

The Reason Why God Raised Up CFC Churches

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the distinctiveness of NCCF from other churches, focusing on drawing closer to God and becoming more like Christ rather than just seeking comfort or good company. It highlights the importance of living a life dedicated to God, being detached from earthly attachments, and evaluating church success based on discipleship and spiritual growth rather than numbers. The sermon delves into the seriousness of sin, including anger and lust, and the profound sacrifice Jesus made to save humanity from eternal separation from God. It calls for a deep understanding and reverence for the grace of God, emphasizing the transformative power of grace in overcoming sin and living a righteous life.

Scripture: Romans 6:14, Proverbs 4:18, Hebrews 10:29, Matthew 5:21, Matthew 5:27, Isaiah 33:14, Proverbs 4:23, Hebrews 10:25, Matthew 22:37

Topics: "Discipleship", "Transformative Grace"

Description

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Transcript

I did not know that this was the 11th anniversary, but I'm very happy to hear that the Lord's preserved this church all these years. So, in the light of that, I thought perhaps I would share on what, in what way is NCCF distinct from any other church? And see, many of you who come, there are newcomers here and others, people may ask you, why are you going to this church? I mean, if you've been coming here a few times, what do you see different from other churches? Not just the atmosphere here, because you could go to a good club and feel that way too. The primary reason we go to a church is not because it's a good place for our children, or it's a good place for us to meet good people.

That's all on the horizontal level. And if I'm always looking at the horizontal level, is that a good place for me to meet good friends, and a good place for my children to meet other well-behaved children? We have

no idea of our vertical relationship with God. In a church, the primary thing is not how good the people around us are, or how good the Sunday school is, or how our children will be benefited, but will this draw me closer to God? Will it make me more like Christ? That's the primary thing.

So it's a common thing. When we started CFC in India 47 years ago, in the beginning we had a lot of opposition. But over a period of time, numbers increased.

It never excited me when numbers increased, even when we had 600 people on Sunday morning. The Lord said to me, you count the chairs. And the Lord said, He doesn't count the chairs.

He doesn't see how many chairs are occupied. He sees how many of these people sitting here are, in their private life, disciples, who love Jesus more than they love their father, mother, wife, children, job, money, everything, and who are willing to take up, and not actually willing, but actually taking up the cross and dying to themselves every day, and who are detached from their attachment to earthly things. They have earthly things, but they're not attached to them.

And the Lord says, when I look at it like that, I felt that the Lord may look at our church and say, well, there are 20 people in this church. Quite different from the way men count the chairs and say 600. And the Lord says 20.

And I said, Lord, I want to evaluate the church the way you. See, and you know, if you move around long enough with people, you discover whether their primary interest is Christ or something else, whether they're really disciples or not, and whether there's a growth in that. I remember once when somebody asked me in India, what's the difference between your church and other churches? I said, well, I'll tell you one difference.

One is that in almost every other church that I know, Sunday morning is the important day. When they have worship, and what they call worship, I don't believe that's worship, it's just singing. Worship is a much deeper thing than that.

There's a lot of singing and excitement and good sermons. They like to go to a church where there's a good sermon and good singing. These are the main things that people look for, good singing and good sermons.

And then, of course, a good time of fellowship, if they have time for fellowship after that. But I say for us in CFC in India, the most important day is not Sunday. It's Monday.

It's Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evening after you go home. In other words, for us, it's not how well the service was conducted on Sunday morning, how exciting the singing was, and what a powerful sermon that was. Not at all.

We give two marks for that. 98 marks for how did you live the rest of the week? How did you behave with your wife at home Sunday evening till next Sunday morning? How did you bring up your children during the week? What was your attitude to money during the week? Were you righteous in everything that you did during the week? Did you ask forgiveness from everybody you hurt? Did you forgive everyone who hurt you? Those are the much more important questions. And I say to me, I said, it doesn't make the slightest difference if the singing was out of tune and the people who were leading the singing were not singing together.

It doesn't matter. It just disturbed others. It didn't ever disturb me.

Or if the sermon was not all that great, or we say, hey, we've heard all that before. It's nothing new in the sermon we heard. It did not disturb me one bit, provided from Sunday evening till the next Sunday morning, they lived in godliness.

And I want to ask all of you sitting here, be honest. Is that more important to you? Or is it how the service is going to go this morning? Can you honestly say, yeah, I thank God I'm able to come here for fellowship and pray to God. But if what I hear today is not going to change my life for the next six and a half days till I come back here again, I've got nothing.

Really got nothing. You might as well go to some other church. So I said, that's the number one difference.

We emphasize that. And I said, the other thing is, in the Old Testament, there were 10 commandments. If you were to make a list of commandments in the New Testament, the first one would be, thou shalt not be a hypocrite.

That means you will not, don't pretend. Hypocrite, by the way, is a Greek word. It's not English.

There are words which have been imported into the English language in our Bible, which are not originally English, and that's why a lot of confusion. For example, why do so many churches baptize babies? I'll tell you why. Because when the King James Version in 1611 was translated, the ruler, King James, who authorized that translation said to those godly men who translated, don't disturb any church traditions with your translation.

That was one of the rules. So if you find some translation is going to rock some of the traditions in the Church of England in those days, don't translate it that way. But these were God-fearing people.

So when they came to the word baptism in the New Testament, it's again not an English word. There was no such word existing in the English language up to that time. It's a Greek word meaning bapto or baptizo, which has only one meaning in the Greek language, which means dip.

If a man dips his hand into a bucket of water, he's baptizing his hand, according to the Greek language. Immerse is the meaning of it. Supposing they said, if they had translated it, people must believe and be immersed.

They said, boy, this will rock the whole Church of England because they don't immerse anybody there. They sprinkle water on somebody's head and call it baptism. So what shall we do? Shall we translate it as immerse? They would lose their heads.

King James would have chopped off their heads. So they were wise men. I mean, you know what they did? I don't believe what they did was right.

They invented a word into the English language from the Greek, called it baptism. So when people opened the King James Bible, they said baptism. What in the world is that? I suppose it must be what those people do on Sunday when they sprinkle water on their heads.

That is how infant baptism started. Wrong translation. People who feared man.

So it's like that. There are many words like that which are because of faulty translation. We have not really understood church, for example.

It's a word which means that people called out, called out of the world. The same way hypocrite, I was talking about hypocrisy. Hypocrite is a Greek word, which means, it's a Greek word, which means actor.

Just like we talk about Hollywood actors, Hollywood hypocrites. That's how it was in the Greek, was an actor. So if you went to 2000 years ago to Greece and said, where are all the hypocrites? They'd say, go to the theater.

Today they'd say, go to the church. Those days they'd say, go to the theater. All the hypocrites are there.

The actors. But what is an actor? An actor is one who comes to the stage and acts like Moses. They're filming the Ten Commandments or something like that.

And he's a holy man there. And the acting goes on for maybe a few hours and then he goes home. When he goes home, he's living with his fifth wife and getting drunk or something like that.

Because now he's no longer an actor. He's just himself. But next morning when he comes back for the acting, he's again Moses.

That is hypocrisy. A double life. One life when you come to the theater, or in this case to the church, or when you're mingling with people who are believers anywhere, visiting their homes or somewhere.

And quite another life when you're mingling with your worldly colleagues or the type of conversation you have. I don't mean the subject. I mean the quality of uprightness and cleanliness in our conversation should be no different whether we are with unbelievers or believers.

I mean if we can laugh at dirty jokes in the midst of worldly friends in an office, and you never do that in a church, the Greek word is hypocrite. Actor. So that's another important thing.

There's the Ten Commandments in the New Covenant. The number one would be you shall not be a hypocrite. You shall not be an actor.

In fact, there's a whole chapter on it in Matthew chapter 23, where when you get time you can read it. There's a whole chapter where Jesus said, you're a bunch of hypocrites. You're like a grave full of dead men's bones.

And on top of that, you put this fantastic pedestal that looks so grand, but inside it's all dead men's bones. Many illustrations like that. He said, a cup which is also beautiful on the outside, inside it's filthy.

That is the thing that Jesus spoke against most. Jesus spoke against adultery and murder, just one or two verses. But boy, how he condemned acting.

So my question is, do you go to a church that constantly rebukes you for pretending? For pretending to be holy when you're not. For being careful that your life is always consistent, 24 hours of every day. Not perfection, I'm not talking about perfection.

It's honesty. Honesty is very different from perfection. We're not talking about perfection.

Nobody's perfect. I've been a believer 63 years. I'm more aware today that I'm not perfect than I was 63 years ago.

But I'll tell you this. I'm a lot more honest today than I was 63 years ago, definitely. And honest doesn't mean perfect.

That means I'm quick to admit when I'm wrong. I'm quick to apologize where I realize that I made a mistake. I'm sorry I hurt somebody, wife or stranger or anybody.

That's honesty, absolute, total honesty. And I'll tell you something. There are very, very, very few believers who are 100% honest.

They can be, if they work on it, 100% honest in filing your taxes. Can all of you sitting here say that you were 100% honest in filing your taxes a couple of months ago? You know. But that's one of the New Testament Ten Commandments.

Honesty, uprightness. And I can say that. All my life I've been honest in filing taxes to the last cent.

Otherwise I wouldn't be able to preach God's Word. I mean, a lot of people can preach God's Word from knowledge. I say, I only want to speak from my life.

So another New Testament commandment, it's one of the first New Testament commandments that Jesus said was he equated anger with murder. I don't know whether you know that. Killing is one of the most serious sins, to kill somebody, to take somebody's life.

And what can you equate with that? There's no way of recovering it. You kill the guy and that's it. There's no way of rectifying it.

And yet Jesus equated getting angry and speaking in anger to someone with that sin. Turn to Matthew 5, verse 21. I never get tired of saying this because I find it's not spoken of enough in Christendom.

And that's why I say it. I believe, as far as I'm concerned, God's called me to emphasize what is not emphasized in Christendom. I remember when I studied the Scriptures and sought to preach God's Word.

This is what the Lord said to me. Look around at Christendom. Read the books other people write.

Listen to the messages other people preach. Find out and compare it with Scripture. And find out what they are not preaching.

And you preach those things. Fill in the gaps. I said, I'll do that.

And one of them is this. Matthew 5, 21 and 22. You know, he was speaking about Old Testament righteousness and New Testament righteousness.

In the previous verse, verse 20. Your righteousness must exceed the Old Testament righteousness which the Pharisees have. You guys are my disciples.

Don't be satisfied with that Old Testament righteousness. It's like telling children, get out of the kindergarten. Don't spend 20 years in the kindergarten.

Get out of the kindergarten. The Old Testament was kindergarten. Get out of it.

Your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. Otherwise, you won't enter the kingdom of heaven. And immediately the question comes, what do you mean, Lord? He says, okay, I'll explain to you.

The righteousness of the Pharisees, verse 21, was don't kill. Don't commit murder. The equivalent in the New Covenant is don't get angry.

Verse 22. Now I want to ask you, my dear brothers and sisters, many of you have been in many churches. Which church have you heard telling you that anger is a sin? Equivalent to murder in the Old Testament.

Have you heard it somewhere? I hope so. I hope there are a few churches at least preaching that. I'm not saying we are the only ones.

But I'll tell you, in the years that I went to church in India, more than 60 years, I never heard that once in any church. And I've been to Baptist churches, Methodist churches, Pentecostal churches, brethren assemblies, but I never heard it once. I hope there are some.

But that's one of the things the Lord said you've got to preach because hardly anybody else preaches that. Many of you are sitting here. You've been to many, many churches in your lifetime.

Can you think of some church which equated anger with murder like Jesus did in verse 21, 22? That is why the Lord raised up another church here in CCF. To emphasize something which is not emphasized in other churches. And we don't glory in the fact that it's been going on 11 years.

If in 11 years we have not become holier than we were 11 years ago, if we have not become more Christ-like and more spiritual, then every anniversary celebration is hollow, empty, and worthless. That's like saying I've grown older. What is that worth if you're still sitting in the kindergarten? And if you're allowing people to come here to be comfortable in their sin, there's a verse in Isaiah 33.

It says the sinners are terrified in Zion and hypocrites are scared. And I believe that's how it should be in the church. Sinners should be terrified when they come here.

They should say, hey, we can't sit here. We better go to another church. And hypocrites are terrified and sinners are scared because they know the word goes straight to them, exposes them.

So here it says, I say to you, everyone who is angry, he's explaining how our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. If you say to your brother, you're angry with your brother, that's stage one. That's only in the heart.

You're already guilty. And if that anger comes out of your mouth saying you're good for nothing, you're more guilty. And if you go on and say some more, verse 22, the last part, stage three, you're ready to go to hell.

That's another thing I would ask you. Have you ever been to a church that spoke on that verse and said, anger is the first of three steps to hell? There are three steps here. The first is guilty before a court.

The second is with a guilty separating court. The third step is hell. It's anger, anger, anger.

I say this because I find so many Christians, even those who listen to me, they nod their head, but they never take anger seriously. Supposing I were to tell you, anger is worse than cancer. Cancer, fourth stage,

is nothing compared to anger.

Cancer will never send you to hell. Anger will, which is worse. And even as I say it, I know some of you don't believe it.

I know it. I hope you're not among that number. You're despising the words of Jesus.

Let me tell you another thing. Jesus said heaven and earth will pass away. My words will not pass away.

That's one thing. And Jesus said, I'll give you one more example. Adultery, that's another terrible sin in the Old Testament.

Jesus picked out two of the really serious sins in the Ten Commandments. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery.

There were other commandments like don't worship idols and don't tell lies, don't bear false witness and all, but these were about the worst. Murder and adultery. So he took the second one in verse 27 and said, yeah, the Old Testament was you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you, if you look at a woman, this is a commandment particularly for all men.

If you look at a woman and in your heart you desire her, you lust after her beauty. She's not your wife. Your wife's beauty you can welcome.

You're welcome to admire as much as you like. But this is not your wife. This is somebody else's daughter.

Maybe that everybody who walks down the street, every woman who walks down the street is somebody else's daughter. And he said, you shall not covet somebody else's wife or daughter. Somebody else's daughter is every other woman other than your wife in the world.

You shall not desire them. I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust, with desire in your heart for her has already committed adultery. Where? She doesn't even know that you were lusting after her.

She was sitting over there or walking by the road or you were sitting in some place and just looking at her. She didn't have a clue. She didn't have a clue you were committing adultery with her.

But the Lord says you have. How serious is this, Lord? What shall I do with my eyes? He tells you. Verse 29.

If your right eye makes you to stumble, tear it out. Tear it out. And throw it from you.

For it is better for you to lose one eye than for your whole body to go to hell. You say, Lord, can I go to hell for just lusting after a woman? Well, I would say all of you who know English well, try and find some other meaning for verse 28 and 29. I haven't found it yet.

I have not found another meaning for verse 28 and 29. Search. Go meditate on it.

Look at the Greek or whatever you like. It means what it says. Lusting after a woman tells you where it will take you.

We can repent. Sure. You can repent even after you commit physical murder.

God forgives you. But I'm not talking about what is the minimum required to go to heaven. I'll tell you honestly.

I do not believe in preaching on what is the minimum required to go to heaven. Do you want children who say to you, Dad, what is the minimum I have to do to please you? You want me to do chores in the house. What is the minimum I have to do? You want a child like that? You want a child who goes to school and says to the teacher, what is the minimum I have to get to pass in this class, in this subject? 40%.

Okay, I'm aiming for 40%. How many of you want children like that? Tell me. What is the minimum I have to do to get through this? What is the minimum I have to do here? What is the minimum I have to do here? You don't want children like that.

I'll tell you, God doesn't want children like that either. He doesn't. But you ask yourself whether you're one like that.

What is the minimum, Lord? I believe there are two types of Christians, minimum Christians and maximum Christians. That's another big difference between what we preach in CFC churches, this is also one of those in the same faith, is I believe in maximum Christians. What is the maximum I can do for the Lord in my earthly life? I'll tell you this, I'm not preaching what I have not practiced.

From the time I quit my job 56 years ago and decided I would not depend on any man but support myself, do my own business and support myself, I have always sought to the best of my ability. I haven't always succeeded. But my aim was, Lord, what is the maximum I can do for you with this one earthly life? I will not get another life on this earth.

And I don't want to scrape into heaven somehow or the other. I feel ashamed of myself, not for one or two years, but for all eternity. That's how I felt myself.

I don't know how many of you are only interested in just going to heaven when you die. I hope you're not, or if you are like that, I hope you'll get converted even today. After Jesus came and gave his life for us on the cross, do you know that Jesus actually went to hell? I don't know whether you know this.

I want to tell you that I understood this only 16 years after I was born again. As I told you, I was born again when I was 19 and I understood this, what I'm just about to tell you, only when I was about 35, 36. I asked the Lord, some of you have heard me say this before, Lord, what was the cup which you did not want to drink in the Garden of Gethsemane? You know that.

When he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, he said, Father, don't let me drink this cup. I don't want it. But if it's your will, I'll drink it.

There was something that Jesus shrank from. He never shrank from death. He was not afraid of death.

He was ready to die a thousand times for the Father or for you and me. But there was something he shrank from, something he detested and feared. I said, Lord, I want you to tell me what it is.

And this is the picture the Lord gave me. In the Garden of Gethsemane, as he approached the cross, it became, you know, as you approach something and you have a sense of what's coming now, and Jesus had a very clear sense of what's coming. He knew that he was going to take the punishment for man's sin in a few hours.

I mean, he knew that from the time he was a child. But now he is approaching it. In a few hours, I'll be taking that.

And when you approach it, it becomes more real to you. And what is the price for man's sin? I remember as a child, I used to say, Christ died for our sins. And I used to think of, oh, the agony of the nails and the crown of thorns.

And every time I saw a movie of Jesus, I would weep, like many of you do. But it didn't change my life. I still live the same old life the next day.

It was a temporary emotion. It's that physical death that even many of you may be moved only by that physical death. I was moved by that.

What a lot he suffered. I'd imagine the nails being hammered in and all that. I'd say, thank you for dying, for bearing all that for me.

The Lord showed me the cup was much more than that. He was not afraid of the nails. He was not afraid of the crown of thorns.

He'd be willing to die a thousand deaths like that for me. But he knew, what is the punishment for man's sin? I think most of you know that. If I were to ask you, you know a little bit about the Bible.

Where do people go if they die in their sin? That's the punishment for man's sin. It's hell, a lake of fire. Next question, how long will they be there? 10 years, 100 years? Eternity.

So the punishment for man's sinning is eternal hell. And if Jesus did not take that punishment, then he has not taken the punishment for my sin. If the punishment for a crime is a million dollars and a man puts in one dollar, he hasn't paid the fine, not at all.

He's paid one dollar. The fine is a million dollars. So if the punishment for man's sin is eternity in hell, and Jesus just went and suffered a few nails on the cross and a crown of thorns, he hasn't paid my punishment at all.

I'll tell you another thing. If physical death is the punishment for sin, I can take it myself. Why does Jesus have to die? I will die.

I take the punishment for my sin and I go to heaven. Do we think these things through? I thought it through. And I said, if Jesus did not suffer hell, he has not taken the punishment for my sin, then my sin is still on me.

But he did take it. What is hell? Hell is not, you know, Jesus used picture of fire and worms. It's all picture language.

Like he spoke of heaven of mansions and streets of gold. I'll tell you, I don't believe there are mansions in heaven. What will I do with a 14-bedroom mansion in heaven? I wouldn't want to be there at all.

I say, you can have it. I want to be with Jesus all the time, not sit in a 14-bedroom mansion. These are all pictures Jesus uses a crown.

Do you think I'm going to go around with a crown over my head in heaven? We throw it at Jesus' feet. It's all pictures. Things that are valuable on earth, mansions, crowns, and Jesus saying, heaven is a wonderful place.

In the same way, he pictures hell as fire and worms, all the horrible things we can think of. But what is hell really? It is the only truly God-forsaken place. There's no place on earth which is God-forsaken.

It's a place where God is not there. And the only way Jesus could picture it is like burning in fire or being eaten by worms all the time and never dying. But the sad reality is that it's completely forsaken by God and it's absolutely unthinkable what it will be.

So Jesus had to be forsaken by God, the Father, if he's to take the punishment for my sin. And that's what happened on the cross. For the first three hours, he was not taking the punishment for my sin.

He was forgiving the dying thief and he was caring for his mother and telling John to take care of his mother and forgiving all the people who crucified him. That's all he did the first three hours. But then, when it all became dark, that's the time God forsook him.

And that's the time, the only time in his life where he looked up to heaven and never said, Father, he said, God. Only once in his life did Jesus look up to heaven and call his Father, God. Every other time for 33 1/2 years, he always said, Father, Father, Father, Father.

But all of a sudden, it changed. Because now he was standing before the judge of the universe and he was being judged for being a sinner. Not himself.

He was not a sinner. He never sinned. But for me, he took my place and he was standing before the throne of the judge and he had to say, my God, my God.

You know, when you're forsaken by God, your mind is completely disconnected. You don't know why you're forsaken. I mean, I can explain it.

If I was there, I could have said, Lord, you're being forsaken because you're taking my sin. But there you see the very fact that he had to ask that question showed that he was really experiencing hell that he could not even understand why. I mean, I sitting here can understand, but he could not.

That's what hell is. Absolutely no contact with God. Not even understanding the reason why you're suffering.

Why have you forsaken me? And I remember when I was praying about this, it was exactly about 46 years ago, and the Lord said, I can imagine a conversation going on in Gethsemane. An imaginary conversation where the father tells Jesus, you don't have to drink the cup. You don't have to be forsaken.

You lived a perfect life. From Gethsemane, come straight up to heaven. But Zach will go to hell.

Oh. Jesus said, Zach will go to hell. Okay, Father.

I'll go to the cross. I remember when I saw that the first time, I can't express it, but I wept and wept and wept. And I said, Lord, at last you've shown me the price you paid for my sin.

It changed my life. I'll tell you, it'll change yours. You're only hearing me.

But if you get this as a revelation from God, I guarantee it'll change your life. If I'd only heard it as a message, maybe I just heard it taken down the notes and gone away. But when I got it from God as a revelation, it changed my life.

And I said, Lord, I will never again live for myself. I'll never again take sin lightly. Because this is the sin that's made God forsake you.

How can I ever take sin lightly? How can I ever take telling a lie or hating someone or, you know, injuring somebody or not asking forgiveness, that's a sin. Or loving material things more than loving God, that's a sin. How can I ever do that? I will never do it, Lord.

By the grace of God, give me grace. I want you to help me. I'm a man tempted in every way human beings are.

But I want to overcome. Because you drank that cup that day to save me from an eternal hell. So, the only two, I mention hell because there are only two places in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus spoke about hell.

Only two places. He spoke about many other sins. Like don't tell lies, let your yes be yes and no be no.

Don't hate others. When you pray, don't let other people, don't pray to impress others. Don't love money.

Don't be anxious. These are all sins. But with all the list of sins, there are many of them in Matthew 5, 6 and 7, only two sins did he say will send you to hell.

And those are the two sins I speak about most in my preaching. And if you heard me say that a hundred times, you can be pretty sure you'll hear me another hundred times saying the same things because I know what a dreadful place hell is. A little bit.

And I know what my Savior suffered to deliver me from it. And I want to explain to you what can send you there. Anger and lusting after women.

Those are two very serious things. I'm just mentioning since these things are not taught much in other churches, God had to start another church. That is how CFC started in India anyway.

And I believe that's why God has raised up NCCF 11 years ago. I was just trying to explain the 11th anniversary and the significance of it. Now I say this.

If you come across some church either online, the YouTube, it's thousands of sermons, and preaching these things, boy, I tell you honestly, I'd love to come across such people. I'd love to come across such a church that emphasizes, not just casually takes a Bible study on it and moves on, but emphasizes it the way I emphasize it right now. The seriousness of sin and many other things against hypocrisy and telling lies and paying your taxes and all that.

Where are the churches that emphasize this? Hypocrisy. Anything contrary to the law of love is a sin. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

There must be no place in my heart for anything that God does not approve of. And I must not love anything more than God in my life. That is the only Christianity.

There's no second level Christianity or third level. There is only one level. You shall love God with all your heart.

I've heard people say you accept Jesus as Savior, and then later on you accept him as Lord. What do you mean? It's like saying I get married one day, a woman says I get married to a man one day just to provide my food, and then some other day later on I will be with his wife to sleep with him and be in his house. Is it like that? When you get married, when a woman gets married, she completely belongs to her husband, and she cannot love another man.

Not even a little bit. Her husband is the only one she's attached to. That is the way the Bible pictures a relationship with Jesus Christ, where everything else is through Christ, and if I cannot do that through Christ, I don't do it.

Dear brothers, I've just said a few things, but these are some of the things that distinguish CFC. I'll say one more thing, and that is, in the Old Testament, there was no understanding of grace. We use it so lightly.

May the grace of God be with you. The Bible says, Romans 6.14, if you have grace upon you, sin cannot rule over you. That's it.

Absolute. It's like saying if I've got an umbrella over my head, the rain cannot fall on me, it can fall all around me. I will not have one drop on my body if I am under the umbrella.

Romans 6.14, when you're under grace, sin cannot rule over you. I put sin under my feet. That is the New Testament definition of grace.

And that's another thing I tell you I never heard in any other church. These are some of the things that we emphasize and say we need living examples of that. We need living examples of those who demonstrate in their life what the grace of God has done in my life.

As I said, it's not one jump to perfection. You start in the kindergarten, but every year we go higher and higher and higher and higher and higher. The path of the righteous is described in Proverbs 4.18 as the sunrise.

You're born again, the sun rises, and the sun keeps on going up and up and up, brighter, brighter, brighter, it says in Proverbs 4.18, till one day Christ comes back and it's perfect. So, the sun never backslides, by the way. I hope you know that.

Not after a while it says, hey, let me slip back a little. Christians do that, but not the sun. But the path of the righteous, there is no backsliding.

Proverbs 4.18, it's like the light of the sun, and if you're backsliding, you know for certain you're not walking with Christ at that time. You can get forgiveness, of course. Even the thief on the cross got forgiveness after murdering 25 people.

You can murder 25 people and repent. But remember this, he never knew about that before. He didn't know all those things and then go and murder people.

That's the difference between him and Christians today, who know and then commit sin, knowing that the blood of Christ will forgive me. There's a verse in the Bible which says to treat the blood of Christ like a common thing in Hebrews 10. That is, to treat it like tap water.

Why are we not afraid of getting our hands dirty? Because tap water is cheap. If tap water cost a million dollars for a gallon, oh boy, we'd be very careful not to get our hands dirty. But because tap water is cheap, just go and wash your hands.

And when I can take sin like that, I sin, oh the blood of Jesus will cleanse me. We are treating the blood of Christ like tap water. In Hebrews 10, verse 25-27 onward says that you are in danger of severe judgment if you treat the blood of Christ like a common, unclean thing.

That's another thing we emphasize here. That we treat the blood of Christ as something very precious and sacred, not something to be fooled around with. Now, it looks like it's a very gloomy life.

Exactly the opposite. I found such joy in my life since I discovered this. And I'll tell you honestly, one of the big problems I had in my life before that was discouragement.

Frequently discouraged. It disappeared when I found the true Christian life. I'll honestly stand before God and say discouragement disappeared from my life when I discovered true Christianity.

It's impossible for me to be discouraged now. Things may go wrong in the world around me, so what? I have Christ. I live with Him as my head.

And it doesn't matter what people say about me or do to me or what doesn't happen, makes no difference. Because I know one thing, that God is going to make everything around me work for my good. It's a wonderful life.

I invite you all, encourage you to participate in it. That's what this church stands for. Amen.

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