

# The Tenth Commandment

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of honesty in our relationship with God, and how the new covenant offers us a life of freedom from our inner struggles with coveting and lusting.*

**Duration:** 1:08:46

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:6, Hebrews 12:10

**Topics:** "Commandment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal journey of seeking reality in his faith and how God has led him in India. He emphasizes the importance of honesty and transparency in our relationship with God and with one another. The speaker highlights the need for husbands and wives to walk in the light and be honest with each other. He also mentions the danger of giving young people the impression that Christians don't face the same struggles they do. The sermon references Psalm 51 and Romans 7 to illustrate the importance of honesty and the transformation that can come through the new covenant.

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## Transcript

It's a real joy for me to be here. And as I've shared with Brother Denny in the afternoon, as he just said, I saw a lot of similarity in the way God's led him through the years and led us in India. Twenty-four years ago, there were a few of us, just three or four families, that sought reality.

About a year before that, I was born again about forty years ago, and for about sixteen years after that, I found, as I went on in the Christian life, that gradually the Christian life became a routine. And though I went through the external form, there was a lack of reality, and gradually I began to talk about things that were not true in my inner life. Externally, my testimony was okay.

And I prayed a prayer that time. I was in full-time Christian work. And I said, Lord, I want you to do something in my life so that everything I say is going to be true in my inner life, my private life, my home life, that I'll never say anything that I don't practice.

And I'll never give an impression to people of being holier than I really am. That was the prayer of my heart, and I felt if this could not be accomplished in my life, I'd quit the ministry and do something else. And that's when God met with me.

And that's when a few of us began to meet together in my home that from there has grown into many people and many churches. But more than the numbers, I'm excited that there are people in our land whom God has brought together who want reality in their lives. There's a verse that I want to read to you in Psalm 51.

Psalm 51, it says, this is a prayer of David. David was a man after God's own heart, but he lived under the old covenant. There were heights that he could not reach, however much he longed for it.

Remember, Jesus once said that the greatest man under the Old Testament was the greatest man born of women. Up until that time was John the Baptist. And when we look at the life of these men, like Elijah and Moses and John the Baptist, they were tremendously godly men.

They were not people running after money. They were not people seeking the honor of men. They were not people who were running after the opposite sex.

They lived before God's face. They didn't care for kings or anyone. And yet Jesus said, in Matthew 11, that even though John the Baptist was the greatest prophet ever born and the greatest man born of women until then, the least person in the kingdom of God would be greater than him.

And he was drawing a contrast between that life under the old covenant and life in the new covenant. Under the old covenant, you could come to a tremendously good life, as good as John the Baptist. And he said, if you really enter into the new covenant life, every single person who really enters into the new covenant can rise to a higher life than John the Baptist.

It's quite something. And here's where we've got to be honest. It's very difficult to be honest.

We are a people who fool ourselves very easily. When I began to examine my life and compared myself with John the Baptist, I couldn't say that my life was better than his. I couldn't say that my life was better than Elijah's.

And yet, that was the promise under the New Testament. There was another man, David, it says in Psalm 51, this is the verse I want to read. Psalm 51, verse 6. Behold, thou dost desire truth in the innermost being.

David is not saying he had it. He's saying, God, I know that's what you desire. I don't have it.

I've got a good life externally. He had it till he fell, and one mark of his uprightness was that when the prophet confronted him with his sin, he acknowledged it immediately. But he knew that there was more that God had, truth in the innermost being, reality in the innermost being.

That's what God wants. David knew that, and he knew that he couldn't come to that height. All of that Old Testament life was external.

The entire law, the Ten Commandments, dealt with that external life. And if you honored your father and mother, and you didn't worship idols, and you didn't take the Lord's name in vain, and you worshiped God, and you kept the Sabbath, and you didn't kill, didn't commit adultery, didn't steal, didn't bear false witness, you had a good testimony. The law couldn't punish you.

You were okay. But God kept one commandment there, right at the end, to test how many would be honest. That was the Tenth Commandment.

It was the only commandment in that list of ten that dealt with something inside. And that was, you shall not covet. You shall not desire your neighbor's wife, your neighbor's house, your neighbor's daughter, anything that's your neighbor's, his job, his ministry, his Bible knowledge, anything.

You shall not desire it. Now, the law could never punish that, because how do you know whether a man's desired something? The law could only punish a man who disobeyed the first nine commandments. The Tenth Commandment didn't speak about grabbing your neighbor's something or the other.

It was desiring. And we can wonder, why did God place a commandment that the law could never punish? Because you'd never be able to find out whether a man obeyed it or not. He placed it there to find out how many people would be honest.

Paul said, in one place, in the Acts of the Apostles, he said, From my childhood, I've lived with a good conscience right up until this day. In Philippians 3, he said, According to the righteousness of the law, I was blameless. Which means, as far as he could remember, in his whole life, he had never disobeyed the law.

What he meant was nine commandments. Because, I want to show you these two verses. First of all, in Philippians 3, where he says, As to the righteousness of the law, Philippians 3, 6, I was found blameless.

Now, we think that he's referring to the whole Ten Commandments, but he isn't. He says, There was absolutely nothing from my childhood in which I violated the law. He says that in Acts 23, verse 1. Looking at the Sanhedrin, the council, before whom he stood for judgment, he says in Acts 23, verse 1, Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day.

There was a man, just like that rich young ruler, who came to Jesus. I believe Paul was also a rich man. He belonged to a family that lived in Tarsus, where the business people from among the Jews went.

His father was obviously a very rich man. There was another rich young man, Paul of Tarsus, who made the right decision. Unlike the other rich young ruler, who also was very upright, who missed what the Lord had for him, who had kept all the commandments, Paul says, I too have lived with a perfectly good conscience.

Now, there are very few human beings who can say that. There was a man who from childhood had lived with a perfectly good conscience. And he was a million miles away from God, in spite of all that.

Going completely on the wrong track, despite being so upright on the outside. And when you turn to Romans 7, you see what he says. Here is where you see Paul's honesty.

And it's that honesty that led him into the new covenant. Otherwise, he would have missed it altogether. Just like that other rich young ruler.

In Romans 7, Paul says, what shall we say then, verse 7. Is the law sin? May it never be. Now, notice his honesty here. On the contrary, I would never have known sin, except through the law.

I would not have known about coveting, if the law, now he is talking about the 10th commandment. Had not said, you shall not covet, you shall not lust. It's the same word, lust, covet, desire.

Verse 8, but sin, and this is the verse where he reveals his inner life. Taking opportunity through this commandment, produced inside me. Coveting of every kind, lusting of every kind.

Here is Paul's honesty. He is saying, even though I kept all these commandments on the outside, and I had such a good testimony before people. People thought I was such a saint from childhood, because I lived with a good conscience.

My parents thought I was a saint. The Jewish leaders thought I was a saint. But little did they know, what all was going on inside my heart.

Lusting of all types. Not just one type, many types. That's where we see, that Paul was constantly disobeying the 10th commandment.

He admits it. I couldn't keep it. Inside me, lusting, lusting, lusting.

And because he was honest, and he was struggling with this. This is what he was struggling with. He says, I want to be pure inside.

Verse 19, the good that I wish, I don't do. He is not talking about honoring his father and mother. That he could do.

He is not talking about not committing adultery. He didn't do that. Never committed adultery in his whole life.

Not talking about not bearing false witness. He never bore false witness in his whole life. He is talking about something else when he says, the good that I wish, I do not do.

He is talking about, I want to be pure in my heart. But I don't seem to be able to. I am defeated inside.

That's what he is talking about in verse 19. I am doing the very thing I don't wish. Verse 20.

He is not talking about external sin. He is talking about inward, in his thought life. In his attitudes.

And then he says, O wretched man that I am. Verse 24, Romans 7, 24. How can I be free? Here is a man who is crying out to God and he is revealing to us his inner heart.

In absolute, total honesty. He is getting up and saying in scripture, I found every type of lust in my heart. And then he says in Romans 8, this wonderful word, but finally something happened.

The law of the spirit, Romans 8, 2. Now this is different. From the law of Moses. Here he is talking about the law of the Holy Spirit.

There is a law of the Holy Spirit. Just like there is a law of Moses. But the law of the Holy Spirit is not found in commandments.

Jesus didn't come with many more commandments. It says here in Romans 8, 2, the law of the spirit is life in Christ Jesus. It is a life.

It is not law. It is a life. And he says, that life has finally set me free from this other law of sin and death.

Then he says in verse 3, for what the law could not do. Now we need to stop there a moment. What was it that the law could not do? He is talking about the Ten Commandments.

Could the law help him to worship only one God? Sure. Never worship idols? Sure. All his life the law helped him.

Never committed adultery? The law helped him. Never steal? Never tell lies? Never murder? The law helped him in all these areas. There was only one thing the law could not do.

It could not deliver him from lusting inside. And he says, what the law could not do, God did. That is the new covenant.

And a man who has not experienced that has not entered into the new covenant. It is only his external life that is holy. And he says, no.

And then he talks about God sending his own son, that is Jesus. In the likeness of sinful flesh. There is an offering for sin on Calvary's cross.

God condemns sin. In the flesh of Jesus. Why? So that.

Now we need to go back once again to Romans 7 verse 8. Where he said, this 10th commandment, it produced in me or revealed to me. Probably is a better way to say that. There was all types of lusting.

He goes on to say, I never knew about it. It was always going on there. But the law was like a searchlight, you know, like you can have a whole lot of snakes in a room.

And you don't know they are there till somebody shines a light in. And here were all these snakes in Paul's heart. And he never knew about it till the law shone a light in and said, you shall not lust.

And he suddenly discovered all types of snakes there. Which he never knew was there. See people walk in darkness, they don't even know about this.

But people open up their lives to the law of God, to God's word. Begin to discover these snakes as the light shines in. And that's why when Jesus came and saw these Pharisees who didn't seem to have a consciousness.

Of all these snakes crawling around in their heart. He said, well you fellows are healthy, aren't you? Jesus could be sarcastic sometimes. He said, I don't come for you people.

I came for the sick. I came for the prostitutes. I came for the thieves.

I came for the tax collectors. Because it's the sick who need a physician. And he was trying to point out to them.

They still couldn't see it. That their biggest problem was they thought they were healthy. And they were not.

But Paul acknowledged it. The law shone in. Did those Pharisees have the tenth commandment? Sure.

What was the difference between those Pharisees and Saul of Tarsus? One major difference. And that's the big difference between God's people today. And that difference was the Pharisees would not acknowledge.

That they were disobeying the tenth commandment inside. That they were lusting. Coveting.

Desiring. They would come to the synagogues on Saturday and pretend to be holy people. And sit there and talk about scripture.

And pray. And praise and perhaps clap their hands in the temple. They never cried out like, Paul, oh God.

I'm a wretched man. The things inside these other folks around don't know. That's what made God select Paul.

That's why out of all that bunch of Pharisees, God picked out one. He just left the others. Why? Why does God pick out one person from here and one person from there? In the midst of a whole lot of bunch of holy people.

People who look holy anyway. Because they are honest. Paul said, I discovered all types of coveting, Lord.

I want to do what's right. But I don't do it. And I want to acknowledge it.

This is what David said way back a thousand years earlier. You desire truth in the innermost being. You desire reality in the innermost being.

Not just on the outside. That was the crisis I had with God 24 years ago. Reality.

I saw that my problem was not Bible knowledge. I knew the Bible. I could preach.

But I didn't have reality. And when I sought that, I entered into the new covenant. Just like this.

What the law could not do. It wasn't through a technique. It wasn't through an experience.

It was through the law of the Spirit. Of life in Christ Jesus. That's what the Holy Spirit has come to produce in us.

Life in Christ Jesus. The very life that there was in Jesus. To be produced in me.

In my thought life. In my attitudes to other people. It was not me struggling and manufacturing a good life.

It was the Holy Spirit imparting to me another life. That's this new covenant. That's why God picked Paul.

Because he was honest. He admitted his need. And I believe God is looking all over the world.

For those who are honest. Those who will acknowledge honestly before him. This is the meaning of walking in the light.

If we walk in the light. What does that mean? It's not a big complicated thing. It just means I just expose myself.

And I say if there is a stain on my shirt. Well, I acknowledge it. I don't pretend it's not there.

To walk in darkness is to pretend it's not there. To pretend I'm okay inside. To put up a front.

Then of course God can't do anything. I think of the two thieves who hung on the cross of Calvary. On Calvary on either side of Jesus.

For many years I thought. That that one thief who got into God's kingdom. Got in there because he said Lord remember me.

When you come in your kingdom. But as I studied that passage carefully. I discovered that was not the reason.

Why he got into paradise. A lot of people who say Lord remember me. When you come in your kingdom.

Who never get into God's kingdom. Not everyone who says Lord Lord. Will enter into the kingdom Jesus said.

But there was something else about that man. You see crucifixion. Was the type of punishment.

That the Roman government reserved. For the worst criminals. It's like the electric chair.

Or hanging. You don't. You send the worst criminals to the electric chair.

The others may get 15 years or 20 years. But the worst. In those days the worst were crucified.

And here were those. These two thieves hanging on the cross. Alongside Jesus.

And one of them said to Jesus. In Luke 23.39. Luke's gospel 23.39. One of the criminals there said. Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us.

What he was saying was. Well I need to be saved from this crucifixion. I know I'm a criminal but I'm not so bad.

That I deserve to be crucified. Perhaps a few years in prison. But not crucifixion.

I deserve to be saved from this. But the other man. On the other side.

The other thief he said. He said don't you fear God. Verse 40.

Verse 41. He said exactly the opposite. He said we are being punished justly.

Because. Verse 41. We are receiving what we deserve.

What we deserve. For our deeds. He was honest.

He said Lord I don't pretend to be a saint. I don't even pretend that what I needed was 20 years. I'm such a wicked man.

I deserve to be crucified. I deserve the worst punishment. I deserve the electric chair.

And he was free. The Lord that's why. Because he was honest.

Just like Paul in Romans 7. And he said. Jesus remember me. When you come in your kingdom.

That's 2,000 years later. And Jesus said no. Not 2,000 years later.

Today. You're going to be with me in paradise. Paradise is made for people like you.

Who are honest. That man make restitution. Never had a chance.

Did that man even go and ask for forgiveness from those he had wronged? No. Did he ever do one good thing? He never had a chance. He repented and he died right there.

And that evening. The angels in paradise. The angels in heaven saw.

This amazing sight. Of one who had walked for 33 and a half years without sinning. Walking in paradise with one who had walked for 33 years in sin.

Amazing. What did he do? He never did one good thing in his life. But he was honest.

He said Lord this is what I really am. I deserve this. Paradise is made for honest people.

Made for those who are willing. To be known as they really are. In whom there is no pretence.

And. This is the secret of fellowship. If we walk in the light.

John says 1 John 1 7. We have fellowship one with another. Not only vertically with God. But with one another.

The great need among husbands and wives. To walk in the light. To be transparent.

Without pretence. To be honest. Sometimes we can give.

Young people who come into our churches. An impression. Through our preaching.

Through our singing. Through our whole church service. And our presenting of ourselves to them.

An impression that. We don't face the struggles they face. And those young people can come into our meetings.

And think well. This holy bunch of people will never know. What I'm going through.

And they turn away. And they don't turn away from Jesus Christ. They turn away from the false Christ.

Presented by Christians. I believe this is true in India. I don't believe that India is a false country.

I don't believe India has rejected Jesus Christ. I believe India has rejected the Christ. They've seen in so many Christians in India.

And that's not the true Christ. The Christ they've seen in Christians in India. Is a Christ who loves money.

And who is interested in seeking his own gain. And many things like that. That's not the true Christ.

That's the Christ they've rejected. And that's the Christ America has rejected. The Christ they've seen in the television evangelists.

And the Christ they've seen in so many hypocrites. That's the Christ they've rejected. And I know this has brought me on my face before God.

And said Lord. Am I reflecting your son. Correctly.

Jesus said. His disciples. At the end of three and a half years with them.

He said if you've seen me you've seen the Father. You don't need to see God at all. You've seen him. You've seen the way I live. You've seen everything I did. You've seen the Father. And Jesus said as the Father sent me. So send I you. That means. As we walk through the world. We should be able to say to others. If you've seen me. You've seen a little bit of what Jesus is like. I thought you know. When. If I were living in Nazareth. Around two thousand years ago. And I didn't know that. I thought of him as the son of Joseph. Another carpenter there. And. Supposing I thought of him as just another Jew. And I encountered this. Twenty eight year old young man. Sometime in the streets of Nazareth. What would be. The first thing that struck me about him. I thought of that. Supposing I'd encountered Jesus in the streets of Nazareth. What would be the first thing. That would impress me about him. Have you ever thought of that. I think. I would have come away with the impression. Not of a holy man. The Pharisees gave that impression. A holy man. Who's always talking about the Bible. And many many holy things. I think I'd have come away with the impression. When I met Jesus of a very humble man. Man who. Put me at ease. Not overawed me. With his sense of holiness. He was the holiest man that walked on earth. But that's not. What he would overawed me with. He would. Make me feel as if. I were his equal. Even though I would be a million miles beneath him. It'd make me feel at ease. And not. Uncomfortable with his holiness. And. If I'm not. Like that to other sinners around me. I'm not reflecting Jesus correctly. This is. The wrong Christ. That many sinners are rejecting. You know. Logically speaking. A sinner. Should feel more comfortable. With another sinner. Not with a holy man. I mean it's like a person who's filthy. Will. Feel comfortable with another filthy man. You feel very uncomfortable and awkward. If he sits next to a very. Clean. Person. Strictly speaking. The sinners. The sinner should feel.

Uncomfortable with a holy man. And that's how they did feel with the Pharisees. The sinner came near a Pharisee.

A prostitute came near a Pharisee. She'd feel so terribly unworthy. But he felt so comfortable with Jesus.

How is that? Even though he. He had real holiness. His holiness was a blazing holiness of God.

This filthy sinners. Felt comfortable with him. That is the holiness of God.

And if you haven't seen it. We have really missed something. The holiness of God.

Is perfect love. It's a love. Which never makes another person feel.

Awkward. Or inferior. Or small.

Or overawes them with. A sense of what a. Pure holy person I am. I may be.

But I don't overawe him with that. I make him feel at ease. I want to.

It's a holiness. The real holiness of God. Is something that gets underneath someone.

And lifts them up. Right up into the presence of God. That's how Jesus came.

That's the Jesus we need to reflect. The society around us. And.

We may not be reflecting that. And then. We say all these.

People they don't have any love for righteousness. Well. They may be turning away from the Christ.

They see in us. Now that's what the Pharisees said. Those people who don't know the law.

They are condemned. But Jesus went underneath them and saved them. Lifted them up.

The only thing he required from people. Was honesty. And if we were honest.

If we are honest. There are types of lusting in us. And if you are saved from it.

I'm not saying we got to live like that. The spirit has come to save us from it. But it doesn't make us superior to that other person.

Paul says what have you got. That you didn't receive. Is there a single thing in your life.

That you didn't receive. You know we can never be proud of what. We didn't manufacture.

If your holiness. Is something you manufactured yourself with. Gritting your teeth.

And denying yourself. And reading the Bible every day for one hour. Etc.

etc. etc. Well you'll be proud of it.

But if it was something imparted by the Holy Spirit. As a free gift. You can never be proud of it.

I feel that. I believe in victory over sin. I preached it for twenty years.

And been rejected by Christians in India. Because I preached it. And I continue to preach it.

Because God's word says. Sin shall not have dominion over you. No sin need ever have dominion over us.

I need not be a slave to anger. I need not be a slave to the lust of my eyes. Or the jealousy or bitterness.

Not even a single day of my life. I need never raise my voice at my wife. 365 days of the year.

That's the Christian life. That's God's will for me. But.

I don't have to make other people feel uncomfortable. When they are defeated. God divides.

We think God divides people according to holy and unholy. I think God divides people according to honest and dishonest. When Jesus said about Nathaniel.

There is a man in whom there is no dishonesty. There is a man in whom there is no pretence. There is a man in whom there is no guile.

For many years I've said. Lord if you can say that about me. I'll be happy.

There is a man in whom there is no pretence. He is genuine. He is real.

You know. We can't be holy overnight. We can't be perfect in love.

It takes many years. And people who have been defeated by anger for many years. It may take many years for them to get out of it.

People who have indulged in dirty thoughts. It may take a long time for them to be totally free from it. But there is one thing all of us can be honest from day one.

That all of us can be. That's honest. We can be honest right from day one.

Because that's easy. Anyone can be honest. A prostitute can be honest.

A thief can be honest. That's what Paul was in Romans 7. And that's one of the most difficult things to be. And that's what makes us.

Not spiritual. But religious. And I see that Jesus.

In his earthly life. He was in a constant battle. With religious people.

You know he was never battling. Sinners and thieves and murderers. And condemning them.

I never see him taking a campaign against. Adulterers and murderers and. Everything I see in the gospels.

Is this conflict with these so called holy people. Religious people who. Were always in the synagogues.

Praying, fasting, tithing. Doing so many things. And the biggest hypocrites.

In the land. He was in constant conflict with them. And I believe that if Jesus were.

He's the same yesterday, today and forever. And if he were to come into our churches. His conflict would not be.

With those people we dub as sinners. Who are externally sinful. And acknowledge it.

Don't pretend to be holy. Not with them. His conflict would be with people.

Who pretend to be holy and are not. People who claim to be following him. And who are not free from the love of money.

But pretend to be free from it. The first sin. That we read of as judged in the early church.

Was not murder. Not adultery. Not theft.

It wasn't telling. It wasn't bearing false witness. The first sin that we read of as judged in the early church.

Was the sin of pretense. Hypocrisy. In Ananias and Sapphira.

And when we read that in Acts chapter 5. We see that they sinned. Without even opening their mouth. You know that Ananias never said anything.

It says there that all the. People were coming and laying there. Selling their property and taking the money.

And laying it at the apostles feet. And all that Ananias did. Was stand in the queue.

And along with all the others. Quietly leave his money. At the apostles feet.

Nobody said a word. Different people came put their money and went on. And the next person came put his money and went on.

And Peter was standing there. They were coming and laying the money there. And Ananias just laid the money there and moved on.

And as he moved on Peter said come here. Those apostles had discernment. They could see through these humbugs.

They were spirit filled men. And he said to Ananias. Why have you told a lie to God? He hadn't opened his mouth.

That's the first sin we read of. Judged in the early church. Judged with death.

It was a very serious punishment. For what? For telling a lie in the church. Without opening your mouth.

What was that? Pretending. You see everybody was giving. All that they had sold their land for.

That was understood. And all that Ananias did. Was pretend that he was giving everything.

And God didn't want his money. God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He doesn't want anybody's money.

And Peter said to him. He said do you know Ananias. Before you sold the land it was yours.

Nobody asked you to sell it. There is no commandment which says. Thou shall sell all thy land and give thy money to God's work.

No such commandment. After you sold it the money was still yours. You could have kept it.

There is no commandment which says. Because everybody is doing something. You also must do something.

The same thing. No. After you sold the land you could have still decided.

To keep it and when you came in the queue. All you had to say was. Well Peter.

The others were giving a hundred percent. My wife and I didn't feel. We could give a hundred percent.

We just want to give fifty percent. He would have been alive. He could have gone home peacefully.

But it's because he kept his mouth shut. That he died. That's a warning to us.

I believe that the problem was. That Ananias and Sapphira were in such a powerful church. You know it depends on which church you are in.

If you are a hypocrite. In a church full of hypocrites. You are probably safe.

God will leave you alone. I think if Ananias were in a church like the church in Corinth. He would probably have been an elder there.

I mean after all how many people give fifty percent of their money to God. The problem was he was in the church in Jerusalem. Which is a church on fire for God.

In the midst of revival. And he was pretending. That's why he was judged.

For dishonesty. For pretense. And I see that.

Like we said in the case of the Apostle Paul. It was his honesty. His honest acknowledgement of his need.

That enabled God to lead him. Into the new covenant. Where that which David longed for.

Reality in the innermost being. Could be fulfilled. I want to turn to Romans chapter eight again.

Where we read. What Paul says. When the law of the spirit began to operate in his life.

Life in Christ Jesus. What the law could not do. God did.

And then he says. In order that. Romans eight four.

This is the whole purpose and the goal. That the requirement of the law. Now what is the requirement of the law he was talking about.

Which the law could not do in verse three. That was. Deliverance from every type of lusting.

You know. We can think of dirty lusts. But there are other lusts.

Which are clean lusts. You know when. Like the good sheep of King Saul.

Which he of Amalek. Which King Saul never killed. Amalek.

Which is a picture of the flesh. Has got bad sheep and good sheep. And of course.

Everybody would kill the bad sheep. But like King Saul. We don't identify these good sheep.

I'll give you one example. The lust for. The honor of men.

Does that look like a dirty lust. You know to. Perhaps preach in a way that impresses people.

I remember in my younger days. I began preaching. Thirty five years ago.

Of course we are young and. We want to make an impression. And the Lord asked me a question.

You want to impress people. Or you want to help them. I said Lord I want to help them.

And he said stop trying to impress them. I said ok. It's a lust.

It's one of those. All types of lusting. One of those is this lust to.

Impress. To get honor. To please people.

To soften that. Word so that it doesn't hurt that. Friend of yours sitting there.

I remember about twenty five years ago. Twenty six years ago when I was. In Australia for a deeper life convention.

And. I was praying in my room. Before the first meeting.

And the Lord spoke to my heart. And said. You want to be invited here again.

I knew what. What the Lord meant. That means are you going to speak.

In such a way. Please everybody. So they call you again.

And I said no Lord. I'm not bothered. I want to speak the truth.

And it's only then the Lord permitted me to go. And speak. And I found through the years.

I've had many experiences where. They've. Stopped me in the middle of.

Special meetings. So we don't want to hear you anymore. It's a temptation to seek honor.

It's not one of those dirty lusts. Like sexual. The dirty thoughts.

Or bitterness or jealousy. It doesn't look so ugly. When I sing a song.

Or a solo. Be more bothered what people think of my voice. Than whether Jesus Christ is glorified.

When I preach to. Be more bothered about what people think about my message. Than whether they are drawn closer to God.

It can be in many many ways. If I'm seeking the glory of God. And if I'm.

Ministering in the power which God gives. I can never seek my own honor. It's like the holiness I said earlier.

You know if. If the holiness I have. Is something I made.

I'll be proud of it. And that pride shows me I don't have victory. The way the Lord pictured this for me.

Many years ago was like this. Anger. The Bible says put away all anger.

Which means there must be no more anger in my life. It's very clear in Ephesians 4.32. So I must seek victory over all anger in my life. But anger is a one.

Let's say a hundred foot pit. And here I am like all other men. Sunk in this pit.

One hundred feet deep. And I'm one of those seeking for victory. And I seek for victory.

And I managed to come out of it. And I fall into. Another one thousand foot pit.

Called. Spiritual pride. I'm proud of the fact that I've got victory over my anger.

I look down on that other fellow who's still losing his temper. What is that? The Lord said that's not victory. That's a worse defeat than you were in before.

The Lord wants to give us victory. With humility. A victory where you don't despise the other person.

Who's still defeated by the very thing you got victory over. The Lord wants to give us victory in such a way. That we're not going to show off.

We're not going to make that other person feel small. Because he doesn't have the life I have. That's why people were drawn to Jesus.

Sinners were drawn to Jesus. He had genuine holiness. Genuine holiness is always accompanied by humility.

False holiness can be identified by this one mark. Pride. You can sense it.

The person makes you feel that you're inferior. And then such a person has fallen to a thousand foot pit. That's not victory at all.

And we can say that such a victory is something I've manufactured. We had a brother in our church who came from Hinduism. And he said this one day in a testimony.

He said, I got victory over anger long before I became a Christian. I did yoga. And with that Buddhist type of self-control.

He never lost his temper. We had a religious leader in India called Buddha. One thousand years before Christ.

He forsook all the wealth of this world. And went and sat in a forest. For meditation and all that.

One day somebody came and irritated him. Terribly. And he said to him, you've come ten years too late.

You can't irritate me now. You cannot irritate me. I have victory over anger.

That's Buddha. It's a thousand years before Christ. And here was this Hindu person.

He had victory over it before he came to the church. It was on the outside. It didn't solve the anger problem inside.

It was just putting the screw tight on the bottle so it didn't come out. That's all. And yoga in Hinduism teaches people to really screw that bottle tight that nothing comes out.

But it doesn't solve the anger problem inside. The tenth commandment is still being disobeyed. There's no reality in the innermost being.

But you look very holy on the outside. And it's very easy for a Christian to be a Buddhist. A good Buddhist.

And think he's following Jesus Christ. God desires truth in the innermost being. And he gives it to those who are honest.

Say, Lord, there's every type of lusting in my heart. There's a desire for honor. Desire for the approval of men.

Seeking to please this person. Thinking what will that person think of me. It's a lust.

It's as dirty a lust as any other filthy lust you can think of. And when I have got a victory, like I said, this type of victory over anger or anything. Yoga also teaches people to control and get victory over dirty sexual actions and self-control.

It's one of the things that yoga in Hinduism teaches. But it's all on the outside. But that type of victory can appear like victory, but it's not victory at all.

It doesn't bring a man to rest. He's always proud of it. Always conscious of it.

And always makes other people aware of his victory and makes them feel small compared to himself. It's a counterfeit. It's not the real thing.

And I remember once looking at it like this. To use an illustration. I used to think, supposing there's a beautiful cake here being distributed after the service.

A lovely cake. And I didn't make it. But somebody else made it and brought it and everybody gets a taste of it and says, Boy, that's a wonderful cake.

Wonderful cake. I never even feel tempted to be proud of it because I didn't make it. But supposing I was the one who baked it.

And I hear different people saying, Boy, that was a wonderful cake. Well, I'm certainly tempted to be proud then. So, what am I trying to say? If you made it, you're tempted to be proud of it.

If you didn't make it, you're not even tempted to be proud even if a hundred people say that was a wonderful cake. If you manufactured your holiness, you're proud of it when people say, Boy, he's really a humble brother. Or, he's really so gracious.

So gentle. So nice. And you feel a little happy about it because you made it.

You made the cake. You baked it. You manufactured it.

It's not God's at all. It's a counterfeit. If it was really from God.

If it was something God did in you and you are aware. Like Paul says, what have you got that you did not receive? It's something that God gave you. The Bible says that we are to be partakers of His holiness.

You read that verse in Hebrews chapter 12? It's a beautiful verse. It's not a holiness we manufacture. Hebrews chapter 12, it says in verse 10 that we may partake of His holiness.

This is New Testament Christianity. Where the Holy Spirit comes and gives me the life of Jesus. This is why it's necessary to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

He's the one who's going to impart to us this life. And when I recognize this is something I've received from Him. It keeps me down on my face before God in gratitude.

And if people appreciate it, they say, Lord, it's yours. It's what you did. I know what I am.

And the other thing is, which I've discovered through the years. The closer we come to God. You know, when Paul wrote Romans 7. He wrote that 30 years after he was a believer.

The closer we come to God, we discover things in our life which we never knew earlier was sin. I remember once in my life, many years ago. I found a little difficulty with a brother in the church.

I mean, I didn't have any difficulty with him, but he seemed to be a little distant. I was wondering why. I began to rack my mind and said, Lord, what did I do? I can't remember a single thing I said to hurt him.

Or did to him that should have hurt him. I can't think of anything. Why has he become a little distant? And then the Lord showed me that there were two types of sins.

There are sins that you can commit. It says in 1 John 3. The sin is the transgression of the law. That means the law says you shouldn't do that and you do it.

That's a sin. That means a sin which you did. For example, you speak a rude word or an angry word to a brother or to a wife.

Or you act in a way that's bad. That's a sin of commission. But the Bible also speaks of sins of omission.

In the last verse of James 4, it says, If you know what's the right thing to do and you don't do it, that's also a sin. And what the Lord showed me that time was that you needed to have a little more fellowship with that brother. You needed to spend a little time with him which you didn't do.

It was not a sin of commission. I hadn't hurt him. I hadn't said a word to him.

I just ignored him. That's all. We don't think ignoring a person is a sin.

It's like with our children. I can get angry with my child and beat him and say, Oh, that's a sin. But I may never think that if I don't encourage my little son, I never think of that as a sin.

I don't speak a word of encouragement to my wife. I don't think of that as a sin. If I speak rudely to her, of course, that's a sin.

But if I don't speak a word of encouragement. There is a proverb which is used in the military in India. The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war.

The meaning of it is, if you work hard in times of peacetime, it won't be so difficult when the battle comes. And the way I apply it to this situation is, it's in times of peace between husband and wife that we need to build fellowship. When things are peaceful between brother and brother.

But that's the time we do nothing. Chill. Everything's okay.

And then attention comes. And then we wonder why. And we never related to the fact that during the time of peace, we didn't sweat.

We didn't do any work. We didn't try to build something. And that's why this thing came.

And that's what the Lord showed me at that time in relation to this brother. That if you had taken a little time to fellowship with him, perhaps this strain wouldn't have come. It could be in a married relationship.

The Bible says a woman's a weaker vessel. And the Bible says a husband must live in an understanding way with his wife. What does that mean? It doesn't mean just that I don't shout at her or yell at her.

It also means that I recognize that she's a weaker vessel and needs encouragement and lifting up of her spirit. And if I don't do that, it's a sin of omission. And when I don't do that, a little later a strain comes and I wonder what did I do now? I never said anything.

Of course you didn't say anything. That's the problem. You never said anything.

You never said anything to encourage her. You didn't lift up her spirit. In the time of peace, you didn't sweat.

And so now in times of war, you bleed. When we come closer to the Lord, the Lord begins to show us this various type of lusts in our... You know, why is it I don't take time to fellowship with that brother? Why is it I don't take time to encourage this person? Because there's a terrific lust in my inner heart, in our flesh called selfishness. We think in terms of ourselves all the time.

And one of the things the Lord gives us light on is that as we walk with Him. I'm not saying this to condemn anyone. There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus.

And let me say this, my brothers and sisters, in the New Covenant, there is no condemnation. And if you're getting this as condemnation, you got it in the wrong spirit. I'm just trying to show you, I praise God that I've been delivered from all condemnation.

The Holy Spirit convicts me, but He always shows me specifically. I find this is the big difference between the devil speaking and the Holy Spirit speaking. The devil says, Oh, you're good for nothing.

You're useless. You'll amount to nothing. The way some foolish fathers tell their children, You'll amount to nothing.

You're useless. You're good for nothing. But God never says like that.

God never says to the worst sinner in the world, You're useless. You're good for nothing. You'll amount to nothing.

He never says that. It's always the devil. The Holy Spirit, when He speaks, is always specific.

Like a father will say to his son or daughter, You know, the way you spoke to mummy, that wasn't right. That was a bit rude. That was a bit rude to her.

That's specific, giving the person hope, how to set it right, and how to come out of that situation. That's how the Holy Spirit convicts. And I praise the Lord for that, that that's the way He speaks to me.

Not, Why didn't you encourage your wife for the last 20 years? What can I do about that? But, another way, don't you think that's a good thing you could start doing from tomorrow onwards? I say, Yes, Lord. I want to do that. There's no condemnation.

It gives me hope. It gives me hope that I can have a wonderful married life with my wife. It gives me hope that I can build fellowship with that brother who is a bit distant.

You know, it's our pride that makes us, that hinders us from humbling ourselves to seek fellowship with that person. I say, Well, we're so big, if he wants fellowship, let him come and seek it with me. You know, I've asked married couples in India, we often have married couples meetings in India, and I ask them this question.

I say, When there's a tension between husband and wife, and the same principle applies to a brother and brother, or sister and sister, who should take the first step to restore that fellowship and restore communication, and bridge the gap, and come closer together? Who should take the first step? That's the important question. Because very often, when a husband and wife are in tension, they both realize they've done something wrong, but each is waiting for the other person to take the first step. And when somebody takes the first step, the other one is quick to say, Oh yeah, I'm also sorry.

But the question is, who's going to take the first step? And I say, we have a wonderful example in God. When God had a problem with man, and there was a distance and a gap, and it had to be bridged, I say, who took the first step? Who? God. In other words, the one who was more spiritual.

Okay? You got the answer now? Who should take the first step? The one who is more spiritual. And since husband and wife both think they are more spiritual, they should be just running towards each other. Why isn't it so? Are you really more spiritual? And follow God's example.

Humble yourself. Take the first step. Say, Lord, I want to build fellowship.

Have I partaken of the life of Jesus? This is what the Holy Spirit comes to communicate. My brothers and sisters, this is real holiness. The primary characteristic of holiness is humility.

When people meet you, they must meet a humble man. One who doesn't overawe them with a sense of holiness and righteousness, but one who gives them hope. One who is willing to be a servant, not one who is a benefactor.

Jesus said, don't be benefactors. Have you read that verse in Luke 22? When he was sitting in the Last Supper with his disciples, then he said, the Gentiles, he said, he said the Gentiles are kings, don't be like them. But he also said in Luke 22, 25, the Gentiles are benefactors.

You know who benefactors are? Benefactors are people who do good to others. But they do good in such a way, they make that other fellow painfully conscious of the fact that he is inferior. And here is this great philanthropist who is coming and doing good to him.

A lot of Christians doing good to poor people like that. I've seen it in my country. Rich people from western lands, great benefactors, they do good.

Hundreds and thousands of dollars. But it's not in the spirit of Jesus. It's not in the spirit where you make that other person feel an important brother.

He's inferior. He's poor. I'm rich.

And here I am the great benefactor coming in, doing all types of good things for him, providing him with this and that and the other thing to make his life comfortable. And that poor slave looks up and says, I'm very thankful for this benefactor. It's not Christianity.

It never builds a brotherhood. Jesus never came like that. The first principle of all Christian service is he was made in all things like his brothers.

That's what it says about Jesus. He was made exactly like us. He came down to our level.

Like it says about Ezekiel, I sat where they sat. I was just like them. It's only from that position that we can manifest the holiness of Christ to a needy world around us.

I want to encourage you as I encourage myself. I haven't preached to you, my brothers and sisters. Every word I said is as much for myself as it is for you.

I stand before God and the word is for me as much as it's for you. We need to repent where we have turned our children away by presenting to them self-righteousness, Phariseeism, a holiness which is not coupled with the humility of Jesus Christ. We need to get on our faces before God and say, Lord have mercy on me.

That unrepentant, unborn again child of mine has not rejected you. He's rejected the Christ he's seen in me. Forgive me.

That neighbor of mine, the person who works with me in the office, and that other person has not rejected the Christ of God. He's rejected the self-righteous Christ he's seen in me. Forgive me.

I want to repent. I want the Holy Spirit to work in me and make me really like Jesus and not like the Pharisees. Let's bow our heads before God.

The Bible says that when you look into the mirror of His word, don't be a hearer. For it's easy to be a forgetful hearer who saw very clearly during the meeting what the mirror of God's word showed us. But we forget completely the moment we are out of the door.

We need to pray that the Lord will do a permanent work in us. Lord, I want you to do a thorough work in me in this area. Bring in my heart a deep sorrow and a mourning for the self-righteous pharisaical Christianity that I've manifested to others.

The honor-seeking, the lust for honor, for position, for the approval of men, to please men. I want to repent of it. The lies I've spoken without opening my mouth by giving a wrong impression of a holiness I don't have.

Forgive me. Cleanse me. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin those who walk in the light.

There is no condemnation those who walk in the light. Heavenly Father, apply the truth to our hearts. Everyone who is calling upon you, I want to invite you, my brothers and sisters, respond to God right now.

Open your heart right now. And say, Lord, begin that work in me right now. I want reality in my innermost being.

I want reality. I want the humility of Christ to be the glory that people see in me first of all. Deliver me from counterfeit holiness, from external holiness.

Give me a reality in my innermost being. Lord, you hear those who are crying to you at this moment. You see the hearts of people here.

The ears of the Lord are open to the cry of the righteous. The Lord is near the broken hearted. And Lord, those who are broken hearted here today, I believe you are near them right now.

And I pray you'll give them an assurance that you have heard their prayer. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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