

Walking as Jesus Walked

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a higher Christian life, focusing on aspects like genuine forgiveness, serving without expecting gratitude from others, and seeking to imitate Jesus in every aspect of life. It encourages a deep understanding of forgiveness, a joyful and complaint-free attitude, and a heavenly perspective in daily living.

Scripture: Matthew 6:14, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:1, Revelation 4:1, 1 John 2:6

Topics: "Genuine Forgiveness", "Imitating Christ"

Description

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Transcript

It's good to see so many of you here. Probably the first time that some of you are coming here. Welcome.

Our theme for this weekend is the higher Christian life. I want to say a word about, thank you, about the hymns that we sing. From my own experience, when I was converted 63 years ago, I used to go to church and I really enjoyed singing the songs.

After a little while, I would memorize these songs and know them by heart. What happened then was, gradually I began to sing them without meaning the words that I was singing. I had some experiences like that.

We used to use a songbook in those days, I'm talking about more than 50-60 years ago. The song leader would say, let's sing another song and everybody turns to the other song in the songbook. I suddenly realized, I don't even remember what I told the Lord in the last song.

What I would do is, when the others were singing that song, I turn back to the song we just finished singing, and I go through it slowly and I say, Lord, I'm sorry. I just sang this without thinking that you're here and I'm talking to you. I go through that line by line.

It took me a while to gradually come to the place where, when I sing, I'm aware that Jesus is right here. That two or three are gathered in my name, I'm in the midst, and that I'm singing to him. That made such a

difference in my life, that singing was not just a time of entertainment or having good sing-song time, as they say.

It was a meaningful communication to the Lord. When we sang about the cross, or even years later, 50, 60 years later, there'd be tears in my eyes as I sing about, think about Jesus dying for me. The Lord showed me in Revelation Chapter 5, I want to show you this.

There's going to be a lot of singing in heaven. If you can't keep a tune on earth, don't worry. When you get there, God will make you so perfect, you'll be singing along with everybody else perfectly.

But more important than singing in tune, we'll be meaning. So this is the word that the Lord spoke to me from Revelation Chapter 5. Revelation gives us a few glimpses of heaven. And one of the glimpses of heaven is this.

In Revelation Chapter 5, we read about some elders in verse 6. There was the elders, a lamb was standing in the midst of the elders. And he came and took the book and the elders and the others sang a new song. It says in verse 9, worthy art thou, the word new, when it says a new song, the meaning is something ever fresh.

So that's how it came to me. When they sing in heaven, they may be singing it for the thousandth time, but it's fresh. And we believe that the Holy Spirit has come to bring heaven into our hearts, a foretaste of it, even before we get there.

And so Lord, I want, I said, Lord, I want to have a foretaste of this, where when I'm singing a song for the hundredth time, it's going to be fresh as if I've never sung it before. And particularly something like this, verse 9, they sang this ever fresh song, saying in the middle of that verse, you were slain. You died on the cross.

Hey, we said that's an old story. That's been, we've known that for 2000 years. But they're singing it as if they're hearing for the first time that Jesus died for me on the cross.

And that was one of my prayers, and it still is. Lord, when I sing about the cross, about what you suffered, when you suffered hell for me on those three hours when you were forsaken on the cross, for my sin, to save me from the wretched person I was, and to take me into your eternal kingdom. When I sing about it, let it not be something like some reading the newspaper or some old story.

Let me realize the seriousness of it. And I'll tell you many, many times when you sing about the cross, even today, there are tears in my eyes that my Savior died for me. I want to encourage you.

It won't happen overnight. But if you make a decision today that when you sing, you're going to try and mean the words that you sing, especially about the cross of Calvary. I'll tell you, maybe in a year or two, it will become real in your life, where every time you sing, you'll be singing directly to Jesus.

It will no longer be a routine sing-song session anymore. And that'll make a world of difference. It's the best way to prepare your heart to listen to the message.

It's made a great difference in my life. And the Holy Spirit has come here to help us. So the higher Christian life, let me turn to 1 John chapter 2, verse 6. If there is one verse, perhaps more than any other verse, there are other verses too, that explains what the higher Christian life is.

It's this. 1 John chapter 2, first episode of John chapter 2, and verse 6. The one who says he abides in Christ, most of us, if not all, we say we are in Christ. We received Christ as our Savior and Lord, and Christ came into us, and we are in Christ as members of His body.

Well, if we say that, or we sing that, then we have a responsibility. It's an amazing verse. To walk in the same manner as He walked.

That is the higher Christian life. The way Jesus walked on earth, that was the most blessed, the happiest, most victorious, every adjective you can use, a wonderful life that anybody can ever live. He wasn't the richest man on earth.

He didn't live to the age of 60 or 70. He lived only up to 33. And he started his ministry only when he was 30, for three and a half years.

And yet at the end of his life, he looked up to the Father in John chapter 17. He was praying to the Father. This is the longest prayer of Jesus recorded in Scripture, John 17, it's a prayer.

Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and He said, verse 4, one of the things He said was, I have glorified you on earth. How did Jesus glorify the Father on earth? By finishing the work which you gave me to do. All through His life, He was conscious that the Father had sent Him to earth with a particular task to be accomplished.

It wasn't just dying on the cross. It was ministering to so many people, preaching God's Word, preaching the Sermon on the Mount, healing blind people, and so many things. And of course, working up to the age of 30 as a carpenter, that was also part of God's will for him to show that Christianity is not just preaching and singing.

It is practical work, and earning one's living. And he grew up in a poor home with... Joseph had died, and it was his responsibility to take care of his mother, widowed mother, and he had four younger brothers and two younger sisters, Mary's children, and he was the eldest. And it was his responsibility to earn.

He finished the work God gave him to do, and preaching was only 10% of that. Three and a half years out of 33 and a half. So, that secular job that he did, for maybe from the age of 18 to 30, was part of the work the Father gave him to do.

You say, why in the world does Jesus have to come here and work as a carpenter? Because, 99.99% of Christians are not preachers or full-time workers. Almost all of you sitting here, you're not preachers or full-time workers. You're in a secular job.

So, if Jesus could only be an example to preachers, how would he be an example to you? In a secular job to be faithful, not to love money, and meditate on how Jesus was in the carpenter shop. That is the higher Christian life. Walking as Jesus walked in our secular job.

And I've meditated on that. You know, in a world where there's so much of stealing and telling lies and cheating people in jobs, I've seen a lot of carpenters and their work in Bangalore, India, where I live. Most of them would cheat.

They will not use the wood that they say they are using. And when cracks come up, they'll patch it up so that the buyer doesn't see it. I'm sure Jesus was tempted like that too.

When he bought a piece of wood to make a table for someone and a crack came in, the temptation to cover it up, he says, if it did crack and he covered it up, he'd tell the buyer, this is cracked and I've covered it up. Would you like to buy it like this? Otherwise, I'll make another one for you. You can't make money when you're going to be upright like that and honest.

But you'll be able to say at the end of your life, Father, I've finished the work you gave me to do. It's all a question of what your goal in life is. If Jesus' goal in life was to make money, then he'd be like everybody else, cover up all these things and pretend that everything he sold was perfect when it was not.

Remember, he was tempted just like us. The Bible says Jesus was tempted just like us. And the higher Christian life is to manifest on this sin-cursed earth where people cheat and tell lies and only think in terms of profit and money-making and how to take advantage of others to live in such a way that I would take advantage of no one.

And if there's a loss, I will bear that loss. That's how Jesus lived. And I can imagine how if a little child came into his carpentry shop and broke something, he wouldn't get upset with that child.

He'd pick up the child and kiss it and say, it's alright, don't worry. I can make another one. Imagine living like that.

You're not going to be the richest carpenter in Nazareth that way, but you'll finish the work God gave you to do. And you may not be a carpenter, but whatever work you do, there are many temptations. I found when I was working in the Navy, any place, temptations are the same.

To tell lies, to get some advantage for ourselves. I remember one of the situations I was in where I was in charge of all the boats in the naval base in India. They appoint different officers to be in charge of that.

And we have a commander and a commanding officer, a captain, on top of that. The officers were permitted to use the boats, but they had to pay for the diesel. So if an officer used the boat, he got a bill for the diesel and he could use it.

But when the captain used the boat, you know, previous boat officers would not send him a bill. When he went for a picnic with his family, he was permitted to do it, provided he paid for the diesel. They would show it as captain has gone for harbor inspection, official duty, no charge.

So when I became boat officer, for the first time, the captain got a bill. I sent him a bill. And the second in command, the commander came to me and said, Lieutenant Poonen, hasn't the previous boat officer told you what to do when the captain takes the boat? I said, yes sir, but my conscience doesn't permit me to tell a lie.

In half an hour, they transferred me from that job. I praised the Lord. I'm thankful for such situations where I said, Lord, I'm not interested in his writing a good report about me at the end of the year.

I knew I wouldn't get the promotions that I wanted if I was going to walk as Jesus walked. And I said, Lord, I want to please you. I want to say at the end of my life that I finished the work the father gave me to do that I was a witness.

And I'll tell you something, they may disagree with you and all, but they'll never forget you. And I remember from that naval base, I resigned when I was 26 and I came out to serve the Lord. But 40 years

later, a colleague of mine who was in that naval base and who met me in Bangalore in a retired naval officer's meeting, he was an admiral and he said to me, Zach, I can never forget you, what you were.

They remembered years later that once in their life they met a true Christian who was different. And I believe that is your calling in mind, brothers and sisters, wherever you work, people you deal with, shopkeepers, family members, neighbors, they may be upset with you for being so upright and all that, but they will never forget you. Remember this, may people who come across your path and know you well all their life remember that at least once in their life they met a true Christian, a disciple of Jesus who would never cheat them, who would never get upset with them, who wouldn't get angry or upset even if they were supposed to do something for you and they didn't.

You know, we live in a fallen world and we all make mistakes right from childhood. I'm 83 years old but I make mistakes now. We'll never do anything perfect until Jesus comes again and therefore we have to be merciful to others.

It's beginning with our own home. We must be merciful to the members in our own home. When they make a mistake say, it's okay.

Did something get broken? It's fine. We can always buy another one or we can do without it if we can't afford to buy another one. Nothing is so important that we have to lose our temper and get upset and be bothered by it for the whole day.

No, there isn't. Think of it like this, 2000 years from now when you look back over your life and you look at that incident that happened in your home or in your place of work that you got so upset about what are you going to think about it 2000 years from now? Is it going to be so important? So valuable? Not at all. That is the higher Christian life.

And I'll tell you this you will not become bankrupt by going this way. No. God is a loving father and if you are upright you may not make as much money as other people, good but he'll provide for every need of yours.

That's absolutely certain. I've experienced that ever since I left the Navy 56 years ago. All these years God's taken care of me and my family without my sending prayer letters or ever asking anyone for money God's taken care of us.

He'll take care of you. I'll tell you he'll take care of you. You don't have to be afraid of whatever there may be famine in the land but God will take care of you.

I'll tell you why. Because of one promise of scripture Matthew 6.33 Seek first It's a well known verse Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these earthly things, food clothing, shelter the necessities of life will be added to you. That's how Jesus lived.

Jesus did not live in intention at any time. For three and a half years he was a full time worker for the father. He would never, he never sent prayer letters asking for money like a lot of missionaries do today.

He never did that. He never advertised his work. He never asked for money but he knew the father would provide for him.

Somebody would give him a gift and he would take care of that and he learned to live simply. He did not go and live in the most expensive restaurants expensive hotels when he traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was probably 100 miles away from Galilee and it would take him three days to walk up there and walk back whenever he went there.

You read in the bible that he went from Galilee to Jerusalem but you forget that it took him three days to go there. He was walking with his disciples and having fellowship along the way and when he went to Jerusalem sometimes people would invite him to a home to live in sometimes he slept under the trees in the Mount of Olives without a complaint. It's wonderful to see how Jesus lived on this earth and say Lord this is the higher life this is the way I want to live on this earth and I believe that the Lord sent the Holy Spirit to enable every one of us to live this higher life.

So it says in John chapter 16 I want to show you this verse when the Holy Spirit has come verse 13 you know there is a lot of confusion concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit I love my brothers and sisters in the Pentecostal and charismatic churches but I have to honestly say I don't agree with their emphasis on what they call supernatural things their public manifestation of speaking in tongues. Now speaking in tongues let me tell you is a gift of the Holy Spirit but it's a gift the Bible says which God gives us let me explain to you briefly it's a gift God gives to some people not to everyone to when they have to express what is in their heart to God it's a gift not for public prayer never it's for private prayer when one cannot express to God what's sufficiently in one's own language that God gives him another language. God's given me that gift 47 years ago and I've used it never in public only in private my communication with my heavenly bridegroom you know how husbands and wives speak things to each other that they never want anybody else to listen to that's how we are supposed to speak to our heavenly bridegroom and for that he gives us the gift if we want it if we need it and it's a useful gift but the way it is used so often in other places I don't agree with that's not the primary purpose of the gift of the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit has come let me show you John 16 13 the Holy Spirit when he has come the spirit of truth he will guide you into all the truth and the word truth by the way is reality that's the meaning of truth in the New Testament the opposite of truth is falsehood the opposite of reality is hypocrisy pretending what is not true so the Holy Spirit will lead me and you to live a true life that means what you see me is what I am I don't have another life behind the scenes I'm not another person inside than I am visible on the outside now I'll tell you that was not true of my life in the early days of my Christian life I never knew what it was to be filled with the Holy Spirit I was born again and I lived the way most Christians live I was really born again I knew if I died I'd go to heaven but I did not live on earth the way God wanted me to live it says here everyone who says he abides in Christ must walk as he walked well I wasn't living like that I would get angry, upset my thoughts were not always pure and I'd fall and get up and of course I would always confess my sin to the Lord say Lord forgive me and I'd be cleansed but I was absolutely certain that I'd fall again and fall again but always the blood of Christ was there to cleanse me I treated the blood of Christ like tap water we are never afraid of getting our hands dirty because tap water is cheap you can always go and wash your hands that's why a lot of people are casual about their sin because they say the blood of Christ is there to cleanse me it's treating the blood of Christ like tap water it's an insult Peter says the blood of Christ is more precious than all the gold and silver in the world and in Hebrews 10 in verse 29 it says warns us don't treat the blood of Christ like a common thing like tap water take it seriously so I asked myself this question I said if tap water cost a thousand dollars for a cup boy I'd be very careful not to dirty my hands it's going to be pretty expensive to wash my hands every time and if I recognize the blood of Christ is so precious I'll be very careful not to sin I won't say well I can always go to Christ and be cleansed so as I said unfortunately I was not taught these truths in the church I went to when I was converted and most churches they don't teach

you to value the blood of Christ and to stay away from sin or that the Holy Spirit can help you but all this made me very desperate and I began to seek God and said Lord I want a better life than this I want a higher life I'm living at a very low level and that's the level most of the others living at I once asked a missionary who was 15 years older than me I thought he would know the answer and I asked him I said brother how do we get victory over dirty thoughts he changed the subject and talked about something else I got the answer he hadn't got victory himself and that's the truth that many many men particularly born again men they've never taken seriously the matter of having a pure thought life was Jesus tempted like us yes did he have dirty thoughts no is it possible for us to come to that life not overnight but get there yes the Holy Spirit when he's come he'll guide you into reality into a life of truthfulness reality that means what you see is what I am what you see is what I am in my home life my office in my thoughts inwardly that is the life the Holy Spirit wants to come to that's the meaning of truth that's why he's called the spirit of truth the spirit of reality and it says here further verse 14 in the middle he will take the things of Christ and reveal it to me so one of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to show me how Jesus lived on this earth that's the meaning of that verse he will disclose it's like reveal disclose is a word which means telling us something which is a secret you know he disclosed that secret it's not something openly known it's something which is hidden which he discloses so there are things about Jesus' life that the Holy Spirit can show us from the scriptures what you read otherwise in the scriptures is that Jesus healed the sick raised the dead the sermons he preached but about Jesus the inner principles by which Jesus lived that's what the Holy Spirit will show us as we read the scriptures I can give you one or two examples the higher Christian life turn to Matthew chapter 12 in Matthew chapter 12 we read of a time when there was a demon possessed person verse 22 it was brought to Christ he was blind and dumb and Jesus healed him he immediately began to speak and he could see and all the crowds Matthew 12, 23 were amazed they said this must be the Messiah that we've been waiting for all these years the son of David but the Pharisees who were jealous of this who could never do a miracle themselves who would just keep preaching the Bible they were jealous and said no this is the work of demons this man is doing it by the power of Beelzebul which is another name for Satan the ruler of demons this man is possessed and ruled by Satan you know it's a terrible thing to call any human being Satan or ruled by Satan imagine how much worse to call the son of God as one being ruled by Satan can that sin be forgiven we read of a time when Miriam Moses sister criticized Moses for marrying a non Israeli woman and you know God struck her with leprosy yeah you read that in the book of Numbers just because she criticized God's servant saying Miriam that's none of your business and Moses had to pray for her to be healed there was another time when the Elisha the prophet had just taken over the ministry from Elijah and he was coming back 42 young men you read that in 2nd Kings made fun of him Elijah had gone up in a chariot of fire and they made fun of Elijah saying you bald you bald man you also go up made fun of him and bears came out of the forest and killed all those 42 young men it's a serious thing to speak against a servant of God so what is the punishment for someone who calls Jesus the devil Miriam got healing no Miriam got leprosy these 42 young men were killed they got death you know what the Pharisees got from Jesus forgiveness Jesus looked at them and said in verse 32 if you have spoken a word against a son of man he is forgiven that is the higher Christian life we don't expect judgment to come on a person who harms us that's the low level the higher Christian life is alright you are forgiven even if you hurt me even if you harm me or my family this is what Jesus has taught us and the Holy Spirit helps us I've heard people tell me this oh brother Zach the way that fellow treated me I can never forgive him I say well brother then you'll never get to heaven I'll tell you that right now if you don't forgive him you're not going to go to heaven I'm not saying you should forgive him because you want to go to heaven you must forgive him because Jesus forgave you what has he done compared to what you have done against Christ the well known Lord's Prayer it's actually a

prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray you know what it is in Matthew 6 in verse 9 our father who art in heaven and one line of it says give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins our debts exactly like we have forgiven others do you know that when you ask the Lord ask God your father to forgive you this is the way we have to pray for forgiveness not just oh God forgive me Jesus said pray like this forgive me my sins exactly like I have forgiven other people who have hurt me who sinned against me it's connected there were a number of requests that Jesus made in this prayer about six of them but out of all those six requests he mentioned in this prayer he picks out one he taught us to pray God's name should be hallowed his kingdom must come his will must be done we must pray for our daily food we must pray for forgiveness and we must pray for victory over sin and satan then out of all these six requests he picks out one and emphasizes it you know which one it is forgiveness you see that in verse 14 he doesn't emphasize the other five but out of the six he emphasizes this particular one and he emphasizes IF IF must be in capital letters IF YOU FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR SINS ONLY THEN ONLY THEN YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL FORGIVE YOU ok Lord understood no I must repeat it verse 15 IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR SINS YOUR FATHER WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU YOUR SINS a double emphasis on that one out of those six requests in the prayer when you read the bible carefully you see certain things Jesus emphasizes like you know if your dad writes a letter to you and he underlines something all of it is important but the underlined part is very important he is underlining this remember out of these six requests remember this one thing YOU ASK FOR FORGIVENESS IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY AS YOU HAVE FORGIVEN OTHERS FORGIVE ME FATHER AS I HAVE FORGIVEN OTHERS now if I have forgiven somebody with saying I will always remember I will keep a grudge against you you are asking God to always keep a grudge against you because you are saying forgive me exactly like I have forgiven that guy no I don't want God to keep a grudge against me it's very very important if you do not forgive others your father will not forgive you now if God doesn't forgive a man and he dies in that condition where is he going to go his sin is not forgiven and he dies is there some place after death some sort of purgatory where he can get cleansed and have his sin forgiven no Hebrews 9.27 it is appointed unto men once to die after that the judgment so if you missed doing something that you should have done on earth there is no chance for it in eternity you are gone it's over and it's very clear if you don't forgive others your father will not forgive you I don't wish that any of you would die like that life is very uncertain who can say how long you live how can we say the bible says don't even boast about tomorrow James chapter 4 says your life is like a vapor you know it's like a little smoke it's there next moment it's gone it says your life is like that and so don't boast even about tomorrow he says in James 4 just say if the Lord wills we will live tomorrow and we will come for the morning meeting here if the Lord wills that's exactly what it says in James chapter 4 and so it's very important therefore to have short accounts with God don't take anything on credit say I'll pay later no, pay immediately pay means ask for forgiveness immediately it's already been paid on the cross but avail of it now and in order to avail of forgiveness you must forgive others so I want to pause a little here this is the higher Christian life I'll tell you why it's higher because most Christians that I have met I'm not talking about non-Christians most Christians that I have met and I've been in the ministry as I said 56 years I've had the opportunity to counsel with hundreds and hundreds of people in many many countries and I'll tell you that most Christians that I have met have a grudge against someone somebody did something to them years ago when they were young or did something to their family to their son or daughter or something and they just haven't forgiven that person they don't take him to court or anything but they've got this little grudge against that person they're not forgiven and they're all the time asking God to forgive him now I don't know how many preachers have told you this very in plain words as I'm saying right now and emphasizing it like I am emphasizing it now there are many things in scripture but some things that need to be emphasized you know Jesus sometimes used to say

verily verily I say unto you truly truly I say unto you that's the meaning of that verily means truly why does he have to emphasize that isn't everything Jesus says the truth would he ever tell a lie every word was true then why did he have to say truly truly he was underlining certain things why did he have to repeat after saying that we must pray for forgiveness like we forgive others why did he have to repeat it in two further sentences saying if you don't forgive you won't be forgiven if you want forgiveness forgive others why because Jesus knew human weakness we take some of these things lightly I'm sure all of you and if you are born in a Christian family you probably heard this prayer from childhood my father was a born again Christian and from the earliest childhood he taught me to memorize this prayer our father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name even before I was born again he taught us to kneel down on our bed as soon as we woke up and I would kneel down on my bed and pray that prayer before I got out of bed everyday I was repeating it like a parrot I didn't mean it but anyway you've all heard that prayer I'm sure you've all repeated it I want to ask you how seriously have you taken this one part of that prayer which you probably prayed for years forgive me exactly like I have forgiven everybody else the lower Christian life is the type of life most Christians are living keeping grudges unforgiveness I'm not the judge of humanity God is the judge but I'm a servant of God who has to proclaim the truth and the truth is this according to Jesus own words that the people who die without forgiving others they will not be forgiven for all eternity and where do they go? well you know now again let me repeat it's not because I want to go to heaven that I want to forgive people let me read a verse in Ephesians and chapter Ephesians chapter 4 and the last verse Ephesians 4 verse 32 be kind to one another tender hearted and listen to this forgiving each other exactly like God in Christ has forgiven you it's the same thing because God has forgiven us so much a million times more than the few things human beings have done against us we should forgive them I don't believe that any of us me included realize how many sins we have committed in our life we think of a few things our understanding of sin is so limited that we are aware of a few things which are serious we say we've done this but when we get into I'll tell you from my own experience as I've come closer and closer to the Lord in these 60 years I've discovered more and more some things which I never thought were sin wrong attitudes towards people which I never thought was sin but I get light on it's like you go from the kindergarten to grade 1 and then you learn something more and you go to grade 2 you learn something more and if you're faithful in your education you go up to grade 7, 8, 9, 10 you learn a lot of things you never learned in kindergarten Christian life is really like that unfortunately a lot of Christians sit in the kindergarten all their life they never learn anything new I'm wanting to learn something new next year and this year which I never know before of Christ likeness what is unlike Christ in me Lord show me I want to get rid of everything that's unlike the external things I've got rid of I'm not cheating anybody I'm paying all my taxes uprightly I'm asking forgiveness from anybody I accidentally hurt and I'm not expecting anything from people but there are still inner attitudes and different things in me that aren't Christ like that God begins to show me I'll give you one example something God showed me some years ago is it right to expect people to come and say thank you no we teach our children whenever someone gives you something that's very good manners and I believe we should teach our children to say thank you and we must also learn to be grateful to people who do anything for us Jesus said that if a person gave a person a cup of cold water he will not lose his reward you remember that verse he told his apostles if someone gives you a cup of cold water which doesn't cost anything he will not lose his reward I thought of that verse I use my imagination when I read these verses and I can imagine Jesus has come to set up his throne and he calls up some little boy or some old sister who lived 2000 years ago at the judgment seat he calls this person up and says you gave my apostle Peter a cup of cold water here is your reward do you believe that? I believe it he does not forget a cup of cold water that somebody gave to one of his children that's amazing and when I thought of that I said Lord I want to be like that too I want to never forget the little little

things that other people have done for me and I want to remember that 20 years later, 25 years later when I meet them I say yeah I remember you gave me a lift in your car when I was there and I was stuck somewhere thank you very much it was 25 years ago cup of cold water and so when the Lord forgives us so much we mustn't forget it that's more than a cup of water he has forgiven us so much so what I was going to say is something on Christ like I remember there was a young man in our church many years ago who was the only Christian in his family so he used to come to the meeting and meetings were late and he would sleep in our house and he felt so free in our home he'd get up in the morning and make coffee himself and go to college from there and we helped him a lot we were very happy he grew up well spiritually in our home the church was meeting in our home but then he did well in his profession and got a big job and went off somewhere else he never wrote any letter to us we were wondering where he was and I was wondering what an ungrateful person he is after all that we did to him he doesn't even express his gratitude to us that's the time the Lord spoke to me he said do you remember that passage where the Lord said to people I was sick and you visited me I was hungry and you fed me I was thirsty and you gave me a drink and they say Lord this is in the day of judgment Lord when did we see you like that and the Lord will say to them in as much as you did it to the least of these my brothers you did it to me so here is your reward so what I learned from that was that when I do something for a brother I must not expect a thank you or a reward from him the Lord says you have done it unto me in as much as you did it to the least of these my brothers you have done it unto me I got light on that verse Matthew 25 that when I do something for any believer I am doing it unto the Lord and if I am doing it unto the Lord from whom should I expect thank you not from that person not from that brother but from the Lord there I got light on something unchrist like in me what was the unchrist like thing in me I was expecting gratitude from a human being for what I did for him now most people wouldn't even think of that as something it's not a sin it's not a sin to expect gratitude but I saw it as something unchrist like because I must do it as unto the Lord he is a younger brother of Christ so I have done it unto him the Lord says I will thank you for it if you expect gratitude expect it from me not from him boy I was thankful for that because from that day onwards I stopped expecting gratitude from anybody it was a joy for me to help people serve people it didn't matter one bit they didn't thank me for it because I did it as unto a younger brother of Christ a younger sister of Christ the Holy Spirit showed me what Jesus was like it's a wonderful it's an exciting journey this Christian life day by day as you read the Bible the Holy Spirit shows you more and more of Christ let me show you another example of what this higher Christian life is where you don't expect gratitude from people you expect it from the Lord and I tell you you will be a very happy person the people are always expecting people to thank them they are pretty grumpy inside even if they smile on the outside they are not very happy inside you will be a very happy person if you expect your gratitude only from the Lord in the final day so let me give you another example I told you that Jesus had to walk these 100 miles from Galilee to Jerusalem whenever he came there and Jerusalem is not his home it's like you are traveling from your hometown to somewhere else and you are going there for ministry and Jesus went to Jerusalem and he was preaching you read in John chapter 7 that he was in Jerusalem preaching John 7 verse 37 on the last day of the feast he got up and he prayed and he cried out saying if anyone is thirsty let him come to me and drink John 7 verse 37 it was the feast day in the temple and Jesus had finished preaching the whole day and at the end of the day it says in verse 53 everybody went to his own home but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives it's the same sentence unfortunately the chapter division has broken up that sentence John 7 verse 53 everyone went to his own home but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives John 8 verse 1 so I thought about that by the way whenever you read these chapter divisions ignore them because that's made by men three four hundred years ago to help us to refer to verses the original when John wrote it there was no break there so what I saw there was why in the world did Jesus go to the Mount of Olives he

would have been delighted if some disciple had said hey Lord please come and stay in our home he would never have said no Mary and Martha would always invite him but they were in another town Bethany in Jerusalem what came to me was nobody invited Jesus home imagine a preacher coming to a new place to preach and nobody invites him home it's never happened to me I've traveled to many countries but no one's ever let me in the lurch like that and what did Jesus do he had no complaints he said well it's not raining I can go and sleep under the trees on the Mount of Olives no complaints I said Lord make me like that no expectations that I have come to serve them and they don't care for me no let me learn to take care of myself without a complaint the next morning chapter 8 verse 2 Jesus came in the morning and again sat down in the temple and he began to teach them now I'll tell you how the average preacher would begin his sermon if nobody invited him the previous night well last night when I was sleeping under the trees on the Mount of Olives that would be the first sentence and everybody would be alert oh we didn't invite him home Jesus never said that he never gave a hint to anybody any inconvenience that he suffered because of their lack of concern I tell you as a preacher myself I learned some wonderful things as the Holy Spirit has shown me this higher Christian life which makes you live without a complaint against a single human being your life is one of perpetual joy it is only then that you can obey the command which says rejoice always 24 7 you sleep peacefully at night I'm reading my testimony have you ever slept have you ever gone to bed and found it difficult to sleep because you are tossing around thinking of somebody who did something against you or said something against you and toss around and toss around you lose your sleep Jesus slept peacefully and we can sleep peacefully that is the higher Christian life it's good for our health as well this higher Christian life it's a wonderful life it's a wonderful life many people die early because they keep bitterness they develop sickness see God has made us in such a way that the laws of the spirit affect the body as well dear brothers and sisters ask the Holy Spirit to lead you higher I think of a verse and I'll close with this in the book of Revelation chapter 4 John was looking at all the things the sad condition of all the churches in chapter 2 and 3 if you read Revelation chapter 2 and 3 it's a pretty pathetic picture of the condition of 5 of those 7 churches very bad state of affairs and John the Apostle looking at this what a condition these churches are in it must have grieved him so the Lord says to him in verse 4 chapter 4 sorry verse 1 come up higher come up here and I'll show you things from here I believe that's what the Lord is saying to you and me come up higher view things from heaven's standpoint that's what God wants to do for all of us because it says in Colossians chapter 3 Colossians 3 verse 1 if you have really been raised up with Christ then seek the things that are above may Christ be seated at the right hand of God set your mind on things above and not on the things that are on earth for you have died to this earthly life and your life is hidden with Christ and God Ephesians 2 says because we have been raised up with Christ in spirit we are to live our earthly life with our spirit in heaven while our body is on the earth it's unbelievable but it is true this is the life the Holy Spirit wants to give us and I pray that we will all make it our earnest prayer as a result of this weekend's that we will not only hear and get some information but actually get a hunger for a higher life than we have experienced so far hunger and thirst is the first step always let's pray let's bow our heads in prayer there are many things we heard today don't worry if you don't remember all of them the Holy Spirit will bring it to your remembrance at the right time but remember just the first verse that we read in 1 John 2 6 if you say that you are in Christ you are called to walk as Jesus walked and the Holy Spirit has come to help you and me let there be a cry in your heart saying Lord this is the life I want to live please help me this weekend to understand how I can live this life thank you Heavenly Father for your word that always seeks to lead us higher higher higher I thank you with all my heart I pray that everyone here who have taken all this trouble to come here will go away immensely blessed beyond what they expected because of your Holy Spirit moving in our midst thank you Father it will be so in Jesus name Amen

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