

The Whole Purpose Of God

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of personal testimony in sharing the gospel, highlighting the power of sharing what Jesus has done in our lives. It also addresses the significance of obedience in small commandments, testing true obedience. The speaker urges listeners to meditate on the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:19, emphasizing the importance of keeping and teaching even the smallest commandments to be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Scripture: Acts 20:26, Matthew 5:19, Colossians 3:11, Ephesians 4:11

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Obedience to God's Commandments"

Description

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Transcript

Three times in the Acts of the Apostles, we read the testimony of the Apostle Paul. And so I see that personal testimony is something that is very important for us. When you're witnessing to somebody who has an antagonism or hatred or enmity to the gospel, and you won't listen to the message, the best thing you can do is give them a personal testimony of what Jesus did for you, because that's very powerful.

So, there's a book here which I wrote years ago, which is my personal testimony, called The Day of Small Beginnings. Unfortunately, there are no copies here. If you want a copy, you just have to send it or go to ravensministry.com R-A-V-E-N-S Ravens, you know, Ravens at Elijah's Ravensministry.com and you can get all my books there, whatever you couldn't get here.

The question that we need to ask ourselves is how important it is, is it to keep the small commandments? Our obedience is not tested in the big commandments. It's in the small ones. Like, how do you test whether your children are obedient? When they go to school in the morning, you tell them that they don't murder anybody, don't commit adultery on your way to school, don't rob a bank, tell commandments, don't worship any idols.

They'll come back and they'll obey you. Is that when you test their obedience? No. It's when they're out doing something and mommy says, come back in now.

You've got to do your homework. That small little thing, that's when you test their obedience. It's the same way with, you know, a lot of Christians go to the scriptures and say we've got to obey the big commandments.

That's like saying your children obey the big commandments. But the obedience is tested in the small things. And Jesus said that in Matthew chapter 5. He said in verse 19, I don't know how seriously you have taken this word of Jesus.

Whoever cancels one of the least of these commandments, commandments which Jesus gave and teaches others to do the same, that means teaches them, ah, that's not so important. He will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. He won't go to hell because he's born again.

He's a second Christ. But in the kingdom of heaven, God will call him the least. Why? Because he taught people yeah, keep the main commandments, but ignore the small ones.

But whoever keeps and teaches the smallest commandment, of course he will keep the big ones and the small ones, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. I would encourage you to go home and meditate on that verse seriously. Matthew 5.19. A lot of things that Jesus teaches in the Bible teaches, many people don't take seriously.

They take the main ones, like I said, you know, send your children to school and tell them to keep the ten commandments. But it's the small ones that God tests our obedience. And there are many, many things in scripture which are small commandments.

The other verse I want to show you is Revelation and chapter, it's almost the last verse in the Bible. Revelation 22 where he says in verse 18 and 19 I believe this applies to the book of Revelation, but it applies to the whole Bible as well. In the middle of verse 18, if anyone adds to the words of the prophecy of this book anyone adds something, God will add to him the place that are written in this book.

And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away this part from the tree of life, from the holy city which are written in this book. So here's a warning not to add to the book of Revelation or subtract from it. And I believe that applies to the whole of scripture as well.

And here's another verse as to the purpose with which God gave us the scripture. Why did God give us the Bible? Second Timothy in chapter 3 and verse 16 and 17 if you want to know why God gave you the Bible here's the answer. It's what I've written in the first page of my commentary to the Bible which I encourage you to read a few pages later.

Second Timothy 3.16 All scripture is inspired by God and what's it for? Teaching being reprov'd by what you read correction where you're going wrong training in righteousness so that the man of God may be perfect fully equipped for every good work. That is the purpose of the Bible. And one more verse Jesus said in John chapter 14 he said in verse 15 if you love me you will keep my commandments and you know these commandments are a very nice thing if you get angry and you call your brother by a name and by a worse name you'll go to hell.

Have you ever heard a preacher tell you that if you keep on getting angry you'll go to hell? I preach it all the time and Jesus said if you lust after a woman with your eyes it's better to pull out that eye pull out your right eye and then your left eye pull out that as well. In other words, it's better to be blind and go to heaven and have both eyes and go to heaven. Those are the words of Jesus.

People ask me, Brother Shackley, when they listen to your sermons, I find you preach so much against anger and lusting with the eyes. Why is that? I say I'll tell you why. Because in the sermon on the mount first of all at the end of the sermon Jesus said if you hear my words and don't do them you're like a man who built his house on sand and it collapsed one day but if you hear my words and do them you'll be building your house on a rock that will never shake in time or in eternity no matter what flood or rain comes and then I say the other reason is that in the sermon on the mount there's only two places in the entire sermon where Jesus warned you may go to hell.

There are many commandments in the sermon on the mount for example love your enemy bless those who curse you don't divorce your wife don't tell lies, don't judge others let your prayer and fasting and all these secrets don't be anxious, don't love money, all these things so many commandments, out of all the commandments in the sermon on the mount only two commandments he said are in danger of sending you to hell. You know which those two are? Anger and lusting with your eyes I say that's why I preach on it because you go to the YouTube and try to search for messages on anger and lusting with your eyes and see how many people preach on it consistently the two sins that can send a man to hell preach on it all the time. The Lord asked me many years ago when I was a young preacher do you want to impress people or do you want to help them? I said well I want to help them and he said stop trying to impress them and from that day onwards I stopped trying to impress people in such a way that in the day of judgment you and I are going to meet and I'm going to meet all the people who have heard me, there are thousands of people who have heard me on the internet and conferences around the world I got an email from Greenland I didn't even know it was from Greenland and I was amazed, I said well God breaches the uttermost parts of the earth with the word of God and in the day of judgment when they see what happened to so many believers who were not taught the whole word of God by their pastors and see how their own lives were saved from that calamity because they listened to what I said and took me to it they would turn around to me and say thank you for saving our lives I don't care what they say about me I want to know what they say in that way and many who are offended with what I say will think I'm speaking too strong today and that's the only way I'm concerned it's life or death it's more serious than going through heart surgery or cancer treatment, this is much more serious than all that, it's eternal life or eternal death so that's why I preach all the commandments, I don't take away anything I don't preach something that is not there and I've spent 58 years studying the bible so that I make sure that I am not taught anything which is not taught by Jesus and the apostles, and I've tried to teach everything that Jesus and the apostles taught you go through the bible, the commentary, you'll see that everything that Jesus and the apostles taught and that's why I encourage people to read it for example I have consistently taught and practiced that the new testament does not ask anybody to pay 10% of their income to gospel preachers, I've never done it and I've never preached it there are times when I was in the navy, I used to give 50% of my income to gospel, but I've never preached it's voluntary, the bible says God loves a cheerful giver, 2nd Corinthians 9 in the old testament the emphasis is how much 10% in the new testament it is how cheerfully or not cheerfully, the reason is in the old testament God was the head of the government Israel was the government and they had government servants who did the work of the government and they were called the Levites now when you work in your factories or offices or anywhere, you pay something called income tax to the government, to the IRS and maybe it's 10% or 20% whatever it is, that is income tax you know what the

government does with that income tax it uses it to pay the government servants who are serving the country so what you call type is income tax the Israelites had to pay it, God was the head of the government and God said I've got servants who are working, government servants they were called the Levites in those days so you must pay your income tax so that my servants because they were not getting any other salary and by the way, the income tax they paid was not in money because they were not business people they were farmers and shepherds so their income tax was in 10% of their grain 10% of their cattle, which they would give to the Levites and the Levites would live off that the Levites were not supposed to have any property or do any other work they were full time in the temple so it was income tax, because God was the head of the government now the church is not a government, it's a family and God is not the head of the government, he's a father and I say, which of you pay income tax to your father which father demands income tax from his children it's crazy it's because people don't know God is their father that they are paying income tax, and pastors, covetous pastors tell you, give your time, give your time, give your time and there's not a single verse in the entire New Testament that says you've got to pay your time what the New Testament does say is give cheerfully and it's very important to emphasize that give cheerfully I heard of a mother who sent her little girl to Sunday school and said, I'm giving you two notes a \$5 note and a \$1 note when Sunday school offering time comes, put the \$5 in the offering bag and on the way back, you can buy \$1 worth of candy when she came back, the mother asked did you put the \$5 in the offering bag she said, mama, I was about to put the \$5 in the offering bag when the Sunday school teacher said, God knows what a cheerful giver and I bet I could give the \$1 much more cheerfully than I could give the \$5 so I put the \$1 in the bag and I bought \$5 worth of candy that girl was absolutely right she was more scriptural than all these people in churches who are being forced to pay tax I believe God was delighted you think God was delighted in that reluctantly that, oh, I've got to put this \$5 into the bag you think God would be happy with that child like that? Not at all you don't understand God is a loving Father very important things which the New Testament does not teach are being taught by the Bible for things that the New Testament does teach that a woman when she prays must lay her head you teach that, oh, that's a small thing, I know when mummy says come inside, let's do your homework, it's a small thing what should we teach then, don't commit murder, don't commit adultery that's not the way you test the obedience of your children it's in small things and God has kept some very small commandments in the Bible you know what for? not whether you go to heaven or hell if you love me, you'll keep my commandments and not one little dot will be removed from God's word heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will not pass away so that's the way we have sort of built new covenant churches here in India and in at least 70 other places in different parts of the world the poorest villages in India we've seen this in a couple of villages where there was no church for 2000 years where we have a new covenant church and in big cities London, Paris it doesn't matter where it is, a new covenant church it's not size that matters, Jesus said the way of life is now very few will find it so we're not expecting to find megachurches I don't believe any new covenant church will ever be a megachurch if it happens, I'd say what is it you're not preaching here how in the world did this become a megachurch Jesus said few will find it in John chapter 6 we read a big multitude came to Jesus and they were so impressed by all that Jesus was doing and then he turned around and said to them some teaching about the cross about the way of the cross he turned to John chapter 6 to read there, there was a great multitude that was following Jesus there, it says here in verse 2 John 6 verse 2, a large crowd followed him now today when a pastor sees a large crowd he says, time to make an offering but that's not what Jesus said when he saw a large crowd he said, time to teach them about the way of the cross and he taught them, you know what he taught them if you don't eat my flesh verse 53, and drink my blood you have no life, you know what that symbolically means to eat his body and drink, eat his flesh and drink his blood means, death, that flesh and blood symbolizes death, so

he's saying the way I die, you gotta die means symbolically speaking about eating the flesh and drinking the blood and if you don't do it, verse 54, you have eternal life if you don't do it, you don't have eternal life and he who eats my flesh, verse 56, and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him, and then you know what the disciples, now we are not talking about the Jews, none of the Jews, people who up till then were willing to follow him verse 60, many of his disciples now if the Jews said it, I can understand it it was his disciples, not the 12 disciples, many others, he had many others, hundreds of people they said this is a difficult statement, who's gonna take the walk this way of the cross and then, he would not explain it he said all I can say is, verse 63, the words I speak to you are spiritual it's not physical flesh and blood and then it says here as a result of this verse 66, many how did we start, chapter 6 verse 2 great crowd, many left, there were thousands then, you read there that 5,000 were fed with 5 loaves and fishes there, you read about that in the earlier part of the chapter, and many of them left and this great mega group finally were left with 12, verse 67 John chapter 6 is the great chapter of how Jesus Christ would reduce a huge crowd to the size of 12 people, he was in the business of reducing numbers, all the time and then, he wasn't excited that 12 stayed he said hey, you guys wanna go as well imagine saying that he says no, I hope you folks don't leave me that's not what his attitude is, you wanna go with you verse 67, do you wanna go away also it doesn't disturb me because of verse 37 I know one thing all whom the father gives to me will come to me, they'll never go that's why Simon Peter said Lord, to whom shall we go you have the words of eternal life then began the first new covenant but he said one of you is the devil, verse 70, he dropped out, so there can be people who come to us in the beginning who don't have the spirit who externally have the same form but the preaching of the word becomes so strong that they will drop out I can imagine some of these other fellows who left earlier, would have come to Simon Peter later on, and I can imagine them asking hey, you decided to stick along with this man you explain to me Peter what did he mean by eating his flesh and drinking his blood and you know what Peter would have replied he said listen fella, I don't know I can't explain, I myself can't understand but I know one thing, this man that I have no doubt about and it's because of his life that I stick with him, not because I can understand everything he teaches, that is the basis on which the disciples stuck with Jesus not because they could explain what does it mean to eat his flesh and drink his blood, we can explain it because we have the Holy Spirit they didn't have the Holy Spirit at that time they were drawn to Jesus by his life and I say the only thing we want people to be drawn by to our new covenant church, is the light that they see in our midst not the darkness, the people who are drawn to us by, ah, this is wonderful doctrine they won't last, I remember a man from the Pentecostal church in Kerala, India came to me once at the end of a conference and said I'm fed up with the Pentecostal church and I want to join your church, he said please don't join our church because you will get fed up with us also after some time you stay there, where you are the day you are fed up with your own defeated life then come to us, not when you are fed up with your local church, when you are fed up with your own defeated life, because we are a bunch of people who are fed up with our own defeated life, fed up that we are not like Christ we want to be like Jesus, we are fed up every day that we have not yet become like Jesus, we have not yet become like Jesus we've got a passionate desire to follow after Jesus, because we are fed up with unchrist-likeness that we see in little areas of life when you come to that place, welcome to join us otherwise you will never fit in with us because we'll be arguing about doctrine and all that, but I have no time for that please stay where you are, the day never comes in your life when you are fed up with your defeated life fed up with your unchrist-likeness, come and join us, welcome we can together encourage one another to press on that is how we build a church, it's on the basis of life not on the basis of understanding and accepting the doctrine, it's very very important to understand and so when we follow that way we seek to see what all does Jesus teach everything in the New Testament yesterday I was mentioning the five fingers with which you can hold something tight, five

main things, certainly I found that in my own life the first is the blood of Jesus Christ which we can't begin to abase, ABC the blood by which all our sins are cleansed and we are justified by his blood, means we are declared righteous, because his blood has cleansed us number two, the word of God, we respect the Bible as the word of God, we cover the cover, we study it we emphasize it, we believe that man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, it doesn't mean just a lot of people emphasize reading the Bible we must read the Bible daily let me tell you what I teach, if you read the Bible for half an hour in the morning and you go to the office and tell a lie or get angry it's much better you don't read the Bible for half an hour in the morning you go and obey the Bible throughout the day, that is a million times more important than reading the Bible what is the purpose of reading the Bible, it is to obey Jesus didn't say if you love me read the Bible no, do you know that for 1400 years Christians never had a Bible in their hands, how can you tell people to read the Bible half an hour a day when 1400 years they never had a Bible but they could obey God's word everyday, it's obedience unfortunately that's not being stressed a lot of people are easing their conscience I read my Bible this morning, so what did you obey it throughout the day, did you yell at your wife that's what you should overcome, there's no use reading the Bible and getting angry with your wife or your husband, no obey that, overcome that obedience, man shall live by every word what's the rest of that sentence that proceeds you know the difference between past tense and present tense not that proceeded 2000 years ago that proceeds from the mouth of God it's a living thing, that means as you read the Bible if you hear the word that proceeds from God's mouth to your heart that's what you live by in other words you've got to let that word come into your heart man shall live by that, that's what we preach so I say it's better to read one verse let that hit your heart, I know in my life I mean in the early part of our Christian life we must go through the whole Bible, meditate, I used to read a whole chapter a day, because I didn't know anything about the Bible when I started and that's a good way to start, but as time has gone on and I've read chapter and chapter and got to really understand the Bible now very often I read a verse and God speaks to me and I say I can't move on to the next verse because I've really got to the depth of this verse and seen five more pages and that's changed my life as I stop and say it's like a stop light I can't move, it's a red light there God's stopping me and saying think on that verse that's how my life has changed as I've learned to listen to the word that proceeds from God's mouth through that verse of Scripture then I move on to the next verse sometimes I go on to the next day and the Lord says same verse again and the red light is still there, it's not yet green you read the Scripture like this where you examine yourself and see whether you really obeyed that or you just ease your conscience saying yeah I've read my Bible, anyway that's the second thing the Bible, the third is the Holy Spirit I'm not surprised that there's a lot of counterfeit of operations of the Holy Spirit in the world today, not at all because anything precious is counterfeited, have you ever seen counterfeit toilet paper anybody, counterfeit toilet paper counterfeit newspaper counterfeit brown paper, what do you see counterfeit counterfeit notebooks, what do you see counterfeits of gold, diamonds only precious things are counterfeit is there a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit, boy then the original must be really precious and I want it and if you're going to find diamonds somewhere I've never bought one but I would never think of ever buying it without taking an expert with me saying listen how do I distinguish between glass and diamonds how do I distinguish between fake gold and real gold you really need an expert to tell you the difference between the real ministry of the Holy Spirit and the fake and I'll tell you who that expert is, Jesus Christ and you look at the Scriptures and you see there was a perfect spiritual man and I said Lord show me what is really the Holy Spirit and what is not and Jesus looked at me he was the perfect spiritual man and whenever I see something which is called a manifestation of the Spirit immediately I compare it with Jesus, you know this fake gold with the real gold, this fake diamond with the real diamond, I see Jesus, can I imagine you doing that no, fake, I don't want it so I'm not deceived now because I've got the real thing here, the real person

the real spiritual person as an example so I'm not deceived by the fake and I need the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit if you're not interested in serving God in any way then you don't need the gifts but you need the fruit anyway to live the life but I'm interested in following Jesus in His life and His ministry and the ministry does not mean necessarily teaching and preaching, maybe just helping the poor or just encouraging somebody so the third is the Holy Spirit very important to have the genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit like I said earlier, if you open every door of your heart He will fill you.

Number four is what I've said yesterday the way of the cross, hardly ever taught in Christendom today, the way of death to self every single day Galatians 5.24 they who belong to Christ, Galatians 5.24 have crucified the flesh with all its affections and desires that is their attitude to the flesh is one of crucifying it, crucifying it every day the flesh is different from the old man you don't know the difference? if you've been a Christian for more than two years two years, when does a child learn to walk steady on his feet? Two years after how many years did God take the Israelites to the borders of the land of Canaan? Two years from all these examples I believe that God wants a Christian to enter into a life of victory in two years and if He doesn't, something's wrong of course the Israelites took 40 years and some Christians may never enter the land of victory even in 100 years but if you've been a Christian for two years and you don't know the difference between the old man and the flesh first of all you're sitting in the wrong church they haven't taught you the difference between the old man and the flesh apples and oranges are completely different what is the old man and what is the flesh I'm sure you've read this many times in the New Testament and people use a word called sinful nature take a concordance and see if the word sinful nature is taught anywhere in the New Testament, it's not there why do we use words which are not in the Bible, why do we invent words you've heard them from your pastor who hasn't studied the Bible himself that's why you get the word sinful nature, show it to me in the Bible the Bible says flesh and old man, why not use biblical words why use some other word, this is just an example of how Christians have ignored the Holy Spirit's words and use words which are taught in Bible schools I'm not interested, my life was changed I never went to a Bible school a single day of my life, I thank God because the apostles never went there, no prophet in the Old Testament ever went to a Bible school all the false prophets came out of the Bible school of the Old Testament the same today so now let me explain to you, at least now you'll understand in a very simple way, the old man is like an old servant that lived inside my heart who always opened the door to the gang of robbers called the lust of the flesh and this gang of robbers always came to steal from me not my money, but my purity my love, to make me hate people to make me proud, to make me sin this is what the gang of robbers are coming into my heart for that's the lust of the flesh, and the old man is the wanting to sin attitude in me which I inherited from Adam, which opened the door Aha, have you come to steal something? Come right in you want me to watch pornography? Sure, come right in you want me to yell at this guy? Come right in you want me to be a bit unrighteous with money? Sure, I'm here already that's the old man, different from the robbers this is the unfaithful servant living inside one day God took that unfaithful servant and finished with it removed it, killed it I couldn't do it, God did it your old man was crucified with Christ that is what we testify to in baptism, when I go into the waters of baptism my old man, God has got rid of it and I come out of the water saying, I'm a new man now what is a new man? A new man is a new servant who does not want to sin, who wants to keep the door shut when these robbers come knocking, so after your baptism you find the robbers are still coming knocking, haven't you noticed that? after your baptism, after Jesus' baptism he was tempted immediately, after your baptism, you are tempted immediately the robbers are still here in hiding they come knocking and say, can we come in? But now there is a new servant inside, say no, you are not going to come in your old servant is gone, sorry, you are not going to come in isn't that what happened to you when you were born again? see, if your attitude to sin has not changed I would say you are not born again, definitely not do you want to sin? when

people come to me for baptism, I ask them one question, do you want to sin? they say no do you want to sin even once in the rest of your life? No I'm not asking will you sin, that nobody can say no do you want to sin? the one to sin is the old man, if that's still alive you are not born again, the new man is I don't want to sin, that's the way you can find out if Christ has come into your life, I don't want to sin but then what happens? why does the Christian sin? Because he doesn't feed the new man the new man is not strong enough to keep the door shut, he wants to shut the door but those robbers force their way in because the new man has not been eating enough, not been doing enough exercise and he is too weak, he doesn't read the Bible he doesn't pray, he doesn't sing God for the fullness of the Holy Spirit he is not strong enough to keep the door shut but there is a difference between a believer sinning and an unbeliever sinning the believer does not want to sin but he sins, the unbeliever wants to sin and he sins, there is a lot of difference it's like a pig going into the dirty water and a cat going into the dirty water cats can fall into the dirty water too, sure but when a pig falls into the mire it says wow, I enjoy this and it stays there, but a cat when it falls into the dirty water it says hey, I want to get out of this so if there is a dirty pond somewhere and at night you hear some animal falling into it you can find out whether it is a pig or a cat if it jumps out immediately it is a cat if it hangs around there it is a pig and that means when you fall into sin, I can tell you whether you are a believer or not by what is your attitude after you fall into sin not whether you fall into sin or not when you fall into that dirty pond you want to get out immediately, you are born again you don't want to get out, what about a cat who looks around to see if anybody is looking and enjoys that pond that's not a real cat, that's a pig that's put on a cat's dress and pretending to be a cat, there are a lot of believers like that they look around, anybody seeing let me enjoy this for a while, I won't watch this on the computer anybody watching, that's not a real cat that's a pig pretending to be a cat so you know it is wonderful to see these truths so that we get a proper light on ourselves and don't deceive ourselves so these are little things that when you go into the depths of scripture you hear the word of God, you get a light out of it and one of the things we discover in the New Testament as we read it is that the apostles, you know that the apostle Paul said follow me as I follow Christ you know the first person in the Bible who said follow me was Jesus Christ he said follow me, follow me, you know who was the second person in the Bible who said follow me the apostle Paul he said in 1 Corinthians 11 the imitators of me, just as I am of Christ Christ is like one who is climbing the top of the mountain called perfection, Paul is looking at Jesus' footsteps in the snow and following him and I can say follow me as I am following Paul and Christ going on this road of perfection every true Christian should be able to say that and not only Paul he says in Philippians 3 he says not only me, you can also follow verse 17, others who are walking in the same pattern as me who brethren join in following my example Philippians 3.17 and also others like me who are going in the same way, I want to be able to say follow me as I am following Paul and following Christ we are not saying we have reached the top of the mountain of perfection, no the top of the mountain is like Mount Everest 30,000 feet, maybe Paul reached up to 15,000 feet he said I haven't yet reached the top maybe I am only at 3,000 feet, ok, but I am seeing the footsteps of Paul and Jesus and going and I can tell you to follow me because you are behind me I can't tell people who are ahead of me to follow me, they are ahead of me spiritually but if someone is behind me spiritually, I can say hey follow me man look at my footsteps, see how I am following Paul's example and Jesus' example pressing on to perfection, there is nothing wrong in saying that in fact if a preacher cannot say to you follow me as I follow Christ and says this highest statement don't look at me, look at Jesus it sounds so humble, it's a lot of nonsense what he is saying is don't look at my defeated life but look at Jesus, that's not Christianity that's counterfeit, a true Christian preacher or shepherd should be able to say follow me as I follow Christ because a good shepherd goes in front of a sheep, that's what we preach in New Covenant Church examples, not perfect, we are not saying we have reached 30,000 feet, no, we are only at 3,000 Paul hasn't even reached 1,000 feet only, long way

to go to the top, but someone who is at 300 feet we can tell them follow me, it's very simple, it's like mountain climbing you don't have to reach the top of perfection before you tell people follow you so where could Paul be an example to us where Jesus Christ could not be an example in life Jesus is the perfect example tempted in every point never sinned I can follow him in every little detail any temptation, I remember when I first got light on this about 40 years ago and I was tempted with the passions and temptations that young men had in their 30s like me at that time and I used to say Lord Jesus when you were in Nazareth and you were 25 years old I'm sure you were tempted exactly like I'm being tempted now, it's a permanent expression and I want you to show me through the Holy Spirit what you did, how did you resist it, I want to resist it like that now, that's what it means to look up at Jesus and walk in his footsteps, and that's what I did and I gradually over a period of time began to overcome sexual lust, love of money anxiety, grumbling you can overcome it my brother and sister don't ever let the devil tell you that you cannot overcome these things which scripture says you're supposed to overcome we can walk in Jesus' footsteps looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith he's our forerunner, that means we can run in his footsteps the devil has deprived you of your birthright by telling you you can't do that, that's what we are restoring to Christians in New Covenant Church, you can have your birthright which is purchased for you on the cross, don't let the devil rob you of it like some crooked lawyer who steals your birthright, your father has left a billion dollars for you and some crooked lawyer is cheating you of it and leaving you with a hundred dollars in your pocket, that's what's happened to so many Christians, the devil has cheated them of most of their birthright and just left them with the forgiveness of sins is that all that our heavenly father purchased for us on the cross? No! What are we proclaiming? We are proclaiming the whole details of what the father wrote in his will for us on Calvary's cross and the resurrection Son, this is for you, my daughter this is for you, you can walk as Jesus walked on this earth and don't let any crooked lawyer or the devil cheat you of your inheritance so when we look at Paul's life, there are things he can teach you that Jesus could not, not in life, in life Jesus but in ministry, for example Jesus never planted a local church and appointed elders he went around preaching he had his disciples, he went around preaching, he went to Paul he went to Philippi, he planted a church there and appointed elders he went to Thessalonica, he planted a church there and appointed elders every ministry, whether it's apostle, prophet evangelist, shepherd, teacher, every ministry must build a local church seek Ephesians in chapter 4 these are passages of scripture which probably you never hear in your own church, Ephesians 4, it says after Jesus ascended to heaven, verse 10 he descended, in verse 10, he ascended up to the heavens and after ascending to the heaven, verse 11, he gave some apostles that's not the 12 apostles they were appointed when he was on earth, these are apostles whom he appointed after going to heaven and if you want to know what those apostles did, you read the Acts of the Apostles and you read the Epistles Paul was a classic example of that, so if you want to know what a New Testament apostle did, look at the life of Paul in his ministry, and some as prophets appointed from heaven, some as evangelists and some as, the word pastors in the original is shepherds, it's the same word used where Jesus said, I'm the good shepherd, same word, I don't know why they translated it as pastors here, it means shepherds that mean those who care for the flock and teachers, so these gifts are all given but what purpose? To equip all the saints so that they work and build the body of Christ the ultimate aim is to build the body of Jesus Christ in a locality and that's why there was a church in Philippi, a church in Ephesus a church in Colossae, many churches in Galatia a church in Smyrna, a church in Philadelphia local churches evangelists are also mentioned here by the way, verse 11 what is the purpose of the evangelists? Verse 12, to build the body of Christ to build local fellowships which are like expressions of the body of Christ working together even an evangelist, now today, listen to this you go to some evangelists today some of the well-known evangelists and ask them, just do an interview with them hey brother, I've heard that you've gone to many countries

and brought thousands of people to Christ, in this continent and that continent and the other continent, great where are they today? You say, I don't know I hope they're in some church, are they following the Lord? I don't know, I hope they're following the Lord, every single evangelist will say that I had a great campaign, I was there for 3 years and then I came away they got their names, where are they today? I don't know but you go to the apostle Paul, who says follow me, don't follow these evangelists, follow me I say, Paul, I heard that you went to Philippi and you brought some people to Christ, where are they? come, I'll show you all of them, he takes you to the local church in Philippi, he says, you see these people sitting here? all these people, these are the people I brought to Christ and hey Paul, I heard that you went to Thessalonica and brought some people to Christ come, I'll show you all of them, he takes you to Thessalonica and says, you see these people here, these are the people I brought to Christ they're all meeting here in their local body, I heard you brought some people to Christ in Ephesus, come, I'll show you all of them, here they are he won't say, I don't know where they are what type of mother is this? You ask the mother I heard you gave birth to 6 or 7 children, where are they? I don't know, I kept them on the road, I hope somebody took care of them and brought them up this is today's evangelism, it's absolute garbage there's no better word for that do you think any mother will do that? a mother, you ask, even if they've got 1 child or 10 children they'll tell you where each one is and they take care of them, they don't just give birth and leave them on the road, they nurture them till they grow up to maturity and that's what Paul did he wrote letters to them, he visited them, he encouraged them and if they had problems, like children have problems he sorted it out, that's what you read in Ephesus he was always correcting, setting things right that is how he built local churches and he says, follow me Jesus never wrote letters to churches but in his life I can follow Jesus, if I want to do a ministry, there's one man I can follow, that's Paul he said follow me, that's why we built New Testament churches according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul we'd go somewhere, we'd bring the other people Paul would go to a synagogue, and people would respond and a few of them would come out and he'd start a local church there and then after a while, after maybe a couple of years he'd appoint elders there, and then he would write to them every now and then, letters, encourage them, if they had a discipline problem they didn't know what to do, he would tell them what to do because he was like, elders were appointed as spiritual fathers to the flock, and he was like a spiritual father to the elders, that is New Testament pattern do you see it being followed today? can you show me some churches where that pattern is being followed today, exactly like Paul did it what do we see today? we see massive denominations like the Roman Catholic Church where they're gathered together to elect a Pope you know that the Pope is elected it's like politics, there's a lot of competition there because everybody wants to be the Pope, among cardinals and there's a lot of canvassing and all that before the election it's just like politics, Paul would say let's go to the Protestant churches let's go to the Assemblies of God, which is a Pentecostal church they preach the New Birth and all that but how did they appoint their top leader the President of the Assemblies of God by election how did they appoint a leader in a particular area district superintendent election, world superintendent election, is that now possible? were they elected, who's the most popular let's take votes and find out who used to be the elder or used to be the leader, never, where did all this come from I'll tell you where election is found, in the corporations who's going to be the next CEO, who's going to be the chairman of the board let's have an election the church is following the patterns of the world I don't know whether you know the story in the Old Testament, let's get time to read it, in 1 Samuel the Philistines captured the Ark of God we read that in 1 Samuel, the first four or five chapters and they put it in front of their god, Dagon and their god fell down and collapsed before the Ark and they said, hey, this is dangerous, having the Ark here and we better send it back, so they sent it on a bullock cart, with a cow and its little ones and the bullock cart took it all the way into Israel many years later, and it was parked in somebody's house many years later, David

wanted to move that to Jerusalem, and he knew that the Old Testament law was the Ark must only be carried by the sons of Aaron one particular group of the sons of Aaron was supposed to carry the Ark on their shoulders that was God's law, but David said hey, it's long distance from heaven they might make these poor sons of Aaron carry it let's do it the way the Philistines did it put it on a bullock cart, that's a good idea those Philistines had and carried it, do you know the rest of the story? after some time the oxen stumbled and the Ark began to topple, and Uzzah, who was not a son of Aaron, with a good intention touched the Ark to prevent it from falling, and he died on the spot, because he was not a son of Aaron David learned a lesson, the Philistine method is not the best method, so he kept the Ark there, and carried it on his shoulders when he finally took it to Jerusalem, he carried it on his shoulders the sons of Aaron, now I see the same thing happening today, churches saying let's do it the way these corporations do it they select the best man to be the chairman that's exactly what is happening in the Catholic Church, or in some ways in the Protestant but Catholic doesn't make a difference, it's like a village or when a company wants a CEO, one CEO is gone they have organizations that hire that research for CEOs I don't know what that company is called which searches for leaders, and they contact that person, can you give us a list of leaders who we can appoint as the next CEO, and they interview certain people, and they say ok, this is the best you know how many other churches that are not in the denomination select a pastor, they advertise, there are groups in Christendom also that look around for potential pastors, and this church will invite them and say let's hire them, it's like hiring a father for the family we don't have a father, so let's hire a father how many people have volunteered to be a father in this family can you imagine anything so crazy as that and so this person they interview him, come and preach one sermon and then at the end of it, ok I think this is the best CEO do you find this in the New Testament? no, every church had its leader come from within, and always plural, elders, never one man because this was a family in the Old Testament there was one high priest, because it was a government head of government, a president, or a prime minister but here it's a family, and in a family there are always mother and father, minimum two, and so in the New Testament it's always two, because it's a family, elders there is no such thing as a pastor of a church anywhere in the New Testament, where did it come from? It came from this corporations, elect, now the point is this, you say these things are minor exactly, the main thing is don't murder, son, don't murder anybody on your way to school today, don't commit adultery those are the main things, little things like you don't come in when mom calls you, that's not important well you try and bring up a son like that, you'll have a rebel by the time he's a teenager, he won't come and murder he won't come and talk to you, but he'll never obey you but yet we are following those patterns in so called Christendom today, there are so many people who say, I go to this church and I want to tell you another thing you know the apostle Paul fought against Jews who wanted to have a Jewish church you know that was one of his biggest battles, the Jews said only converted Jews must be in this church and there were some non-Jewish people getting converted they said, no, no, no, we don't want that, and Paul fought against it, fought against it, he says in Colossians and chapter 3 in the church there is no difference between verse 11 Colossians 3, Greek, Jews, circumcised, uncircumcised barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, Christ of all and he fought against it so, now today we have a brother, sorry you can't be a part of our church because this is a Telugu church, sorry, you're not Telugu you can't be a part of this church it's like saying, you're not a Jew, so you can't be a part of this church or this is a Malayali church, you speak Malayali? and you're from Kerala? No, sorry, you're from one of those other churches is this Christianity? No, this is the exact thing Paul fought against tooth and nail, but it's being practiced all over, this is a church for Russians ok, you might as well make a church for the Jews now, or some other group this is the church for intellectuals you've got to have a postgraduate degree to be a part of this church why not? We have groups like that in India called Evangelical Graduates Fellowship, sorry, you can't be a member of this fellowship because you're not a

graduate do that, when you get your graduate degree, come back is this a church? all types of things going on in the name of Christianity today, and they don't compare it with the Bible and say is this what Paul spent his life fighting against? It doesn't matter, these things are not important what are the main things? Don't commit murder, son make sure you don't murder anybody on your way to school don't commit adultery Jesus said, if you break one of these small commandments you'll be called the least in the kingdom of heaven and I tell you, multitudes of pastors and Christians some of you sitting here will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven if at all you get there and if you haven't overcome an anger and you won't even get there or if you don't forgive somebody, you won't get there so, in the church in the New Covenant Church, we preach the whole counsel of God, you know there's this expression that people say, I'm free from your blood I've heard people who give up tracks I did it myself in my younger days, I'd sit in a bus in India, when I was 21 23 years old, and I had a lot of tracks I'd go and give out tracks to everybody, and I'd say, ok your blood is not on my hand now, you can't say in the day of judgment you didn't get a track, and the guy probably didn't even read it, probably threw it on the ground, but your blood is not in my hands I gave you a track, God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, that's what the Lord showed me the Lord said, by doing that you've condemned those people have you saved them? No, your aim was to condemn them to wash your hands of their blood, that is not why God sent Jesus to the earth, he sent his son to save the world and I decided that I'm going to stop this ministry of condemnation and lead people to salvation so, I may still give an occasional track to somebody, but I'm trying to lead them to salvation, not to condemn them saying your blood is not on my hands, when can we say your blood is not on my hands let me read that to you, again the Apostle Paul's example Acts chapter 20, he had been three years in Ephesus, and he told them in verse 26, I am innocent of the blood of all of you none of you, your blood is on my hands because, verse 27 I declare to you the whole purpose of God, the whole circle of God's purpose, I declare to you, therefore your blood is not on my hands, I did not just declare one segment of that circle called forgiveness of sins, I taught you forgiveness of sins, so your blood is not on my hands brother, that's only one segment of that circle there are 25 other segments, what about all that I declare to you the whole purpose of God therefore your blood is not on my hands, and when you have declared the whole purpose of God to somebody, then you can say your blood is not on my hands brother, and wherever I go, and in every new government church that we have planted and where I have appointed others we preach the whole council of God and I can say to them before God, your blood is not on my hands, I taught you sisters even to wave your heads, even though a lot of people ignore that it's a small group, I also taught you not to get angry, not to lust after women, I taught you not to get angry, not to murmur, not to complain, I taught you the whole purpose of God, whether you do it or not it's your business but your blood is not on my hands, it's not just, I preach the gospel to you, have you accepted Christ? Ok, goodbye, I'll go to somebody else that is not Christianity that is a fake way of serving God and I want to say to you, if you're in that direction you better repent, turn around and I'm not asking you to follow me, ignore what I say go to the Bible, I often challenge people, supposing you could take this Bible, the New Testament and give it to a non-Christian, say a person who is born without even knowing about Christianity, who knew nothing about Christians or Christianity, there are people like that in India who never heard of Jesus in some religions and supposing the guy is educated and you read tell him to read, please read the New Testament and tell me how these people, this is a guy, remember who had no exposure to Christianity, and say can you please study the New Testament and tell me how they did God's work I tell you, they will say exactly what I teach in New Covenant Churches, and not this garbage that is being taught in so many churches that call themselves Christians, where they elect their leaders and don't preach everything written in the Bible, how will they come to that conclusion because they'll see it's all written here there you can see how our minds have been brainwashed by our traditions, you know why

they killed Jesus, you know why the Pharisees killed Jesus not because he washed the people's feet not because he healed the lepers, not because he preached love your enemies, they killed him because he stood against their traditions and he exposed their rotten traditions, your traditions are not according to the word of God, and they got angry because he exposed their false traditions and they killed him, the same thing happened today if you stand against the traditions of your so called church which are not found anywhere in the New Testament I tell you, they won't accept you I mean the men are crucified because men have become more decent today, they just keep Jesus standing in the rain outside and they don't kill him they treat you like that, that's communicated, that's all, but it's the same result we don't want you to come and disturb our traditions this is what we have followed always I say in India sometimes, why do you stay in that church because our father was there our grandfather was there I say do you send your children to the same school your grandfather went to why not, that school is still there, why do you send them I think there are better schools today you send your wife to the same hospital that your grandmother was admitted to when she was sick no, because there are better hospitals today don't you think there are some better churches today as well compared to your grandfather's time and your grandmother's time I tell you why you are willing to find a better school and a better hospital, because education is important for you, a better hospital because health is important for you, but why do you stick to the same old church, because God is not important for you that's the truth, whether you like it or not brothers and sisters he was yours to kill, let him be she was yours to kill, let her be I am free from the blood of all men thank you father for this weekend for those who had a hunger to come here we believe that you threw them here to hear something whether they respond to it or not, I don't know but we certainly love them enough to give them a desire in their heart to come and listen to the word of God, I pray them have the freedom to believe as well whatever the price please help them lord, that they will not love themselves so much let them be radical disciples we love you more than father, mother, brother, sister wife, children, and their own life and their possessions, so they can follow in your footsteps we pray in Jesus name Amen

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