

Where Is Your Mind Set

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a wholehearted disciple of Jesus Christ and turning the world upside down by living a life that is opposite to the world's values.

Duration: 58:31

Scripture: Philippians 3:18

Topics: "Discipleship", "Kingdom Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of wholehearted discipleship of Jesus Christ, focusing on loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind, loving one another, and loving our neighbors. It warns against being deceived by worldly distractions and urges believers to seek the kingdom of God first. The message highlights the need to prioritize heavenly things over earthly concerns, to set our minds on Christ, and to live in a way that reflects Christ's example of balance and devotion.

Transcript

Just like Jesus warned as we approach the end of time, we're going into a time of tremendous spiritual deception. While the world is concerned about an economic recession, that's not the most serious thing that would affect a wholehearted disciple of Jesus Christ. Because I'm not talking about those who just want to go to heaven and have accepted Christ.

I'm talking about the only type of person Jesus wanted to be a part of his church. Wholehearted disciples of Jesus Christ who love God with all their heart, all their soul, and all their mind, and who seek to love one another as Christ loved them, and who seek to love their neighbors as they love themselves. That's a wholehearted disciple.

And we may not have achieved there, but if that is our goal, we're really longing for it, then you're a wholehearted disciple. For a wholehearted disciple, economic recession is never a problem because Jesus said that if you seek the kingdom of God first, all the other earthly things we need will always be added to us. Every wholehearted disciple and his family will always have enough for food on the table, for a shelter over his head, and clothes to wear to educate his children.

Everyone may need not fear in the midst of the darkest times. If we live in Psalm 91, we don't have any fear of that. And when people are concerned about what's happening to their money, etc., I think of an Old Testament story where they took the ark, the Philistines took the ark of the Lord, you read about it in 1

Samuel, and they placed it in front of their idol Dagon.

And we read in the morning that Dagon had fallen down and broken. Today, it's Mammon that's fallen down. Why should that disturb the worshipers of the true and living God? If it does disturb you, you are a worshiper of Mammon.

That's pretty clear. But what we should be concerned about in this time is deception. Deception, spiritual deception, which is rampant.

There's more than one verse in Scripture which says that in the last days, there's going to be a tremendous amount of deceiving spirits that are going around. Jesus, when the disciples asked Jesus about what's the sign of the last days, the first thing he said was, don't let anybody deceive you. The very first thing.

And he repeated that two or three times in Matthew 24. Paul writes to Timothy saying, in the last days, the Holy Spirit expressly says, that means he's underlined it, saying that there'll be many deceiving spirits. You can wonder why a loving Heavenly Father allows deceiving spirits to move around among Christians.

It is to sift the chaff from the wheat. That's the reason. Don't you use a sieve? Particularly the wheat you buy in the shops in India.

You've got to use a sieve. And the rice and everything in to sift out, even the stones, etc. It's a very useful thing.

Deception is a sieve. It's something with which we sift out the rubbish. God preserves that which is good.

So we need not fear it. You're wholehearted. But it's good for us to see clearly what the scripture says.

Like I've repeatedly said in the last few days, weeks. If you do not study the Bible, you deserve to be deceived. If you do not study the scriptures in these last days, you deserve to be deceived.

Because God's given us his book. I mean, you can't say like people said six, seven hundred years ago, we don't have a Bible in our home. That was true.

Their printed Bibles became available in the last 500 years. But you've got not only one version, you've got many versions in your home. The question is whether we read it.

We ask the Holy Spirit to show us the truth of God. So this Sunday and the next three Sundays, God willing, I want to speak on the subject of turning the world upside down. And that's a phrase found in Acts of the Apostles, chapter 17.

It's in the King James Version. It says in verse six, these were words actually quoted by a lot of unbelievers in Thessalonica. When Paul came there and there were many Jewish people who had were in the synagogue and who were concerned that what Paul was preaching was so different from what they had heard in the synagogue for so many years.

Now, the reason why this is interesting to read these encounters of Paul with Jewish people in the synagogues and the Acts of the Apostles is because this is exactly how any true servant of God will find what he'll find in these last days when preaching in most churches. The same type of reaction. Because like the Jews drifted away from the truth of God from Moses' time in 1500 years, Christians have also

drifted away.

In fact, they drifted away pretty quickly. In 100 years, they drifted away, as we read in Revelation 2 and 3. But the drift has been that there have been a few ups and downs in the last 500 years ago and 200 years ago. But gradually, as we approach the end of time now, it's really Christians have drifted away from the truth of God, from the genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit, the genuine power of the Holy Spirit, missed out the central things of the Christian faith.

And so that's why it's interesting. Paul's encounter in the synagogue, it says in verse 2 of Acts 17, he, as it was his custom, he went for three sabbaths, reasoned with them from the synagogue, explaining, giving evidence that the Messiah had to suffer and rise again and that Jesus, whom I proclaim, is your Messiah, the one you're looking for. And then they, some of them were convinced, along with some God-fearing Greeks.

But the Jews, becoming jealous, and that's happening today also. Christians are jealous whenever they see a ministry that draws people away to godliness from their own churches. They're not worried whether somebody's becoming more godly.

They are jealous because somebody's leaving their dead, lifeless church. And these were people who were jealous that their dead, lifeless synagogue, people were leaving and joining up with Paul, who was preaching the truth of God. It's the same thing happening today.

And they took along some wicked men from the marketplace. It's amazing how when Christians backslide and become jealous, they'll gang up with criminal lawyers and all types of people, take people to court and do all types of things. Many terrible things happen when you backslide, and that's exactly what happened here.

They took along wicked men from the marketplace, criminals, gangsters, and formed a mob. Imagine using these weapons and still thinking that they are doing God's work. And they attacked the house of Jason, who was one of those whom Paul had converted.

They were seeking to bring him out of the people. When they did not find Paul and his team, they began dragging Jason out, and some brothers, and shouted, these men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. Now, even though that's an expression used by those unbelievers, I think it's very true.

I mean, these were religious people, and they found their whole religious system. These were not ungodly, heathen idol worshippers who were doing this. These were religious people who had the Bible of that time, which is the Old Testament.

And they couldn't understand this revelation because they hadn't studied the Bible. Paul was using the same Old Testament and showing them that Jesus was the Messiah, but they couldn't see it. And I find the same thing with many Christians today.

When we show them something from Scripture and show it plainly, there it is. They don't see it. They don't see it because they love that tradition more than Scripture.

They love the honor of men more than the honor of God. And anyone who seeks to please relatives, friends, pastors, priests, bishops, popes, et cetera, will never know the truth. And anyone who loves their

inherited culture and tradition more than the word of God will never know the truth.

They deserve to be deceived because they have placed something above God's word, that tradition, the opinions of men, culture, or whatever it is. And I tell you, a lot of us Indian Christians are guilty of placing Indian tradition in many, many areas above the truth of God's word. There's a verse in Psalm 138, I think it's verse three, which says, God has exalted his word above all his name.

Can you imagine something exalted above the name of God? The word of God. And when you dishonor God's word and put your tradition above that or culture or your opinions, I think you deserve to be deceived. I don't want to do that.

But if you put God's word on top, you will find that your way of life is the opposite of the way of life of the world. That's what I mean by turning the world upside down. Actually not upside down, but right side up.

Because Jesus came into a world that had become upside down the day Adam sinned. God created man to walk uprightly. The Bible says that in the Old Testament, the books of Moses, it says God created man to walk upright.

He didn't create man to walk upside down. And Adam was created to walk upright. But spiritually, the moment he sinned, first of all, by listening to his wife, instead of stopping his wife, he became upside down right there.

And his wife became upside down. And there were two upside down people who produced upside down children and grandchildren and forever after. And we have a whole world of millions and billions of people who are born upside down, live upside down.

In the midst of them came Jesus, living upright. It was 180 degrees different from the way everybody else was living. And he gathered together apostles, they gathered others who were gripped by this truth.

It was not just that Jesus died for their sins. There are millions of people who believe that. But that Jesus came to change our whole way of life.

As the meaning of repentance could be a turning about 180 degrees or turning right side up. So what these people said, Thessalonica said was absolutely true. They weren't turning the world upside down.

The only way difference was that they were actually turning the world right side up. Making man once again, live the way God originally intended him to. So if you're interested in that, you can listen.

And of course, our example is Jesus himself. He was the one man, the first man who walked on this earth, who in every area walked right side up. There were a few people in the Old Testament like Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, a few godly men who were somewhat opposite to the world, but not totally.

Jesus was the first person, totally, completely opposite to everything that this world stood for. And that's why he's the mediator of a new covenant and the beginner of a new creation. You know, the real church, I don't mean everybody who attends Sunday morning church services.

I mean, those who committed their life to Christ, who married to Christ, just like a bride, totally committed to a bridegroom, who are keeping themselves pure. I'm talking about them. Their whole value system is completely different.

Their way of thinking is completely different. From the way of the world. And so it's good for us to compare our way of thinking, our values with the values of the world to see for ourselves, whether the Holy Spirit has succeeded in turning us right side up, because he won't force anybody.

If you want to sort of come horizontal, just 90 degrees, he'll leave you there. And if you want to come all the way upright, like Jesus, he'll take you there. But always with your permission.

The Holy Spirit never does anything without your permission. That's one thing about God. That's one difference between God and the devil.

You've often heard me say that you read in the Bible about the Holy Spirit filling people and demons possessing people. You never read about the Holy Spirit possessing people, and you never read about demons filling people. The devil doesn't fill people, he possesses them.

The Holy Spirit never possesses people, he fills them. And the fundamental difference is this, that when a demon or a devil possesses somebody, he controls him completely. The person doesn't have any control over himself or herself.

We were in a conference last week where there was this demon possessed girl who was sitting quietly through the two hours of the conference. As soon as the conference is over, and we were all going down out and sitting there, she suddenly started rolling on the ground and screaming and all. It wasn't her, it was a demon.

She couldn't control it completely. But when the demon was cast out, then she was okay. Demons possess people, they control them.

And whenever you find something controlling you like that, that's not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives you freedom. Whenever a pastor or a preacher tries to control you, force you to give your money, that's demonic.

100% demonic. I have no hesitation to say that. It's ignorant, godless men who try to control others.

A godly man will give advice, but he will never tell people what to do. That's God's prerogative. The Bible says God is jealous for our spirit.

That means he doesn't want anybody else to come between him and us. Jesus is the one mediator between God and man. He doesn't want Mary or pastor or you or me or anybody else to come between him and one whom he purchased with his own blood, one who is his bride.

And a godly man recognizes that. I've often said to people, listen, the source of power is God. It's like an electric power point.

I'm only an extension cord. You know what an extension cord is. If you can't reach the plug point yourself, you put an extension cord and that passes the power.

But there's no power in the extension cord. You know that. That's a true servant of God.

He's only an extension cord. And if the person plugs in only to him and the man himself is not plugged into God, they're not going to get anything. And these people who are plugged into this extension cord should not remain plugged into the extension cord forever.

It's only an initial stage like little children. You know, we have to take care of them, do everything for them, but we don't do that forever. They should grow up and start doing things themselves.

So we are plugged into an extension cord, a servant of God who leads us to Christ. You should gradually come to the place where you plug into the socket yourself, and then you can become an extension cord for somebody else. That's God's will.

But anyone who makes you feel that he's the source of power, he's like that magician Simon in Samaria, you read in Acts chapter eight, who made himself known to people as a great power and all that. He was demon possessed, but he got baptized, not converted, pretended to say the right words, fooled even the evangelist Philip. Yeah.

Sometimes non born again people can fool believers. I mean, they can fool me too. They can't fool God.

And he got baptized. But when sometime later, Peter came along and exposed him. And that's one thing we have seen in this church through many years.

The people who come along after a while, they get exposed because God is in our midst. He's in the business of bringing more and more light and making people feel uncomfortable if they continue to live in their sin. And either they get offended and leave, or they get converted and repent.

You can get converted. So the message that the apostles proclaimed and that we proclaim is that Jesus came to make us right side up in Philippians in chapter three. Let me show you another verse, which refers to the same thing.

Philippians chapter three. This is a wonderful passage. I would encourage you to read this chapter very slowly because it gives us an inner look into the inner life of the apostle Paul that made him the man he was.

And I want to say, dear brothers and sisters, if you have these values, then only will you be able to turn the world upside down. Then only will your way of life be a rebuke to a world that's got another standard. If you have the same values that Paul had, where did Paul get it from? He got it from Christ.

Let me just show you a few things in Philippians three. I don't have time to show everything, but I want to say this. Verse seven, whatever things were gained to me, those things I counted lost the sake of Christ.

Everything that I once considered valuable, I've thrown away. It's all rubbish. I've thrown it into the trash can because I found Christ.

My dear brothers and sisters, if your conversion was not like that, you have started wrong. I'm not saying you're not born again, but you're like these babies born at six months premature. Some of their body parts are not fully developed inside.

They've got to be put in incubators. And sometimes all their life, they have to live with some type of medicines and treatment and all because some foolish evangelist pulled him out of the womb before he was ready to be born. You see, there's a period of preparation before a child is born.

And there's a period of preparation before a person can be really born again. He's got to repent. He's got to turn from his selfish, self-centered life to the measure in which he knows.

If he's not done that, if your conversion was not like this, all the things in this world that were valuable for me, I've thrown it in the trash can because I found Christ. It's like a girl who has dumped all her old boyfriends because she found at last the man she wanted to marry. I count everything as lost.

I've suffered the loss of all things and count them, verse 8, but rubbish. That's what I meant, throw it in the trash can. Everything else, everything.

And now I want to be found only in Christ. Paul spoke about being hidden in Christ, you know, in such a way that you can't see Paul. It's like something you put inside a box and you can't see it anymore.

It's inside, but you don't see it. Paul wanted to be like that in Christ so that only Christ would be seen. And there's another little secret that I've discovered.

In the world, there's a tremendous lust in people's hearts to be visible. They want to be seen. They want to be known.

They want to be recognized. They want to be honored. They want to be respected.

They want everybody to know their name. They want everybody to know them. If they do something, they want good.

They want everybody to know that they're the ones who did it. If they pray, they want people to know what men of prayer they are. If they fast, they want people to know.

If they give something to God, they want people to know. That's the world. To turn the upside down means that you want to be invisible.

Like Jesus, he would heal people and say don't tell anybody about it. Don't tell anyone. I'm so happy that you're healed.

That's why he said, I don't want people to know that I'm a great healer, Jesus said. I want people, I'm happy that you're healed, man. Don't tell anybody about it.

Just go home and rejoice that God did something for you. So different from today's healers, who when a fellow is not even healed properly, they put him in front of a microphone and tell him to give a testimony, which they force him to give. What can the poor person say on a stage except say I'm healed? He'd look a fool if he said anything else.

And the whole purpose is for the man to say, do you recognize what a man I am? So different from Paul. He said, I want to be found in him. I don't want any of my own righteousness to be seen or known.

I don't want any of that. I want that which comes from God. My aim in life is not to be a great apostle, verse 10.

My great aim in life is to know Jesus more and more. This is where you see today's Christianity is so different. Today's Christianity with its projects and its ministries and so many things which look so good, they are good.

But like that old English proverb says that good is the enemy of the best. And here's the best, that I may know him, the power of his resurrection in my inner life and the fellowship of his sufferings being

conformed to his death. Why suffering? Because when a man walks upright in the midst of a world that is upside down, he's going to invoke the anger and jealousy of a lot of other people.

I'll tell you this. If you live for God, God blesses you in such a way. God blesses you.

God blesses your family. God takes care of your need and you're healthy and strong. And God does so many wonderful things for you.

And people around you are just waiting for calamity to hit you and it doesn't hit you. And they're jealous. Even Christians, not even Christians, it could be Christians in your own church who are not properly converted.

I want to say this little guy, my dear brother, sister, please listen to me. If you desire even the slightest bit of evil for another person, you're in fellowship with the devil. If you're happy when some little bit of evil happened to somebody, maybe somebody you don't like, you are hand in hand with Satan.

Recognize that. I don't care which church you go to. I don't care if you've been in this church 25 years.

You're in hand in hand with Satan because you desire or you delight in some evil that happened to somebody else, some sickness, something worse, some sad thing that happened to his children or something like that. And you're happy. Dear me, what are you, a Christian or a demon? Ask yourself, wake up before you end up with all the other friends in hell.

It's serious. These are little ways in which God is showing you, you haven't really repented. How do I know? Because God showed me that many years ago.

And I found myself in the same. I'm not throwing stones at you. I myself found myself in that type of situation at certain times.

And I was a little happy when something evil happened to somebody I didn't like. And God said, that's evil. And I acknowledged it.

I said, Lord, that's a little bit of hell in my heart. I don't want it. I want all of my heart to be filled with heaven.

I don't want one little corner of hell or of the devil in any corner of me. Please take it seriously. Even if you don't do it for the glory of God, do it at least for your own good.

That's second best. The best is to do it for the glory of God. Lord, this honors you.

I don't want to do it. But if you don't do it for that motive, at least do it for your own good and the good of your family and your children. Rejoice when it goes well with others, when it goes well with other people's children and their family and their work and their business and everything else.

And grieve when it goes badly with others, even if they are your enemies. That is Christianity. When Jesus saw a soldier who had come to capture him and get somebody, his ear chopped off and fallen on the ground, the poor fellow screaming with pain, Jesus, he wasn't delighted that the fellow deserves it for coming to catch me.

No. He forgot about everything else and picked up that ear from the ground and fixed it back. Follow that example.

That is Christianity. Anything less than that is demonic. And don't hold hands with the devil, because if you keep going like that, you'll end up with him forever.

No matter what formula you repeated saying Jesus come into my heart, no matter how many hundreds of times you took part in the breaking of bread, I guarantee you'll go to hell if you desire evil for other people. I have no doubt about that. I can give it to you in writing.

Because that is not God's nature. To be born again means a turnaround. So keep that in mind, to know him and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, to be different from the world.

And therefore, the world troubles us in many ways. But he says, my goal is not what this world is seeking for. Verse 11, my goal is to attain to the resurrection from the dead, in order that I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.

I want to encourage you to read the Bible slowly. Let the Bible go through you more than you go through the Bible. Think of this just for a moment, slowly, in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Two resurrections, everybody's going to be resurrected. There's a resurrection of the righteous and resurrection of the wicked, Jesus said, only two. And he says, I want to attain to the right resurrection.

It's not only here, I'll show you another place where he said it. But what I want to point out is, you say, hey, I thought I don't have to do anything to attain to the resurrection of the dead. 25 years ago, I said, Lord Jesus come to my heart, that's it.

I've already attained to the resurrection of the dead. Which Bible do you have, by the way? Which version is that? Here is every version is this, in order that, so that. What did he do so that? I counted everything as rubbish, per se, that I may gain Christ.

His commitment was total. He was not like these married women who fool around with 20 other men. That's what I'm saying.

Even you wouldn't respect a married woman who fooled around with 20 other men. But Jesus doesn't even. If his bride is interested in a lot of things in the world other than him, and which are contrary to him.

If his bride is interested in watching movies that Jesus would never watch, watch television programs that Jesus would never watch, read books that Jesus would never watch, go after things that Jesus would never go after, speak in a way that Jesus, they would never say in Jesus presence, what type of bride is this? It's not a bride, it's a harlot. And the Bible calls it. James is one of those strong preachers in the Bible.

He says in James 4, verse 4 onwards, beloved brethren, you adulteresses. Brethren, adulteresses. I remember about 35 years ago when we started our church, I spoke on this.

This is not a new message. Brethren can be adulteresses. And somebody got a bit disturbed and went to him and asked him, what is that? Talking about believers living in adultery.

That's right. Spiritual adultery is worse than physical adultery. Worse because in physical adultery, you betray your husband.

In spiritual adultery, you betray Christ. Which do you think is more serious? Both are bad. But which do you think is more serious? If you see that, you will see how serious it is.

You men, as much as you want your wife to be faithful to you, ask yourself whether you're faithful to Jesus Christ, whether you're allowing yourself to be attracted. What would you think if your wife was attracted to your neighbor or to somebody else, some distant relative? Would you be happy about that? Do you think Jesus is happy with you when he sees you? Maybe you're not fooling around with him. Maybe your wife's not fooling around, but she's just attracted, likes to talk to you.

Maybe you're not actually living in sin, but you're attracted to that. You want to go there. I believe Christendom has drifted far, far.

You know, when the world watches certain types of movies because they're upside down and you watch those same movies, you're upside down too. What they value, you value. What excites them excites you.

All those violence and all that type of stuff excites them. It excites you too. Can you imagine Jesus sitting and watching excitedly all that violence and sex on the screen? You're married to another Jesus, brother, sister.

You probably will never hear that in any other church, but you'll hear it here. You are married to another Jesus, not the Jesus of the scriptures. Bible speaks about another Jesus and Paul was so concerned that the Corinthian believers who were born again, baptized the spirit and speaking in tongues and got all the gifts of the spirit.

He said, I fear that you guys are going after another Jesus. I fear that you are receiving another spirit. Who did he say that to? He didn't say that to nominal Christians.

There were hardly any nominal Christians in those early days. These are people who set the magic formula, Lord Jesus come into my heart, but they hadn't counted everything as lost for the sake of Christ. And those are the people, you know, who are the people who fall over the edge of a cliff? Those are the people who are walking near the edge of the cliff all the time.

They're the ones who one day will fall over. I want to stay as far away from the world as possible when I walk and not to find out how much closer can I go to the edge of the cliff without falling off? How much closer can I go? Sometimes in question answer sessions, young people ask this, can I do this without being worldly? Can I do this? Can I do this? That's not my question. My question is how far do I want to, how far can I stay away from that cliff? I don't want to fall over.

I don't want to take a risk. It's an attitude of mind. You know, it's like a woman who really is in love with another man, but who got this arranged marriage to somebody else.

You know, in numerous cases like that in India, the poor woman's actually madly in love with somebody else, but couldn't marry him. The parents arranged the marriage to Mr. X. And she stays with Mr. X. What to do? Society says you've got to stay with him, but her heart is after that fellow. And secretly she'll phone him up.

And this is exactly the condition of many who say they are born again. Their marriage to Christ is an arranged marriage. It's not a love marriage.

Paul's was a love marriage. He didn't love anybody else. My marriage to Christ was a love marriage.

I love him more than I love my wife. I've always loved her for 41 years. I want to ask you, if your marriage to Christ is a love marriage or an arranged one, because you want to go to heaven or you want to escape hell, Paul's was total.

And why did he do this? I want to count everything as rubbish. I want to know him. I want to know the power of his resurrection.

I want to know the fellowship of something. It's so that one day I can attain to the resurrection from the dead. I want to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

I don't believe it just by saying some magic formula. I believe it's by a passionate devotion to him that one day he will come for his bride and he will gather those who are devoted to him. That's the type of wife you want to marry.

That's the type, the way you want your wife to be passionately devoted to you. Christ is no different. You want someone who's passionately devoted to him and who will not fool around with the world.

And he says, I'm pursuing this. I haven't attained it. I haven't become perfect.

He hasn't yet totally become like Christ. But he says, let us who are perfect according to the level of our conscience, verse 13, have this attitude. And listen to this, verse 15, sorry, verse 15 in the middle.

If, here's a good prayer to pray. If in anything, Lord, I have a different attitude, will you please reveal it to me? Lord, if in anything, I have a different attitude, which I have not yet seen, please reveal it to me. I pray that so often.

I say, Lord, is there anything in my life that's displeasing to you, making you sad? Is there any area where I'm seeking my own still, where I'm not upright? I want to be. I'm not perfect, but I want to be. If you want to be, that's fine.

Then you will get there. But if you don't even want to be, and you're not even asking God to show you where you're not perfectly upright, God will never show you. I'll tell you one thing.

God will definitely show you the truth about yourself if you have a passionate desire for it, and if you won't get offended when he tells you. I remember a brother in this church came to me once and said, Brother Zach, I want you to give me a spiritual checkup. I said, you really want it? I said, I'll give it to you.

You sure you want it? He said, yes. And I gave it to him. In a few weeks, he left the church.

Why was that? Why do you think he left? He got offended with the x-ray report. He got offended with the scan report. It wasn't what he expected.

It's like that joke I heard about a man who said, the doctor said, after seeing this x-ray, that I had to go through a very expensive surgery, but since I didn't have enough money, he just touched up the x-ray and gave it back to me and said, you're okay. Then I didn't have to go through surgery. You want that? That's sad, but that's exactly what many Christians are looking for.

Some preacher who will touch up the x-ray and say, you're okay, brother. You're a wonderful brother. You're a wonderful sister.

You're one of the best brothers and sisters in the church. Yeah. Pray to God and say, Lord, if I have a different attitude, please show it to me before it's too late.

Many times I've said this fervently to God. I said, Lord, don't give me any surprises when I see you face to face. Don't tell me that day about something you don't tell me right now.

If I'm deaf, shout in my ear, break my bones or wake me up if I'm, you know, carnal and not even knowing it. Speak to me at night in my dreams. If I'm too busy during the day to listen to you, I want to know.

And that's how God has shown me thing after thing after thing about myself, not about other people. I'll tell you one thing, everything that I preach is what I've discovered in myself first. Because in my flesh, there dwells no good thing.

And as I've discovered those no good things, I sought to cleanse myself by the power of the Holy Spirit, like it says in 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness or the flesh. Don't ask the Lord to cleanse you. Cleanse ourselves.

It's like I heard of a brother who once told the Lord, Lord, the devil's harassing me. Will you resist him and drive him away? And the Lord told him, no, I'm not supposed to do that. You're supposed to do that.

So the Bible says you resist the devil and he'll flee from you. You can't ask God to do what you're supposed to do. Can you ask God to do the obedience which you're supposed to do? No, I can't ask.

If I'm so lazy and say, God, you do everything, it's not going to happen. The Bible says you resist the devil and he'll flee from you. The same way in 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1, it says you cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh.

He will cleanse you from your past sins. That, of course, I can do nothing about. But I have to cleanse myself from the filthiness of the flesh I find in myself.

If you have a wrong attitude, if you find something in you, which is the same sense of values that the world has, cleanse yourself. You take one step and God will take the others. I heard of a young man who came to a man of God once and said, brother, I'm so lazy in the morning.

I can't get out of bed to read the Bible. And will you please pray for me that I can get out of bed? And he said, if you promise when you wake up in the morning that you put one leg outside of your bed, I will pray and God will help you to put the other leg outside also. But if you're not even willing to do that and you want God to lift you out of your bed and keep you on the chair, I'm not going to pray for that.

Because that will be possession. Demon possession. The spirit never possesses.

He fills, he gives us strength. It's like the electricity board you apply when you put a new building, you apply for electric power and they give you the power. Now, if you ask the electricity board, please come and put on the switches for me every day, they're not going to do that.

You got to put on the switch yourself. We give you the power, but you got to put on the switch in the rooms you want. That's sensible.

That's exactly what God says. You've got to use the power of the spirit I give you to get rid of that selfishness, self-centeredness in your life. So he goes on to say in verse 17, brethren, join in following my example.

I love men who can say that. There are very few men in my life who've been able to say, follow my example. You know that every true servant of God should be able to say that.

Follow me as I follow Christ. That's not pride. That's humility.

I'm not yet perfect. I haven't reached the top of the mountain. The mountain like Mount Everest is about 10,000 meters.

I haven't reached 10,000 meters. Maybe I'm 1,000 meters. But I was at zero once.

1,000 meters, I've got a long way to go. But I'm telling the fellows who are at zero or 200 meters, hey, fellas, follow me. Let's climb this mountain.

Is anything wrong with that? That's not pride. It's a mountaineer encouraging others to climb the mountain. He can't say to the people who are ahead of him at 5,000 feet, follow me.

They are ahead of him. He can follow them. But to say to people, don't look at me, don't follow me, that means you're at the foot of the mountain.

That's why you're saying, don't look at me. You shouldn't be at the foot of the mountain. You should be climbing.

All the time, every year, we should find us a little higher than we were last year. It's like when God remade the earth in Genesis 1. Every day, the earth was a little better than the previous day. The second day, it was better than the first day.

The third day, it was still better. Fourth day, fifth day, sixth day. Finally, on the sixth day, it was perfect.

That's progression. That's how God remakes us every day. It should be better.

Certainly every year. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4, 16, that he was renewed every day. Every day, boy, I want that life to reach the standard that Paul reached where he said, I'm being renewed every single day.

Every single day, I'm becoming a little more Christ-like than I was yesterday. Ask your wife if that is true. Ask your husband if that is true.

They are the best judges, or your children, or perhaps a servant in your home. They will know whether you're becoming a little Christ-like. There's a verse in Proverbs which says even your animals will know.

In those days, they had animals. The animal suddenly finds his master is not swearing at him anymore. What happened? He got converted yesterday.

He made Jesus Lord of his life. Even the animals will know, it says, when the dogs will know in your house when you got converted. You're becoming a little more Christ-like.

And your children, and your servants, everybody will know. Something's happened. Something's happening.

And people in the church, as they see you and mingle with you, they'll see that you haven't lowered your standards one bit. You haven't become a compromiser, but you become more gracious. You become more yielding.

You're not stubborn anymore like the old days. Those are the things. Brethren, join in following my example, and not only my example.

There are a few others like me who are walking in the same pattern that I've just spoken about. In contrast, this is the verse I want you to see now. In contrast to all these people who are a good example, there's another group of people, and he's talking about believers.

I have to weep when I tell you about them. I have to say I haven't wept enough. I've wept a lot for myself, but I haven't wept enough for other people like Paul could.

That was a fantastic standard. I want to get there. You begin by weeping for yourself, for your sins, for your failures, for your un-Christ likeness, but when you get to Paul's level, follow my example, you begin to weep when other people are not becoming Christ-like.

Boy, what a place to reach. Do you want to get there? I want to get there. Paul was so strict when he spoke, but behind the scenes, he would weep for these people who were ruining their lives by living for money and the world.

He said, I tell you, weeping, they are enemies of the cross of Christ. That means they haven't understood that the cross of Jesus put a death blow to this whole world system. Their end is destruction.

Who are the enemies of the cross of Christ? Those who make their stomachs their God, for whom food is everything. One way to find out whether your stomach is your God, one way, there are many ways, is to ask yourself whether you get upset with your wife if she made a mistake in the cooking one day. Now, don't misunderstand me.

To say, pass the salt is not a sin. You feel you need a little more salt than was in the cooking. That's okay, but to have a complaining attitude, even though you don't say it in so many words, why in the world do you always do it like this? Why can't you cook any better or what is worse? Why can't you cook like somebody else's wife? That's the spirit of adultery, by the way.

When you compare your wife's cooking with somebody else's cooking, there's a spirit of adultery there. You may not know it, but there's a spirit of adultery there. But you are comparing your wife's cooking with somebody else's.

You say, no, that's not adultery. Okay. May the Lord give you light one day.

Adultery is a thick onion. There are many, many layers. Maybe you haven't reached that layer where comparing your wife's cooking with another person's cooking is adultery.

Okay. Maybe you're at a much earlier layer where only hugging somebody else's wife is adultery. If you're faithful, God will lead you down to the lowest layer of that onion.

Jesus spoke about lusting with the eyes. That's one layer. There are other layers underneath, which if you ask the Lord to show you.

If you go by the letter, you stop there. I don't go by the letter. I go by the spirit.

The spirit leads you way beyond the even the letter of Matthew 5. So that's how you discover, one way you discover your stomach is your God. You're not upset because the food is not up to your expectations. A man who makes his stomach his God is an enemy of the cross of Christ.

That's what the Bible says, not me. Who are these people who are enemies of the cross of Christ? A man who worships food. He says grace, he gives thanks, but actually there are many, many people who give thanks and immediately thereafter grumble about something on the plate.

I can't understand that. He just gave thanks two minutes ago that food is their God and they will even miss a meeting because they got to eat. It's tragic.

You miss a meeting because you see you haven't had your dinner. Food is your God. I'm not preaching when I don't practice.

I've never missed a meeting in 50 years because I wanted to eat. Dear brothers and sisters, these bodily passions can be another husband, another boyfriend who draws you away from Christ, whose stomach is their God and who glory in their shameful things. I like the message translation.

Their praise isn't how much they belch. They belch and belch and then that's the thing they glory in, the thing they should be ashamed of. All they can think of is their appetites.

Their mind is set on earthly things. Look at that phrase. Their mind is set on earthly things, but they're believers.

They are the same way upside down like the rest of the world. They are enemies of the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ.

Here's the verse. It says when you really accept the cross of Christ in your life, it turns you right side up. Your mind is not set on earthly things.

You use earthly things. Like Jesus used money. He worked as a carpenter to earn his living.

And when he was a full-time worker for three and a half years, he received money. He never asked people for money. He never made his needs known to anybody, but he was supported as we read in Luke chapter eight, verse two and three by certain rich women, supported him with money.

He received it, but he never was dependent on anybody. So he's an example for those who work and earn their living as a carpenter. He's an example for those who are dependent on their parents to support them when he was a little child.

And he's also an example for full-time workers who are supported by others in the last three and a half years of his life. He's an example for everybody. The godly way a man of God should live upright, using earthly things, but never hankering after them.

Never dependent on any human being, dependent only on his heavenly father. He needed to sleep. And I love that passage in the gospels, in Mark's gospel, where it says, have you read it? When he was in a boat, he put his head on a cushion.

He used a pillow. He wasn't one of those ascetic Spartan people. Yeah, who wants a pillow? I sleep on the wooden board.

Who wants a comfortable bed? I sleep on the floor. He wasn't like that. I mean, he was ready to sleep on the, he slept on the Mount of Olives sometimes.

Comfortable beds never meant anything to him. He could sleep on the ground. But if he had a comfortable bed, he'd use it.

That's Christianity. He was called a glutton and a wine-bibber because they would ask him, Lord, would you like a second helping? Yeah, I like that. Give me that second helping.

You know, spiritual people are not supposed to have a second helping. You know that, where you act spiritual just for your honor. You love it so much, but you say, they'll think I'm a glutton.

So I better not eat. And you tell a lie. I don't want that.

Now, if you deny yourself because you feel there's not enough for the other people around the table, that's a good thing. Like I often say, when you go to some poor person's house, don't take a second helping of the dessert or the ice cream, because they may have got it only for you. And if you refuse a second helping, the children behind the curtain will say hallelujah, because they'll get it after you leave.

So be thoughtful, be considerate. But you don't have to be a liar, pretending that spiritual people don't have an appetite. It's making your appetite a God.

Jesus was so balanced. He could eat, he could take a second helping. But remember, all of you who are now happy to take a second helping, let me tell you the other side of Jesus, he could fast for 40 days.

Got it? Be balanced. Not 40 days, but fast once in a while at least. Don't make your appetite your God.

Yeah, there's more to this. We can look in the coming Sundays. But I hope you've got an idea how the things that this world sets their mind upon is what makes them upside down, whose mind is set on earthly things.

When the cross of Christ comes, it turns us the other way around. See Colossians chapter 3 and verse 1 and 2. If you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on this earth.

That's the opposite of what we read in Philippians. Set your mind. It's not a question of using your mind occasionally for earthly things, like I've used the picture of a rubber band very often.

Here is heavenly things up here. Earthly things are down here. Your mind, like the rubber band, must be tied to the heavenly things.

You stretch it to the earthly things for your eight hours of work, to get admission for your children in college, to get food, cook food, to look after your babies, do all types of earthly things, get clothes for your children, so many things, that once that's all over, when all your earthly things are over, the rubber band is released, comes back to heavenly things. That's how it should be. But people in the world, the worldly person is the man who's got the rubber band tied to this end, to the earthly things, and it's occasionally

stretched on Sunday morning for two hours, like right now, to heavenly things.

And once you go back from here, bang, back again to some earthly thing that you're occupied with. Mind is set. There's a difference between our using our mind set on heavenly things, but we use it for new, maybe you have to spend 12 hours a day sometimes at work.

That's fine, but your mind is not set on it. You can keep that rubber band stretched for 12 hours to earthly things, or 16 hours, because even a child is sick, maybe 24 hours. But then it's released, and you're free from all those things.

What are you thinking of? Is it earthly things, or is it heavenly? Beware of the movies, and of television, and of advertisements, which are the ways by which the devil makes your mind set on earthly things. He tells you, you need this, and you need that, you need that, and you can't do that. You keep your mind occupied with this, this, this, this, this, this, this, and they mean so much to you.

May God help us to be free. Let's pray. The Holy Spirit has come to set us free.

Jesus came to open the prison doors, so that there may not be any prisoners inside. But even though the prison doors are open, some prisoners prefer to stay inside the prison. That's up to them.

You won't drag them out. But I want to tell you, the prison doors are open. You can be free.

You can walk out. Jesus has opened the prison doors. Heavenly Father has been bowed before you.

I pray that everyone here will have at least one thing, if not more, that they've got to think about when they go away from here, where they've got to rearrange and reorder their priorities, that there'll be some definite result in their life, as a result of what they've heard today. Be humbly asked.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/ZMFTTrGHJWB0.mp4>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/where-is-your-mind-set/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net