

Why We Say Hallelujah

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being careful with our words and not using meaningless repetition, and warns against the dangers of Babylonian Christianity and the need for discernment.

Duration: 58:13

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11

Topics: "Pure Devotion", "Godly Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life where the Lord God Almighty reigns in every area, highlighting the need to avoid the temptations of seeking money, honor, and power, and to maintain a pure devotion to Christ. It discusses the significance of saying 'hallelujah' for the right reasons, focusing on the destruction of corrupt practices and the pursuit of a genuine relationship with God. The message urges believers to seek the rule of God in every aspect of their lives, striving for continuous growth and perfection in Christ.

Transcript

Praise the Lord. We thank God that he's on the throne, and that's the message that we must always proclaim. A very common expression, which is the most common word that all Christians of all denominations use? Hallelujah.

Do you know where the word hallelujah comes in the New Testament? It comes frequently in the Psalms, and most Christians that I know live under the old covenant. I don't even have a clue what the new covenant is all about. One proof is, as we have often said, they are defeated by sin.

And the other is, they have more understanding of what the book of Psalms says about hallelujah, not the New Testament. Do you know where hallelujah comes in the New Testament? The book of Revelation chapter 19, it's almost at the end of the New Testament, that it occurs for the very first time. And so, it's good for us to have a look where it comes.

Most Christians say hallelujah in a meaningless way. Most people that I've met, hallelujah, hallelujah, glory, they don't even know what glory means. Amen, it's not a meaningless word.

Amen means it will be so. It's an expression of faith. So, Jesus taught us to be careful not to say idle words.

He told us don't use meaningless repetition in prayer, because that's the mark of heathen people. So, I would say most believers are like the heathen, when they meaninglessly say hallelujah, or glory, or amen. I think a lot of words we sing in our songs and hymns, if you don't mean them, I don't know whether you realize you're saying meaningless words to God.

I know in my younger days, I did that a lot, because I did not have good teachers in the church to teach me to be careful about what I sang. And I had to discover those things myself, like many other things in the Christian life. But if you're serious about God, and you really fear Him, He will reveal these amazing truths to you.

And it's not really an amazing truth that we have to be careful about the words we say. We have to be very careful about every word that we sing. That's why, personally, I never sing a song where I address God as Jehovah.

I know there are songs like that, and when others sing it, I keep quiet. Because I don't call God Jehovah, I call Him Dad, or Father. Why do I do that? Because Jesus said, call God Father.

I take Jesus' words seriously, most Christians do not. I'm just giving you a simple example. When we talk about God, we can talk about Him as Jehovah.

But when you address Him, I don't address Him as Jehovah. But I find that most Christians, and I think a lot of people in CFC too, do not have sufficient reverence for God to be careful about the words they speak in prayer or in song. And part of the reason could be that they're not really filled with the Holy Spirit.

Because the Holy Spirit brings within us tremendous reverence for God. I never knew what reverence for God was until I was really filled with the Holy Spirit. Because that's what He brings, a tremendous reverence for the Father.

And if that has not come in your life, my dear brothers and sisters, you know what you should do? First of all, check whether you're born again. That also may not be true, that some of you are not born again. Is it possible for somebody to sit in CFC many years and not be born again? Absolutely.

You know, for example, what's the difference between a plant and a rock? If you see a plant and a rock here, you come back ten years later, the rock will be the same size. The plant would have become a tree. And when I see believers sitting in CFC for ten, twenty years and not growing spiritually, I say they're dead.

A rock is dead. And if they're dead, they're not born again. Born again people grow.

All children grow. Anything that's got life grows. And that's why I say my conviction is there are lots of people in CFC who are not born again.

There's no life in them. They're born again by the standards of the dead Babylonian Christendom, not according to God's Word. So that's the first thing.

The second thing you need to check is whether you're filled with the Holy Spirit. Don't be satisfied till God Himself gives you an assurance that you're filled with the Holy Spirit. You're missing out on the most important thing on earth.

If you're just satisfied that you've got acceptance with others in CFC and everybody respects you here, that's garbage. It's garbage. Just that everybody thinks you're a good brother or sister.

What's that worth? I mean, I don't care for that. I don't care that people respect me in CFC or any other church. I want to live before God and say, Lord, what am I going to stand before you and say in the final day that a lot of people respected me? Garbage.

I want to know whether I fulfilled God's purpose on earth. And I tell you, those are the only ones who are really going to stand before the Lord with joy in the final day. And you may be old.

It doesn't make a difference. You can be a young person and take your Christian life seriously. So I was talking about this meaningless repetition that a lot of people use when they say, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

And particularly in Pentecostal charismatic circles, it's very popular. I think they use more meaningless repetitions of Hallelujah than any person on earth. But Jesus told us very clearly, when you pray, do not use meaningless repetition.

For that, maybe I should look at that verse there before I go to Revelation 19, since some of you may not be familiar with it. It's in Matthew chapter 6, the command of Jesus. Not a suggestion, but a command.

When you pray, don't be as the hypocrites. Verse 5, Matthew 6, 5. That means don't pray in order to be seen by men. We have to be very careful when we pray in public that I'm really praying to God and not praying to impress people.

If you check your own prayer, you know, any time you pray in public, I would advise you, go home and ask yourself, or immediately after the prayer finishes, ask yourself, how much of that prayer did I pray directly to God? And how much of that prayer was prayed to impress all the people here? You may get a surprise. To be seen by men. And secondly, he said, when you pray, you know, lock yourself up in secret.

And we can do that right in a public gathering like this, where I shut the door of my mind to all the people around me. That's one reason we close our eyes. You don't have to close your eyes when you pray, there's no law like that.

But the only reason I shut my eyes is to shut off other distractions. That's the only reason. It's like shutting the door.

And I'm going to shut the door of my mind and then pray to God. And the other thing he said in verse 7 was, don't use meaningless repetitions. Hallelujah, glory, amen.

Those are wonderful words. But what Jesus said is, mean it every time you say it. You can say hallelujah 20 times a day, provided you mean it.

Otherwise it's a meaningless repetition. Because he says, that's the mark of the heathen. The heathen use meaningless repetitions.

And they think they'll be heard because they say it so often. You know, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. It's a mark of a heathen who thinks he's a Christian.

Now when you come to Revelation 19 and see how they say hallelujah in heaven, it's very interesting. Revelation 19, it says, not hallelujah, full stop. That's the point.

Hallelujah means praise the Lord. Hallel, it's a Hebrew word, it's not English. Yah, at the end of hallelujah.

Hallel is praise the Lord. Yah is short for Yehovah. It's hallelujah, hallelujah.

Praise the Lord in Hebrew. So praise the Lord is good. What are you praising the Lord for? Salvation, Revelation 19, hallelujah, because salvation and glory and power belong to our God.

And because his judgments are true and righteous. And he has judged Babylon, the great harlot. That's very interesting.

Very, very interesting. And the first time the word hallelujah comes in the New Testament is thanking God for destroying harlot Christianity. Corrupt Babylonian Christianity, which was interested in honor and money and worldly values.

Heaven rejoices and says hallelujah, that's destroyed. I don't know whether we understand how seriously God takes corrupt Babylonian Christianity. I also feel there are a lot of people in CFC who think, well, we're all Christians, you know, we're all believers.

Well, you've got to see heaven's perspective. And see how they rejoice when they see this adulterous Christianity. And like you've heard me say, Babylon is not any particular denomination.

So many people for many years would say Babylon was the Roman Catholic Church. It's easy to put the blame on them. But Revelation 18, 17 says Babylon, the mother, has got many daughters.

Many daughters. That's exactly what it says. Babylon, the great mother of harlots.

Mother of harlots. And abominations of the earth. So there are many daughters of harlots too.

And hallelujah comes the first time in the New Testament in relation to the destruction of harlot Christianity. In James chapter 4, it tells us what harlot Christianity is. So many people have their definitions.

But it's good to get it from scripture. James 4, verse 4, you adulteresses. Don't you know? Now, who are these adulteresses? If you read the earlier chapters of James, he's talking to believers.

You beloved brethren. That's how he addresses them in chapter 2, verse 1. My brethren. In some other places, beloved brethren.

My brethren. You adulteresses. Boy, James was... These first century apostolic preachers, they were fiery.

They couldn't care less for what people thought about them. Because they were not paid pastors. They were not there to impress people or get a salary or get any approval or get invited to some conference to be a speaker.

They were speaking as God's mouthpiece. Says, my brethren. You harlots.

You adulteresses. James 4, verse 4. He doesn't say what some people are adulteresses. You adulteresses.

Don't you know? That friendship with the world is enmity towards God. And don't you know that anyone who wants to be a friend of this world makes himself an enemy of God. So this is harlotry.

Harlotry is pretending to be the bride of Jesus Christ. But really being interested in this other man called the world. This is a picture in the Bible of the church as the bride of Jesus Christ waiting for her heavenly bridegroom to come.

But while she's waiting for the heavenly bridegroom to come, if she fools around with the world system, she's a harlot. That is Babylonian Christianity. And I want to tell you, that's not found in any one denomination.

It's individual. You can be a harlot Christian sitting in the most spiritual church in the world. Because it's an individual thing.

We can't become spiritual by sitting in a spiritual church. Because it's the personal choices you make seven days a week that determine whether you're a spiritual harlot, a prostitute, or a virgin bride for Jesus Christ. So it's very interesting that Hallelujah comes the first time.

And I wish everybody who said Hallelujah on earth today would remember that. Hallelujah. That corrupt, adulterous, harlot Christianity is going to be destroyed.

Think of that. If every time I say Hallelujah, I'm going to remember, well the first time they say Hallelujah in heaven in the New Testament is when harlot Christianity is destroyed. Is that why I'm saying Hallelujah right now? Very often it's the opposite.

Man can say Hallelujah. I got more money. There's a danger I have seen even in a lot of folks in our own church.

I remember the early days when many of us were very poor. We had more time for God. We had no money to spend in restaurants and television and so many other things like that.

But things have changed. We have a lot more money now, a lot more time to waste going here and there, traveling here and there. And less time for God, less time for Scripture.

And one way to do that is check yourself. Compare yourself with the olden days when you had less. Maybe your salary was less.

Did you read the Bible more those days? Did you have more time for prayer perhaps? So you see what I'm saying? Money has a tremendous... It's not an evil thing. Money is a very useful thing. But we've got to put it where Jesus put it, under His feet.

If we don't make money our servant, we'll become harlots. There's no doubt about it. It's not the amount you earn.

It's a question of where it is. Does it sit on your head or is it under your feet? Like they say, fire is a good servant but a very bad master. You know fire, we use it every day in our stoves to cook food.

Every day we're using fire. You can't cook food without fire. Either an electric fire or a gas fire.

But if you leave it uncontrolled, you'll burn up your house. That's why you've got to control it. And it's exactly like that.

If you don't control money and make it your servant, say, I'm going to turn you off when I want to turn you off. Don't you do that with fire? You keep it burning the whole day in your gas stove? No, the times when you turn it off, you say, I'm not going to be interested in fire now. I've got other things to do.

If you can control money like that, it's a wonderful servant. But if you cannot control it, I tell you, I can tell you in Jesus' name it will destroy you. It's probably already started destroying you.

And you don't realize it. It's time to wake up. Because if you have the time, you'll read about Babylon in chapter 18.

It's all about money. The whole of chapter 18. And at the end of it comes chapter 19.

Hallelujah! This has been destroyed. This corrupt system that corrupted God's people. You say, why does God allow it? Because you have to be tested.

You know, even Jesus had to be tested with money. Money is part of the glory of this world. Honor is part of the glory of this world.

To have power over people. I've seen elders who want to have power over people. Pastors who want to rule others.

Who want others to keep consulting them about every little thing. To find God's will in all these television preachers who get money out of people. It's part of this world system.

I don't know whether you see that. I know some people in CFC who admire some of these television preachers. Men and women.

They say, boy, what wonderful things he teaches. What wonderful things she teaches. But they've sat in CFC so long that they're not able to gauge the spirit of these people who are preaching.

Imagine spending hours listening to someone and you're not able to gauge his spirit. What is his spirit? Do you know that that spirit can get into you if you listen to the person long enough? We say, well, the teaching is so good. Well, that's exactly how the devil comes.

The Bible says, do you know that the Bible says that Satan's agents are ministers of righteousness? Have you read that in 2 Corinthians 11? That Satan's preachers preach righteousness. So how in the world will you distinguish between a servant of God and a servant of Satan? I'll tell you. For me, it's very easy.

I say, what is that person's attitude to money? That's all I need to find out. That's all I need to ask. But I'm amazed that some of you sitting here after so many years still don't have that basic discernment.

And that's why your life is so shallow. That's why you have not become a mighty man of God or a mighty woman of God after having listened to God's word for 25 years here. You could have been if you had concentrated on the things that were eternal instead of being fooled by all these television preachers whom you listen to.

Because they teach something good. They're preaching righteousness. Read 2 Corinthians 11 where Paul says, I fear for you because you will not remain a virgin for Christ.

You'll be a harlot, he says. Because like the devil deceived Eve, he will deceive you by his preachers of righteousness. I would encourage all of you to study 2 Corinthians 11 and see how he says there, I, Paul, he says, I want to show that I'm different from all these people by the fact that I'm not interested in money like them.

It's a wonderful chapter. I mean, if you're serious about being free from the Babylonian spirit and getting some discernment on all these preachers who preach righteousness but who don't have the right spirit, 2 Corinthians 11 is the chapter for you. And Revelation chapter 18.

See, the thing is there are hardly anybody speaking against all these things in our world today. There are hardly anybody saying, Hallelujah, this thing's got to be destroyed. Because everybody loves money.

Everybody loves honor and power. When it says, whoever is the friend of the world, he's not talking about worldly people. That's impossible.

God so loved the world that he gave his son. Do you know that God loved the people in the world much more than you and I do? Do you know that Jesus was a friend of sinners much more than any of us is a friend of sinners? It's not wrong to be a friend of sinners. It's not wrong to be a friend of worldly relatives, worldly people in our office, and worldly neighbors, and worldly Jesus would be friends with all of them.

But not one of them would be able to influence him in that direction. He would influence them towards God. I mean, if you find that your worldly friends are influencing you towards the world, then you better drop them immediately.

That's not the type of friend of sinners that we are to be. But if you are influencing them towards God like Jesus, that's the right way to be a friend of sinners. That's the right way to love the people in the world.

But when the New Testament uses the word world, it uses it in two different ways. One is the people of the world, and the other is the world system. There's a whole system in this world which is controlled by the devil from his headquarters in the second heavens.

It speaks about these evil forces in the heavenlies who are controlling like satellites from the heavenlies, controlling things on earth, influencing all the media, determining how movies are produced, and determining how to capture people's minds with continuous meaningless TV serials in different languages. It will look so innocent, or if people avoid that, to see if we can control them through television preachers. Just make sure that they just get a lot of information in their head, but never overcome sin.

You see, if you don't believe me, I don't have cable television, but I did take it for at least a year or two to listen to all these TV preachers, every single one of them, because I wanted to know what Christians in our country are listening to. And I listened to every one of them. And I'll tell you, I never heard from any one of them, a single time, how I could overcome the lust of my eyes and stop lusting after women.

None of them told me. None of them ever told me how to stop raising my voice and overcoming anger against my wife or husband or anybody else. Nobody told me that, which proves to me that they themselves don't have victory over these things.

None of them ever told me how I could be free from the love of money. None of them ever told me how the Apostle Paul never took money from people, but preached freely. How is it all these important things in Scripture are left out which Jesus and the Apostles speak about? That's amazing.

And I'm surprised. How is it that people in CFC who have heard all these things for ages still admire these preachers and travel here and there to listen to them? Imagine that. Dear brothers and sisters, have you got any discernment? Or are you like these little babies who put mud and rocks and all in their mouth, just like bananas and sweets, they'll also put mud and screws and nuts and all in their mouth? I find a lot of CFC people are like that.

Oh, that's a good message. That's a nice-tasting screw. Let me put it into my mouth.

Oh, that mud. It's pretty good taste. I'm amazed at it.

I mean, you're not surprised when a child does it, but imagine if you find a 20-year-old chap doing that. He says, something's wrong. That's what surprises me.

New people who come to CFC, I'm not surprised if they're taken up by these things because they don't know the difference between mud and good food. But people have been here so long. How is that? That's why it's important to see this.

Her smoke, the second time, verse 2, verse 3, Revelation 19, 3. A second time, they said, Hallelujah. Again, the same subject. Babylon's smoke rises up forever and ever.

And they all bowed down, the 24 elders, and said, Amen. Let it be so. It will be so.

Hallelujah. The three hallelujahs, the first three hallelujahs in Scripture. And the 24 elders said, Amen, Hallelujah.

Are all related to the destruction of adulterous Christianity. And if you wonder why you've heard me all these years speak against it, it's because I want to be in tune with the elders in heaven, and not the elders on earth. That's why.

I want my spirit to be in tune with the elders in heaven. You know, and have you seen people sometimes tightening a guitar when they're playing together, just to make sure it's the right, in tune with the other instruments? Otherwise it will all sound jarring. One chap is on one key, another chap is on another.

And I don't want to be jarring when I speak or when I live. I want to be in tune with heaven all the time. And the only way I can be in tune with heaven is if I read the Scriptures.

Let me exhort you, my brothers and sisters, what you heard from your early Christian life. Read the Bible more than you watch television. Read the Bible and study it.

That will teach you a lot more. The Holy Spirit can teach you a lot more than all these television preachers. And you won't go astray.

So, then he goes on to say another hallelujah. Revelation 19 and verse 6, I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude. There's a sound of mighty waters, many waters, sound of mighty peals of thunder saying, hallelujah again because the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns.

And the bride of the land has made herself ready. That's the next hallelujah. So, you have three hallelujahs for the destruction of Babylon.

And then a hallelujah that the bride, there's a little group of people on earth who have kept themselves for years from being polluted by this adulterous spirit in Christianity. They were small in number. They were despised.

They did not have the money to spend on getting time on television. It costs millions of rupees. The bride of Christ doesn't have that much money.

The Apostle Paul wouldn't have had that much money today to get time on television. And that itself shows me something about the spirit of all these people. Many people think, oh, we're reaching so many people, reaching millions, reaching millions with what message? That's the important thing.

Is it curing people? What's the use of having a medical camp to reach millions of people to cure some disease but the medicine doesn't cure the disease? You can have statistics. We distributed this medicine to 100 million people. Wonderful.

Did it cure anybody? Did it cure these 100 million people of lusting after women? Did it cure these 100 million people of anger? Did it cure these 100 million people of the love of money? It didn't. Then what are you saying 100 million people got the medicine? We reached 100 million people with this message through television. I'd rather have good medicine and give it to 10 people and cure them.

I'll tell you honestly. These are things which we have spoken about so often but I find that, well, I suppose it's like Jesus said, he who has ears to hear, let him hear. Some still don't have ears to hear because they are still taken up by the worldly attractions that come with many preachers.

So I just want to warn you about that. Dear brothers and sisters, don't get a surprise when Christ comes back. That's all I say.

I seek God myself for that. I say, Lord, I don't want any surprise when I stand before you. I don't want to be surprised, hey, I didn't know that.

Or boy, you mean that guy was a deceiver? I thought he was a wonderful preacher who was preaching righteousness. I don't want to get a surprise. I say, Lord, please reveal it to me now.

Expose to me now the people who will lead me closer to God and the people who will lead me astray with their preaching on righteousness and miracles and all that. Well, I mean, you'll be able to find out yourself by how much all that preaching is helping you to be free from sin in your life and in your family life. It's very easy to find out.

Do they convict you of the sins that Jesus spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount? I mean, just read the Sermon on the Mount and do these people convict you about that? I remember in the years when I watched all these TV preachers, I never heard one speak on the Sermon on the Mount because there's some difficult verses there. Don't be anxious. Three times in the Sermon on the Mount.

Don't judge others. How much do people speak about backbiting, about total purity in our mind? How many of you are interested in total purity in your mind? Tell me. How many of you are interested in total control of your tongue? I am.

I'm totally interested in that. I've been interested in it for many, many years. I want total freedom from the love of money.

I've been interested in that for many, many years, and that's why God has shown me certain things which I find many people never see. I say, well, I suppose they're not so interested in total freedom from sickness as I am. Spiritual sickness, I mean.

So here's the contrast. The fourth hallelujah is, praise God, there's a bride that's kept herself from this. Revelation 19.

Hallelujah for the Lord our God. 19.6, the last part. The Lord our God, the Almighty reigns and let us rejoice and be glad because the bride, the marriage of the Lamb has come.

The bride has made herself ready. That means she's kept herself as a virgin in spite of this handsome, rich man called the world. Constantly tempting her throughout her life.

Jesus was tempted with the glory of the world. It was the third temptation in the wilderness. It says the devil showed Jesus all the glory of the world.

I mean, and it's called a temptation. The Bible itself calls it a temptation. And it says in Luke 4, the Holy Spirit led Jesus to be tempted.

So when you're tempted, remember, it's the Holy Spirit who leads you there. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into temptation. It wasn't the devil who led Jesus into temptation.

It's very clear. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, Luke 4, to be tempted by the devil. Will the Holy Spirit lead you into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil? Don't be saying, follow, follow.

I will follow Jesus anywhere, everywhere. I will follow him. Right.

Well, here it is. Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, Luke 4, 1, was led by the Spirit in the wilderness. And for 40 days, he was tempted by the devil.

Who took him into the wilderness? Not the devil. The Holy Spirit. After he was filled with the Spirit, he was taken into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit for 40 days to be tempted by the devil.

And the devil tempted him for 40 days. I don't know what all temptations he faced there. But at the end of 40 days, you see the three final temptations.

Those are mentioned there. One is to use his supernatural power to feed himself. Turn the stones into bread.

Same temptation. I remember years ago when I was, you know, preaching the Word, God said to me, Never use the supernatural anointing I've given you to get things for yourself. That's the first temptation.

You've been anointed, Jesus. Use your power. Use your supernatural power to get bread for yourself.

He said, No. Don't use the anointing you have to get honor for yourself, to get money for yourself, or bread for yourself, anything. And I find that that is the first temptation at which almost all preachers have fallen.

Almost all that I know of. They are either seeking money or honor. One of the two.

Or position. With their gift. Who gave them that gift? God.

That would be like Jesus using the gift God gave him to turn the stones into bread. He didn't do it. That's harlotry.

That's the first step towards harlotry. Spiritual harlotry. And that's what's happened to most people.

You see, you may not be seeking money. But you can come to the church and seek honor for what you do. Maybe you have a little gift that you're using in the church or doing something.

And you want some honor for it. You want some respect for it. Some God-given ability God gave you.

And you use it to get honor for yourself. You're no better than those pastors who make money for themselves. Absolutely no better.

The honor that should go to God, you take to yourself. It's a sin. Don't glory that, oh, I don't take money for my services in the church.

Brother, sister, do you get honor? You're seeking for that? It's no better. It's just the same thing. It's just another type of currency.

Honor. There's a lot involved in these temptations if you meditate on them. And you think about it.

The devil was very subtle and clever. And then he tempted him with jump down from the roof of the temple and claim the promises of God. This is another type of stupidity that the devil tells believers to do.

When there are stairs in the temple, there's no need to jump. Use the stairs. So Jesus said, I'll use the stairs if I want to go down.

Why should I jump? Why should I jump and do some type of magic to perform the angels, try to protect me? This is how some Christians, and I've had one or two cases even in CFC in past years, who say, when we're sick, we won't take medicine. We'll trust God to heal us. Medicines are like the stairs God has provided to come down and be healed.

No, we'll jump off and claim a promise. Stupidity. Now, if you're in some jungle where no medicine is available, there are no stairs, then jump, and God will protect you.

He will heal you. I believe that. The point is, use means.

But you say the Bible says there are examples. Yeah, there are examples. Do you know in one place in Acts 8, it says God lifted Philip up, took him to another place.

Supposing you say, Lord, I want to travel to that place. Please do what you did for Philip. It won't work.

You'll be sitting where you are. When God has provided trains and buses and many means of transport, why don't you use them? This is the same as using medicine. The stupidity of sort of people who want to say, I want to show my faith.

I'm going to trust God, do something spectacular. That's the aim of the devil. Then you can testify about it.

Then you can talk about it and say, see what I did. You know, there's a great temptation. The basic temptation in that second temptation was, do something spectacular in the name of the Lord, and then you can talk about it and say, you know, I jumped off the temple, and the angels protected me, and I came down without being harmed, and the people at the bottom of the temple would see this person descending like as if he had a parachute, and they'd say, boy, how did you come down like that? Get some honor.

But it wouldn't have happened if Jesus had jumped down. He'd have broken his head. He knew that.

But that's what a lot of people want to do. You know, you do something. Maybe you do something wonderful, and you follow Jesus in some way, and then you talk about it, of what a wonderful thing you did, and the whole purpose is to get some honor for yourself, not to glorify God as to how great God is, but, you know, I had faith, and I did this.

And at the end of it, everybody's admiring you for your faith or your devotion or your sacrifice or the way you took up the cross. Is it right to give a testimony? Paul gave a testimony, and many times you read about testimonies in Scripture that the apostles gave, but not a testimony that brings honor to oneself. And if you are trying to do something, and you want to talk about it later on in a way to show other people what a man of God you are, that's the second temptation.

It may be a wonderful thing you did, wonderful thing, but if you had kept quiet about it, it would have remained wonderful. But like I often say, because you boasted about it, you put a dead lizard into that chicken curry, spoiled the whole thing. Boy, it was beautiful before you put that dead lizard inside.

It was beautiful before you talked about it and boasted about it. When you sought honor, you spoiled it, and it's gone. It's gone.

There are many things God does for us, and many wonderful things God has done. We need to know what among those things we should tell others, and what among those things we must never tell others. Have you noticed even in the book of Revelation? Let me see if I can find it.

It says here that Revelation 10 verse 4 There were seven peals of thunder, and they said something, and I was about to write, and I heard a voice saying, Don't write that. Do you know there's something that John saw which is not written in the book of Revelation? All the other things he wrote, but one little thing God said, Don't write that. That's only for you.

Are you able to recognize the things that God tells you to share with others and the things that God says only for you? I remember once many years ago, before our church started, the Lord spoke something so clearly to me, and He said, You must only tell your wife this, nobody else. I've never told anybody about it till today. That's what God spoke to me 37 years ago.

I only told my wife, that's all. There are certain things He says don't tell anybody. It's just for you.

See, because we must have a private relationship with Christ that is closer than even with your husband or wife. Then only you can really have a godly home. Then only you can really live a Christian life.

I mean, just like you have a very close relationship with your wife, there are things you tell her, you don't want to tell other people. Things you tell your husband, you don't want other people to hear it. Do you have a relationship like that with Jesus? There are things He tells you, and He says that's only for you? Imagine if a wife went around saying, telling everybody everything that her husband told her.

It would be pretty embarrassing. But we're like that sometimes in our Christianity, which shows that our relationship with Jesus is not, is not like a bride. No.

These are little, little things which, if you want to be, if you want to avoid corrupt Babylonian spirits, study these temptations and say, Lord, don't just read them like children read Bible stories and know that David threw a stone and killed Goliath and Jesus went into the wilderness and He was tempted like this. Always ask yourself, how does this apply to me? If you don't read the Bible, saying, how does this apply to me? You'll never do the will of God. So God told certain things to John, and He said, keep quiet, don't tell anybody that, and He never told anything.

Once you read in 2nd Corinthians, in chapter 12, it says, 2nd Corinthians 12, Paul says, I knew a man, verse 2, who 14 years ago, whether in the body or out of the body, I don't know, was taken up to the third heaven. That was Paul. He's talking about himself, but he puts it in a third person.

I knew somebody who was taken up to the third heaven. And I'm sure he heard some amazing things there. And he says, he was caught up into paradise, verse 4. That's the same paradise that was in the heart of the earth when Jesus was buried, and the thief went, but now he was taken up to the third heaven, after the resurrection, ascension of Christ.

And there, he heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. Do you know that when you get caught up to the third heaven, you hear things that you're not allowed to tell others? I'm amazed at all these people who say, I went to heaven, and I heard all this, and they tell stories here and there. You go to the internet, you'll find a lot of stories like that of people.

And there are dumb Christians who, with their mouth open, say, ah, really? Amazing. They haven't read scripture. You won't be deceived by these people if you read the Bible.

Do you have more respect for Paul, or for these people? I'll tell you why I respect Paul. I believe he went up to the third heaven, because he doesn't tell us what he heard. That's why I believe him.

All these fellows who tell us what they heard, I'm sorry, I don't believe them. They may have had a dream. They didn't actually go to the third heaven.

I'm not saying they're liars, but you know sometimes, a dream can be so vivid that you think you were there, and you wake up and say, hey, I'm still in Bangalore, I thought I was there. So these guys may have had a very vivid imagination and a dream, they thought they were there. So, anything that we want to make, we want to boast about to others, you can be pretty sure that falls under the category of the second temptation.

And the third one, you know where Jesus was shown all the glory of the world. Here you are, take it. Do you want money? Do you want honor? What are the things that come under the title glory of the world? You know.

The things that people seek in the world. What do businessmen seek for? Politicians. Ask yourself, what do businessmen seek for and politicians? All people in the world, even scientists.

Honor. Money. I think money is at the top, and honor, and position, and power.

So let's define glory like that. The Lord, the devil tells you, do you want money? Do you want honor? Do you want power? And position? Even in the church, because that's a worldly type of honor. I'll give it to you.

You don't have to go anywhere else. Just bow down to me a little bit. What does that mean? Just compromise a little bit in your life.

Put the things of the world above the things of God. Just a little bit in your life. If you put God first in your life, you won't be able to make so much money.

It doesn't matter. Just give God a place. Of course you must give God a place.

Because that's how Satan's preachers of righteousness, how can Satan's preachers of righteousness tell you don't give God any place? Give God a place, but it doesn't have to be all that important. You've got to live in this world. There are so many other things you've got to do.

You've got to get on in your profession. You've got to achieve something. You've got to take care of this and that and the other.

Just bow down to me a little bit. Do you know that all of you, my brothers and sisters, who have taken God away from first place in your life, have bowed down to Satan somewhere. You may not think so.

You say, God's still got a place in your life. I know he's got some corner of your heart. I know he's got some corner of your house.

You haven't driven him out completely. It's like these people who keep their old parents stuck in some corner of the house and say, we didn't get rid of them. We kept them.

Why don't you honor them? It's very sad when people treat God like that. Don't you feel sad if you go to a home and see them treating their old father or mother in a bad way? I feel sad when people treat God like that. But the thing is, you know, God won't take that place.

Your old father or mother may be willing to sit in some corner of your house, but not Almighty God. I'm sorry. You can imagine that you have him, and that's why in times of need, you find yourself in a panic, and you've got to go rush here and there and say, oh brother, please pray for me, I'm in a problem here.

Because God, you know, the Lord always said to the Israelites like this, you come to me when you're in trouble. Why don't you go to those idols of Egypt that you worshipped all your life? Can't they help you now? That's what he says to a lot of his people today. You push me into a corner most of your life, because other things are more important to you, and when you're in trouble, why don't you go to those other things which you're pursued after, the idols that you've lived for.

His bride has made herself ready, it says. She kept herself from being polluted. Revelation 19 says, hallelujah, the fourth hallelujah.

The Lord, our God, the Almighty reigns. You know, that's the testimony of the bride. Almighty God reigns.

He is king over my life, and it says the kingdom of God has come. That's what happened on the day of Pentecost. John the Baptist preached, the kingdom of God is nearing, is nearing.

Israel was living for a kingdom of earth, but he came for a kingdom of God. He says, turn around from that, repent for the kingdom of God is nearing, and it came on the day of Pentecost. You know what the kingdom of God is? The rule of God in every area of your life.

Has it happened? The rule of God in every area. You know, like they occupied Canaan to make sure that every nook and corner of Canaan come under God's control, but they failed. You read in the book of Judges, they went here, they conquered a little bit, but they did not drive out all these people.

Another tribe went here, but they did not drive out all the people. Another tribe went to another part of Canaan, but they didn't drive out all the people. This is the exact history of a lot of Christians.

They've not driven out the Canaanites from every corner of the heart so that the Lord, our God, the Almighty reigns. And if you cannot say, the Lord, our God, the Almighty reigns, then we will not be ready for the marriage of the Lamb. I want to make sure that the Lord, my God, who gave himself for me, reigns in every area of my life, in my thought life, in my words, in the way I use my time, money, everything.

It's a pursuit of perfection. It doesn't matter if I haven't achieved that in one year or two years or 20 or 30 years, but it's like climbing a mountain and we are going higher and higher and higher. Like Paul said, I've not yet achieved, but one thing I do, I'm pressing towards the mark.

It's pressing on to perfection so that the rule of God would cover his whole life. Dear brothers and sisters, let's learn to say hallelujah for the right reasons, for the destruction of corrupt, adulterous Christendom from our life. Forget all the others.

And for the pursuit of a virgin devotion to Christ in our life that will satisfy the heart of our bridegroom, that he can look at us with great joy because in the midst of all this temptation, he kept us all pure. Jesus was tempted with the world and so will we be. The Holy Spirit led him to be tempted, leads us to be tempted every day.

And in it, the Lord is saying, who is fit to be his bride and who is not. It's the only thing worth living for. I'll tell you that.

We don't live like hermits or sannyasis out in the jungles. We live right in the middle of this world, just like Jesus lived in the middle of the world, but completely untouched by the Spirit. That is the bride of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord help us so that we say praise the Lord, hallelujah, for the right reasons and that our life becomes one of continuous joy because the Lord our God reigns in every area of our life. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we bow before you, we want your name to be glorified in our lives.

We want the Lord our God, the Almighty, to reign and rule in every area of our life, in every single area. Help us, we pray, that your name be glorified through us in our homes and our church. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/why-we-say-hallelujah/>

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