

What to Forget and What to Remember

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of humility and childlike faith in forgetting past grievances and trusting in God's sovereignty for a fulfilling spiritual life.

Duration: 58:39

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:25, 1 Corinthians 14:20

Topics: "Being Born Again", "Kingdom Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being born again in order to enter God's kingdom. He shares the story of D.L. Moody, a renowned evangelist, who preached the same message of being born again for seven consecutive days. The speaker also highlights the significance of learning from children, servants, and beggars in understanding the Kingdom of Heaven. He encourages listeners to adopt the attitude of being poor in spirit, acknowledging their dependence on God. The sermon concludes with a reminder to not keep a score of the sins committed by others, but to live a life of love and forgiveness.

Transcript

We have come to the end of the year. This is the last day of 2006. And as we begin a new year, I thought it would be good for us to think about how we began our earthly life.

As a little baby, born into the world with no history of anything behind it. Imagine the day when you were born into the world, whenever that was. There's nothing that you could think of in relation to your past.

Because you had no past. It was in the womb, hidden away. From the day you were born, which is the day we all count our earthly life from, there's no memory of anything in the past.

It's a wonderful way to live. And I think that's what Jesus meant. Part of what he meant, when he said in Matthew 18, that if you don't humble yourself, Matthew 18 verse 4, that if you humble yourself as this child, you'll be the greatest in heaven, in the kingdom of heaven.

The greatest person in the kingdom of heaven is the one who can constantly live, forgetting the past in the sense that he has no record of all the good things he did for other people. He has no record of all the bad things that other people did to him. Can you say that is true of you this morning? That by an act of your will, you have chosen not to remember anything good that you ever did to another human being.

You know, sometimes even parents look at their children and say, I've done so much for you, what are you doing for me? Those parents need to be converted. There are even parents who train up their children to look after them in their old age. Those parents need to be converted.

Because when they get converted, the Lord says to them in Isaiah 46 verse 4, I was the one who brought you into the world, I'll take care of you when you're old. Isn't that much better? You know, it's amazing how much we expect from others because we did something for them. But as children or brothers, you can expect the church to be very grateful to you for a lot of things you remember that you did.

Let me invite all of you to become like little children, like a newborn baby as you begin a new year. Lord, help me to live like that, not only on the first of January, but every day of this year to be like a little child. If you turn to Matthew chapter 11, Jesus said these words in verse 25, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

From that verse, I know why many people, when they read the Bible, they get almost nothing out of it. I've heard people say, I get hardly anything out of reading the Bible. That's right.

Because God has hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent and you must be in that category. If you became like a baby, you'd understand lots of things. And then some people say, I don't seem to get anything new.

Just the old things. Yeah, perhaps once you were a baby, but now you've become a senior brother, senior sister, big man. You won't get anything new for the rest of your life.

You got to remain a baby in your spirit. Because he has hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent. What's wrong with being clever and intelligent? Nothing.

Why did Jesus say it's so difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of God? I mean, if you happen to be rich because your parents were rich, what can you do about it? You need to understand what he was saying. It's the pride that riches bring that are dangerous. It's the self-confidence and self-dependence and independence of having to consult God about anything that riches bring.

That is the danger, not the wealth in itself. And it's the pride that makes you congratulate yourself. That cleverness and intelligence brings that hinders you from hearing God's words.

Not cleverness and intelligence in itself. Because cleverness and intelligence is like the color of our skin. I didn't choose the color of my skin, God chose it.

In my intelligence level, God chose it. I didn't choose it. So what can I do about that? Nothing.

So why does he say it's hidden from the clever and the intelligent? And those who are self-confident because they are clever and intelligent. Those who argue, convinced that they are right because they are clever and intelligent. You know that it's very easy to win an argument with a two-year-old or a one-year-old.

Very easy, because he hardly knows anything. He doesn't know how to reply to all your clever statements. You can quote this authority, that authority, the other authority.

But what can a little one-year-old quote? Nothing. It's such people who, they may have acquired a lot of information from the Bible in the past years. But they seem to get nothing new.

Or if they do get something new, it's from some message they hear from somebody else. But nothing new themselves. You know, I personally, I'll give you my testimony.

I would consider myself a backslider if weeks went by in my life and I saw nothing new in the Scriptures. Would you apply that test to yourself? I don't mean you got something new when listening to a message. That may have only entered your head.

If you meditate on the Scriptures, you'll get something in your heart. And I fear there are many, many, many believers who get nothing when they read the Scriptures now, except what they already got in the first few years of their conversion. They understood about forgiveness, justification, and that God loves them, etc.

They know those basic facts. Imagine if a child, through 20 years in school and college, all it knows is what it learned in the kindergarten. I know that BAT is bat and CAT is cat and 2 plus 2 is 4. And wouldn't you be disappointed if that's all it knew? I believe God's very disappointed with many of His children.

We're not learning something new about Him because He reveals Himself to those who have the spirit of a little child. I would urge you, my brothers and sisters, covet it. If you don't find any worthy example among Christians, sometimes people tell me, Brother Zach, what to do? In my church, I don't find any good examples to follow.

Well, don't you have any babies in your church? Or around you? It doesn't have to be in your church. Don't you have any babies in your neighborhood? Even those non-Christian neighbors, look at their baby. That's a good example for you.

If you don't find any good examples in the church, don't make silly excuses when you don't want to follow the Lord by saying, we don't have any good examples. There are plenty of babies around you. I think the statistics say that in India, babies are born every second.

No excuse in India anyway. We have plenty of babies being born. Examples of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like.

There are only two people who we have around us that we can take examples from. One is children and the other is servants. You know, many western countries, they don't have servants.

But in India, we have servants all over. And we have one more thing in India, beggars. You can learn a lot from beggars.

Their attitude, to be poor in spirit. Blessed are the poor in spirit. I'll tell you, nobody has taught me what it is to be poor in spirit like the beggars in India.

They are poor in body and in wealth. And I apply that to my spirit. And I say, the way they are not ashamed to acknowledge that they have nothing.

You'd be ashamed to go to somebody's gate and beg. I know I would. But they are not ashamed.

And I think if I were as hungry and poor as them, and I had to feed children, I would probably beg. Do you know that the Bible never says you can't beg? The Bible says you can't borrow. But most Christians borrow.

They don't beg. The Bible says don't be in debt. But it never says don't beg.

Don't be in debt, it says. So these beggars are not coming asking for a loan. They can't repay it.

They are asking for help. Will you repay it tomorrow? No, sir. What you give me, I have to spend for today.

And sir, I'll come back to your gate tomorrow. Because I'll be in need again. The Bible says in Proverbs 8, Blessed is the man who waits daily at my gates, expecting to receive from me.

That's how I want to go to God every day of my life. That's how I seek to go to God. Every morning as I get up, I say, Lord, I wait on you.

Every time I go to speak in a meeting, I'm like that beggar before God's gate. I say, Lord, I have nothing to say. Will you please give me something? I'm empty.

And if the Lord says, what about what I gave you yesterday? That's finished, Lord. Like the beggar. If you live like that before God every day, I can guarantee you 2007 will be the best year you've ever experienced in your life.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. You see, a child is like that. A little baby is so helpless every day.

It can't do a single thing for itself. That's how a child is. I can't do anything, Dad.

I mean, if it could speak. I can't do anything, Mom. I'm dependent on you.

Aren't you ashamed to be dependent on us? No, I'm not ashamed. I know you love me. You care for me.

And I'm not ashamed to be dependent on God like that. God is my Father. And I need His wisdom in everything.

His wisdom keeps me from putting things into my mouth or my heart which are not good for me. I recognize that as a baby, I don't know the difference between good food and mud. Haven't you seen that little babies? They put anything into their mouth.

Everything they get into their mouth. That's how proud people are who don't recognize, Lord, I don't know. But if it's a baby who recognizes, yeah, I don't know.

That's why my dad tells me not to put that in my mouth. My mom says, don't put that in your mouth. We are surrounded in a world where there are all types of things we can put into our heart.

Just like that baby puts into the mouth. And most Christians do that. Anything into their heart.

We need to recognize that we don't have discernment. Lord, I'm like a little child without discernment. Therefore, I need wisdom from you.

I need to be helplessly dependent on you for wisdom. See, that's why it also says, here it's speaking about, Yes, Father, for this was well-pleasing in my sight, in your sight. Matthew 11.

What has God revealed to infants? Verse 27. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. I want to know that.

Theoretically, all of us know that all authority in heaven and earth is in the hands of Jesus Christ. But if we really believed it, we would never be anxious about anything. Have you been anxious in the year 2006? Well, you didn't believe that all authority in heaven and earth was in Jesus' hands.

You were far too clever and intelligent to know that. You thought you had to take care of everything yourself. But the Father has revealed them to little helpless babes that all things have been handed over to Jesus Christ.

All things are not in the hands of the devil. They're in the hands of my Savior, my Lord. And that's why I can live the coming year without any fear.

I don't know what awaits me tomorrow or next week or in the middle of 2007. But I know who's got all authority in heaven and earth. I know who knows the future all the way up to the end of time.

God could write a history of my life and all the things that are going to happen to me in 2007 right now. He's already got it. He won't let me see it.

But I know every single thing that's going to happen in my life that anybody's going to try and do to me or say to me or not do or not say. If I were to say, Lord, can you let me have a peek into that book? I'd know every single thing that's going to happen all the way up to the end of 2007. But He doesn't show it to me because He leads me step by step.

But the comfort it brings me is that when it does happen, I say, well, I wasn't as surprised to God. It was a surprise to me. But it wasn't a surprise to God.

And that's what brings rest in our hearts. Can you believe that anything that happens to you in this coming year will not be a surprise to God? Does that require a great faith to believe that? It just requires you to believe God is God. Unless your God is so small that He doesn't know what's going to happen tomorrow.

The God of the Bible is so big that He knows everything that's going to happen way to the end of time. That's what brings rest to a little child. Have you seen a little baby? You know, it's so secure when it's in the arms of its mother or father.

But so full of fear, it starts screaming when it's surrounded by strangers or when it's all alone. That's how we should be too. Lord, I'm scared to be all alone.

I want to be in Your arms every day. And Jesus said how His sheep would not respond to strangers. Lord, I want to be like that little baby.

People are strangers. People are not wholehearted disciples of Christ. I just want to be a little careful when I'm around them.

In my office, in my place of work, anywhere, in the church perhaps. I want to be a little careful when I'm around those who are not radical, wholehearted disciples of Jesus, who are not members of the family. The child's not scared.

It recognizes members of its family. But it's wary of others. It's good for us to be wary of others.

All things are handed to me by my Father. And no one knows the Son except the Father. Listen to verse 27.

No one knows the Father except the Son. And anyone to whom the Son will reveal Him. You can hear a thousand messages on God as a Father.

And yet, in a time of temptation, you may not react as one who knows God as a Father. I knew God as a Father, theoretically, from the time I was born again, 47 years ago. But I'd still be anxious.

I'd still be worried. I'd still be disturbed when somebody did something to me. Because, theoretically, if you asked me to write down who is your Father, I'd say God is my Father.

But in the actual situations of life, He wasn't around. I mean, I thought He wasn't around. Because I knew in my head which was not revealed to my heart.

You know, one of the great words that you need to learn in the New Testament is the word revelation. Understanding is in the mind. Revelation is in the heart.

The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation. And when Paul wrote to the Ephesian Christians, he said to them, in Ephesians chapter 1, he says these words, Ephesians chapter 1, he says, you know, he says, I'm thanking God for many things in you. Verse 15, Ephesians 1.15 I've heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, your love for all the saints.

And I thank God for that. I don't stop giving thanks to God for you. The church in Ephesus was a wonderful church.

But he says, I'm praying something for you. And notice what he says. He says, I'm not praying, I'm not asking you to read this letter 20 times and understand what I'm saying.

You can read it a hundred times and you still may not understand what I'm saying. But what I'm saying is I'm praying that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, would give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation. In the knowledge, wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Yeah, that's quite different. The Holy Spirit giving me revelation in my heart to see, to know the Father. This is eternal life.

To know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. That is what eternal life is. And it's a lifelong thing to know God and eternal life.

And to have eternal life. And that comes to little babes. I thank you, Father, that you have hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent.

But you have revealed them to babes. I'll tell you something. The more you become like a babe, the less anxiety you'll have in your life.

So you can measure whether you have come to this level by the amount of anxiety and depression and gloom there is in your life. It's because you're clever and intelligent that you're so gloomy. It's because you're clever and intelligent that you're so discouraged.

It's because you're clever and intelligent that you complain so much and you murmur so much and you criticize others so much. It would all disappear if you decide to become like a little baby in 2007. You may not.

But that's up to you. If you prefer to live the same miserable life you have lived up to now, you're welcome. But God invites you saying, come up higher.

And to come up higher, you have to go down lower and become like a little baby. That's the secret. Because then the Father, the Lord gives us revelation.

It's the great word of the New Testament. It comes many, many times. Revelation.

The knowledge of Him. To know Him. You can't know Him by listening to this message.

You can take a CD of this message and listen to it 20 times and you think you got it. No, you haven't. You need to ask God to humble you.

Then you'll get it. Then you'll get it by listening to it once. I know people in our churches who have heard me for 25 years.

They don't see it. But I see them still. Half-hearted.

Not overcomers. Still critical and judgmental of others. This, that and the other.

They have many clever ideas but they don't realize it's all in the brain. Their brain which is so active and so clever is very little in the heart. You don't see the meekness and the humility of Christ.

You don't see the purity and the glory of Jesus. You don't get the aroma of Christ when you're around Him. You can get the aroma of a clever man.

Of an intelligent man who sees so many clever things in the Scriptures. Many Bible school professors who see clever things in Scriptures who are in hell today. It's very easy to follow them.

But if you are converted and become like a little child you'll never see the gates of hell. You'll be in heaven and heaven will begin for you right now. That's a wonderful thing.

And so that's how I want to live 2007. I want to become more and more like a child. Notice that in a child there is no desire to retaliate when you hurt it.

No child wants to get back at you for what you did to it today. So if there is any desire in you to get back at somebody who did something to you last year or the year before or in all your life. Let me recommend something to you.

Ask God, the Holy Spirit to make you like a little child. Your life will be much happier. A lot of the misery and gloom is because of anger within at somebody.

There was somebody who said that discouragement is actually constipated anger. Anger that is stuffed in there that hasn't got out. You know some people how it is they get angry and blow their top and yell at you.

That's their temperament. They are choleric. They get upset very quickly.

There are other people who bottle it all up and think that they are more spiritual and judge those other people who blow up. They are not really better. They just bottled it all up and when they bottle it up it manifests itself in other ways in their life in gloom and discouragement and bitter thoughts and people think oh they are so wonderful people they never lose their temper.

They are just fooling you. There are many more other problems. I am not saying one is better than the other.

Both are equally bad. The snake running around openly and the snake that is hidden somewhere are equally dangerous. The sickness that is visible and the sickness that is hidden in your blood stream both can be deadly.

How to escape from all this? The answer is to be like a little child and to say Lord I want to be just dependent on you. I want to be like a newborn child. I want to meditate on what a newborn child is like.

No desire to retaliate. No memory of even after it is born its memory is very limited at least as far as I can see the child doesn't remember that you hurt it yesterday. That's wonderful to be like that.

And Jesus said that's the type of person who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The greatest in the kingdom of heaven is not the one who can preach the best because that's a gift. You know God could give a donkey in the Old Testament a gift of a prophetic word to speak to a prophet.

That's not difficult. If God could give a gift to a donkey to speak a prophetic word He can give it to any one of us. There's nothing great about speaking a prophetic word because that's a gift.

God may not give it to everybody. But humility that's dependent on us. You can stand before God on the final day and say I wasn't a prophet Lord because you never gave me that gift.

And God will say right. You can say Lord I never became an apostle on earth because you never made me an apostle. I couldn't do it.

But you can't say Lord I wasn't humble because you didn't give it to me. We have ample opportunity throughout our life to humble ourselves and become like little children. You have the Bible in your own language and you read it numerous times that unless you humble yourself and become like a little child you will not enter God's kingdom.

It's not the first time we are hearing it. I'm often encouraged when I have to speak the same message three or four or ten or a hundred times by that man by the story of D.L. Moody who took a D.L. Moody was a great evangelist of a hundred and twenty years ago in America. And he took a series of meetings for seven days in some country.

And everyday his subject was you must be born again. Seven days, same subject. You know and some clever person sitting there was always hoping to hear something new everyday got fed up by the seventh day and came to Moody and said why do you keep on saying everyday just the same thing you must be born again.

Moody said because you must be born again. That's it. Very simple.

If you are not born again you probably need to hear it a thousand times. It's not just a question of intellectually knowing it but being actually born again. How often do you need to hear about humility?

Anybody here who needs to say well I don't need to hear that anymore.

I wouldn't say that. Jesus said learn from me. You know there are only two examples he gave in humility.

I hope you remember that. One we saw in Matthew 18. Whoever humbles himself like this child.

Here is an example of humility Jesus took on earth. It wasn't Peter. It wasn't John.

It was a child. The humblest is the greatest in God's kingdom. And the example of humility Jesus gave is a little baby.

But he gave one more example of humility. In Matthew 11 you know after he said these verses I thank you that you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent revealed them to babes. He went on to say verse 29 learn from me for I am humble.

That's I don't think any human being can say that. I wouldn't dare to say that to anybody. I mean I would say to people follow me as I follow Christ.

Like Paul said. But I would never turn to somebody and say learn from me for I am humble of heart. Only Jesus could say that.

But I will say to you learn from a little baby for he is humble. There are only two examples of humility that Jesus gave. One is a baby and the other is himself.

You can have your choice. You can learn from both of them. Only two examples.

I'm not your example in humility. I'm a long way from following Jesus. I'm trying.

I'm trying to follow him wherever I get light and I think it gets a little better in my own life. Humility is before God. It's not for your approval.

But But it's something that humility is to me that helpless dependence upon God like a child has for everything. It's not a question of whether you think I hang my head and walk around humble. That's all counterfeit humility and it's a lot of rubbish fit to be thrown in the trash can.

I'm talking about this attitude of a life which you don't know about me which I don't know about you. Of humble dependence on God for every single thing in life. That's how a baby is from morning till night.

It's dependent on its parents for everything and that is humility. The humble dependence on God for everything. That's how Jesus lived.

When he said learn from me for I'm humble of heart. He had a humble dependence on his father for everything. And he said if you learn that from me you will stop being anxious.

You will stop being worried. You will stop getting into unrest. You will stop getting irritated with people.

You will stop getting agitated by your circumstances. You will lose all fear. It's my amplified translation of you will find rest for your souls.

That's the meaning of finding rest for your soul. You will not be anxious. You will not be worried.

You won't be depressed. You won't be discouraged. You won't be critical.

A man who's at rest is like the lake that is absolutely calm. You know one stone can cause a ripple. It's not calm anymore.

Think of a lake that's absolutely calm. Nothing disturbs it. No person.

Somebody says something. Somebody doesn't say something. Something happens in the world around.

The newspaper says something. Some new law the government has passed. Some anti-Christian government has come to power.

Not a ripple. You take a little baby and tell the baby, you know, one day old baby, do you know an anti-Christian government has come to power? Oh. You know things are going to get bad next week? That's rest.

Jesus was like that. I want to be like that. You will find rest.

It's a promise. I'll take that promise. Because I'll tell you this.

Give me a choice between earning more money in 2007 and finding more rest in my soul in 2007. I have made my choice already. I want to find total rest in my heart in 2007 than earning more money in 2007.

We all have more than enough already. It's more important for you to find rest for your soul than to increase your standard of living. You know, you get what you seek.

Seek and you shall find. You seek to make more money, that's what you get. You seek to find more rest in your soul, you'll probably get that.

But you got to learn from him. He said, learn from him and we can learn from a little child. Humility.

No concern, no worry. Is it really true that God wants us to live that life? He certainly does. I told you about no memory of the past.

When a child is born, there is nothing it can boast about. It can't think that I have done this, that for somebody and they are not grateful to me. I want to ask all of you, be honest today.

I want to be honest before God. Do you feel that somebody is not grateful enough to you for all that you have done for them in so many years? It may be your children. You have an inner complaint that your children are not grateful enough.

Maybe they are not grateful enough. Maybe they are unconverted. Maybe they are ungodly.

They are not grateful. It's true. But you also need to be converted and become like a little child.

Concentrate on that in 2007. Really, I tell you. Maybe some of you feel your wives are not grateful for all the trouble you go through in your office to earn a living.

Maybe it's true. Maybe your wife is ungodly. But you need to be converted too and become like a little child.

Well, you don't have the feeling that I have done so much for other people. Do you know the amount of unrest it brings into your heart when you begin to think of how much you have done for other people and

they are not grateful? Does a little baby have that feeling when it's one day old? How much I have done for other people? It actually has done a lot. You know.

Don't you think Isaac did a lot for Sarah the day he was born? Boy, she would have given the whole world for that baby. And someone who hasn't had a baby for 50 years and suddenly gets a baby. It's done a lot.

But baby Isaac itself is ignorant that I have done such a lot. And that's good. It's good to be like that.

To be such a tremendous blessing to your mother that you bring such joy into her heart that you don't even know it. To be such a blessing to other people and to be totally ignorant of it. And not to consciously meditate on what I have done.

What a blessing I am. Most of the people who imagine they are such a blessing to other people, they don't realize. Actually, they are a bit of a nuisance.

I have seen some people who imagine that because they have been so many years in the church I think I find that problem more with some sisters. They have been so many years in the church and they are so old. They think, I know so much.

I can be a blessing to these young sisters. I can give them advice. These young sisters see them coming and want to escape.

Ah, here is the old sister coming with more advice for me. You don't realize that. Because you are so blind.

I will tell you something. Don't try to be a blessing to others. Please.

The biggest nuisances I have seen in churches are those who try to be a blessing to others. A river doesn't try to flow. It flows.

Let God bless you and you will automatically be a blessing to others. People will come to you and say, Brother, sister, can you give me a little advice on that? Wait for that. Instead of you going and giving advice to people.

There are some of you sitting here who are so eager to give advice to other people. You don't realize they don't want it. Change in 2007.

Change. Let them be desperate to come to you. Because they sense the aroma of Christ in you.

And they know and they see that you have wisdom. It's far better. Can I urge you that, dear senior sisters? Will you stop being a nuisance to other people in 2007? And seek instead to manifest the aroma of Christ.

If you want to give young people something, give them a meal. That's a good thing to give. Invite them to your home and give them a meal and zero advice.

Don't tuck a little bit of advice there along with your meal. Okay? And if they are eager for some advice, they'll ask you. Brother, sister.

Yeah, that's how we should be. Jesus went around doing good. And so, that's one thing we've got to, you know, come be free from.

No memory of anything good I've done for anybody. I'm not expecting anybody to be grateful to me for anything. In other words, there's no past.

Paul says that. Philippians 3 says, forgetting the things that are behind. You know, like having a curtain fall just at my feet.

If I move forward, the curtain's always following me. I look back, there's nothing there. What did I do five minutes ago? I don't know.

There's a curtain there. That's what it means to forget the things that are behind. Now, I'll tell you this.

It doesn't come easily. I've said this incident before once many, many years ago. I remember once, you know, we in the early days in the church, churches would meet in our home.

A lot of people would just stay in our home overnight and eat with us regularly. Many young people stayed in our home. Many young people ate meals in our home.

We were very grateful for those opportunities. We're a little old now and can't do as much now as we did in those days. But when we did have the health and ability, we are thankful that we did open our home to everybody who wanted.

Some people took advantage of it. That's fine. But we blessed everybody who came.

But I began to think about some of those young people when they left and some of them left our church and I felt that some of them were not so grateful for all that we did for them. They seem to have taken it for granted. And the Lord spoke to me and said, there's a mistake in you.

He didn't rebuke me. It's very gentle. It was a gentle rebuke.

Yeah, you did good to them. But you should not have done it as unto them. You should have done it as unto me.

Then you would not be expecting gratitude from them. That was a real revelation to me. And that changed my whole attitude to doing good to other people.

That when I do good, you know what Jesus said, inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these my brothers, you have done it unto me. Oh, so that's how I'm supposed to do it. Here's a person, it doesn't matter who it is.

Maybe I spent a long time with them, helping them or blessing them or helping them financially or whatever it is, but it says unto him. It's like helping Jesus when he was poor or giving a meal to Jesus when he came to my house or giving a room for Jesus to stay when he came to my house. I won't be always looking at him and say, Lord, you're not thanking me.

No. If I did it as unto the Lord, then I will not be expecting this brother, why isn't he thankful? Or that other sister, why aren't they thankful for what we did? It'll go from my mind. I'll tell you practically, it's helped me tremendously, this little truth the Lord taught me years ago when I did look for gratitude from people.

It was wrong on their part, not to be grateful, that I agree fully, but I never realized that there was something wrong in me in expecting that gratitude. And that delivered me. You know, very often, when you

think something is wrong with somebody, maybe it's true, but if you judge yourself, you'll find a wrong attitude in yourself too.

But if you don't judge yourself, you only see the wrong in the other person. And then you never grow yourselves spiritually. Because you think you're perfect.

I got a great revelation many years ago that I would never become fully like Jesus till he comes again. Have you got it? You know how it helped me? That means every day of my life, I recognize there's something unchrist-like in me today. And I'm passionately determined to discover it.

Will you have a passionate determination, like you've had passionate determination past years for other things, right? To make money, to get on in the world, to take revenge on somebody, all those things, finish with all that now. Let's have a passionate determination this year to discover something unchrist-like in ourselves. And to cleanse ourselves from it.

For example, like you've had a passionate determination in the past to discover unchrist-like things in other people, right? And speak about it and point it out and talk about it at home and all that. Can we just turn that around, that mirror, in other words, that driving mirror, make it a bathroom mirror. You know the difference between a driving mirror and a bathroom mirror? In a driving mirror you see somebody else.

That fellow behind me is not driving properly. You see a lot of things about people behind you. But a bathroom mirror you see yourself.

It's a very simple thing, you know. You've just got to turn the mirror a little bit to turn the driving mirror into a bathroom mirror. Just a wee bit.

Will you do it in 2007? Do it. Every day. Don't make it one of these New Year resolutions that disappear on the 7th of January.

Say, Lord, I'm determined. I'm going to check up. Now, I'll tell you what.

Ask your wife to remind you. Because she's the one you may be criticizing the most. Tell her to remind you.

Say, honey, didn't you decide on December 31st that you're going to have a bathroom mirror? And maybe your wife. Remind your wife. You know, we are given to each other as helpers.

Helpers for what? Not just to cook my food and wash my clothes. Helpers to become like Jesus. I want my wife to remind me anything she sees in me.

If she sees a mark on my face as I'm going out of the meeting, I want her to remind me so that I wipe it out. What if there's a mark on my soul, on my heart that she sees and she doesn't tell me? Oh, what a poor helper that'll be. Who just sees a mark on my face but doesn't tell me a mark on my heart that she sees.

If she doesn't see it, it's okay. But if she sees some selfishness in me, and she's afraid that I'm going to get upset, then you're a terrible husband. I want to get light on those things in my life where I'm demanding on others or expecting things from others or remembering all the good that I did.

In the same way, like this curtain just behind my legs but I don't see the past, forgetting the things that are behind. As I said, a child has no memory even of the harm that other people have done. You know, we

carry around with a lot of memories which we should get rid of in this coming year.

Totally. We should get rid of as soon as possible. There's a very lovely verse in 1 Corinthians 13 about love which says It's translated here like this.

In the Message Bible, 1 Corinthians 13 in the NASB it says, does not take into account a wrong suffered, in verse 5, the last part of verse 5. And in the Message Bible it says, it does not keep a score does not keep a score of the sins of others. You know how when we play football, we are so eager that the score must be kept right. It's not 3-2, it's 4-2.

Don't you remember that goal? Keep a score of the goals you've scored and you scores others scored. Here it says it doesn't keep a score of the sins of other people. The fouls that other people committed.

What a way to live. No score. Zero.

How many sins of other people done against you? Zero. What about that other brother? Turn to his face. Zero.

And that other sister? Zero. Imagine if you clean out the record tonight before we begin the new year. No score of the sins of others.

If you have a book with the names of all your friends and brothers and sisters. Zero on every page. Tell me, what have you gained by keeping this list of all the sins that other people... Have you got anything positive out of it? Hasn't it made you grumpy, miserable, sour, long-faced and discouraged and everything else and made your children also like that? You haven't gained a thing.

The devil has made a fool of you for so many years as you turn back to those pages and think of all the evil that other people have done to you and you made your children miserable too. Shall we do it different this year? Yes? Wonderful. Sisters, you heard your husband say yes? Brothers, you heard your wife say yes? Yes, we're going to do it differently this year.

We're not going to keep a score of all the foolish things that we did against each other in our homes. No. We're not going to bring it up anymore.

You've heard the... I love this joke about this married couple who went to the counselor for advice and the husband said to him, Sir, my wife gets historical whenever we have a fight. He said, what do you mean historical? He thought his English was not right. You mean hysterical.

That's the word. No. Hysterical means something else.

Historical. She goes back to history and brings back all the things that happened from the day of our marriage and even some things that my father and mother did. Shall we stop being historical and hysterical in the new year? Great.

What a happy year it'll be. You know, the Lord used to tell, the Lord told His children of Israel that every seventh year, have a year of Jubilee. Jubilee means just release everybody from all their debts.

Forgive them. They were under the old covenant. They could do it only once in seven years.

What about us? Once a year? Eh? Tell me. You know, the Jews said you must forgive others three times. Peter said, I'm better than them.

Lord, shall I forgive him seven times? Expecting Jesus to say, great Peter, you're a great man. She said no. 490 times every day.

Great. That's a little child. I want to be like that and I hope you want to be like that too.

No memory of the evil that others have done. It'll come to our mind. I can't clean out my memory but I consciously say no.

You know that we don't have control over our memories. I wish I could. I wish I could just clean it out but I can't.

And we don't have control over the thoughts that come into our mind. Temptation. But I have a control over my will.

What I choose. And holiness, listen to this liberating word which helped me many years ago. Holiness does not reside in your mind or in your memory.

It resides in your will. It's not in my thoughts. The devil can put a thought into my mind right now which may be the filthiest thought anybody can ever have.

But in my will I say no. My heart is pure. My memory may remind me of something that some fellow did against me.

Took me to court. Cheated me. In my will I say no.

I will not. Memory is there. What can I do about it? And I choose not to have any grudge against him.

I choose not to have a wrong attitude towards him. That's all we can do. Some people say when you forgive somebody you must forget as well.

That is impossible. And anybody who tells you to do that is somebody who's not read the bible. He's trying to raise the standard higher than God has raised it.

And he's a liar. Nobody can forget what other people have done to them but he can choose not to remember. Let me ask you something.

The sins that you committed 30 years ago which you confessed. Has God forgotten about them? Yes or no? Show me the verse. There is no verse like that.

What the verse says in Hebrews 8.12 is I will not remember. Do you know the difference between I will not remember and I have forgotten? Do you remember what you did 20 years ago? Now how can God not remember it? How can God forget it I mean? It never says I'll forget your sins. It says I will not remember means God says I choose not to remember.

That's all he expects us to do. It was a liberating word for me. I'll tell you honestly I can't forget what somebody did to me 20 years ago but I choose not to remember.

That's what it means to be like God. Don't burden yourself you know God I'm still remembering that. Why you remember that? Because it's your memory it's not your heart.

Live in your will. Even discouragement a thought can come into my mind I refuse to be discouraged I will only praise. It's your will.

Holiness is in your will. The will is that thick curtain between the holy place and the most holy place that is to be rent. And if I rent it I don't care what my feelings are I dwell in the most holy place with God.

Choose to live in your will in this year. Lord I choose not to remember all the evil people have done to me. I choose to forget all the not to remember all the good that I have done to other people.

Then what shall I remember? There are a few things to remember too. Remember all the good that other people did to you. Jesus said even a glass of cold water given to a disciple of his you'll not lose a reward.

That means at the judgment seat of Christ somebody who gave a glass of cold water to somebody two thousand years ago the Lord said come here. You remember that in A.D. 35 you gave a glass of cold water to one of my disciples? Don't remember. Anyway I remember it.

Here's your reward. Help me. I want to remember whenever anybody has helped me in the smallest little way even if it's in the ancient past I deliberately sometimes I on a new year what I do is I write to certain friends with whom I have not been in contact for a whole year.

I say I remember what you did for me twenty years ago. I'll never forget it. Just this morning I wrote to somebody saying I remember what you did for me so many years ago.

I thank you for it. Be thankful for the good that other people have done to you. And what's the other thing we must remember? The evil things we did to other people.

Don't forget your sins are forgiven. Peter says, 2 Peter 1, if you forget the purification from your former sins you'll be blind. So we're not like little children in our understanding.

There are areas we must be like little children. We must not be like little children in discernment. 1 Corinthians 14 verse 20 is a very wonderful verse to balance it all out.

1 Corinthians 14 and verse 20 says that Brethren, do not be children in your thinking but in evil be like infants but in your thinking be mature. Got it? Where should we be like children? In our evil attitudes. Where should we not be like children? In our mature way we think.

So like children I forget what other people have done to me. I forget the good I have done to others. As an adult with a good clear mind I think about all the good that other people have done for me.

I want to remember that to the end of my life. And I want to think of all the wretched ways in which I dishonored God in my past life so that it'll make me grateful and to love Jesus more and serve Him more wholeheartedly. Got it? The two things to forget.

What are they? The evil that others did and the good that I did. Now don't get it mixed up. What are the things to remember? The good that other people did and the evil that I did.

Now if you just turn it around you'll live an upside down life. Praise the Lord. Let's begin 2007 loving one another as Christ loved us so that we can show the world that we are the disciples of Jesus.

Let's bow before God. Lord you've been so good to us throughout this year. You've given us your word again and again and again and again and again and again.

We never want to be ungrateful. Thank you for all your love for us. Help us to live as worthy children of yours in this coming year.

There's so much we need to repent of this past year Lord. So much that we are ashamed of. But we know it's going to be different.

We speak that by faith. It will be different in the coming year. It'll be more glorious than we have ever experienced in all of our life.

We say that in Jesus name. It will be more glorious in our life than it was in all the past. Thank you Father.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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