

# (The Missing Messages in Today's Christianity) the Cross and Our Self-Will

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of understanding true repentance and the daily commitment to self-denial through the cross in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 56:13

**Scripture:** Psalm 90:12, Proverbs 3:13, Matthew 6:33, John 12:25, Galatians 6:14

**Topics:** "Christianity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of applying the teachings of the Bible to our daily lives. He criticizes the exaggerated and artificial way some preachers speak, urging for a more genuine and authentic approach. The preacher highlights the division between the soul and spirit, as mentioned in Hebrews 4:12, and challenges the audience to understand and embrace this concept. He also emphasizes the significance of Jesus' repeated statement about being born again, suggesting that the devil tries to make people ignore it.

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## Transcript

We continue to think about the missing messages in Christendom. Yesterday we spoke about repentance. Now, there are some groups in Christendom that emphasize repentance.

I want to mention that also. But it is emphasized in such a legalistic way that it leads people into bondage and condemnation. Repentance, as I said yesterday, if it's really done in the proper way, is like having a shower or a bath.

You shouldn't feel condemned or discouraged or gloomy at the end of it. You should feel thrilled. It's like got rid of some dirt.

It's like throwing out the stinking garbage from your kitchen. Do you feel happy about that or not? That's repentance. So a repentance that leads to gloom and self-condemnation and long face, that is the devil's counterfeit.

So everything that there is in scripture, you can be pretty sure the devil has got a counterfeit if it is a valuable thing. If it's not a valuable thing, he doesn't make a counterfeit of it. There's plenty of counterfeit tongues, speaking in tongues, and that's why I believe that tongues is useful.

I mean, that to me is the clearest proof. Anything that the devil counterfeits, there must be something genuine which is valuable. So you can be pretty sure that counterfeit repentance is also there.

Do you know that the Bible says Judas repented? It says that. But he didn't go to heaven. It's possible for you to have a repentance like Judas and go to hell.

So we must be careful. Anything that is done in obedience to God will always bring joy. If it doesn't bring joy, it's a counterfeit.

Take that as a guideline. Because the Bible says in Hebrews 1.9, God, because Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity, God anointed him with the oil of gladness. So if you love righteousness and obey God, you'll have more gladness than anybody else.

The true Christian who is filled with the Holy Spirit should be the happiest person in the whole world. Not just in the meetings. Meeting happiness can be a deception.

It's a working up of the emotions very often. But true joy is something that's lasting 24 hours of the day, 365 days of the year. If you don't have that, seek for it.

That's what the Bible says. Rejoice in the Lord always. It's not possible in the Old Testament times.

So there are many things like that. We could spend a whole month talking about the messages that are missing in Christianity. But here's another thing I want to share this morning.

And that is concerning the cross. The way of the cross. You know, I believe this is one of the major things missing in Christendom today.

And even a lot of people who talk about taking up the cross don't really know what it means. So I want to explain. I don't believe I can explain every aspect of it in one session.

But I want to try and explain something of what Jesus meant. When he said in Luke 9, 23, that if anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. Every day.

He never told us to read the Bible every day. He told us to pray always. But something he told us to do every day was taking up the cross.

And when I was a young Christian, I went to an assembly where I never heard one message on the cross in the six years I was there. And then I went to another group of assemblies where they used to speak about the cross, but nobody took it up. Nobody knew what it was.

It was just a nice expression, taking up the cross. It's like some difficult English word which you don't know the meaning of. And you hear it and you just don't look up the dictionary.

And you think that is the meaning. That's not really the meaning. I find for many Christians taking up the cross is like that.

I want to show you a verse in John's Gospel, chapter 12. In John's Gospel, chapter 12, verse 25, Jesus said, You'll hardly ever hear a sermon on this verse, I'll tell you that. He who loves his life loses it.

And he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. I challenge you to find a message on that on the Internet or in television. Very rare, almost impossible to find someone who will preach on that

verse.

Because people don't like to hear what Jesus said. And I want to tell you something. Of all the statements that Jesus made, the statement that is repeated the most number of times in the four Gospels, seven times, is this statement.

Are you surprised that the devil has made a lot of people ignore it completely? Naturally. If that is the statement that Jesus made that is repeated by the Holy Spirit seven times in the four Gospels, more than any other statement that Jesus made, you can be pretty sure the devil is going to make people ignore it. You must be born again.

Jesus never said that. It's not repeated as often. He said it, but it's not repeated as often as this verse.

Haven't you heard lots of sermons on you must be born again? It's very important. But it's only found in one chapter, in John chapter three. But this statement is found in every Gospel.

In one form or the other. What does it mean to hate my life? Now, in the original Greek language in which the New Testament is written, there are different words for our physical life and our soul life. You know, we have a physical life and we have a soul life.

And I'll explain the difference between the two. Physical life is this which we understand, our physical body. It dies physically.

We are buried and put in the grave. And he's not talking about our hating our physical life. That means you don't feed your body.

You don't take a bath and you don't, you neglect this physical body. He's not talking about that at all. We're not supposed to hate our physical body.

We're supposed to care for it. It's the temple of the Holy Spirit. How can he tell you to destroy the temple of the Holy Spirit? How can he tell you to hate the temple of the Holy Spirit? Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

I don't have to hate my physical life. In fact, in Ephesians 5, it says there's no man who has hated his own flesh, his physical flesh. Nobody.

It says you must love your wife like you love your own body. Everybody loves his body. So this is not the word used here.

He's talking about our soul life. And once you understand that, you understand to take up the cross is to put that soul life to death. To hate that soul life.

And it's because I love this soul life that I get offended when somebody corrects me. I've seen numerous believers in our churches who have sat here for 20-30 years who still get offended. Brothers and sisters.

They get offended. Why? Because they have never understood in 30 years what it means to hate their soul life. You hear about the cross.

You hear about the cross. As I said, it's like hearing some English word. You don't know the meaning of it and you assume you know it.

You don't know it. And I tell you, this is the reason for the lack of spiritual progress because it's through the way of the cross that our capacity expands. You know how a child's body grows and his mind begins to expand? In the same way, our spiritual capacity from the time we are born again must expand.

It's like a little cup in the beginning where we can have a little bit of water. And even if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, it's only a cup that's filled. God wants it to become the size of a bucket, the size of a tub, the size of a lake, the size of a river, and finally the size of many rivers that are filled.

So the fullness of the Spirit is something we got to keep on experiencing in greater and greater measure. But this capacity will increase only if you know what it is to take up the cross every day. If you know what it is to hate your soul life.

If I hate my soul life, I will never get offended. No matter who says what to me or who doesn't say what. There are people who get offended if you don't shake their hands.

I wonder if such people are even born again. There are some people who get offended if you don't smile at them on a Sunday morning. You think such people are born again? They don't have a clue about Christianity.

They are unconverted people with a whitewash of religion and sit in the church. Overcoming getting offended is the kindergarten lesson. And I want to tell every one of you in the name of Jesus.

If you get offended, you're still in the kindergarten. And many of you have not got out of the kindergarten. I have to say that.

I have personally seen people who get offended who have been in the church 20, 30 years. They're in the kindergarten. You know, there's a gloom about their face when you correct them or they hear something bad said about them.

They're so happy whenever somebody says something good about them. They're in the kindergarten. They love their soul life.

They love to hear people praise them. You know, you love to hear people praise you. You are in the kindergarten.

You don't hate your soul life. A man who's put his soul life to death, he couldn't care less for the praise of people. And he's not offended when people criticize him.

And I'll tell you something. I have been corrected in my younger days much more than any of you have been corrected in your entire life. And I decided I would die.

People have called me worse names than any of you have been called. You put all the bad names all of you got together and people have called me worse names than that. It doesn't disturb me.

People have praised me more than any of you have been praised. It doesn't make a difference to me because I know their opinion is fit for the garbage bin. I know it's only God's opinion about me that matters.

So I appreciate their words of appreciation. I don't despise them. I don't try to have an artificial humility when somebody comes and thanks me or appreciates me.

I accept it fine. But I know in my heart of hearts, it's God's opinion that matters. You have to give an opportunity to people, you know, to express their appreciation or give you a gift.

Take it. But don't set your heart on it and begin to think you're a wonderful man because of that. Oh no.

It's because our soul life has not been hated and put to death that we have so many problems in our Christian life. And I tell you that's the reason why you so often get discouraged. That's why you get depressed.

I was like that. You know, 35 years ago, I used to be so depressed so frequently, more than most of you anyway. And I'll tell you the honest truth before God today.

I am never depressed or discouraged. Never. No matter what happens or what doesn't happen.

I didn't even get discouraged when I got into court and stood there. Because I hate my soul life. I decided long ago that I can never follow Jesus if I don't hate my soul life.

It's not enough to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I have to, if I seek to, if I don't hate my soul life, it says here that I will, if you love your life, you will lose it. If I love my reputation.

Why are you disturbed when your reputation has been taken away because somebody said something bad about you? It's because you love your soul life. If it completely does not affect you that somebody is spoiling your reputation, then you hate your soul life. And God, God allows many things to happen in our life to help us to hate our soul life.

But we fight against it and we don't realize we are fighting against God. We are not humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God. And so He is not able to exalt us.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 5, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you. I want to be exalted. I don't want to be exalted to become some king or president or even be exalted in the church to get some title as some reverend or even recognized by others as some prophet.

It means nothing to me. It means absolutely zero. But I do want to be exalted by God over sin, over my self life, over Satan, over depression, gloom, discouragement, jealousy, all of that.

I want to be exalted above all that. That's what I want to be exalted over. And the Bible says, God will exalt you if you humble yourself under His mighty hand.

And His mighty hand is those circumstances by which He takes away my reputation. He makes people do harm to me and speak evil to me. And I humble myself and say, God, that's not that man.

That's not Judas Iscariot. That is the cup which my father has sent me. Shall I not drink it? You say that.

Follow Jesus. Don't look at people and say, he did this to me and he did that to me and he promised to do this and he didn't do this. No! Hate your soul life and say, that was the cup which my father gave me to drink and I will drink it.

If you see Judas Iscariot, you'll be like Peter to take out the sword and swipe at that fellow. And you know, when you put a long face at somebody who has spoken evil of you, that's like taking a sword and swiping at him. That's the equivalent of swiping at his ear with a sword.

Can you smile at the one who has spoken evil of you? I can. I honestly say I can. Because I hate my soul life.

That's not a great thing. In fact, Jesus said, you've got to do it every day if you want to follow me. I want to follow Jesus.

Many of us sing about following Jesus, but we don't really want to follow Him. And I want to say to you, those of you, I don't believe all of you have ears to hear. I hope you have, but I don't think so, because I preached in CFC for 30 years and I've discovered many people just sit there, they remain the same, which proves to me they don't have ears to hear.

But I believe some of you have ears to hear and I want to say to you who have ears to hear, if you really want to follow Jesus, you're a young person, please take this seriously. Decide, Lord, I want to follow you and it won't be just in choruses and songs. It will be actually and I cannot follow you unless I hate my soul life every day.

Every day I have an opportunity, somebody will do something to me today or not do something which I expect him to do for me and I have an opportunity to either die to myself or feel sorry for myself. Oh, he didn't take care of me. Oh, he didn't speak nicely to me.

I'll also have an opportunity to get puffed up when somebody says something nice to me. Ah, I feel nice there. Those are the opportunities you'll get today and every day of your life to die.

If you die, you will find eternal life, it says. I want to get eternal life. I want to keep it for life eternal.

I want to keep the soul for life eternal, not for this temporary life on this earth. Do you hear much of that preached today? Seven times in the four Gospels. I don't have time to show it to all of you.

You read about it in Matthew chapter 10, Luke chapter 9. There are a number of places where this same expression is taught in different ways. He who loses his life, that is his soul life, gives it up. Now I want to go back to Genesis chapter 2 and see, you know that story of the two trees.

What do those two trees symbolize? One is a life of dependence on yourself and the other is a life of dependence on God. That's basically what those two trees symbolize. The knowledge of good and evil.

Knowledge. When it comes into me, you can say, what's wrong with the knowledge of good and evil? Essentially nothing wrong with the knowledge of good and evil. Don't we want our children to know what is good and evil? That it's not good to put stones and mud into your mouth? And it's good to eat good food? Don't we know as we grow up that we need to take some exercise that's good for us? And a little bit of education is good for us? I mean, these things, what is wrong in knowing good and evil? The danger there is when I don't seek God for my knowledge of good and evil, but I seek to know myself what is good and evil.

If I want to know what television program is good and what is evil, you can either depend on your own cleverness or you can depend on God. I depend on God. Because I don't know.

And I say, Lord, I want you to give me a witness in my spirit when I'm seeing something or reading a book, whether you feel this is good for me. And if I feel a witness in my spirit that that's not good, I reject it. It may look very good to another Christian.

Let him do it. Let him destroy himself if he wants to. That's fine.

But I'm not going to choose it. You see, there are two levels at which you can live the Christian life. You read that in 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 12.

Let me show that to you. In 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 12, it says, All things are lawful for me, but all things are not profitable. Here's another message.

It's all related. That's missing in today's Christendom. Are you going to just choose what is lawful? Or among the hundred lawful things, are you going to choose the ten things that are profitable? That's going to be the spiritual Christian.

Let me say that again. There may be a hundred things that are righteous and proper and good to do. Out of that, only ten things may be profitable.

And if all your life you choose what is profitable and not just everything lawful, you'll become a spiritual person. But if you keep on asking this question, What is lawful? What is unlawful? In fact, a lot of young people's question-answer time, the question is, What's wrong with this? In other words, they are trying to find the borderline between what is right and wrong. What is the borderline? It's like children who stand on a railway platform and have a competition.

Who can stand closest to the edge of the platform when the train is coming by? I'm not in that competition. I say, You can win that competition. I'm going to stay a little far away.

I'm not in that competition like little children. Or little children go to the edge of a cliff, and who can stand nearest to the edge of the cliff? Or some young people have competition in western countries where they drive cars faster than each other and say, Who will turn away first? It's a game called chicken. Of course, in India, we play it all the time on the roads.

But the amazing thing is we don't have as many accidents as those people who play chicken in the west. Who can turn away first? I'm not in that game. You know, what is the maximum you can do without going into sin? I'm not interested.

I want to try and find out how far away can I stay from sin? How far away can I stay from the edge of the cliff? Lawful and profitable. And all of us are living life at one of these two levels if you're born again. Of course, if you're not born again, then you go into unlawful, which is another level altogether.

But if you're born again and you decide that certain things are wrong, I'm never going to do it, there are a lot of things that are good. Do you know that you can spend 24 hours a day without sin, without committing sin in a lot of good things and never become spiritual? Because among all the hundred good things, you did not choose the ten profitable things. And the difference between you and another Christian who grew much more than you in five years is because in those five years, he chose the profitable things consistently.

He chose to spend his time and his money and his energy and his knowledge and his wisdom for that which is profitable. Whereas you didn't do evil, you spent your time doing a whole lot of lawful things and you say, what did I do wrong? No, you never did anything wrong, but you didn't grow spiritually either. Because you didn't take up the cross.

Your soul life has got so many interests. My soul life has got so many interests. And if I don't put some of them to death, I'll never become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

There are a lot of things we'd like to talk about, but I don't have time for it. A lot of things I could spend my time with. I don't have time for it.

This is how the Bible gets neglected by a lot of people. So it's not enough to just cleanse ourselves from filthiness of the flesh. We also need to cleanse ourselves from the pollution of the spirit.

You know, in the Old Testament, they could not do this. There was no question of lawful and profitable in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is cut and dry, right and wrong.

Something was right, something was wrong. But in the New Testament, after the Holy Spirit has come, He teaches us to live like Jesus, where not only I do what is right, but like I repeat, let me repeat, out of the hundred right things, I choose to do only the ten things that are profitable, because I don't have time for everything else. See this prayer of Moses in Psalm 90.

Psalm 90, Moses said, Psalm 90 and verse 12. Beautiful prayer. It's the only psalm that Moses wrote in the book of Psalms.

It says here in verse 12, Teach us, Lord, to number our days, so that we may present to you a heart of wisdom, or as some translations say, so that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. That means to do those things that are wisest. That is to choose the tree of life.

See the tree of knowledge of good and evil just tells me two categories. Good, evil, that's it. The tree of knowledge of evil will not tell me among all the good things, which are the profitable things.

So when you live by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, your mind only says, is this right, is it wrong? It's right. My conscience doesn't disturb me about it, I do it. You can live like that and be a good Christian, but you'll never grow spiritually.

Because you're living by the principle of right and wrong. Good and evil. Whereas the tree of life is altogether different.

There, you wait for the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and out of a hundred right things, the Holy Spirit may tell you to knock out ninety of them from your life. Because the Holy Spirit says, listen, you've got only one life. You don't have time to do all those ninety other things.

If you do it, you'll miss the will of God. I mean, you take the life of Jesus. Don't you think he could have taken a holiday to go and see Rome? Capital city of the world.

There were people giving him enough money, he could have bought a ticket and gone to Rome. What would have been wrong with it? He never asked anybody for money, people gave him money. Why didn't he go to Rome? He wouldn't have sinned in Rome, Jesus wouldn't have sinned anywhere in the world.

He said, no, I don't have time for it, because God's given me only three and a half years to complete my ministry, and if I divert my time during those three and a half years to other things, I'll never do the will of God. Now, don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying you shouldn't have a holiday.

We've got more than three and a half years. Many of us have got 30, 40, 50 years to do God's work, and sometimes we need a holiday. In fact, Jesus once told his disciples, come apart and rest a while.

We need that. What I'm saying is, in everything, the spiritual man seeks the will of God. If he takes a holiday and he takes a vacation, it's not for fun.

It's because he needs rest in his body. He needs time off. If he has some form of recreation, it's because he wants to unwind his mind so that his mind can be more alert to serve the Lord.

I do that. I don't read the Bible the whole time and pray the whole time. I need to unwind sometimes my mind so that I'm fresh and fit, just like we need to sleep.

We don't know how to keep awake the whole time. So don't misunderstand me. But the point is that in everything, we seek the glory of God.

It may be profitable sometimes to go and play games. I tell you, playing games together with other believers builds a lot of fellowship between people, sometimes better than sitting in a meeting. I've seen that.

A lot of fellowship between people is built by playing games. We saw that in our recent youth camp. It's playing together that brings greater fellowship than sometimes sitting in a meeting.

So is that playing together profitable? Of course it is. So don't think profitable means that is this right-wrong understanding. Reading the Bible, that's profitable.

Playing games is unprofitable. This is legalism. That's not being led by the Holy Spirit.

Do you know what they do in the New Jerusalem? Let me tell you. In the book of Zechariah, chapter 8, it's one of my favorite verses. In Zechariah, chapter 8, it says, it's talking about the New Jerusalem in verse 4, and thus says, The Lord will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, and the Lord of hosts came saying, I am jealous for Zion, and I will return, verse 3, to Zion and dwell.

When the Lord dwells in the midst of Jerusalem, that is when He establishes His kingdom on the earth, what are the young boys and girls going to do? You'll say, fast and pray? No. Verse 5, it says, they're going to be playing. They're probably going to play cricket, and the American children will play baseball, and somebody else will play something else, and I think Jesus will join in.

Can you believe that? Or do you think He's going to call everybody to fast and pray? We've got wrong ideas about what Jesus is like. It's the Bible that says that. They're going to be playing in the streets.

So, when I say profitable, don't think always this legalistic idea that meetings, prayer, fasting, Bible reading, some of the people who emphasize that are some of the most carnal Christians I've ever met. The Christian life is a balanced life. He created our spirit, soul, and body.

But there was one part of this that people could not enter into in the Old Testament. Let me show you Hebrews 4. In Hebrews 4, we read in verse 12, I want to ask you, how many of you have understood this verse? The word of God is living and sharper than a two-edged sword. That part we know.

It's very sharp. But it says it pierces as far as the division of soul and spirit. Do you know that there are some Christians who don't believe there is a division between soul and spirit? That's how blind people can

be.

In 1 Thessalonians 5.23, it says, Man is spirit, soul, and body. There are three parts of man. Just like there are three persons in God.

God is a trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And man was made in God's image.

And there's a trinity in man. Spirit, soul, and body. The body is this part we see.

The soul is our personality, which is our mind, our feelings, and our will. And the spirit is deeper than that. It's in our spirit that we have a conscience.

A person can have a very alert soul and a dead spirit. That means his conscience is dead, even though he's very brilliant in his mind. Spirit is the deepest part of man and it is dead.

Most of it is dead in an unconverted person. He's got a little bit of conscience that stirs up there, a little bit of the image of God there, but most of it is dead. And when we are born again, it is the spirit that comes alive.

And the conscience becomes sensitive to sin. And God's purpose is that the spirit will become more and more alive and rule the whole body. We're not supposed to destroy our soul.

I don't believe in destroying my mind. I use my mind a lot for my regular work in the world and for studying the Bible. But my soul and my feelings don't run my life.

The trouble with people in the world is their mind runs their life. Or the trouble with many Christians is their feelings run their life. I was like that in the early days of my life when I was a Christian.

I didn't know... I felt nice one day, depressed another day and my feelings ran my life. And my feelings made life miserable for other people who came in touch with me. A lot of Christians are like that.

They're gloomy one day and happy another day because they haven't learned to divide between soul and spirit. They haven't learned to live in the spirit. They're living in the soul.

Living in the soul means living in your intellect or living by your feelings. When you live by your feelings, you can be depressed yourself and you can depress other people. To divide... When the Word of God divides between soul and spirit and I learn to live by my spirit, my spirit determines my soul, how it's going to function.

And the wonderful thing is it even begins to control my body that my body becomes healthier. God's will is that the spirit should rule our soul and body. A picture in the Old Testament tabernacle.

If you have seen a picture of the Old Testament tabernacle, that tent, the tabernacle was a big compound, an open compound surrounded by a white sheet. That is a picture which everybody could see. It's a picture of the body which everybody can see.

Inside that compound was a tent cover. And that tent had two parts which is a picture of soul and spirit. And the first part is a picture of the soul and the second part called the most holy place was a picture of the spirit.

And that was the tabernacle of God, a God's dwelling place symbolized body, soul and spirit. And that spirit was the most holy place in front of which there was a thick curtain. And that thick curtain is a picture of your will, your strong will which refuses to be torn.

You see that in a little child, how stubborn it can be. It's a strong will. And that's why one of the most important things we need to do with little children is to break their stubborn will.

If you want them to grow to be spiritual when they are young. Have you heard the story of that little two-year-old boy who his father told him, sit down. He said, no, I'm not going to sit down.

Father said, sit down. No. So father took the stick and said, sit down.

He sat down and he said, Daddy, but I'm still standing up inside. Now the question is how do you make the child inside to sit down? That's difficult. You can use a stick and make the outside child sit down, but the inside wants to stand up.

Defiance. And one day when he's 18, 19 years old, he won't even sit down on the outside. He'll just defy you to your face and say, mind your own business.

That will is like that thick curtain. And nobody understood it in the Old Testament. Beyond that lay the most holy place where God dwells.

Teaching us that if this will is not broken, you will never get into fellowship with God. And I want to say to all of you who've got a strong, stubborn will, whether you're a husband or wife or anybody, if you don't let God break that will, you will never enter the most holy place. You will never have fellowship with God.

You'll have religion, like a lot of Christians have. But fellowship with God, which is the most wonderful experience that any human being can have. Do you know what is the result of fellowship with God? The Bible says in Psalm 16, 11, in His presence, there is fullness of joy.

You know where fullness of joy is? It is not in sex. It's not in money. It's not even in praise and worship meetings.

It is in His presence. And you can have that joy even if you can't sing for nuts. If you can't sing two lines properly.

Makes no difference. If this will is rent, you know what happened when Jesus died? The veil was rent from top to bottom, symbolizing what? Symbolizing that for 33 years, He allowed the Father to break His will, as a man. And to say, never my will, Father.

Never my will. Only Your will. The veil was rent.

And the way into the Father. That's why Jesus enjoyed fellowship with the Father all the time. You think that you can have fellowship with the Father just by a nice time of praise and worship.

And you know it doesn't last. You go out of that meeting, and in the afternoon, you are back to your old self. The veil has to be rent.

All this type of emotion is in the holy place, in the soul. It's in the soul. And many people don't understand it.

What many people call a baptism in the Holy Spirit is actually a baptism in the soul. And we need to distinguish between baptism in the soul and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Baptism in the Holy Spirit will rent this veil.

And take you into life in the Spirit, into fellowship with the Father. That's why it's very closely linked to the cross. The Bible says the Spirit led Jesus to the cross.

Have you read that verse? Hebrews chapter 9. See this verse. Hebrews chapter 9. And verse 14. Please turn in your Bibles if you want to become familiar with the Bible.

If you want to remain ignorant, please just listen to me. But if you want to become familiar with the Bible, turn to your verse in your Bibles. This is how many people remain ignorant.

Hebrews 9.14 Jesus Christ, in the middle of that verse, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself to God. Do you know how Jesus offered Himself to God on the cross? Through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will lead you to the cross.

Even today. He will lead you to the cross means He will lead you to the renting of the veil. He will lead you into fellowship with the Father.

The veil has already been rent. Fellowship with the Father is open. But you have to choose that way.

It's not a once for all event for you. In Hebrews chapter 10. And verse 21.

Verse 19 and 20. Brethren, since we have confidence to enter, this means the most holy place, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way. Not a door.

I hope you know the difference between a door and a way. A door is something you enter in a moment. A way is something that takes a whole lifetime.

And the veil is not called a door, even though it looks like a door. It's a way which Jesus inaugurated for us through the veil. That is His flesh.

And whenever you read the word flesh in this connection, always it means self-will. When we say Jesus had a flesh, it means He had a will of His own. Which He denied.

John 6.38 says, He denied it all His life. The Garden of Gethsemane, He denied it. That was the rending of the veil.

You've learned a lot of things this morning. I hope you'll apply it to your life. This is the veil that was rent in the temple.

The will of Jesus was broken. So that you could enter into fellowship with the Father. And that has taught me, I thank God that I understood this many years ago.

That I could have fellowship with the Father without ever going to a praise and worship meeting. By denying my will. By taking up my cross every day.

Saying no to my will. When somebody does something against my will. And I yield.

I say, ok. Do it your way. You know something happens to me.

I get into fellowship with the Father. The Father is delighted that I gave up my will. What is the reason for all the conflict between husband and wife in many homes? I'll tell you.

It's two strong people. A strong husband and a strong wife. Neither of them willing to yield their will.

Then the veil is still there. There's no fellowship with God. And there's conflict, conflict, conflict.

If one of them denies his will, there'll at least be peace in the home. If both deny their will, there'll be fellowship. Fellowship is higher than peace.

Peace is where one of the partners is still stubborn. But the other yields his will. Fellowship is where both yield their will.

Where both take up the cross. It's the same in a church. In the leadership of a church, you can have two strong elder brothers.

That's good to be strong. The church needs strong people. We don't need weaklings and sissies to lead the church.

We need strong people. But we need strong people who know how to yield their will. If you have two strong elders, and one is willing to yield, you have peace.

If both are willing to yield their will, you have fellowship. That's the way to build a church. And if others in the church follow that example, it'll become a blessed church.

Where fellowship increases and increases. Nobody gets offended because they see everything as an opportunity to die to their own will. And they know that each time the veil is rent, we have fellowship with the Father.

That's why we need to have light on ourselves. I'll tell you honestly, you know, many of you who know me know I'm a very strong person. God made me like that.

But what you probably don't know is that many a time I've learned to yield my own will. Because I want fellowship with God. That's so important for me.

I'd rather give up everything else in the world and not have my own way in anything if I can have fellowship with God. Value it, my brother. If you value your own will and you want your own way more than fellowship with God, God will see that and you'll have your own way.

But you'll miss fellowship with God. And many a time in your life, you have missed fellowship with God in your church, in your home. Don't make that mistake again.

Fellowship with God is the most wonderful thing in the whole world. Joy comes through fellowship with God. What many people call joy is this superficial emotion.

Emotion is a part of the soul. Many a time the feelings that you have when you sing very moving songs. You know, songs like, I should have been crucified.

I should have suffered and died. But a voice from heaven said, Let him go. Take me instead.

Oh, that moves me. Or when I hear he had no tears for his own griefs, but sweat drops of blood for mine. It moves me.

I'm not saying we should kill our feelings. It moves me. I weep when I think of Jesus' sufferings.

But I know spirituality doesn't come through tears. Spirituality comes through denying my own will. Many a people who get very moved in the worship time, in the praise and thanksgiving time, they go out and remain exactly the same afterwards.

They fight just as much on Sunday afternoon with their husbands and wives as they did all their life, even though they say they had a wonderful time of praise and worship. It's a deception. It's the deception which is most prevalent in Christendom today.

You can listen to a message like this and get all stirred. And say, Boy, I have understood the secret of spirituality now. Have you? We'll test that next week.

Ask your husband to tell you. Ask your wife to tell you whether you understood the secret of spirituality. Not this week.

This week we are all spiritual. We look very holy. It will be next week that it is tested.

In our place of work, in our home, when things go wrong, when things don't go the way you want it to go, you will discover in that day whether you have understood to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and let go this soul-life of yours. Let it be killed. Let it die, so that from it can come another life, a resurrection life, the life of Jesus.

That is the way of Christianity, of true Christianity. And He who has found it has found the secret of perpetual joy, of perpetual overcoming. He has found the secret of being in touch with God, a God who can solve every problem.

He is always triumphant. How do you think Paul could say in 2 Corinthians 2.14, Thanks be to God who leads us in triumph always. I used to read verses like that and say, Lord, there is a secret men like Paul had which I haven't discovered yet.

And I was determined to discover it. And that's where the Lord showed me the way of the cross. When I was seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit, even as a young man, the Lord pointed me to the way of the cross.

The way of the cross is the answer to everything. Death to the soul life. Death to this Adamic life.

When Adam chose the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he was choosing soul life over spiritual life. I want to develop my soul. And there are people in the world today who have developed the soul so much.

Ungodly people. Hypnotism. They develop the soul power so much, they can hypnotize people.

You submit to them, they will hypnotize you. They can cut your hand and you won't feel any pain. That is the power of the soul.

I've heard of people who can bend a steel spoon just by the power of their mind. Can you believe that? Who can move a physical object with the power of their mind. It's amazing the power of mind.

I'm not asking you to develop all that. But I'm just saying that this is what Adam chose. The way of developing the soul and yoga and Hinduism and Buddhism have got a lot of this in it.

Unfortunately, a lot of Christian preachers. Because you don't have discernment, you may not know it. But I can see it when I watch some of these people on Christian television.

I can see that is soul. It's not spirit. You know, there are deliberate emphases made in the way they speak to stir your emotions.

There are techniques that preachers have developed. Play the music a little softly while I give an invitation. And the people are moved and sing a song slowly.

Move people's emotions. And use certain emphases when you speak, come to Jesus and do this. You know, this type of stuff.

Have you heard it? You watch these TV programs, you'll see it. It's all soul. It's not the way normally speak.

He doesn't speak to his wife saying, how are you, darling? They don't speak like that to their wife. That's only to fool you. We are supposed to talk normally.

Do you think Jesus spoke in a different way when He preached? He is speaking absolutely normally. Whenever a person speaks in a different tone, you know the guy is being artificial. It's soul power to move people.

And because this preacher knows that 99% of people sitting there are all dumb spiritually, they can't discern between soul and spirit, they can't discern between feelings and the Holy Spirit, they all swallow this pie. Brother, have you heard this man? I say, I've heard plenty of people like him. The power of the Holy Spirit is so different.

Whenever you hear a man, ask yourself, do you think Jesus would have spoken like that? You see all these people who carry a mic and run up and down the platform? That's why in the CFC we made the platform so small that people won't have time or place to run around. We eliminate all those preachers automatically. But they run around to just whip up your emotions.

And there are other places where they have drums, you know, and they meet in the drum faster and faster and faster and they bounce on their knees more and more and more. And finally, the spirit is gone. What is this? It's deception.

It's baptism of the soul being counterfeited as baptism in the Holy Spirit. Feelings. That is why I tell people, any experience that you had in an emotionally tense meeting, put a big question mark on it.

If you got a so-called baptism in the Holy Spirit in some emotionally worked up meeting, what you probably got was a baptism of the soul. Maybe you spoke in tongues. There are Muslims who speak in tongues.

There are Buddhists who speak in tongues. So what? I've actually heard a person who spoke in tongues when the demon was cast out. He stopped speaking in tongues.

Demons speak in tongues. That is a genuine speaking in tongues too. The genuine tongues edifies us.

It's not the repetition of three, four syllables back and forth, back and forth for two minutes. No. It's a language.

And you know the difference between language and baby talk. A lot of what I hear in tongues in public is just baby talk. What is that? You can make out it's not a language.

But they are fooling people left and right. And tongues is primarily meant for our private communication with God. It's meant to help us because of the limitations of our mind in our communication with God.

That's why Jesus never needed it. Why didn't Jesus speak in tongues? Because He had no limitation in His mind in His communication with His Father. It's a temporary gift God has given us because of sin that has warped our mind and made our mind crooked and limited us.

A temporary gift God has given us on earth to communicate with the Father. Very useful. But it's primarily to communicate with the Father.

That's why when you go to heaven, you'll never speak in tongues for the rest of eternity. You don't need it. We need to understand these things.

And these are messages that are never spoken anywhere in Christendom because they want to fool people, keep them under subjection. You know, if you can move a person emotionally, hypnotize them, control them, make them subject to you. I know as a preacher, it's very easy to use my power as a preacher and the gift God has given me to make people subject to me and be afraid of me.

And I never use it like that. You can make money with it. You can get power with it.

You can get honor with it. And the moment I do that, I will be corrupting the gift God gave me. I learned that from when the devil told Jesus, Turn the stones into bread.

You were anointed 40 days ago. You've got power. Use the power to satisfy your personal need.

And Jesus said, No. And what the Lord taught me was any gift I give you must never be used by you to benefit yourself. You must not make money through it.

You must not get honor through it. You must not get anything for yourself through it. Zero.

But Jesus used that power to feed 5,000, to make bread for 5,000. And the Lord said, You can use the power I give you to bless other people, but never to get any profit for yourself. That's why I don't seek to make profit from my books, CDs, sermons, anything.

I'm amazed that people do all that in Christendom today because they don't understand what baptism in the Holy Spirit is, what denying your own will is. Look at the number of people who make money through selling Christian music. Can you imagine Jesus singing a song and asking you to pay for it? I'm amazed that people don't have light on these things.

How is it that we have a Christendom today that is so blind? I'll tell you, because they haven't discerned between soul and spirit. You know, there are people who use their mind, mind is a part of the soul, to say so many clever things. Have you heard those sermons which all begin with the letter A, all begin with the letter C, all begin with the letter P? Well, that's good if you want to help people to remember certain things.

But don't think it becomes more spiritual if you do it like that. Where in the Bible do you find Jesus speaking sermons all began with the letter A, all began with the letter C, all began with the letter P? You find Paul preaching like that? No, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that. Sometimes we need to put it like that to help people to remember it, but don't think it is more spiritual.

That's what I'm trying to say. Don't think that's a better sermon. Maybe people can remember it better.

Okay, if you want them to remember it, that's good. It's called alliteration, where all the letters, first letters are in a particular order. You find that in the Old Testament, in the book of Psalms, for example.

There were 22 alphabets in the Hebrew language, and you have 22 sets of 8 verses in Psalm 119, all with a different letter of the alphabet. In Lamentations, it's like that. You have 22, 22 verses, and chapter 4, 3 sections like that.

So they do it in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, you never find Jesus or Paul doing that. Most Christians live in the Old Covenant, so I'm not saying it's wrong. I'm just saying don't think it's spiritual.

That's all I'm saying. There are many things that people do, for example, you can have a nice looking building. There's nothing wrong in that.

But it doesn't make you more spiritual. Oh no. You can have a lot of instruments when you play music, when you sing songs.

It doesn't make it more spiritual. That's what I'm trying to say. I'm not against it.

I'm not against alliterations and sermons, but don't ever think that that was a better sermon. The best sermon is the one that challenged you to take up your cross and deny yourself and follow Jesus. And where you got convicted and you didn't get condemned, but you were encouraged and challenged to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

That is the best thing and that's what we need to hear. So we need to distinguish between that which merely stirs our feelings. I told you our soul is our mind, emotions and will.

And a lot of sermons I hear today are feeding the intellect with a lot of knowledge. It doesn't lead people to wisdom. Stir the feelings.

Stir the feelings. But the will remains unbroken. And so people don't fellowship with the Father.

It's all this excitement in the soul, but no penetration into life in the spirit. If you want to penetrate into life in the spirit, remember that thick veil has to be torn in your life. Symbolically, symbolizing your strong will.

There are many wonderful brothers who live good lives, but their will is so strong it's never been broken. And so they never become spiritual. I want to encourage you to see this, that the taking up the cross is to deny your own will.

That's what brings peace and fellowship in the home, peace and fellowship in the church and fellowship with God. When it says, we walk in the light, we have fellowship with God. To walk in the light is to deny my own will, to always do what God wants me to do.

Let's pray. Let's bow our heads. It doesn't matter if you cannot remember everything you heard this morning.

Have you understood the main message? Is there something you have discovered that you need to yield to God in your own life and make that a way of life in you? Then you've got the message. Heavenly Father, apply these truths to our daily lives, we pray, lest we increase in knowledge without it having any application in our life. Help us, each one, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

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