

Trust God To Give You His Nature

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of working on our attitudes, pursuing love, and seeking to partake of God's nature through the Holy Spirit. It challenges listeners to focus on genuine transformation from within, rather than external appearances or doctrines. The speaker urges self-reflection, humility, and a deep desire to love others unconditionally, highlighting the danger of producing 'Ishmaels' or fake victories in our spiritual lives. The message encourages a pursuit of Christ-like love, freedom from wrong attitudes, and a genuine desire for transformation in the new year.

Scripture: Romans 4:17, Matthew 22:37, 2 Peter 1:3, James 2:8, Philippians 2:12, 2 Corinthians 5:15

Topics: "Inner Transformation", "Christ-like Love"

Description

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Transcript

When we come to the end of a year, we look back and we must look ahead. And I'll tell you this, if you look back honestly at yourself, it will go very well if you decide to change in the coming days. But if you look back and all you can see is the way other people hurt you or how they spoke evil of you or did something against you or cheated you, I can guarantee 2018 will be exactly like the past year or probably worse.

The choice is yours because God does not force anyone to change. God does not even force anyone to go to heaven. There are many hundreds of thousands of people who died in the last night.

Most of them went to hell. God didn't stop any of them. Even though he knows what eternity in hell is like and he knows what eternity in heaven is like, he does not stop anybody from going to hell.

Because if he did that, he would have to make man into a robot. If he forces you to be spiritual, the only way he can do it is by making you a robot. And if he doesn't even take people to heaven that way, I'll tell you he's not going to make any of us spiritual that way.

The most important thing that God has given to us is choice. And at the end of this year you are what you are because of all the choices you made in the last 365 days. Think back.

The choices you made. You chose to say something to somebody. You chose to say something about somebody.

You chose to do something to please yourself or to indulge yourself. You chose to spend money the way you wanted to spend it. You chose to read the Bible when you felt like it and ignore it on other days.

What is the result? What you are today. But you can change. We have made many decisions in the past to change and probably nothing has happened to some of you.

I was thinking of a statement this morning that's written about Abraham in Romans chapter 4. It's an amazing expression. I don't know how many of you have noticed it in Romans 4. You know when he had no children and because his wife was barren, he could have no children. He himself was capable of having children, Abraham.

But his wife was barren and yet God had promised him in Romans 4 verse 17, a father of many nations I have made you. When God called him, his name was not Abraham. His name was Abram, A-B-R-A-M, meaning highly exalted father.

He was a big shot. He was being a big shot if he didn't have any children. God said I'm going to change your name.

I'm going to change your name to Abraham, which means the father of a multitude and you know supposing in those days you had to go to some registrar's office to change your name and Abraham goes to the registrar's office and says I want to change my name. What's your new name? He says father of a multitude. Okay, how many children do you have? None.

Are you sure? You want to change your name to father of none or father of a multitude? No, father of a multitude. That was faith when he didn't have a single child to believe that he'd be the father of a multitude. How does that apply to us? When you don't have victory over any sin, to believe that you'll have victory over all sins.

When you're defeated in every area, to believe that you'll be victorious in every area. That is faith. You have no children? Call me the father of a multitude.

That's what we see here because God had told him. It was only based on God's Word. He did not look at himself because if he looked at himself there was no hope.

So he believed in a God, verse 17, who can give life to the dead. I mean there is no greater miracle than giving life to a dead person. Healing of the sickness is not such a great miracle.

Giving life to the dead and even if you are dead in sin, to believe that God can give life to the dead. Every person whom Jesus raised from the dead was a testimony that God can give life to the dead. And not only that, here's something going back to Genesis chapter 1 verse 1. God can call into being something that does not exist.

Right in the beginning God says, let there be heavens and there were the heavens. Let there be the earth, there was the earth. In a split second, all in Genesis chapter 1 verse 1. What you read in the rest of

Genesis chapter 1 is not the creation of the earth.

The word creation is not used there. That's only in verse 1. It's because the earth got corrupted through the sin of Lucifer who became the devil. God had to remake it in the remaining verses of chapter 1. But creation of the earth was from nothing.

He called into being something that did not exist. This is the example mentioned in Romans 4 for our faith. I mean, do you have maybe a victorious life that does not exist? In other words, you don't have a victorious life.

Do you believe God can say to you, I'm going to give you that? It wasn't Abraham struggling, it was believing. Lord, if you have said it, it will happen in my life. I'll tell you I was defeated.

Thoroughly defeated and I think God allowed me to sink into the depths of defeat in my own life in order to show me that I was no better than any other human being. And that's something I'm convinced in my mind. The two revelations I got in my life, one was that Jesus came just like me, was tempted like me and overcame sin.

And the second was that there's no difference between me and the worst human being, terrorist or suicide bomber. There's no difference between me and any human being. You know how that has helped me? It has saved me from despising other people.

You may believe that Jesus was tempted like you, but I think if you despise somebody, that proves that you feel you're better than him. And I have a feeling that many of you, I'm sorry to say, look down on others who are inferior to you in some way. And I want to say to you that is the reason you're defeated.

And if you continue like that in 2018, at the end of 2018, you'll still be defeated. Can you ask God to give you one? Maybe you got a revelation, Jesus was tempted like you. He overcame.

Can you ask God to give you a second revelation? That there's no difference between you and the worst terrorist or suicide bomber in the world or the most adulterous fornicator in the world. There's no difference between you and them. Once you get that revelation, it'll be easy for God to lead you into victory.

And it's because you haven't got that, that victory hasn't come. Abraham was convinced that his wife could not bear a child. It was not a question of, well, let me try some more.

No, no, no. He cannot bear a child. Zero.

But he said, God has said it so. God has said in Romans 6, 14, sin will not have dominion over me. OK.

The question is whether you're going to look at that promise in 2018 or you're going to keep on looking at how you struggled and been defeated throughout this year, then you'll continue to be defeated. It says here, because God had said, this is the expression I want you to see, verse 18, in hope, against hope, he believed. In his case, it was to become a father of many nations when he had not a single child.

And in your case, it may be to get victory over all sin when you haven't even got victory over one. Is there somebody here who's not even got victory over one sin after being here so many years? This is for you. Some of you got victory over a few sins, but somebody who hasn't got victory over even one, not even one child.

God says, as the stars in the sky, that's how your victory will be. Now, you don't have hope, but it says, Abraham was like that. In hope, against hope, he believed.

In your case, that sin will not have dominion over me. And he did not become weak in faith. Verse 19, there are two things he did not look at.

And the two things he did look at. He looked at God's promise for himself and for Sarah, both. Then he looked at his own body, dead.

In the beginning, he could produce one son through a servant woman, Hagar. At that time, he was not impotent, because he could produce a child, Ishmael. But God waited till he became impotent at the age of 99.

He says, now there's no hope. Now, even I can't produce a child. It says here very clearly, his own body was as good as dead.

That's not when he produced Ishmael. That is 16 years after he produced Ishmael, he was dead. And incapable of producing a child.

About 100 years old, and Sarah's womb, dead. Okay, he looks at himself, dead. Sarah's womb, dead.

I mean dead in the sense that he can't produce a child. But then he looked at God's promise. I'm not going to waver in unbelief.

See, I feel that many of us have wavered in unbelief. Sin shall not, no sin will rule over you. And you say, well, it's still ruling.

It's like Abraham saying, another year has gone by, no children. Another year has gone by, no children. One year, two years, three years, 16 years went by, no children.

But he did not waver in unbelief. He grew strong in faith, not because he was looking at himself. He says, I know, my body is dead.

It's like a man saying, I've tried for years to get victory. I can't get it. Some of you are still trying, but some of you have given up.

It's the ones who have almost given up. They're the ones close to victory. He was convinced that he could not produce a child.

And he was convinced that Sarah cannot produce a child. But he said, God, you've said it. You said, I'm going to have one.

Oh, I'm going to glorify you. How do you glorify God? By believing what he has said against what you see in yourself. That's glorifying God.

Whatever habit you're a slave to, your anger, or your sexually dirty thoughts, or your pornography, or I don't know what you're defeated by, your bitterness against your relatives, your unforgiving attitude towards somebody, your problem with your mother-in-law, or your daughter-in-law, or anybody else, whatever it is. These are the main areas. So many people have problems which never seem to change.

And you feel you're going to do it better this year. Oh, no. This year will be just as bad.

Until you say, Lord, nothing good dwells in my flesh. Have you said that? Like Abraham said, I'm incapable of producing a child. We haven't got there.

That's why some of those sins still come out. And you glory in one or two victories you got here and there when there are other areas which are stinking before God. And we can glory in victory in certain areas.

I want to show you a verse in that connection. Turn with me to James in chapter 2 concerning God's law. There it speaks about God's laws.

And we give ourselves marks in a different way than God does. In James chapter 2 it says, verse 10, listen to this, whoever keeps the whole law but one point you miss out, he's guilty of all. That's like saying out of 100 questions in the examination paper, you got 99 right and one was wrong, you get zero.

You get zero for the whole paper. You can go to the teacher and say, hey, I got 99%. How can you give me zero like that fellow who got everything wrong? No, you don't understand God's law.

God's law doesn't make a difference whether you got one right or 99 right. Listen to this. You keep the whole law.

That means you got every question right except one. Zero. See, these are verses we haven't read carefully.

That's why we compare ourselves with others and say, I'm better than that person. I'm not watching pornography like that person. I just get angry once in a while.

Zero. You're as bad as that guy who's watching pornography every day. How many of you who lose your temper believe that you're as bad as the man who's watching pornography every single day? I don't think you believe that, right? You think you're a little better than that person.

That's because you haven't read James chapter 2 and verse 10. Because the one who gave one commandment also gave the other. The question is not what the commandment is.

The question is who gave it. And if he's given a number of commandments and you violate it, it's not a question of how many commandments you've kept. You violated the one who gave it.

That's the point. And here it is speaking about a sin which almost nobody considers a sin. I've seen in my life, even among CFC people, this is one of the biggest sins of all.

You know what it is? Verse 9. Partiality. Very few brothers, sisters I've met in my life who have really fought against partiality and overcome it and determined, I will never be partial to anyone in my life. God can have a great ministry for you if you overcome this one sin.

Are you partial towards someone? That's what he's speaking of. He's got a whole number of verses. In verse 1 he begins with personal favoritism.

An attitude of personal favoritism. It's a sin. That means you, as far the church is concerned, you treat a man who's rich, verse 2, in a special way and you ignore the fellow who's poor.

That's partiality. Basically what it means is if you cannot look at a highly educated rich person who's a believer in exactly the same way, you cannot look at a poor person who's thoroughly uneducated and

crude. If you can't look at him in exactly the same way as to the rich person, you've got partiality.

I see that particularly in conferences. I particularly see that when foreigners come here to CFC. You find certain believers, brothers and sisters, they all go and speak to that person who's come from abroad.

You never see them going and meeting the people who come from Tamil Nadu during the conference. Oh no, no, no, they're not no time. They are the biggest sinners of partiality I have seen and I've seen it for 42 years.

You examine yourself whether you're like that. You ask yourself how much time have you spent trying to talk to people from Tamil Nadu. I've seen people who children of Tamil families who say we don't know Tamil.

I'm not from a Tamil family. I just learned. I speak a lot of mistakes but I learned it because I wanted to speak to these people.

Not because I grew up speaking it. I said I'm determined in my life that I will have no partiality. I will never care for a person's skin whether it's white or yellow or brown.

I'll never care for his income. I'll never care for his education. I will not even care whether he's an elder brother or somebody who came yesterday to the church.

I will not show partiality because I know then I'm as guilty as watching pornography every day. As guilty as killing people. I take God's word seriously.

If you show partiality, verse 9, you're committing a sin and you're convicted as a transgressor and you keep all the rest of the law but you stumble in partiality. It's as good as murdering, as good as watching pornography, as good as doing the worst possible sins. I take it seriously.

I believe God's word and I'll tell you what has happened to me. Because I believed God's word, God helped me to overcome it and it has changed my life and I've got revelation from God. You ask yourself if you're not getting revelation from God continuously it's because something you ignore it as something very not so serious.

Which is not so serious? If God has commanded something, it's serious. He says, verse 6, you have dishonored the poor man. You dishonored someone, verse 5, whom God has honored.

God honors somebody and you dishonor him. Very serious. Ask God to make you free from partiality in the way you treat all brothers and sisters.

I can stand before God and say, Lord, I have no partiality to Malayalis or to educated people or dark-skinned or white-skinned or any other skin. I'm not partial to educated people, uneducated people, elders, junior brothers. Sin is sin wherever it's found.

Take that attitude in the new year. Say, Lord, I'm not going to grade sins as murderers up there, adulteries up here and no partiality. That's not such a big thing.

Then you haven't read James chapter 2. So coming back to Romans 4, be thinking of Abraham, how he believed that, you know, once you take sin seriously and you recognize, then you will be able to acknowledge, Lord, I cannot produce victory. Like Abraham was convinced that all his efforts, he cannot

produce a child. But he didn't waver in unbelief.

God's going to deliver me. And his faith was this, verse 21, Romans 4, 21, that what God has promised, he will perform, not I will perform. What God has promised, he will perform.

That was the difference. That in the beginning, Abraham thought what God has promised, I will try and perform. So I want you to see the difference and I hope you'll understand this in this coming year.

Turn with me to Genesis chapter 16. You know, God had already told Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, verse 2, I will make you a great nation. Very clear word.

Genesis 12, I will make you a great nation. And verse 7, Genesis 12, to your descendants, I will give this land. And God did give it to Abraham's descendants.

It was a promise. He didn't promise his heaven to his descendants. But he said this land of Israel, which is called Israel today, I'll give it to your descendants.

And God has kept his word. And so here is a promise that God has given. In our case, the promise is sin will not rule over you.

Keep that in mind as we study this. Now, chapter 16, Sarah, Abraham's wife, had no children. Promise can't be fulfilled.

How can your descendants own this land if you have no children? I don't have victory. So Sarah said to Abraham, now, see, I don't have children. And we got to help God.

God is in a tight situation now. We got to help him out somehow. Can you imagine the height of unbelief? To think that God cannot open Sarah's womb.

It's real unbelief. And so please take my servant girl, whom we got from Egypt, verse 1 in Genesis 16, one Egyptian maid named Hagar. You can have children through her.

And listen to these very sad words, very sad words. Chapter 16, verse 2, the last part, Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah. Earlier, Abraham listened to the voice of God.

Now he listened to the voice of his wife. Just like Adam, Abraham was another guy who listened to the voice of his wife. And so he had a child.

And the name of that child was Ishmael. Verse 16, Genesis 16, verse 16, Abraham was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him. Next sentence, Abraham was 99 years old.

What's happening in those 13 years? Not a single sentence written about those 13 years. You know what? God was waiting for Abraham to say, even if I try, I can't have a child. That is the point at which we read in Romans 4, he looked at his own body, it was dead.

At 86, in verse 16 of chapter 16, his body was not dead. He could produce a child and he could go on producing children through Hagar if he wanted. It is a picture of man's effort.

To try and keep God's promise. God has said, I will make your descendants a blessing. Okay, I'm going to produce those descendants who will be a blessing.

God has said, I'll give this land to your descendants. I'm going to produce those descendants. And he could do it.

He produced Ishmael. God said, okay, keep trying. It's not going to be accepted to me.

And Abraham says in verse 17, verse 18, Oh, that Ishmael might live before you. Oh, that Ishmael might live before you. You know what Ishmael is a picture of? Ishmael is the picture of that apparent victory that we get through our own effort.

For example, you learn to control your tongue for a few days and say, Oh, I got victory over anger. But it hasn't got out of your heart. And a few days later, you're losing your temper again.

Oh, that's just a slip up. Let me produce another Ishmael. You have to recognize, God has to wait.

You know how God has to wait with different people. Here it was 13 years, not one sentence between Genesis 16, 16 and 17, 1. You know, with Jacob, he had to wait 20 years before he could break him, dislocate his tie and say, okay, now you'll be Israel. With Moses, he had to wait 40 years.

With Abraham, he had to wait 13 years. Always the waiting is for making the fellow important. It took 13 years for Abraham to become important.

I cannot produce a child. It took 20 years for Jacob living with his father-in-law and mother-in-law and sisters-in-law to recognize I can't fulfill God's purpose. It took Moses 40 years staying with his father-in-law and his sisters-in-law to recognize I'm useless.

Then at the age of 99, he comes to Abraham. And when Jacob has been broken, he says, now I'll make you Israel. And when Moses is broken, he says, now you'll be the deliverer.

We must learn this lesson throughout. That's why God allowed Peter to fail three times because he was so proud. No, I'll never deny you.

Okay, Peter, I'll teach you a lesson. Peter says, I can produce. What does he produce? An Ishmael.

He says to a servant, small servant girl, I don't know Jesus. That was enough to humble Peter. He was broken.

Then he could be filled with the Spirit and become a different man. And we can produce something in our own effort for it looks like the victory other people are talking about in CFC. And we say, oh Lord, is this good enough? Genesis 17, 18, oh that Ishmael might live before you.

And God says, no. Have you heard God say no to you? To the yoga type of control you had over your anger, where you control your tongue. And with a great effort, you accomplished something in some area, an Ishmael.

You say, oh Lord, is this acceptable? And God says, no. It's just your own effort. You get the credit for it.

And the proof of it is that you look down on other people who lose their temper. That is, you know, whenever you overcome some sin, and you look down at another person who falls into the same sin, you can be absolutely sure that that victory you have is an Ishmael. Why? Because you say, I accomplished something and that guy cannot.

Uh-huh. Okay. It's an Ishmael.

And try to present it to God and you think God has accepted it. He hasn't. He says, that's the result of your own self-control.

It's Buddhism. It is yoga. Look at your heart.

Man looks on the outward appearance and gives you credit for looking like a victorious Christian. But God looks at the heart. He says, you're no different from anybody else.

I see you've got partiality in your heart. You've already got zero. I see there's somebody you cannot stand.

You've got zero. You may boast about your external, what you think is CFC standard or whatever it is. But God says, you've got zero.

God says, no, I won't accept it. And now, finally, you know, as we read in Genesis 21 verse 1, the Lord took note of Sarah and gave her the seed He promised. And Sarah conceived, Genesis 21-2, in his old age, just as God had spoken to him.

It's a wonderful thing when we can experience that. God has said, sin will not rule over you. And it happens.

Like it says in Hebrews 8-11, I will write my law in your mind and in your heart. I will put my law in your mind and write it in your heart. That's not your effort.

That is God doing something. That is in Isaac. So if you turn to Galatians, these are not bright ideas that I got from somewhere.

I just read Galatians chapter 4 and it's over there. The explanation of this Old Testament example. Galatians in chapter 4 verse 21.

Listen carefully. Tell me you who want to be under the law. Now, you know, those Jews want to be under the law.

But for us, the application is, tell me those who think you can overcome sin by your determination and by your discipline of your life and your gritting your teeth and your yogic self-control. Tell me. Listen.

Abraham had two sons. One by a slave woman, Hagar, and the other by the free woman, Sarah. And the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh.

That means by Abraham's effort. He did not need God's help at all. It was 100% yogic self-control, self-discipline.

But the son by the free woman was the promise of God. And this is an illustration of two covenants. Do you see that? Old Covenant and New Covenant.

We speak about New Covenant so much in CFC. And here is an example in the Old Testament of Old Covenant and New Covenant, Hagar and Sarah producing children. And there's a world of difference between the two.

You look at both these babies, they look exactly alike. You look at that fellow's yogic self-control with which he overcomes anger and this other person who's overcome anger by the power of God, it looks the same, but it isn't. One is from the heart and the other is just on the outside.

You see this person who's loving this person, somebody else whom he cannot love, trying to love his mother-in-law, and this other person who genuinely loves his mother-in-law, looks the same on the outside. But one is just pretends. One is just acting.

It's a Ishmael. The other is from the heart. This acting you can do if you're a good actor.

But divine nature you cannot produce. To love one another, you can do it on the outside. We can produce any number of Ishmaels.

The thing my brothers and sisters in 2018 is to recognize what your Ishmaels are. Don't say, Lord, I present them to you. God says, I don't accept.

It's all pretending to love. Somebody you don't love at all, but you're pretending to love that person. It's Ishmael.

Don't take any credit for it. God says, I will write my law of love to that very unlovely person in your heart and in your mind, to that person you cannot forgive. I will write my law that you can forgive that person.

Somebody who cheated you years ago, you can forgive that person. You may not be able to fellowship with them because even Jesus could not fellowship with the Pharisees. I don't get condemned that I cannot fellowship with certain people.

Jesus could never fellowship with the Pharisees or Sadducees. I'm not better than Jesus. But I can love everyone.

Jesus loved them. God's not asking you to fellowship with everybody. Don't try to struggle to have fellowship with somebody that you're trying to be more spiritual than Jesus.

I don't struggle. Fellowship is from two sides. If the other person is not interested, I cannot have fellowship.

But love is only from one side. Nobody could stop Jesus from loving people. But he couldn't fellowship with them.

In fact, he could not fellowship with most people. How many people in the world, in Israel, do you think Jesus fellowshiped with? I think it must have been less than 10%. So when people say, Brother Zach, you don't seem to have fellowship with many people.

I say, I agree. I fully agree. Tell me how many people in Israel Jesus had fellowship with.

But love must be 100%. In other words, in my attitude, in my heart, I must not have any bitterness against a single human being. Otherwise, I'm guilty of all.

Guilty of pornography, guilty of murder, guilty of adultery. Did we read that in James chapter 2? So let me not glory if I still have some unloving attitude in my heart that I carry over into 2018 and think I'm very spiritual because I got victory over a few other things. Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you.

Let's move into reality in 2018. Let's not present any more Ishmael's to God and say, O Lord, accept it. He says, Ishmael is a picture of the old covenant, Galatians 4.24. That is what comes from Sinai, the law.

And all who do that, they are slaves. That which comes, it says in verse 27, from a barren woman who could not bear, one who had completely given up all hope of victory. I can never get it.

Lord, but I depend on you. You promised. I can't do it, Lord.

I'm just thoroughly defeated in this area, this area, this area, this area. I cannot love that person. I try.

I try to show love. Why do I mention love? Because the Bible says love is the fulfillment of the law. That is a test.

I can glory that I keep certain other commandments, but if I cannot love, I have violated the law. So, you brethren, verse 28, are like Isaac, children of the promise. What does the scripture say? Verse 30, cast out the bondwoman and her son.

Get rid of this yocic type of victory. God will not accept it. So, it's very important to understand this.

So, as I told you, that period when nothing was written between Genesis 16 and Genesis 17, 13 years with nothing written, could be like that in our lives where nothing really happens. Year after year after year, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 13 years can go by with nothing written because I'm not yet impotent. Is 2018 going to be like that? How many years more shall we remain till we come to the place where we say, Lord, in my flesh there dwells nothing good.

There's no difference between me and the worst terrorist or suicide bomber in the world. There's no difference between me and the worst pornography addict or drug addict. There's no difference.

Lord, there is no difference. I will never think I'm superior to them. In my flesh dwells no good thing, Romans 7.18. It's a revelation to understand that verse.

Many people think the only thing we need to understand is 1 Timothy 3.16. Great is the mystery of godliness that Christ came in the flesh and was tempted in all points as we are. It's true. That is a mystery.

Romans 7.18 is another mystery. In my flesh there dwells zero good. If you believe that, I tell you it's a revelation.

It is an absolute revelation which many Christians don't have and that is one of the main reasons they don't get victory. They think they are a little better than that person, a little better than that other person, a little better than that person in that other church. I remember when I was speaking in the United States and I said that I don't agree with Mother Teresa's doctrine but I believe that she was a godly woman who loved Jesus and cared for the poor and I believe her heart was much better than mine and I believe in the kingdom of God she'll be way ahead of me.

An Indian brother living in the US who was a converted Catholic came to me and said how can you say that? He prayed to Mary and she prayed the rosary. I said brother those are all matters of the head. She was wrong in her doctrine.

Okay she was wrong but her heart she loved Jesus and I think it was this brother who left India to go to America to make money and to give his children a good future in life. He's despising this Mother Teresa

who went to the poorest people in India to pick up people from the gutter. I should be ashamed to despise that lady just because you have a right doctrine.

This is the type of craziness that some people have. I got the right doctrine. Lord I thank you I'm not like those Roman Catholics.

I'm not like those people because my doctrine is better. It's a deception. If you've got 10 talents of doctrine you got to produce another 10 and if that person only got one talent of doctrine and produces 10 don't you think that person is 10 times better than you? I do not despise.

I disagree with people. I will not despise a person. If I despise a person that's because I don't believe that in my flesh dwells nothing good and see that brother couldn't see how he himself was just living for himself and covetous and living for money but despising another lady who gave up everything to live in the gutter to help poor people.

It's very easy for us to despise people who are serving the Lord in a way 10 times better than us but whose doctrine is maybe a little inferior to ours. Do you think in the final day Jesus is going to give us all a sheet to answer questions on doctrine? No. You'll get a surprise.

He's not going to question your doctrine. He'll say I gave you 10 talents of doctrine. What did you produce with it? And you said that other person the Lord says that person only got one talent of doctrine and see what she or he produced much more than you.

To whom more is given more is required and I believe that's one of the great revelations that people in CFC need to see and because I find in CFC people are glorying in the fact that we've got the finest doctrine. It may be true. We've got 10-15 talents, wonderful 100 talents.

What have you produced with it? Have you produced another 100? If not let's appreciate someone else who's got three talents and produced a higher percentage than us. It's a very serious thing to understand more of the truth because more will be required. It's very clear that the man who had 10 talents had to produce 10 and the man who had five talents only had to produce five.

The man who had only two had to produce only two. Principle is the same. Percentage.

In other words the more you understand the higher the standard of life God expects from you. That's the challenge that needs to come to us today and when we realize that we'll say like Abraham, Lord I'm important. I cannot do it.

Write your laws please in my mind and heart otherwise I'll never make it. I just get a good reputation before persons, people as a very holy person and nice gracious person ready to apologize every time I make a mistake to go and say I'm sorry. I'm sorry for losing my temper for the 1000th time at you but I'm holy.

I ask forgiveness. Is 2018 also going to be like that or will you say Lord I don't want to live in this muck and this rubbish of defeat. I want to believe your promise that sin will not rule over me.

It's because I haven't become impotent that you're waiting. One year, two years, 13 years. How much longer Lord? Like you hear that prayer of some saints.

How long oh Lord? How long oh Lord? Do you have a longing like that? How long oh Lord shall I till I partake of your nature? The promises of God in the new covenant are that we can partake of his nature. See 2nd Peter chapter 1 a verse that we've often quoted. 2nd Peter in chapter 1 we read in verse 3 and 4. By God's divine power he has granted us everything.

Let's go slowly. I always say read the Bible slowly. By God's divine power he has granted us 99% no 100% of everything pertaining to a godly life through the knowledge of him and by these he has granted us precious and magnificent promises so that by these promises we can partake of the divine nature.

Not that we can get 100% in our doctrine. No. Not that we can argue and prove to people that women should veil their heads or women should not be adorning themselves with jewelry or we must dress modestly.

All that I agree. I agree 100% or this is the pattern we shouldn't have pastors or you know we should not take money to preach. All correct.

All correct. But if we follow all those things and we have impartiality and we can't love somebody who's unlovely. What is the use of boasting in these things? It is his nature that we are called to partake of and it is only if we partake of his nature verse 4 that we can escape the corruption that is in the world by lust means desire.

Strong desire. Now very often we think of lust only in terms of sexual lust. The word is a strong desire.

It can be a strong desire for more and more and more money more than you need. It can be a strong desire never to love this person. It's so unlovely I cannot love this person.

It's corruption. It's corruption in the world through strong desire. The only way to overcome it brothers and sisters is through the divine nature.

That is why I believe the greatest gift God has given us next to the forgiveness of sins is the gift of the Holy Spirit. I don't have time to show you this in the book of Leviticus. You know leprosy is a picture of sin in the Old Testament and when a leper was cleansed they had to put a drop of blood on his ear and on top of the drop of blood a drop of oil and different parts of the body drop of blood a drop of oil drop of blood and a drop of oil.

We are lepers cleansed the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It's incomplete with just the blood drop of blood oil and I really believe that that is the supernatural power by which we partake of his nature and I know in my case it's the fullness of the Holy Spirit that gradually began to change me from that thoroughly defeated life I had. Dear brothers and sisters there's one thing I would urge you seek in 2018 to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day to partake of his nature.

Never mind if you never speak in tongues. Jesus never spoke in tongues. Do you know that? Balaam's donkey spoke in tongues.

I'm not against the gift of tongues but compare Balaam's donkey who spoke in tongues with Jesus who never spoke in tongues so that you understand the relative value of that gift. I'm not despising it. I speak in tongues myself but I don't believe that is the greatest thing.

To me the greatest thing is that the Holy Spirit makes me partake of God's nature from within. A cat does not have to pretend to meow like a cat. A cat can never bark you know.

Even if you train a cat to bark it cannot bark like a dog. It's nature and once nature takes over you won't lose your temper. You will get angry like Jesus got angry with people who made money in the temple.

Sure till the end of my life I want to be angry with people who make money in the name of Jesus Christ and use a whip at least with my words to drive them out of the church. But Jesus was never angry when people spat on him or went against his way or did anything to him called him the devil. He said oh it's forgiven.

His anger was always directed at the where the glory of God was touched. Then you have to be angry when people dishonor the Lord. And I know a lot of people have get upset with me when they see me speaking strongly where the name of the Lord is dishonored.

I don't care what they think about me. I live before God's face in any case. Don't worry the only thing you should be concerned about is the glory of God.

You stand for that. Never personal insult or abuse forgiven. Partake of God's nature and Jesus has given us an example of what a spirit filled life is like.

Dear brothers and sisters that's what we have to partake of in this new year. And if you think that you think I can make it think of Abraham. It says in hope against hope he believed he did not look at his own body but at the promise of God.

So when I look at when you look at your past life this past year or years and say well it doesn't look as if it's going to change at all. Don't say that. It says in Romans chapter 10 and verse 9 if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you'll be saved.

For with the heart a person believes resulting in righteousness you are justified. With the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation from sin. And verse 11 whoever believes in him will not be disappointed.

Whoever there's no difference between the Jew and the Greek. There's no difference between brother Zach and you. No difference.

Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed. Believe that. Lord I'm going to confess with my mouth that what you have done for some godly brothers I have met you will do for me as well.

Can you say that what he's done for even if you can't believe what he's done for Jesus he'll do for me. What he's done for that for Paul he'll do for me. Of course the highest is to believe what he did for Jesus he'll do for me.

As he cared for Jesus he will care for me. It's a wonderful life. Do you know that God wants you to live 365 days without anxiety in this coming year? 365 days without being anxious about anything.

I want you to explain the difference between being concerned and being anxious. If your children haven't come home from school on time you should be concerned. Why are they late? If you're not concerned you're not a good parent.

But anxiety is a different thing. They're all tense. No.

Take it to God in prayer or whatever concerns that we have. Take it to God in prayer. I believe I speak with my mouth.

That's what it says here. What I believe in my heart. I believe in my heart sin will not rule over me.

I said that to the devil so many times before it became real in my life. I said Satan you defeated me but I tell you a day is coming when sin will not rule over me. You will not have the upper hand anymore.

I had to confess it for a long time before it happened. I sought to be genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit for a long time. You say how is it so easy in the early days? Because there's not so much confusion.

You know if there are hundreds of thousands of fake 500 rupee notes floating around you've got to really search to find the genuine one, right? But in those early days when there were no fake 500 rupee notes, everything was a genuine one. You can trust everything. Supposing there's a place where there are no fake 500 rupee notes.

You can pick up any 500 rupee note. It's genuine. That's how fullness of the spirit was in the early days.

There was no fake there right at the beginning. That's why they received so easily. But now that the world is flooded with fake and that's why we got to turn away from all that and say Lord I will not have that.

I want the genuine thing. I tell you I remember saying that to the Lord once. I said Lord I don't care waiting 10 years but I want the genuine thing.

I don't want to tell other people I got filled with the spirit. What does that mean? Dear brothers and sisters, I fear that some of you are just wanting to tell other people I also got baptized in the Holy Spirit. Dear me, you want the honor of men? You'll never come into the spirit filled life.

Never means never. Go to God and say Lord I don't want anybody to think I'm filled with the spirit. I want you to tell me in your heart you're being genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit and you've made me a partaker of Lord you've given me your nature.

I want to hear it from you. Don't accept the testimony of men and don't care for the testimony of men. Let everybody think you're not filled with the Holy Spirit.

I don't care if the whole world thinks I'm not filled with the Holy Spirit. So what? Their opinion is fit for the trash can. I want God to be able to say to me I've made you partake of my nature.

If you are desperate, Lord I want this. You said in 2nd Peter 1.4 I can partake of your nature. I want it.

You said in Hebrews 8.11 that you will write your law in my mind and my heart. Now not the outside on my mind and my heart. That law of love.

We were looking at James. I want to point out one verse I didn't point out then James chapter 2. It says James chapter 2 the royal law verse 8. If you are fulfilling the royal law, what is that? You shall love your neighbor as yourself. You're doing well.

But if on that you show partiality. He goes on to say verse 10 you're guilty of all. You got zero.

So there's a royal law. It's a law of love. It's not sisters wailing their head or not having ornaments or not collecting a salary when you preach.

No, no, no. Don't get occupied with these trivialities. That I can love everyone from my heart.

I'd rather have a preacher who collects salary for preaching and loves everybody than another cfc elder who does not collect a salary but he's got some inability to love somebody which is better. You can't love your brother-in-law mother-in-law but you don't collect a salary. Worthless.

Go and collect a salary brother and love. You must have relative understanding what is important. The reason I emphasize this is we value all these little little things in cfc but I fear that we are straining at mosquitoes and swallowing camels.

Jesus said that. Strain at little little things. I don't do this.

I don't do that and swallowing camels. What is a camel? An unloving attitude towards someone. That's a camel.

What is the beam in the eye? It's an unloving attitude and you can take a speck out of the other person's eye. In that church the women don't wail their heads. In that church the preachers collect a salary.

Okay, that's right. That's a speck in their eye. I agree it must be removed but what about this beam in your eye that you can't love somebody.

You can't forgive someone. You keep a grudge against someone because somebody treated you badly some time ago. What's the use saying I don't have a specks in my eye.

I've got a beam in my eye. This is what we should concentrate on in 2018. I hope you will see it as a prophetic word from the Lord for you.

Don't strain out mosquitoes. First get rid of the camels. Don't try to pick specks out of other people's eyes.

Get rid of the beam in your eye. That means the way you look at somebody in your heart. I mean the way you consider that person and if you find somebody it's very difficult to love.

I'll tell you what you should do. Here's a solution. It's like you go to a doctor and say doctor I've tried so long to get rid of this disease.

I can't get rid of it. The doctor says I can cure you if you will submit to my treatment. Say Lord fill me with your Holy Spirit and give me your nature of love.

Otherwise I can never do this. I mean there are a lot of people and you know I've been serving the Lord more than 50 years and I can imagine particularly the type of standards we preach. I'm sure I'm the target of the devil and target of many people whom the devil tries to use to accuse me and tell lies and all that.

I can say before God I love all of them. I don't have fellowship with 90% of them just like Jesus but I love all of them. I can stand before God and say I don't have an unforgiving attitude towards one human being in the world.

I don't have an unloving attitude toward one human being in the world. I don't have fellowship with 99% of people. That's another thing just like Jesus didn't have but love as far as love.

The law is not have fellowship. The law is love. So pursue that.

Pursue love in this coming year more than anything else and if your doctrine is superior to others remember you'll be God will expect more from you than those people and let's leave these other people alone and say Lord let me work out my own salvation with fear and trembling. One of the greatest sad saddest things rather that I've seen in many CFC brothers and even in some elders and I think of all the more than 130 elders we have in CFC churches. I can see that some of them are not judging themselves even elder brothers.

You can make out how is this guy still in the same level as I seen one year ago two years ago. He's not judging himself. He's not cleansing himself.

You know another odor comes out of us an aroma of Christ will come out more and more not perfection but a little more Christ-like aroma in our language and in our attitude. It's easy to change our language but it's attitude. Work on your attitude to people in very simple language.

I would say dear brothers and sisters work out your salvation from wrong attitudes that you have towards anybody in the start with the small in this church. Let's start with this church. Don't try to go to the other places first.

Start with the church. You know Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the outermost parts of the earth. So start with the smallest circle and say Lord I want to have a good attitude.

I may not have fellowship with everybody here. Some people don't want to have fellowship. It's fine.

I have to honestly say I'm not equally close to all of you. That's the truth. I believe my attitude is clear but if there's something wrong in your attitude if you're not walking in the light with God, we won't have fellowship.

That's true. I can still love you but we won't have fellowship and I have to honestly say I don't have equal fellowship with everybody. It's not true.

I don't have equal fellowship. So that's a fact and you will not have equal fellowship with everybody because it depends on how much that person is willing to walk in the light. How much that person is willing to get rid of bad thoughts, wrong attitudes, partiality and things like that.

If not, my fellowship with that person will be limited. But give me a brother who's radical against everything unchrist-like in his life. Our fellowship will just grow and grow and grow and grow and grow.

I don't mean the time we spend together. Fellowship is not. I can have fellowship with somebody I don't meet for a whole year.

Wonderful fellowship. As soon as we meet it's as if we had been together the whole year because it's attitude that determines it. So dear brothers and sisters, let's make this coming year a year when we work on our attitude and say Lord, I am going to pursue after love and I'm not going to produce Ishmael's and say here Lord accept this which is my struggle and I've struggled enough and I've not succeeded.

I succeed in one area and I've completely failed in another area and then you tell me that I got zero in the whole thing. So let's use my glory that I succeeded here. I want your nature.

Give me your nature Lord. Fill me with your Holy Spirit. I don't want the product of my own efforts and please show me Lord what is in Ishmael and what is in Isaac in my life.

What is my struggling doing something and what is your writing your law in my mind and your heart. I believe it was not at all difficult for Jesus to love anybody and I believe that is one way in which I know God has done a work in me and I'll find it easy to love people who are unlovely or repulsive. Okay, maybe not in perfection but it's going to get easier and easier and easier and easier.

But if you find in a certain area your attitude remains the same. You know that despite all the wonderful doctrines we hear in CFC it hasn't changed your life. I say this plainly my dear brothers and sisters because I fear many of us are going to get a big shock when we stand before the Lord and we thought we were so spiritual, so much better than some of those other people in those other churches and when the Lord comes and reveals the hearts of everyone the story may be completely different.

I don't want you to get a shock in that day. That's why I'm speaking the truth in love. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling and say Lord I will never be satisfied till your nature of love has taken over my heart.

I know I will not be perfect till Christ comes again but I wanted to take over my heart a little more in this year than has ever happened till now. Let's pray. Remember that God is on your side against the devil.

It's one of the greatest truths we must remember. God is on your side against the lust in your flesh. God is on your side against the devil.

God is on your side against all the attractions of this world. He's on your side. He's there to help you.

Cry out to him in secret. Let there be a cry in your heart that never dies out. Lord I will not rest like David said.

I will not like Jacob said. I will not let you go until you make me partake of your nature more and more and more and more. I'm willing to judge myself in any area.

I'm willing to give up anything but Lord I want your nature. This is the reason why you kept me on this earth is that I might manifest your nature. Let it work out from within.

Lord deliver me from being satisfied with an external self-control. Help me to be free from myself within. Thank you Lord.

Trust him. Jesus died 2nd Corinthians 5 15 that we might never again live for ourselves but for him who died and rose again for us. Pray that simple prayer.

Lord you died that I might never again live for myself but for you who died and rose again for me. I want that life Lord. Now and then I come across someone who has that life.

I love it and I want it. I want to hate getting a reputation before the brothers and sisters. I want to detest getting a reputation.

I want to die to that completely. And Lord I want your nature not a reputation for holiness. Help me Lord.

Help me not to glory in doctrine but in love that floods my heart. The Holy Spirit floods our heart with love. Heavenly Father help us.

It's impossible for me to share your heart the way it should be shared. But I pray what I could not make clear that your Holy Spirit will make clear to everybody here because this is a matter of eternal life and eternal death. And I pray that nobody here will be deceived Lord.

When they stand before you that there'll be no shock or surprises. Lord please help each one of us. We bow before you.

We are a needy people and Lord as we come to the end of one year, the beginning of another. I say for myself and I pray each of you will say to yourself. I want this coming year to be better than any year in my life in the past.

More Christ-like, more loving, more humble, partaking more of your nature, being a greater blessing to others, free from prejudices and bitternesses and unforgiving attitudes and every type of wrong attitude. Help me Lord to really make a new beginning. Help each one of us.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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