

The Secrets of Jesus' Life

by Zac Poonen

The secret of Jesus' life was that He was centered in His relationship with the Father, and we can have the same relationship with the Father too.

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Scripture: Matthew 5:48, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:25, John 14:6, John 16:32, Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18

Topics: "Secrets"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being continuously led and filled by the Holy Spirit. He references 2 Corinthians 3:18, which speaks about the Lord the Spirit and how we are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. The speaker highlights three areas in which the Holy Spirit can show us the glory of Jesus and help us pattern our lives accordingly. He also discusses the Father's purpose for our lives, which is to become like Jesus Christ. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the need for a strong relationship with our heavenly Father, just as Jesus had, and how the Holy Spirit enables us to reach our destination of becoming like Christ.

Transcript

Last Sunday, we were looking at the fact that God has a destination for us and we saw that destination from Romans 8.29 and that destination was that we might become like Jesus Christ. So there we saw the Father's purpose for our lives and that's very important, it's like when you get in the train, you know what your destination is going to be and that's what you're aiming for, you don't get down any wayside station. Now, I want to turn to a verse which we are very familiar with in 2nd Corinthians 3.18 to show us that God's purpose in sending the Holy Spirit was to enable us to reach this destination.

He knew that we could never reach this destination, no matter how hard we try, without the power of the Holy Spirit. This is like the engine of the train. You can sit in the train for ages and you'll never get to your destination if the engine doesn't pull it and it's as simple as that and one day if you decide to be disconnected from that engine, well, then you're going to be stationary again.

And this is why there's a need to be continuously led and filled by the Holy Spirit. 2nd Corinthians 3.18, it speaks here about the Lord the Spirit in the last phrase, the Lord the Spirit. And in the mirror, which is God's Word, we see the glory of Jesus and are transformed into that same image from one degree of glory to another.

From one degree of glory to another just means that we get closer and closer to our destination. It's like when you get into a train, every minute you should be getting closer to your destination. So that's all it means, that when you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you, He's first of all going to show you the glory of Jesus.

And that's why I say it's so important for us, when we read God's Word, to see the glory of Jesus Christ and seek to allow the Holy Spirit to make us pattern our lives exactly according to that likeness in every area. Now there are hundreds and hundreds of areas that the Holy Spirit can show us in our life, but I want to mention just three this morning. What were the things that were, we could say, the secret of why Jesus' life was so effective, so perfect.

It's the only life worth following completely. And I'm sure all of us agree there. But if we don't focus on what the Holy Spirit, like it says here, shows us of the glory of Jesus in His Word, what's going to happen is that we can very subtly be led astray from that destination, from that glory, by many other voices that sound very similar and that sound right to us.

When we come to God's Word, we must come like little children. Jesus said that, not only children, He said babes. Matthew 11 25, He said, I thank you, Father, that you have hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent and revealed them to babes.

Now, what is the difference between babes and intelligent people? It's just this. Babes know nothing. What does a little baby know? Nothing.

What do intelligent people know? They think they know everything. So you come to the Scriptures, thinking you know a lot and thinking that you're very spiritual, you'll get zero from God. You'll get nothing from the Holy Spirit.

He just won't tell you anything. But you come to the Scriptures like a little babe and say, God, I mean, it doesn't matter how long I've been a believer. I really don't know.

I need to see the glory of Jesus in my life. You'll see a great deal, even in one reading. So, the first characteristic, I would say, of Jesus' life was that He lived in a relationship with His Father.

He had a wonderful relationship with His Heavenly Father. And you see that many times in Scripture, in the Gospels. You need to let the Holy Spirit show you that.

That the first secret of Jesus' life was His relationship with His Heavenly Father. He was so secure in that relationship. And I just want to show you one verse which teaches that.

Because that's what the Holy Spirit seeks to do in our life too. It's in John's Gospel, chapter 16. John's Gospel, chapter 16.

We read in verse 32. He was talking to His disciples after the Last Supper. They all had said that they would never leave Him, etc., etc.

They would never deny Him and all that. But He said, an hour is coming and it has already come for you to be scattered everyone will go to his own home and you will leave me alone. Now these were people, remember, these 11 people were people who stuck with Jesus through all types of situations.

There was a time when many other disciples left and went when they got offended with the words of Jesus. But these 11 stuck and He said to them, do you also want to go? And they said, no, to whom shall we go? You know, a particular trial would come where they would all leave Him. There are a lot of believers who will stick with us in different situations, but sometimes it can get so intense that they will leave.

Paul experienced that. A lot of believers stuck with him through many times, but finally he said in 2 Timothy 4 when it came to the last trial, all men left him. He stood alone in court without a single person, not a single believer wanted to identify with him.

But he said, the Lord stood with me. Paul was not insecure because he had seen Jesus. And Jesus says here, you leave me alone, and yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.

That was the security of his life. He did not find his security in 11 good disciples who would stick by him. He found his security in the Father.

He thanked God for those 11. You read that in the next chapter. It is full of thanksgiving for those 11 whom the Father had given him.

But his security was not found in those 11. His security was found in the Father. He says, oh, time will come in a few minutes, all of you will go away.

Okay, so what? I am not alone. And the more I have seen believers, the more I am convinced that a lot of us find our security in a group. And you can be in a group and have no relationship with the Father.

And what happens is, if the group collapses, you are finished. You read that particularly in cults, you know, people who join certain cults. They find such a security in that cult group.

There is so much love, affection, care, and all that, you know, we are the only people on earth whom God loves, and we are the only body of Christ, and all that wonderful thing. They hear that, and one day it splits. And some people are left alone.

And do you know what happens to them? Some of them go right out into the world. Why? Their only security was in the group. They never had a relationship with the Father.

You know, that danger can happen to all of us, particularly, listen, particularly if you have, what shall I call it, misfortune or good fortune or belonging to a good church. If you were in a bad church where nobody was born again, oh, then it would be different. You would know the Lord.

Or you were in some lonely jungle or forest where you didn't have any believers around you. Boy, that would have been different. You would lean on the Lord.

But when you are in a very good church, you don't need the Father. It's a great danger. You can get so involved in the activities of the church and the meetings and the choir practice and the young people's meetings and so many things that you really don't need God.

You don't need to have a personal relationship with the Father. You don't need to read the Bible because you hear so much every week. And gradually the habit of Bible reading disappears from your life, which will not disappear from the life of a man who is living in a jungle because he doesn't have anyone to teach him.

So many other things disappear from your life. Your faith disappears because this corporate faith. You know, if you have sudden financial need, you don't have to worry.

This wonderful church takes care of your financial need. But if you are out in the middle of the jungle, you can only trust God. You don't have a wonderful church.

And do you know how much that has robbed you of miraculous experiences with the Father? You have a need, and you very subtly, cleverly make it known to people in the church, and the need is met. What have you missed? You have missed a miraculous experience with God. That's happened to so many people.

That's why I decided many, many years ago that if I had a need, I wouldn't tell a soul because I wanted to experience God. In that situation. And that's what I've experienced so many years.

Security in the Father. Some of you find your security in a job. You don't realize it.

Your security is in a job, and you don't need much faith when you have a secure job. If you had an insecure job, you'd probably get to know God a little better. Do you feel sorry for the people who have insecure jobs? No.

I feel sorry for the people who have secure jobs. They don't need God. It's like a good church.

Your life can be so independent of God because you've got a good church, you've got a secure job, you've got a good family. You don't need God, do you? It's a very tragic situation to be in. Jesus, His whole life is found in His security with the Father.

All the religious people in Israel opposed Him. Didn't make a difference. He wasn't seeking for popularity with the religious crowd.

We live in a day and age where a lot of Christians try to be popular. They don't want to offend anybody. They don't want to say anything that will hurt anyone.

Can you imagine Jesus living a life like this? Always careful. I must not say anything that will hurt anybody. What would the Gospel records have been like? Do you find Jesus like that in the Gospels? You know, always saying, no, I shouldn't offend the Pharisees because they also have the right doctrines and why should we talk about them? Can you imagine what His life would have been like? I mean, the Father would have to say, this is my son with whom I'm thoroughly displeased.

That's what He says about a lot of Christians today. Yeah, these are my children, all right, but I'm thoroughly displeased with them because they are diplomats, they are compromisers. Jesus is not like that.

He wanted to please the Father. He had a relationship with the Father of security. And that's the first thing I want to encourage all of you, my dear brothers and sisters, to have in your life a relationship with the Father.

In my travels in different places, I try to listen to how people pray publicly, not to judge them. No, it's not my business to judge. I believe that even a child prays in stumbling words, God hears.

But we need to grow up to maturity. And I've discovered one thing all over the world, including our churches. Very few people pray to the Father.

Most people pray to Jesus. They don't know the Father. They are orphans.

They are like people who got an elder brother, but they have no father. They are orphans. If you don't believe me, test it out.

Have you heard me pray? I always pray to the Father. If you heard me, you noticed that. Because I know the Father.

Not only that, because Jesus said, when you pray, don't say, Lord Jesus, say, Our Father. I'm just obeying Jesus' command. That's all.

I take every word of God seriously. Now, I'm not saying that if you pray to Jesus, God won't hear you. Don't misunderstand me.

We teach our children to pray to Jesus. I believe with all my heart, when you pray to Jesus, He hears you. All I'm saying is, when I became a man, I put away childish things.

That's all I'm saying. If you're a child, spiritually, please go ahead. Continue to pray to Jesus.

But Jesus told His disciples, when you pray, say, Our Father. You read in Romans chapter 8, we're talking about the Holy Spirit. Verse 14, For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.

You have not received a spirit of slavery, Romans 8, 15, leading to fear again. But you have received a spirit of adoption as sons, by which we cry out, Lord Jesus. No, we cry out, Abba Father.

The Holy Spirit fills me and He speaks out through me and says, Father, I'm a son. And He shows me Jesus, my eldest brother. Now, you see, there is a teaching among some Roman Catholics that Mary loves you.

So, if you want to get anything through Jesus, you better go to Mary. You know how mothers are more tender, they say. So, if you want to go to Jesus, don't go to Him directly because He's pretty strict and He may not give you what you want.

But you go through His mother. And a lot of people believe that. It sounds a very good argument, you know.

You want to get something done through a very powerful government official, if you know His mother. Boy, that's a help, isn't it? So, you go to His mother and say, Can you tell your son to do this for me? And that's Roman Catholic teaching. Now, a lot of Protestants, it's just one step further.

Don't go to the Father. He's very strict. No, don't go to Him.

Just go to Jesus and perhaps He'll put a word in to the Father and maybe you'll get it. I want you to turn to John 16, what we read there, verse 26 and 27. John 16, verse 26 and 27.

In that day, you will ask in My name. And I don't say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf. No.

For the Father Himself loves you. That's what He was trying to tell them. He said, Go directly.

Go in My name. Of course, Jesus is the mediator between God, the Father and us because we can't come to Him without being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. I want to encourage all of you, my brothers and sisters, to know the love of your Heavenly Father for you.

It can change your life. It's not a new message. I preached it here for 28 years.

The thing that changed my life was when I discovered that the Father loved me as He loved Jesus and that the Holy Spirit has come into my heart to assure me of that. He loved me. Why? It says here, verse 27.

For the Father Himself loves you, not because you're good, but because you love me and you believe that I came forth from the Father. I want to ask you, my brothers and sisters, do you love Jesus to the best of your knowledge and ability? Maybe a little bit. Maybe a drop.

Not an ocean. Doesn't matter. At least a drop.

Do you believe that He came from the Father? According to this verse, the Father loves you. We may think that it can't be because I'm so bad. God's not like earthly fathers.

You've heard me say that many times. If you're being evil, the best earthly father is evil. But God is a good father.

Jesus lived in that security. Didn't matter if everybody left Him. He was secure.

And therefore, His life was centered in the Father. He knew that if the Father... Now listen to this. Because Jesus knew that the Father loved Him so much, He knew that it's only by doing everything that the Father said that He could have a wonderful life on earth.

I mean, think of your children, you who are fathers and mothers, if they could only believe that everything you tell them is for their good. Can you imagine how protected those children will be from dangers and many things that you seek to protect them from? But how are a lot of teenagers today? They think their dads and moms don't know. They're old-fashioned.

They don't understand us. And so they go and do all types of stupid things and they mess up their life, which they would not have messed up if they would only have listened to their Father. Now Jesus had no such problem with His Father.

He was absolutely secure. I know my Father loves me. So if my life is centered in the Father, that'll be the best life I can live on this earth.

That is the result of knowing that the Father loves me. Now there's a need for me to say that because a lot of television evangelism today stops with telling us that the Father loves us. The most favorite message of American charismatic TV evangelist today is that God loves you tremendously, full stop.

It doesn't stop there. If that is true, like it was for Jesus, then you would center your life in God. And the end result is a lot of the television evangelists go on from there and preach a man-centered gospel that because God loves you, He wants to give you houses and cars and lands and the whole thing is man-centered.

But a lot of people can't see it. They can't see through it. If you don't believe me, if you have a habit of watching these television evangelists, just concentrate on that and see if you ever hear a message where they tell you to be centered in God.

Think of His glory, His name. No, it's not. Everything is, you are so important and you are so precious and you're so valuable and God will do this for you and God will do that for you and God will do the other thing.

God is like, you know, this Aladdin's lamp. Have you read the story of Aladdin's lamp? You rub it, the genie comes. What do you want? Anything.

You want a palace? You want a... And it's the same old story. It's just you replace the genie with God or Jesus and He's there. And it's this man-centered gospel is the reason why despite all the messages you hear, you're still defeated by sin.

You can't get victory over anger. You can't get victory over bitterness. You know, that's one of the things that's grieved me.

As I see so many believers who have been here, believers for so many years, so many, many, many years and they've got long faces, they're sour, got grudges against people. They should have been some of the sweetest saints in India, but they're not. They've got grudges, they've got bitterness and it's written all over their face.

I mean, they think they can hide it in their heart. You cannot. I want to tell you a little secret.

What's in your heart is written all over your face. Other people can see it. It's, you know, if you're the angry type of person, it's written on your face.

If you're a proud type of person, it's even written in your eyes. The Bible says that about haughty eyes and haughty looks and I'm sorry to say that we have a younger generation growing up like that and it's a great grief to my heart to see that. It's very sad because their life's not centered in God.

It's this man-centered gospel they're listening to from American evangelists, TV evangelists. All wonderful messages. They like all the way all those people are so dressed up in such posh dresses and they want to dress like them and they see all these grand church buildings where they meet and it's all it's all so wonderful to the eyes.

What's the result? Are you getting victory over your anger, your lust, your bitterness, your love of money and all the things the New Testament speaks about? No. I have one bit of warning to you if you take it. Don't be deceived.

You can take it or leave it. He was yours to hear. Let him hear.

But if you want to make use of you, you've got only one life. You can't afford to make a mistake with this one life. Don't you can't afford to make a mistake.

You've got to recognize the secret of Jesus' life was he wasn't asking the father for cars and houses and land. He was asking the father how to please him. He struggled in Gethsemane for what? What did he fast and pray for 40 days for? Nothing earthly.

His life was not centered in himself. He wanted to know how he could do the father's will. He prayed a whole night once.

For what? To find out who could carry on the leadership of his work after he left. Where are the people nowadays who pray like that? They've been taught by all the TV programs they see and the videos they see to pray for themselves. And to think and invariably material things.

And what's the result? The worldly people get material things. You think worldly people don't get married? They get married. You think they don't have houses, lands? God, they've got a lot more than the best Christians I've ever known.

When God loves us, if I really believe it, and I believe it with all my heart, and therefore I know that no matter how hard I try, I cannot make a more perfect plan for my life than the one my father in heaven has already made for me. That is the very best. And I have no complaints.

And if I ask him for something, and he doesn't give it to me immediately, I say, my father, I'm willing to wait. Can you wait? Supposing you have a physical infirmity. You have a back problem, or arm problem, or some other problem, and you prayed and prayed, and God never answered you.

Can you still find a security in your father and say, that's okay, father. The greatest thing in life is not to be free from back problems and arm problems. The greatest thing in life is to do the will of God.

And nothing in earth can stop me from doing the will of God. That's security. Jesus' life was so centered in the father, that he, because he was secure in that love, he knew that never, never, never would the father forsake him.

And it's wonderful. I thank God for that security that's grown in my own life, and I wish that for all of you. That you would know that in no circumstance would the father ever forsake you.

Dear brothers and sisters, live in the center of his will. Live in the center of his will. You've often heard me say, what is the safest place in all the earth in these days of terrorism and anti-Christian activities and threats, where some missionaries in North India are threatened that by setting such a date, if you don't leave this village, we'll burn up your family.

That actually happens in our country. You can't come here and preach the gospel. Now, just put yourself in the place of that missionary.

Supposing you were there living with your family and your little children, and you know how much these missionaries get. They don't get the fancy salaries that many of you get. But they're godly people.

They're living out there seeking to serve Jesus. They had good salaries once upon a time, but they gave it up to serve Jesus on a much 10% of that salary somewhere else. And they're struggling there.

And they get this threat. Supposing you were there, what would you do? That's the question. Is that a safe place? Is Bangalore a safer place? You can get killed crossing the road here.

Every day people get killed. The safest place is the center of God's will for your life. The center of God's will for your life is the safest place of all.

And if you can say, Father, I only want to do your will in my life. I have no ambition. I have no ambition for wealth or comfort or ease or anything.

If I can be in the center of your will for my life, I'll ask for nothing else. Jesus never asked in Nazareth for a better house. He could have.

He never asked for anything earthly. He knew that if he sought the Father's will, the Father would give him exactly everything required of earth. I have proved that in more than 40 years of my Christian life.

I can't remember consciously that I've asked anything earthly for my life till today. He's provided me many things I never asked for. I want to encourage you, my brothers.

It's not only Jesus. There are many other godly people who have experienced in their life. Seek the kingdom of God first.

And the other things that you need of earth will be added to you. God knows that you need a job. God knows that you, if it's His plan for you to be married, that you need a husband or a wife.

God knew that in my case. I didn't go hunting. God provided me one.

And God knows that you need a place to live in. God knows everything. But He waits to see whether you'll seek Him or like all the other people in the world, seek after those other things.

Let your life be centered in Him. And I'm not talking about, you know, I've often said that of going into full-time Christian work. You know, I have met that, I have seen that the people who work in Christian organizations are some of the biggest backsliders I have met in my whole life because they have such a comfortable life with so much money, you know, funded from the United States or whatever it is.

They don't need to trust God at all. They go to Bible schools, established Bible schools, orphanages and all this type of stuff. It's a racket.

Don't get in that. But, you know, Jesus never got into all that. He wasn't running organizations.

He was never part of an organization. It was a personal relationship with the Father. And that's the best type of life you can have.

He was a carpenter, the type of job you have, you do that whatever God's given you. But that relationship with the Father, that's what you need more than anything else. Otherwise, I tell you, you'll be a backslider.

You'll sit here and you'll be a backslider. Every week you sit here, you'll be a backslider. You got to cultivate that relationship with the Father.

And that's why Jesus' life was so pure. The fact that the devil tempted Him proves that the devil knew Jesus could be tempted. Now, a lot of people today have a lot of arguments whether Jesus could be tempted.

The devil knew that much better than anybody else. He's cleverer than any human being that says he tempted Him. He wasn't a fool.

And the Bible says Jesus was tempted, like us. How is it He never sinned? Because He knew that whatever the Father had said was the best. And He would always choose.

Now, what's going to please the Father here? I want to choose that. Gradually, it became a way of life with Him, which He never forgot, just like you never forget to brush your teeth every morning. I hope so.

That it's a habit. You know, I mean, when you were a little child, you had to learn it, but it's become a habit. Just like that with Jesus.

In the beginning, you had to struggle to learn something. And after a while, you enjoy it. It's you enjoy overcoming temptation.

It's like you, you know, children are being forced when they're a child to go to school, or after some time, you see the same child enjoying his studies, or being forced to learn an instrument, and after some time, he enjoys playing it. It's like that with temptation. It's a struggle in the beginning.

Don't give up during those days of struggle. You'll really enjoy being an overcomer. You'll enjoy the fact that the devil can't knock you down, that you can stand.

Find your security in the Father. This is the whole secret of Jesus' life. And I believe, if we can say, Lord, I want to learn what it is to have my life centered in You.

Everything, in other words, every decision in practical terms, it meant this, that every major decision that Jesus took, He always would think now, how would this, will this glorify the Father or not? That's where temptation comes in. All of us take decisions, but we don't necessarily ask that question. In everything, I believe in, if you're really a godly person, you would seek to say now, how would this glorify the Father? I mean, the type of dress your sisters are going to wear.

You think now, is this something that will glorify the Father? Something I can go into Jesus' presence with, the way I dress right now. Can I walk hand in hand with Jesus with this dress, or would He be a bit ashamed of me? Think of that. Think if you walk like the people in the world, with your head cocked in the air.

Is that the way you'd walk with Jesus? Little things like this, you know, can change your whole way of life. The devil can't knock you down. That's why the devil could never knock Jesus down.

His life was so secure in the Father. He knew that everything the Father said was absolutely the best, and he wanted to do that. He wanted to please the Father at any cost.

He lived his life only for the Father. And God created us, allowed us to come to the earth, allowed us to hear the gospel, so that we can see in Jesus' life the way we are supposed to live. Not just as a theory, but in practice.

And the second thing I want to say about Jesus' life was, first, He was His relationship with the Father. The second was, He had a tremendous concern for other people, which was given by the Holy Spirit also. This is the secret of Jesus' life.

His mind was always thinking of others. Somebody in need, He'd be alert. I mean, the clearest example of that is His washing the disciples' feet.

See, in those days, as you've heard me say this before, they used to wear sandals, like some of us wear. And they didn't have tarred roads. All their roads were just mud roads, dusty.

And you walk down a dusty road, even a hundred yards, your feet are dirty. And you know how refreshing it is to wash our feet. And that's what was provided in every Jewish home.

Near the entrance, there was a basin of water and a towel. And the rich Jewish homes would have slaves. And as soon as the guests came in, they would sit down.

And the first thing the slaves did was wash their feet. And then they would go to the dining room or whatever it was. That was a standard procedure.

So when Jesus and His disciples came for the Last Supper, that was obviously a well-to-do person's home. But Jesus had said, we want the room empty. So there were no slaves.

There was a basin of water and a towel. Jesus said, I want a private meeting with my disciples. So nobody was there.

The room was available. They came there. The food was laid on the table.

They didn't cook it. It was there on the table. Everything was laid out.

But no servants, no slaves. Everybody's feet was dirty. And Jesus was the one who noticed that.

Do you want to be like Jesus? We all say in the meeting, oh, I want to be like you. And oh, Lord, transform me. Little by little, I'm becoming like you.

Well, here's a little bit. We can be like Him. To be a little alert to the needs of people around us.

To see a little thing like dust on the feet. And there's the basin of water. It doesn't cost me anything.

Costs me my pride, that's all. Doesn't cost me anything else. To take the basin of water wash their feet and wipe it with a towel.

There were no slaves there. So Jesus said, okay, then I'm the slave here. And that was the last day of His life on earth.

The last day of His life on earth, He was not the director of an organization. He was a slave. Where do we find Christians like this today? Who have no titles when they come to the end of their life.

Every Christian is in this rat race, particularly in Christian work, for some better title and higher title. And the terrible demonic thing is they glory in it. They glory in their titles.

Where do you find that in Jesus? I mean, a lot of people want to be like Jesus in certain areas, but not in certain other areas. If you want to be like Jesus, you have to be like Him totally. He lived without a title all through His life.

And in the last day of His life, He was not a director of anything. He was washing people's feet. He was a slave.

He was alert. He saw things that other people wouldn't think of. Who do you think thought of feeding the multitude? It was not the multitude of themselves.

They were hungry. In one place, it says they traveled with Him for three days without food. And they didn't complain.

Even the disciples didn't think of it. But Jesus thought of it. Hey, these fellows are hungry.

Let's do something for them. He'd see lepers outside the city wall and say, nobody touches these people. Let me go and touch them.

Let me just be friendly with them. He thought of how those people are feeling. That is to be like Jesus.

Now, we got to translate that into our situation. All around us are people, wherever we go, who are beaten and battered by society, particularly the very poor people, to be good to them. We don't have to be good to all the rich.

I mean, the world is full of people taking care of the rich people. You can forget about them. They've got enough people to take care of them.

Let's concentrate on the people, Jesus concentrated on them, the people who are on the periphery, the outskirts of society, the poor, the weak, and the people are rejected by everybody. You go to a shop and I'm not talking about the manager, I'm talking about the lowest worker in that shop. Everybody treats him badly.

We got to be good to them. If you go and eat in a hotel, the person who serves you, that little boy who comes and cleans the table, nobody speaks a kind word to him. I believe if Jesus sat at that table, he'd speak a kind word to him, or give him a little money when nobody's looking.

That's how Jesus was. I tell you, lots and lots of Christians sing forever that they want to be like Jesus, but they really don't want to be like him. It's all pious words on Sunday morning.

They don't look at the scriptures to see how was he. He was always alert to the needs of others. He had received so much himself.

He told his disciples to be like him. He said, you fellows have received freely. Can you learn to give freely? You know that verse in Matthew chapter 10? It says in Matthew chapter 10, a very lovely verse.

The last part of verse 8, I want you to think of this my brothers and sisters, freely you received, freely give. Don't charge for everything. Have you ever given away anything free? I don't mean the leftovers and the things you don't want and don't need.

There's no great virtue instead of throwing it in the garbage bin that you gave it to some poor person. I'm not talking about that. Does God give you the leftovers and the garbage? No.

Think of the wonderful things God has given you. Freely give. God has blessed you.

Think of this my brothers. I'm speaking to a lot of people sitting right here. I know almost all of you the day you came to this church.

I don't know the one so much who come the last two, three years, but in the earlier years. And I know what many of you were like when you came to this church first. Some of you lived in one room apartments, small 10 feet by 10 feet places.

There are people who helped you tremendously financially in those days from this church. Many. I know that I have passed on huge sums to many people.

Today, God has blessed you. You don't live in a one room apartment anymore. You live in a big house.

What are you doing with all the money you're earning? Do you think of other people? Now it is your turn to do for somebody else exactly what somebody did for you when you were in need. You forget that. Oh, God has blessed me.

Brother, I came so poor. Now I'm so rich. Why did God make you rich? That's why your life has been destroyed.

That's why you've become unspiritual. That's why your children are worldly. You know, Jesus was a generous person.

He was large hearted. That song we used to sing, every miserly soul is in Satan's control. I believe you can find a miserly man by the fact that his fists are closed tight over the money God has blessed him with.

I asked you a little while ago, what is the safest place on earth? It's the center of God's will. Now let me ask you another question. Do you know what is the most dangerous place to live in? The place where God is blessing you.

It's a dangerous place. Exactly. I have seen it through the years.

The most dangerous place to live in is when God has blessed you immensely and you think you deserve it. You become selfish and keep all that to yourself and you were far better off spiritually when you were in that little one room 10 foot by 10 foot house than you are today. You don't see it.

The world thinks you're better off. You're not. You and your family are ruined.

It's very difficult for God to bless a person and for that person. The other problem with a lot of people when they get blessed. I've seen this particularly with poor people who come to CFC.

People who are extremely poor when they come to CFC and God blesses them become wealthy. They become so proud. Their children become so haughty.

It's amazing. It doesn't seem to happen to rich people but it does happen to almost every poor person who has come here. Almost every one of them.

But they don't see it themselves. They have fallen into that danger. Most dangerous place of all.

The place where God blesses them and it destroys them. God blessed Israel tremendously in the book of Joshua. The 40 years in the wilderness.

Do you know one thing about the 40 years in the wilderness? I mean despite all the mistakes they made, they grumbled, they complained. Can you tell me one serious sin that Israel never committed in the wilderness? They never worshipped idols. In all those 40 years they grumbled, they complained, they did 101 things but they never worshipped idols.

Then it was desert, sand, no proper food, no house, a tent, tent, tent, tent. 40 years they came into the land of Canaan. Settled down comfortably just like many of you.

Oh God has blessed us and you read the book of Judges, the next book. Every one of them went after idols. It's the most dangerous place to be in.

It's the place where God has blessed you financially, with good jobs, maybe given you gifts and you don't see that it has destroyed you. It has happened. I can see it so clearly.

I'll tell you how clearly I see it. I see it as clearly as black and white in some of you sitting right here. I'm not going to tell you.

I'll never come up to you and tell you, brother I think God has destroyed you. That's the Holy Spirit. If you listen to Him, He'll tell you.

It's not my job. My job is to work out my salvation, to live in fear because God has blessed me. He's blessed me, He's blessed my children and I live in fear.

I judge myself. You know what to do. Whether you do it or not, that's between you and God.

You can be sure I'm not going to come and tell you, my brother. Listen to God. Have you received freely? Give freely.

I believe one of the great lacks in our church, because we don't take an offering, we don't teach tithing, is that people have not learned to give and because of that they become poor. Because the law of God is you give and then God will give to you. Look at the words of Jesus in Acts chapter 20.

Acts of the Apostles chapter 20. Paul says, I was with you, verse 31. He tells the elders in Ephesus, I was with you for three years.

And in all those three years, verse 33, I never desired anybody's money. I never desired, if I saw somebody wearing good clothes, I never wished for his clothes. And if you were living today, Paul would say, if I saw somebody having a scooter, I wouldn't wish for his scooter.

If I saw somebody having a car, I wouldn't wish for his car. I coveted nothing. And you know, verse 34, with my own hands, I worked, took care of my own needs.

He didn't have a family, but he took care of the people with him. And today we are to take care of our family. I took care of my own needs and my family needs.

Why did Paul do this? Now, there are many reasons why Paul did this. One was to expose other Christian workers who were saying that they also served the Lord like Paul. But there was another reason.

He says, in this way, verse 35, I showed you how you must help the weak. That means the poor. And remember the words of Jesus who said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Is there a blessing in receiving? Sure. But Jesus said, there's a greater blessing when you have learned to give. I believe that many of us sitting here have received the blessing of receiving from God.

Many have missed the greater blessing that would have come to your life if you had learned to give. That's what it says here. It's more blessed to give than to receive.

I have proved it in 40 years of my life, not 40, 44 years of my life. I have proved it. God has blessed me immensely.

My dear brothers and sisters, there's a far greater blessing which you're missing because all you're doing is receiving and receiving and thanking God that you're receiving and imagining that you're so blessed because you got so much money and so much material things. You don't realize that God of the world has blinded your eyes. If you want greater blessing, if you want God's best, be like Jesus.

He always thought about others. How can I, how can I, you know, there were times when he went without food because he was serving somebody else. Have you ever once in your life, I'm talking about once in your life, skipped a meal because you had to counsel somebody, you had to talk to somebody, you had to help someone.

Once in all your life. Imagine some of us have lived 50, 60 years and we've not even missed one meal in our life to help another person. Little by little he's changing me.

He's not changing you, my brother, because you don't want to be changed. We've got to give, not only money, we got to give our convenience, we got to give our time, we got to give our health. Charles Spurgeon died when he was 58 or something like that.

58 is a very young age to die. But he started serving the Lord when he was about 14. He was getting up in pulpit and preaching when he was 15 years old.

And you know what he said, that towards the end of his life, he suffered from gout and pain and he was bedridden a lot. And he said one thing, he said, I thank God that in the years God gave me health, I served him wholeheartedly without sparing myself. You never know when any of us may be bedridden.

In those days, you won't be able to help and bless and serve other people as you can today. God's given you health. Use that health to serve others.

This is how the Holy Spirit seeks to transform us into the likeness of Christ. Has God given you much? Use it to bless other people and not just think of yourself. That's God's way.

God's way. Seek to live spending the minimum on yourself. That's how Jesus lived.

No matter how much you earn, say Lord, on myself, I want to spend the minimum. You do that and you'll find God picks you up. I did that.

I mean, I remember the years when I was working in the Navy 40 years ago. I would spend the minimum on myself. If my pant tore, I would stitch it up and wear it.

I mean, you don't throw away a pant just because it tore somewhere. And I say, God blessed me. He certainly has.

I mean, the greatest blessing is He called me to serve Him. I can't imagine a greater honor God giving anybody. I want to say that some of you are missing something God has for you.

Don't discover in eternity that God had something for you and you missed it because you selfishly stored up all His blessings for yourself. And the last thing I want to say is that Jesus' life was, follows on from something I said earlier, was characterized by humility and gentleness. He said in Matthew 11, 29, learn from me for I'm humble and gentle in heart.

The Bible says in 1 Peter and chapter 3, especially to women, it says to women about something that's very precious in God's eyes. And whenever you read that something is very precious in God's eyes, when I read that in the Bible, that something is precious in God's eyes, I say, God, I want that. I hope you have the same excitement when you read something like that in scripture.

It says about to women, particularly verse 3, don't let your adornment be external. Braiding the hair, it's unfortunate that the New American Standard Bible puts in merely there to satisfy American women. But you see the merely is in italics, meaning that in the original Greek, it's not there.

Whenever you read a word in italics in the Bible, leave it out. That's not in the original. It's added to, so that the American women won't get offended.

And let not your adornment be external. Braiding the hair, wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses. You know the meaning, putting on expensive dresses.

But I mean, that's just the negative. Don't live a negative life saying, I don't do this, I don't do this, I don't do that. No, that's not enough.

It's not like saying, oh, I don't go to the cinemas. I don't drink. I don't smoke.

I don't dance. What do you do then? But the positive, let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit. Now you see, Peter knows that women particularly don't like to look old.

I suppose men don't mind it so much. But women particularly, they say in the world, never ask a woman her age. Because she doesn't want to say how old she is.

They don't want to look old. They always want to look young. They want to black their hair when it gets white.

Because they want to look young. They always want to look young. And Peter knows that.

I mean, Peter knew that 2,000 years ago. They want to look young. They want to look nice.

They want to pull up all the wrinkles from their face. All types of operations nowadays you do where you look like a 25-year-old even when you're 75. It's amazing.

It is fundamental desire not to look old. And Peter says, I'll give you a prescription for that. Here is something which is ageless.

The ageless something which will make you look young all your life. A gentle and a quiet spirit. You'll never age.

You'll never become an old man or an old woman. Even though outside there are wrinkles and gray hair and all that in your spirit, you will be a young, fiery brother or sister. How? With a gentle and quiet spirit.

That is precious in God's eyes. Now I want to ask how many of you sisters are really eager about it. There are not many sisters I've met in my life who've got a gentle and a quiet spirit.

Most of them are so pushy and bossy and impose their view on others. I mean, even some young people are like that. They are so pushy and bossy and try to push their way around and try to show that they are

very important sisters in the church.

And oh, I say, God save us from them. That's all I can say. Where can God find sisters with a gentle, quiet spirit who are not pushy, who are not bossy, who don't try to run their husband's lives at home, who are gentle and quiet in their spirit, not just their tongue.

It comes in the tongue later, but in their spirit. Jesus said, learn from me for I'm humble and gentle in heart. He had a meek and a lowly spirit.

And he says, you must have that meek and lowly spirit. It's so precious in God's eyes because he saw it in his son, first of all. He saw it in his son and he said, I'm well pleased in that.

And he wants to see it not only in the sisters, but in the brothers also. I want to have a gentle, quiet spirit more and more. I want to be like Jesus, because I know that in my natural temperament, I don't have a gentle, quiet spirit.

It's pretty rough. But Jesus had a gentle, quiet spirit. I mean, he was always fiery when it came to somebody who exploited others or made money in the name of religion.

And I want all my life to be fiery against people who make money in the name of religion or somebody who tries to do business in the church and sell land and property and all types of things in the church to other poor believers to make money off them or people who try to sell things. The money changers back in the temple, sellers of doves and sheep. I'm going to be furious against them like Jesus was, a whip, chase them out.

But in his spirit, he was always gentle and quiet. That's how Jesus was. He was always gentle and quiet.

And I want to encourage you, my brothers, pursue after that. It was the secret of his life, his life is so, it didn't matter. I mean, somebody slapped him.

He said, if I spoke right, why do you slap me? They slapped him again. Okay. I've got nothing more to say.

We can ask for our rights, but we don't fight for it. He wouldn't fight. He didn't threaten them.

It says when he was suffering at the hand of the priests and Pilate, he didn't threaten them saying, wait till I come back and finish you fellas off one day. 2000 years from now, I'm going to catch you fellas. No, he didn't say anything like that.

It's going to happen. He never said it. He was gentle and quiet, accepting whatever the father sent into his life.

A gracious humility. Do you sisters want to look young all your life? Have this gracious, gentle, quiet spirit. It's very precious in God's eyes.

God wants us all to look young in our spirits. That's how Jesus was. And when we look at these things in Jesus life, we say, Lord, I know when I see it, I say, Lord, I want to be like you.

It's the most important thing in my life is that I want to spend my earthly days like this. I don't want material things. You give me whatever I need.

That's enough for me. But if I can be like this, I've spent my life in a worthwhile way. And I pray that as we live like that, our children will also grow up with their right values in life.

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