how to set it right. I'm not an evangelist but I wish I were and if I were, I'd go after those. I've always felt, I remember reading the story of the Salvation Army and General Booth.

I mean, some people are disturbed by the fact that he called himself General but I'd still join. If I were living in England 130 years ago, absolutely no doubt I would have joined the Salvation Army. Without a doubt.

They were the people out on the streets, on fire for God to reach the people down in the dumps, the filthiest sinners and bring them to Christ. The type of man that William Booth was when he was 86 years old and weak and dying. He said, as long as there's breath left in me, as long as people are exploiting women, as long as people are exploiting children, I'll fight.

In Jesus' name, I'll fight for them. I'll fight for them. That was a man who had the spirit of Jesus Christ.

He knew God loved the worst of the worst. My brothers and sisters, we need to understand that. Jesus came into the world not for the righteous.

He came for sinners. And if any of you feel you're one of those, He came especially for you. He came especially for you and not these bunch of people who sit there thinking they're holy.

Oh, I thank God I was brought up in a very God-fearing family. That's fine. But your heart is no better than those filthy people who are not brought up in God-fearing families.

The day you understand that, you'll have a closer walk with the Lord. I was brought up in a very God-fearing family. My father never took me once to a movie.

I mean, I did go to movies, but my father never took me there. And he would send me to a good church. But I was a sinner, deep down.

Really inside, I was no better than... You know, I've asked myself, Lord, am I as bad as Hitler? Hitler, who killed six million people, gassed them and killed them. Lord, is my heart capable of that? My flesh? It was difficult for me. I can't imagine gassing even one man to death.

I mean, six million. And I only have to ask myself one question. Did Hitler have some other flesh than me? Was he born from Adam? Maybe if I was brought up like he was, and I had his circumstances, I, who think, Oh, Hitler! I would have done the same things.

But mercifully, God has kept me from killing anybody. Doesn't mean I'm any better. And you know, that has changed my life.

To recognize, I believe we all need two revelations. One is that Jesus came in our flesh, like us. And secondly, that every man in the world has got the same flesh.

Including Hitler, including Saddam Hussein. Would you do the things that Saddam Hussein did? He said, No! Aha! No wonder your relationship with the Lord is not all that good. Tell me one thing, do you believe that Saddam Hussein came from some other race or from Adam's race? You believe he came from Adam's race? You know, I really believe that we have not seen the capability of corruption that is in our flesh.

We glory in things which we did not do, but we did not do them because of our upbringing. Because we didn't have the opportunity. Not because we are better than.

I don't believe I'm one bit better than Saddam Hussein or Hitler or any of these most evil people or the debauchers who sinned with so many women. No, I'm not better than any one of them or those preachers who fell into sin or the preachers who run after money and always asking for money. I'm not in my flesh better than them.

But Jesus has been good to me. He saved me. I know those things are wrong.

And that's, you know, when it says have a sober estimate of yourself. Romans 12.3 I'll tell you it will help you tremendously. When you can get the revelation that Paul got.

It's a revelation. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am number one. Now, you know, we can all say it in a pious way.

I always use this example. I said in prayer, you know, how we all pray the right words in prayer. Oh God, I'm such a wretch.

I'm such a terrible sinner. But next day somebody says Oh, so and so is such a wretched person. What do you mean? Wretched person? That's exactly what you said yesterday in your prayer.

You don't believe it, right? We tell such a lot of lies to God and we think we are very humble. Get rid of all this false humility. Keep that all for your private prayer.

What do you say in private prayer before God? Do you recognize the next time you say you're a wretched sinner compare yourself with Saddam Hussein and Hitler and people like that and ask yourself, do you really believe it? Don't tell lies to God. If you mean it, chiefest of sinners means what? Worse than Saddam Hussein, worse than Hitler, worse than Saddam Hussein's sons and worse than all of them. Otherwise, what does it mean chief of sinner? Just pious religious language, which a lot of people use.

That's why their relationship with Jesus is not good. Jesus came for sinners. The intensity of God's love, Paul was secure in that.

I want to say to you my dear brothers and sisters, the root cause of a lot of our problems is because we are insecure. We don't know that God loves us without any conditions, just as we are. He accepts us just as we are.

You know, because we had parents, all of us probably had parents who drove us to do well in school and were happy when we got good marks in school and happy when we got a good rank in school and a bit disappointed when the marks card showed failure or failure. We had parents like that. And maybe they scolded us for not doing something right or some mistake and they said, oh how many times I've told you not to do that.

We had parents like that and then we grew up as children seeing all this and then one day we heard about, there's a father in heaven we thought, oh that must be like my dad. He wasn't like, he's not like your dad. He's not like your dad.

Do you hear the good news? He's not like your mom. He's no! He's a good God. There's no one in the world who's ever like him.

He's never angry with you. He's sad sometimes. He's sad not because he loses something but you're losing something.

I mean, won't you feel sad if supposing you saw that man, that demon possessed man who was cutting himself. You know Jesus met one demon possessed man cutting himself. How would you react if you saw that man? Would you get angry with him? No, you'd feel sad, poor man.

Supposing you saw somebody cutting himself or you know sometimes you see some people a little off their heads picking up things from the gutter. Do you get angry with them? No, you feel sorry for them. That's how it is when God sees us insecure.

He's not angry with us. He feels sad because we think you feel sad for that one man who's off his head and is picking up things from the gutter. Boy, a human being created in God's image.

Oh, if only he could know the love of God and not be mentally stable. What a useful life he could live instead of picking up things from the gutter. And when God sees his children going after money it's no different from the fellow picking up things in the gutter.

And the angels say if only these human beings would be gripped by what they were called for. Money is not everything. Honor in the world is not everything.

You don't have to feel discouraged that your parents did not have the money to give you a good education. You don't have to be discouraged that you don't have the intelligence to get all these post-graduate degrees that other people in your church get. God loves you just as you are.

And if he wanted to give you more intelligence, he could have given any one of us more intelligence than he gave Einstein. Yes. God gave Einstein intelligence.

And he gave you and me certain amount of intelligence. He could have given us a lot more. Why didn't he do it? That may have destroyed you.

God has distributed different levels of intelligence like we are not all the same height. We are not all the same color. We are not all the same weight.

We are not all the same intelligence. We are not all the same temperament. But you need to accept yourself as you are.

Because God accepts you as you are. And he loves you just as you are. And he doesn't love you when you are good.

He loves you all the time. That's the meaning of no part dark in God. Let's turn to 1 John chapter 1. 1 John chapter 1. It says here the first message we have heard is this.

1 John 1.5 And we announce to you that God is love and in him there is no hatred at all. Okay? No darkness at all. There is no hatred in God at all.

You cannot do anything to make God hate you. Because it's not there in him. How can you produce something which is not there? Supposing I come to your house and say, come on, produce a snake from your house.

Snake? Sorry, I don't have any snakes in my house. Come on, produce some snake. I'll irritate you enough till you produce a snake.

No matter how much I irritate you, I say, there is no snake here. What to do? It's like that. God is like that.

You can't get hatred out of him. It's impossible. Think if you know that, my brothers and sisters, God loves you just as you are.

When you fail, he loves you. When you are discouraged, the psalmist says, I think it was David, no? Psalm 27. When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will pick me up.

Imagine being so bad that your father and mother forsake you. He says, when my father and mother forsake me, he says, the Lord will pick me up, he says at the end of Psalm 27. What a tremendous verse.

That's really something. Verse 10. When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.

You see, that's in the margin, it says, if my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up. Even if my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up, because he loves me more than my father and mother. I'm sure most of you here have got good parents who've loved you tremendously.

And here is a situation where even if your father and mother forsake you, the Lord will please remember that, my dear brothers and sisters. Please be secure in that. I believe that's the foundation for Jesus was secure in that.

That is the secret of his life, the secret of Paul's life, the secret of Peter's life. You know, one last verse. Luke chapter 22.

I want to paraphrase this verse. Luke 22 verse 32, it says, verse 31. Simon, Simon, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail, and when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

You know what that means? You're going to deny me, Peter, three times, but I'm praying that even when you hit rock bottom in your failure, you will know one thing. When he says your faith should not fail, what he's saying, I hope, not I hope, I pray that you will remember when you hit rock bottom, that God still loves you. I remember one young brother who was here.



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