

# The Principles by Which Jesus Lived

by Zac Poonen

---

*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the necessity of focusing on Jesus as both Savior and our example for living a life aligned with God's will.*

**Duration:** 57:33

**Scripture:** Leviticus 4:2, Matthew 6:33, Acts 17:30-31, Acts 24:16, James 3:1, 1 Peter 1:15-16

**Topics:** "Principles"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of discipline and doing our best in our Christian walk. He uses examples from the world, such as athletes and students, who put in great effort to achieve their goals. The speaker then draws parallels to the spiritual realm, highlighting the need for believers to discipline themselves and strive to do their best for God. He also discusses the concept of unintentional sin and how the Bible provides a way for forgiveness and restoration through offerings. The sermon concludes by referencing the book of Hebrews and its teachings on sin and forgiveness.

---

## Transcript

Through all the years that the Lord has led us as a church, our vision has been fixed on the Lord Jesus. And that song that we sing is so appropriate to the message we preach in our church. Jesus only is our message, Jesus all our theme shall be.

We will lift up Jesus ever, Jesus only will we see. It's never been any different. We believe in doctrines firmly, but not to the exclusion of seeing Jesus.

Doctrine has its proper place only when our vision is focused on Jesus Christ himself. And a lot of the problems with Christianity and Christendom today is because they've shifted their focus away from the Lord Jesus onto some doctrine, however good it may be. Something that they find in the Bible.

And that's the thing we have to always be careful about. When God sent his son into the world, it was with two purposes mainly. And those two purposes are summed up in two titles that are given to Jesus in the scriptures.

One is Savior and the other is Forerunner. He is our Savior and he is our Forerunner. He died on the cross that we might be forgiven.

And he lived on earth for 30 years to be an example for us. So when God sent his son, he sent him to die so that the sins of the world might be taken away, put upon him on the cross. And then he also sent his son to show us how God wanted man to live.

Remember these two things. He sent his son to die for the sins of the world and he sent his son to show the world how God wanted man to live. And I don't want to judge other Christians, and I haven't seen all the Christians in the world.

I've seen a small fraction. But among those I have seen, and that's quite a number in this country and other countries too, 95% I would say have only seen that first part of why God sent his son. I think there's only about 5% of Christians who believe that God sent his son to show man how man should live.

If they believed that, they would be much more serious about wanting to live every day of their life exactly like Jesus lived. They would want to speak like Jesus spoke. They'd want to have the same attitude to money that Jesus had.

And when they see that that is not true, they would be cleansing themselves every day. How many people, how many believers do you think are doing that? I would say 5% of believers. Those are the only ones who take Christianity seriously.

And I want to say, my brothers and sisters, those are the only ones who will have no regret when Christ comes again and we stand before him. And will have no regret through the ages of eternity that in the one short life that God gave us on earth, we knew how to live. And we sought and tried to live that way.

So that's been the burden of what we have preached in 30 years in the church. It's not a new message, but we need to be reminded of it constantly. Because there are so many pressures around us in the world that would seek to dilute that message, that would make us go off on a tangent in something which is good.

Like the proverb says, the good is the enemy of the best. And you can be so taken up with the good that you miss the best. That's what a lot of Christians do.

A lot of good things we can do in this world. Avoiding evil is not what Jesus did. The Bible says he went about doing good.

And that meant he went about doing the very best that God wanted him to do. He went about doing good to people. And delivering all those who were oppressed by the devil.

So the only way that we can live this life is if we have a clear focus on Jesus. As the one, first of all, as I said, who has got rid of all of our sins. And as one who is our example whom we have to follow day by day.

When we think of our past sin, that's important that every one of us is absolutely clear that we have been accepted by God because we have come to him honestly. It's not a question of how many tears you have shed. It's a question of how honestly you have come before God and acknowledged that you deserve to go to hell, however good you may be.

But you are thankful that Christ died for you and suffered that torment of hell on the cross that you might never have it. So that's where we begin. But then when we look at the second part, and that's what I want

to talk about.

About his being the author of our faith, the finisher of our faith. The one whom we have to follow, running a race behind him. We need to see the principles by which he lived his life.

It's not laws. Moses had laws. Read the book of Leviticus, it's so thick, I mean, so full of laws that no matter how many times I read it, I can't understand.

I mean, not understand, I can understand, but I can't remember. And that's why God in the Old Testament kept a whole tribe of people as priests to spend their whole life studying those books so they could tell people what to do. They needed to devote their whole time to that.

Those guys were not worried about how they lived, they just needed to know the book. When people came to the question, they'd say, OK, here's this verse, Leviticus chapter, so and so, so and so, that's the answer. Go away, next.

It's like that, that's how they lived. But it's so different for us today. Jesus didn't come and give us a whole lot of laws to follow.

It was his life. And that life was lived by certain principles. And we need to, if we understand those principles, we will walk as he walked.

And one of the first things we see throughout Scripture, and in the New Testament, about God, is that he's a holy God. And, you know, it says in John 17, it's an important verse for us to remember, when Jesus came with a message of eternal life, and he himself gave us the definition of eternal life. And that's another thing I would say, if you want you can check this out.

You go to ten believers, whom you know, who have never heard me preach, and ask them, what is the meaning of eternal life? And I guarantee, nine of them will tell you, we're going to live forever in heaven. You see, it's not because they haven't read the Gospel of John. They haven't thought about it.

Those nine people would all have read the Gospel of John many times. And it says in John 17, verse 3, such a clear word. This is eternal life.

Not that we might live forever in heaven, but that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. So, my brothers and sisters, I hope you'll never forget, in your life from today, as to what eternal life is. Eternal life is not living forever anywhere.

People go to hell also to live forever. But, it's got nothing to do with length of life. It's got to do with knowing a person.

Eternal life is knowing God as our Father. And when Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 6.12, lay hold of eternal life. What did that mean? Lay hold of this knowledge of God as your Father.

And, knowing Jesus Christ as Savior and Forerunner. This is eternal life. Can we have more of eternal life? Sure.

Some people, if it's the wrong definition, living forever, then how can we have more of it? How can you lay hold of it? You know, many people take one verse, Romans 6.23, the gift of God is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. I know it's a gift.

It's a gift in the sense that, everything God gives is a gift. You think victory over sin is not a gift? Sure. Supposing you get victory over sin.

I can still say to you, according to 1 Corinthians 4.7, what have you that you did not receive? You can be the holiest man in the world. And I can ask you about your holiness. Did you receive that? Or did you manufacture it? If you manufactured it, it's not the real thing.

If you received it, then it's the real thing. So, eternal life is a gift. In fact, everything from God is a gift.

But that doesn't mean, you know, people use logic when they come to scripture, unfortunately. 2 plus 2 is 4. So, eternal life is a gift. Just take it and you got it.

I wish it were so easy. It's not. If it were, what does 1 Timothy 6.12 mean? Lay hold of eternal life.

And confess that same confession Jesus made before Pontius Pilate. That my kingdom is not of this world. You got to do that if you want to lay hold of eternal life.

So, eternal life is knowing God. And when Jesus lived on this earth, he did not live by... His life was not based on rules, but on knowledge of God. There's a lot of difference between knowing the Bible and knowing God.

The Pharisees knew the Bible, they didn't know God. Jesus knew God, the Father. And even today I find many Christians, they know the Bible.

They don't know God. And I'll tell you honestly, some of the most difficult Christians in the world, hard to get along with, are the people who know the Bible. They are the Pharisees of today.

Is it important to know the Bible? Sure. I spent my life studying the Bible. But I say, that doesn't make me know God.

No, I can end up as a Pharisee. You know how people take one verse and produce a doctrine out of it? Jesus never did that. He knew the Father.

The first thing he knew about the Father was God was a holy God. So the first area, which we have to take very seriously in our life, if we want to follow Jesus in his daily life, is sin. I want to show you this Old Testament law concerning sin, because it's a shadow of what we see in the New Testament.

In Leviticus, we read about the law for the sin offering. And we know that sin offering was a picture of Jesus Christ dying on the cross. And I want you to see the law concerning the sin offerings in Leviticus 4. In Leviticus 4, the whole chapter is dealing with the sin offering when a person sins, when the congregation sins, when a leader sins, or when a common person sins.

You see, a common person sinning was not as serious as a leader sinning. That's something we see throughout scripture. That's why leaders, when they sin, are to be punished more severely than ordinary people when they sin.

That's taught in Leviticus 4, James chapter 3, Don't be many teachers, my brothers, because we shall receive the greater judgment. Okay, now the thing I want you to notice in all these four cases, first it says generally a person, then the whole congregation, then a leader, and then a common person. And I want you to see one thing that's common about all four.

First of all, Leviticus 4 verse 2, Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, If a person sins unintentionally, that's the word I want you to notice, not deliberately, that would be rebellion, unintentionally, and commits something which the Lord said should not be done. That means, either he didn't know it, or he did it accidentally. You know, like you fall on the road accidentally, it's not deliberate.

An accidental sin, or an area of sin where they did not know it was sin. Anyway, it was not planned, it was not schemed, it just fell into it. It's like falling into a pit, you didn't know there was a pit there.

And then, what shall he do? When he's aware of the sin, he must come to the anointed priest and he's got to, there's a whole law concerning there. Now, same chapter, verse 13, If the whole congregation of Israel sins, and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they commit things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and they are guilty, notice again, that means they have committed error, and the matter escapes the notice, that means they didn't know that it was wrong. It was not deliberate sin.

When the sin, verse 14, which they have committed becomes known, that means when they become aware of the sin they have committed, then they shall bring a bull and offer it. Okay? The next is a leader, verse 22. When a leader sins, and unintentionally, notice that word again, does any of the things which the Lord has commanded, and he becomes guilty, if, verse 23, if, there's a big if there, his sin which he has committed is made known to him, then he can bring an offering.

Now the fourth. One of the common people, verse 27. If one of the common people sins, unintentionally, doing things which the Lord has commanded, he's guilty, and if his sin which he has committed is made known to him, maybe one day later, maybe one week later, maybe one year later, he comes to know about it.

Hey, what I did that last year was wrong. I didn't know that. Then he's got to bring his offering.

Notice this, that always the Lord said there is an offering for sin which is committed unknowingly. Now when you come to the book of Hebrews, you understand this verse a little better now, in chapter 10. This is the opposite.

This is the New Testament, remember now, where the fulfillment of that shadow, Christ was a sin offering. Hebrews 10.26. If we go on sinning willfully, that's the opposite of unintentionally. That means I know something is wrong, and I keep on doing it.

Why do I keep on doing it? Because I say, I can be cleansed by the blood of Christ. Such a person does not take sin seriously. That's how you know whether you take sin seriously.

I'm not talking about our accidentally falling, or, you know, something I'm still battling to overcome. The fact that you're battling it proves that it's not intentional. If it's intentional, you don't battle it.

Any sin that you're battling, you hate it, and you're trying to get rid of it, maybe your anger, maybe some lusting with the eyes, or something that you're doing, but you hate it, and you're trying to get rid of it, and every time you fall, you have such sorrow, that's not intentional sin. That is something you hate, and something you're trying to get rid of, and we could say it's something that we fall into despite our best effort. Because we haven't got grace for victory.

We should seek for grace for victory. We shouldn't continue like that. But we're talking here about someone who's got a totally different attitude.

Hey, this message of the gospel is wonderful. I can be forgiven, no matter what I do. I can gossip endlessly, and be forgiven.

I can have wrong attitudes in my heart, and just go to the Lord and say, Lord, forgive me. And the Lord who sees all of our hearts, I don't. I thank God I cannot see what's in your heart.

And God doesn't give it to me, and I don't want to see it. It'll be terrible for me if I have that responsibility. I don't know it.

But the Lord who knows all of our hearts, knows among us who is taking sin lightly. Because he thinks, oh well, I can go to God, and have it forgiven. You know, it's like the student who, Christian student, born again believer student, who desperately attempted to cheat in an examination, and plans ahead of time and says, I'll cheat and then I'll go to God and ask him to forgive me.

What will be the result? I'll get good marks, and I'll also remain a child of God. Isn't that smart? This is written for such people. If we go on sinning willfully, after receiving the knowledge of the truth.

Now there's a whole lot of people who have not received the knowledge of the truth. They don't know the truth. Forget about them.

You know, all our responsibility is after we have come to know the truth. If you don't know the truth, then it's okay. But once we know the truth, it's just like we read in the Old Testament, that when the sin becomes known to that person, after we receive the knowledge of the truth, then there is no more sacrifice for sin.

Boy, that's scary. There's no more sacrifice for my sins. You mean that's the end? That's what God's word says.

Then what am I to look forward to? I'm to look forward to a terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. And here's the reason. Because if anyone who set aside the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses, how much severe a punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God in his death on the cross, and has regarded as common, unclean means there, common, cheap, the blood of the covenant with which he was made holy, and has insulted the spirit of grace who was telling him not to keep on sinning.

Because we know that God has said vengeance is mine, I will repay, and again the Lord will judge his people. It's a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. See, this is not written to unbelievers.

You read in Hebrews chapter 3, it says, Brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and the high priest of our profession Jesus Christ. That's the one to whom he's written. See, the point is, the Bible warns people who play the fool with God, who take advantage of God, and think that the death of Christ, the blood of Christ is something we can take advantage of.

So, here is an area, impurity, sin in the heart, number one area where we have to be extremely sensitive. What's the solution? The solution is very simple. I'll tell you in one verse, if you want to remember it, all this entire passage will never apply to you, never, if you follow this one verse.

That's in Acts of the Apostles, chapter 24, and verse 16. Acts 24, verse 16. Paul said, in view of this, in view of what? Verse 15, I believe there will be a resurrection one day of the righteous and the wicked.

There'll be two resurrections. Righteous people, wicked people. And Paul says, I know which group I want to be in.

I hope you know which group you want to be in. Don't we all want to be in the group of the righteous? Yes. Well, in view of this, if I want to be in that group, Paul says, I do my best.

That's a good phrase. Stop for a moment. Think of people in the world who do their best.

Some student who wants to come first in the class. You see him studying the whole night. I do my best to come first in the class.

Think of people who want to win the 100 meters in the Olympic Games. Four years they practice for it. I do my best.

Or some businessman who wants to make money. I do my best to make money. There are many examples we have in the world of people who want to make money or win a gold medal or excel in some area, want to advance in their profession and they do their best.

Paul says, I do my best but in a completely different area. And if you and I can follow the example of these examples I gave you in the world, how they struggle to do their best, how they discipline themselves. Think of those people who want to win the marathon race.

In the Olympics they run every day so many miles for four years. And then you see them standing on the victory stand getting the medal. That wasn't cheap.

They disciplined themselves. They didn't eat all that stuff which is not good for them. They woke up when other people were sleeping and ran and ran when other people were sitting lazily in their chairs.

That's the price the fellow paid to stand on that victory stand. It wasn't easy. And one day when you see Jesus come back and He gives a reward to different people.

And you say, boy that's great. But remember it wasn't easy for Him to get that reward from Jesus Christ either. They were people who did their best to do what? To keep their conscience always blameless before God and before men.

That's the thing. They did their best to keep their conscience absolutely clear before God and before men. Now that does not mean that Paul says, I never sinned.

No. Just in the previous chapter you see him shouting at the high priest and saying God will smite you. You fake.

You whitewashed wall. That wasn't Christ like. And they slapped Jesus.

He didn't speak to the high priest like that. But Paul recognized it immediately. As soon as he arrived, he said, oh I'm sorry.

I didn't know that was the high priest. God's word says, you shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people. And I shouldn't have done that.

He kept his conscience clear immediately. He didn't wait till the evening or something to confess his sin. He did his best to keep his conscience absolutely clear before God and before men.

And so to keep a good conscience does not mean that I never fall. I don't deliberately sin. I don't keep on taking advantage of God's goodness.

But I may fall. But when I do I immediately go to God and say, Lord I'm sorry. I take the blame.

Forgive me. Cleanse me. I keep my heart pure.

Now Jesus never had to do that because he never sinned. He was so faithful. And the more you walk with God, the more you know God, the more and more and more you will stop sinning.

Area by area by area. You know like that little picture we saw many years ago where we saw the heart as a black circle and where Jesus comes in as a small little white circle comes inside the middle the rest of the circle is still black many many areas were defeated by sin. And then slowly this white circle conquers and conquers and conquers becomes bigger and bigger and bigger.

And the black gets smaller and smaller and smaller. The white is conquering, you know, area by area by area. You're getting victory.

That is sanctification. So the first principle by which Jesus lived was the principle of holiness. Absolute holiness.

Be holy, says the Lord, because I'm holy. Let me show you that verse. 1 Peter chapter 1. There is a reason why we should be holy and that's because God is holy.

This is New Testament. Verse 15. 1 Peter 1 verse 15 and 16.

Verse 14 first. As obedient children, don't be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance. In Acts of the Apostles chapter 17 it says God overlooks the times of ignorance.

But now he commands everybody to repent. Acts 17 verse 30 and 31. But now it says like that holy one who called you be holy yourselves in all your behavior because it's written you shall be holy for I'm holy.

That's the first principle. And it's not by rules. It's by our conscience.

See our conscience grows in understanding as we know God more and more. Some of you who are younger than me spiritually may do certain things which I may see as sin but you don't see it yet. So it's not sin for you.

But it's sin for me. Because I've got light on it. To use the example of the white circle, the area where you have light is the border of that white circle.

The border of the white circle is the areas where you're battling sin. And as you battle and overcome that circle becomes bigger. And if my white circle is bigger than yours then the boundaries of my white circle are the areas where I'm battling sin.

It's completely different from your white circle which is smaller. So there are certain things between your circle and my circle. My circle is a little bigger, yours is a little smaller.

In between those areas you don't have light. It's sin for me and not sin for you. That's why the Bible says don't judge one another.

Live by your conscience and you're okay. The second principle by which Jesus lived his life was the principle of faith. Now faith, many believers think of faith as a weakness.

It's not a weakness, it's evil. Unbelief, lack of faith, I mean, many people think of lack of faith or unbelief as a weakness. But lack of faith or unbelief is not a weakness, it's a sin, it's unbelief.

It's a sin, it's evil. See Hebrews in chapter 3 where it says, brothers, it's talking about believers, dear brothers, take care that there's not anyone among you who has an evil, unbelieving heart. Now if that verse said an evil lustful heart, we can understand that.

Or an evil greedy heart, we can understand that. Or evil hating heart or evil bitter heart or evil jealous heart. And there are so many sins which we describe as evil.

I don't think many believers would put unbelief in that category. What are my sins? My sins first of all are unbelief. You know, if you're honest, you'll have to admit that when you're afraid of something, you wouldn't call that a sin, would you? How many people call fear a sin? But fear is always because there's unbelief.

That's why Jesus, the same Jesus who said sin not, sin not, sin not, sin not, also said fear not, fear not, fear not, fear not. In fact, even to the Apostle John in Revelation 1, he says fear not. We need that.

We need to be reminded that fear is something God doesn't want us to have. There are so many things in the world around us that can bring fear. Fear of the future.

Fear of sickness. Fear of what evil other people can do to us. So many fears.

And if our faith is based on some promise in scripture, it's good. But it's not the best. See, some Christians, let me tell you this.

Some Christians tell you claim this promise brother, claim that promise, it's good. But do you think, how do you think Jesus lived? Did you think Jesus went around claiming, I claim Isaiah 43 19 now Lord, Father, and I claim Isaiah 43 1 now. Do you think Jesus was going around saying things like that? No.

His faith was based not on a knowledge of the Bible, but on a knowledge of his father. And there's a world of difference between faith based on a knowledge of some promise and faith based on knowing how good a father I have in heaven. It's like a son who trusts some letter that his father has written.

Yeah, my dad has written that, he'll do it. And the son who knows his father. I didn't get any letter from him.

Maybe the letter was lost in the mail. But I know my dad. I know he'll do that for me.

Even though I didn't get a letter. I mean, how did people live up to the year 1400 AD when there were no Bibles? How did God expect Christians to live for 1400 years without a Bible? They couldn't claim Isaiah 43 19 or anything like that. That's all nowadays.

And do you think people nowadays have great faith? Rubbish. Those people had more faith in the days when there was no printed Bible. We've got 26 translations in our house and still we don't have faith.

Faith doesn't come by various translations and reading message Bible. It's all good for the intellect. But you think people who read the message Bible and get excited about it have more faith than all those fellows who lived before message Bible existed? Dear brother and sister, don't get so excited with translations and think that you got it.

It's your knowledge of the Father. Because all these translations don't deliver you from fear. What does that prove? You're taken up with words.

The kingdom of God is not in words. Eternal life is to know the Father, not to know the Bible. There were men who had no Bible in their hand for centuries.

Many centuries. When Paul got up to speak, he didn't have a Bible. They knew the Father.

I believe the Bible is important. Very important. You know, if you want to know the difference between knowing the Bible and knowing the Father, see the difference between the Pharisees and Jesus Christ.

When it says, Jesus is the author of our faith. His faith was not based on knowledge of some promise here and there, which he had to keep claiming. His faith was based on knowing the Father, and he is the author of our faith.

The faith he wants to give us, he's the author, means he writes it. The author of a book. He wants to write a faith in your heart, and it's a faith based on the knowledge of the Father.

And Jesus lived by faith. Faith means a dependence upon the Father. A confidence in the Father.

I know my dad won't let me down. Everybody in the world may let me down. He told his disciples in John 16, verse 31 to 33, you will all leave me, and I'll be alone, but I'm not alone.

My dad won't leave me. It's great. Paul says he had that experience.

He says all the people were around with him in jail, but when Paul was taken to court, everybody ran away. I thank God I didn't have that experience. A lot of people stood with me.

But with Paul, they all ran away. Hey, we don't want to get caught in this. And he says in 2 Timothy 4, they all ran away because they were afraid they'd also be pulled up.

But he says the Lord stood with me. Great. I tell you, sometimes it's a handicap when we have too many brothers to support us.

We lean so much on them, we don't know God. We don't need God at all. You know, if you have so many good brothers and sisters who do everything for you, you won't need God.

I'm not saying we shouldn't have good brothers and sisters, but learn to lean on God in spite of having good brothers around you. That's faith. Lord, I don't want to depend on... I don't want to say, oh well, if I have a problem, I know I have a wonderful church.

They all stand by me. Dear me, I hope that's not your faith. No.

You'll be disappointed. Your life won't be strong. Even if there are brothers and sisters who stand around you and help you, if your faith is in them, God is disappointed.

God is a jealous God. The Bible says He is jealous for the spirit He has placed in us. Meaning James 4, 6, that our spirit does not lean upon men.

Jesus lived by faith. Everything He knew, He knew that the Father had planned everything. Once when they mobbed, hundreds of them, very first so many priests grabbed Him and took Him outside the city to throw Him down the cliff.

He didn't panic. He didn't say please, please save my life. Don't do this for me.

I won't do it again. Like some two year old child. He wasn't like that.

Where did that confidence come from? He knew that if the Father wanted Him to be crucified, no crowd can throw Him over a hill. And He stood before Pilate and Pilate said, don't you know I've got power to crucify you and power to release you? He said, no. He said, you have no power over me except my Father gives it to you.

My brothers and sisters, this is our forerunner. God sent Jesus to show us how man should live with the dignity of a king no matter what the circumstances are. The dignity of a king.

When Pilate was a king, his royal robes, when Jesus was stripped, beaten, broken, torn, clothes bleeding, crown of thorns on His head. Pilate looked like the king, but he was not a king. He was a slave.

He was afraid of the people's opinion. The people said, crucify me. He said, okay.

Where was he a king? The real king was Jesus who stood there with His torn body and torn clothes but with a dignity. And that's how you and I are to be. We may not be rich and big in the world, but we have the dignity of a king in all circumstances.

We live by faith. It's a very important principle. They never had it in the Old Testament.

They couldn't keep their conscience clear in the Old Testament. This is a New Testament thing. Nobody could stand like that.

I mean, it's amazing how even a man like Elijah could stand before King Ahab. But then, it wasn't always like that. You know what happened when Ahab's wife said, I'll chop off your head.

The guy ran. Oh dear. I mean, the man I can handle, but this woman.

Oh dear, that's too much for me. That was Elijah. But did Jesus do that? Elijah is not the author and finisher of our faith.

Jesus is. I don't know what circumstance you're facing right now. And I don't know what circumstance you'll face in the future.

But I want to tell you, if Jesus is your forerunner, you need never have a fear. To keep your conscience clear and your only aim in life is to glorify God. You need never have a fear.

God will support you 100%. He'll never let you down. He said, I'll never fail you nor forsake you.

Jesus knew that. Even if all men failed him, he said, the father is with me. I'm okay.

I don't have any... There may be feelings of fear. Feelings are deceptive. We don't go by feelings.

As long as we are human, we'll have feelings. But we refuse to live by those feelings. With those feelings on the outside, inwardly we stand out.

That's what we are. The third thing, Jesus lived by the principle of humility. If there is one thing that's guaranteed to make an angel into a devil, it is pride.

And if there's one thing guaranteed to make the holiest Christian a demon, it's pride. Any type of pride. Pride of good looks.

Pride of intelligence. Pride of caste, culture, community. Pride of Bible knowledge.

Pride of spiritual gifts. Pride of experience. Pride of what God has done through me or in me or anything.

The color of pride doesn't matter. Red, white, blue, green. I told you all these different colors just now.

It makes no difference. It's pride. It's evil.

I mean, like snakes come in different colors. They don't all come in the same color. Pride is like that.

So what? Pride is the thing that made an angel into a devil. Pride is what brought sin into the universe long before Adam was created. And because sin came through pride, salvation had to come through humility.

Jesus lived by that principle that he would never exalt himself in any situation. Brothers and sisters, very few Christians have understood that. I told you, 5% who've seen that, how did God want man to live? In humility.

For how long? Till we become senior in experience in the church? Rubbish! The more senior and more experienced you are as a brother or sister, the humbler you should be. The longer you've been in the church, the humbler you should be. With no consciousness of seniority, I hope it doesn't even occur in your mind that you've been so many years in the church and you're a senior brother, senior sister.

Garbage! You know what seniority means in the kingdom of God? If you're close to God, you're living next to him, you've got tremendous authority. Look at this lovely verse. John chapter 13.

It's one of the most fantastic statements of the authority of Jesus Christ. Here's one of the most fantastic statements of the authority of Jesus Christ. In John 13, verse 3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given everything into his hands.

The entire universe, all the future, every creative thing was in the hands of Jesus. He had all authority in heaven and earth. He had come from God.

He had been faithful. He was going back to God. Ha! What more do you need? How should such a man act? Who has got all authority in heaven and earth.

He's come from God and going back to God. You think the next verse is he got up and sat on the throne. That's what worldly people would do.

That's what a worldly preacher would do. Knowing all that, Jesus got up, took a towel, poured water into a basin, verse 5, and washed the disciples' feet. This is true Christianity.

The more authority you have, the more God commits into your hands. Like Jesus, everything was committed into his hands. He knew he came from God and he's going to God.

He washes people's feet. Have you understood this principle, brother, sister? Oh, I wish we had more and more godly men and women like that. Who don't want to impose themselves on others.

Who are not here to show that I'm so knowledgeable. Or I'm senior to you. Who can put a young brother and young sister at ease and say, I'm just like you.

You want me to wash your feet? Please wash my feet too. You can wash one another's feet and follow Jesus. And that's where the old 70-year-old person and the 17-year-old can have wonderful fellowship together.

It's only possible in the new covenant. But I'll tell you, such elder brothers and sisters are rare. I have been around quite a bit.

And I tell you, they are rare. I wish our church were filled with such godly men and women. But you can be one like that.

You can be one like that. That the more God is committed to you, the more Christ-like he's made you, the more wonderful things he's done through you. You bow your head down and you take a towel and you're there to wash people's dirt away from them.

Not like Satan, be an accuser of the brothers and point out the dirt in different people. Which is better? To point out all the dirt or to wash it away? If you go around to the back to the toilet and you find the toilet dirty and you come back and say, hey brothers, the toilet's dirty. Is that what you should do or get a bucket and clean it out yourself? It's exactly the same with a brother.

You see a brother or sister who's got some weakness or problem, you can go announcing it to everybody. Or you can humble yourself and help them or her. And I'll tell you, young brothers and sisters, they're not all that dumb.

I know at least the ones in CSE are not dumb. They're pretty smart. They can sense who among the older brothers and sisters have this spirit and who do not.

Don't be fooled. They can sense it. You think they can't, but they can.

Because there's an odor. You know like if a man's body is smelling. You don't need to have a super sensitive nose to pick that up.

You just smell it. And if you'd like to talk to him at a little distance, that's understandable. So if you find that some of the young brothers and sisters don't want to come too close to you, it's because there's not a body odor, you've got plenty of deodorant and perfume and all, but a spirit odor which they sense.

The spirit odor of an expert. Of a specialist. Of one who knows everything.

And they keep their distance. And what shall I say to young brothers and sisters? Please keep a greater distance from such people. They can't help you.

No. Jesus was not like that. The aroma that came forth from him was one of humility.

It's a principle. Finally, Jesus lived by the principle that you had to choose. Jesus chose God above money and merriment.

All times. There's a principle in his life. He stated very clearly in Luke 16.13 that there were only two masters anybody could serve on this earth.

God and material things. That's so clear in Luke 16.13. Only two masters. God and mammon which refers to all the material things in the world.

And Jesus lived by the principle that God alone was to be worshipped. When Satan offered him all the glory of the world, all the riches. That was mammon.

Satan said in the last temptation, Here is mammon. Take it. I'll give it to you.

Just bow down to me a little bit. He said, Get away, Satan! He said, Worship the Lord your God and him alone shall you serve. What was the alternate? Worshipping mammon.

The same principle he said in Luke 16.13. You cannot serve God and mammon. The reason why so many Christians never seem to make much progress in their life is because they are trying to serve both. Now when we say serve God, I'm not talking about full-time Christian work.

90% of the full-time Christian workers I've seen in this country are serving mammon. They are not serving God. They'll join whichever organization gives them a higher salary.

One day they have a burden for radio ministry. Another day they have a burden for literature ministry. Another day they have a burden for child evangelism.

How is this burden changing? I'll tell you. The better salary is offered in these different organizations. What is that? That's business.

It's like a teacher leaves one school and goes to another school. Not because they've got a burden for those students. It's because it's a higher salary.

It's exactly like that in Christian work. So I'm not talking about full-time Christian work. Every child of God is to serve God.

1% of them may be called to full-time Christian work. 99% of them are not called to full-time Christian work. But they have to serve God like members in the body.

Is there a single member in the body that doesn't serve the head? Everyone! And everyone is a full-time worker. Do you have any members in your body that are not full-time workers? I hereby appoint all of you as full-time workers from today. If you didn't know that.

Full-time workers for God! That doesn't mean you can't earn your income. Paul earned his income. But he never said, I'm a tent maker.

He said, I'm an apostle. He said, hey, I thought you were a tent maker. I'm serving God.

That's just for earning my living. I'm serving God. If somebody asks you, what are you doing? What do you say? You say, I'm serving God.

Of course, I've got a job to earn my living, take care of my family. But basically, I'm serving God. That's the type of person who has made Christ Lord of his life.

Mammon is not Lord. My dear brothers and sisters, remember this. Jesus said, if you're not faithful, Luke 16, 11, with unrighteous mammon, you will never get true riches.

Faithfulness with money is more than righteousness with money. Righteousness means I don't cheat, I don't tell lies, I return all my debts. I'm righteous.

But faithfulness means more than that. That with the money I earn, I'm careful in spending it. I don't just waste it on myself.

That's faithfulness, a higher step than righteousness. If you're faithful with mammon, God will give you true riches. And true riches are, for example, revelation on God's word, transformation into the likeness of Christ, anointing in our words, whether spoken in a pulpit or spoken face to face.

Why is it there is so much of boring messages nowadays? I know the reason. They're not faithful with mammon. Why is there not increasing conformity to the likeness of Christ? They're not faithful with mammon.

Why is there not more revelation on God's word? Not faithful with mammon because God only can give these true riches. And it's so clear. If you're faithful with unrighteous mammon, God will give you the true riches.

And remember one thing, my brothers and sisters, when you get up to heaven, you'll discover what the true riches really are. Blessed is the man or woman who's discovered it now. These are the principles by which Jesus lived his life.

He's our forerunner. And here's the good news. He sent the Holy Spirit, who helped him in his 33 years on earth, to help us.

He's our helper. We can live this life every day by the grace of God. I hope you will believe that.

I hope you'll believe that the Holy Spirit has come alongside you to help you, inside you, to fill you, to help you.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8101.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-principles-by-which-jesus-lived/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**