

# The Lineage of Jesus

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking the power of an indestructible life, which is the basis for true humility, repentance, and a deep knowledge of God.*

**Duration:** 54:19

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:4, Daniel 6:22, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 7:16, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 11:40 - 12:2

**Topics:** "Imitating Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares the story of Sadhu Sundar Singh, a young boy who was desperate to encounter God. He threatened to take his own life if God did not reveal Himself to him. To his surprise, he saw a vision of Jesus instead of the religious figures he expected. This encounter transformed his life completely. The speaker emphasizes the message of hope in the first chapter of the Bible, which offers a permanent change for those whose lives are chaotic and empty. The sermon encourages listeners to cry out to God, recognizing their own helplessness and weakness, and to have faith that God desires to meet with them and bless them. The power of an indestructible life is highlighted, which allows believers to live transparently without hiding anything. The speaker concludes by stating that having a great thirst for God's truth and having faith are the two requirements for receiving valuable blessings from God.

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## Transcript

There's a phrase in Hebrews in chapter 7, which has been coming to my mind, and I thought perhaps that's what the Lord wants us to consider during this weekend. It's in Hebrews chapter 7. To me, Hebrews is the most wonderful of all the Epistles. I think among Christians, most Christians I've met, it's the least popular.

Very few Christians read it. They're more into Ephesians and Philippians and things like that. But the reason why I love Hebrews is because there's no book in the entire Bible that highlights the difference between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant like Hebrews.

And that tells us that the Old Covenant has been abolished, it's obsolete, we shouldn't be living according to it, and there's a New Covenant that God's established. Hebrews is the one book, the only book in the Bible that tells us that Jesus Christ was tempted exactly like us in every single point and did not sin. Hebrews is the only book that tells us that we have to run the race looking unto Jesus, that He's our forerunner.

There's a title given to Christ in the book of Hebrews that's not found anywhere else in the Bible. It's a title which most Christians are not familiar with. They know Him as Savior, Lord, Shepherd, but forerunner.

I know it's when I saw Jesus. You know, each title of Jesus meets a need in our life. There was a time right at the beginning we saw Him as Savior, Shepherd, Lord, and forerunner was the thing that met a certain need in my life when I was defeated by sin.

So there are a number of things in Hebrews that excite me. And if you have listened to the 70 hours through the Bible study that we have on our website, [cfcindia.com](http://cfcindia.com), you'll notice that out of 70 hours I spent on the whole Bible, I spent 4 hours on Hebrews alone. So Hebrews 7, the verse I'm thinking about is verse 16.

If you're not a deep student of Hebrews, I want to encourage you to do it. It will change your life. Hebrews 7, verse 16.

It's talking about Jesus who is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. It's another title of Christ you don't find anywhere else in the Bible. There's something unique things about Jesus that you see in Hebrews you don't find anywhere else.

Verse 15, it speaks about His being a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. And He's comparing that with the priesthood of Levi and said a person could be a priest according to the order of Levi, the old covenant, if he descended from that tribe. Now if you didn't descend from the tribe of Levi, you just couldn't be a priest.

And it says here that Jesus didn't come from the tribe of Levi, verse 14, He came from Judah. So obviously by physical lineage, He couldn't be a priest under the old covenant. Which is another way in which Jesus was saying the old covenant is finished.

Don't have to go back to that spirit of the law. And there are many things involved in that. And so it's in that context that He's saying here that He has become this priest not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

I want you to see this verse as a contrast of what the old covenant emphasized and what the new covenant emphasized. The law of a physical requirement, that's old covenant. And the new covenant is the power of an indestructible life.

That's the expression I've been thinking about and I thought it would be good for us to focus on that during this weekend. The law required many things which were, which had to do with the physical world, with the material world. The laws were, the sacrifices were material, the buildings were material.

And there were all types of laws concerning how to treat, if you found a nest with a bird and its little ones, what to do with it. And what to do with people who had leprosy and the type of clothes you had to wear if you were a priest and so many things, the size and shape of the tabernacle. The physical was very very important under the law.

And when physical material things are the major things in a church, it's under the law. When a church glories in its building or the way we dress, whether it's this way or that way or anything. The moment it's the emphasis on the physical, you got back under the law.

Now I'm not saying these things are not important. Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that we shouldn't be dressed modestly and decently.

But my point is, if it doesn't come out of the power of an indestructible life, it's law. That's what I want you to notice. You know we can do so many things which are right.

You can get rid of television in your house. Because in your church, they frown on it. It can be a physical thing that you do, or it can come out of the power of an indestructible life.

Two completely different motives for it. And when we do something not from the power of an indestructible life inside, but because of the law of a physical requirement. Many churches have certain laws.

If you belong to this church, you must do like this, and you must do like that, and you must do like the other thing. In some churches everybody's got to clap their hands perhaps, or everybody's got to raise their hands, or... Whatever it is. Or in some churches you got to dress like this, or you can't have this in your house, and you can't do that.

The moment you have all these laws of physical requirements, you got back under the law. Now many of those things are good. But they should come out of the power of an indestructible life.

That means it's a life within that makes me do something. And when I do it like that, it has value before God. Otherwise, if I do the same thing, it has no value before God.

So here you, for example, you have two brothers or two sisters who are externally doing the same things that Christians should do externally. And they both look spiritual to human eyes. But one person may be doing it out of the power of an indestructible life, and so it's a good work before God that God values.

And the other person may be doing exactly the same thing as a law. And it is a dead work in God's eyes. See Hebrews is the one book that uses another phrase called dead works.

You don't find that in the other books of the New Testament. That's why I say Hebrews is an amazing book. You'll find some unique things.

One of the main words that comes in the book of Hebrews is the word better, better, better. I think it comes about 13 times in this book. It's telling us that everything about the New Covenant is much better than the Old Covenant.

And we've got to get out of the Old Covenant. I find the vast majority of born-again believers, even those who claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues are living under the Old Covenant. That's a fundamental problem.

There are as many laws in Roman Catholic churches as there are in Pentecostal charismatic churches. Laws is the power of an indestructible life that we must seek for. So this life is the basis on which Jesus became a high priest.

The Levitical priests became priests according to a physical requirement. But it says here Jesus became a high priest because he had an indestructible life. And just like the sons of Levi became priests because of physical requirement, the priests who are under the high priesthood of Jesus, and that's you and me, we should be priests on this basis, the basis of an indestructible life.

See in the Old Testament, there are good works and evil works. That's it. But in the New Testament, there are good works, evil works and dead works.

Now good and evil, the world knows about ever since Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Every descendant of Adam knows basically in his conscience certain things are good and certain things are evil, you know, even little children. You don't have to tell them that telling a lie is wrong.

They feel in their conscience. When they have told a lie, they feel a bit bad about it. The knowledge of good and evil is there.

But the knowledge of dead works does not come from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It doesn't come from a conscience. The Holy Spirit has to show you that there are some so-called good works that you think are good, which are actually dead works.

Like I said, two believers doing the same thing, one is a good work and the other is a dead work, and yet externally, they're doing the same thing. See, two people can read the Bible, one because there's a life in him that leads him to read the scriptures, and the other, well, I have to read the Bible this morning. It's a ritual.

I have to have my quiet time. For some people, it may be even worse than that. It's superstition, perhaps.

I'll have an accident or something if I don't read the Bible this morning. There's so many reasons why people read. A simple thing like reading the scriptures.

For many people, it's a dead work. It doesn't come out of the power of an indestructible life. And when such people read the scriptures, they get knowledge from the scriptures.

They don't come to a knowledge of God. In the Old Testament, there was a knowledge called the knowledge of the law. In the New Testament, when it speaks about knowledge, it's the knowledge of God.

Jesus defined eternal life. You know, we speak about eternal life, which is not spoken of in the Old Covenant. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but know God better and better and better.

Have you heard that verse? I just combined John 3.16 and John 17.3. That's all. Jesus said, This is eternal life, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. Now, you get that definition of eternal life.

This is eternal life. There's no better definition than what Jesus Himself gave. This is eternal life, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.

God so loved the world, God so loved you and me, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but know God better and better, know Jesus Christ better and better. That's my definition of eternal life. But very, very few Christians understand that.

Their understanding of definition of eternal comes from the dictionary, not from Jesus Christ. I'll tell you, you'll be amazed how many words you've understood from the dictionary, from the English dictionary, and not from the Bible. Eternal life is one of them.

What is the definition of eternal? You can either go to the dictionary, or you can go to John 17, verse 3. And most Christians I have met, who've been believers for 30 years, who've gone through Bible school, their understanding of eternal is from the English dictionary. Take humility for example. There are two ways to understand humility.

One is by looking into a dictionary. What does humility mean? The other is listening to Jesus, who said in Matthew 11, 29, Learn from me, for I am humble in heart. If I get my definition of humility from the dictionary, I will have a false humility.

And most believers who think they're humble, have got a false humility. And they're pretty proud of their humility. That's how it is with many believers.

Because they got it from the dictionary. And they won't do certain things, they won't take a stand for the Lord firmly, because they think, boy, that will ruin my reputation for humility. But if you learn humility from Jesus, who took a whip, and chased people out of the temple, and says, learn from me, for I am humble in heart, you'll get a completely different understanding of humility, which would be the real thing.

It wouldn't be just walking around with your head hanging down, or anything like that, or speaking softly, or anything like that. No. It would be real humility.

And the mark of it would be that you would get grace. Because God gives grace to the humble. So I'm just giving you some examples of how you can study the Bible, and get the knowledge of the Bible, and be completely wrong.

Or you can use the scriptures to know God. That's eternal life. God has given us His word, not to produce laws, to put people inside.

Come on, you must do like this, behave like this. Lot of churches do that. And what's the result? There's strife, and there's death, and there's conflict, and you got to cover it all up, and be a hypocrite, and pretend that everything is okay.

But when you have the power of an indestructible life, you have to cover up nothing. You don't have to hide anything in your life, you don't have to hide anything in your home, you don't have to hide anything in your church. You can say, come right in and see.

It's the power of an indestructible life. And everything in scripture, I found through many years, we get it if we have a tremendous thirst for it, which comes out of a great sense of need. And secondly, if we have faith.

It's basically only two requirements for getting anything from God, anything valuable. A sense of need. Such a tremendous sense of need that makes you desperate.

One of the greatest saints that India ever produced was a man who was born into the Sikh religion. These folks who wear turbans. A non-Christian religion.

His name was Sundar Singh. He died in 1929. It was 80 years ago.

He was converted when he was about 14 or 15 years old. But from childhood, he didn't know the true God. He had torn the Bible saying Christianity is all rubbish.

But he was seeking after God. And he would go to various gurus in his religion, leaders in his religion to learn about God. His mother tried to lead him here and there and mother died and then he was a motherless boy and he began to seek God.

And one day, he knelt down in his room. And he was so desperate. And he said, God, I have to... I don't remember his exact words, but what he basically said was, I have to meet with you today.

I can't live without you. Imagine a 14-15 year old boy saying that. I can't live without knowing you.

And if you don't reveal yourself to me today, there's a railway train that goes by my house at 5 o'clock in the morning. I'll just go and put my head on the railway track and kill myself. I cannot live anymore without you.

And before 5 o'clock in the morning, he saw a vision. He expected to see Buddha or Krishna or someone, but he saw Jesus. The one whom he despised.

And his whole life was changed. Completely. In a moment.

It was not a gradual change. It was instantaneous. Christ changes people instantaneously when they are desperate.

And he surrendered his life to Him. And in the morning, he told his family members that he was a Christian. They got furious and tried to poison him.

He had to run away from home. He escaped death. He ran some distance away to some missionary's house.

And he became... I consider him the greatest saint India has ever produced. For the next 29 years, or 25 years or 29 years, he traveled mostly to unreached areas, to Tibet and different places preaching the gospel. But the thing that always struck me, I remember reading his story as a young man and it challenged me so much.

God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. There is no partiality with God. You remember when Peter went to the house of Cornelius.

Cornelius was a person who was a non-Christian. He never read the Bible. He didn't know who Jesus was.

He didn't know anything. He was a Roman military man. But he was a man who was seeking after God.

And it's amazing how I've seen and met different people like that in different religions who are seeking after God, this unknown God they are seeking after. They don't know. And they are seeking.

They never read the Bible. They don't know about Jesus Christ. They are turned off from Christianity because of the hypocritical life they've seen in Christians around them.

I remember one Hindu man who was seeking after the true God. This was way back during the days of the Second World War. And he was in the Indian Army.

And he was fighting with the British soldiers somewhere in Arabia during that war time. And it came to Christmas day. And he said, Boy, this is the birthday of the Christmas God.

This Hindu man thought, let's see how they celebrate it. And he saw all those soldiers around him getting drunk and misbehaving. And he got turned away from Christianity because of that.

Do you know the number of people there are in the world who are turned away from Christ because of what they've seen in Christians? It's a very good question for us to ask ourselves. Is there any one of my acquaintances, my relatives, my neighbors, my customers, if you're in business, my fellow workers in the office, or anyone who's turned away from Jesus because of something they saw in me that was unchrist-like? Boy, we've got to really repent. The first prayer that Jesus taught us to pray was, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

That's a prayer we should constantly pray. I pray it all the time. I say, Lord, I want your name to be hallowed and glorified as people see me and look at me and see how I behave in trying circumstances, difficult circumstances, everything.

I want to see that Christ changes lives. That Christianity is real. It's not a religion.

It's the power of an indestructible life. A life that nothing can destroy. So, many people have turned away from Christ because of what they've seen in Christians.

And I believe that we all need to repent because of that. We need to repent if we have made loud boasts about what Christ can do. And then they look at our life and they say, it doesn't seem to work in this person's life.

So, if you have a desperate thirst like that, Lord, I want the life that you came on earth to give. The power of an indestructible life. And I have faith.

That's the other thing. If I have a desperate thirst, like I said Sundar Singh had, you know, people say, why doesn't the Lord give visions like that to everyone? Well, how many people are seeking Him like that? With that desperate thirst, where they'd say, Lord, I don't want to live on this earth if I can't meet with you. I don't think people are that desperate to know God.

Thirst. And the second is faith to believe. That's the other thing.

I remember in my own life when I was seeking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. After I was born again, I never seemed to believe that God would give it to me. I had thirst, need, desire, everything, but somehow didn't believe that God would do it for me.

I thought it had to be something I had to earn. I had to fast and pray for so many days or something like that. All these wrong concepts that I had from various things I heard instead of going to the scriptures.

I realized finally it was a gift. And when finally God did fill me with the Holy Spirit, it was a time in my life when I was... If I were to draw a graph of my life, it was my lowest point. It was the lowest point of my life when I was backslidden, defeated.

When instead of sending me to hell, God filled me with the Holy Spirit. Teaching me one thing that I'll never forget in all my life. That all of God's gifts are undeserved.

We can never come to God and expect Him to give us what we deserve. Don't ever ask God to give you what you deserve. Because what we deserve is hellfire.

He gives us what we don't deserve. He gives us forgiveness of sins, which we don't deserve. He'll fill you with the Holy Spirit.

If you recognize there's nothing, you don't deserve that. You don't deserve to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Yeah, you recognize that.

Then it's easy to have faith. Lord, I'm not coming because I fasted so much, I prayed so much. I'm coming because this is the gift which Christ purchased for me on the cross.

This indestructible life that the Holy Spirit has come to give me is mine for the asking. If I can ask in faith. And I remember the time in my life when I had faith for that.

I had no physical experience. I didn't speak in tongues or anything. I just believed.

Galatians, it says, did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? You can't receive the gift of the Spirit by any works you do. It's by the hearing of faith. And I remember that day when faith was born in my heart and I said, Lord, thank you.

And I believed. And my life was changed. It can be like that for everyone of us.

Thirst and faith. So let's come this weekend with that attitude. Lord, I'm thirsting because I have needs in my life.

There may be needs in your life that even your husband and wife don't know anything about. Needs. Go to God and say, Lord, I want you to meet that need in my life.

And I believe that you will meet with me. It is your good pleasure to bless me. I come to you.

You brought me here with a purpose and I'm not going to go away without that purpose being fulfilled. I'm not saying that everything is going to be solved in two days. But God's going to put you on a path that will lead you to the solution of everything.

I believe that. I believe God's plans are for our good. Think of this lovely verse in Jeremiah chapter 29.

You're probably familiar with it. But it's good to be reminded of it again. Jeremiah 29 and verse 11.

And if you're not familiar with this verse, I want to encourage you to remember this verse. Those who've never seen this verse before. Jeremiah 29, 11.

The Lord says, I know the plans that I have for you. Now take that personally. You read a word like that and say, Lord, that's for me.

The Lord's speaking to you, brother, sister, young person, child. The Lord's speaking to you. You're a little boy or little girl sitting here.

The Lord's saying, I know the plans I have for you. Plans not for any calamity. For your welfare.

To do you good. To give you a wonderful future. And a hope.

Those are the plans. And since those are His plans, what should you do? Verse 12. Go to Him.

Call upon Him. Pray to Him. And He will listen.

And you seek Him. Verse 13. And you'll find Him when you search for Him with all your heart.

Say, Lord, I see that you've got wonderful plans for me. I want you to fulfill that in my life. I'm so thankful that God revealed that to me when I was 21 years old.

And I knew that His plan would be better than any plan I could ever make for my life. Some of you are much older. You can't do anything about your past.

Don't live in regret over the past. Don't weep over what's... Forget it. It's over.

But say, Lord, of the years that are left to me, I give them to You. I want to really fulfill Your plans. I believe that God can pick you up from where you are right now and fulfill something wonderful through your life.

Through every single one of us. It will be according to your faith. I always say this.

You know, sometimes people have made a big mess of their life. They can say, Well, I made such a big mess of my life. I ruined my testimony.

I ruined my life. I've done so many wrong things. I don't know whether God... Maybe God can do a little bit through me.

But not much. Nothing much will happen through your life. Not because God can't do it.

There's nothing impossible with God. But because you feel that God can't do much. And here's another brother.

You'll see one day when you stand before the Lord, when we have finished our life, and we... I believe we'll get an opportunity at the judgment seat of Christ to see how other believers lived in different generations in different parts of the world. And I get to see this brother. You get to see this brother whose life was a bigger mess than yours.

Who'd made a much bigger mess of his life. Who had ruined his life completely. But he trusted God and said, Lord, I believe You can do something wonderful with my life.

And then you see what a fantastic thing God did with his life. Who had made a bigger mess of his life than you. And you realize the only difference that he knew in him was he trusted God.

That's all. He believed in a big God who could take a complete mess and do something about it. Do you know what's written in the first paragraph of the Bible? God created the heaven and earth perfect.

And Satan came and made it into a mess. Satan came means he became Satan at that time. Between verse 1 and 2. Lucifer became the devil.

And the earth it says became chaotic dark empty. And the first chapter of the Bible says God picked up that chaotic, dark, empty earth. And you can picture yourself there.

Whatever the devil's made of your life. Chaotic, empty, dark. God picks it up.

And little by little. He doesn't change it overnight. Little by little, day by day, by day, day.

Works on it till he looks at it and says, this is just like me. Adam. It's very good.

You must have faith. That's the message in the first book of the Bible. First chapter of the Bible.

The first chapter of the Bible is a message of hope. For those whose lives have become chaotic, dark, ugly, empty. And that's the message of the Gospel.

It's only in picture language there. But the reality is when the Holy Spirit came to do it. The power of an indestructible life.

This is the meaning of the resurrection. Just like the devil had come between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis and ruined that earth that God had made because of his sin. We read in that the devil has come and ruined our life and Jesus has come.

1 John chapter 3 verse 8 The Son of God has appeared for this purpose. 1 John chapter 3 and verse 8 to destroy the works of the devil. I like that verse.

Because I know in my life the lot of things the devil did. From the time I was born he taught me to tell lies, to lust, to be proud, to be selfish, to be bitter, to fight, to quarrel. He destroyed me in so many ways and it says here Jesus came to destroy all the works of the devil.

That's what he came to do. He was manifested that purpose. Three verses earlier it says he appeared to take away our sin.

We believe that. Verse 8 it says he appeared to destroy the works of the devil. The Son of God appeared John says for two reasons.

The Son of God appeared on earth for two reasons. One to take away our sins. Verse 5. I think most of us have believed that.

Second, verse 8 to destroy the works of the devil. Why can't we believe that? Did you take away your own sin? No. He took it away.

I don't have to undo the works of the devil. The devil the Lord has come to do that. The original word there is undo.

I get the picture of I get a little picture like this in my mind that when we are born we are born so innocent. Jesus said that babies are like heaven. Heaven is like the greatest in heaven is like a little baby.

The closest thing to heaven that you can see on earth is a little baby. So when we are born we are born to use an illustration with a beautiful ball of thread all rolled up neatly into a nice ball and right from the beginning of our life we have taken out that string and tied knots into it, knots into it, knots into it, knots, so many knots into it that by the time we are 15 or 20 the whole beautiful ball of string that we got when we are born is an absolute mess. And not just a hundred knots but millions of knots and we look at it and say how in the world am I going to get this back into its original shape? Jesus came to untie all those knots.

I believe that. According to your faith be it unto you brother, I believed it with all my heart that every knot that the devil ever tied up from that ball of string God gave me I could never do it but Jesus untied it. And gives me back a beautiful ball of string again.

Makes our life happy, triumphant, victorious in all situations. This is our savior. Believe it.

Believe it. I believe we have limited God by our unbelief. I think of those words he could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

I believe there are most of us we have missed so much in our life because we think God can't do it. I keep saying everywhere I go what is the message in Jesus doing all those miracles in the Gospels? One message that God can solve every problem. Every single problem.

I don't care what problem that is. You never find anybody coming to Jesus with any problem and Jesus scratching his in saying boy that's a tough one. I don't know how to handle that one.

Never. Never. It doesn't matter what it is.

And he always had time for it. He'd be going off. Somebody had called him to go somewhere.

Not his way there. Some guy called Jairus would say hey can you come to my house my daughter is sick. And he would turn around and say okay let's do that first.

He always had time. That's the other message I get from the Gospels. Jesus always has time for me and for you.

I don't care what your problem is. He will have time for you. We must believe it.

The devil has put too many unbelieving thoughts in our mind. I believe that we have to demonstrate to the world around a triumphant Christianity. A Christianity, a life that cannot be destroyed.

So many people who call themselves Christians have got a love that will remain as long as everybody is loving around them. The moment someone begins to hate them their love is destroyed. That's not an indestructible life.

I want a love that no human being can destroy no matter how much he hates me. No matter how much evil he does to me he will not be able to destroy my love. Try producing a love like that.

You can't do it. But the Holy Spirit can. The Bible says in Romans 5.5 that when the Holy Spirit fills our heart He floods it with the love of God.

There is no corner left out. Every part of our heart is filled with the love of God. And it's a love which is indestructible.

You see that on the cross. Oh how they tried to destroy the Son of God and His life and His love. It couldn't get destroyed.

They poured all the hatred of hell on Him. I can imagine in that moment all the demons were full of glee saying we got Him. We finally got Him.

And were laughing and scorning and mocking along with the Pharisees. All those Pharisees served the devil but Jesus served His Father. All that hatred would not produce one bit of hatred in Him.

It was love. Father forgive them. They don't know what they are doing.

The happiest person on Calvary's hill was Jesus Christ. So that is the life He gives us. Indestructible life.

A life of peace for example. In a time of recession where the fears that the world tries to put into our heart cannot destroy this peace. If I have a peace which is produced from a good bank account, a secure job, and nice people around me.

It's peace alright but it's untested type of peace. You don't know whether it's from God or from yourself. But let some things go wrong.

Let your child suddenly get sick and the doctors give up hope. You'll find out pretty soon whether your peace is indestructible or not. Whether your faith is in God or in man.

I'm absolutely convinced. I know that because in my own life so often even after I was born again for so many years of my life my faith was thank God nothing is going too seriously wrong around me so I'm okay. I didn't really need God.

God brings me into circumstances where I can't, I mean I can survive outwardly but I can't retain this inner life without the power of the Holy Spirit. Has God brought you into circumstances like that? Where you find outwardly okay you can manage outwardly, you're able to take care of your family and feed them and clothe them and you got enough money but the inner peace is getting destroyed. It's not an indestructible life.

So think of this phrase. We are priests. Jesus is the high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

We are junior priests and we are priests on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. It's a beautiful expression. He's challenged me for many a time.

Everything that God gives me is indestructible. What I have from Adam is destructible. What I have from Adam will make me shake.

What I have from God will never make me shake. If I have a joy which has come out of my circumstances or a joy which has come out of my natural temperament which I'm a happy-go-lucky fellow that will get destroyed. There's some set of circumstances that can destroy it and we all know that.

But if it is from God it is indestructible. Such a person is the only one who can obey the command which says rejoice in the Lord 24-7. Not rejoice in your circumstances.

That is impossible. Nobody rejoices in being crucified. Jesus didn't rejoice in being crucified.

What does it say in Hebrews 12? He endured the cross. You notice that? Hebrews 12 2. He doesn't say he enjoyed the cross. We're not supposed to be Spartans and stoics saying I'm going to enjoy the cross.

I've never enjoyed any cross. But I've endured it for the joy set before him. Don't condemn yourself because you don't enjoy a cross.

Even Jesus didn't. He endured it. But it didn't destroy his joy.

The night before he was going to be crucified he knew he was going to be crucified next morning and he sits around with his disciples at the last supper and says my dear friends I've got so much joy I've got to give it to you. I mean it's something like if you're going to get a lethal injection or the electric chair tomorrow you've been sitting on death row and today you're just going around encouraging all the others saying I'm so happy today I just want to encourage you fellas I'm going to be killed tomorrow morning you

know but I just thought I'd encourage you fellas my heart's so full of joy. That's Christianity.

That is true Christianity. Nobody enjoys the electric chair or the lethal injection or the cross. The joy set before him.

That if this is the will of my father and I go this way it will glorify God. It will ultimately accomplish God's purpose and it did. So Jesus Christ never promised his disciples a life free from suffering.

You know it says in Hebrews in chapter 11 this is another one of those really misunderstood chapters in the Bible. How have you heard Hebrews chapter 11 described as? The chapter of the heroes of faith. But they miss out the real hero of faith who comes in chapter 12 verses 1 to 4. Now listen.

Okay these guys were mini heroes let's say. Abel and Enoch and Abraham and Noah and Daniel and the whole lot. But the last verse of Hebrews 11 says again you find that word better that comes often in Hebrews.

God has provided something better for us. You know I like to put that verse right at the beginning of Hebrews chapter 11. Hey fellas when you read Hebrews 11 please remember God has provided something better for you.

Keep that in mind and then read it. And everything I read I say hey God has provided something better for me. Daniel shut the mouths of lions.

God has provided something better for me. I can be eaten by lions like the early Christians were and I shall go into the mouth of the lion praising God. That's better.

Daniel couldn't do it. Daniel could praise God when the lion's mouth was shut. The early Christians could praise God when the lion's mouth was open and they were eating them up.

Which do you think is greater faith? God has provided something better. Do you realize now why your circumstances are not like those other people's circumstances? When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went into the fire their faith brought them out of the fire without the fire touching them. But when the early Christians were put into the fire they praised God and sang songs and they were burned to death.

Whose faith was greater? God has provided something better for us. We need to see that. And that's why it says after all these wonderful things, these guys who could shut the mouths of lions and who could escape unquenched from the fire, who could let's think of earthly enemies.

Earthly enemies who they could kill. David could kill a Goliath and Samson could kill 300 Philistines. But the early Christians when the Roman soldiers came against them, the Roman soldiers killed them.

Their faith was greater. Have you seen that? Have you seen there's a difference between the old covenant and the new covenant? The old covenant people glorified God by escaping the fire and the new covenant people glorified God in the fire. That's our calling.

And that's why it goes on to say God has provided something better for us that we have another one. I read it like this. By faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Abraham, by faith Joseph, by faith Moses, by faith Daniel, etc.

Finally, the last one by faith Jesus. That's the last one. Actually those four verses of Hebrews chapter 12 should be at the end of chapter 11.

By faith Jesus manifested the power of an indestructible life that when he faced the cross in all types of situations he endured it. He didn't try to escape it. He endured it.

He went through it and glorified the Father. And he says, notice that Hebrews 12 by faith Jesus endured the cross, despised the shame. He wasn't bothered what people said about him.

You know when have you read in the Old Testament that when they made fun of Elisha because he had a bald head some young fellow said, you bald man, you bald man. You know what happened to them? Some bears came and ate them up. But God has provided something better for us.

We follow Jesus who when they called him Beelzebub prince of devils he said, you are forgiven. Which is better? Who do you want to follow? Do you want bears to eat up those who fight against you? Or call you names? Then you are a follower, an old covenant follower of Elisha. If you follow Jesus you say, forgive them father.

Yeah, it's a wonderful life. Despising the shame means nothing to me. What people say about me because their opinion is fit for the trash can.

If they praise me, that's fit for the trash can. If they criticize me, that's fit for the trash can. When you come there, you become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

When the opinions of men whether good or bad trash can. He endured the cross, despising the shame and today sat down on the right hand of the throne of God and says, we got to fix our eyes. It's a lovely translation I have here in the NASB.

The King James Version says, looking unto Jesus, but here it says in Hebrews 12 to fixing our eyes on Jesus. Now that's important because there are so many things in the world that are trying to divert my eyes onto something else. I've got to fix my eyes on Jesus.

He's my forerunner. The one who ran the same race in front of me endured every single temptation that I can ever face in my entire life. And not every circumstance.

Jesus never faced road rage from angry car drivers in Nazareth. But he endured the same he faced the same temptation to anger from some other set of circumstances. The Bible never says he faced the same set of circumstances we face, but it says he faced the same temptations in a different set of circumstances.

In fact, you and I haven't faced all the same circumstances. But because you and I have the same flesh we're tempted in exactly the same way and Jesus was tempted like us. Otherwise he could not be an example for us and to say to us, follow me.

And when Jesus hung on the cross and said it is finished it wasn't just the forgiveness of our sins. A number of things were finished there. It's a massive statement.

It is finished. I have been tempted in all points as all human beings ever can be. And I have overcome every one of them.

Demonstrating that a human being with all the limitations of man, with the power of the Holy Spirit can overcome every temptation that the devil sends his way. It's finished. The devil's kingdom is finished.

The sins of man, finished. God's purpose is over as far as my life is concerned on earth. There's much in that simple statement.

That's why he's the author and finisher of our faith. And I want to say to you brothers and sisters that if you fix your eyes on him and see how he went into the wilderness to pray. Because he needed the power of the Holy Spirit.

He needed help from his Father. Let me show you one place where it says that in Luke chapter 5. Luke chapter 5 and verse 15. The news about Jesus was spreading further and great multitudes were gathering to hear him to be healed of their sickness.

When the Bible says Jesus was made like his brothers in everything. Hebrews 2.17 He became like me and you. So what I do is when I read about what Jesus did in his earthly days I put myself in his shoes for that moment.

And I say Lord supposing that were happening to me. And I'm serving you. Verse 15.

And the news about me was spreading far and far and great multitudes were gathering to hear me speak and to be healed of their sicknesses because I had the supernatural gift of healing and miracles. What do you think I would face? Pride. Tremendous temptations to pride.

Do you think Jesus faced them? He was tempted like me. What did he do? Verse 16. He would slip away into the wilderness and pray.

Do you do that? Slip away. That's a lovely word in English. You know what slip away means? It's like 10 people are standing around talking and all of a sudden they find hey where's Jesus? He's missing.

That's slipping away. It's not announcing hey fellas I'm going to pray now. Excuse me.

That's not how he went to pray. He would slip away and after a while people discovered where he had slipped away. That's how they wrote that.

He would often often. Why? One who had never sinned. One who was perfect.

Why did he need to slip away and pray? Because he was tempted like you and me. Jesus said to his three disciples watch and pray otherwise you will enter into temptation. You fellas think you're so strong.

You're so capable. You don't need to pray. No wonder you keep falling into sin.

And Gethsemane he told Peter James and on watch and pray otherwise I tell you you will fall. And sure enough Peter fell. He took out his sword and chopped off somebody's ear.

How is it Jesus didn't fall? Shall I tell you why? Don't say because he's the son of God. Because he watched and prayed. He would often slip away and pray.

His whole life was in dependence upon the Father. That's how he became an overcomer. And he says we can overcome as he overcame.

That's how I can have that indestructible life. You know when I pray what am I saying? I'm acknowledging Lord I cannot produce this life. But I can get it from you.

The river of God is full of water. Always there's plentiful supply. I can go and drink.

Let's pray. Let's bow our heads before God. And make sure that all we have heard this evening is not another pep talk.

That stirs us up temporarily. Moves us for a few days. But will you cry out like Sadhu Sundar Singh cried out.

God I need to meet with you. I'm desperate. I want you to make a permanent change in my life.

In my habits. In enabling me to recognize my impotence. My helplessness.

My weakness. I need you Lord. And I believe that you will meet with me.

I believe Heavenly Father that it is your good desire to meet with every single one of us. Lord Jesus I believe it is your good desire to bless us. To fill us with your Holy Spirit.

To baptize us in fire. And make us flaming witnesses for you. Thank you Lord Jesus.

I pray that this will be an unforgettable weekend for everybody who has come here. Something that turns around their life completely. I want to trust you for that for myself.

And for everyone. For I'm a needy person too. Thank you Lord Jesus.

Thank you Father. In Jesus name. Amen.

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