

The Most Important Commandment (Video)

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's love and the depth of our own sin to increase our love for Him. It highlights how the Pharisees misunderstood God's requirements and how Christians can make similar mistakes. The speaker shares personal experiences and insights on how keeping God's commandments is not a burden when rooted in love for Him.

Scripture: Matthew 22:35, Psalm 139:23, Luke 7:36, 1 Timothy 1:15, John 14:15

Topics: "God's Love", "Understanding Sin"

Description

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Transcript

I want to begin in Matthew's Gospel and chapter 22. The mistake that the Pharisees made when reading God's Word was to misunderstand what God required from them, first of all. And we can make the same mistake too.

I've discovered that if you study the Gospels and see the mistakes the Pharisees made, we can learn from them because I found Christians make the same mistakes. It's like that with the Old Testament. You read the mistakes that Israel made, you make the same mistakes.

If you don't read these passages then you don't learn. I would rather learn from the mistakes of others and not make those mistakes myself. There are two ways to learn.

One is you make the mistake yourself and bungle up your life or you watch other people and make them see the mistakes they made and learn from them. That's a better way because then you don't have to make it yourself. So there are many mistakes the Pharisees made and I'm not going to list all of them.

But one of them was they did not understand what was most important in God's eyes. They majored on, thank you, they majored on minors. You know what that means? That you give more importance to less important matters.

They majored on minors. And they felt the most important commandment was keep the Sabbath. That's pretty easy to do.

It's pretty easy. If someone were to say that you want to have a holiday, oh sure. So that is one holiday in the week.

They said great. That's the greatest commandment God has for you is you must have a holiday once a week. Who wouldn't want to have a commandment like that? That's the only thing God wants from me.

Live as you like the rest of the time but take one holiday a week. That was in their mind so much that they would judge others even if somebody plucked a grain from the in the fields or any little thing they did. And Jesus rebuked that.

You know the number of times in the Gospels you find Jesus rebuking the Pharisees for that. They wouldn't allow a man to be healed on the Sabbath day. And Jesus said if your donkey fell into the ditch on a Sabbath day would you pull it out? He had such direct statements.

You care more for your donkey and this man's hand is withered and I want to heal him and you won't heal him but want him to be healed because it's Sabbath day. So what shall we learn from that? And that's why the Pharisees could not keep all of God's commandments. That's why they couldn't please God.

So we can also hear and keeping the Sabbath was a very important commandment. There's no doubt about it. In fact Jesus said if a person doesn't keep it he'll be cut off from Israel.

But it was not the most important commandment. So likewise in the New Testament there are many commandments and we can major on the minors. It's not that they are minor.

It's that if you don't have the most important commandment you won't be able to keep the other ones. So Matthew 22. Somebody wanted to test Jesus.

He was a lawyer verse 35. And lawyers are very clever. Matthew 22 verse 35.

But not not cleverer than Jesus. Matthew 22 31. A lawyer asked him a question testing him.

He wasn't wanting to know the answer. He wanted to expose Jesus as someone who did not emphasize the main commandment of keeping the Sabbath. What is the great commandment in the law teacher? And here's the answer.

And this is where the Pharisees went wrong. And my dear brothers and sisters this is where many Christians have gone wrong as well. The greatest commandment is love the Lord your God with all your heart all your soul and all your mind.

And we can come to the New Testament and we hear so many things in the church. Don't get angry. Very important commandment.

Don't love money. Very important commandment. Don't lust with your eyes.

Forgive everyone who has hurt you. And we preach these things. These are words of Jesus himself.

And love your enemies. Bless everyone who curses you. When you pray don't let anybody know that you've been praying in secret.

When you fast don't let anyone know about it. When you give money don't let anyone know about it. Don't be anxious about anything.

You can take all these commandments and say boy what a burden. How in the world am I gonna keep it? It's because we have missed out on the first one. To love the Lord with all our heart.

I discovered that through the years that everything falls into place when you have this commandment right. And everything becomes easy to keep when you have this commandment. When you love a person nothing is a burden.

I heard a story of a ten-year-old boy carrying his little brother on his shoulder. On his back rather. Climbing up a mountain.

They were going their home when it was up on top. And somebody met him and said hey isn't that a burden you're carrying? He says no it's not a burden. It's my brother.

You understand that? It's not a burden. It's my brother. He didn't feel his brother as a burden at all.

It's like that. Commandments will not be a burden when we recognize I love Jesus and this is what he wants me to do. But if you don't start there and you look at the commandment boy I must never get angry.

I really feel like getting angry now. But the Lord told me not to get angry and I grit my teeth and don't get angry. Your life would be miserable.

I tell you it will be. And those of you who do get angry tell me the truth. Isn't it miserable? Trying to you know.

Now the man in the world is not disturbed by it. He gets angry and he says nothing wrong with it. But don't lust with your eyes.

Which man can keep that? It's a burden until you love Jesus. You'll struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle. And ultimately say no it's not possible to keep it.

So I might as well do it. And you'll be 90 years old and you'll be still doing it. I'll tell you.

It's not something that goes away just because you're past your teenage years or something. But it can go away even in your young age. If you begin with the first commandment.

So that's very very important to understand. And I'm thankful that's one of the things that the Lord emphasized to me early in life. And I it's what led me to read the Bible.

Read the Bible. That's another heavy commandment for many people. You can ask yourself one question.

A very simple question. Have you read through the whole Bible even once? If you've been a Christian for more than one year and you have not read through the whole Bible once. I'm not asking whether you understood it.

Whether you read through it. I believe you should go home and hang your head in shame before the Lord. Lord I'm an absolute liar when I say I love you.

Say that to the Lord. If your husband were in a far country or your wife and wrote you, took a long time to express his love for you in a very long 20 page letter. And you read a few sentences here and there and just kept it aside.

Do you really believe you loved your husband or your wife? No I wouldn't believe it. He took all that trouble to write a long letter to you and you don't even have time to read it. I look at that.

I look at the Bible as something God has written. The only book in the world written by God. Which he has sent to me out of great love for me.

I just keep it on the shelf. And some people have been believers 20 years and they haven't read that letter yet. The red pots here and there.

And if you read a letter from your husband and there was some sentence there you couldn't understand. What exactly did he mean by that? He wanted me to do something but I can't understand what he wrote here. What would you do? Oh forget it.

Doesn't matter. Let me go on to the next sentence. No if you loved your husband you'd say it must be something important that my husband wrote in that sentence and I don't understand.

Let me contact him and say darling what exactly did you mean by that sentence? Do you have that type of love relationship with Jesus Christ? If not I say your Christian life is pathetic. I want to tell you straight. It's the truth.

People get offended with what I say sometimes. People got offended with Jesus. It doesn't disturb me.

They got offended with Paul. Anyone who spoke the direct truth to people. People didn't often like it.

Especially if you went home to a point in their life where there's something sore in their life that was touched. So if this is the most important thing then we ask ourselves how can we love Jesus Christ? Is it just by hearing a message saying you got to love Christ? There's something more that how is it if ever you fell in love with your I mean if your marriage was something that came out of love for your husband or wife. Wasn't there something that triggered that love? Something that made you love him or her and that enables you to continue to love him and her? Without a foundation it's difficult to love.

So here's what Jesus said in his commandment. We were talking about the commandments. Let me read to you in John chapter 14 first of all.

We were talking about keeping the commandments and how the keeping the commandments can be such a burden. Any honest Christian who takes the entire New Testament even the Sermon on the Mount. Forget the entire New Testament.

Just take those three chapters in the New Testament. Matthew 5 6 & 7. Go through it slowly verse by verse. I remember when CFC started 48 years ago in Bangalore.

We studied that verse by verse over a period of months because we knew that this is how we build the church. I'll tell you why because at the end of that Sermon on the Mount Jesus said if you listen to my words and obey them your house will be built on a rock. It'll never shake and we wanted CFC never to shake.

We wanted each home in that in our church never to shake. We didn't want any divorce in our home in our families. We wanted each brother and sister their life never to shake and Jesus said well Matthew 5 6 & 7 your life will never shake.

I took it seriously and it took me a long time to understand it and to really enter into it and then the other thing Jesus said if you listen to Matthew 5 6 & 7 but you don't keep it you'll be building on sand. One day it'll collapse. It lasts a long time and everybody will think you're a wonderful Christian till one day Christ comes back and your whole life collapses and you go to hell.

So here's what Jesus said in Matthew sorry John chapter 14 and verse 15 how to keep the commandments. What's the foundation for keeping the commandments? If you try to build a house without a foundation the house will collapse. Here's the foundation John 14 15 if you love me keep my commandments.

If you don't love me don't keep my commandments. Don't bother. Do what you like.

Live your own life. Forget it. Don't take the Bible seriously.

Pick it up once in a while. Just claim the promises. Forget everything else.

Yeah you know there's a verse in the Bible which commands you to be filthy to live in sin. Have you seen that verse that tells you to live in sin? Seriously. It's not an Old Testament verse.

Turn with me to Matthew sorry Revelation and chapter 22. It's almost the last commandment in the Bible inviting you to disobey God inviting you to not keep the commandments and to remain in sin. Did you think there's a verse like that in the New Testament? Revelation 22 and verse 11.

If you do wrong keep on doing wrong. Don't stop. If you are filthy in sin keep on being filthy.

Don't turn away from your sin. I'm coming quickly. Verse 12 my reward will be to give to every man according to what he's done.

That's that is for certain. So if you want to be filthy be filthy. Now have you ever wondered why is that verse there in the Bible which inviting you do wrong be filthy.

I'll give you the answer. If you read the whole this whole book the Bible and you come to the last page and you still want to do wrong there's no hope for you. Keep on doing wrong.

You read this whole book you come to the last page and you still want to be a filthy sinner. There's no hope for you just be a filthy sinner. That's the meaning of that verse.

If you don't love me don't waste your time keeping my commandments. Go and do what you like. Go and live for the world.

Go and live to make money. Go and live to make a name for yourself. Go and live fighting with your husband and wife regularly and don't care for what I have commanded you.

You don't have to do anything I say because you don't love me. If you want to keep my commandments begin with laying a foundation. I'll tell you if you build on this foundation your I guarantee your house will never shake.

I'm telling you from my experience and God is there to help you. He's there to help you when you cry out Lord help me to love you or whatever you're supposing you find that you don't have the strength to do something. You ask God to help you.

It's amazing what miracles he'll do for you. I'll tell you one of the first experiences I had when I was born again at the age of 19 and a half. One of my very first experiences of God answering prayer.

When I did not have the boldness to stand for him. I just received Christ into my heart. I read a verse it was nothing spectacular.

I was reading my Bible one morning and I read John 6 37. He who comes to me I will never cast out. Now you know I grew up in a Christian home so from the age of 13 in Sunday school I had kept on asking Jesus to come into my heart right up to the age of 19.

Maybe a hundred times or 500 times I asked Jesus to come to my heart. I don't know how many times. I was never sure.

So I was living living a backslidden life in the Navy and that day I read you come to me I'll never cast you out and I said Lord I've come to you many times. He said to me from that verse I did not cast you out. Boy I dropped an anchor that day and my ship has not drifted for 64 years.

I never doubted from that day onwards Christ has accepted me. My whole life turned around that day. My ambitions changed.

I had spent many years before that you know being trained in the military and my aim was to become the admiral of the Navy and I was doing well in my profession. But that day my goal changed. I said now my goal is not to be an admiral in the Navy.

My goal now is to please God. The next day or soon after two of my friends said hey Zack let's go to the movies. There's a movie inside the naval base.

The naval base we had a special cinema for the naval officers and sailors. So let's go there's a movie there very good one. I didn't want to go.

I was the one who used to take them in the early days to the movie and now I didn't want to go but I did not have the courage to tell them. I've now become a Christian. I don't go to movies.

I didn't have the courage. I was ashamed and so I started walking with them towards the movie theater and in my heart I was feeling miserable and I was crying out to God in my heart Lord please help me help me get me out of this situation some way. Well he didn't send an earthquake but we reached the movie theater and there was a notice stuck up there.

The movie is canceled because we did not get the movie reel from the company. I was so delighted. They were disappointed but I was just so delighted and they were wondering why I was so happy.

I came home and the Lord said this time I helped you. Next time you'll have to tell them yourself that you're not going otherwise you'll never be strong. I learned that.

The next time they came I could say myself I'm a Christian. I'm sorry I don't go. That's what makes us strong.

God helps us when we are sincerely seeking and I sincerely did not want to enter that movie theater that day and God helped me. He'll do a miracle for you. That is the first miracle I experienced.

I think that is probably the only day in the history of that naval base where the movie was canceled. It was canceled only because of me. What an experience to remember all through my life that whenever I'm in need if I'm really sincere and I want to say that to all of you, you come into a tight situation.

I don't know what it is but you come into a tight situation in your office or a place of work or with your unconverted relatives and you don't know how to escape. You say Lord please help me. He'll do miracles for you.

If you love me keep my commandments and he's there to help you to keep those commandments. So how shall we increase our love for the Lord? That's also written in Scripture. I'll tell you two things.

First of all in 1 John and chapter 4 and verse 19. We love him because he first loved us. It's because he first loved us that we love him.

In other words, if I want to increase my love for Christ which will help me to keep all the commandments. You know if you love me you will keep my commandments. It's sort of automatic.

If you love me you will keep my commandments. If you don't keep my commandments whatever you may say you don't really love me. It's clear because the reverse is also true.

2 plus 2 is 4. 2 plus 2 is not 5. It's not 3. It's only 4. We know that in mathematics. If you love me you will keep my commandments. If you don't keep my commandments whatever excuse you may give my dear brother and sister here's the reason you do not love Jesus Christ.

Face it. If you don't face it like a doctor tells you this is the reason. Your diabetes is getting worse and worse and worse and worse because you're eating sweets and sugar and sugar every single day.

Give it up. He's telling you the truth. You're not bothered you die.

You get a stroke or a heart attack or something but at least he told you the reason and so the Lord says if you're not if you don't love me you won't keep my commandments. That's the reason you don't keep my commandments. Any commandment that you have heard in this church from the Bible or that you've read in the Bible yourself which you don't take seriously to keep it.

Today you heard the reason. All your talk about loving Jesus Christ is absolute nonsense. It's bogus.

It's a lie. Don't ever say that again that you love Jesus. Speak the truth and say I do not love Jesus Christ.

That's why not that's not that's why I fall into anger or fall into lust. That's why I don't take those things seriously and fight against it. It may take you one year ten years to overcome it but if you're fighting it every day it shows that you love Jesus Christ.

But if you're not fighting it I'm talking about I'm not talking about people who fall into anger or fall into sexual lust in their thoughts. I'm talking about people who take it lightly who do it say what to do who yell at their wives or yell at their husbands and say okay it's not serious. You don't take that seriously that you get angry at home.

You don't love Jesus. Don't ever say you love Jesus. You don't love him and if you never heard it you hear it from me today.

A lot of preachers won't tell you the truth because they want your money. They want you to be a member of the church. I've said it many times in all CFC churches.

I'm not interested in your money. CFC is not interested in your money and CFC is not interested in your membership. Go where you like but here we speak the truth.

If you get offended there are many other churches where they will pamper you and butter you and lead you to hell but we are not interested in that. We're interested in leading people into the kingdom of God and making sure before they enter the kingdom of God they live a worthwhile life on this earth before they leave. I've told people you may get upset with me but I tell you at the judgment seat of Christ I will tell you honestly you will turn around and thank me for telling you the truth even if you don't appreciate it today.

Yeah I remember when the Lord called me to serve him. There are two things the Lord told me never to seek from people. One is honor and money.

Don't ever care for that because if you do you will never speak the truth and by the grace of God. The Lord I quit my job 57 years ago and by the grace of God one thing I can say though may I have may have slipped up in many other areas when it came to seeking honor from people or seeking money I never saw it by the grace of God because I know I'll go against my God if I do that and I know that the vast majority of preachers I have met they are seeking one or both of these two. So dear brothers take this seriously if you love me keep my commandments and the way to love him is to meditate on how much he loved us.

I spent years meditating on that right from the time I was converted. The Lord pointed me to the cross. It's on the cross of Calvary that we see the manifestation of God's love.

It's a visible manifestation of God's love. Why didn't God allow Jesus to die of some fever or something at home and just quietly die and die for our sins that way? Why didn't it have to be in such a public way or at least if it was to be public way why not with a sword where his head was chopped off? Why had it had to be in such a terrible painful way it was to manifest his love for us so that even little children could understand? And it's not something for us to just hear about and cry a little. I remember when I was much younger and I used to see movies of Jesus every single time in the movie when I saw the cross I would cry.

I don't know I just felt Lord how much you love me and suffered all that for me. But a couple of days later my life was just the same. It did not change one bit it was just a momentary feeling so sad and if you're honest you say that too.

You could still yell at your wife the next day even though you wept seeing Jesus dying on the cross for that. It didn't make a difference. It was only an emotional stirring that disappeared in about half an hour after the movie was over.

But that's not the way. If we see clearly what he went through I want to just show you. You know those well-known words of Jesus when Jesus hung on the cross in Matthew 27 we read when he was crucified.

He cried out Matthew 27 and verse 46. My God my God why have you forsaken me? First of all you need to see that in his entire life of 33 and a half years he never looked up and called him God. He said father

father father father father father 33 and a half years then now my God.

He's not father anymore. Why is that? Because now he was not standing before his father. He's not hanging before his father.

He was hanging there before the God of the universe. The judge of the universe and paying the price for my sin. He could not call him father.

He was standing before the judge and I thought about this. Why have you forsaken me? Even I know the answer. Does Jesus whose intelligence and knowledge of God is far greater than mine did not know did not know why he was being forsaken? A few minutes earlier in Gethsemane he was struggling with that and he knew the answer.

Why does he say why we forsaken me? I say Lord I can tell you because you're taking my sin. You're taking the punishment of my sin. You're experiencing hell now for my sin.

You know that it says there for three hours it was dark and the rocks were split and all types of things happened. That was because what Jesus experienced in those three hours was eternal hell. You see you can't experience eternal hell in three hours because we are all finite beings.

Because Jesus was infinite he could experience hell in one second. Eternity. So in three hours he experienced what you and I would experience in hell for eternity.

That's exactly what happened on the cross. He experienced eternal hell. The eternal hell that billions of people would suffer was concentrated into three hours and he experienced it.

But he says my God my God why have you forsaken me? And I thought about that. Why does he have to ask why? Because when you're in hell your reason doesn't work. Today our reason is working.

That's why we can explain it. He was in hell because of my sin. But when you're actually in hell your reason doesn't work.

Why in the world am I here? People in hell will ask that. Why in the world am I here? I can tell them it's because you lived in sin. But when they're in hell their reason doesn't work.

Everything is destroyed and that's what Jesus experienced in the cross. That's why he did not know at that moment even though a few minutes earlier and get so many he would have known. Now he does not know.

Another proof that he experienced hell. See this is what the Lord showed me of his love for me. And when I understood that I loved him.

And when I loved him I longed to keep his commandments. So keeping commandments you've got to step back and love him first and go back and understand how to love him to know his love for me. And I remember I've said this many times before and I never hesitate to repeat it because there may be someone who's hearing it for the first time.

There was a day a number of years after I was converted. About 16 years after I was converted where the Lord suddenly revealed his love for me in a way that I had never known before. I had understood this you know this movie type of Christ dying on the cross type of agony suffering and all that.

I never knew what I told you just now about a suffering in hell. I only knew the physical agony sufferings pat on the face the crown of thorns and all the things that make you weep. But it didn't change my life.

It didn't make me want to live a holy life. But one day in prayer I said Lord I want to know one thing. When you said in Gethsemane let this cup pass from me.

Why were you for one hour? He struggled with let this cup pass from me. Let this cup pass from me and still not get an answer and his sweat coming out like blood. Just for that one thing let this cup pass from me.

Why? What is that cup? What is the cup all your life you said you won't do your own will but the Father's will. What was that cup? Tell me the meaning of that cup. And the Lord explained it to me that day and I'll never forget it.

I imagined a conversation going on between Jesus and the Father in Gethsemane. And the Father saying you don't have to go to the cross. You have lived a perfect life.

You can come straight up to heaven from Gethsemane. But Zach will go to hell. That's how it came to me.

And Jesus says Zach will go to hell. Okay Father I'll go to the cross. It changed my life when I understood what happened in Gethsemane.

I saw the love of Christ for me before on Calvary but that day I saw it in Gethsemane. If you don't drink the cup Zach will go to hell. Okay Father I'll drink the cup.

And he went to the cross for me. And I've never forgotten that from that day. I said Lord I'll pour out my life in serving you.

I'll never get tired of serving you. Even if I live to a hundred years old I'll never get tired of serving you. I'll serve you when I'm sick.

I'll serve you when I'm weak. I'll serve you when I have no money. I'll serve you under any circumstance, any persecution, any opposition, anything.

I will not serve you only when it's convenient. I will serve you when it is inconvenient. I will help people in any place.

I'll travel any distance, undergo any difficulty in my travel if I can serve you and help people and bless them and lead them into your kingdom. And I will never never complain that your service is too hard. I'll never complain that people make too many demands on me when I try to serve the Lord.

No. I'm available day and night. If you call me to serve you at 2 o'clock in the morning I'm ready to go and help somebody.

Sure. It all came out of that one experience when I saw Jesus saying if Zach has to go to hell then I'll drink the cup so that he doesn't go there. You can hear that? It's the story of another man, me.

But when you see it as your story it'll change your life. It'll make you love Jesus with all your heart. And I saw that more than 45 years ago and I've never forgotten it and I never will.

It's become more and more real and that's what drives me to keep his commandments, to keep even the smallest commandment and to obey every little thing. If you love me you keep my commandments. And it's been a wonderful life I'll tell you.

You know what John the Apostle said at the end of his life? He was baptized in the Holy Spirit when he was around 30 years old on the day of Pentecost. 65 years later, 65 years later he writes these words in 1 John chapter 5. This is written when he was 95 years old. And what does he say 65 years after being baptized in the Holy Spirit? Verse 3. 1 John 5 verse 3. This is the love of God that we keep his commandments.

His commandments are not a burden. That's not the result after one day of keeping it. After 65 years of keeping all of Jesus' commandments he says his commandments are not a burden.

I've tried to keep them for 48 years since CFC began really. I began to seriously obeying all the commandments. Before that I'll tell you honestly like you, like many of you perhaps, I didn't take some of the commandments seriously.

But once CFC started and I got this revelation I began to take every commandment seriously. Every thought must be pure and never a word that slips out of our mouth. And if I slip up I must ask apology.

I'm not saying it never happened but it happened I would immediately apologize and fight and fight and fight and fight and say Lord I want to come to the life, this life where I never have a lustful thought. I want to come to the life where I never speak an angry word. I want to come to this life where I'll immediately apologize if I've hurt somebody.

I will never wait. I'll immediately set everything right what I did wrong. So I'm not talking about a perfect life but a life that immediately you know stands up as soon as we fall.

You know there's a time when you learn to walk. In the first one year you all of us fall fall fall fall fall fall. That's another type of falling.

We don't know how to walk. Now we have learned how to walk. But still you may slip on the sidewalk and fall but you don't stay there.

You get up immediately. You don't even wait five seconds. That's my Christian life.

Not even five seconds. Not even one second. If I slip up any day I'm gonna get up immediately.

And the falls become less and less and less as we go on. Because our love for the Lord becomes more and more. How is it in your life my brother, sister? I'm saying this to you in love.

Please believe me. I desire your good. That's why I'm telling you the truth.

I desire that you'll have a glorious entrance into God's kingdom one day. I desire that you'll have a great reward when Christ comes back. I desire that Jesus will say to you, well done good and faithful child of mine.

That's why I'm telling you the truth. Will you turn around from the half-hearted Christian life you've been living till now? And say Lord I want to love you with all my heart. Get a revelation.

Put your name there. Jesus said if you're going to hell I'll drink the cup. That's why he drank it.

Make it personal. That's what I did. And his commandments are not a burden.

And I say this today. His commandments are not a burden. Not a single commandment is not a burden.

There are many people who have hated me. I love all of them. There are many enemies of mine.

I love them. I bless them. I have no grudge against a single human being in my entire life.

You think people haven't done wrong to me? Of course. There are people who took me to the court. To the Supreme Court of India for 10 years.

You know what for? Because I exposed that their Christianity was teaching a false Christianity. They were Christians. Not Hindus or Muslims.

They were upset with me for exposing their error. And I keep exposing error in Christendom all the time. I don't know who's the next person who will take me there.

But I remember I was scared. I'll tell you honestly. I was about 50 or 59 years old or something.

It was in 1998. 1998 to 2008. That's the period we went.

And I was scared the first time I'd gone to court because I'd never been to court. But the day I stepped into court, as soon as I stepped in, the Lord said, don't be afraid. Religious people took me to court before they took you.

I found I had fellowship with somebody who had gone this way before me. Religious people took him to court on religious grounds. And now religious people were taking me to court on religious grounds.

People who believe the Bible took Jesus to court and people who believe the Bible were taking me to court. I said, wonderful. I want to ask you, do you really want to walk in Jesus' footsteps? All his footsteps or only some of them? I told Jesus, Lord, I want to walk in all your footsteps.

And I remember the Lord saying to me, look for my footsteps in this court. I said, what are those footsteps, Lord? I had known left, right, left, right in the military. But what are your footsteps here? He said, faith and love, faith and love.

Faith in your heavenly father and love for your enemies who are accusing you here, who will be standing there. Okay. I said, fine.

I'm going to trust my heavenly father. That's the first step. That he is in control of the whole situation.

He rules heaven and earth and all authorities in the hands of Christ. And I will trust him first of all. And secondly, when I see my accusers in India, I'm going to love them.

So in courts in India, you're not allowed to sit. I've noticed, I've seen pictures of court where the accused is allowed to sit. Not in India.

I had to stand and stand for one hour. Do you know what they wanted to punish me with? 10 years in jail. That's what I faced that day.

Some vague rule they quoted, you know, how you can find things to accuse people of. So I stood there and that magistrate looked at me and he saw me smiling and happy. He'd never seen a criminal like that before.

And believe me, he looked down and he never looked up again at me for that entire one hour. He'd look at the accusers and he'd look at my lawyer this side, but he wouldn't look at me. He saw something in my face that convicted him.

He had seen many criminals in that court, but he saw this was different. And he called my lawyer later on. My lawyer told me, he said, please don't bring this man to court again.

Go and settle this case outside the court. I was so encouraged. And at the end of that one hour session, my accusers some type of believers walked past me.

I grabbed their hand. I said, God bless you, and smiled at them. I walked that second step of faith and love, you know.

It was a wonderful experience. It's amazing how the Lord leads us and makes us happy in every situation. His commandments are not a burden.

Praise the Lord. I thank God for such a wonderful savior. If you love him, you will keep his commandments.

If you meditate on his love. The other thing I want to say, there are two reasons, two ways in which we increase our love for the Lord. I've told you about one of them, which is to understand how much Jesus loved us.

The other is to recognize how great a sinner I am in God's eyes, not in the eyes of man, not even in my own eyes, but in the eyes of God. We may look at these well-known terrorists whose names are very familiar, who killed thousands of people and say, boy, I'm not as bad as them. I did not send a plane to blow up the twin towers and kill thousands of people.

In Luke chapter 7, there's a story of a prostitute, a harlot, who was forgiven, who had met Jesus somewhere and been forgiven, and who came to Jesus to express her love for Christ. And she brought, this is in Luke chapter 7, and we read here in verse 37, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner, meaning she was a well-known immoral woman. And when she learned that Jesus was in this house sitting at the table, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume.

Now, you know, perfumes cost a whole lot of money. And how would a prostitute have money to buy perfume? She must have saved her all that money that she earned through sin for many, many years. And somewhere she heard about Jesus, and she had met Jesus and been forgiven, and she said, how can I show my love for him? She said, I'll do one thing.

I'll take all that I earned and go and buy the most expensive perfume there is in the market and pour it out at his feet. You see what happens when a person loves Jesus. Money is no longer important for them.

Here's a person, she wasn't a rich woman. She didn't have a big bank balance after she had bought the perfume. There was nothing left.

She took it all and when she came and poured it at Jesus' feet. Do you know there's an Old Testament law in the book of Deuteronomy, which says a prostitute is not allowed to give her money in God's house. It's a law.

Anybody else can give their money in God's house, but not a prostitute. The wages of sin, you can't give that in God's house. So she probably didn't know about that law, but Jesus knew the law that you can't accept an offering from a prostitute.

And everybody knew who this woman was. And she kept on pouring all this ointment. And Jesus never said a thing.

He accepted it. He had come not to establish the law. He came to bring grace.

Grace replaced law. The law came by Moses, it says in John 1 17. But grace came by Jesus Christ.

And you see that here. The law would have said, you can't accept that. Simon, the man who invited Jesus to his house said, he began to think, verse 39.

The Pharisee who invited him said, if this man Jesus was a prophet, he would know this woman's a sinner. How does he accept this offering? Doesn't he know Deuteronomy chapter so and so verse so and so, which says you cannot accept an offering from a prostitute. That's law.

Jesus came with grace. He accepted it. And then he said, verse 40, Simon, I've got something to say to you.

You know the difference between you and her? I'll tell you. The one who is forgiven more, loves more. The one who is forgiven less, loves less.

Or to be more accurate, the one who imagines that he's been forgiven very little. Verse 47. I say to you, her sins which are many have been forgiven.

That's why she loves so much. But when a person thinks he's been forgiven little, he loves very little. How much do you feel you have been forgiven when you compare yourself with all the other sinners you've met? The wicked sinners in your office, perhaps, who are crooks.

Or the terrorists in the world who are evil. You're not a terrorist. You're a good man or a good woman.

How bad a sinner are you compared to them? You know what the Apostle Paul said at the end of his life? 1 Timothy 115. Christ Jesus came to world to save sinners of whom I am the worst. What is that? Was he living in adultery or stealing or murdering people? Did he really believe that he was the worst sinner? Absolutely.

It's inspired scripture. In 1 Timothy 115. And I'll tell you this.

There are times when I felt exactly like that. And I'll tell you the reason. When you're far away from God, the light is so dim.

The light of God, I mean. That you see very little of what is sin in your own life. You think you know a lot of sin, but you only know the main ones.

You don't know the deep little, little small, small things, which you can only see under a magnifying glass. You know, under a magnifying glass, a little, little germ looks like an elephant. We see it as a germ.

Paul saw it as an elephant. He said, boy, I'm sure nobody has sinned like me. I'm the worst sinner on the earth.

And Christ Jesus came. That's how this woman felt. Simon didn't feel like that.

He was under the law. He said, yeah, I slipped up here and there. I mean, one Sabbath, I did a little work.

And so things like that. I did a few things. That's how exactly how many Christians, perhaps that's how some of you feel.

But I'm not such a bad sinner. I live a pretty decent life. I don't rob banks or go around molesting women or go to prostitutes.

No, I'm pretty decent. I'll tell you, brother, sister, you're far, far away from God. Let me tell you the truth.

You know, you know, the religion, Christianity, you know what Jesus did on the cross, all the theory. Oh, today's Easter, the day Jesus supposed to rise from the dead. Oh, but you don't know God.

If you knew there would be such a spirit of repentance in your life, as you see the horrible sinner you are, the closer you come to God, the more the bright light of God shines upon you. And the more you see, the more you love. He who loves much, he who says, forgiven much, loves much.

That's the second way our love for Christ increases. I already told you the first way. We love him because we see how much he loved us.

I'll drink the cup to save that man from hell, to save you from hell. That's the first. The second one is to see how much you have sinned.

Your love will increase tremendously when you see how much you have sinned. That's what happened to me. I'm telling you the honest truth before God.

I began to feel as I got closer to God that I was the worst sinner on the whole earth. I didn't say, Lord, I have to serve you more than anybody else on earth serves you. Because you've done so much for me.

You've forgiven me more than anybody else. How can I serve less? Till my dying day, every single second of my life will be devoted to serving you. And it'll never be a burden.

Nothing will be a burden. In sickness and in health and poverty and in wealth, I'll only serve you. And I want to tell you my life has been a very exciting life all these years since that day.

And God's given me the tremendous privilege of being able to share this testimony with many people. I hope it will bless you as well. Shall we bow our heads for a moment? You can pray one little prayer.

Lord, don't let me ever forget what I heard today. One sentence. Lord, don't let me forget what I heard today.

Because I'm so forgetful. I never want to forget this till the day I die. And I want to respond more and more each day to what I heard.

Believe that he will help you. Heavenly Father, we know you love us immensely. We see it on the cross.

And we see it when we think of the depth of our own sin, which you've just blotted out in a moment and told us, forget it. I will not remember your sin anymore. Thank you.

Help us, Lord, to be grateful and to show our great gratitude, not in empty words that we sing to you, but in a life poured out of service to you and service to our fellow believers and to other human beings. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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