

# When God Is Everything

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility before God and the necessity of submitting to His will to receive grace and overcome sin.*

**Duration:** 1:07:57

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:5

**Topics:** "True Worship", "Surrendered Life"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of true worship, which involves offering everything to God, denying oneself, and making Jesus the center of one's life. It challenges believers to be maximum Christians, willing to give their all for God, and to prioritize worshiping God in spirit and truth over external rituals or songs. The speaker shares personal experiences and insights on living a life of worship and service to God, focusing on the eternal perspective of being with Jesus in heaven.

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## Transcript

This morning we were thinking about the humility of Jesus Christ and after the meeting Herman reminded me of a message I had given at the end of December for the new year in my church. Do you have this? I'd asked him to print out something. Humility is not just having low thoughts about ourselves.

It's recognizing how is Jesus' humility? His humility was found in the fact that he never did his own will. All his life, we read in John chapter 6, let me read this to you, in John chapter 6 and verse 38. This by the way is the one sentence biography of Jesus Christ.

Autobiography, that means he's telling us how he lived for 33 and a half years on earth. In one sentence, if you were to describe it, it's here. I came from heaven all his life.

Not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. So there's his humility. Our pride is seen.

We want to do. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, it was a manifestation of their pride. I know better than God what's good for me.

God says, I shouldn't touch, you shouldn't eat from this tree, but I think I know better. And when we think we know better, we're actually listening to the devil. That's what we learn in the first sin.

Humility is to acknowledge that God knows what's best for me. And when he tells me to do something, and I want to do something else, humility is to put aside my will and to say, Lord, I want to do your will. So the humility of Jesus right through those 33 years was not just seen in washing people's feet.

Any of us can wash people's feet. There are a lot of people who do that for a show of humility. There's a lot of external humility that Christians have, which is a deception.

Let me tell you that real humility is in this verse. That throughout his life, he never did his own will. Never once, not even in Gethsemane, it was so painful to do the Father's will.

There you see the greatest depth of his humility, that he still did the Father's will when it cost him being forsaken by the Father. So if we don't seek to know God's will in every situation, and we're not committed to do his will, whatever the cost, we shouldn't fool ourselves to think we are humble. That is the main reason why we don't get grace.

Because it says in 1 Peter 5 and verse... Sorry, let's look at James 4 first. James 4 and verse 6. God gives greater grace. We thought about grace yesterday.

But he doesn't give grace to everybody. He gives grace to the humble. Important to remember that.

God gives grace, James 4, 6, only to the humble. And then it says, submit to God, therefore. Resist the devil, he will flee.

It is God's will that every one of us, the devil flees from us. Flees, you know, an animal flees. And when it says the devil flees, he doesn't just walk away.

A person walks away from us doesn't mean he's scared of us. But when a person flees, like you read in the Old Testament, sometimes the enemy fled or Israel fled from their enemies. They were scared.

And when it says the devil flees from you, to me that picture is of Satan who's scared of us. But I want to say to you in this verse, he's scared only of humble people. If he's not scared of you, he sees something in you of his pride.

God gives grace to the humble. Submit, therefore, to God and the devil will flee from you when you resist him. So the only one whom the devil flees from is the one who decides, I am going to do the will of God.

I will never do my own will. To the best of my knowledge, whenever I know this is God's will, I will choose that. When the Holy Spirit tells me in my conscience to keep my mouth shut in a particular situation, I'm going to, I want to speak something.

The spirit will say, no, I keep my mouth shut. And vice versa, in some other situation where opening my mouth will bring the opposition of people in the spirit of God says, speak up a word for the Lord. OK, if it brings opposition, well and good, I'm going to speak up for the Lord.

I will not do my own will. Those are the situations where our humility is tested. Remember, humility is primarily before God.

Very often we think of humility before men, you know, doing things in a way that gets his reputation for humility. But that's not it. It's before God.

Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Turn now to 1 Peter 5, where the same thing is repeated. When God repeats something, it means that it's important.

God is opposed to 1 Peter 5, 5, but he gives grace to the humble. Therefore, since God gives grace to the humble, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you at the proper time. Now, when you read a word saying he will exalt you at the proper time, how do you understand it? Does it mean he'll make you someone big in the world or perhaps somebody big in the church? No.

I want to ask you, what do you want to be exalted over? Do you want to be exalted over people? Man has a great lust to be a leader. There's a great lust in many people in churches to be elders and leaders and to have honor before people. But that's not what God is seeking.

He wants us to be exalted over sin. He wants us to be exalted over sin. And for that, he says, humble yourself and I'll give you grace.

And when I get grace, sin will not have dominion over me. So if any time I fall into sin, it means I didn't get grace at that time. And I go to God and say, why didn't I get grace? You were not humble.

So every sin we commit is because of pride. Because if I were humble, I'd have got grace and grace over me, I wouldn't sin. You must always remember 1 Peter 5, 5 with Romans 6, 14 proves one thing very clearly.

There's only one reason why we don't get grace and that's pride. And if I don't get grace, sin rules over me. So when you put, it's like two plus two equals four.

If I'm really humble, I will get grace and I'll overcome sin. That's why Jesus never sinned. He remained in that place of humility, being nothing before his father.

The only one who can do the father's will all the time is the one who says, I'm nothing. I want the father to be everything. Now, Christians don't, most Christians don't come to that place.

Inwardly, we may, outwardly, we may humble ourselves because we get a reputation for it. I want to show you a verse in the Old Testament in Daniel. You know, the Bible ends with two churches, the false church called Babylon in Revelation 17 and 18, and the true church called Jerusalem 21.

These are symbolic, these names are symbolic of a false, corrupt, worldly church, which is called a harlot. Claiming to be the bride of Christ, but loving the world and living for the world and the true bride of Christ, Jerusalem, which keeps itself pure. That's the church we are supposed to build.

But I'm convinced that most churches today are Babylon. So I want you to see about one who was a king of Babylon began with the Tower of Babel way back in Genesis 11, where a whole lot of people said, let us build something to get us a name for ourselves. And we'll reach up to the sky.

The spirit of let us build a church to get a name for ourselves. That's the Tower of Babel. That's where Babylon begins.

That's what they said. Let us get a name for ourselves. The moment you want to get a name for yourself or anything for your ability to preach or sing or lead a church or the size of your church and all the terrible things people boast about.

I've traveled to so many countries, brought so many people to Christ. It's all let us get a name for ourselves. And I want to say, the more I've seen of Christendom, the great so-called so-called great preachers and leaders, I see a tremendous lust to get a name for themselves in competition with others.

It's the spirit of the Tower of Babel. It's Babylon. It'll finally be destroyed.

And you read in Revelation 17 and 18, Babylon is also something, a commercial enterprise where money becomes a very important factor in a Christian church. God uses money, but I want to say to you something. When I look at Christendom today, I find people acting and speaking as though money is the most important thing in Christian work.

And money was not the most important thing in the days of the apostles. And that's the big difference in the Christian church of the apostles. In the days of the apostles, the important thing was the Holy Spirit.

They sought for the power of the Holy Spirit. They would pray and fast and seek for the power of the Holy Spirit. And they knew that is needed for the spread of God's work.

But today, the emphasis is on we need money for God's work. We need money to send people here and send people there. They never said that once in the Acts of the Apostles.

And yet they did a fantastic work in that known area of the world at that time. They spread the gospel everywhere. Where did the money factor? Try and read Acts of the Apostles and see if anybody is begging for money.

See if Paul goes around saying, hey, fellas, will you support me? Or any of the apostles. They depended on the Holy Spirit and they knew that what they needed, God would provide. Money was below their feet.

Money is a wonderful servant. When money occupies our mind, you know you're not like Jesus. That's the principle by which I've tried to live.

Every human being loves money. I've never seen a beggar in India who doesn't love money. I've never seen a rich man who doesn't love money.

Everybody in between loves money. And if you're honest about it, we'll ask the Lord to deliver us from it. And how do I know? How do you know whether a man is sex crazy? He's always thinking about sex.

He may be battling it, but he's always thinking about it. How do you know a person is money crazy? He's always thinking how to make money or how to do this. Money, money, money, money is frequently in his mind.

Such a man can't be a servant of God. He needs to have his mind occupied with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. And God will provide all that is needed.

Money must be his servant, not his master. And if money is occupying his thinking all the time, money has become his master. Do you know that there's gold in heaven? Yes.

But do you know where it is? On the streets, under our feet. When you've learned to put money under your feet, you're ready to go to heaven. On earth, they put money on their heads.

They hang it on their necks and ears and on their heads. We've got to put it down beneath our feet, then we're ready to go to heaven. Walk on it and say, you're not my master.

It's very easy to find out if money or God is our master. Jesus said, you cannot serve God in money. If there's a man here who's my servant, A and B stands here and says, Zach is my servant.

It's very easy to find out. You want to find out? You say, tell them both to call me. And the one I respond to, I'm his servant.

If A calls me and B calls me and I go to A. So in a situation, I find God telling me to do something and money telling me to do something. You know whose servant you are? The voice you respond to. If the call of money pulls you and you neglect the call of God, you are a servant of money.

Even if you're born again, claim to be filled with the spirit or speak in tongues or know the Bible and preach, whatever you may say, you are a servant of money. Response to an invitation because he knows he'll get more money there. Or a pastor says, if I go to that church, I'll get more money.

He's not a servant of God. He's a servant of money. And Christian world is full of them.

Money has replaced the Holy Spirit. And that's why Christians, most Christians live such shallow lives. They're not being taught by anointed men.

You cannot be an anointed man if you love money, if you haven't put it under your feet. Music is another thing. There's music in heaven.

The music glorifies God. When music glorifies individuals, that's not the worship of God. When the music in a church focuses on the musicians and the music and not on God, I always tell the people who play music in our church, I say, if you draw attention to yourself, that's the spirit of Lucifer, who wanted to draw people, he wasn't happy with people worshiping God, he wanted people to worship him.

I've seen people, especially those who play drums, banging away in such a way that everybody's attention is drawn to him. I say, that guy is getting people to worship him, not worship God. It's very easy, it's very difficult to be a musician who worships God.

I'll tell you that. Because it's such a tremendous temptation to show off. And that's why you see in so many Christian churches, music has taken such an important place.

And they say, we are drawing young people to God, to the church through music, to what type of Christianity are they drawing them? Music is the second thing that's replaced the Holy Spirit. How much music did they have on the day of Pentecost to get 3,000 people converted? How much do you read about music and instruments in the New Testament? Zero. They sang, they sang in their hearts melody to the Lord, they were so poor running in the caves, escaping from persecution, they didn't have time to carry musical instruments around, but they had the power of the Holy Spirit.

Money is the number one thing that's replaced the Holy Spirit's power. Music is the other, and the third is psychology. Very few Christians can discern when a man is trying to manipulate their thinking through psychology, to stirring up their mind and their emotions instead of reaching their spirit.

That's why there's so little preaching today that brings Christians in. I mean, the type of things I speak about now, most preachers will never talk about it because it'll make them unpopular. Many places, they'll

never get invited again.

I remember once when I went to a very large convention where they invited me to speak in Australia. It was about 42 years ago. It's one of the largest conventions in Melbourne.

And the first day, I was praying in my room on my knees, and the Lord asked me a question. Do you want to be invited back here again? I said, no, I couldn't care less. And the Lord said, go and tell them the truth.

And I did, and I never got invited back again. I said, I'm not interested. I'm not interested in their honor or their invitation or their money.

I'm a servant of God, and I know that every word I speak and every sermon I speak, I shall give an account for it in the Day of Judgment. I don't know whether you realize that even if you're not a preacher, everything we do, we're going to give an account in the Day of Judgment. We must live in the light of that.

I very often picture in my imagination my standing before Christ in the Day of Judgment and His evaluating every sermon I preached. I remember hearing a story of a God-fearing cobbler. He was repairing shoes.

He was not a cobbler, really. He was one shoe repairer. And he was a very God-fearing man, and he would do a good job of it.

And he hired an assistant one day, and the assistant told him, he said, Master, why do you repair shoes so well? I mean, if you use inferior leather, they'll come back quicker for repair, and we can repair it again and make more money. Because John would do a good job, so he would use the best type of leather, etc., for repairing it. And he said, Son, I'm not repairing these shoes to make money.

God gives me enough to earn my living. I'm doing it in the sight of God. I believe that... He was a simple man, and this is what he said, I believe one day I'll stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and as I stand before Him, there'll be a pile of all the shoes I repaired, and the Lord will pick them up one by one and say, John, why did you repair the shoes like this? Why did you do a third-rate job on this? I'm more interested in what I'll say to Him then than how much money I make now.

How many people do their work like that? This is true Christianity. The rest is all Babylon. So turn with me to Daniel chapter 4, where we read about this, another place where Babylonian Christianity is manifested.

Nebuchadnezzar the king, verse 28. He was the founder of the modern city, of that day's city of Babylon. He was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, Daniel 4, 29.

And the king reflected. There was nobody there. He was all alone walking on those massive walls of Babylon, the hanging gardens that he had made, and he said to himself, Is not Babylon the great which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power for the glory of my majesty? This is the principle of human work.

I have built it by my cleverness, by my power, by my glory. The essence of Babylon is my will, by my power, and for my glory. The essence of Jerusalem is by God's will and plan, by God's power of the Holy Spirit, and for God's glory.

Remember this very simple rule. What is wood, hay and straw? My will, my power, my glory. What is gold, silver and precious stones? God's will, God's power, God's glory.

That's why we need to seek God's will, we need to seek God's power, and we must do everything for God's glory. And people who live like that, the Bible says, when the fire tests their work in the final day, 1 Corinthians 3, it won't be burnt up, it will all be gold, silver and precious stones. And as soon as he said this, God judged him.

That was a mercy that God judged him. Sometimes when God gives us a severe punishment, that's his mercy. And he was driven away from mankind, and he began to eat grass, verse 32, like the cattle.

Imagine this big king becoming so insane that he was eating grass on the fields. And it says here that his body was drenched with the dew because he lived outside and his hair grew like eagle's feathers, verse 33, and his nails like bird's claws. And he was in that period for a long time.

And he was told that seven periods of time, verse 32, will pass over you. Now I don't know what that means, a period of time. Is it a year? No, it's longer than he was like that for seven years.

But then, at the end of verse 34, and this is the part I want you to see, I raised my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me. And he praised the Lord for humbling him. When God takes you through a difficult moment, through poverty, or difficult circumstances, or sicknesses, it's God's punishment.

You know when that verse says in 1 Peter 5, Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Do you know what the mighty hand of God is? It's not some great supernatural gift. It's the circumstances that God places you in, and humbles you.

In Nebuchadnezzar's case, it was a case of humanity, because a man was so proud. There are many ways in which God seeks to humble us. It could be by giving you a difficult wife, or a difficult husband.

It could be by giving you difficult children. It could be by financial struggle. It could be by a lot of people opposing you.

It could be by people taking court cases against you. People have taken court cases against me, religious people. Took me to court for 10 years, all the way to the Federal Supreme Court.

I saw it as the mighty hand of God, so that he could give me grace. And I received abundance of grace after that. So don't complain about these things.

Don't look at people. What did Jesus say? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. You know what that means? That if your heart is really pure, you love God with all your heart, you will see God everywhere.

In your circumstances, in the evil that people do to you, you will see God. That's the meaning. When you don't see God, but you see people, your heart is not pure.

You remember when Judas Iscariot came with the Roman soldiers to capture Jesus. Peter's heart was not pure. He saw Judas, and he took out his sword, and he was a swordsman, he was a fisherman.

He wanted to cut off Judas' head. He missed, and he hit a soldier's ear and chopped that off. And the Lord said, put your sword back.

And what did Jesus say? The cup which my father has given me, shall I not drink it? He saw the father there. Judas Iscariot was only the mailman bringing the cup. But he saw beyond the mailman, to the one

who sent it, it was his father, allowing him to be caught, to be crucified.

But Peter could only see human beings. Isn't it wonderful when people have betrayed you, that you see God, and you don't see Judas Iscariot. That's why Jesus could look at Judas' betrayer and say, friend, did you betray the son of man with a kiss? He had no bitterness against him, he could call him a friend.

Wonderful to be like that. That's why when he stood before Pilate, and Pilate threatened him in John 19, and said, don't you know I have power to crucify you? And Jesus looked at Tom, and said to Pilate, you have no power over me, except what my heavenly father gives you. I've seen people in our churches, I say, I don't know when persecution will increase in India, but when it happens, remember to look at your persecutors, and say, you have no power over me, except what my father in heaven gives you.

If he permits you to kill me, so be it. But don't you think you have any power over me. I live under the hand of almighty God.

This is how the great prophets lived, and I want to say to all of you, dear brothers and sisters, this is the way you can live. Your boss in your office, he has no power over you, except your father gives him that power. If you live in the will of God.

If you seek God's power. If you're living for God's glory. So, Nebuchadnezzar blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him, verse 34.

And he said his dominion is an everlasting dominion. And I want you to read verse Daniel 4, 35. This is one of the most powerful statements of the sovereignty of God, that I have found in the entire Bible.

And it came from the mouth of one who was a heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar, who I believe got converted. It's quite likely that we shall see Nebuchadnezzar in heaven, because the guy really got converted. Look what he says.

All the inhabitants of the earth are as zero. Listen carefully. All the inhabitants of the earth, the big kings or beggars, or any human being, is a zero before God.

And God does according to his will in the host of heaven, and among all the inhabitants of the earth. And no one can stop his hand or say to him, what have you done? Or what are you doing? Can you say that? Can you look around and say, including me, all the inhabitants of the earth are zero. God Almighty is the only one, is one.

And no one can stop his hand. No one can ward off his hand or say, what are you doing? Absolute statements of God's sovereignty. Something like Jesus said to Pilate, you have no power over me.

You can do nothing to me. In the New Testament too, when we read about what Paul says in Galatians, in chapter 6. Galatians 6, he says, 3. If anyone thinks he is somebody, when he is a zero, he deceives himself. Do you think you are a little more than a zero? You are deceiving yourself.

Anyone who thinks he is somebody, compared to maybe some of the others here, who you think are not so spiritual, or a bit dumb, and not so well read in the Bible, and maybe not so steeped in good doctrine as you are. Anything that makes you look down on others, which makes you think you are a little above the other. You are nothing.

You are a zero. You deceive yourself. And the Christian world is full of people who are deceiving somebody when they are nobody.

Let me show you another passage. 1 Corinthians in chapter 3. It's amazing what we discover when we read scripture slowly, and we see things that we never saw before. And I hope in every one of these sessions that we've had this weekend, you have seen something in scripture that you never saw before, and yet you had that Bible for so many years.

That shows God's love for you. He is giving you revelation on His Word. What about the great Apostle Paul? What was his opinion about himself? He was a man who planted churches, handkerchiefs that touched his body would cast out demons and heal the sick.

He raised the dead. He wrote scripture. What a mighty man of God.

What's his opinion about himself? He says in 1 Corinthians 3, verse 6. I planted. First of all, what is Paul? Just servants, through whom you believe as the Lord gave us opportunity to serve you. I planted a Paulus water, but God caused the growth.

Now what does he say? The one who plants, that's me. And the one who waters, God is everything. So Paul, what do you think of yourself? He says, I'm a zero.

That was the secret of his life. So demonstrate this. I did a little demonstration in my church at the end of last year so that it'd be very vivid in the eyes of even children.

Herman, could you come up in a minute here? I want two other people. Any two, would you come forward? I'm not going to ask you to say anything or do anything. If you can just stand here.

Can you come this side? Who are the two bold brothers who will come forward? Oh, two young people, fine. Thank you, one more. Okay, we have three.

Just stand here. Here, Herman's so much taller than all these others. But they are humble brothers, I believe.

They acknowledge that they are zeros. That's what they are. There may be tremendous differences in their financial standing or education or musical ability or whatever it is.

In God's eyes, zero. That's what Paul was. Okay, what is it that can make any one of them more valuable than the other? Can you come a little closer to me, Herman? The others stay there.

The others stay right there. Jesus. When Jesus is added, you see what his value becomes.

Take Jesus away, he's back to zero. When Jesus is there, that's the only thing that gives him value. And if he is humble enough to seek fellowship with one more brother, can you move forward, one of you? See what the value becomes.

It's not 11. It's 100. And they are both humble enough to seek fellowship with one more brother.

You see what happens. This is how we build a church. We need a bunch of zeros.

Think of all of you become zero. Can you imagine the value of this church? But you take Jesus away, that's the end of it. I will build a church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it because they are

humble brothers.

Thank you very much. We are clapping for the Lord who taught us these things. So you know, children in our church will never forget it in all their lives.

And more important than that, to recognize it forever and ever. Lord, I'll have value in your kingdom only if I recognize I am like Paul, I am nothing. I'm a zero.

But I'll always have you there with me to give me value. And I will have fellowship with as many zeros as possible. We'll be the body of Christ.

This is humility. And this is the position that Jesus took. The place of nothingness before his Father so that God might be everything.

You know, John the Baptist paved the way for that by when somebody told John, you know, Jesus. They didn't know, they didn't recognize Jesus as much as John the Baptist did. And they came to John the Baptist and said, See, he, Master, he's baptizing more people.

And John the Baptist said, I must decrease and he must increase. Many of us want, that's John 3 verse 30, he must increase and I must decrease. Many of us want Christ to increase in our life.

How will we do that? By your decreasing. The less there is of you, the more there will be of Christ in your life. The more you're willing to go down and become nothing, the more there will be of Christ in your life.

And God sometimes arranges circumstances such, for example, Jesus said, when you do something for God, do it secretly. Whether it's giving money or praying or fasting, the principle extends to everything. As far as possible, don't let anybody know that you did something for God.

We have a weekly email with God's word that we send out every week to those who will subscribe for it. And the subscription is free. You just got to send your email ID to our [cfcindia.com](mailto:cfcindia.com) The address is [cfc@cfcindia.com](mailto:cfc@cfcindia.com) You can get a free email every week which I write.

Expounding something will challenge you. And that goes out to 10,000 people around the world. And in all these years, 15 or 20 years that we have sent it out, never once, never once have we read anything about our work.

We want to be zeros in the eyes of others. If you go to our [cfc](http://cfcindia.com) website, you will never read anything about our work. You will never read anything about what we are doing in other parts of the country.

You will never read about how many people were converted or any such thing. That's not what we talk about. Everything in that website is to glorify Jesus.

We want to decrease and He can increase. That's the only way. And the picture the Lord gave me early on when we started our ministry was this.

He said, the Lord said, keep everything that you do, keep it hidden. Don't let people know what you're doing. Don't let people know how many churches are being planted or people are being converted.

Nobody needs to know all that. You need to have information on finances very clear because Paul was very clear on that. So that he could say, I'm not like these other workers.

But it's very important. And the picture the Lord gave me at that time was this. You know, in the olden days, we used to have these cameras.

Today, it's all digital cameras where you can immediately see the picture you took. But in the olden days, for those of you who remember, we had little rolls, camera film rolls. And you had to put the film roll in and wind it in and take one picture at a time.

And that would come on that roll. And then when it's all over, 36 pictures in a roll, and you wind it all back. After you wind it all back, and it falls tight in that roll, you got to be very careful not to expose it to the light.

Because if you pull that out and expose it to the light, everything gets wiped out. That roll had to be developed in a dark room. And they'd make a negative first, and then it would be printed.

Some of you remember that, who had those type of cameras. And the Lord said, it's like that with my work. All that you do for me, to others, it gets wiped out.

And in the day of judgment and reward, the Lord says, let me pull out this reel, and what's there? What did you do? Hey, nothing. You did nothing for me. I said, Lord, I did such a lot for you.

Well, you exposed it all. That's why it all got wiped out. So the Lord said, conceal it.

Keep it in a dark room. When the day comes, I will open it out and show everybody. And that's the picture the Lord gave me, and we decided to follow that.

And we decided in all our work, whether it is printing books or publishing DVDs, we said, we'll make zero profit. No profit for anybody, no royalty for any author or any publisher of DVD, and everything on our website will be free. Because we want to go down to zero.

It's very, very important, and that's one reason why I believe God's blessed our ministry through the years, and especially through the internet. It's good for you to examine yourself in your own life and to see whether you have taken that position so that we can give more to the Lord. One of the words which the Lord spoke to me many, many years ago was from 2 Samuel in chapter 24.

It's a word that stayed with me all these years of my life. 2 Samuel 24. It speaks of a time when God told David, in the end of 2 Samuel 24, verse 18, a prophet called Gad.

2 Samuel 24, verse 18, God told him to erect an altar to the Lord, not anywhere. It must be on the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. And David went.

Araunah was one of his subjects. David was the king. And when Araunah saw the king, verse 20, and his servants coming, Araunah came and bowed his face to the servant and said, My lord, the king, why have you come to your servant's house? David said, I've come to buy the threshing floor from you to build an altar to the Lord.

And Araunah said, Oh no, you're not going to buy it from me. I'll give it to you free. Take everything.

Take the land free. I'll give you oxen for the burnt offering and you can take the wood or the oaks or the oxen for fire and you can have it all free, O king, because I'm yours. May the Lord accept your offering.

And you know how all of us like to accept. Notice that that if you have things lying on a table free, even if you don't want it, you pick it up. We love to get things free.

Human nature is like that. But David said, I won't take it free. I'm sorry.

I will not offer to the Lord my God, verse 24, that which costs me nothing. That's the word the Lord spoke to me 52 years ago. The Lord said to me, you must never in your life offer to me that which costs you nothing.

Look at Calvary and see what it costs Jesus to offer himself for you. It's a shame when people offer to God that which costs them nothing. And I said, Lord, all my life if I live to be 100 years old, I will always offer to you that which costs me something.

I will offer to you if I serve you. It may cost me inconvenience. It may cost me my health perhaps.

It may cost me a ridicule from others and my reputation is gone. I don't care. I will not offer to God that which costs me nothing.

When I give money to you, it's not going to be a cheap offering. It's going to cost me something. I want to ask you, how do you give to God? Do you give to God that which costs you something? Many Christians are very calculating when they give to God.

It's like, you know, if you were thinking of giving a gift to somebody, say it was a wedding or something like that, you don't know everybody so well and naturally you don't give very expensive gifts to people you hardly know well. You go for the wedding and you take a nominal gift and give it to them. But how would you give a gift to your wife? Give a gift to your son on his wedding or something like that.

How would you give a gift to someone who is very precious to you? You would never calculate. You would get the best possible no matter what it costs. How do you give to God? Do you give to God as one who is a stranger, some less known person getting married, I have to give some type of gift for his wedding.

It's not decent to go to a wedding without a gift. It's a stranger, I don't know him so well, I don't need to spend so much money for him. Right! Is that how you give to God? He is a stranger, I have to give some type of gift to him, so let me give something.

I tell you, this is how many Christians give and that is the reason why their lives are so pathetically poor. That's why they know God so little, I mean after knowing him for so many years. But I found when I followed this rule from the age of 22 onwards, boy, what the Lord did for me, I said, Lord all my life I lived with the minimum for my family.

When I got married, they said, we are going to spend the minimum on ourselves. We are not going to spend lavishly on ourselves. We shall live simply.

We shall eat simply. We don't want to waste money going to restaurants and here and there. We want to live for God totally and always offer to God that which costs us something.

You know the result we read in 2nd Chronicles chapter 3 when the Lord decided to build the temple the house of God in the Old Testament, 2nd Chronicles 3 it says here, the Lord told Solomon, 2nd Chronicles 3 verse 1 Solomon began to build a temple in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, not in any place. One of the things the Lord said to Moses was don't go and offer your offerings in any place. There's a particular place

the Lord has chosen.

That's the only place you must offer the offering. That's where the temple must be built where all the sacrifices are offered. Which was this particular spot in Jerusalem? It was the spot where the Lord had appeared to his father David in the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite.

Why? Because there was a man of God's own heart who said, I will never offer to God that which costs me nothing. And the Lord said, that's where I'm going to build the church. And that was also the spot where chapter 3 verse 1 where long before David a thousand years before David there was another man of God called Abraham who had brought his only son and God asked him to offer up his son.

He would have gladly offered up ten thousand sheep in place, but he decided I will not offer to my God that which costs me nothing. And he took his son and placed him on the altar and said, Lord here I am to prove to you that I will give everything up for you. And he took the knife to kill him and the Lord said, stop.

I've seen your heart Abraham. And because you have offered your son to me there will be no limit to how much I will bless you and the families of the earth. Do you know that that blessing is for us? It is in this place that the Lord selected to build the temple that his servants Abraham and David had come with the spirit, I will not offer to God that which costs me nothing.

And that is where the church is built today by such men and women. In Galatians 3 and verse 13 it says Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. There is no curse on God's children.

Nobody can curse on me or on you if you are in Christ. This rubbish that so many charismatic people teach that there is a generational curse. So many people write emails to me, Brother Zach what is this I hear of some great charismatic leaders talking about generational curse.

I said one word, rubbish. There is no generational curse on a Christian. They teach that if your ancestors worshipped idols or something, that's why you are suffering something today.

Absolute nonsense. There was a time when there was a curse on me because I belonged to a tree called Adam. I was a branch in that tree and it was cursed all the way from Adam right up to me.

But a day came in my life and the Holy Spirit cut me off from that tree and I was born again and put me into another tree. Grafted me into another tree called Jesus Christ. And there is no curse there.

What generational curse do I have if I am in that tree? There are charismatic people who say that believers can have demons. Impossible. I have cast out many demons in my life, never from a believer.

But they say, well how is it this person who claims to be a believer had a demon and we cast out. Well he was not born again obviously. Can you imagine anything more stupid than Jesus Christ and a demon occupying half of your heart.

And the Lord Jesus living co-existing comfortably with a demon in your heart. That's so ridiculous. I can't understand how anybody can believe such nonsense.

Don't believe everything. It's because of a tremendous ignorance of scripture these days that so many people are swallowing all the... into condemnation and discouragement. There is no such thing as a born again believer having a demon.

It is impossible. There is no curse for a child of God because Christ took my curse on the cross. But that's not all.

That's one part of it. Why did he take my... That's the negative side of it. He took away my curse.

What is the positive side of it? 6th verse 14. The blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles. And you know what the Lord said to Abraham on Mount Moriah where later on the temple was built? Because you have not withheld your only son from me.

Because you have offered to me that which cost you something. Genesis 22. There is no limit to what I'll do for you Abraham.

All the families of the earth are going to be blessed through you. And that's for me. And for you who receive the promise of the Holy Spirit through faith.

That is the whole purpose of the Holy Spirit filling us. What does it mean for rivers of living water to flow from our innermost being? Rivers are not meant for us. Rivers are meant for other people.

That means God wants to make you not just remove the curse from you but bless you in such a way that you'll be a blessing to every family that you meet on the face of the earth. That means in your locality or when you visit someone, every family that you meet or encounter or visit you will leave a blessing there before you leave. What a way to live.

That's how every one of us is supposed to live. But that blessing came upon Abraham because he offered to God that which cost him everything. He said, this only son of yours whom you love, offer him up.

Prove to me that you love me more than Isaac. Isaac has become an idol in your life, Abraham. Is there something in your life, my brother, sister, which is an idol? Maybe your job, maybe your money, your education, maybe your preaching ministry.

I have to be careful that my ministry doesn't become my idol. And I always check myself on that. I said, Lord, you can paralyze me.

You can make me lie in bed paralyzed. You can take away my voice so that I can never speak again. Take away my paralyzed fingers so that I can never write another book again.

I will lie down in my bed and worship you. Nobody can stop me from worshiping you. My ministry is not my idol.

Nothing will come between me and Christ. Not even my ministry. Not even my Bible study.

Jesus is everything. I want to ask you, is he everything to you? Then he will make you a blessing wherever you go. You know how David says, my cup runs over and goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

What that means is, wherever I go, goodness and mercy follow me. I will leave goodness and mercy behind. Every person I meet, every home I visit, for a short while, I will leave some goodness and mercy behind before I leave that home.

That is the will for every one of you, God's children. If you have received Christ as your Lord, so many people just come to Jesus because they want their sins forgiven. I remember telling the Lord, I said, Lord, there are 1,200 million people in India and every one of them wants to go to heaven.

I've never met a man till today who wants to go to hell. Have you? I'm not looking for people who want to go to heaven. No, I'll tell you honestly, I'm not.

I'm not having meetings saying, who wants to go to heaven here? Raise your hands. Everybody will raise their hands. I'm looking for people in India and every country who want to follow Jesus on earth every day before going to heaven.

And that number is very few. How many people are there themselves every day, never do their own will, never love money, never love themselves, fight against sin with all their heart, live totally for God, offer that which costs them something and follow Jesus every day and then go to heaven. That number is very small.

And I say, Lord, those are the only people I'm looking for. Those are the people with whom I'm going to build my church, build your church. All the rest can go.

There are hundreds of other churches. They can go and sit and listen to sermons that tickle their ears and satisfy themselves that they are wonderful Christians and live for them. I call them minimum Christians.

A minimum Christian is one who is always calculating what is the minimum I have to give to God? What is the minimum amount of money I have to give to God? What is the minimum amount of time I have to give for God's work? What is the minimum I have to give? And let me spend the rest on myself. What is the minimum time in a week I have to give for God's work or service? I have to enjoy myself too. And then there's another type of Christian whom I call the maximum Christian.

His attitude is, Lord, I want only one life. I'm never going to have a chance in heaven to show my love for you by denying myself. There's no denying myself in heaven.

People say, there's no second chance after you die to believe in Christ. I say, that's right. I also want to say to you believers, there's no second chance to take up your cross after you die.

The only opportunity you get to take up the cross and to show your love for Christ is on this earth. There's no taking up the cross in heaven. I won't get another chance.

I want to make every opportunity to... I'm not just interested in selfishly going to heaven when I die. I want to show my love for Jesus before I go. I was riding my scooter, my two-wheel scooter in India some years ago.

It was 1990. And I was crossing a railway crossing which is operated manually in India with two bars across the railway line. And the man was not a very efficient person who was doing it.

Both these bars were up and I was going through and as I crossed one, that man lowered the other suddenly and I went bang into it and got knocked off my scooter and fell on the railway line unconscious. I don't know for how long. Somebody picked me up and I saw the scooter was there and I still don't know what's happened.

Somehow these things disappear from your memory when you have an accident like that. But I remember what I said. I said, Lord, thank you for saving my life but before the train came and ran me over you pulled me out and I want to say, Lord, I have not finished saying thank you to you for dying for me on the cross.

Give me a few more years to serve you, to say thank you to you. And the Lord in his mercy has given me 24 years, 22 years since that day. I'm deeply thankful.

I believe he'll give me more. But do you live your life like this saying, Lord, my life is to say thank you to you for dying for me. Every day I want to live in such a way that my life is an expression of thank you, Lord, for dying for me.

Myself in a particular situation. Provocative situation where I'm tempted to please myself, my own will, to have my own way. And I say, no, Lord, I've got to say thank you to you and the only way to say thank you to you is denying myself, going the way of the cross.

That's the maximum Christian. Lord, I've got only one life to live and I want you to get the maximum out of this one life before I leave. So that I can say like Jesus said in John, I have finished the work you gave me to do.

Father, you sent me to earth through my mother's womb with a particular plan and purpose. Brought me to yourself and made me born again in a particular day. And you had a plan for my life.

I want to fulfill it before I leave this earth. I don't care how much money I make or whether I'm opposed or rejected, whether I'm called a prophet or a heretic. It doesn't make a difference.

10,000 people calling me a devil will not make me a devil. 10,000 people calling me a prophet will not make me a prophet. God determines that.

I live before God's face. So those things don't bother me. All I ask myself is is God getting the maximum out of me.

My life is not given to me for comfort and ease and making money and making a name for myself or any of that nonsense. It was given so that it might be given back to him who gave his life for me. Is that the way? Are you a maximum Christian or a minimum? Is your attitude, Lord, what is the maximum I can give to you of time, energy, money, health, resources? Everything.

My honor, my position. I'm willing to lay everything. I'm taking the most precious thing like Abraham put Isaac on the altar and say it's gone from my life.

You are everything to me, Lord. Whom have I in heaven but thee? There's nothing I desire on earth beside thee. That is true worship.

True worship is not just singing a lot of songs. You know there's a lot of misunderstanding of this word worship. I don't know whether you know that the first time, the very first time in the Bible that the word worship occurs.

Do you know where it is? It's in Genesis and chapter 22. And it's very interesting. I call it the law of first mention.

First mention of worship in the Bible is in Genesis 22 when Abraham went to Mount Moriah and he told his servants I'm going to take Isaac up to the top of Mount Moriah. Genesis 22 5 and you know what I'm going to do there, folks? He was telling his servants, I am going to worship my God. Do you know what he called that act of tremendous sacrifice? Genesis 22 5. Worship.

He didn't go there to sing songs. He didn't go there to play a guitar. That's not how he worshipped.

Do you know how Abraham worshipped? By offering everything. He was saying, God, you're more important to me than everything. There was another great man who lived around the same time as Abraham, Job.

In a day when he lost everything he had, all his sons, all his property. In the book of Job it says in Job 1 20 he fell to the ground with his head to the ground and worshipped. And he said, when I came out of my mother's womb, I was naked.

Job 1 21, when I go down to the grave, I'll go naked. During my short time on earth, God gave me many things. Children, property.

He has every right to take it away. What shall I say? Blessed be the name of the Lord. He worshipped.

God, you are more important to me than my ten sons. You are more important to me than all my wealth which you have decided to take away in a moment. Do you know what worship is? It's not just strumming guitars and singing songs.

No. There are four levels in our communication with God. The first is prayer, where I ask God for things.

Perfectly right. We can do that till the end of our lives. The second, the natural second step is giving.

Thanking God for what he's done for me. And we should do that. Don't be like the nine lepers who never came back.

And the third is praise. In praise, we're not thanking God. Praise is adoring God for who he is.

Even if he's done nothing for me. He's still almighty. He's God.

He's holy. He's loving. He's compassionate.

He's merciful. He's gracious. And I praise him for who he is.

And then comes worship. What is worship? It is not singing songs. A lot of people talk about praise and worship.

That's because they haven't read the scriptures. You show me one place in the New Testament where it says singing songs is worship. You won't find it.

The Lord told us the time has now come, John chapter 4 and verse 24, when the true worshipers worship God in spirit. John 4 23. And the Father is seeking for such worshipers.

And when I read that verse, the Father was seeking for worshipers. I said, Lord, to teach me what worship is. And this is what he taught me.

It's not singing songs. That's prayer. You go through all our songs that we sing.

Take your hymn book sometime home and look through all the songs we sing. Every one of them is prayer or thanksgiving or praise. Every one of them.

It's good. We need to pray in our songs. Sure.

Pass me not, O gracious Savior. It's a prayer. Praising him.

When we all get to heaven, what a wonderful day that will be. Thanking him, O God, how wonderful thou art, thy majesty, how bright. That's not prayer or thanksgiving.

That is praise. But worship is not in words. It's in secret.

Alone on your mount, Moriah, where you take what is most precious to you and say like the Psalmist in Psalm 73-25, Lord, I desire nothing on earth but you. I desire no one on earth but you. And in that secret place, you worship God.

It's just you. That is worshiping in the spirit. Where you become a maximum Christian.

Where you never hold on to anything. I desire nothing on earth but you. I don't desire houses or lands or job or money or honor or fame.

Zero. I want you, Lord. I want to be a zero all my life.

I only want to exalt Christ who is the only one who gives me value. I want to be a worshiper till the end of my life. And Jesus said to the devil in Matthew 4-10, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and thou shalt serve him.

Teaching us that true service can come only through a man who has first learned to worship. Thou shalt worship and thou shalt serve. The trouble today is a lot of people are trying to serve God who haven't first learned to worship him.

I'm thankful that the Lord taught me these little things. I never went to a Bible school in my life and I'm very thankful for it. So that my mind wasn't led astray into all types of strange teachings.

I said, Holy Spirit of God, you taught the apostles, you can teach me. So all these things I learned by studying the scriptures. The Holy Spirit Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

And he showed me what worship was. He taught me what grace was. He taught me what faith was.

And he taught me that worship is this, that even when I get to heaven, I'll say it like the psalmist, there is nothing whom have I in heaven but thee. I'm not looking for golden streets and mansions, you know people saying, I've got a mansion up over the hilltop. I'm not interested in it.

What will I do with a 14 bedroom mansion in heaven? You can have it. I want to be with Jesus. I'm not interested in mansions in heaven.

I'm not interested in even a crown. What will I do with balancing 10 crowns on my head as I walk around heaven? I'm going to cast it all at the Lord's feet and have no crown on my head. No.

I say, Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee. I'm not going to heaven. I'm going to be with Jesus.

Are you looking forward to go to heaven or to be with Jesus? I once told the Lord this and I meant it. I said, Lord, I'm ready to go to hell if you're there. Because that won't be hell anymore for me.

The fire won't bother me. If you're there, it'll be heaven. It's not comfort and ease that makes heaven.

The presence of Jesus is what makes heaven. And that's why I can have heaven here on this earth. I believe the real gospel is this, that we can have two heavens.

One here on earth and the other one when Jesus returns. And I've begun to taste a little bit of that in my life, in my ministry, in my home and my fellowship with people. Heaven on earth and then one day heaven above.

Whom have I in heaven but thee. Nothing else in heaven but Jesus. I'm not thinking of heaven as, oh, the day of my sorrows will go.

I couldn't care less. If I'm with Jesus, I don't care if I have sorrows until the end of my life. Jesus is heaven for me.

What are you looking forward to? Looking forward to being with Jesus or going to heaven? Where all my aches and pains will go. I don't care if I live with aches and pains for all eternity. If I'm with Jesus, that's enough.

I won't even think of my aches and pains if Jesus is there. I want to ask you my brothers the same question that Jesus asked Peter. Do you love me more than all these other things? Are you looking for comfort and ease and honor or is Jesus enough for you? Will you give to God that which costs you? Will you be a maximum Christian? Then the Lord will build his church through you.

However weak you may be. However ignorant you may be. However lacking in gifts you may be.

If you have this one quality and you say to the Lord, I'll never offer to God that which costs me nothing from now till the end of my life. Okay, we messed up our life. Bible says God overlooks the times of ignorance.

Acts 17 verse 30 beautiful verse. Acts 17 30 He overlooks all your times of ignorance but now he tells you to repent. Become a maximum Christian from today and it's amazing what God will do through you.

I'm a very shy person. I've never spoken in public as a little boy or even when I was in the military. I didn't have that gift but I love Jesus and I asked him to fill me with the Holy Spirit and it was amazing grace that he saved me and filled me with the Spirit and revealed things to me which I'm not worthy of.

I just fall before him every day and worship him. Sometimes I lie down flat on my bed with my face down and say Lord like John on the Isle of Patmos. I say Lord I want to spend all my days worshiping you so you can have all there is in my life.

I want to say it like the Apostle Paul at the end of my life. I fought a good fight. I finished my course.

I've kept the faith. That's the only life worth living. All the money you make, all the houses you build and all the honor you gain is absolutely rubbish compared to being able to say I fought a good fight.

I finished my course. I kept the faith. And Lord I did my little part to build your church on earth.

A church against which the gates of hell will not prevail. That's the only church worth building. God bless you all.

Patient these 3-4 days and listening to me. I pray they'll be eternal fruit from what you have heard in these days. Thank God for the internet where you can go and listen to all these messages all over again.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father as we bow before you we want you to lead us into a spirit filled life where Jesus becomes everything to us. Where we don't even think twice of making a sacrifice for you.

And we won't even call it a sacrifice when we think of the sacrifice you made for us on Calvary. Thank you Father. Let's bless these dear brothers and sisters and pray that there will be much fruit in the days to come from their lives.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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