

# Winning God's Approval - Part 9

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of winning God's approval through faith and overcoming sin in the context of the New Covenant.*

**Duration:** 57:21

**Scripture:** John 7:53

**Topics:** "Approval"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of winning God's approval and how it differs from being accepted by God. They compare it to the foundation and superstructure of a building, emphasizing that both are essential. The speaker also highlights the blindness of the world to the truth of Christ's sacrifice and the new covenant life available to believers. They give an example of two missionaries, one living in luxury and the other living in poverty, to illustrate the importance of living a simple and debt-free life as a child of God.

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## Transcript

This is the last of a series of nine messages that I have given, eight that we have concluded this morning, on the subject of winning God's approval. And we considered how being accepted by God is different from being approved by God. It's like the difference between a foundation and the superstructure of a building.

Both are essential. We need the foundation first. We need to be sure God's accepted us.

That is freely. It's a gift. But the New Testament speaks of a gift and a reward.

Both are important. The foundation, we could say, is a gift. Winning God's approval results in a reward.

There are other illustrations that also we considered. To come to the starting line of a race is where we win, where we are accepted by God. And then running the race in a way that we win, wins God's approval.

Jesus spoke about a gate and a way. There are many, many examples of this in the New Testament. In John chapter two, it says many believed in Jesus.

They committed themselves to him, but it says he did not commit himself to them. And so throughout the New Testament, you find this emphasis on being accepted by God freely. But not all win his approval.

Many are called, but few are chosen. And still fewer are faithful until the end. Many trust in the Lord, but very few are overcomers.

And the emphasis in the New Testament is always on overcoming. Jesus said, if you overcome as I overcame, then you will sit with me on my throne. Revelation 321, as I sat with my father on his throne after overcoming myself.

There are many examples of how God tested people in the Old Testament before he committed a responsibility to them. God never uses a person before testing him. Even in the time of Gideon, we read 32,000 people volunteered to fight God's battles for him.

And God said, there are too many. He sifted them out and finally was left with 300. One percent, less than one percent.

And it's that group with which God won the victory. And of course, all enjoyed the benefits of the victory, but the ones who won the victory were 300. It's something like that in the church today.

It's a very small percentage of those who overcome, those who are faithful, those who win God's approval, who do the real work of God on earth today. And it's God's will that that number should increase. That's why we have a series like this.

In the first six messages, we thought of Adam and Eve, how they failed. Job, how he won God's approval. About Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David.

And then the last two studies, we considered the three Marys in the Gospels. And Peter and Judas in our last session, where one won God's approval and the other didn't. Now we want to turn today to Hebrews in chapter 11.

In Hebrews chapter 11, we have this great list of people. We can say it's a list of people who won God's approval through faith. Because that is how the chapter concludes in Hebrews 11.39. All of these won or gained God's approval through faith.

They had a testimony that they pleased God. Like it says about Enoch, that before he left this earth, in Hebrews 11 and verse 5, he had a testimony that his life had pleased God. And there's an example for us.

Before we leave this earth, before he was raptured, Enoch was raptured up to heaven. The first person who was taken up alive. And if we live until the coming of the Lord, we too will be taken up alive.

But before we go, we need to follow Enoch's example and have this testimony that we pleased God. He was a married man with many children, but he walked with God for 300 years. And many examples like that throughout the Old Testament.

People who did fantastic things. A man like Abraham, who trusted God and had a son when he was 100 years old. And people like Moses, who split open the Red Sea and delivered 2 million people out of Egypt.

Like Joshua, who pulled down the walls of Jericho and captured a whole nation for God's people. Many others who shut the mouths of lions. Daniel, who put armies to flight, who defeated Goliath.

Many, many wonderful things listed there in Hebrews chapter 11. And at the end, listen to how Hebrews 11 ends. All of these gained God's approval.

But God has provided, verse 40, something better than all this for us. That is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. For many people, Old Testament and New Testament are just two parts of the Bible.

But it's a lot more than that. The Old Testament or Old Covenant is an agreement that God made with man through Moses. And the Bible says in Hebrews chapter 8 that it has been abolished.

We're not under that Old Covenant law. God has now established a new covenant. That was established through the blood of bulls and goats.

This new covenant has been established through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Savior. And if you want to know how much better the New Covenant is compared to the Old Covenant. Well, as much better as the blood of Jesus is better than the blood of bulls and goats.

As much better, as much higher as Jesus is than Moses. The law came through Moses, but grace came through Jesus Christ. It's much higher, much greater.

God has provided something better for anyone who enters into this new covenant. Why is it then? Why is it then? That so many Christians who claim to be believers in Christ. Their standard of life is far inferior to the people who lived under the Old Covenant.

Like Elijah, Moses, John the Baptist. Is it really true that God has provided something better? He has. But, not every Christian has laid hold of it.

Just like the God of this world, the devil, has blinded the minds of unbelievers. So that they don't see the wonderful salvation that is freely available in Christ. Where their sins can all be forgiven in a moment, freely.

Look at the millions in the world today. Who don't enjoy what most of us here have enjoyed. The removal of all our guilt.

Gone in a moment because we turned to Christ. And believed that He died and took away the guilt of our sin. And paid the price completely when He said it is finished.

And we are free. But the God of this world has blinded the minds of billions of people in the world from seeing that. In the same way, the God of this world, the devil, has blinded the minds of born again believers.

From seeing the glory of this new covenant life. That God has provided something better for us than anything any Old Testament saint ever experienced. So, if I were doing the chapter division of the Bible, like somebody did five, six hundred years ago, whenever it was done.

You know, the originally when the Bible was written, it wasn't broken up into chapters and verses. It was just one complete section all the way from beginning to end of each book. But it's broken up by man into chapters and verses for our easy reference.

If I were doing it, I would not have finished Hebrews 11 at verse 40. I would have finished Hebrews 11 at chapter 12, verse 4. I would have added four more verses there. The remaining four verses of chapter 12.

Because that is really the conclusion of what he's coming to. Otherwise, you sort of end up with this verse, God has provided something better. And those of us who have the good habit of reading a chapter a day may forget when we turn to Hebrews 12 the next day.

What we read in Hebrews 11 and don't see a connection. It's a very good habit to read a chapter of the Bible every day. But I would encourage you in future when you do that, read the next two or three verses before you close the Bible.

And when you begin with a new chapter, start with two or three verses in the previous chapter. You may see a connection. Have you ever seen the connection between John 7 and John 8? Everybody went to his own house, but Jesus went to sleep on the Mount of Olives.

You missed that if you read it separately. There are many other chapters like that. I could spend a long time telling you about these interesting connections between two chapters that I have discovered in my study of the Bible.

Here's one of them. God has provided something better. What is that? It started off with by faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Noah, by faith Abraham, by faith Sarah, by faith Isaac, by faith Joseph, by faith all these people.

And finally, by faith Jesus. Have you seen that? That is the better thing that God has provided for us. Jesus, it says in Hebrews 12 too.

Or what I like to call Hebrews 11 42. Hebrews 11 42 or Hebrews 12 2 in your Bible. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith.

Let that sink in. The author means, if I take up a book here and say, this is the author, that means he wrote it. Isn't that the meaning of author? So, Jesus the author of our faith means he writes his faith in me.

And his book is going to be completed. He's the finisher of our faith too. He doesn't have an incomplete book.

So what does this mean? The faith that Jesus writes in my heart. You know, this is a new covenant promise by the way. I wish I could spend 10 hours talking about the new covenant.

It's the most exciting thing for me. But I assure you, we'll finish at 1230. But this has thrilled me so much and excited me because God opened my eyes to it about 30 years ago.

And it changed my life completely. And I see so many Christians, so many who haven't entered into the wonder and the glory of this new covenant life. That's why it burdens me.

I never feel more burdened about any other subject. In the Bible as new covenant. How much better it is than the old covenant.

Jesus writes it. The new covenant, it says in Hebrews 8. I will make a new covenant with these people. It will not be like the old covenant.

Why won't it be like the old covenant? Well, it says there in the old covenant, God wrote on two tablets of stone. And it is as if God was saying, it's easier for me to write my laws on those stones than in your hearts. Your hearts are hotter than those rocks.

But he wrote those commandments. Four on one tablet. First four commandments relating to God.

And six on the other tablet. Six commandments relating to men. In the new covenant, he says.

The two tablets will be your mind and your heart. I'm going to write them not on rocks now. I'm going to write them Hebrews 8. Read that in Hebrews 8 and verses 10 to 12.

I'll write them on your minds and on your hearts. And the meaning of that is. In your mind, I will give you a desire to do my will.

That's the meaning of God writing his law in our minds. If you have a desire to do God's will. I hope you are not so conceited as to think that you got that desire yourself.

You didn't. The Holy Spirit wrote something in your mind. Give him the credit for it.

He gave you the desire. Of course, you offered your mind to him. That's what made you different from others in whose minds he has not written it.

But he's the one who gave you the desire. And I will write it in your mind. But that alone would leave us still in the old covenant.

You know in Psalm 40. David said. I delight to do thy will.

Oh God. But when you come to the new covenant. That same verse is quoted in Hebrews 10.

Related to Jesus. Where Jesus says not I delight to do thy will. I come to actually do thy will oh God.

Now I hope you know there is a lot of difference between delighting to do God's will. And doing God's will. There are a lot of people who delight to do God's will.

Who never do God's will in their life. Paul said I delight in the law after the inward man. Romans chapter 7. But very often I don't do it.

So that's why the second thing God says in Hebrews 8. I'll write it also in your heart. And that means I'll give you the ability. To do my will.

So basically the new covenant is this. The desire and the ability to do the will of God. Which they just did not have under the old covenant.

Because it was written outside. The law was written outside. And here was man without God's ability.

Struggling to do it. A few people like David. Had the desire to do it.

Many didn't even have that. But nobody. Had the ability to keep that law.

But now. With the finger of God. That is the Holy Spirit.

That's very clear. Jesus called the finger of God the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Spirit.

He writes his law. In my mind. Giving me a desire.

And ability. Like it says in Philippians. In chapter 2. In verse 12.

And 13. It is God. Who works in you.  
Both to will. And to do. His good pleasure.  
Giving you the desire. And the ability. That's what Jesus had.  
That's why this is better than the old covenant. Jesus. Was.  
Had the desire and the ability. And it says here. He.  
Will write his law. In. Our.  
Heart. And in our mind. He'll give us the desire and the ability.  
He's the author of this new covenant faith. It's wonderful. So we see that.  
Jesus was sent to earth. Not only to die for our sins. That's the starting point.  
Or the foundation. Or the gate. Or the beginning.  
What about what we've been considering all these. Weeks. Completing the race.  
Building the superstructure. Jesus is not only. Our substitute on the cross.  
He is our example. Do you know that Jesus said more often. Follow me.  
Then he said believe in me. He would meet people and say follow me. Follow me.  
Follow me. He never said admire me. He said follow me.  
Follow me. Follow me. And yet.  
Most people admire him. Very few follow him. He's not looking for our admiration.  
He's looking for disciples. Who will follow him. And the old covenant.  
This was just not possible. But now. God has provided something better.  
Do you believe there's something better. Than splitting open Red Seas. Receiving manna from heaven  
every day for 40 years.  
Pulling down walls of Jericho. Shutting the mouths of Lions. What exciting things in Hebrews 11.  
Something better than that. Here is something better than that. Overcoming sin.  
Until you see that that is something better. You won't pursue it. You know we are built in such a way.  
That we pursue. What we feel is better. When you're looking for a job.  
Or a house. Or anything. Or marriage.  
You look for that. Which is good for you. If you don't believe.  
That overcoming sin. Is greater. Than shutting the mouths of lions.

We'll never pursue it. We'll seek after miracles. Like a lot of Christians are seeking for today.  
In Jesus life. I want you to see how he won God's approval. Before we get to that.  
Let me just read this passage. Hebrews 12. Fixing our eyes on Jesus.  
Or turning our eyes away from. Everyone else. From everything else.  
And seeing Jesus alone. Let us run this race. Because he's the author.  
And perfecter of our faith. And what did he do? He never split any sea. He never shut the mouths.  
Of a single lion. He never pulled down any walls. Of Jericho or any other city.  
He never did. Any of these things. That are mentioned there.  
You know fantastic things on the outside. He did miracles for a lot of others. It's true.  
But what is mentioned here? Not that he fed the Pythagoras. Or he walked on water. Or changed the  
water into wine.  
Or raised the dead. These are all fantastic things. But none of these are mentioned here.  
He's the author. And perfecter of our faith. And what's mentioned about him is.  
He endured the cross. Imagine putting that. In contrast to.  
Pulling down the walls of Jericho. Splitting the Red Sea. You know.  
Shutting the mouths of lions. Because on the other side. You have enduring the cross.  
Full of joy. Completing the course. Despising the shame and ridicule of the world.  
I tell you. You got to have eyes open by the Holy Spirit. To see that that is greater.  
Than all those things listed in Hebrews chapter 11. Most Christians haven't seen it. That's why they don't  
pursue it.  
And that is why. Their Christian life is so unsatisfying. If you were to ask the average.  
Born again believer. And many of you. If you were honest.  
You'd have to say. My Christian life is not satisfying. It's an up and down experience.  
Sometimes up on the mountain. And sometimes down in the valley. And up on the mountain.  
And because most people around you. Live like that. You think that is the normal Christian life.  
It is not. The normal Christian life. Is the way Jesus lived.  
That's the way we're supposed to live. Because as long as you say that. You'll never even attempt to live  
like that.

Do you know there's a verse in the Bible. Which says 1 John 2 6. 1 John 2 6. The living Bible says. Paraphrases it like this.

Anyone. Anyone. Who says he's a Christian.

Should live as Christ lived. Now when you read a verse like that. How do you react to it? Oh boy.

How in the world can we do that? And the devil whispers in your ear. Impossible. Don't listen to his lie.

He was a liar from the beginning. I'll tell you how another saint of God. Responded to that verse when he saw it.

He saw it. Boy. You mean I can live like Jesus lived? He saw it as a possibility.

Instead of something that depressed him. It excited him. And he pursued it.

And came to that life. So. When we see something in scripture.

We can either say oh that's impossible. But that's what a lot of people said. Even in Jesus time.

And it says in Matthew chapter 13. In the last verse. Some of the saddest words written in all the Gospels.

He could not do many works for them. Mighty works for them. Because they wouldn't believe him.

And I believe. We're going to discover. In the day we stand before the Lord.

There are many mighty works. That God wanted to do for you. That he couldn't do.

Because you wouldn't trust him. And I'm not talking about splitting Red Seas. I'm not talking about pulling down walls of Jericho.

Or shutting the mouths of lions. Do you know that there are lions within us. Which are much more powerful.

Than lions on the outside. We read of. Samson.

There was no lion that he couldn't tear to pieces. But when Delilah came. Oh it was a different story.

How did she tear him to pieces? This man who could tear lions to pieces. A woman tore him to pieces. How is that? Because there were lions within him.

The lion of lust. It was too strong. To conquer.

That is what Jesus. Conquered. And teaches us.

We can conquer too. That is a greater lion. More powerful lion.

I can prove it to you from Samson's life. He could conquer the external lion. But he couldn't conquer the inward one.

So which is stronger? God has provided something better for us. That sin. Shall not have dominion over you.

That is new covenant message. It was just not possible under the old covenant. All the dissatisfaction in your Christian life.

Is because you are not overcoming sin. All the misery in your home. Is because you are not overcoming sin.

It's not because you are not pulling down the walls of Jericho. No. It's because you are not overcoming sin.

You can feed the 5,000 and still have a miserable home. And a miserable life. Jesus came.

To bring us to that life that God wanted Adam to live. Reflecting his nature. And if you want to know what type of life that is.

Here are some verses. That Paul mentioned in his episodes. Which describes the type of life he lived.

And remember he was a man. Just like us. He says in 2nd Corinthians 2.14. Thanks be to God.

Who leads us in triumph. Always. Not once in a while.

Paul's life was not this up and down thing. That most Christians have. It was always in triumph.

In Romans 8.37-39. He says. We are more than conquerors in everything. In Christ.

He says in Philippians 4.4. Rejoice in the Lord. Always. 24-7.

It's not once in a while. Not in a Sunday service. But all the time.

That's the type of life that Paul lived. Be anxious for nothing. Nothing.

He who has been perfected in love. Has no fear. 1 John chapter 4. This is the type of life the apostles lived.

And I remember. After being born again. And living a defeated.

Up and down life. For more than 16 years. I got fed up with myself.

And I said Lord. There must be something better than what I'm experiencing. And that's when God began to open my eyes.

Little by little. I began to see what the new covenant was all about. To be free.

From the wretched slavery of sin. To be free. From the wretched things.

That made my life miserable. And unhappy. And to be free from discouragement.

And depression. I was a slave to that. God has provided something better.

And I want to say to all of you. In Jesus name. That is for you.

It's not something you can attain to. It doesn't work in you. Remember Jesus is the author.

He can do it in you. If you will seek for it. I've always said you can have anything you want from God.

Which is promised in his word. If you have thirst. And you have faith.

If either of these are missing. You won't get it. If you don't have a longing.

A tremendous thirst for it. If it doesn't mean more to you than everything else in the world. I'll tell you.

Might as well forget it. And even if you have a tremendous thirst and longing. But you don't believe God will do it for you.

You still won't get it. Maybe you say. Oh well I'm not worthy.

Well that's not humility. That's unbelief. Don't call unbelief humility.

That's what the devil makes people think. Oh well I'm not worthy. I'm not good enough.

Well none of us are worthy. You won't be worthy in a thousand years. You got to receive what God gives to people who don't deserve anything.

Everything I've got in my life. Is what I didn't deserve. And so there's no question of worthiness.

Christ has made us worthy. Before the father. And if there's something promised in his word.

It's for me. He's the author and finisher of our faith. I want to show you something in Jesus life.

Here in Matthew chapter 3. We're very familiar with this. We're thinking of winning God's approval. How to please him.

And Jesus is our example here. Remember. In Matthew chapter 3. In verse 17.

At his baptism. When he was 30 years old. A voice from heaven came and said.

In Matthew 3 17. This is my beloved son. In whom.

I am well. Pleased. That means I'm extremely happy with him.

Extremely happy with him. Now I want to show you a contrast to that. In 1 Corinthians.

In chapter 10. In 1 Corinthians. In chapter 10.

We read. That the Israelites were delivered out of Egypt. 600,000 men and many women and children.

Perhaps 2 million of them. They were all redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. 1 Corinthians 10.

In verse 2. It says they were. They had two baptisms. One into the Red Sea and out of it.

Symbolizing. Water baptism. And the other.

A baptism of a cloud that came from heaven. Symbolizing. The baptism in the Holy Spirit.

They had both of these symbolically. They ate. Verse 3. The same spiritual food.

Symbolizing God's Word. Which is our food. They drank the same spiritual drink.

Symbolizing the work of the Holy Spirit. That makes us converted. Nevertheless.

Verse 5. God was not. Well pleased. With.

Most of them. And killed them in the wilderness. They never entered the promised land.

Somewhere. Between Egypt. And the promised land.

They wandered. All their life. And got lost.

How many of that family. That crowd entered the promised land. Two.

Out of 600,000. It's. I mean believe it or not.

It's about the same proportion today. 600,000 believers. Come out of Egypt.

Come out of the world. Born again. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Baptized in water. Baptized in the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues.

And that's not essential. But some have that gift. And then.

Reading God's word. And yet. Two out of them.

May enter the life. Where they have joy. 24-7.

Where they overcome lust. And overcome anger. And overcome bitterness.

And overcome jealousy. And where sin does not rule over them. It's about the same proportion.

And how is it Joshua and Caleb entered the land? By faith. It's not because their muscles were stronger than the muscles of those Canaanite giants. No.

They said. God is able to bring these giants under our feet. We don't have the ability.

We look like grasshoppers in front of these giants. And some of the sins that rule your life. You may look like a grasshopper.

When you try to overcome anger. Anger stands up like a giant before you and says. Hey.

You think you're going to overcome me? I have ruled you all your life. I ruled your dad. I ruled your grandfather.

Where in the world are you going to overcome me? We cower in fear and say. Oh that's right. It's a lie.

The Bible says sin will not rule over you. If you come under grace. Proclaim the lie of the devil to his face.

The devil frightens so many of God's children. With this thing. That thing.

Do you believe that it's God's will for you to be depressed. And gloomy. And sour.

And hard to get along with. All your life. And just come to meetings.

And sing God's praise for an hour a day. Far from it. That's not God's will.

God wants you to be a triumphant Christian. Who is a blessing. Who draws people to Christ.

By your conduct. Your behavior. Your speech.

And if it isn't like that. I want to say to you. It can be like that.

Even if you're the most miserable. Defeated Christian in the world. It can be.

Oh I wish. Before I came here. I said Lord how shall I proclaim this message.

This glorious message. It's impossible. Your Holy Spirit has got to convince people.

The glory of this. The truth of this. That you can come to this life.

This is not a theory. This is not just a pep talk. That you're getting here.

Just to stir you up for a few hours. It's something permanent. I tell you I've experienced it.

I've tasted it. I would say. A little bit.

There's far more to this than I've seen. But it's a wonderful life. And I tell you.

Don't miss it. You've got only one life on earth. You're not going to be able to come back to this earth again.

To be an overcomer. You know you can't be an overcomer in heaven. There's nothing to overcome there.

What's there to overcome? All the people are nice. And good. How many enemies are you going to love in heaven? Zero.

If you want to love enemies. You better practice on earth. This is the only place you'll ever get a chance to experience that.

The joy of loving an enemy. Of blessing somebody who curses you. Nobody's going to curse you in heaven.

There are many things you'll never get a chance to do in heaven. You won't be able to take up the cross there. You won't be able to deny yourself there.

You won't be able to be an overcomer there. God gives us all one life on earth. Don't miss.

Don't waste that life. Living under the old covenant. Satisfied with the substandard life that you see of the Christians around you.

Or even some of the Christian leaders you've seen. Say Lord. The author and finisher of my faith is Jesus.

I remember once. A brother came to me and said. Well.

I get discouraged so often. But I suppose if Elijah also got discouraged. I can't be better than him.

He also got depressed once. And sat under a juniper tree and said Lord. I'm fed up.

Take away my life. Well. I said.

If Elijah is the author and finisher of your faith. That's right. You've got to live there all your life.

There's no better way for you. But I said I thank God. That God has provided something better for me.

Yes. Hebrews 11:39 is not the end of that book. There's something beyond that.

By faith Jesus. Who is the author of my faith. And I say I follow Jesus.

He is the author and finisher of my faith. And Jesus never sat under a juniper tree and say. Oh father I'm fed up with my life.

Please take it away. Never. He can write that faith into my heart.

That never in my life. No matter what happens. No matter what other people do to me.

I'll never say that. By the grace of God. You can live that life my brother sister.

You can live that. Tell the devil he's been fooling you. Blinding your eyes.

All these years. You can live a life where you have joy 24/7. I'm not saying you'll go on smiling 24/7. It doesn't say Jesus was smiling all the time. I mean if you see a man walking down the road.

Smiling all the time. I say Lord I don't want to be like that. I mean.

There's something wrong with him up here. If he's smiling 24/7. No Jesus was a man of sorrows. He had trials.

He had pressures. He had problems. And boy he wasn't smiling when he took the whip.

And chased those fellows out of the temple. He certainly wasn't. But he had joy.

Joy is something inward. Joy is something in the midst of sorrows. Joy is something that says Jesus wept.

We can have joy in the midst of sorrow. Trial. Pressure.

It's something inward. Jesus had so much joy in his heart. That the night before he was going to be crucified.

He went around encouraging his disciples. He said I've got so much joy in my heart. You know I'm going to be killed tomorrow morning.

But that's another thing. I've got so much joy in my heart I'd like to give it to you. Imagine being a Christian like that.

If I know I'm going to be hanged tomorrow morning. And I just come and visit you fellows. And say I'd just like to share my joy with you.

That is true Christianity. Because that is the faith that Jesus writes in our hearts. He writes his laws in our mind.

In our heart. We have to see Jesus as our example. The father was well pleased with him.

He was not well pleased with these Israelites who came out of the wilderness. It's quite a contrast. When I first saw that comparison of Matthew 3:17. With what we read in 1 Corinthians 10.

And verse 5. Here was somebody God was not well pleased. And there was somebody who he was well pleased. What was the difference? What does first of all.

Let's go to the Israelites in the wilderness. What are the type of things. God will do.

For those with whom he is not well pleased. He'll give them food. Every day.

Clothing. Shelter. Answer their prayers.

Do miracles. I mean imagine if you got bread coming from heaven one day in your life. You'd be talking about that for the rest of your life.

But these folks they got bread every day from heaven for 40 years. And God was not happy with them. Some of us think that if God does one miracle for us.

Oh he must be tremendously delighted with us. Far from it. Far from it.

Let me clear your mind of that illusion. That God's happy with you just because he did a miracle for you. He did a miracle every day for these people for 40 years.

Bread dropping from heaven. Every day. And he was not happy with them.

Their clothes never wore out for 40 years. They never had needed a new pair of sandals for 40 years. God was not happy with them.

When they were bitten by poisonous snakes they were healed miraculously. God wasn't happy with them. When they were thirsty rocks split open and water would flow out for 2 million people.

It wasn't a trickle it was rivers. And he was not happy with them. Does God do such things for people he's not happy with? He certainly does.

He makes the sun to rise on the good and the evil. And makes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous. It's often said if you want God's material blessings you must be either good or evil.

Do you qualify? Everybody in the world qualifies. That's why God does miracles for people whom he's not happy with. Proving not that he's happy with them but that he's a good God.

That's all. So we need to be very clear in our mind that just because God answers our prayers doesn't mean he's happy with us. That just proves he's a good God.

Particularly if those prayers are answers to material things. God answers the prayers of many people. I believe he answers the prayers of non-Christians.

Think of the number of people Jesus healed. Thousands. Many of whom are in hell today.

Absolutely true. Many of whom are in hell today. Even though they experienced healing when they were on earth.

You don't go to heaven just because you're healed of some sickness. Oh no. God is a good God.

Now let's look at Jesus. With whom the father is well pleased. With these people the father was not well pleased for 40 years.

With Jesus the father was well pleased for 30 years. What did Jesus do in those 30 years? Did he preach a sermon? No. Did he do a miracle? No.

Did he get bread falling from heaven? No. He had to work hard to get his bread. He perspired and sweated and worked in the carpenter shop.

Earning bread for himself and his mother and four younger brothers and two younger sisters at home. He had a large family to support. Eight members at least in the family.

Joseph is probably dead. He is the eldest son. Had to work hard.

No bread fell from heaven for him. There were no supernatural miracles for him when he wanted water. No rock could be split open.

He had to walk all the way to the village well and draw the water and bring it home. No miracles as far as we know. No miracles.

What was it that the father was so happy with in 30 years? With a man who never cast out a demon. Never preached a sermon. Never did a miracle.

His life was free from sin. That's the only thing that we know about Jesus. It says in Hebrews and chapter 4 and verse 15 the description of what people call the hidden 30 years.

What was happening during those hidden 30 years in Nazareth? Hebrews 4.15 it says, In all those years he was tempted. Not just in the wilderness as we read three times in Matthew 4. But all those years he was tempted. How exactly like we are and he never sinned.

I mean you and I know how difficult it is to live one day without sinning in thought, word, deed. Attitude to others. Motive.

One day. Jesus lived 33 years. What a miracle.

Now it doesn't look like a miracle if you think that he did that all as God. I mean when a bird flies over our heads that's not a miracle. But if you see a man flying over your head you say hey that's.

I mean isn't there a difference? So the question is very very important question. I never realized the importance of knowing the answer to this question for many years. And that's why I was defeated.

Did Jesus overcome sin as God or as man? You may think that's not a very important question. I tell you your victory over sin depends on getting the answer to that question. The Bible says great is the secret mystery of godliness.

1 Timothy 3.16. God was manifest in the flesh and his spirit was pure. That's the secret of godliness. To understand that this Jesus God Almighty the eternal second person of the Trinity lived on earth.

He was God when he was on earth. That's why he could accept worship forgive sins and things like that. But he never used any of those resources that he had as God.

Otherwise he could not be an example for us. Because he wanted to be an example. If an angel came from heaven with his wings and took me to a swimming pool and said I'd like to teach you to swim.

And flies across the swimming pool and says follow me. What can I do? If I don't know any swimming. I say hey listen.

I can admire you. I can't follow you. If you want to teach me to swim.

Get a body like mine. That's subject to gravity. And then jump into the pool and then teach me.

Just going across like this. Something I can admire. I can never follow you.

Now apply that to Jesus. If Jesus came with some type of invisible wings so that the gravity of sin could never pull him down. We can admire him like we can admire a bird flying in the air.

We can never follow that. And that's the reason why many people don't follow Jesus or even attempt to follow him. Because deep down in their heart the God of this world the devil has convinced them it's impossible.

He had powers which you don't have. When it came to overcoming sin let me tell you the truth in the name of Jesus. He had no power that he doesn't offer us.

It's true. This is the amazing truth of scripture that when Jesus came to earth. He had no right to say follow me.

If he was not like me. It says in Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 17. Amazing words.

He had to be made like his brothers in all things. He was made like you and me. In everything.

Except for sin which we have inherited. He didn't have an earthly father. So there was no inherited sin.

Other than that he was exactly like you and me. Tempted exactly like you and me. And he overcame exactly like he wants you and me to overcome.

This is a glorious truth. That means every temptation he faced. He faced the pressure.

He faced the pull. If there is no pull there is no temptation. I mean think for example in the garden of Eden.

If the tree of knowledge of good and evil which is forbidden. Was a horrible ugly stinking tree full of thorns. And the Lord said don't touch it.

Adam said oh yeah I don't want to go anywhere near that. There wouldn't be any temptation there. But God was the one who made that tree so attractive.

That it made Eve's mouth water. Then only is it a temptation. And then God was saying to her.

Am I more precious to you than my creation? Eve said no thank you. I like your creation. If God had made all the women in the world horrible ugly looking hags.

And said don't lust after women. He said no problem Lord absolutely. Who is it who has made women so attractive so pretty? God.

And he asked you the same question he asked Eve. Will you choose me above what I have created? And many Christians say no. I choose your creation.

That's what grieves the heart of God. That which God has forbidden. We choose.

He gives you a wife. You're not happy with that. You want something God has forbidden.

That's what grieves the heart of God. I mean if these are heathen who don't take the name of Christ we can understand. These are people who call themselves Christians.

And not only Christians they say we are born again Christians. And not only born again Christians they say we are spirit filled Christians. We speak in tongues.

And then we divorce our wives and marry somebody else. What is this? Can you imagine the reproach there is in the name of God. That the devil is always hurling at the name of God.

Look at that person he claims he is spirit filled speaking in tongues. Look at the way he behaves with someone who is not his wife. You got to see that.

You got to hear it. You got to say Lord we brought shame to your name. Now that may not be your problem.

You may be running after money not after women. But whichever it is that's also something created. And God says you want that more than me? Will you be happy with what I give you? If you seek my kingdom my rule and your passion in life is to live for me.

And I give you enough for your needs. Will that satisfy you? Or will you say no that won't satisfy me. I need more than what you think I should get.

A lot of Christians live like that. And that's why they are so miserable. That's why they are so unhappy.

That's why they have broken homes. That's why they have divorces. That's why they are depressed.

And that's why some of them commit suicide. It's not God's will. The devil has blinded the minds of believers.

Jesus overcame. And he tells us follow me. I could use another example.

We have had some wonderful missionaries that have come from the United States of America. Into India through the years who have lived and sacrificed so much. I really appreciate them.

And I never appreciated them sufficiently until I saw the standard of living that there is here. And I saw how these people forsook all that. I'm talking about missionaries who came particularly before the 50s.

Godly men and women who came there to jungles were infested by cobras and all types of things. Without electricity. Without roads.

And lived there to bring people in my country to Christ. I have the highest appreciation for that. And I want to give you an example.

And it's a fictitious example. Here are two people who come to India as missionaries. To teach people who live in a slum.

And people in slums in India may earn \$20 a month. Less than \$1 a day. And here is this missionary who has come to teach them.

How to live on \$20 a month in a slum. And live in a clean little hut. It may be small but you can keep it clean.

And supposing he is a millionaire here. And he comes to India. Here is one millionaire.

I want to take the example of two missionaries who come like that. One is a millionaire who comes and lives there. In some 5 star hotel.

And visits the slum every day for 2 or 3 hours. And tells them this is the way you should live. You must learn to live on \$20 a month.

And you must keep your houses clean. See you again tomorrow. And comes and visits them every day.

For 2 or 3 hours. And here is another missionary. Who is also a millionaire.

Just like the other one. And he comes and says listen I live in your slum. And not only live in your slum.

I will work like you. And earn \$20 a month. And even though I have a credit card.

With millions in my bank account. In home in the United States. I will not use it.

I will earn \$20 a month like you. Live like you. And show you how to live free from debt.

Live simply. And be a child of God. Which missionary do you think you would respect and appreciate? Certainly the second one.

Now let me apply that to Jesus. How do you think Jesus came? If he came to earth. With some 5 star type of flesh.

Quite different from ours. And comes and visits us. And says you know you got to be overcomers.

You got to overcome. And doesn't realize all the struggles we are going through. In this wretched slum.

That we live in spiritually. And then comes with messages to us. Or would you admire a Jesus.

Who came and lived exactly like you. Tempted exactly like you. With no resources.

He is a millionaire. He has got the credit card of heaven. But he says I never use it.

I will only have the resources you have. And I will show you how you can be an overcomer. That is the real Jesus.

That is the Jesus. Who is the author of our faith. That is the only one we can follow.

Because he has shown us by example. In the old testament. They never had an example.

They had only commandments. But Jesus has come and given us an example. And he tells us in the word.

That the secret of his whole life. Was he was filled with the Holy Spirit. He never spoke in tongues.

But he overcame sin. That is what the Holy Spirit did in him. He overcame sin.

He manifested the nature of his father. The kindness. The goodness.

The humility. That is what he manifested. And he says he told his disciples.

I will give you the same Holy Spirit. That I had all my earthly life. You know the Holy Spirit could not come and live in people.

Until he at first lived in one man. That is me. And now he can live in all of you.

And do not ever go out. Before you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Wait.

I know the world is dying. But you can wait. You will accomplish nothing.

If you are not filled with the Holy Spirit. Wait. And even there.

In the matter of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. What a work the devil has done. Bringing confusion.

And counterfeit. And magnifying some particular gift. As if that is the great manifestation.

I tell you this. If you do not want to be confused about the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Remember this.

The perfect example of the Spirit filled man. Is Jesus Christ. Yes.

I do not see Jesus rolling on the floor. When he is filled with the Holy Spirit. And I have never done that in my life either.

And I do not want to. I have seen demon possessed people rolling on the floor. And when the demon is cast out of them.

They get up. And Jesus laid hands on people. He did not push them down.

He lifted them up. And I have seen that happen myself. Demon possessed people lifted up.

It is demons who cast people down. In the Gospels. And it is demons who cast people down today.

I am not criticizing anybody. I am just telling you what scripture says. And I am telling you what Jesus did.

Do not be confused by all the wrong teaching. All the so called prophecies. And tongues.

And interpretations. Which is confusing people. Not leading them to overcome sin.

Let us open our lives today to the Holy Spirit. And say Lord do in me. What you did in Jesus.

There is a. There is an old song. Sung in the 50's. Called.

Written by Stuart Hamblin. It is no secret. What God can do.

What he did for Jesus. He will do for you. That is faith.

He is the author. And finisher of my faith. This millionaire.

Came from heaven. Never used his credit card. Lived in my house.

In this slum just like me. And showed me. That I could live a clean life.

In this slum. That is the gospel. So my brothers and sisters.

At the conclusion of this series. Let us say. Let us demonstrate to this world.

That. We too can live a life. At the end of which God can say.

I am well pleased. With your life. Well done.

That is the joy of your Lord. That is God's will for every one of you. And it is possible.

In Jesus name. And the power of the Holy Spirit. That is Bible for God.

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