

# The Secret of Living in God's Presence Always

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of living in the presence of God continually by denying our own will and following the example of Jesus, who set the Father always before Him. It highlights the significance of the veil being rent at Jesus' death, symbolizing the way into the Father's presence. The speaker encourages believers to walk in the new and living way opened by Jesus, to experience fullness of joy and unshakable lives. The message stresses the need to forget past regrets, press forward, and focus on becoming more like Christ.*

**Scripture:** Psalms 16:8, Acts 2:25, Hebrews 10:19, Philippians 4:4, Hebrews 11:40, John 16:13, 1 John 2:6, Hebrews 12:1, James 1:14, Galatians 5:17, John 6:38, Hebrews 4:15

**Topics:** "Living in God's Presence", "Following Christ's Example"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Let's begin with the Psalm 16. There are many wonderful verses in Psalm 16. It's worth meditating on them.

There are not many psalms like this. There are just a few psalms filled with verses which you can meditate on each one. But I'm thinking particularly of verse 8. I have set the Lord continually before me, and because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

We know this psalm is referring to Jesus because in verse 10, that's the verse that's quoted in the New Testament. You will not leave my soul. You will not allow your Holy One to undergo decay.

That's the verse that was quoted in the Acts of the Apostles. So, verse 8 also is referring to the way Jesus lived. He set the Father continually before Him, and the Father was always at His right hand so that He would not be shaken.

So this is one of the great privileges we have in the New Covenant. Mostly we emphasize victory over sin. Sin shall not have dominion over you because you're under grace, not under law.

You're in the New Covenant and not the Old Covenant. But another thing about the New Covenant is that we can constantly live in the presence of the Father every single day and all the time. I set the Lord continually before me, and I will live an unshakable life no matter what happens, no matter how I'm tempted, no matter what circumstances are around me.

And one way in which the Lord showed the Old Testament people that they could not live in His presence was that in the tabernacle, there was a veil that blocked off the most holy place where God dwelt. The tabernacle was identified by a flaming fire on top. Everything in that tabernacle, I mean, all the details are given in Exodus, how, what the dimensions and the material and everything.

And anybody could make it. Even the Philistines could make one, and the enemies of Israel could make one quite easily. But there was one thing in the tabernacle they could not reproduce, and that's the fire on top of the most holy place.

And that was the most important thing. And when Israel backslid, that glory went away. Later on, when the temple was built according to the pattern God had given to David, again, there were these three compartments, the outer court, the holy place, and the most holy place, which was blocked off by the curtain.

And again, the glory of God was there. And when Israel backslid, the glory went away. So in the New Covenant, by the rending of the veil, when Jesus died, the veil was rent.

There's a great significance to that. Because it meant that now man could have this verse fulfilled in his life. I've said the Lord continually before me.

I'm always in his presence. All the time I'm living in God's presence. That privilege and opportunity was opened up when Jesus died and the veil was rent.

And yet, as I've observed most believers, they seem to live like in the Old Covenant. I don't mean just being defeated by sin. But this verse is not true in their life.

I accept the Lord continually before me. He's at my right hand. I will not be shaken.

The way never to be shaken is to have the Lord always at our right hand, to have him always in front of us. And that is God's will for our life, for every one of us. Look at this verse in 1 Corinthians 15.

In the last verse, verse 58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, means unshakable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. What we read in Psalms 16, because he's at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

I'm always living in the presence of the Lord. And God's will is that our life should be unshakable. Our home should be unshakable.

Our ministry should be unshakable. Our church should be unshakable. Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

But it begins with each of us, our individual lives. The church is not some organization. It's each of us.

If each of us are unshakable, then the church is unshakable. So we must seek to live this life, which we read in Psalms 16. I accept the Lord always before me.

And because he's at my right hand, I will not be shaken. I will not be moved. And when we think of how the Lord opened this door, the way into the most holy place, it's mentioned for us in Hebrews 10.

I don't think most Christians have understood what this means. Hebrews 10, he first speaks about forgiveness and God writing his laws in our heart and mind. Hebrews 10, 16, which is really a life of overcoming sin.

And verse 17, God blotting out our past in such a way that he doesn't even remember it. That's sort of a good foundation. Our past is not remembered.

Verse 17, Hebrews 10, 17. And right now, we live with God writing his laws. Verse 16, in our heart and on our mind.

Okay. And then it says, therefore, brethren, verse 19, we have confidence to enter. This is the most holy place, which is preventive.

The Jews could not enter in there. And the fact that the book of Hebrews picks this up and emphasizes it, teaches us that it's not just an Old Testament thing that was there. There was a symbolism there that we need to understand.

And it's connected with the verse we just read. I've set the Lord always before me. Because when we enter, this is really referring to the most holy place.

We enter into the most holy place where God dwells. That's the immediate presence of God there in the most holy place. It was not there in the outer court.

It was not there in the holy place. It was only in the most holy place. Nobody could go in there in the Old Covenant.

One of the great privileges of the New Covenant is that we can go right in there and dwell in the presence of God every single day, every single moment of every day, just like Jesus lived there. And yet my observation is that the vast majority of Christians of course live in the outer court where the sacrifice is made, my sins are forgiven, and that tub of water symbolizes water baptism. Okay, my sins are forgiven, the altar and the laver.

That's it. And there are some who go beyond that to the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is symbolized by the first part of that tabernacle. Beyond the outer court you enter the holy place where there's the incense being burned, which is a picture of the Holy Spirit, and the lamp that is lit, which is another picture of the Holy Spirit, and the bread, the anointed bread that we can partake of.

But even that is not enough. It's not enough to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. So we can say that the entry into the outer court is when we know Jesus as Savior, forgiving our sin.

And the entry into the first part of the tabernacle, the holy place, we could say is knowing Jesus as our baptizer in the Holy Spirit. So knowing him as Savior, and then knowing him as baptizer, and many people, many stop only at Savior, and some go beyond that to be a baptizer. But then there's another compartment, the most holy place, and there it says in Hebrews 6, and verse 19 and 20, Hebrews 6, 19 and 20, this hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope sure and steadfast, which enters within the veil.

Remember the veil is the thing that blocked off the most holy place. And where Jesus has entered for us as a forerunner. So Jesus is to be our Savior, the outer court, the baptizer in the Holy Spirit, the holy place, and then our forerunner into the most holy place.

So we need to know Jesus as Savior, baptizer, and forerunner. The vast majority of Christians, born-again Christians, know him only as Savior, period. Some have gone a little beyond that, the baptizer in the Holy Spirit, great.

But very few have gone beyond that, beyond the veil, where Jesus is our forerunner. All of these are different entry points. The outer court had a gate by which you could enter, there was only one.

And then the holy place had a door by which you could enter. And the most holy place had this veil, which is blocked off in the Old Testament, but which was red. And that is where Jesus has entered as our forerunner.

And it says here, we have to enter in there. Turn to Hebrews chapter 10 again, we were looking, the verse we were looking at. Therefore brethren, verse 19, Hebrews 10, 19, since we have confidence or boldness to enter into the most holy place, first of all by the blood of Jesus.

You know, in the Old Testament, the Old Testament history has got a lot of symbolism. That's why three quarters of the Bible is the Old Testament. And there we read the high priest could not go into the most holy place without blood.

There was an awareness of sin that had needed to be cleansed and forgiven. So we enter by the blood of Jesus with the perfect assurance that I've confessed every sin and it's all forgiven. I don't have any guilty conscience when I enter into this place, because I know to the best of my knowledge I've confessed my sin and it's all blotted out.

But it's not only by the blood of Jesus. This is what I want you to see, this next part. By a new and living way.

And we could translate that word living as ever fresh, ever fresh way, which he is our forerunner. He did not just go in. It says he inaugurated this way for us.

It's just like, you know, when they build a new road, some dignitary comes and inaugurates it. And maybe he drives through it first, but that's meant for everybody else to use after that. So Jesus inaugurated.

He opened up this, what's called this new and living way through the veil into the most holy place, into the immediate presence of God. A way opened up for us to live in the immediate presence of God 24-7. That's our calling.

And it says here, this veil symbolizes his flesh. That's interesting. You must know that.

The way into the most holy place is through the flesh of Jesus. And when the veil was rent, it was symbolizing that Jesus' flesh was rent. By that, I don't refer to his body.

Not his body. It's not referring to his body. As I've studied the word flesh in this context and in other places in the New Testament, it refers to the will that Jesus had as a man, his will, which he yielded to the Father every day.

And that is how this veil was rent. So if we see flesh as our human will that opposes the spirit, turn with me to Galatians in chapter 5. Most people have never thought of what is the flesh of Jesus mentioned here in Hebrews 10-20 because it says he opened a way for us through his flesh.

Through the veil means through his flesh. So we need to understand what the flesh of Jesus is here. It's the will he had when he became a man.

So we see in Galatians in chapter 5 and verse 17, the flesh sets his desire against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. And these are in opposition to one another so that you can't do the things that you please. The flesh is that thing within me that makes me do what pleases me and the spirit opposes that.

And if I yield to the spirit, the result will be I can't do what I please. So this is not referring to a physical flesh. It's not referring to it's not referring to something sinful.

It's referring to this will of mine which if I yield to it, it becomes sin. If I don't yield to it, there is no sin. Because Jesus had a flesh.

It says here he came in the flesh. God was manifest in the flesh. 1 Timothy in chapter 3 and verse 16.

Great is the mystery of godliness. He, God, was revealed in the flesh and was pure in his spirit. So, like the Living Bible says, it is true that the way to live a holy life is not an easy matter.

But the answer lies in Christ who came to earth as a man in the flesh. So, throughout, when it says we are to crucify the flesh, Jesus crucified the flesh every single day. Now we've always associated the flesh with something evil.

There's nothing evil in Jesus. His flesh was not sinful flesh. When we have indulged in it so much, it becomes sinful flesh.

He says he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. It wasn't actually sinful flesh, Romans 8. So, what was it that was rent? Let's turn to John chapter 6. We need to understand what was rent. What was the veil that was rent? Now, this is not just a nice picture or a theory.

It's very, very practical because that's called the new and living way into the Father's presence. So, we see here, John chapter 6, verse 38. I came down from heaven.

That's when he got a flesh. And in that flesh was a thing called my own will to please myself. But he never did his own will.

John 6, 38. And that was the only way he could do the will of the Father. If he denied his flesh and denied his will, what we call temptation, every temptation, whether it's from inside or from anywhere, the source of temptation is not important.

But if I yield to it, I sin. And I'm yielding it because my will wants that. So, if I don't yield my will to it, like Jesus, he never yielded.

He was tempted like us in every point. But he said, I never did my own will. So, he never sinned.

So, I see that this rending of the veil when he cried out on the cross, it is finished. That's when the veil was rendered at that moment. So, it's not just that the punishment by sin was finished, but in that moment,

Jesus had completed being tempted in every single area that any human being can ever be tempted.

Not with the same circumstances. For example, he didn't have a drunken father like somebody. Nobody has the same circumstances, but the same temptation.

Whatever circumstances people may have, comfortable or not comfortable, the temptations to do one's own will is exactly the same for every single human being. And it was the same for Jesus. And if he had yielded to it even once, he would have sinned.

So, turn with me now to James chapter 1 and see how sin comes. This word lust also, because we're always connected with dirty lust or sexual lust, we always think it's evil. But the word lust only means a strong desire.

Because in Galatians 5, 17, it says the flesh lusts against the spirit. And the spirit lusts against the flesh. So, that can't be evil if the Holy Spirit is lusting against the flesh, like it says in Galatians 5, 17.

It can't be evil. The word lust only means a strong desire. The flesh has a strong desire against the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's got a strong desire against my flesh, my self-will. And here it says, verse James 1, 14. So, let me read it like that.

Everyone is tempted when he's enticed by his own strong desire to do his own will. And when that strong desire is conceived, that means you yielded to that, you yielded your will and did not resist it, then it gives birth to sin. Up until that point, there is no sin.

The fact there was a strong desire and the desire enticed you, verse 14, there is no sin. The sin comes when you yielded your will, then sin is conceived. And if you continue like that, it says it ends in death, verse 15.

So, the fact that you're attracted to something, it doesn't mean there's any sin. If you yield to it in your mind, then of course you sin, but otherwise, the fact that you're attracted only means you're tempted. Whatever the attraction is, whether it's gold or women or some position or honor or title, the fact that you're attracted to something is not a temptation.

It's when I yield to it in my mind that I sin. That desire, I yield to it. Then it says, Jesus was tempted like us.

He was tempted to be hungry, and the devil tempted him to turn stones into bread. He had the power, but he wouldn't do it. He wouldn't do his own will.

So, that verse in John 6, 38, I came from heaven never to do my own will, never to yield to my flesh. So, when the last temptation was over, the veil was rent. So, it's symbolizing that throughout his life, that veil was being ripped and finally, when the last temptation on the cross was over, it was torn completely.

And that is not just for us to walk in. It says here, I mean, walking on the basis of what he's done. It's a way which we have to walk.

In other words, we have to walk that same way. That is the meaning of Luke 9, 23. If anyone will come after me, let him deny what? His own will, himself, and take up his cross, which means to die to that will and follow me.

If you follow him, where will you enter? You will enter the most holy place because that's where he went and that's where he invites us to come. So, this is also, in fact, if you understand this, you'll find that all of scripture just fits in. In Hebrews chapter 12, in Hebrews 11, verse 40, after listing all these amazing things that old covenant people experienced, he says, God's provided something better for us.

The last verse of Hebrews 11, 40. All that these people experienced was something inferior to what God has provided for us, something better. And that better thing is that we can fix, chapter 12, verse 1 and 2, run a race, and that is along this new and living way, fixing our eyes on Jesus and walking in his footsteps and walking in his footsteps who endured the cross for the joy set before him.

Why is the joy set before him? In Psalm 16, 11, it says, in thy presence is fullness of joy. That verse has gripped me quite a bit because I say, anytime I don't have fullness of joy, I say to myself, I'm not in God's presence. Psalm 16, 11 is very clear.

In thy presence is fullness of joy. So, anytime we don't have fullness of joy, we have to say to ourselves, Lord, I'm not in your presence. In some or the other, I drifted away or I walked away or something happened, but I'm not in your presence right now because I don't have fullness of joy.

And people say, are we supposed to have fullness of joy all the time? Yes, in our will, yes. In fact, Jesus said, the night before he went to the cross, he told his son, my joy I give unto you. Even though he knew he was going to be crucified the next morning.

There was never a time in Jesus' life when he did not have joy in his life. He went through a lot of pain and struggle. I remember the garden of Gethsemane.

He was struggling, but he was in the Father's presence. The only way he could have lost his joy is if he did his own will. He did his own will, then it's gone.

And that's the reason why we lose our joy too. Because in his presence, there's fullness of joy. So, this is the better thing that God's provided for us.

Better than splitting the Red Sea and better than shutting the mouths of lions and raising the dead, all the things mentioned in Hebrews 11. Something better than all that, if you have eyes to see it, is to walk in Jesus' footsteps into the most holy place, who for this joy that was set before him, which is the joy in the presence of the Father, endured the cross, which is what? Denying his own will and despising the shame. And the result is he's in the presence of God.

And he's opened that way for us. And he goes on to say, if you face opposition from sinners, remember he faced it too, verse three. Don't grow weary, press on in this way.

And he finally says in verse four, you may have resisted sin, but you have not resisted sin to the point of dying. That's the point, that you're not resisted to the point of shedding blood. You resisted, resisted not, and sometimes you yielded to your own will, to the flesh.

And so this new and living way that Jesus has inaugurated for us is the way into the most holy place, which comes as I choose to say no to my will consistently day after day after day. And the result is I experience the same joy that Jesus experienced of living in the Father's presence all the time. And this is the real secret of an effective Christian life or even an effective ministry in the church or in our home as fathers or in relation to our children or to our wives, to be a leader.

To be a leader is to, how am I going to be a leader to my wife? How am I going to be a leader to my children? It's by following Jesus, who's my leader. And where is he going? He's going into the Father's presence. And the only way he can go into the Father's presence is by denying his own will.

That is the rent way. That is a new and living way, which read in Hebrews is the far better thing that God has resolved for us. So if you see it like this, you'll see it is a tremendous privilege.

There's a price to be paid, but the price is so little compared to the joy of living in the Father's presence all the time. I personally believe that it is God's will for us. Like it says in Philippians 4.4, to rejoice in the Lord always.

There's only one definition for always, 24-7. Rejoice in the Lord always. And I like what it says here.

Philippians 4.4. In the Father's presence is fullness of joy. And that's the only way you can rejoice in the Lord always. The only way to get into the Father's presence is through this new and living way that I described.

Rejoice in the Lord always. And just in case you think that's a bit of an extreme statement, he says, yes, I mean it. Again, I say rejoice.

That was not a slip of the pen. It was exactly what I needed. Because it looks like such an impossible demand or command.

Rejoice in the Lord always. You say, hey, Paul, you really meant that? Yes, again, I say rejoice. It's interesting that the Holy Spirit prompted him to say that over there.

But when we link it to these other verses, in thy presence is fullness of joy. And the way into the Father's presence is through the new and living way that Jesus inaugurated by denying his will every single time. And so what did we read in John 6.38? I came from heaven never to do my own will.

Everything in that veil was ripped. Every strand was ripped and ripped and ripped. And every strand was selfless.

Selfless, selfless, selfless. That's what blocked off man from going into presence. There's a way we can describe that veil which, you know, everything in the Old Testament has a symbolism.

The altar and the laver, the table of bread, the lampstand, the incense. Everything had a meaning. What about this veil? It has strands, many, many strings of strength, whatever you call it, that had to be ripped one by one by one by one.

There's the many, many aspects of our own self-will in different situations. And that's the way that Jesus went. And he has opened up the way.

We don't know. We can't open it up. He's already opened it up.

But it says here, this is the new and living way. It's not a door. We would think that the veil is like a door.

It's not a door. We read in Hebrews 10, 20, this is a new and living way into the presence of the Father. So even though this sounds very technical and theoretical, it isn't really.

In practical terms, all it means is in every temptation, I have a choice to do my will or God's will. That's all there is. And what Jesus is saying is every single time he chose the will of his Father.

And in many situations, we may not know what the Father's will is in terms of, we think in terms of the Father's will in terms of situations like what job should I take? Whom should I marry? Which house should I buy? All these earthly things. But this is not talking about God's will in those areas. This is talking about God's will when we are tempted to sin.

Not talking about whom you marry or which house you take or which job you choose. But when we are tempted to sin, when we are tempted to do our own will, every sin is really just doing our own will. And Jesus never did it.

And you see in Gethsemane particularly how he struggled with that. Father, it's such a struggle to I don't want to drink this cup. But even there, the most painful temptation of all, he yielded his will again.

He would not do his own will. He said, get not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he drank the cup.

So when that was finally drunk to the bottom, the veil was rent. So in practical terms, if we understand this, it leads to many wonderful things. And I believe this is what will also finally lead to our being built together in fellowship.

Because in Hebrews 10, it goes on to say, by this new and living way, Hebrews 10, 20, that is, through the denial of our will, in practical terms, before we go further, what does it mean? It means when somebody yells at me and provokes me, my will says something, I've got to just deny it. I've got to put it to death. When I'm tempted to lust after something, I know what my will wants, and I put it to death.

When I'm tempted to have a wrong attitude towards some brother who's treated me badly, that's an inward thing, and I know what my will is, the will of Adam, and I put it to death. I say, no, I'm not going to have that attitude. I will not do my own will.

I'll do the will of the Lord. And we could apply to different situations. For example, supposing you took a decision in some matter which resulted in some great loss for you, say, financial loss, and we can brood on that for a long time.

Oh, if I had not done this, if I had done that, I would not have lost so much. Yeah, we all go through those things, and what the Lord says is, forget it. Let's move on.

Don't keep thinking about that, because it doesn't help. Like the old proverb, don't cry over spilt milk, just carry the rest of the milk at least towards its destination before you spill some more. So, we are to really be very strong there, because we can have regret over certain decisions we've taken, maybe financial, maybe something else, you know, a job or something else, because of which we suffered a certain loss.

I think all of us have had that experience in some areas. And you look back and say, boy, if I had chosen that instead of this, how different it would have been. Yes, it would have been different in terms of some earthly gain or advantage.

But the more you brood on it, it doesn't help you at all. Actually, we're just kind of forgetting the things that are behind and pressing on to the things that are before. I find there's a great need for that verse that Paul quoted all the time.

If there's something you did which you can confess and set right before God and before men, do that. But if it is something you can do nothing about, it's done. You can say, Lord, I'm not going to waste my time thinking about it.

The thought will come, I'm going to reject it. And I'm not going to sit brooding over it. That's my own will.

To keep brooding over that. Why did I do this? Why did I do this? And you think, you're not going to change the situation. And even common sense says, forget it.

Move on. So, there could be many, many situations like this where self-will comes up. And when we've done this over in numerous different situations, the end result is, after so many years of our Christian life when we could have been so much more in the Father's presence and so much more Christ-like, we have not become that.

We are way behind where we should have been. It's like a child has been in school for 10 years and should have reached grade 10. They're still in grade 2. It's rare to find a child who sits 10 years and is still in grade 2. I've met lots of believers like that.

But it doesn't seem to grieve them so much. We'd be terribly grieved if one of our children was sitting in the same class and defeated by the same thing, failing in the same arithmetic or some subject. We just don't seem to grasp it and constantly failing in the examinations.

We should look at ourselves like that. We're constantly failing in some area again and again and again and again. I often speak about the matter of getting offended, grumbling, complaining, murmuring.

These are kindergarten lessons. We have to get beyond it. And all we have to do is say, Lord, I will not do my own way.

The question comes up, you know, as to what if I go like that and people take advantage of me? No, I don't think God will ever allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. You control the situation. Even if you have a difficult wife, I think most of you have got good wives.

Supposing you're in a particular situation, your wife is a bit stubborn about something or insisting on a certain way. By giving up your own will, will you give up the headship of the house? No. You'll be an example.

By the patience and long-suffering that will become manifest in your life. You're not compromising. Giving up headship means I'm compromising on some spiritual principle and say, okay, let's do it that way, which is wrong.

No, I say, no, I'm not going to do it the wrong way. Maintaining the headship in our home is saying that I decide which way this home is going to go. It's going to go the way of holiness, the way that Jesus walked.

But to yield in a particular situation, which is not important or trivial, we should be willing. We must distinguish between the things that we need to take a stand for with our wives and the things we can yield. Many, many things.

Unnecessarily many husbands take a stand for some silly little thing. It's not worth it. So there are many areas where we have an opportunity to lay down our will and yield.

It just requires a little crucifixion of our pride and falling down and dying. So if we, as we are eager about this way, I believe the Holy Spirit will show us more and more in different situations what exactly we're supposed to do. John chapter 16 has been a very helpful word from John chapter 16 where it says, John 16, 13, When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth.

He will tell you which is the right path to take in a particular situation. We must say, Lord, I want to be sensitive to the voice of your spirit that speaks in my heart in that time of temptation when I'm tempted to do my own will and give me grace at that time to listen to the voice of the Spirit and yield. And He will take of mine.

This is what I like. Verse 14 in the middle. The Holy Spirit will take something from the life of Jesus and disclose it.

To disclose means reveal, not just show. To disclose is something which is hidden, which is revealed. So the outward life of Jesus is not hidden.

Anybody, any non-Christian can read the Gospels and find out all the things Jesus did. This is something different. These are the hidden things in Jesus' life which the Holy Spirit reveals and shows me how I am to walk.

See, that's the wonderful thing to recognize that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are. Hebrews 4.15. I found great joy in saying, Lord, this particular temptation, I really don't know what to do. But you were tempted like me, not in the same circumstances, but the same temptation.

And I want to respond as you did in Nazareth in those 30 years. To me, those 30 years of Jesus' life have become far more precious to me than the latter three and a half years which many people are taken up with. The things that Jesus did in the last three and a half years, well, most of them, I can't do it.

I can't turn the water into wine or walk on the water or raise the dead or any of those things. I might as well forget it. But the things that Jesus did in the first 30 years, that I can do.

That's where He never did His own will. In different practical circumstances, when He was tempted exactly like me and the veil was being rent, there was an invisible veil that was being rent in His life. And when He finally said, on the cross it is finished, it was the last strand torn, and the way was opened up.

And He says, now that I've inaugurated that way for you to walk in the same way, and then you will find in the Father's presence there is fullness of joy. I've set the Lord always before me. Always.

And because He's at my right hand, I will not be moved. You know, that's the verse that Daniel asks the apostles in chapter 2 when Peter was preaching the gospel. Acts 2, the first gospel sermon.

It says in verse 25, when David says about Jesus, I saw the Lord always in my presence. He's at my right hand, so I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, my tongue exalts, my flesh lives in hope.

Verse 28, You have made known to me the way of life. You will make me full of gladness in the presence there is fullness of joy. That's all Psalm 16.

That whole thing is from Psalm 16. And that is the better thing that God has provided for us in the new covenant. My conviction is that the vast majority of Christians I have met in my life have missed it completely.

They don't. They missed out. There's something that Jesus purchased for us as part of their inheritance.

They've ignored it. It's like, I mean, if your dad left you an inheritance of a few million dollars, you'd be pretty careful to find out what you have a right to and take it. I find here something that Jesus has left for us and I find the vast majority of Christians have not even bothered to find out, to dig into Scripture and say, what does this mean, Lord, in my life? I want it.

Anyway, I thank God it changed my life because I dug into Scripture to find out what is this thing that Jesus purchased for me? I don't want to treat what my Lord has paid such a price for to purchase for me and treat it as if it's unimportant. He does not want me to live this gloomy, depleted life. He wants me to rejoice in His presence always and to live in His presence always and to be an overcomer at all times.

So dear brothers, since we are men, we have to lead the way and be strong to be leaders to our wives and leaders to our children at home. So maybe some of the things I said today may have sounded theological or complicated. It is not.

It's very downright practical. I was just trying to give you a scriptural foundation for this truth because faith comes by hearing, not by hearing a man. That was the explanation.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ. So I hope some faith has come here. Faith to believe that we can walk this way.

And like it says in 1 John 2, 6, he who says he abides in me must walk as he walked. Amen. I feel a burden to reemphasize what I said about forgetting the things that are behind.

I fear that there could be people perhaps in our own midst who are thinking frequently of something done in the past which is new and if I had done it only a little differently, the situation would be different today. Agreed. But you're not going to be able to go back to that point.

So I drew this picture of a curtain dropping right behind me, right behind my back, touching my back. And I look back. Nothing I can see.

It's all forgotten. I have to think that as I move forward, that curtain is there always behind me, forgetting what is behind. We can learn lessons from the past, definitely.

We have to learn lessons from our blunders and mistakes in the past. That is the will of God. But to live in regret over it? No.

To say, Lord, okay. Okay, I can't do anything about it. Why should I think about it anymore? It's gone.

Maybe I lost the money. Okay. Or maybe I lost the position or lost something or the other.

But I'm going to forget the things that are behind because if I don't, my onward progress is definitely going to be hindered. And I'm not going to make as much progress as I should. So forgetting what lies behind and pressing forward to what lies ahead for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, which is to become like Him.

So I see it like this, that if I allow this regret over any past failure or incident or some trivial little thing, even money is a trivial little thing, that keeps bothering me, what will happen is, by the time I come to the end of my life, the measure in which I could have become like Christ, I did not. I could have a lot more. It's like I

could have gone up to grade 10, I ended up in grade 4, and the Lord has come.

It's not God's will. Let's press on. I want to repeat again to these... I don't know why the Lord is asking me to repeat this again.

We have to let a curtain fall behind us. And the thing that is causing you regret about something you missed or lost out on or that you could have gained or something like that, you have to, instead of letting it bring regret to you, say, Lord, I'm going to make that a stepping stone to climb even higher than I could have gone if that had not happened. That's how we turn the tables on the devil.

Amen.

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