

The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

by Zac Poonen

Growing in heavenly wisdom requires studying God's word, submitting to parents, and delighting in the fear of the Lord.

Duration: 1:23:49

Scripture: Exodus 2:23-25, Proverbs 9:10, Isaiah 11:2-3, Jeremiah 29:11-13, Matthew 11:28, 1 Corinthians 14:20, 2 Timothy 3:15, Hebrews 5:7-9, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Biblical Wisdom"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom from God's Word, highlighting the need to diligently study the Bible to grow in heavenly wisdom. It stresses the significance of surrendering to God, searching for new revelations in Scripture, and developing a childlike heart while maturing in thinking. The speaker encourages deep prayer, seeking God with all one's heart, and being free from partiality to truly grow in wisdom and overcome sin.

Transcript

Our subject for this conference has been Growing in Heavenly Wisdom. I want to show you a verse in 1 Corinthians in chapter 14. The word of God is like a well in which the water never runs dry.

The more you read, the more you get out of it. If you read a newspaper or a book after 2 or 3 readings, there is nothing more you can get from it. But the word of God is different.

I don't know how many hundreds of times I have read so many verses in this book. In the last 57 years. But I am always finding something new.

You can't read any book in the world for 57 years. You can't read the newspaper for more than one day. So, this is the proof that the Bible is the word of God.

If you don't read it and study it, you are missing the most important thing in life. There is no way to grow in wisdom without knowing the word of God. In 1 Corinthians 14 it says, verse 20.

In the same verse it says, don't be children but be children. Don't be children in your thinking. In your mind, you must not be a child.

You must be like a man. But in your heart, you must be like a child. So, both these things are true.

They should be true in our life. In our mind, we grow more and more to maturity. In our heart, we become more and more like a child.

Just see that picture there. Can you show that video camera over here? So that everybody can see it. Those who are in the live stream can see that.

See, it's true that in our mind we must grow from a child to an adult man. But in our heart, we have to go the other way. From the strong, powerful man we are to a weak child dependent upon God.

That is growing in heavenly wisdom, both ways. Thank you. So, both are in this verse.

To be like men in our thinking, but to be like a little baby in our heart. So, that is why I said that we must study God's word if we want to grow up in our thinking and get wisdom. So, we must grow in our thinking to get the wisdom of God.

2 Timothy 3 2 Timothy 3 verse 15 Paul says to Timothy So, from childhood his mother taught him the scripture which could give Timothy wisdom. Why did Paul choose Timothy when he was a young 20 year old man? And say, hey, you must be my co-worker. Would God choose your son at the age of 20 to be Paul's co-worker? Paul was a very shrewd, discerning man of God.

He wouldn't just select anybody. He observed Timothy, spoke to him and said, this is a very unusual 20 year old young man. He is so wise.

Where did he get it from? Where does a 20 year old become wise? How does a 20 year old become wise? Because his mother taught him the sacred writings of God's word. And that scripture, it says in verse 16, taught him, reproved him, corrected him, taught him in righteousness. And so he became a man of God who was thoroughly equipped to do every good work.

The same thing can happen to you if you study God's word carefully. And say, Lord, give me revelation on your word. That is, in our mind we become mature.

And then we will be able to discern what is right and what is wrong. We will not be fooled by unspiritual people. All of you young people must grow in wisdom.

And it is only by studying the word of God. And that will protect you from so many evils. Jesus said, man must live by every word of God.

And here also in verse 16 it says, all scripture, not just one or two verses. And Jesus said, man must live by every word of God, not just one or two favorite verses or chapters. So we must say, Lord, please teach me and give me wisdom.

And you are a young person, you must pray that. So as you read the scriptures, something must develop in you through the Holy Spirit. I told you, we must look at Jesus as our example.

It says in Luke's gospel, chapter 2. About Jesus when he was a little child. Luke chapter 2. Twice it says in this chapter. That Jesus grew in wisdom.

Luke 2, verse 14. Luke 2, verse 40. How did he get that? Because it says, the grace of God was upon him.

Let me tell you something. In the entire Old Testament, grace was an unknown word. John 1.17 says, the law came through Moses, but grace came through Jesus Christ.

So John 1.17 makes it clear, there was no grace before Jesus Christ came. So nobody could overcome sin because grace has to be upon you to overcome sin. Romans 6.14 says, when you are under grace, sin will not overcome you.

That's why in the Old Testament, nobody could overcome sin. Because the grace of God never came till Jesus came to the earth. And when Jesus came to the earth, the first person upon whom that grace was, was Jesus himself.

It says here, the grace of God was upon him. As a child. And when you are under grace, Romans 6.14 says, sin cannot rule over you.

It's like saying, if a roof is over your head, the rain cannot fall on you. Even if it's pouring rain, we are under the roof, it will not fall on us. So when we are under grace like this, there can be sin and temptation all around us, it will not overpower us.

Can we have that when we are little children? Jesus had it as a child. Why can't the grace of God be upon a child? I've heard of people who were truly born again when they are three years old. I met one godly old sister, she's dead now.

I met her when she was more than 70 years old. She testified that she was a European lady. She said when she was five years, she was born again when she was about three.

And when she was five years old, she got a call to go as a missionary to China. She could go only when she was 35 or something. But she heard the call when she was five.

And I could see in her life, a godly humble woman. So the grace of God can be on our little children. So we must instruct them in God's word.

Jesus grew as a child and the grace of God was upon him and he grew in wisdom. And then it says when he was 12 years old, he went to the temple. And then he came back home after that.

And when he came home to Nazareth, verse 51, he continued from the age of 12 up to the age of 30 in subjection to his earthly parents. And what is the result of that? What is the result of a young boy submitting to his earthly parents, even when he is 20 years old, 25 years old? What happens when he is submissive to his parents? Jesus grew in wisdom. Luke 52, verse 2. He grew in the grace of God and in the mercy of man.

If it is possible for Jesus to walk as he walked, even small children can walk like Jesus. Growing in heavenly wisdom. What is God places over you? First it is your parents.

Elders. People in your place of work. They may not be more spiritual than you.

Do you think Joseph and Mary were more spiritual than Jesus? Joseph and Mary were under the old covenant, defeated by sin. Joseph and Mary were under the old covenant, defeated by sin. Do you think Joseph and Mary fought with each other? What do you think? Unless you are a Roman Catholic.

I believe they fought with each other. Even new covenant husband and wife fight with each other. Even the old covenant couple, they must have fought and yelled at each other.

Jesus as a little boy heard that. And what did he do? He did not despise them. He did not say, how can I submit to these people who are so imperfect? He saw their imperfection and submitted because the father said, submit to them.

Children, young people. If God tells you to submit to imperfect parents. Submit to them.

Do not disobey God's word. If your father tells you to tell a lie, say daddy I can't do that. Or tells you to bow down to an idol, you say no I can't do that.

Because above your father is God and you have to listen to him ultimately. But in all other things, when they ask you to do something inconvenient, you do it. Supposing you want to do something and your father and mother say no, go to the market and buy something.

Drop what you are doing and obey your parents. You know what will happen? You will grow in wisdom. Because God sees at that moment, you are denying God.

You are denying yourself to do what you want to do and you are going to do what God is telling you to do. Which is submit to your parents. You don't have to submit to your parents once you leave the house.

Jesus left the house only when he was 30. Then he told his mother in John chapter 2, what have I got to do with you? Don't tell me what to do. Completely opposite.

Mary was surprised. What has happened to my son? Till now he would do anything I say. Now he tells me, don't disturb me, don't tell me what to do.

So when you leave your home and you are setting up your own home, you don't have to listen to your parents then. In fact, it says when you get married, you must leave your earthly parents and cleave to your wife. But when you are living at home under the subjection of your parents who are taking care of you, you must submit to them.

But honoring them, you must honor them as long as they are alive. You don't have to obey them when you leave your home. And even in your home, you don't have to obey them if they tell you to do something ungodly or against the word of God.

But you must respect them. Even if your father is a drunkard, non-Christian, he is still your father. You must respect him.

Don't speak evil of him. Pray for him. God will honor you because you respect your father and mother.

Even your drunken father may tell you to do some stupid things, you don't have to do it. You have to be wise. But don't despise him.

You must never despise your parents for being more foolish than you are. Many of you young people are smart and clever. You are more educated than your parents.

Okay, that's true. But respect your parents. Then you will grow in wisdom.

Otherwise, you will only grow in knowledge. You know what knowledge does? See 1 Corinthians chapter 8. 1 Corinthians chapter 8. It says here in the first verse. The last part.

That knowledge only puffs you up and makes you arrogant. It's like a balloon. You pump it and pump it and pump it and it becomes so big.

Knowledge is like that. It looks very big but it's just hot air. You prick it and the whole thing goes off.

You can see that. Some of these clever people, you just irritate them a little bit and all their anger comes out. The balloon has become a small little thing.

But wisdom is real solid stuff. It's not like a balloon. It says love and wisdom will build you up.

So how did Jesus grow in this wisdom? Through the Holy Spirit. Turn to Isaiah chapter 11 where there is a prophecy about Jesus Christ. Isaiah 11 is speaking about Jesus Christ.

It's talking about Jesse the father of David like a tree. He was the father. And from that a branch came.

Humanly speaking of the seed of David Jesus was born. And it says here the spirit of the Lord will rest on him. You know in the book of Revelation the Holy Spirit is called the seven fold Holy Spirit.

It is actually seven fold one Holy Spirit. And those seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Revelation are written here. One is the spirit of Jehovah God.

Second is the spirit of wisdom. Third is the spirit of understanding. Fourth the spirit of counsel.

And spirit of strength. And the spirit of knowledge. And seventh the spirit of the Lord.

Of the fear of the Lord. So these are the seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit. That's why it's called seven fold Holy Spirit in Revelation.

And out of all these things it speaks about wisdom in the beginning. Only the Holy Spirit can give you wisdom. Because wisdom must come before the knowledge of the word.

Through the word I must get wisdom first. Mere knowledge will just puff me up. And out of all these seven characteristics one is picked out by the Holy Spirit.

Now remember this is referring to Jesus Christ. This seven fold spirit verse two will rest upon him. From childhood.

From birth. And so he grew in wisdom. But out of those seven characteristics one is taken out especially.

The last one. The spirit of the fear of the Lord. You know the Old Testament verse which says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

That is Proverbs chapter nine verse ten. That is like saying that is the ABC of wisdom. So when you go to a kindergarten class a baby he first learns the ABC.

You can't read a book without knowing ABC. You can't understand physics, science, nothing without ABC. And you must never forget your ABC because then all your education will stop.

So ABC is essential for all education till the end of your life. You can't say after 50 years okay okay I don't need ABC now I have understood so many things. Your knowledge will stop.

You need ABC right until the end. Your alphabets. Fear of the Lord is the ABC of wisdom.

So that means till the end of my life I must know this alphabet which is called the fear of the Lord. So the spirit of the fear of God was upon Jesus. And that's why he was quick to obey anything that the Father told him.

And it's because the fear of the Lord is upon him that he never did what the Father never told him to do. Even a simple thing like now you have not eaten for 40 days in the wilderness you have been fasting. You are hungry.

It is wrong to steal. So don't steal. It's wrong to take somebody else's bread.

But if you can make bread yourself why don't you do it? If God has given you the power to turn stones into bread use it. You are not making some ice cream or biryani just simple bread. But do you know what Jesus said? No I can't do it.

Lord you can't do it when you are hungry. Use your common sense. No.

I will hear the word of my Father. I know I am hungry. I may die of hunger.

That's okay. But I will not disobey my Father. That means I will not do something if the Father doesn't tell me.

I have had no command from my Father right now to use my power to turn stones into bread. When the Lord called me to full time Christian work 50 years ago that is the worst God spoke to me through. Worst temptation.

Don't use the power God has given you to get something for yourself. Jesus used that power to make bread for 5000 people once. But he would not use it for himself.

That is to live under the anointing. The devil says come on use your power to get something for yourself. You are not luxury.

You are need, bread. I will not use the anointing part of God even for my need. I will use it for others.

So God had given me a gift to preach God's word even when I left the Navy at the age of 26. From this first temptation the Lord told me never use your gift to get something for yourself. Don't use your gift to make money for yourself.

A lot of preachers may do it but you are not to do it. I learnt that when I was 26. Don't use this gift to get any honour for yourself.

A lot of people use their gift to get honour. To become big in the eyes of others. So what the Lord taught me from the first temptation I have not anointed you to get something for yourself.

Even if you are starving don't use my anointing to get anything for yourself. Don't use your gift to get money or honour. Don't use your gift to draw people to yourself.

Like Jesus did use your gift to bless others. Always to bless other people. I thank God I learnt that lesson 50 years ago.

That has protected me from the calamity that I have seen has happened to so many preachers already. Where did I learn it? From meditating on that first temptation. You say it's not written like that there.

No it is not. But if you meditate on it God will show you. In the old testament there was a commandment you shall not commit adultery.

Jesus meditated on that and realised it also refers to adultery in the heart. How did he discover it? By meditating on the commandment written in Exodus 20. Those who don't meditate on it they'll say it only refers to physical adultery.

Jesus meditated on it and said it also refers to adultery in the heart. Anybody else who had meditated on it would also have understood it refers to the heart. And if you meditate more on it it will show you many other aspects.

Don't compare your wife with somebody else's wife. Not just physical beauty but that wife can cook better than your wife. Maybe true.

Don't meditate on that. It can lead you to a form of adultery. You may say it is not there in the word of God.

No, many things are not written on the surface. You meditate deeply it will protect you from sin at the deepest level. So that is what the spirit of the fear of the Lord will show you.

If you read the word of God without the spirit of the fear of the Lord upon you you will just read what is written there. But if the spirit of the fear of the Lord is upon you almost every time you read you get something new. In my first Bible I used to write a lot of notes anything God showed me from a verse I would write it down.

But I was young and I needed to remember. But now in my Bible I don't write anything. Because if I write it I won't get something new that the Lord is trying to say to me from that verse.

I will just be reminded of what I got some years ago. God can show you something new from all of his word. So the spirit of the fear of the Lord is what makes you grow in wisdom.

And it says here in verse 3 out of all these 7 things he picks out fear of the Lord. And it says here the Holy Spirit will make Jesus delight in the fear of the Lord. Some people think of fear of the Lord as some terrible thing.

Some bitter medicine ok give me one spoon I'll take it. Or this painful injection ok give it to me. That is how some people take fear of the Lord.

But Jesus looked at it like ice cream. He delighted in the fear of the Lord. And when the Holy Spirit makes you delight in the fear of the Lord you will grow in wisdom very quickly.

When you see the fear of the Lord not like painful medicine but like ice cream. Lord I want it. I delight in it.

That reverence for God. I don't know much about your Tamil songs but lot of the English songs I hear nowadays being written by people they are so shallow so empty not like the hymns that were written

100-200 years ago. Those men had a reverence for God when they wrote their hymns.

They didn't write it for money. Today's song writers singers all do it for money. Even Christian books are written for money.

Only in CFC we print books without anybody getting money out of it. I think I'm the only author who gets no money from my books. To me that is like the money changers in the temple selling things to get money.

I say if we sell our books we use it to print more books that's all. So many books we give free to people also. Nothing for me.

So if I preach it's not for money. If I write books it's not for money. If I write a song it's not for money.

But in today's world it is not like that. All these Christian singers who you see on CDs you think they're doing it because they love the Lord? No! They're making money. The more CDs are sold the more money they get.

You think Jesus would ever do that? You think Paul or Peter would ever do that? But you admire these people. They can sing well but they're doing it for money. And so I've seen that today a lot of English songs that are written they have no reverence for God.

They talk about Jesus like their boyfriend or something. You know before they were converted they were writing songs for their girlfriends. Before they were saved they were writing songs for their girlfriends.

Oh my darling I miss you so much. I long after you. I wish I could see you.

Now they get converted and they say Oh Lord Jesus I miss you. I wish I could see you. It's the same old thing.

There's no reverence there. Treat Jesus like a friend. Hi, good to see you.

I have zero respect for these people. And I'm not surprised they're doing it for money. The reverence of the Lord that the Holy Spirit brings that's what we need more in the church.

Let me show you in Acts of the Apostles. In Acts of the Apostles we read in chapter 5 we read how Ananias and Sapphira were judged for their sin. And it says here as a result of that a great fear came upon everybody.

Acts 5 verse 11 Acts 5 verse 11 A great fear came upon the whole church. It was a fear of God. A desire to be holy.

And people were afraid to join them. Verse 13 I want our church to be like that. Where there's a holy fear that people are afraid to join us.

Are people afraid to join your church? Or do they say Hey, there's a great singing over here. We'd like to join this church to sing and pray. I'll tell you what I've prayed for CFC churches.

Lord, we don't want anybody to join our church because our singing is good. I'm not saying our singing should be bad. I think your Tamil Nadu singing here is excellent.

Very good. But we don't want anybody to join the church because they like singing. We don't want anybody to come to this church Oh, there are 2000 people here so we can come.

No, we don't want anybody to come because it's a large church or good singing or nice building. No! We want people to sense that Jesus is here. That's why we want to come not even to listen to the preaching.

But Jesus, we come and we meet with Jesus before we go home. That should be our prayer. I've prayed that many times.

Lord, I don't want anybody to come to our church to hear me preach. Yeah, some people may come. I can't stop them.

But I want them when they go away they must sense that they met with Jesus Christ. They heard Jesus Christ. Maybe through a man but they heard Jesus Christ.

And so here is one very important characteristic if you fear God. Isaiah 11 verse 3 If you really fear God here is a test to find out whether you fear God or not. This is a very very important characteristic of all who fear God.

Verse 3 He will not judge by what his eyes see or his ears hear. You know how we have a tendency to believe everything we hear. It's not actually a gunam.

It's actually a bad habit. That everything we hear we believe it. We should not do that if you are Christians.

You hear it and then it says with righteousness verse 4 you must judge decide. That means you heard something and you say Lord I don't know whether it's true or not He told me He is not a liar but he also may have heard it from somebody. How do we know it's true? This is a very bad habit among Christians.

We hear something bad about somebody we believe it immediately. We hear something good we are very reluctant to believe it. Somebody says something good about someone I heard this.

Then we say yeah but you know actually he has got some other problems also. Our hearts are so evil they are not like children because the fear of the Lord is not there. We judge by what our ears have heard and what are we may say okay I didn't hear it I saw it.

You can't even believe what you see.

We had an experience of that in one conference in Bangalore once you know after the night meeting this is many years ago some young people were sitting together in the dark it was dark and there was some young 10 year old boy walking by from our church only and he saw some smoke coming there hey CFC young people are smoking cigarettes he went and told his mummy mummy I saw some CFC young people smoking cigarettes and she was a foolish woman she went around and told other women also so finally all these things finally will come to my ears I said I have never heard a CFC young person smoking cigarettes in a meeting so I went and asked some of the young people who were there you see what is this some smoke was coming up he said we were sitting outside there were so many mosquitoes were there

so we had one of these mosquito coils and we were burning it to keep the mosquitoes away that is the smoke that was going up you can say I saw with my own eyes that boy said I saw with my own eyes the smoke don't believe it if you fear god you will not even judge by what your eyes see and take it before the lord say lord there may be another reason for it that smoke may not have been coming from a cigarette so

don't believe what your ears hear or your eyes see until you investigate it that is the proof that you fear god you know and I'll tell you something even though we say we are believers and spirit filled and all that I have noticed something in CFC people even among CFC elders we have some favorites if that favorite of ours we hear something bad we won't believe it and especially if

it is our children we won't believe it but if it is somebody else in the church whom we don't like and we heard something about that person we believe it we don't investigate it we say this is the problem with our church there are people like this that elder does not have the spirit of the fear of the lord he has got partiality and where there is partiality there will be every evil thing James chapter 3 says the wisdom from above there is no partiality if you really want to grow spiritually cleanse yourself not only from sexual lust cleanse yourself from partiality all brothers and sisters partiality is part of the flesh and we have to cleanse it away we must say I want to see everybody as Jesus sees them I may not like that person but that does not mean I should believe everything evil I

hear about him and I may like somebody very much and then I hear something wrong he did and I won't believe it because I like him so much if you want to spoil your children listen to me do you want to spoil your children you want to bring them up for the devil then when you hear something bad about them defend them and say no no no it's not true I remember when my children were small they were not spiritual when they were small they were not born again and they do naughty things just like all children they used to go to Sunday school in our CFC and I told them one thing if any of your Sunday school teachers come and tell me that you are not behaving properly I will not defend you I told my children that is a brother in the church who is teaching you he is the Sunday school teacher you

respect him and if he says something and you say you don't do it you didn't do it I will believe him I will not believe you I taught my children thereby to respect their Sunday school teachers and to respect the young brothers I was willing to listen to my children I know that children tell lies to defend themselves my children were small they were not spiritual today I can believe my children those days I could not so don't just blindly believe your children I tell you if you are like that you will destroy them they will become wayward they will say daddy and mummy will always take my side my children knew that I will not take their side I will take the side of righteousness and if they are wrong they are wrong if the teacher in the school said they were misbehaving I would go and ask

the teacher tell me what did they do you know their children are small they do stupid things I remember once one of my children were 5 years old and like children he was playing with the neighbour child and they fought with each other so they were hitting each other so I called him my son I said why did you hit him you know the story he hit me first always the story is like that maybe it's true but I said you are a Christian we are a Christian family we don't hit back even if he hits us so now I am going to take you to the neighbour's house and you must say sorry to that 5 year old boy so my son says will he say sorry to me also I am not interested you have to say to him so I took my boy to the neighbour's house and I knocked at the door the man said I said my son has to say something to

your son so my son I am sorry the other boy said ok thank you we came away and my son said he never said sorry to me I am not interested I am not his father I have no responsibility for him I have responsibility for you today I know what my son has become and the other boy I don't know what has happened to him but if his father allowed him to grow up like that I am sure he is wayward today be free from partiality towards your children be free from partiality to the special friends you have in your church don't judge by what your eyes see or your ears hear that spirit of the fear of the lord was upon Jesus that is how Jesus

grew in wisdom and you and I can grow in wisdom I tell you from my experience it's a tremendous battle to fight against partiality some of the best elders in CFC have

not got rid of partiality in their lives I can see it I don't judge them because they don't see it themselves my dear brothers especially elders because you have responsibility in your church it's very easy to be partial I must not even be partial to the righteous person because sometimes the righteous person can be wrong I must not be partial to a poor person some people say oh I'll always be against the rich people that is partiality who told you to be partial against rich people see this verse in the old testament in Exodus and chapter 23 Exodus 23 verse 2 you shall not follow a multitude in doing evil that means if many people in your church say something don't just agree with them they may be wrong and you shall not testify in a dispute to turn aside a multitude to prevent justice

and listen to this you shall not be partial to a poor person in his dispute that's a funny law it's a very peculiar type of law in a court they take bribes from the rich you have to tell the judge don't be partial to the rich but here it says don't be partial to the poor no because we have understood spiritual values God cares for the poor so if the poor person says something and the rich person says something I'm going to believe the poor person you are sinning you are showing partiality to the poor it's very difficult to be free from partiality we have a tendency to be partial towards the one who is weak but sometimes the weak person can be wrong and we must not take the side just because he is weak your big brother and your small little brother are having a fight why do you take the

side of the little brother two children why do you take the side of the smaller child because you say he is weak you are partial your little child may be wrong I'm giving you some examples to show you how partiality is so deeply rooted in us your wife has a problem with some other sister can you be impartial very difficult is it possible that your wife could be wrong or do you feel my wife can never be wrong she is like the angel Gabriel can never be wrong don't be foolish I'm not saying you should have a fight with your wife and I'm not saying that you should not help her and I'm not saying you should accuse her but don't be partial I'm just trying to tell you it is very difficult to be free from partiality it is easier to be free from dirty thoughts than to be free from partiality it is

easier to overcome anger than to overcome partiality many God fearing parents are partial towards one of their children yes, you ask yourself if you have got a few children see whether you are partial towards one of them you don't fear God and if you don't fear God you will not have wisdom for other things why am I speaking so much against this sin of partiality because it will prevent you from getting wisdom for other things James chapter 2 it says don't be partial to the rich person who comes to your church Exodus 23 says don't be partial to the poor I want to keep both I don't want to be partial towards any person in my church nobody not even my favorite elder I don't have any favorite elders if somebody is wrong he is wrong senior most elder can be wrong and the junior elder may be

right you really want to grow in wisdom you want to have the anointing of the spirit of wisdom upon you when you speak God's word be free from partiality don't believe everything you hear don't even believe everything you see take it in absorb it take it before the Lord and say Lord what is the truth now let me show you how the Lord told in the old testament the Israeli judges to judge matters in the old testament the Israeli judges to judge matters Deuteronomy 13 verse 12 if you hear something you heard some news that in one of your cities something is happening you heard that some worthless men verse 13 have gone out and seduced the others saying let us go and serve other gods no today it may not be anything as serious as that but you heard something in your church you heard some people

are doing this in your church and two or three people came and told you what should you do listen carefully see the number of words that are used verse 14 you shall investigate you shall search out you shall inquire thoroughly and if it is true and the matter is established that it has really been done then go and take action let me repeat it you shall investigate you shall search out you shall inquire thoroughly and if it is true and the matter is established then take action don't just suddenly do it this is old covenant how much more in the new covenant this is how we grow in wisdom no i don't want to just listen to everything i hear i want to hear it i want to keep my eyes open i want to judge with righteousness now many of us have not been doing this we have been like little children

believing everything we have to grow up to maturity in our thinking and say lord i want to be mature in my thinking in my heart i want to be loving like a child humble not hating anybody not despising anyone but in my mind i want to be mature that is to grow in wisdom see in hebrews in chapter 5 it says here how jesus overcame sin it wasn't easy for him it's not easy for us it was not easy for jesus hebrews 5 verse 7 in the days of jesus flesh that means 33 and a half years in all those days that is many thousands of days at least 10,000 days or more in all those more than 10,000 days of his flesh he prayed and supplicated means specific request and how did he pray with loud crying and tears that's why he used to go to the wilderness so as not to disturb anybody what is he praying for he

was praying to one who could save him from spiritual death that's not talking about physical death how do we know that because it says his prayer was heard he was not saved from physical death so what was the prayer that was heard there were two types of death physical death and spiritual death spiritual death comes through sin that's the only way it can come james 1.13-15 says that sin finally ends in death so jesus wanted to be saved from spiritual death amazing truth he knew he could not save himself he prayed to somebody to help him just like we have to pray to somebody to help us he prayed to him who could save him from that death and he didn't just say oh father just save me loud crying and tears when do you pray with loud crying and tears i'll tell you if your child is dying in the

hospital and all the doctors have given up hope then you will pray with loud crying and tears you pray with loud crying and tears when you are desperate about something jesus was desperate about not sinning even once we are not so desperate that's why we sin if we were desperate like jesus was we would pray like this and we would not sin and why was he heard not because he is a son of god listen to this verse he was heard because of his godly fear why was jesus heard because of his fear of god although he was a son verse 8 he feared god and he learnt obedience through the fear of god and if he had to suffer he would be willing to suffer but he would not disobey god that means 40 days without food i'm willing to suffer but i will not disobey god that is how he became perfect or completed

his earthly life and now he has become the author of salvation to those who obey him in the same way that means jesus has finished the course and now he says to us i can teach you to run this race i can teach you to finish this course but you must fear god like i feared god when i was on earth so many people are seeking for the holy spirit what did we read in isaiah 11 the holy spirit is the spirit of the fear of the lord i would rather have the spirit of the fear of the lord than just speak in tongues 99% of the people i have heard speak in tongues have no fear of god speaking in tongues is a very good gift i thank god for it but without the fear of god it is worthless the holy spirit is the spirit of the fear of the lord and jesus had that and that's why his prayer was heard the bible

says hebrews 11 and verse 6 when you come to god you must first of all believe that he exists you have to believe that god exists yeah there is a god there my father and he doesn't reward everybody he rewards

those who diligently seek him see Jeremiah chapter 29 Jeremiah chapter 29 this is how we can grow in wisdom Jeremiah 29 the lord says in verse 11 I got plans for you wonderful plans to give you a future and a hope I believe the lord is saying that to everybody sitting here listen to the word of the lord the lord says to you personally every young person here every older person even to those who have made a mess of your life till today the lord is ready to forgive you he is ready to forgive you and blot out your past thus said the lord to you personally the lord is speaking directly

to you I have plans for you not for your confusion not for your evil to give you a future and a hope good plans this is how the lord says Jeremiah 29 at the same time when you call upon me verse 12 I will listen to you but verse 13 only if you seek me with all your heart what if you don't seek me with all your heart you won't find him what is the meaning of you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart does it mean also even if you don't search for me with all your heart you will still find me then god is a liar god says you will find me when you search for me with all your heart and you say no even if you don't search with your heart you will find him I don't believe god is a liar if you have not found god it's because you don't search for him with all your

heart listen to this if you have not overcome sin it's because you are not searching with all your heart to overcome it you are not desperate to overcome anger and sexual lust you are not desperate to overcome partiality ah you pray little bit ok that's not searching with all your heart you heard me use this illustration before supposing at night you lost some 50 paisa on the road somewhere at night how long will you go searching for that will you search the whole night for that 50 paisa even a beggar will not search all night but on the other hand supposing you were carrying a big bundle of 2 lakhs rupees and you were going from different places you stopped in some shop in different places and when you come home you say hey where did i leave it i can't find it i went to 3 4 places boy

you will search with all your heart this is not 50 paisa this is 2 lakhs how do you search for god is it like 50 paisa or 2 lakhs or 2 crores many people search like 50 paisa lord i heard about victory over sin in the conference yeah i have some sins lord please give me victory thank you yeah i got to do my other work now you think you are going to get victory you can come to conference for 50 years you will never get victory because the law of god is you will search you will find me when you search for me with all your heart it was not different for jesus for him also he prayed with loud crying and tears and so he never sinned you know i thought about that verse jesus could go to the wilderness and cry and not disturb anybody but lord we are living in houses and there are people living

around us even in the next room here i am sleeping my wife is sleeping next how can i cry with loud crying and tears he will wake up there are people living in the house and you know the lord showed me something i am thankful for that he said you can have a loud cry in your heart without any sound coming from your mouth i said that's wonderful i can have a cry in my heart cry as loud as jesus cried but without making a noise in my mouth that earnestness in the middle of the night oh god deliver me from my anger deliver me from my dirty thoughts deliver me from my partiality deliver me from my love of money help me to forgive that person 100% help me to wish the best for that enemy of mine i don't want to wish any evil for anybody night after night after night and one day i said lord it's

amazing i am free that temptation came so strongly and i overcame i will tell you something god hears you when you search for him with all your heart let me tell you about some people who prayed for 400 years a group of people a group of people and god heard exodus chapter 2 Exodus chapter 2 verse 23 maybe not 400 years maybe a little less than that because this is about the children of Israel in Egypt in the days

when Joseph was the ruler the Israelites were not slaves they were in Israel they were in Egypt for 430 years the early part of that time they were not slaves but then that king of Israel verse 2 chapter 2 verse 23 that king died it says in chapter 1 verse 8 a new king arose in Egypt who did not know Joseph then persecution started that is the king who said kill all the baby

boys so I don't know maybe Joseph lived till about 130 so maybe 330 years the children of Israel suffered and it says in Exodus 2 verse 23 the middle of that verse the sons of Israel sighed because of their bondage and they cried out and they cried for help because of their bondage rose up to God and God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant to Abraham Isaac and Jacob and God saw the sons of Israel and he took notice of them and the next verse he selected a man to go and deliver them Moses now I want to apply that to our life and these believers in this new covenant church they sigh because of their bondage to sin because of their bondage to sin I am reading verse 23 sighed because of their bondage to these different sins you know what sigh is? sighed oh lord when will I be

free that's a sigh and cried out oh lord and they cried out night after night searched for God with all their heart they prayed to the only one who could save them from spiritual death and their cry for help because of their bondage to sin rose up to God.

And verse 24, God heard the groaning of these believers.

God remembered the covenant he made through the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. And he saw these children of his. And he took notice of them.

And he brought them deliverance. Praise God for that. It can happen in your life.

It can happen in mine more and more. I thank God that in the days when I was thoroughly defeated by sin more than all of you, way back in 1973-74, 43 years ago, I was so defeated. I was born again but I was defeated.

Inwardly. And I said, Lord, I am sick and tired of my defeated life. So many days I would fast and pray.

Nothing happened. I prayed with others who were also defeated. I prayed and prayed and prayed.

I thought deliverance would never come. I don't know God's ways. But one day I remember that so well.

It was on the 12th of January 1975. Unexpectedly God met with me. Suddenly filled me with the Holy Spirit.

Changed my life suddenly. I didn't become perfect that day. But this downward trend in my life got stopped.

And I started going up. He lifted me up. And after that it started going up.

Not perfectly. It's a sort of a wavy up and down way. But it's going up.

And then 6-7 months later he started a church. But he had to deal with me first. He can't build a church before dealing with a person who is defeated.

That's my testimony. And I didn't stop my groaning and crying just from that day. It says about Jesus in all the 10,000 days of his flesh, he prayed with loud crying and tears.

So I pray like that even today. Because I want to discover new areas in my life where I am not like Jesus and I want to be like him. I know I have not become like Jesus 100%.

Outwardly I may look holy. To the best of my knowledge my thought life is clean. To the best of my knowledge I don't get angry.

I am not lusting after women. Many areas which are known God has helped me. I am not interested in making more money.

But Lord there are other areas of selfishness or a little bit of spiritual pride. Give me light. Because I want to be 100% like Jesus Christ.

That is my passion. I hope that you will get a little bit of that passion. Long to become like Jesus Christ.

Don't long to be known as a great elder or a great preacher. I can stand before God and say Lord I have zero interest in becoming a great preacher. I have zero interest in people admiring me for my preaching.

I want to be like Jesus. I want to be free from all sins. That is my passion.

And when that is your passion, from your innermost being will flow rivers without your even effort. I can tell you honestly, preaching for me is not an effort. It's like a river flowing.

Nobody pumps a river. It just flows. The olden days my preaching was like the hand pump.

You struggle, struggle, struggle and get a bucket of water. If your preaching is like that, say Lord I want to be like Jesus. Make that the passion of your life.

And when that becomes the passion of your life, the life of Jesus will flow out from you. And your sisters also. You will be a blessing to your children.

Your children will grow up in God fearing ways. They will see the joy of the Lord in their mommy and daddy. And that will be the biggest sermon to them.

What they see in your faces. Thank you. I am very thankful that I have been here, been able to come here for 34 years.

I love to come to Tamil Nadu more than any other place in the world. Because you are like my own people. I love you very much.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us to be well pleasing to you. Give us grace we pray.

We are needy people. We have many faults. We have not become like Jesus.

You have given us so much light more than other people have. And we know you will expect more from us. Fill us with the Holy Spirit and help us to honor you.

Build strong churches in many parts of Tamil Nadu. Mightily anoint the elders to lead your churches forward. Lead us from glory to glory.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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