

# The Meaning of the Rent Veil

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the critical distinction between religious practices and a genuine spiritual relationship with God, illustrated through the significance of the torn veil at Jesus' death.*

**Duration:** 58:55

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:3-5, Psalm 16:11, Matthew 27:51, John 14:6, 1 Corinthians 4:4, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 10:19-20, Hebrews 12:2

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Christ's Sacrifice"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between being a religious Christian and a spiritual Christian, drawing parallels from Cain and Abel to illustrate the difference. It highlights the ongoing struggle between self-will and surrender to God, symbolized by the torn veil in the temple representing Jesus' sacrifice. The call is to walk the new and living way opened by Jesus, enduring hostility and striving against sin to enter boldly into God's presence.

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## Transcript

As I've seen Christians around the world and in our own land and in our own church here, I feel the greatest need if you want to be protected from the deception there is in the Christendom these days, and if you want to make spiritual progress in your own life and be ready to meet the Lord, the greatest need is to understand clearly the difference between being a religious Christian and a spiritual Christian. Do you know that difference? It's one of the most important things that we need to know because this is one of the great areas where Satan deceives people, thinking that, making them think that they're spiritual when they're actually just religious. And this is not something new.

The whole Bible speaks about these two types of people. Way back in the beginning, we read of Cain and Abel, and they're not, it's not that one was an atheist and one believed in God. No, they both believed in God.

And one was not an idolater. One did not offer his offerings to some strange God. They both gave their offerings to Jehovah, but yet one was accepted and the other was not.

That's how the Bible begins with the first two human beings that you read of outside the Garden of Eden. You see two streams that started. One was a religious stream and the other was a spiritual stream.

And you come to the end of the Bible, you find these two streams have become mighty rivers. One is called Babylon, which is religious Christendom. And the other is Jerusalem, the true spiritual, heavenly Jerusalem, which is the true church of Jesus Christ.

And we are in between Genesis and Revelation now. And whether you know it or not, you are flowing along one of these two streams. And most Christians are in the wrong stream.

Even in Jesus' time, there were these two streams. There were the Pharisees who went along the religious direction, and that was Jesus. And these are two streams, and there are very few people who follow Jesus.

And even the disciples of Jesus, like Peter and the others who had spent many years in the synagogue before they met Jesus, if you had asked them, who do you think is a godly person that you know? They would have mentioned one of the Pharisees in the synagogue, one of the elders, because they know the scripture so well, or they preach so well, and they have great understanding of the law, and they've been faithful in attending the synagogue. Can you imagine the surprise they got when Jesus came in and they met with Jesus? And Jesus said about these people whom they respected so highly, how will you escape the damnation of hell? If someone were to ask you, can you tell me some godly person you have met? Would you think of someone who is religious, with a lot of activity, and who's doing a lot of work, parent work for Christendom, or someone who's a bishop? Then you're probably as mistaken as those disciples were before they met Jesus. Their whole understanding of what mattered to God changed when they met Jesus.

And when we meet Jesus, meet him, I don't mean come to church. When you meet Jesus personally, your whole understanding of what God appreciates changes. That's what happened to me.

So I want to speak about something that happened, a significant thing that happened when Jesus died. Matthew 27, we all know about this, but I want to explain its meaning. After Jesus had suffered on the cross and he had cried out saying verse 46 of Matthew 27, he said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? That's the moment when he was taking our punishment.

The only time in the history of the universe where for a moment, the father and the son were separated. I don't think we can ever understand the agony and the pain of that till we see the Lord face to face. It's the only time in the history of the universe that Jesus, the son of God called his father, God.

He never called him God at any other time. He always called him father. But now he was standing there, not as the son of God, he was standing there as the substitute for humanity.

As one who the Bible says became sin, God turned his eyes away. See, that's what teaches me that even if God loves you greatly, he loved Jesus greatly. But when our sin was on Jesus, the father said, I can't look at it.

Some of us think God loves us so much, even if there's sin in us, he'll look at us. Do you think he loves you more than you love Jesus? You got to be off your head to think that he loves you more than he loved Jesus. He loved his own son.

But when sin was on his son, not his sin, our sin, the father forsook him, turned his face away. Now I want to tell you in Jesus name, if any of you think that God loves you so much that he'll tolerate your sin, the devil has deceived you totally, totally. The cross reveals to me how God hates sin.

However much he loves a person, he cannot even look at him. How in the world do you think you can go into God's presence for eternity to play the fool with sin, with conscious sins, things that you know are sin in your life? Every person in hell knows that God has forsaken him completely. There's nobody on earth whom God has forsaken.

If God had forsaken even one person on earth, he would be experiencing hell today. No, that's the reason why so many atheists are healthy. God hasn't forsaken them.

That's why so many backslidden sinning believers are still not judged. God hasn't forsaken them. But if they continue in that way, a day will come when he will forsake them in spite of the fact that he loves them because of sin.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Because of sin. And then we read after that period was over, at the end of that time, again, he called him father and said, father, into your hands, I commend my spirit. So there we see that he was back in fellowship.

The punishment for sin was over in those three hours, the last three hours on the cross. And again, he was in fellowship with the father. And then it's described here, the words are mentioned in John's gospel, but it's mentioned here only as verse 50, Jesus cried out with a loud voice.

That loud voice was father, into your hands, I commend my spirit. And then we read, this is what I want to speak about. The veil of the temple was torn in two from top.

That means God did it. God tore that veil in the temple and the earth shook and the rocks were split and the tombs were open. There's something very significant about that veil being torn.

And everybody in Israel understood that. Now we may not understand that because we've not grown up knowing about the tabernacle and the temple, but this is described for us in the old Testament that when God was teaching the Israelites how to approach him, he told them to make a tabernacle and to divide that tabernacle into three parts. And the very first thing was to go through the door, through the gate and see the altar where the animals were sacrificed for sin.

And then you go to the sort of a basin of water, symbolizing water baptism. And then you go into a second compartment, which is a covered area where it speaks of a life in the being born of the Holy Spirit and the word of God, prayer. There were three things there.

And then beyond that was another compartment called the most holy place. And that was a thick veil there. God said, nobody must enter that place.

And that's where God dwelt. God didn't dwell in the outer court. He didn't dwell in the holy place.

He dwelt in the most holy place. And what he was teaching Israel was none of you can fellowship with me. You have to stay at a distance, just like a lot of Christians today.

They know they come to the altar, their sins are forgiven. They come to the basin of water, they're taking water baptism. And maybe they have even gone beyond that to be anointed with the Holy Spirit, symbolized in the candlestick, the lampstand and the table of bread.

They read the word of God, the altar of incense, they pray, they do all this. But God says, you can't come near me because of this veil. And we need to understand what was it.

And nobody in those 1500 years understood what it was that was hindering people from coming to God, even though they had gone through all this. That is the difference between being a religious Christian and a spiritual Christian. A religious Christian may believe that Jesus died for his sins and have his sins forgiven.

That's the first step, the altar. He may be baptized in water. He can still be just a religious Christian.

And he can go into the holy place where he reads the of God every day and he's still a religious Christian. And there's the altar of incense there. He prays every day.

He's still religious. There's the lampstand with burns with oil. He's received the Holy Spirit.

He is still religious. How many people have understood that? Some people think, well, the trouble with all these people is they haven't received the Holy Spirit. They haven't spoken in tongues.

I've seen hundreds of people who speak in tongues who are totally religious. Some of those people who spoke in tongues are not even born again. The one last thing was the most important.

And when Jesus died, that veil was torn. And God said, now at last you can come into my presence. But religious Christians don't go there.

They stay in the outer court, the holy place. Once you go into the most holy place, there's nobody there. It's only God.

In the outer court, there's so many people milling around in the holy place. There were at least some people doing some work. People are interested in ministry.

But when you get into the most holy place, there's nobody but God. And if you're bored with God, you'll never want to be there. Would you like to sit for hours and hours with somebody who's boring? No.

You'd like to mix around with a lot of people who laugh and joke and have fun? Yeah. The outer court is for you, brother. The most holy place is for those who want to be alone with God, who don't get bored with that, who love to be with God, who love to talk to Him.

And it doesn't matter to them if all the other people are not there. That is a spiritual man. That's a spiritual woman.

And I want to ask you very honestly, are you bored with God? Would you find it terrible if you were locked up 24 hours in a room and you had only God there, no other human being to talk to? Well, you haven't understood what true Christianity is. I want to tell you the truth. I want to tell you there's something that Jesus purchased for you on the cross, which you're missing.

It's the most important thing. And that's why your Christian life is so up and down and up and down. As long as you mingle with people and you love to be with believers and you think you're very spiritual because you love to be with believers.

No. That's the outer court. Or you love to be involved in the ministry, doing something for the Lord all the time and say, I'm not like those lazy believers who don't do anything.

I do something for the Lord. And you think you're spiritual. No, sir, you're not.

You're just religious still. Maybe you give money for God's work. You pray, you read the Bible.

You're still religious. The Pharisees did all that. The Pharisees even went for missionary work.

And Jesus said they were bound for hell. You got to go through the veil. You got to be alone with God.

God has to mean more to you than your father and mother. Does God mean more to you than your father and mother? Does God mean more to you than your wife and children? Does God mean more to you than your job, your house, your property, your money, your reputation, your honor? That's what it means to be alone with God. I tell you, a lot of Christians who go to church, they do not want to be alone with God.

They're like the Israelites. The Israelites were not allowed to go in there. And today most Christians act as though the veil was not torn.

But that most holy place is still shut off. We like to be involved with people. We like to be involved with ministry.

So I want to lead you on from there to something higher for those who have years to hear. Let me show you Hebrews. First of all, Hebrews chapter 6. In Hebrews chapter 6, the Lord said to Abraham in verse 14, I will surely bless you.

What do you understand by being blessed? Different people understand different things. Some people understand it as material blessing. God's blessed me with money.

He's blessed me with a car. I never had a car. For many years, I have a car now.

Or I got a house. I used to live in a rented house. Now I got a house.

God has blessed me. Or he's blessed me with children. That's a little better than being satisfied with cars and houses.

But it's still not good enough. Or then people say God's blessed me with spiritual gifts. I can serve God.

I can preach. I understand scripture. Still not good enough.

The ultimate mark of God's blessing is that he's given us himself, himself, which nobody in the Old Testament could have. And you see that further down, he says, we have a hope, verse 19, like an anchor. You know, an anchor is something that a ship, people in a ship drop into the sea so that the ship doesn't drift out and hit on the rocks.

An anchor is something that can hold a ship, no matter how heavy the storm. And here it says, there's something we have, which is like an anchor that'll make our life unshakable, no matter what calamity we face, no matter which enemy tries to oppose us, no matter if the whole world's seven billion people are against you, your anchor will hold. If you have this anchor, I don't think many Christians have this anchor.

That's why their life is up and down. That's why their life shakes with the smallest little problem. Have you ever said, oh Lord, I'm sick and tired of life.

Take me away from this earth. You don't have an anchor. Are you a Christian? Are you an atheist to talk like that? So brother, the sorrows are so much.

You need an anchor, brother. People are troubling me so much, brother. You need an anchor and then you won't be disturbed about people troubling you.

But it says here, this anchor is sure and steadfast, but it's an anchor that enters within the veil, that veil that was torn. You need to understand this. If you want to have this rock steady life, because it's an anchor that goes inside the veil.

It's not outside. If you live in the outer court and the holy place, you'll never know this life. It goes inside the veil and it says here, Jesus has entered inside the veil.

That was the significance of the tearing off the veil in the temple. Now you understood it? When the veil was torn, we're saying that Jesus has opened the way. He's entered inside the veil.

Now let me ask you, what does that mean? A lot of people will say that's heaven. No, Jesus ascended to heaven after 40 days, 43 days after his crucifixion. He rose again three days after he died.

And then he was 40 days on earth and only then he ascended to heaven. But the veil was torn 43 days earlier when he died, not when he ascended to heaven. There is a life on earth that we can have before we go to heaven, inside the veil.

That's the meaning. Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us inside the veil. Now this title of Jesus as forerunner is a title which is not found anywhere in scripture except in Hebrews.

And is the title of Jesus, which I would say is the least understood and known among Christians. All of you may know Jesus as savior, shepherd, good shepherd, the light of the world, the resurrection and the life, the bread of life and the door and so many other titles he used concerning himself. Have you ever, if I were to ask you, what does it mean that Jesus is your good shepherd? You can explain that.

Or Jesus is your savior. But if I were to ask you, what does it mean when it says Jesus is a forerunner? Do you know what that means? Well, it's very simple English. For means in front, is the opposite of after.

Forerunner means one who ran in front of us. That's all it means. He ran a race.

The Christian life is pictured like a race. The life of Jesus on earth is also pictured like a race. He was running a marathon race of 33 and a half years, where he never slipped and fell even once.

And he entered inside the veil and we're told to follow him inside the veil. That's what it means. Let me show you another verse in Hebrews 12.

I've always believed that the first four verses of chapter 12 should actually be the last four verses of chapter 11. You know that God did not divide the Bible into chapters. Man divided it into chapters and verses so that we can refer to it easily.

That's all. But whoever wrote Hebrews wrote it as one letter, not divided into chapters and verses. So you got to read these four verses as continuation from chapter 11.

And in chapter 11, we read of these great men who did fantastic things like Abel and Enoch. Imagine what Enoch did. You know what he did? He went to heaven without dying.

That's a fantastic thing. And it says in Hebrews 11 that he did that by faith. Verse 5, Hebrews 11, 5, by faith, he was taken up.

That's one of the greatest acts of faith in Hebrews 11. Imagine being taken up to heaven without dying. And many other things mentioned in that chapter about people who split the Red Sea and pulled down the walls of Jericho and shut the mouths of lions and even people like Elijah who raised the dead.

And then it says at the end of it all, verse 40, but God has provided something better for us. What is better than going up to heaven without dying? What's better than shutting the mouths of lions and driving away all our enemies? What's better than raising a dead child? Something better. And that better thing is mentioned in the next four verses.

That's why I say it's unfortunate there's a chapter division there so people don't see the connection. That better thing is by faith, Jesus. So here's a big list of by faith, Abel, by faith, Enoch, by faith, Noah, by faith, Abraham, by faith, various people all the way down to Daniel, David, Elijah, everybody, Samuel.

Then last of all, by faith, Jesus. What did he do? He did not shut the mouths of lions or split any Red Sea. He entered within the veil.

He is the author of our faith. The author of my faith is not all these people in chapter 11, it's Jesus. And it says here in verse one, let us run this race looking at Jesus.

That means he's our forerunner. Now you understand what forerunner means. Let us run this race looking unto Jesus who has run this race in front of us.

And he entered within the veil. We already saw that. So we are told here to run the same race behind him.

And if we follow him, we will end up where he ended up. You know where the what the finishing line is? It says in the last part of verse two, the right hand of the throne of God. He ended up there.

And here we are told the route to that place. You know, sometimes they have these marathon races, even in the Olympics, the marathon races run through the city because they got to run about 40 kilometers. And if you don't follow the track, suppose you're taking part in the marathon and you don't follow the track, you just go some other way.

You're disqualified immediately. The only way to get to the finishing line properly is by following the track laid out. And it's a wonderful thing if you have a forerunner whom you can see who's running in front of you.

That's much better. I mean, it's like if somebody gave you directions to some complicated address, that would be quite difficult to get there. But if he said, hey, just follow me.

Just follow me and you'll get there. That's much easier. That's what Jesus says.

That's the difference between Old Testament and New Testament. In the Old Testament, the laws were, you know, there were 613 laws in the Old Testament. It's like giving you 613 directions to get to some address.

You say, boy, I'm confused in my mind. No, I don't blame you. If you got 613 directions to get to some address, you'd probably never get there.

And none of the Old Testament people got there. And then Jesus said, I'll take you to that address. Just follow me.

Isn't that much better? I just got to walk behind him or run behind him. He's running, by the way. If you walk, you'll never get there.

Jesus is running and say, follow me. You got to run. Let us run this race.

That means you got to take it seriously. There's no time to stroll around and look at all the sites here and there. You got to run seriously with your eyes on Jesus, looking unto Jesus, who for the joy set before him, the joy set before him was to be with the Father.

Because it's a verse in the Old Testament. It says in Psalm 16 and verse 11, in God's presence, there is fullness of joy. To me, that's been a very helpful verse to find out whether I'm in God's presence or not.

A lot of us like to think we are in God's presence. And for example, when we were having a time of praise just now, we'd have thought we are in God's presence. Not necessarily.

Some may have been, many may not have been. For me, the test is this. In God's presence, there is fullness of joy.

If there is fullness of joy in my heart, I'm in God's presence. If there is not fullness of joy, there's a little bit of joy and a lot of complaints against somebody who treated me badly or some anxiety, I worry about what's going to happen next week. I'll tell you honestly, you're not in God's presence.

You're pretty far away. Don't fool yourself. Just because you're singing some songs and shaking your hips and shaking your head, it doesn't mean you're in God's presence.

It just means you're enjoying a song. It could be rock music. It could be a Christian song.

It doesn't mean you're in God's presence. In God's presence, there's fullness of joy. And not only in the meeting.

If there's any time in my life, in my 24 hours a day, seven days a week, where I don't have fullness of joy, I immediately know I'm not in God's presence right now. I don't know what happened. I better find out.

I came outside the veil. Maybe I'm very active in God's work still in the holy place, but I'm not in God's presence. Maybe I love to fellowship, sit around with God's people.

I'm in the outer court, but I'm not in God's presence. In God's presence, there's fullness of joy. There is no fullness of joy in the outer court or in the holy place.

It's in the most holy place where God dwells. There's fullness of joy and God wants us to be full of joy. When it says rejoice in the Lord always, it just means live in God's presence always.

Some people say, how can we rejoice in the Lord always in this evil world? I ask them, do you want to live in God's presence always? I say, oh yeah. Well, if you really live in God's presence and don't imagine that you're in God's presence, you will have fullness of joy. But if you imagine, oh, that was a nice song.

I felt like crying. I must be in God's presence. No.

If you've got a grudge against somebody, you're not in God's presence. If you haven't forgiven someone, you're not in God's presence. You're a million miles away.

If you've got worries that you haven't committed to God, you're still carrying them on your shoulders. You're not in God's presence. In God's presence, there's fullness of joy.

And there's another thing written. Maybe I should show you that verse. You must see it.

Psalm 16, verse 11. It's a wonderful verse. Psalm 16, verse 11.

You will make known to me the path of light. And by the way, this is the path of light. In your presence, there is fullness of joy.

In your right hand, there are pleasures forever. This is the path of life. Everything else is a path of death.

For me, that's very clear. There is only one path of light. It's not just believing that all my sins are forgiven.

It's living a life where there's fullness of joy, not just a little bit. Fullness of joy, so full of joy that you can encourage every discouraged person who ever comes to you. It's like having so much money that you don't know what to do with it.

I think most of us are not in that place. We're just sort of scraping by with what we have. But in the old days, there were kings who had so much money, they didn't know what to do with it.

Some of the Indian kings used to ride on elephants on their birthday and throw golden coins here and there. Imagine being so rich that you can go around and throw golden coins to people on the street. They were so fantastically rich.

I see that spiritually how God makes us. So fantastically full of joy that we can just go around dispersing joy wherever we go. That's fullness of joy.

We're not just sort of scraping by. There's a fullness that's in God's presence, that's inside the veil. That's the meaning of that veil that was rent when Jesus died.

You can come inside, brother, sister. You don't have to wait outside anymore. Come right in.

Live with God. He's more interesting than the most interesting human being you've ever met. I'll tell you that.

The most interesting person in the whole universe is God himself. If you haven't found that, you missed something. God invites you to that life where you're quite happy to be alone with God because it's so interesting.

It's so interesting the things he tells you. Really interesting. And every day can be like that.

And it says here there are pleasures forever. And that's the other test I ask myself to know whether I'm in God's presence. Listen, that I'm not looking for any pleasure on this earth to satisfy me.

Got it? As long as you're looking for some pleasure on earth to satisfy you, you're not in God's presence. I'm not saying we cannot enjoy pleasures on earth. There are many pleasures God has given us on earth.

You can enjoy. You can enjoy an ice cream, sex and marriage. You can something and enjoy.

Outside of it, evil, wicked, satanic. Pornography, evil, wicked, satanic. I'm not talking about that.

Legitimate pleasures. If you find your satisfaction in those things, you haven't found God fully yet. But if you know, yeah, there are legitimate pleasures on earth like a good sleep, for example.

Or a good meal. And certain other things. A certain pleasure you get when you got a promotion in your job.

God doesn't say you got to look depressed when you got a promotion or look depressed when you got a hike in your salary. Yeah, be happy. But if you find your happiness in that, that is the thing.

You don't know God. But you can say, yeah, there's a certain pleasure, but it's secondary. Because tomorrow, if I lose my job, that's also okay.

And tomorrow, if my boss says, hey, that was a mistake what I told you yesterday, your salary has not been increased. Sorry, that was somebody else's name. I'm sorry.

Oh, that's fine. Praise the Lord. See, that's the man who's living in God's presence.

He's found his pleasure in God. And the other things come and go. If he gets it, praise the Lord.

If he doesn't get it, praise the Lord. We're not ascetics who say, no, no, no, I won't. I won't eat enjoyable food and I won't get married.

No, no, no, it's not like that. We can enjoy these things, but the fullness of pleasure and joy is in God's presence. So that's the joy that Jesus had before him.

We return back to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12, we read that because he thought of this fantastic joy. I mean, how did he know that? Because he'd enjoyed it for all eternity.

Jesus enjoyed the pleasure of the father's presence for all eternity in heaven, where there's no sex, no money, no ice cream. You know, there's no ice cream in heaven, but there's God and Jesus enjoyed that from all eternity. That's all he wanted.

I'm sure when he was on earth, if he gave Jesus an ice cream, he'd have enjoyed it. He said, thank you. I enjoyed that.

He wasn't an ascetic. He even drank wine and he enjoyed good food. He would sleep.

We read in the boat once, he said, Hey, give me a cushion. I don't want to sleep on this hard board. You know, he enjoyed a cushion under his head when it was available.

If it was not available, he'd sleep under the trees as we read in John chapter eight, verse one. So, but the point is this, that's the true Christian life. If God gives me something, that's fine.

I take it. And if I have a good bed to sleep on, I won't sleep on the floor. But if I don't have one, I'm quite happy to sleep on the floor because my pleasure is not found in a good bed.

It's in God. In him, there are pleasures forever. And that joy Jesus always wanted.

He knew everything else is temporary. Everything. How long can you enjoy an ice cream? It's not forever.

Even sex and marriage, just a few minutes, but the pleasures with God, Jesus wanted that. And because he wanted that, he decided he's going to go through the veil because God lives there. And here he tells us how he went there.

Hebrews 12, verse two, Jesus. Now this is talking about what Jesus did by faith. And it applies to us because he's the author of our faith.

Author means the one who writes. Who has written your faith? Jesus has written my faith. And this is the faith of Jesus.

He wanted the joy that was in front of him more than any joy on the He had to endure the cross and despise the shame. You got it? That's what it means when it says the veil was rent. He endured the cross, not just the cross on which he hung for six hours.

That was for our sin. I'll tell you that wasn't much joy there. It doesn't say he enjoyed the cross.

He endured it. If Jesus were an ascetic, there are ascetic Christians who say you must enjoy the cross. I say no.

Even Jesus didn't enjoy the cross. He endured it. He endured it for the joy set before him.

I don't have to enjoy the cross. The cross means death to myself and I don't enjoy it. I'll because of the joy set before me that I can have the fellowship of the Father.

So don't be discouraged if you don't enjoy the cross. You got to endure it. Even Jesus endured it.

He endured. That means he went through it because he knew at the end of it, there's joy. It's like a student studying, slogging away late into the night, studying for an examination or going through a very rigorous course, giving up all pleasures for that one year because he wanted to get admission into some top college because he knows at the end of it, he'll get a good job.

They endure it. They don't enjoy all that study, but they endure it because it's something they're going to get. I mean, that's for something earthly.

For Jesus, the most important thing was fellowship with the Father. And he says, I've got to get there. I've got to endure this cross.

It's in the way, this veil. And look at some of these things which characterize that cross. Verse three, he endured tremendous hostility by sinners against himself.

Jesus faced an enmity from people who didn't want God, religious people, Pharisees. Tremendous hostility. And I'll tell you this.

I've experienced this for most of my life. The hostility of Christians who do not want to go the way of the cross. They will say all types of lies about you.

They will say you're preaching false doctrine. They'll call you false prophet, heretic, antichrist, devil, every imaginable name that they call Jesus. It did not affect Jesus one bit.

And it doesn't affect me one bit because I keep my eyes on Jesus who endured the cross, who endured this tremendous hostility. And I know that in my whole life, I will not experience even one percent of the

hostility that Jesus experienced. Does it disturb you that some people criticize you or speak evil about you? Does it disturb you that some people say you've got false doctrine? He endured more hostility than any of us.

It's part of the cross. And the other thing in the cross is, verse four, resisting, striving against sin to the point of shedding blood. You know, I think a lot of us do strive against sin.

But to strive against sin to the point of shedding blood, that's the cross. You know, it's like to use a very simple example. If I were to take a pin, you know, some parts of our body, palm or heart, or let's take the soles of our feet, which are harder, perhaps the hardest part of our bodies, the soles of our feet, and you take a safety pin and poke your sole at the heel, and you can tolerate it.

Shall I press it in a little more? Yeah, sure. But a certain point comes, you say, hey, no more. You permit that pin to come to a certain point, but when it penetrates the skin and begins to shed blood, say no, I don't want that.

I'll permit it up to a point. It's a good illustration of how some people resist sin. Yeah, I don't want to do it.

I don't want to do it. I'll resist it, resist it. But when it really comes to the point where you have to die, say no, not that much.

It says here he strove against sin to the point of shedding blood. The meaning is, I would rather die than sin. Shedding blood is a picture of death.

Jesus' attitude was, I would rather die than displease God, my father. I would rather die than commit sin. That's the struggle in Gethsemane.

You know, in Gethsemane, it was like the pin poking. Oh, should I drink this cup? Should I drink this cup being forsaken by the father on the cross? Should I drink it? Isn't there any other way? Struggle for one hour. Father said, no other way.

Okay. He bowed his head and said, I'm willing to die. Striving against sin is disobedience to the father.

Striving against sin to the point of shedding blood. And when he hung on the cross, he didn't come down. He had the power.

He told Peter, I can call 72,000 angels to come and fight for me right now. But he wouldn't. He died alone.

Imagine having the power to call 72,000 angels and not calling one of them because he wanted to resist sin unto death. That means he wanted to obey the father, whatever the cost. And that cost was death to self and self-will.

What was Jesus will? I don't want to drink this cup. What was the father's will? Drink the cup. Something similar to the conflict Eve faced in Eden.

What was the father's will? Don't eat the tree of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. What was Eve's will? I want to taste it. Conflict.

My will or God's will? Eve said, my will. All the problems you see in your life and the world around you started there. When one human being said to God, not thy will, but mine.

Don't ever forget that. And all the problems in your life will continue as long as you keep saying to God, not thy will, but mine. I'll marry whom I like, not the one you choose.

I'll take the job I like, not the one you choose. I'll go where I like, not where you want me to go. And when people irritate me, I'll tell them what I feel like, not what you tell me to say.

Remember Eve, you're going that way. All the confusion and chaos started there and will continue. Where did salvation come? When one human being bowed before the father and said, not my will, but thine.

That's where salvation came. And all the beauty there was in Jesus' life was because he said that every day for 33 and a half years. And that's called the new and living way.

And that is the veil that was rent. What was rent? This self-will was rent for 33 and a half years. And at the end of it, as a public testimony that God was saying, this son of mine hanging on the cross for 33 and a half years, he never did his own will.

It is your will, my children, that is the thick veil that hinders you from coming into my presence. Here is one man who rent it. And I testified to it publicly by tearing the veil in the temple.

The people in the old Testament didn't understand what that veil was. Now we know. Turn to Hebrews in chapter 10.

Hebrews chapter 10, we read verse 19. We have confidence to enter, this is the most holy place, right into God's presence. Why are so many Christians hesitant to come into God's presence? Do you have confidence to come into God's presence? The way I test myself in this is like this.

I know that when Jesus comes, we are all going to stand at his judgment seat. One by one, our turn will come to be judged. Second Corinthians 5.10 says that very clearly, for everything we did on the earth, our entire earthly life will be played like a videotape on a screen.

Our whole life will be played up there right from the time we were born again. The time before we are born again, it's not going to be there because it's all blotted out. But from the day you were born again, every single thing you thought, did, spoke, wrong motives, wrong attitudes, right motives, right energies, everything's going to be played back on the screen.

And that's going to happen to all of us, whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not. And the way, the question I ask myself is this. Supposing Jesus were to come, I use my imagination to think like that.

Jesus has come and he set up his judgment seat and all the believers are standing there. And the Lord asks a question, who volunteers first to have his life exposed? What do you say? Will you go to the back of the queue or will you say, yes, Lord, me? I want to say that. That's the meaning of confidence.

I believe I can say that today. If Christ were to come today, yes, Lord, me. It's not only me.

The apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4, verse 4, I know nothing against myself. It doesn't mean he never sinned. It meant that as soon as he sinned, like you, if a thorn gets into your foot, you pull it out immediately.

Immediately he would set it right with God and with man. He would confess to God, ask forgiveness from men and set it right. He won't dilly-dally like a lot of Christians today.

How long do you dilly-dally to take out a thorn from your foot? The problem is you think a thorn in your foot will do more damage to you than sin in your heart. That's how blind Christians are. That's why they don't ask forgiveness from somebody they hurt.

If you really realized what damage sin does to your heart, as soon as you hurt your wife or husband, you would ask forgiveness. You wouldn't even wait till the evening. You would ask forgiveness.

And if you're aware of it, only when you got to the office and say, hey, I'm sorry, you'd set it right. That's how we are to live every day. With every sin confessed and blotted out.

And then all those areas of my videotape where I've confessed will be cleansed and blotted out. All the ugly, evil things I did even after I was a believer will be blotted out. Now some clever fellow will say, ah, then it's easy.

It doesn't matter how much I sin. I just confess it. It's all blotted out.

And I will not be ashamed in the day of judgment. No, you will still be. Because a lot of people will see huge blank areas of tape and wonder what happened during all this hours of blank tape running by.

Uh-huh. You're still going to be embarrassed. I don't want those hours of blank tape running by on that final day.

I want to walk in the fear of God every day. Hebrews chapter 10. We have boldness to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, first of all, because it's only the blood of Jesus Christ we shed on the cross that can cleanse my sin.

Clean out that part of my videotape completely. And listen to this. By a new and living way which he inaugurated.

You know, like cut the ribbon. Haven't you seen these buildings that are open? They cut the ribbon. The God cut the ribbon.

Jesus inaugurated a way through the veil, and that veil is his flesh. Now we understood what the veil is. Now, when it says flesh, he's not talking about the physical flesh.

He's talking about what the Bible calls about the flesh lusts against the spirit. It's a word the Bible uses for self-will. My self-willed life, my self-centered life, that is the flesh.

That's the thing that blocked off people from getting into God's presence. And it's not enough to confess your sin, the blood of Jesus, that's great. That takes part of your past.

But the veil is also to be rent. There is a self-willed life you have, which if you don't allow God to rent it and break it and humble you, you'll never enter into God's presence. You'll live outside the veil all your life, and you'll just be a religious person like the Pharisees.

There's a wonderful way that Jesus opened up for us. It says he inaugurated it for us. It's like one of these new roads that's a broad four-lane highway that's opened up, say, to the airport or somewhere.

The old ditch road is still lying there by the side. How many of you would still want to go by that old ditch road full of mud and rubbish when the broad four-lane highway is there? Jesus has inaugurated a way right into the Father's presence where it's easy to go there, but it's the way of death to self. It's the way which the devil says it's a hard way.

It's not a hard way. There's a joy set before us. We have to endure it, sure, but there's a joy set before us.

That's the meaning of that rent veil. Now, the question is, how many of us really are serious about wanting to get to the Father's presence? We say so many wonderful things on Sunday morning. It's like the story of a man who's had a girlfriend and wrote to her, I'll cross mountains and rivers and come under barbed wire and everything to get to you.

If there's fire or earthquakes along the way, I'll cross them all and I'll come to you. And the last line is, I'll see you tomorrow if it doesn't rain. It's all poetic language.

Oh Lord, there's nobody like you. I love you so much that heaven and earth will pass away, but you and I will be forever. What about tomorrow when you're asked to deny your will in some situation in your home or your office, or you go to humble yourself? It's like that lover.

It's a little inconvenient. I'm not going to do it. We're fooling ourselves, brothers and sisters.

You don't become spiritual because you acknowledged everything I said today. Oh boy, that was a great sermon. That doesn't make you spiritual.

You'll find out tomorrow when you deny your will, or even this afternoon perhaps, when you have to deny your will, you'll discover whether you really want to be a spiritual Christian or you're happy to be a religious person like Cain, who offered up things to God, God never accepted it. There was no fire that came on Cain's altar, and there will be no fire in your life if you don't go this way. But those who go this way, the fire of God, the mighty anointing of the Holy Spirit will rest upon them all the time.

So whenever you see a mighty anointed man or woman, be sure of one thing, that man's paid a price, that woman's paid a price for the radiance of Christ to shine through them. And you can have it too, because the way into the most holy place is open. The veil has been rent.

You don't have to rent it again. It's already rent. You just got to go that way.

Let's pray. So while our heads are bowed in prayer, you know what particular thing God spoke to you today? Dear brothers and sisters, God loves you intensely. That's why he sent Jesus not only to die and shed his blood to take away your sins, but also to open a way through the veil at such tremendous cost.

The cross of Calvary was only six hours. The cross in his life was for 33 and a half years. That's the way.

He shed his blood for six hours on the cross, but he walked the way and rent his flesh for 33 and a half years. That's the way he invites us to walk. He's a forerunner.

May God help us to go that way. Respond to him and say, Lord, help me open my eyes that I see this way every day of my life. And for the joy set before me, I will choose the way that Jesus chose.

Thank you, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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